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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide important information and guidance to current and prospective Special Education Program students. This handbook includes information about program expectations, requirements, policies, procedures and pathways.

All special education students should:
- download and read this entire Special Education Handbook;
- download and read the entire TLL Graduate Handbook;
- download and read the entire PhD in Education Handbook; (doctoral level students only)
- meet with his/her Special Education advisor during the first two weeks of his/her first semester; and
- abide by the expectations, policies, and procedures outlines in the SPED, TLL, and PhD handbooks.

Students should visit the following links for information about university resources, policies, procedures and deadlines.

- College of Education https://education.okstate.edu/
- Special Education https://education.okstate.edu/sped
- Professional Education Unit https://education.okstate.edu/peu
- Enrollment Guides https://registrar.okstate.edu/Enrollment-Guides
- Graduate College http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/
- Office of the Registrar https://registrar.okstate.edu/
- OSU-Tulsa Graduate Student Services https://www.osu-tulsa.okstate.edu/gradservices/index.php
- University Catalog – Graduate College https://registrar.okstate.edu/University-Catalog-Graduate-College

MISSION

The mission of OSUs Special Education program is to prepare effective, knowledgeable, compassionate, reflective professionals. Program graduates are effective educators who implement evidence-based practices, reflective professionals who value diversity and life-long learning, and knowledgeable advocates who support quality educational opportunities and experiences for all students.

OVERVIEW

OSUs Special Education Program is NCATE/CAEP accredited and prepares educators for careers working with students who have mild/moderate disabilities. The program offers graduate courses in special education for the Master of Science in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership (SPED option) and doctoral courses for the Doctor of Philosophy in Education (PES option with an emphasis in SPED).

Coursework in the special education program is designed to address critical issues within the field of special education. The coursework meets standards set by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) http://www.caepnet.org/ . The TLL-SPED program also includes courses provided by affiliate programs (e.g., literacy, math, science, school psychology).
PROGRAM PATHWAYS
(M.S. and Certification Only)

There are four distinct pathways within the special education program for candidates pursuing a M.S. degree in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership (SPED option) and/or Oklahoma Special Education Teacher Certification.

1) **4 + 1 Pathway:** This program is also called the Professional Program in Special Education (PPSE). It is designed for candidates enrolled as undergraduate candidates in Early Childhood, Elementary, or Secondary Education at Oklahoma State University (OSU) who wish to earn an M.S. and B.S. concurrently.

2) **Traditional Pathway:** The traditional program is designed for candidates who already have a Bachelor’s degree in Education and hold a teaching credential in their undergrad area of study. Traditional students successfully completed a student teaching experience during their undergraduate program and/or have at least 1 year of classroom experience as a traditionally certified teacher.

3) **Nontraditional Pathway:** This program is designed for candidates who are pursuing Oklahoma’s Boot Camp, paraprofessional, or other alternative pathway to Special Education teacher certification and/or have a Bachelor’s degree in a field other than in Education.

4) **Certification Only:** This pathway does not result in candidates earning a graduate certificate or a M.S. degree in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership (SPED option). The certification only pathway is for candidates completing only 18 hours of graduate level special education coursework to earn an Oklahoma special education teacher certificate. Students pursuing this pathway must have completed an OSDE approved Boot Camp in addition to earning 18 hours of graduate level special education coursework.

Candidates from all four pathways must meet all admission, program and degree requirements included in this handbook. It is important for all candidates to understand their pathway within the special education program. Candidates should contact the special education program coordinator for clarification and/or questions about the different pathways.
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)
(PhD in Education, Option: Professional Education (PES), Emphasis Area: Special Education)

Prospective students interested in pursuing a special education focused PhD should read the PhD in Education Student Handbook at https://education.okstate.edu/sites/default/files/peu/peu_phded_handbook.pdf

Students who choose to apply to the PhD program should select the Professional Education Studies option during the application process to the PhD in Education program. Visit the Graduate College at http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/ for additional information about the application process.

PhD students must complete the required common core, research courses, and dissertation hours listed in the PhD in Education Student Handbook and 9 cognate hours and 24 specialization hours. Special education specialization hours are listed below. See the PhD in Education Handbook for a complete list of required courses.

