

# **M.S. SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2017 – 2018**

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*This handbook is intended to be read in conjunction with the Graduate Catalog: <http://catalog.tamucc.edu/index.php> and the College of Graduate Studies Handbook [http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/current\\_students/masters\\_students.html](http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/current_students/masters_students.html).*

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## SECTION I. MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM FACULTY

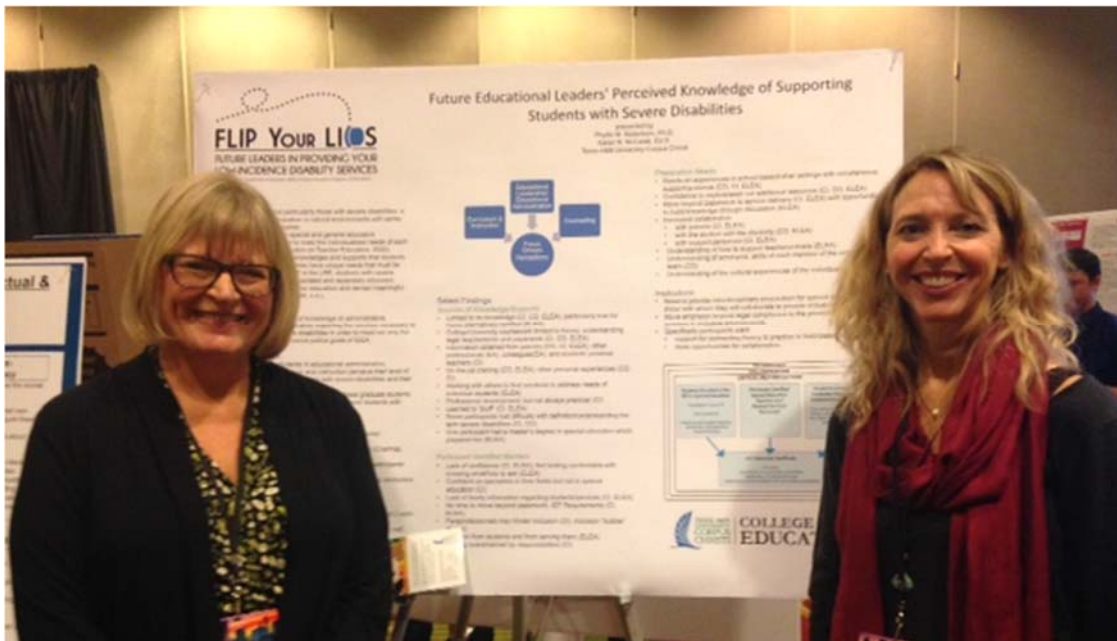
Welcome to the M.S. Special Education program!

Our M.S. in Special Education degree provides students with an eclectic program in special education that interfaces theory and pedagogy from both the special education and English learner education fields. Students receive specialized training that is unique and specific to the needs of students receiving special education services, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Students learn instructional methodology to address the needs of students with high-incidence and low-incidence disabilities. Areas of instruction include domains such as: cognitive, communicative, behavioral, social, and functional. Students also receive training in consultation, collaboration, and family system support areas.

We encourage you to engage fully in your learning experience. Collaborate with classmates, connect with your instructors, and intentionally participate in the many activities and opportunities that you will encounter during your professional journey.

We look forward to working with you to pursue your educational goals!

*TAMUCC Special Education Program Faculty*



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## SECTION II. FACULTY & STAFF



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### **Ms. Maria Gonzalez**

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### SECTION III. LEARNING OUTCOMES

One of the primary goals of the M.S. in Special Education degree is to provide students with an eclectic program in special education that interfaces theory and pedagogy from both the special education and English learner education fields. Students receive specialized training that is unique and specific to the needs of students receiving special education services, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Students learn instructional methodology to address the needs of students with high-incidence and low-incidence disabilities. After successful completion of the program, our students will:

- demonstrate knowledge of individuals with disabilities;
- evaluate the needs of individuals with disabilities;
- demonstrate knowledge of fostering learning and development for individuals with disabilities;
- demonstrate knowledge of foundations of special education and professional roles and responsibilities of the special education educator; and
- develop a behavior intervention/change plan.



