PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The primary objective of Special Education is the education and training of professional educators to serve children and youth who have exceptional challenges and require specialized support through educational, social, cognitive, rehabilitative, and/or behavioral management approaches to attain their maximum learning potential. In line with this primary objective, Special Education sees its role as contributing leadership in the areas of theory; assessment; understanding differences among children and youth with disabilities; the development and implementation of curriculum and intervention strategies; the improvement of teacher-teacher, teacher-child, and teacher-parent relationships; and the integration of special education into total school programs.

The graduate candidates for master's degree and certificate of advanced study degree programs may choose one of several sequences of study leading to certification that provide the preparation required by the Connecticut State Department of Higher Education, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and the Council for Exceptional Children. They may pursue a program leading to a Connecticut Initial Educator Certificate in teaching children and youth with disabilities in grades K through 12 (Comprehensive Special Education endorsement), or a cross-endorsement certificate in comprehensive special education when certification in classroom teaching has already been earned.

INITIAL EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

SEQUENCE OF COURSES

The following list of courses is designed to reflect the current plan of study required by Fairfield University for Connecticut certification as an initial educator in comprehensive special education (51 credits). To be considered for an initial certificate and/or to receive an institutional endorsement from the Connecticut Department of Education, a candidate must successfully complete all coursework in the planned program, pass all PRAXIS assessments and the Foundations of Reading Test required by the state for the intended certification, and pass the program's Comprehensive Examination in Special Education.

The program for those seeking an initial certificate in special education is designed so that candidates first earn a Master of Arts degree (30 credits). During the final semester of the M.A. degree program, candidates complete an abbreviated application to be considered for admittance into the SYC program. Faculty then determine whether candidates are academically and dispositionally eligible to pursue the initial certificate and the SYC. The first 21 credits of the SYC program may be taken in such a way to fulfill requirements for initial certification. Candidates who complete the requirements for initial certification prior to completing all requirements for the SYC may request an endorsement for certification prior to fulfilling the balance of the SYC requirements.

PROGRAM FOR MASTER OF ARTS (MA) ONLY AND FOR MA LEADING TO INITIAL CERTIFICATION (30 CREDITS)

- SE 400 Augmentative, Alternative Communications and Assistive Technologies
- SE 403 Psychoeducational Issues in SE
- SE 411 Introduction to Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ID)
- SE 413 Theories of and Introduction to Learning Disabilities (LD)
- SE 417 Introduction to Children and Youth with Emotional Disturbances (ED)
- SE 419 Special Learners in the Bilingual/ESL Classroom
- SE 429 Fundamentals of Reading and Language Development – Part I
- SE 432 Management Techniques in SE
- SE 500 Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): Theories and Interventions
- SE 529 Fundamentals of Reading and Language Development – Part II
- SE 99 Comprehensive examination in SE

PROGRAM FOR SIXTH YEAR CERTIFICATE (SYC) ONLY AND FOR SYC LEADING TO INITIAL CERTIFICATION

(21 CREDITS TO COMPLETE INITIAL CERTIFICATION)

- SE 534 Skill Development for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)
- SE 537 Curriculum Planning, Methods and Strategies for Students with Exceptional Learning Needs
- SE 550 Collaboration and Consultation for the Special Educator
- SE 561 Diagnostic and Evaluation Procedures in SE

REQUIRED FOR THE INITIAL CERTIFICATION

- SE 593 Student Teaching in SE (6 credits)
- SE 594 Student Teaching/ Practica Seminar

Candidates are eligible to request an endorsement for the IC after successfully completing the MA degree, the above SYC courses, successfully passing the SE PRAXIS II #5543, and the Foundations of Reading test. Candidates pursuing a SYC only are ineligible to take SE 593, but will instead take two courses in consult with their advisor.

Fairfield University

Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions
CROSS-ENDORSEMENT CERTIFICATION
AND MA IN SPECIAL EDUCATION CROSS ENDORESEMENT PROGRAM

Only candidates holding a teaching certificate in another state-approved area are eligible for the cross-endorsement in special education. Candidates must pass the appropriate state-mandated Praxis II examination and Foundations of Reading Test prior to taking SE 594, SE 591, or SE 592. Cross-endorsement in special education is 33 credits and is in alignment with the state of Connecticut guidelines in that courses in each of the following content areas specified under the current Connecticut state cross-endorsement must be taken.

PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

• SE 411 Introduction to Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ID)
• SE 413 Theories of and Introduction to Learning Disabilities (LD)
• SE 417 Introduction to Children & Youth with Emotional Disturbances (ED)
• SE 500 Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): Theories and Interventions

DIAGNOSIS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

• SE 561 Diagnostic and Evaluation Procedures in SE

PROGRAM PLANNING AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

• SE 534 Skill Development for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF TEACHING CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

• SE 429 Fundamentals of Reading and Language Development – Part I
• SE 537 Curriculum Planning, Methods and Strategies for Students with Exceptional Learning Needs

TWO PRACTICA IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SEMINAR (SE PRAXIS II AND FOUNDATIONS OF REACHING TEST – MUST BE PASSED PRIOR TO PRACTICA)

• SE 591 Practica in SE
• SE 592 Practica in SE
• SE 594 Student Teaching/Practica Seminar

Although XE and MA degree courses can be taken concurrently, students must earn the XE prior to the MA degree.

REQUIRED MA DEGREE COURSES

The MA degree with cross-endorsement requires the candidate to pass the Comprehensive Exam (SE 099) and take SE 419, SE 529 and one additional course determined in consult with the student’s advisor.

RESEARCH AND PRACTICA

Original research is encouraged throughout the program. Fairfield students have shared their observations and findings in discussions with other students and in presentations at professional conferences. Some recent student projects have included: flowchart analysis to guide program planning for students with disabilities, bilingual education services and bilingual students with special needs; European versus American services for students with disabilities; expertise of special educators; analyzing learning and study strategies, etc.

TEACHER INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS (PAID INTERNSHIPS)

The internship for certified and non-certified teachers provides an opportunity for novice teachers and those considering re-entry into the profession to have a year’s experience in a public school setting while pursuing either a master’s degree or a certificate of advanced study. During the internship year, interns assume a variety of responsibilities that vary according to their placement. Each semester, interns attend a weekly seminar that focuses on issues pertinent to their internship experiences. In return for the intern’s service, the school district deposits up to $15,000 with Fairfield University. The amount is banked for interns to draw upon for courses taken at Fairfield University toward their degree. The intern gains valuable hands-on experience while helping to defray a major portion of his or her tuition costs for the degree being pursued.

For more information about applying for an internship please contact internship@fairfield.edu.

GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Dr. Deborah Edelman
Phone: 203-254-4000, ext. 3236
E-mail: dedelman@fairfield.edu

Dr. Edelman serves as the contact person for questions about the program.

For a complete faculty listing, see www.fairfield.edu/gseapfaculty.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for a master’s degree must hold a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university (or the international equivalent) and give promise of meeting the standards set by the school.

FORMAL ADMISSION PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed when they are fully complete. Submit the application and all supporting materials well in advance of the semester for which you are applying to allow for application review and program availability.

Students seeking admission must complete and submit the following online:

1. A completed application. (Apply online at www.fairfield.edu/geapp.)
2. A non-refundable $60 application fee.
3. A professional résumé. Applicants are required to submit a current résumé that includes employment and educational history.
4. A personal statement. Students should describe why they want to undertake graduate studies in the program for which they are applying.

5. Official transcripts from all universities/colleges attended. We generally expect applicants to have a minimum undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.0. Any applicant whose undergraduate GPA is lower than 2.67 must request and receive a GPA waiver from the department. Waivers are granted on a case by case basis and may require supplemental undergraduate coursework to increase the undergraduate GPA and/or earning a B or better in two or more approved graduate-level courses. All foreign transcripts must be evaluated by an approved evaluating service. A list of approved evaluators is available at [www.fairfield.edu/eval](http://www.fairfield.edu/eval). Students may be required to take one or more English writing courses if their writing skills do not meet graduate level standards. Upon the granting of a GPA waiver, an approval form signed by the Department and the Dean’s office will be placed in the student’s file. Candidates who are granted a GPA waiver and are admitted must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 to be permitted to continue in the program. Candidates applying for admission to a certification program should note that Connecticut State certification program standards for formal admission to an approved initial educator certification program require candidates to possess a minimum undergraduate cumulative grade point average of B- (2.67 on a 4.0 GPA scale), unless an approved GPA waiver form documents that a waiver was granted.

6. At least two recommendations. Suggested recommendations include your undergraduate or graduate professors, your major advisor, your work supervisor, or a professional in the field that you wish to study who knows you. Note that recommendations from friends or co-workers are not accepted.

7. The Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions requires passing scores for the Praxis Core Test or a waiver of the requirement based on appropriate SAT, ACT, GRE or PAA scores. For a waiver, provide an electronic copy of your test scores from ETS uploaded to the application file. If students provide their social security number to Educational Testing Services (ETS) [www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis) when registering for the Praxis Core exam, the reported score will automatically be uploaded to their Fairfield application file. Our code is 3390.

8. Participate in an admissions interview (applicants are notified regarding an interview after a paper review of their credentials.)

9. All international students whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in the English language by taking either TOEFL or IELTS exams. For admission to the graduate school, a TOEFL composite score of 550 for the paper test, 213 for the computer-based test, 84 on the internet-based test with a minimum score of 21 in reading and 23 in writing is required. An IELTS score of 7.5 is required. Scores must be sent directly from the Educational Testing Service (TOEFL) or [www.IELTS.org](http://www.IELTS.org). Fairfield’s ETS code is 3390.