Special Education Specialization Courses
SPED 6183 Legal Aspects in SPED
SPED 6543 School and Interagency Collaboration
SPED 6603 Current Issues in SPED
SPED 6063 Research Topics in SPED
SPED 6563 Program Development in SPED
SPED 6743 Single Subject Design in Special Education
SPED 6880 Internship in SPED
SPED 6850 Directed Reading
SPED 5993 Culturally Responsive Teaching in SPED
EPSY 6333 Instructional Assessment and Consultation
EPSY 6323 Psychological Consultation
PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

Requirements
All prospective special education candidates wishing to earn an M.S.-TLL or complete 18 hours of course work for Oklahoma special education teacher certification must apply and be admitted to the special education program before beginning coursework. To be considered for admission to the special education program applicants must submit the following:

- Transcript(s) (*all graduate and undergraduate work already completed*)
- Resume
- Two professional letters of recommendation
- Professional goals statement (500-word)
- Nontraditional applicants who completed an OSDE boot camp before applying to OSU must include a copy of their boot camp completion letter/certificate during the application process.

Special education program faculty will review admissions materials once a month, make admissions recommendations, and assign a temporary advisor to admitted candidates. An interview with SPED program faculty may be required before admission to the special education program.

For admission without qualification applicants must have

- passed the OGET,
- earned at least a 3.0 undergraduate GPA (on a 4.0 scale), and
- 3.5 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) on graduate work already completed.

Applicants who do not meet these criteria but have a GPA of at least 2.75 – 2.99 can be considered for provisional admission. Applicants with a GPA of 2.5 – 2.75 can be considered for admission under strict academic probation.

Provisionally admitted candidates can take a maximum of nine credit hours during their first semester and they must earn at least a “B” in all courses during their first semester in order to continue in the Special Education program. Candidates admitted on a provisional basis will be reviewed for full admission after their first semester grades are posted. To be fully admitted the candidate must fulfill all stipulations of their provisional admission.

Candidates admitted under strict academic probation can take a maximum of nine credit hours during their first semester and they must earn at least a “B” in all courses during their first semester to continue in the program. Candidates admitted under strict academic probation will be reviewed for full admission after their first semester grades are posted. To be fully admitted the candidate must fulfill all stipulations of their provisional admission.

Potential special education program candidates who apply as a special student or non-degree seeking student will be allowed to complete a maximum of 9 credit hours in the special education program at OSU. Special and non-degree seeking students wishing to continue coursework beyond 9 hours must apply to the program and meet all admission requirements and deadlines.
Applicants can be denied admission for one or more of the following:

- failure to successfully complete an undergraduate degree;
- inadequate GPA;
- a grade of “D” or “F” in a graduate course or more than one “C” in graduate courses;
- professional goal statement that does not reflect mission of degree;
- academic misconduct or dishonesty for which there is documentation;
- presenting falsified or inaccurate information related to experiences on resume, transcripts, and/or professional goal statement; and/or
- unavailability of special education advisor.

Application Process

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. The review process can take 4-6 weeks during Fall and Spring semesters and/or longer during Summer semester. It is recommended that applicants submit their completed applications by the following dates when applying to the special education program. Submitting an application after the recommended submission date could delay program start date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Start Date</th>
<th>Submit Complete Application by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Last Friday of November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Last Friday of April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Last Friday of June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applications must be submitted online at [http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/content/application-process-0](http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/content/application-process-0)

Complete applications are reviewed during the third week of each month by special education faculty. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed or considered. Complete applications include:

- Transcript(s) *(all graduate and undergraduate work already completed)*
- Resume
- Two professional letters of recommendation
- Professional goals statement (500-word)
- Nontraditional applicants who completed an OSDE boot camp before applying to OSU must include a copy of their boot camp completion letter/certificate during the application process.