## **Program Admission Requirements**

- Complete Application:
- Apply for Admission via [Apply Texas Application](#)
  - An applicant may defer admission to an earlier/later semester. Applications are valid for one year. One deferral is allowed per application.

- Application Fee:
- \$50 for US citizen, \$70 for International Students
    - Pay during application process
    - Pay fee online: [Pay Online](#)
    - Pay fee on campus to [Business Office](#)

Please Note: Applicants who wish to apply for a different program will be required to submit a new application. The application processing fee is required for each application submitted.

- General Requirements:
- Official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate course work taken at any accredited college or University attended (Foreign College credits/transcripts require an official foreign evaluation.) TAMU-CC transcript is not required.
  - Essay (Approximately 300-400 words in length which includes information about their reasons for pursuing graduate study and for choosing this specific graduate program).

\*Please allow 3-5 business days to receive Student ID before submitting additional supporting documents.

Submit all supporting documents [online](#).

- Additional International Applicant Requirements:
- Copy of current Visa (if applicable)
  - English Language Proficiency. TAMUCC currently accepts the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) within the last 2 years :
    - Official TOEFL score minimum paper-based score of 550 or internet-based score of 79-80
    - Official IELTS score minimum 6.5

**Program Admission Deadlines**

Domestic Students:

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer I</b>	<b>Summer II</b>
July 15	November 15	April 15	May 15

International Students:

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer I</b>	<b>Summer II</b>
May 1	September 1	February 1	February 1

**Admission Review Process/Timeline**

Program applications are reviewed by program faculty. Admission decisions are typically made within one week of the program’s receipt of application materials.

**SECTION IV. ACADEMIC PROGRESSION**

**Program Degree Requirements**

The M.S. in Special Education prepares educators to gain advanced expertise in culturally and linguistically responsive special education services to support students with both high-incidence and low-incidence disabilities. Theory and pedagogy from special education and English learner education are combined.

In conjunction with the Special Education Master's Degree, opportunities are available to earn additional credentials:

**Educational Diagnostician Certification**

The Educational Diagnostician certificate program can be taken concurrently with the M.S. in Special Education degree program or alone by a certified teacher who has a graduate degree. This coursework prepares students to assess and diagnose learning difficulties of students.

To be eligible for the Educational Diagnostician program, the student must be a certified teacher. To be certified as an Educational Diagnostician, the student must have an educationally relevant master’s degree, successfully complete up to 33 semester hours for Educational Diagnostician Certification, and pass the required TExES exam.

