BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL DOCTORATE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

PLEASE SEE BSU DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION WEBSITE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM POLICIES HANDBOOK FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION

www.bsu.edu
The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Special Education is designed to meet the needs of advanced graduate candidates seeking to assume leadership roles in special education in one or more of the following positions: higher education teacher educator; state/local school corporation special education administrator; special education manager; curriculum specialist; behavior specialist; and researcher/evaluator.

Upon successfully completing the program, the candidate will hold a doctor of education degree with a program emphasis in one of the following strand areas: Policy and Administration; Applied Behavior Analysis and Autism; Teaching and Learning – Low Incidence; Teaching and Learning – High Incidence; or General Special Education (i.e., general training emphasis rather than a specific disabilities or focused training emphasis).
Special Education Mission

The Ed.D. in Special Education has historically offered an advanced degree designed to meet the needs of advanced graduate candidates seeking to assume leadership roles in special education.

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) provides strand or focus area options based on faculty expertise and naturally existing/emerging areas in the field. Strands are designed to meet candidate interest and labor market needs/demands.
Special Education Philosophy

The doctorate degree represents the highest standards in academic and professional performance. The degree is bestowed upon candidates who have completed a course of study and who demonstrate skills in research and scholarship, written and oral communication, and a commitment to the professional standards and ethical practices established for the special education profession.

The Ed.D. in special education at Ball State University is committed to candidates’ professional development and emphasizes the ethical, standards, and guidelines established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).
Goals of the Doctoral Program

- Focus on core knowledge and skills for advanced professional practice
- Provide flexibility for candidates to develop specialized expertise in selected interest areas
- Emphasize scholarship and research in all courses
- Include options to adapt to changing regulatory statutes, professional standards, and new technology and knowledge
- Build on the strength and collaboration of faculty within the department and other departments
- Emphasize learning in the context of communities
- Encourage teaching and learning collaboratives
- Offered in a blended (online/main campus) format
Special Education Ed.D. Strand Area

- **Policy and Administration**

Focuses on candidates interested in policy areas related to disability public policy and laws and those interested in the administration and management of programs in special education.

Candidates are immersed in laws and policies that shape disability services and principles of organizational behavior that are applied to the administration of service delivery systems geared toward programs for persons with disabilities.

Candidates have the opportunity to expand their knowledge base in the area of administration and public policy. Many candidates choose to complete a cognate in the area of educational leadership and work to add the director of exceptional needs license to their IDOE professional education license.
Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Autism
Focuses on principles and theories related to applied behavior analysis and their applications with persons with autism.
Principles of behavior, behavior consultation techniques, and treatment/intervention strategies are core concepts and skills explored.
Candidates have the opportunity to earn certifications in ABA and Autism from Ball State University as well as working toward becoming National Board Certified in ABA as program options.
Special Education Ed.D. Strand Area

- **High Incidence: Teaching and Learning**
  Focuses on specific strategies and instructional approaches that are evidence-based related to teaching and learning for persons with high incidence disabilities.

Principles of assessment, instructional methods, accommodations, and intervention strategies used with individuals with mild disabilities are key concepts and skills presented.

Candidates have the opportunity to expand their teaching repertoire as they work with candidates with high incidence in special education settings. Teacher education preparation is also a focus of the program.
Low Incidence: Teaching and Learning

Focuses on specific strategies and instructional approaches that are evidence-based related to teaching and learning for persons with low incidence disabilities.

Principles of behavior, communication (including alternative and augmentative systems), accommodations, and treatment/intervention strategies used with individuals with severe and moderate disabilities are key concepts and skills presented.

Candidates have the opportunity to expand their teaching repertoire as they work with candidates with low incidence in special education settings. Teacher education preparation is also a focus of the program.
Special Education Ed.D. Strand Area

- **Special Education General**

  The Special Education General strand is designed to meet the needs of advanced graduate candidates seeking to assume leadership roles in special education in one or more of the following positions in higher education: teacher educator, special education manager, and curriculum specialist and researcher/evaluator.