Applicants will be informed of the admission decision through email and/or posted mail. Applicants admitted to the program will be assigned a special education academic advisor who will counsel candidates regarding initial course enrollment and program requirements. Newly admitted students will have an automatic “advising hold” that will be lifted by the special education advisor after the initial advising meeting. Contact information for the special education advisor will be included in the admission letter sent to newly admitted students. It is the student’s responsibility to contact his/her advisor early enough to schedule an advising appointment and meet enrollment deadlines.
Financial Aid and Scholarships
There are numerous scholarships available for graduate students. Visit the following links for information about scholarships and financial aid options.

Scholarships and Financial Aid [https://financialaid.okstate.edu/](https://financialaid.okstate.edu/)
Scholarships and Financial Aid – Tulsa Campus [https://www.osu-tulsa.okstate.edu/financialaid/](https://www.osu-tulsa.okstate.edu/financialaid/)
College of Education Scholarships [http://education.okstate.edu/scholarships](http://education.okstate.edu/scholarships)
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

All candidates pursuing a M.S.-TLL (SPED option) must earn a minimum of 36 hours of coursework beyond a Bachelor’s degree and successfully complete a capstone course (SPED 5150), creative component (portfolio) and comprehensive exam. Students pursuing special education teacher certification must also fulfill certification requirements. Successful completion of a M.S.-TLL (SPED option) does not guarantee a special education teaching credential.

***All special education program candidates must meet with their special education advisor before enrolling in courses. Nontraditional certification and 4 + 1 candidates complete degree requirements according to timelines and sequences unique to their pathway. Failing to meet with the assigned special education advisor can delay graduation by as much as one academic year. ***

Degree coursework consists of:

**COMMON CORE (specific courses required of all TLL majors)**

- CIED 5053 Curriculum Issues
- CIED 5813 Educational Advocacy and Leadership

**RESEARCH AND INQUIRY (select one course)**

- CIED 5073 Pedagogical Research
- REMS 5013 Research Design and Methodology
- REMS 5953 Statistical Methods in Education

**PROGRAM CORE (specific courses required of all SPED candidates)**

- SPED 5683 Models of Instruction in the Inclusive Class
- SPED 5673 Improving Literacy Skills of Individuals with Disabilities OR approved reading course
- SPED 5743 Compliance, Planning, and Instruction in Special Education
- SPED 5150 Seminar in Special Education

**AREA OF EMPHASIS**

*Candidates taking less than 15 hours of coursework from Area of Emphasis may select, with advisor’s approval, up to 6 hours of coursework from the Electives section included on this degree sheet.*

- SPED 4723 Transition into Adulthood for Individuals with Disabilities
- SPED 5123 Characteristics & Teaching Methods for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- SPED 5620 Practicum with Exceptional Learners
- SPED 5623 Characteristics of Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities
- SPED 5783 Assessing Students with Disabilities
- SPED 5883 Classroom and Behavior Management
- SPED 5993 Culturally Responsive Teaching in Special Education

**ELECTIVES**

- EPSY 5103 Human Development in Psychology
- EPSY 5463 Psychology of Learning
- EPSY 5753 Psychoeducational Assessment of Pre-Schoolers
- EPSY 5853 Applied Behavior Analysis
- EPSY 5783 Psycho-Educational Testing of Exceptional Individuals
- EPSY 5793 Individual Intellectual Assessment of Children and Youth
- CIED 5143 Language Arts in the Curriculum
- CIED 5433 Reading and Writing in the Content Areas
- CIED 5423 Literacy Instr. in the Primary Grades
- CIED 5463 Reading Assessment and Instruction
SMED 5113 Knowing and Learning in Mathematics and Science
SMED 5253 Rational Number Concepts, Preoperational Reasoning, & Classroom Interactions
SMED 5273 Number Concepts and Assessment
SMED 5913 Geometry and Spatial Visualization
SMED 5923 Algebra and Mathematical Tasks
SMED 5933 Data and Probability
CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Earning a M.S.-TLL (SPED option) degree does not guarantee a special education teaching credential. Candidates (traditional and nontraditional) pursuing special education teaching certification (provisional, standard, alternative) should understand and follow guidelines established by the Oklahoma State Department of Education and OSUs Professional Education Unit. Candidates pursuing special education teacher certification should also understand “highly qualified” status requirements. Read the information at the following links for details about certification and highly qualified status.