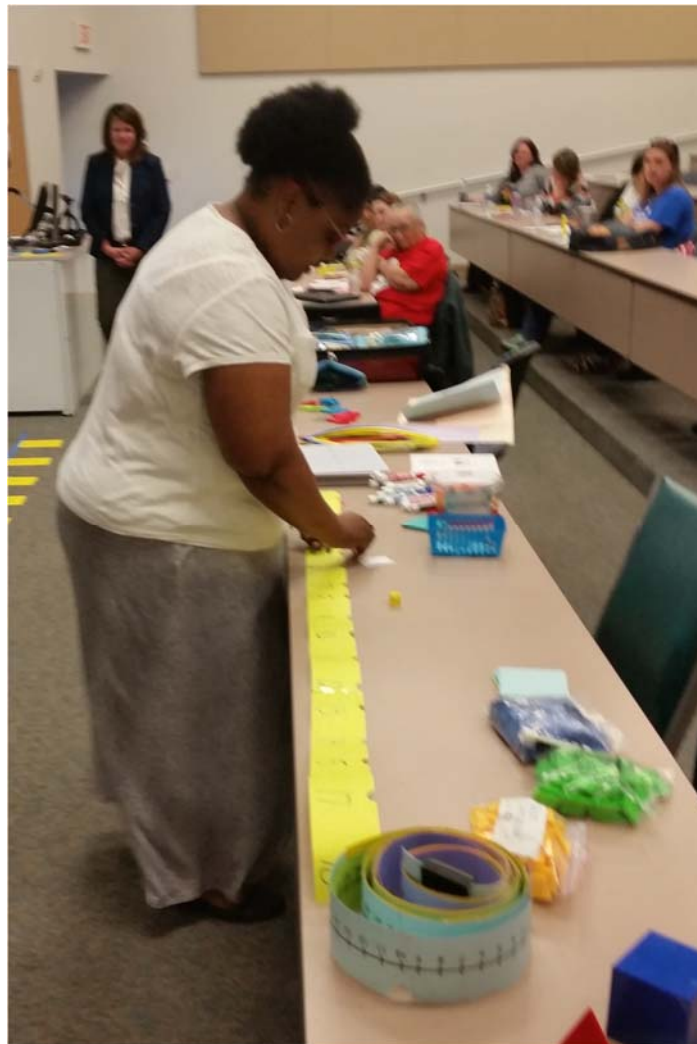
**Low-Incidence Disabilities Transcribed Certificate**

The Low-Incidence Disabilities (LID) Transcribed Certificate is an interdisciplinary program which prepares graduate students to address and support students with significant support needs through evidence-based practices. This 3-course

certificate is offered to educators in the field of special education and other related disciplines, such as: counseling, psychology, general education, and education administration.

To receive a low-incidence disabilities transcribed certificate, the student must complete 9 semester hours of coursework consisting of the following 3 courses in sequence:

- SPED 5319 - Introduction to Low-Incidence Disabilities
- SPED 5320 - Application of Learning Principles
- SPED 5321 - Supporting Access for Students with Low-Incidence Disabilities





## Graduate Advisory Committee

Upon admittance to the program, students will be assigned a faculty advisor. Students must meet with their advisor to develop their graduate degree plan.

## Degree Plan

All M.S. Special Education students must successfully complete no less than 36 semester credit hours to include: 9 semester credit hours of Foundation Courses, 15-21 (depending on past course work) semester credit hours of Core Courses, and 6-12 semester credit hours of Elective Courses which can include the educational diagnostician certificate option or the low-incidence disabilities certificate option.

	<b>Foundation Courses</b>	<b>SCH 9</b>
EDFN 5301	Introduction to Research	3
BIEM 5345 or BIEM 5346	Developmental Linguistics Pedagogic Implications of Bilingual-ESL	3
SPED 5385	Foundations in Language Minority Special Education	3
	<b>Core Courses</b>	<b>SCH 15-21</b>
SPED 5315*	Individuals with Exceptionalities in the Schools	3
SPED 5320**	Application of Learning Principles	3
SPED 5340	Individuals with Multiple Disabilities	3
SPED 5380	Students with Behavior Disorders	3
SPED 5386	Reading and Language Strategies for Students with Exceptionalities	3
SPED 5387	Content Area Strategies for Students with Exceptionalities	3
SPED 5397 (for non-ed diag students)	Special Education Field Experience	3
SPED 5399 (for ed diag students)	Individualized Programs for Students with Disabilities: Practicum	3
	<b>Electives</b>	<b>SCH 6-12</b>
	Students may choose the educational diagnostician coursework, the low-incidence disabilities certificate, or other relevant electives.	
<b>Ed Diag. Cert. Courses</b>		
SPED 5310	Psychoeducational Testing	3
SPED 5311	Advanced Assessment	3
CNEP 5371	Psychometrics	3
CNEP 5374	Individual Intelligence Testing	3
<b>LID Cert. Courses</b>		
SPED 5319	Introduction to Low-Incidence Disabilities	3
SPED 5321	Supporting Access for Students with Low- Incidence Disabilities	3

- \* Required course for students who have no certification or endorsement in special education
- \*\* If not pursuing the LID certificate option, SPED 5320 may be waived if student took SPED 4335 as an undergraduate

Electives. Elective courses are to be selected in consultation with faculty advisor.