  Upon successfully completing the program, the candidate will hold a doctor of education degree with a noncategorical major in special education degree, i.e., with generic training emphasis rather than a specific disabilities training emphasis.
Application Process for the Graduate School and the Special Education Department

- Submit an application for admission at the doctoral level to the BSU Graduate School (applications can be done electronically at http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/teachers/departments/special/academics/lastdegree/howappgradprog)
- Submit four to five satisfactory professional recommendations
- Submit copies of official transcripts from previous institutions attended showing graduation from accredited institutions of higher learning with degrees awarded
- Submit a letter of interest with autobiography highlighting experiences working with individuals with disabilities, professional experiences, area of interest with potential research focus
- Submit GRE scores (GRE scores older than five years are not acceptable) and TOEFL scores (for international candidates)
- Documented two or more years of successful teaching or appropriate professional experience
- Interview with the department’s doctoral committee
Application Process Graduate School Criteria

- Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate School.
- An applicant must also hold a master’s degree from an accredited institution, have two years of successful documented appropriate professional experience, have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.2 on a scale of 4.0 at the master’s level, achieve acceptable composite scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) general test (typically scores at or above the 50+ Verbal and 40+ Quantitative percentile range),
- TOEFL scores for international candidates where required per the BSU Rinker Center for International Programs,
  
  Please note: International candidates should contact Ball State’s Rinker Center for International Programs to determine eligibility status. This program offers courses in a blended format (online/main campus) and might not have sufficient main campus coursework for international students.
- All applicants must be recommended by the department’s advanced graduate studies committee.
Doctoral Degree Requirements

- Candidates must complete at least 90 hours of graduate work beyond the bachelor’s degree. At least 40 hours, excluding dissertation hours, must be in the major (SPCE). A minimum of 48 of the required 90 hours must be completed at Ball State University.

- Candidates must complete a minimum of 10 hours of dissertation credits (DISS 799) and a maximum of 28-30 dissertation hours may be counted toward a candidate’s program of study.

- Doctoral candidates must complete a rigorous research component and will be expected to demonstrate competency with research tools applicable to their major areas. The required research tools (statistical methods EDPS 641 and 642) will be determined by the candidate’s doctoral committee and included on the candidate’s program of study.
Candidates are required to have either a single cognate field consisting of a minimum of 24 hours or two cognate fields consisting of a minimum of 15 hours each. For the 15-hour cognate, 9 hours must be taken at Ball State University; 12 hours of the 24-hour cognate must be taken at Ball State University.

Cognates are available in all major fields of study for the doctor degree. Cognates at Ball State University are offered in a variety of departments and program areas. Candidate’s cognate concentration area/s is selected based on the area of interest, career and degree goals. Candidates are to work with their doctoral committee chairperson in exploration and selection of their cognate area/s.
The candidate’s committee is appointed after the candidate has been admitted to study for the doctoral degree—usually during the first year of doctoral work. Until the committee has been appointed, the departmental program director will serve as the candidate’s program advisor.

Upon the recommendation of the departmental program director, the dean of the Graduate School will appoint the candidate’s committee. The committee will consist of either four or five voting members depending on the candidate’s program of study. All committees will consist of two members from the candidate’s major area and an at-large member from a field or department not already represented on the committee. The rest of the committee will be structured as follows:

Program with Cognate(s)—a voting member will be appointed for each cognate on the individual candidate’s program of study.

The committee chairperson will represent the candidate’s primary area of study.

In consultation with the candidate the committee will determine the candidate’s plan of study and guide the candidate’s dissertation. The plan of study will be filed in the departmental office of the candidate’s major area and the Graduate School.
Stages of Doctoral Completion

Stage 1. Completion of the master’s degree or its equivalent.