OSU Professional Education Unit https://education.okstate.edu/peu

OSDE Teacher Certification http://sde.ok.gov/sde/teacher-certification

Nontraditional Route to Special Education Certification (Boot Camp Completers) http://sde.ok.gov/sde/non-traditional-route-special-education-teacher-certification

Frequently Asked Questions about Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers http://sde.ok.gov/sde/faqs/special-education-highly-qualified-teachers#1
PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Professionalism
All special education program candidates must maintain professional behavior and dispositions in all aspects of the program (e.g., coursework, meetings, practicum, peer interaction, advisement, tutoring, involvement with public schools, etc) while enrolled as a candidate at Oklahoma State University. Professionalism in general is the expectation that a candidate will abide by the policies, procedures and expectations outlined in this handbook, the code of student conduct, and academic integrity guidelines established by OSU. Professionalism also includes taking responsibility for one’s actions and communicating in a collegial, respectful, and ethical manner.

CAEP defines dispositions as “the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities that affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth.” The Professional Education Unit has additional dispositions information and assessment criteria available at https://education.okstate.edu/peu/disposition and https://education.okstate.edu/sites/default/files/peu/peu_dispositions_assessment.pdf.

All special education program faculty assume that special education program candidates have the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a high level of professionalism in all aspects of the program. Candidates are encouraged to meet with their advisor to discuss professional expectations and/or schedule and appointment with Career Services http://hireosugrads.com/StudentsAlumni/Appointment.aspx for assistance understanding and following discipline specific professionalism expectations and requirements.

Advising
The Advisor serves as the primary resource for the graduate student in planning coursework, explaining program requirements and identifying potential committee members for the candidate’s Advisory Committee. In the special education program, the advisor also serves as the chair of the candidate's Advisory Committee. The Advisor/Chair is responsible for reporting to the Advisory Committee on the candidate’s progress. The Advisor/Chair must be an OSU special education faculty member and hold an OSU Graduate Faculty appointment. Candidates are expected to play an active role in the advising process and meet with the advisor regularly to plan and monitor program progress and completion.

If it is determined that a graduate student and Advisor can no longer work together, and all efforts for conflict resolution within the program have been exhausted, it is the responsibility of the candidate to identify and secure a new Advisor in 30 calendar days. The Special Education Program Coordinator can assist with this process but there is no obligation on the part of the program, Graduate College or Oklahoma State University to provide a new advisor. Without an advisor, the candidate will not be eligible to continue in the special education graduate program.

Should a candidate's special education advisor leave OSU before the candidate completes his/her M.S. degree, the candidate will choose a new special education advisor and continue the special education program according to the approved plan of study (POS). If the candidate does not have an approved POS he/she will work with the new advisor to develop a POS. The candidate must secure a new advisor in 30 calendar days of learning that his/her advisor is no longer available.
Additional information related to advising can be found at the following links.

- Graduate Faculty Database: [https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/faculty-and-staff-resources](https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/faculty-and-staff-resources)
- Oklahoma State University Guidelines for Best Practices in Graduate Education [https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/best-practices](https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/best-practices)
- Best Practices: Advisory Committees and Defenses [https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/best-practices](https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/best-practices)

**Enrollment**

All special education program candidates are responsible for enrolling in coursework as delineated in the degree requirements, approved during the special education program advising process, and included in the approved POS. Candidates must follow enrollment timelines and procedures established by the Office of the Registrar. Candidates who choose not to follow enrollment guidelines risk delaying their planned graduation date by as much as one academic year. Go to [https://registrar.okstate.edu/Registration-and-Enrollment](https://registrar.okstate.edu/Registration-and-Enrollment) for helpful enrollment information.

The following requirements apply to all special education program candidates.

1. Graduate candidates must complete a minimum of six credit hours during each 12-month period to be continuously enrolled.
2. Special education program candidates are expected to maintain active status through continuous enrollment from the time they matriculate until they graduate. Withdrawal from classes and/or incomplete grades could result in failure to maintain active status.
3. Graduate candidates must be enrolled in a minimum of two credit hours during any semester they are utilizing University resources.
4. All graduate candidates are required to be enrolled in at least two credit hours the semester they graduate.
5. Candidates are expected to adhere to the enrollment regulations set forth by the Office of the Registrar and the Graduate College.