Ed. Diag. Cert. SPED 5310 requires the following prerequisites: CNEP 5371 & CNEP 5374  
 SPED 5399 requires the following prerequisites: CNEP 5371, CNEP 5374, SPED 5310, SPED 5311, SPED 5315, SPED 5387.

LID Cert. SPED 5319, SPED 5320, and SPED 5321 (in sequence) are required for the LID Transcribed Certificate.

All COURSES APPLICABLE TO THE MASTER'S DEGREE MUST BE NO MORE THAN SEVEN (7) YEARS OLD.

### **Culminating Event/Exit Requirements**

Comprehensive Examination

In addition to successful completion of all courses required for graduation, all students are required to pass a comprehensive written examination taken during their final semester of enrollment.

## **SECTION V. COURSE OFFERING SEQUENCE**

The M.S. in Special Education program consists of a minimum of 36 semester credit hours. Students may pursue the Educational Diagnostician certificate, the Low-Incidence Disabilities (LID) transcribed certificate, or choose other relevant electives – in consultation with their advisor - as part of their specially designed degree plan. Students must work with their faculty advisor to develop the degree plan scope and sequence.

The following course schedule is tentative. Course offerings may vary by semester. Check the catalog each semester for course offerings and additional information.

	<b>Foundation Courses</b> 9 Semester Credit Hours	<b>SCH</b>	<b>FA</b>	<b>SPR</b>	<b>SU I</b>	<b>SU II</b>
EDFN 5301	Introduction to Research	3	X	X		X
BIEM 5345 or BIEM 5346	Developmental Linguistics or Pedagogic Implications of Bilingual-ESL	3 3		X		X
SPED 5385	Foundations in Language Minority Special Education	3				X

	<b>Core Courses</b> 15-21 Semester Credit Hours	<b>SCH</b>				
SPED 5315*	Individuals with Exceptionalities in the Schools	3	X	X		
SPED 5320	Application of Learning Principles	3		X		
SPED 5340	Individuals with Multiple Disabilities	3			X	
SPED 5380	Students with Behavior Disorders	3		X		
SPED 5386	Reading and Language Strategies for Students with Exceptionalities	3	X			
SPED 5387	Content Area Strategies for Students with Exceptionalities	3		X		
SPED 5397	Special Education Field Experience	3		X		
SPED 5399	Individualized Programs for Students with Disabilities: Practicum	3	X			
	<b>Program Electives</b> 6-12 Semester Credit Hours	<b>SCH</b>				
	Students may choose the educational diag coursework, the low-incidence disabilities certificate, or other relevant electives.					
<b>Ed Diag. Cert. Courses</b>						
SPED 5310	Psychoeducational Testing	3		X		
SPED 5311	Advanced Assessment	3		X		
CNEP 5371	Psychometrics	3	X	X		X
CNEP 5374	Individual Intelligence Testing	3	X			
<b>LID Cert. Courses</b>						
SPED 5319	Introduction to Low-Incidence Disabilities	3	X			
SPED 5321	Supporting Access for Students with Low-Incidence Disabilities	3			X	

## SECTION VI. PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION

**Student Organizations.** Students are encouraged to fully participate in our University organizations and professional field. Our University hosts Chapter #328 of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society ( <http://pkp.tamucc.edu/index.html> ). The Graduate Resource and Opportunity Workspace (GROW), through the College of Graduate Studies, provides professional development activities, resources, and events for graduate students.

**Program/College Awards.** The College of Graduate Studies sponsors annual awards including the Outstanding Master's Student Award.

**Conferences to Attend.** Students are encouraged to attend and present at local, state and national conferences. Conference attendance and proposal submissions are discussed and supported throughout the program courses. Funding support may be available.



*We are looking forward to our journey together!*