- Requires completion with at least a 3.2 cumulative grade point average (GPA) at Ball State University or another university that is accredited by its regional accrediting agency. Students who have already completed a master’s degree equivalent to that awarded by the major department are considered to have completed the first stage of the doctoral program unless the department stipulates otherwise.

- Each academic unit that is responsible for a doctoral program will have a procedure to evaluate a student’s progress during this stage. This evaluation will take place no later than the end of the second year to determine if the student is making satisfactory progress, and will be communicated in writing to the student. The evaluation is determined by the major department and could include, but is not limited to, an examination or other appropriate review that must be successfully completed before entering Stage 2.
Stage 2. Admission to Candidacy

- Requires the completion of all course work and fulfillment of any special departmental requirements (e.g., additional language examinations, if any), the passing of the comprehensive examinations, and approval of the dissertation proposal designate the end of Stage 2 (see below for specific information regarding requirements for the comprehensive examinations).

- Completion of this stage is referred to as Admission to Candidacy for the degree. Enrollment in credits for dissertation hours is permitted only upon the completion of this stage. If the foregoing requirements are not met, the student may be admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree on probation, or the privilege of further study leading to the doctoral degree may be denied.
Stages of Doctoral Completion

Stage 3. Dissertation Completion

- Activities are related to the research, writing, and final oral defense of the dissertation. During this stage, all doctoral candidates must be registered for a minimum of 3 credits each semester, except during the summer terms, until the final approved copies of the dissertation are deposited in the Graduate School, all credit hours for degree conferral have been completed, and the residency requirement has been fulfilled. If not registering for a course or courses, the doctoral candidate will register for a minimum of three (3) hours of DISS 799. A doctoral candidate in an externally accredited program that requires an internship experience is exempt from continuous enrollment while registered for internship credit.

- The culmination of Stage 3 is degree conferral. No later than the first four weeks of the last semester before graduation, candidates must file an application for graduation with the Graduate School. Applications may be submitted online at http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/gradschool.
Residence Requirement

- Each doctoral candidate must fulfill a residency requirement at Ball State University. The minimum requirement for residency is the completion of at least 15 semester hours in two consecutive semesters of graduate work beyond the master’s degree.
- The residency encourages the doctoral candidate to concentrate on course work or research; it permits close collaboration with faculty and candidates; it fosters a familiarity with the university’s libraries, computing resources, specialized collections, and other unique campus facilities.
It is important that doctoral candidates be current in their field of study when they graduate. Therefore, after a candidate has been admitted to a doctoral program and has taken at least one approved course, all requirements for the degree must be met within a seven-year period (7 years). Any courses required for the degree taken before admission to a doctoral program are subject to approval by a candidate’s doctoral committee. Evidence of current knowledge in the area may be required.

Upon the recommendation of the department chairperson and with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, an extension of the time allowed may be granted for one additional year. Extensions are based on academic considerations and are limited. The candidate requesting the extension of time allowed may be required to repeat preliminary examinations, to take additional course work, or both.
Satisfactory Graduate Grade Point Average (GPA)

- At all times after completing 9 hours of doctoral study, a candidate must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.2 for courses taken toward the doctoral degree. Candidate’s cumulative GPA is reported and monitored as part of the Ed.D. Decision Point Process within the Department of Special Education.
Comprehensive Examination

- Near the time course work is completed, each doctoral degree candidate will take a comprehensive examination in his or her major and cognate area(s). Administration and evaluation of the examinations are the responsibility of the department or, at the discretion of the department, a candidate’s doctoral committee, hereafter referred to as the examining committee. The examining committee will determine with the candidate, well in advance of the examination, the course work and other preparation appropriate to the candidate’s program of study to be represented in the examination. The examinations will be offered each academic semester, the time and place to be determined by the administering department or academic unit.