Special education program candidates are expected to maintain active status through continuous enrollment from the time they matriculate until they graduate. Candidates who are not able to maintain active status are strongly encouraged to consult with their program, advisor, and the Graduate College to determine whether requesting a leave of absence (LOA) is the most appropriate course of action. Candidates can learn more about LOA at [https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/leave-of-absence-policy](https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/leave-of-absence-policy)

**Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)**

All SPED candidates must successfully complete the online Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training by the second week of their first semester in the SPED program. The RCR is a training component of Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) used by Oklahoma State University. This online training program consists of a series of modules focusing on different aspects of RCR. At the end of each module is a short quiz. The results of each quiz are recorded and provided to candidates and to the Office of University Research Compliance. Candidates must earn a cumulative score of 80% to pass/complete the course. Candidates must submit their RCR completion certificate to their special education advisor by the second week of the semester. Failure to submit a RCR completion certificate by the recommended deadline could delay approval of the candidates POS and subsequent enrollment. Go
to [http://compliance.okstate.edu/rcr/training](http://compliance.okstate.edu/rcr/training) to learn more about RCR training. Download and follow the “Getting Started with CITI Training (Instructions)” to complete the RCR training.

**Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee shares the responsibility for reviewing the candidate’s progress and guiding the candidate toward completion of special education program requirements. SPED program candidates must form an advisory committee by the end of the second week of their second semester (excluding summer) or within the first 17 credit hours of the master’s program, whichever comes first. The duties of the advisory committee consist of:

1. advising the candidate in the selection of course work,
2. assisting the candidate in preparing a plan of study,
3. assisting in planning and developing the creative component (portfolio), and
4. supervising and evaluating the comprehensive exam.

The advisory committee is composed of a minimum of three faculty members holding graduate faculty membership at Oklahoma State University. The candidate’s special education advisor serves as the chair of the advisory committee. Candidates have the option of changing the membership of their Advisory Committee at any time. However, a written request for changing a committee’s membership must be initialed by all old and new committee members and submitted to the School Head and include a clear rationale. Pending the School Head’s signature, the appropriate form will be forwarded to the Graduate College. Forms for changing the members on Advisory Committees should be submitted electronically through the candidate’s my.okstate.edu

**Plan of Study**

Candidates working on a M.S.-TLL (SPED option) must have a POS approved by the Advisory Committee, School Head and Graduate College prior to the end of the second semester of enrollment (excluding summer). In order to facilitate timely approval of the POS students should submit their POS no later than the third week of their second semester (excluding summer). Failure to submit a POS by the third week of the second semester may delay enrollment for subsequent semesters. Candidates should visit [http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/faq-pos](http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/faq-pos) for FAQs about the Plan of Study.

The Plan of Study (POS) must include a minimum of 36 hours of graduate credit beyond the bachelor’s degree. A POS lists graduate courses already taken at OSU, approved transfer courses (9-hour maximum), courses currently enrolled in, and courses that will be completed to meet graduate degree requirements. Candidates must list the advisor/chair, members of the graduate advisory committee, program option, and expected graduation date on the POS. Candidates should use the advising sheet provided by their special education advisor to assist with POS completion. The proposed POS must be submitted online at [http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/planofstudy](http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/planofstudy).

All required approvals will be done electronically once the candidate has submitted a proposed POS. The Graduate College does not receive notification to review the submitted plan until it has been approved the Advisory Committee and School Head. Candidates will receive email confirmations throughout the process and can login to the system to check the approval status at any point. The POS will NOT be approved for candidates who failed to submit an RCR completion certificate.
A revised Plan of Study, a Graduation Clearance Form, and a Diploma Application must be filed with the Graduate College no later than the second week of the semester in which the candidate plans to graduate. Go to http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/masters-checklist for more information about graduation requirements and deadlines.

**Annual Review Process**
Special education faculty are required to monitor student progress through the program each year. The goal is to identify students encountering difficulties and provide support. The annual review process must be completed by March 15th of each year. Special education faculty/advisors will explain the annual review requirements and process to students during the initial advising session. Students are responsible for meeting any stated deadlines and providing complete information when requested.

