The Department of Educational Studies of SUNY New Paltz offers master’s degrees in Special Education. Teacher candidates pursue a program of study in Early Childhood Special Education (Birth – Grade 2), Childhood Special Education (Grades 1-6), or Adolescence Special Education (Grades 7-12).

Applicants with initial certification in Childhood Education 1-6 will complete 36 credit hours of course work. Upon successful completion of the program, teacher candidates are eligible for NYS Education Department initial certification in Childhood Special Education 1-6.

The following initial certification is accepted for admission to the Childhood Special Education program:

- Childhood Education 1-6

Admission Requirements
You must submit:
- A completed graduate school application.
- Evidence of initial certification.
- One official transcript of all undergraduate and graduate work providing evidence of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution with at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
- A typed statement that describes your educational aspirations, experiences in working with students in educational settings, and how the Master’s program in Early Childhood Special Education will help you achieve your personal and professional goals. The response should be 300-400 words in length. The special education faculty will examine the writing sample with respect to content, clarity and organization of ideas, grammar, and style.
- Satisfactory GRE scores.
- Three letters of professional recommendation written on professional letterhead.

All letters must:
1. Be dated and current;
2. Address how long the writer has known you and in what capacity;
3. Two letters should be written by faculty with whom you have taken a college level class. These letters of reference should address your academic performance and your ability to successfully complete a rigorous graduate program in Special Education. We prefer that these letters come from full-time faculty at a college or university.

4. One letter should be written by one of the following individuals: a student teaching supervisor, a cooperating teacher, an administrator in a school, or a supervisor in an agency that is related to education. This letter of reference should address your ability to work with young children.

Application Procedures

Students may select to apply online or via paper application. Review of applications begins on April 1st for the fall semester and November 1st for the spring semester. Late applications may be considered; however, applicants should contact the graduate coordinator before submitting their application.

To apply, submit the following items to the Graduate School in ONE COMPLETE PACKET:

1. A signed application (paper applications) or a signature page (online applications)
2. All undergraduate transcripts, including schools with transfer credits in sealed envelopes
3. One essay stating intent and objective of your graduate studies
4. Three letters of recommendation in sealed envelopes
5. Satisfactory GRE scores
6. Evidence of a valid NYS teaching certificate

If you have questions about the application process or the programs offered, may contact the Graduate School at (845) 257-3947 or gradschool@newpaltz.edu.

Application Deadlines

- Fall and Summer Admission: April 1
- Spring Admission: November 1

Program Requirements

- Complete the prescribed course work and other requirements within five years after matriculation.
- Maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better, with no more than two grades below B-.

Curriculum Requirements / 36 credits

The Childhood Special Education program consists of 36 credit hours, 30 credit hours are core courses and 6 credit hours are electives.
Required Courses
- SPE700 Educating Special Learners (5 credits)
- SPE701 Educational Assessment of Learners with Disabilities (5 credits)
- SPE702 Teaching Math, Science and Technology in Inclusive Classrooms (3 credits)
- SPE703 Research in Special Education (3 credits)
- SPE731 Literacy and Social Studies Instruction for Childhood Learners with Disabilities (5 credits)
- SPE732 Learning Environments for Childhood Learners with Disabilities (3 credits)
- SPE733 Practicum in Childhood Special Education (6 credits)

Elective Courses
- Elective in Diversity (3 credits)
- Elective in Collaboration (3 credits)

Additional Requirements
- This program is field-based. As a result, a significant amount of your teacher preparation program will be conducted with students in the professional field under the supervision of cooperating teachers. The required practicum is offered during the spring and fall. Summer practicum is available to those meeting certain criteria. This is important to consider in planning your program since working in the field demands that you have time available to spend in schools, clinics, and classrooms. This may necessitate an adjustment of your daily schedule. You must have a 3.0 average in graduate courses in order to enroll in the practicum course, SPE733.
- Deadlines for practicum application forms are available in the Educational Studies Office, Old Main Building 108.

Graduation Requirements
- Certification Exam
- In order for SUNY New Paltz to recommend a student for certification you must pass the Students with Disabilities Content Specialty Test.

For course descriptions, please click COURSES.