- While the departments and academic units that house each doctoral program will determine the comprehensive examination format that is most appropriate for each respective discipline, all comprehensive examinations must meet the following general guidelines:
Comprehensive Examination

1. The examinations consist of two parts, one written and one oral.

2. The written examination will be taken during one week; exceptions must be approved by the program director and the candidate’s doctoral committee. The oral examination will be taken within three weeks (exclusive of vacation periods) of the written examination.

3. The examining committee will be made up of a minimum of four members of the regular graduate faculty and will evaluate the candidate’s performance. The examining committee will decide if the candidate’s written examination is of sufficient quality to proceed to the oral examination.

4. After completion of the oral examination, the committee decision for the entire examination (oral and written) will be either “pass” or “fail.” A candidate may pass the entire examination with one dissenting vote. However, if two or more committee members dissent, the candidate fails the entire examination.

5. The examining committee chairperson will send written notification of the outcome of the comprehensive examination to the candidate and the Dean of the Graduate School after the completion of the oral examination.
Comprehensive Examination

- In the case of a failed comprehensive examination (see definitions below), the examining committee chairperson’s written notification will include a statement of the reason or reasons for the failure and the time specified before the next examination.

- A failed comprehensive examination is defined as one of the following: 1) failure of both the written and oral portions; 2) failure of the written portion if the examining committee determines that the candidate should not proceed to the orals; or, 3) failure of the oral portion if the examining committee determines that the candidate was unable to correct deficiencies in the written portion.

- A failed comprehensive examination may be repeated only one time. The committee members who administered the first examination will also administer the retest. A candidate who fails to pass the second examination is ineligible to continue and is dismissed from the doctoral program.

- If more than seven years have elapsed after the candidate successfully completed the comprehensive examinations, the candidate must retake the entire examination.

- Exceptions to the above guidelines must be approved in advance by the Dean of the Graduate School.

- At the completion of the comprehensive examination the Department of Special Education’s Rubric for Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations will be completed by the committee chair, working with the full committee. A copy of the rubric will be provided to the director of the doctoral program and the original will be placed in the candidate’s file. In addition, the committee chair will complete the Graduate School’s Status of Comprehensive Exams form. A copy will be provided to the director of the doctoral program and a copy will be placed in the candidate’s file. The original will be sent to the Graduate School.
Doctoral Dissertation

The general supervision of the dissertation will be the responsibility of the candidate’s committee chairperson. When needed, members of the committee will advise the candidate about the dissertation. The comprehensive examinations must be passed and the dissertation topic approved by the committee before the candidate enrolls for dissertation (DISS 799). The dissertation for a doctor of education degree candidate typically will be a study that will contribute to the solution of some important educational problem.

After the dissertation defense the final approved copy, any accompanying materials, and a 100- to 150-word abstract must be filed with the Graduate School electronically at www.bsu.edu/gradschool. Please see the following Graduate School links:

- [http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/gradschool/preparing-for-graduation](http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/gradschool/preparing-for-graduation)
Doctoral Dissertation

Although the department concerned has the responsibility for determining the manual or form to be followed in writing the dissertation, such matters typeface, spacing, and professional typing standards must follow the specifications in Graduate School Requirements for Writing a Dissertation, available online at http://www.bsu.edu/gradschool. Dissertations will be microfilmed through University Micro films, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, for which service the candidate will pay a fee, plus a fee of $55 if a copyright is sought. Such fees are to be paid by money order only at the time the candidate submits the completed dissertation to the Graduate School office.
Once the final dissertation is completed the candidate will work with his/her chair to distribute the final dissertation for full committee review. The chair of the committee will notify the committee and send an electronic copy of the dissertation (zipped file suggested) to committee members. The committee chair will schedule a meeting with the full committee within 3 weeks of sending the final dissertation for committee review unless something prohibits moving forward with the dissertation defense meeting. The dissertation defense meeting allows committee members to hear a presentation concerning the dissertation study by the candidate and allows for committee questions. The presentation of the dissertation defense is open to the public. The candidate’s question and answer portion of the dissertation defense is not open.
Typically the dissertation defense format is as follows:

1. Introductions and welcome with statement of meeting purpose
2. A closed meeting with the committee to discuss issues or concerns
3. An open meeting with the candidate and the committee with the dissertation presentation
4. A closed session with the committee and candidate focused on questions and answers
5. A closed meeting with the committee to discuss and vote. Three of the four, or four of the five committee members must vote yes for the candidate to pass the dissertation defense.
Final Dissertation Defense

- At the completion of the dissertation defense the department dissertation defense scoring rubric will be completed by the committee chair, working with the full committee. A copy of the rubric will be provided to the director of the doctoral program and the original will be placed in the candidate’s file. All other Graduate School forms are to be signed at the time of approval of a candidate’s dissertation defense. This includes a finalized Plan of Study Check Sheet with any course substitutions with committee signature and date. This final check sheet is filed with the Graduate School and a copy needs to be provided to the director of the doctoral program for the candidate’s file.

- All candidates for the doctoral degree are required to successfully complete an oral defense covering the dissertation, in defensible, final form, administered by their doctoral committee. The time and place of the defense will be announced at least 10 days in advance. No defense will be given without all committee members present, unless prior consent is granted by the Dean of the Graduate School in consultation with the chairperson of the examining committee and the absent committee member.
Final Dissertation Defense

- Two dissenting votes among members of the examining committee are required to fail a candidate. If one member of the examining committee dissents, the dissenting examiner and, if appropriate, the chairperson of the examining committee will file with the Dean of the Graduate School a letter detailing the circumstances of the dissent.

- If the candidate has failed the defense, the examining committee must prepare a report including reasons for failure and requirements to be met. The examining committee chairperson must file this report with the Dean of the Graduate School within seven days from the date of the defense. Permission to defend for a second time must be obtained from the chairperson of the doctoral committee and the Dean of the Graduate School. Failure to pass the second defense will result in termination of doctoral study.

- Upon passing the final dissertation defense, the candidate will be formally recommended to receive the degree. Candidates must complete all degree requirements at least four weeks before the end of the semester or term in which they are certified for graduation. In a term that does not end with a commencement ceremony, all degree requirements must be completed at least two weeks before the close of the term.

- Special cases involving policies not covered in the Graduate Catalog will be submitted to the Graduate Education Committee for consideration and action. In general, the candidate's program committee has jurisdiction, but candidates may appeal adverse decisions impacting their progress toward a graduate degree.
Assistantships

- Doctoral candidates once accepted into the program, may apply and be selected to receive a stipend for the academic year and remission of tuition. Candidates must work 20 hours per week, be enrolled in at least 6 hours during the semester or 3 hours during the summer, and maintain a 3.2 grade point average. Assistants are paid a stipend, tuition is waived, and students pay only the student service fees. For information and an application for an assistantship in the Department of Special Education please contact Karla Carmichael at kcarmichael@bsu.edu or call 765-285-5700.

- Also see - http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/teachers/departments/specialed/academics/mastdegre/assistfinsup
For Additional BSU Graduate School Information:

Ball State University
The Graduate School
Address:
   2100 West Riverside Avenue
   Ball State University
   Muncie, Indiana 47306
Phone:
   (765) 285-1297
Please see BSU Graduate Catalog:
   cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/gradschool/academics/graduatecatalog
For Additional BSU Special Education Department Information:

- **Address:**
  Department of Special Education
  Ball State University
  Muncie, Indiana 47306

- **Phone:**
  (765) 285-5700

- **Fax:**
  (765) 285-4280

**Director of the Doctoral Program:**
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(765)-285-5715
Thank you for your interest in the doctoral program in the Department of Special Education at Ball State University. We welcome the opportunity to assist you in any way with the application process and we look forward to receiving your application materials!

Please see the BSU Department of Special Education website for additional information and the **Doctoral Program Policies Handbook** for important information!!