**Service Learning**
The CORD program, sponsored by OSU’s Service-Learning Volunteer Center and the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs, honors those who have completed more than 300 service hours as a graduate student with an honorary orange graduation cord distinguishing them for their outstanding community service. Candidates should visit http://volunteer.okstate.edu/cord-program for more information about the CORD program. Special education candidates complete service learning hours as part of special education program coursework and are encouraged to apply those hours toward the CORD program.

**Practicum (Internship/Student Teaching/Field Experience)**
Practical experience is a valuable teaching tool that provides candidates with opportunities to instruct and interact with students with disabilities in K-12 public school settings. Many TLL-SPED candidates are full-time teachers with a wide range of experiences and we work to accommodate these practicum experiences within the candidate’s home school when appropriate. For candidates who are not full-time teachers, we locate high performing local schools that serve culturally and socioeconomically diverse populations. Practicum requirements vary based on program completion pathway and candidate’s certification status. Candidates are responsible for working with their special education program advisor to determine the appropriate practicum option(s).

All special education candidates completing a field placement must complete the application process with the PEU office and meet all requirements established by the PEU. Additional information about the PEU can be found at https://education.okstate.edu/peu

**Independent Study and Directed Reading Courses**
Independent study and directed reading courses provide opportunities for a candidate to pursue a topic of special interest that is not available through a regularly scheduled formal course. Candidates conduct research or complete projects, and meet periodically with a faculty member on a topic of mutual interest.

Special education graduate students can apply up to six hours of Independent Study and/or Directed Reading coursework to the POS. Candidates must get advisor approval, advisory committee approval and approval of the faculty member who will supervise the coursework. The candidate is responsible for
completing a Directed Reading Contract in collaboration with the supervising faculty member. The contract must be approved by the candidate’s advisor by the second week of the semester in which the course will be completed. Candidates who complete Independent Study or Directed Reading coursework without proper approval can be denied approval to count the hours toward the POS.

Capstone Requirements
All candidates earning a M.S.-TLL (SPED option) must complete special education program capstone activities. All candidates will enroll in a capstone course, SPED 5150 Seminar in Special Education, pass a comprehensive examination and complete a creative component (portfolio).

Creative Component (Portfolio)
All special education program candidates are required to complete a Creative Component (Plan II). Candidates must fulfill the creative component requirement by completing and submitting a special education portfolio. The portfolio will be a collection of candidate work collected across program courses then finalized and submitted during the candidates graduating semester. The candidate’s advisory committee will evaluate his/her creative component (portfolio), which at committee request can be presented in a public forum. A portfolio checklist and instructions will be provided during the candidates first advising meeting.

Comprehensive Exam
The special education comprehensive examination is administered each Spring and Fall semester. Candidates graduating during summer should complete the comprehensive exam during Spring semester. Dates for the comprehensive exam will be announced early each Spring and Fall semesters. Once exam dates are announced candidates must register online to take the exam. Candidates should take the initiative in communicating with their advisor and registering for the comprehensive exam at http://education.okstate.edu/masterscomp very early in the semester in which the candidate plans to take the exam. Candidates who fail to register for the comprehensive exam by the announced deadline could delay their program completion by one or more semesters.

At least two members of the candidate’s advisory committee will evaluate the exam. Should there be disagreement between committee member evaluations, a third member will evaluate the exam. The program coordinator will gather committee member evaluations and inform candidates of evaluation results as soon as possible (10-14 days) following the examination.

Candidates will earn an exam score of pass, fail, or pass with revisions (rewrites). Candidates who fail will be permitted to retake the exam at its next offering. The candidate must remain enrolled as a degree candidate for at least two semester hours per semester or six credit hours per year until the comprehensive exam is passed. Candidates who pass with revisions (rewrites) will be allowed to complete the revisions within five calendar days of receiving the initial exam score. Once the candidate submits the rewrites the advisory committee will evaluate the revised exam. If the revisions meet passing criteria the candidate will earn a passing score on the exam. If the revisions are deemed inadequate by the advisory committee the candidate must retake the exam at its next offering.

The following are suggestions and ideas to help prepare for the comprehensive exam. Candidates should also consult their advisor, before the comprehensive exam is distributed, for additional suggestions, procedures, and requirements.
1. Learn and use APA style.
2. Attend class, complete assignments, actively participate in discussion opportunities and ask questions.
3. Seek out learning opportunities such as conferences, workshops, professional development and service learning opportunities related to special education and teaching.
4. Organize ALL your class notes, texts, articles, and other materials, and look for major themes, names, and theories.
5. Read recent (last 5 years) journals related to special education and look for themes, current issues, ideas, trends and names.
6. Read books suggested in classes and/or by your advisor.
7. During the exam, develop clear arguments in your response that are well supported.
8. Get to the point fast and with evidence.
9. Be ready to critique ideas! Name names!
10. Your knowledge of authorities in the field is important. Also, be able to call on your own experiences and ideas.
PROGRAM POLICIES

All special education program candidates are expected to adhere to all program requirements, guidelines, policies and procedures included in this handbook. Graduate students can be dismissed from the special education program for failure to abide by program requirements, guidelines, policies and procedures. In such instances, the candidates will be notified of the intent to dismiss and informed of their rights for due process and appeal.

Academic Performance
1. Candidates must maintain an overall graduate GPA of 3.0.
2. No course with a grade of "C" or below can be used as part of the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the degree; therefore, candidates who earn a “C” in coursework will have to re-take the course and earn a grade of “B” or better for the credit hours to count toward earning the M.S. - TLL (SPED option) degree.
3. Candidates who earn a “D” or “F” in a course will not be able to continue taking courses until the course in which they earned the “D” or “F” is taken again and a grade of “B” or better is achieved.
4. Should a candidate earn two “F” grades at any time throughout the program, the candidate will be suspended from the program and can re-apply following one (1) academic year.
5. Special education program candidates are expected to maintain active status through continuous enrollment from the time they matriculate until they graduate. Withdrawal from classes and/or incomplete grades could result in failure to maintain active status.

Attendance
Special education program candidates are expected to attend all classes in accordance with the attendance policies and expectations provided by instructors and professors. Candidates who violate attendance polices and expectations risk earning a low or failing grade in courses. Repeated or excessive attendance problems and/or low or failing course grades could result in a candidate being placed on academic probation, academic suspension, or expulsion from the special education program.

Special education program candidates are expected to maintain active status through continuous enrollment from the time they matriculate until they graduate. Candidates who are not able to maintain active status are strongly encouraged to consult with their program, advisor, and the Graduate College to determine whether requesting a leave of absence (LOA) is the most appropriate course of action. Candidates can learn more about LOA at https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/leave-of-absence-policy

Academic Integrity & Student Conduct
Graduate students may be dismissed from the program for academic integrity violations, candidate misconduct or behavior that is deemed an egregious violation of professional behavior. In such instances, the candidate will be informed by the program of the intent to dismiss and their right for due process and to appeal. Once the decision of the appropriate appeals panel is made, it will be final.

Candidates should understand that grade appeals, and academic integrity appeals are governed by university policies and procedures that apply to all students, undergraduate and graduate. Candidates should carefully read the information about grade and academic integrity appeals to help determine if they wish to file an appeal.
Professional Integrity
Graduate students may be dismissed from the special education program for professional integrity violations. Professional integrity encompasses the expectations included in the “Professionalism” section of this handbook and all of the standards of behavior included the OSU student code of conduct.

Conduct & Conflict Resolution
Special education faculty want to establish and maintain a high level of service and responsiveness to candidates’ needs. Most issues and problems can be resolved in a reasonable and timely manner if all involved parties meet to discuss the conflict and possible solutions. Candidates should understand that most problems graduate candidates face have been experienced at one time or another by other candidates and professors. Many times, a practical solution to the problem already exists but candidates must bring up the problem so that program faculty are aware that it exists and can work with the candidate to find reasonable solutions.

If a candidate has a conflict with an instructor/professor the candidate should schedule a time to meet with the instructor/professor in person and try to find a resolution to the problem. If the candidate and instructor/professor are unable to find a solution the candidate should then make an appointment with the advisor to discuss the situation. If the advisor is involved in the conflict the candidate should make an appointment with the special education program coordinator. If the special education program coordinator is also involved in the conflict the candidate should contact the School Head for assistance.
HELPFUL LINKS

Survival Skills for Graduate Students
• PhDs.org Succeeding in Graduate School: How to Succeed in Graduate School: A Guide for Students and Advisors http://www.csee.umbc.edu/~mariedj/papers/advice.pdf
• Ten Simple Rules for Graduate Students: http://chem.virginia.edu/graduate-studies/test-links-pg/how-to-succeed-as-a-graduate-student/
• Your First Year in a Ph.D. Program: http://chronicle.com/article/Your-First-Year-in-a-PhD/142953/
• The Successful Graduate Student: A Review of the Factors for Success: http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/10569.pdf

Writing
• Writing Center, Stillwater https://osuwritingcenter.okstate.edu/
• Writing Center, Tulsa https://www.osu-tulsa.okstate.edu/tutoringservices/writing.php

Program
• College of Education http://education.okstate.edu/
• Special Education Homepage https://education.okstate.edu/sped
• Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) http://www.cec.sped.org/
• Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) http://caepnet.org/

Graduate College
• Graduate College: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/
• OSU Catalog: https://registrar.okstate.edu/University-Catalog
• Academic Calendar: https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/graduate-college-academic-calendar
• Fall/Spring/Summer Enrollment Guidelines: https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/enrollment
• Graduate Assistantships: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/assistantship
• Graduate College Academic Calendar: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/graduate-college-academic-calendar
• Graduate Degree/Certificate Programs: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/degree
• Graduate Faculty Database: https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/faculty-and-staff-resources
• Graduate Student Appeals Policy: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/content/appeals-policy
• Graduate and Professional Student Government Association (GPSGA) https://gpsga.okstate.edu/
• Graduate College Forms: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/FormsPage
• Graduate Student Appeals: https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/content/appeals-policy
• Graduation Checklist (Doctoral Degree): http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/doctoral-checklist
• Graduation Checklist (Master’s Degree): http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/masters-checklist
• International Teaching Assistant Test: https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/ita
• Leave of Absence Policy: https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/leave-of-absence-policy
• OSU Guidelines for Best Practices in Graduate Education: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/content/best-practices-graduate-education
• OSU Best Practices: Advisory Committees and Defenses: https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/best-practices
• Test of English Language Proficiency: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/telp

University
• OSU- Main Campus https://go.okstate.edu
• OSU-Tulsa Campus https://www.osu-tulsa.okstate.edu/index.php
• Career Services: http://www.hireosugrads.com/StudentsAlumni/
• Edmon Low Library: http://www.library.okstate.edu/
• Family Resource Center: http://reslife.okstate.edu/parent-portal/frc
• Health Insurance (Student): http://uhs.okstate.edu/student-health-insurance-plan
• Information Technology: http://www.it.okstate.edu/
• Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence: http://itle.okstate.edu/
• International Student and Scholars Office: http://iss.okstate.edu/
• International Students Arrival and Orientation: http://iss.okstate.edu/arrival-orientation
• Office of Multicultural Affairs: http://icae.okstate.edu/
• OSU High Performance Computing Center: http://hpc.it.okstate.edu/
• OSU Writing Center: http://osuwritingcenter.okstate.edu/
• Residential Life: http://www.reslife.okstate.edu/
• Responsible Conduct in Research Overview: http://compliance.okstate.edu/rcr/rcr-index
• Responsible Conduct Research Training: http://compliance.okstate.edu/rcr/training
• Seretean Wellness Center: http://wellness.okstate.edu/
• Services for Students with Disabilities: http://sds.okstate.edu/
• Student Affairs: https://studentaffairs.okstate.edu/
• Student Code of Conduct: https://studentconduct.okstate.edu/code
• The OSU Student Union: http://union.okstate.edu/
• University Counseling Services: http://ucs.okstate.edu/
• University Health Services: http://uhs.okstate.edu/
• University Parking Services: http://www.parking.okstate.edu/