Submit transcripts and any other documents that cannot be uploaded to:

Fairfield University
Office of Graduate Admission
Kelley Center
1073 North Benson Road
Fairfield, CT 06824

**BACKGROUND CHECK AND FINGERPRINTING**

In compliance with Connecticut state law effective July 1, 2010, applicants whose programs of study will require participation in school-based field experiences (e.g., observations, practica, student teaching, internships, etc.) must undergo State and National criminal history background checks before beginning their program of study. The regional educational service centers (RESCs) that are authorized to conduct fingerprinting services and provide the background check results to the Connecticut State Department of Education and local school districts are listed at [www.fairfield.edu/documents/admission/ga_fingerprinting.pdf](http://www.fairfield.edu/documents/admission/ga_fingerprinting.pdf).

University students who have a history of a federal or state conviction may be barred from participating in school-based field work and may be exited from their degree program, depending on the nature of the conviction. Confirmation of fingerprinting at a RESC must be received by the Dean’s office (Canisius 102) prior to course registration.

The background check is valid for 3 years if the student remains an active student. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain documentation of current fingerprinting on file with the dean’s office. Students whose background check has expired will not be permitted to register for courses. Note, too, that school districts and other clinical sites may have more stringent requirements and may mandate a new background check prior to students beginning a placement.

**MANDATORY IMMUNIZATIONS**

Connecticut State law requires each full-time or matriculated student to provide proof of immunity or screening against measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chicken pox), meningitis and tuberculosis. Certain exemptions based on age and housing status apply. Matriculating students are defined as those enrolled in a degree seeking program. More detailed information and the required downloadable forms are available online at [www.fairfield.edu/immunization](http://www.fairfield.edu/immunization). Completed forms should be submitted directly to the Student Health Center. Although this is not required to complete an application, you must provide proof of immunity/screening prior to course registration. Please consult your private health care provider to obtain the necessary immunizations. Questions may be directed to the Student Health Center: (203) 254-4000 ext. 2241 or e-mail health@fairfield.edu.

**NON-MATRICULATED STUDENT STATUS**

Under our Non-Matriculated Status option, qualified students may take two or three courses (depending on the program of study) before gaining admission to a degree or certification program. This option provides a wonderful opportunity for qualified students to explore degree options and to confirm personal goals and readiness for graduate study. Qualifications to be considered include a bachelor’s degree (required) and other qualifications related to your preparedness for graduate-level studies in the field of interest to you. Successful completion of coursework does not guarantee formal admission.

Individuals enrolled as non-matriculated students are not eligible for any tuition and/or financial support.

**NON-MATRICULATED ADMISSION**

Qualified applicants who have not completed the formal admission process may apply for permission to enroll as a non-matriculated student and earn up to 6 credits in a certification program and up to 9 credits in a non-certification program.
For non-matriculated admission, use the following procedure:

1. Please call the GSEAP Dean’s office at (203) 254-4250 to be directed to the advisor for the program that interests you.
2. Schedule an appointment.
3. Obtain a copy (official or unofficial) of your transcripts that shows the degrees you have earned. You will need to bring your transcripts with you to the University to be reviewed. International students must submit certified English translations and course-by-course evaluations, done by an approved evaluator (found on our website at www.fairfield.edu/eval), of all academic records.
4. Complete the online admission application at least 24 hours in advance of your appointment and pay the $60.00 application fee at www.fairfield.edu/applynow.

MAXIMUM CREDITS ALLOWED BEFORE FORMAL ADMISSION

The total number of credits earned before formal admission to a program (i.e., the total number of transfer credits plus any credits earned as a non-matriculated student) may not exceed 6 (six) credits for applicants to certification programs or 9 (nine) credits for applicants to non-certification programs.

TUITION/FINANCIAL AID

Academic Year 2016/2017
Tuition: $725 per credit hour

A graduate education can provide countless professional and personal rewards in the future. However, the costs associated with earning a master’s degree may be challenging. Many students need to look beyond their own financial resources or the resources of their employer for assistance. There are many ways to finance a graduate education, including graduate assistantships, federal direct loan programs and our Veterans Pride Program, which are all discussed at www.fairfield.edu/gradfa.

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

Advisors from the Office of Financial Aid are committed to helping students find the options that best suit each of their needs. We encourage all Fairfield University graduate students to contact the Financial Aid office with any questions or to make an appointment to speak with a counselor.

FINANCIAL AID CONTACT INFORMATION
Phone: (203) 254-4125
Fax: (203) 254-4008
E-mail: finaid@fairfield.edu

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE OPERATIONS
Days: Monday-Friday
Hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Location: Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J. Center

MORE INFORMATION

ADMISSION QUESTIONS
Questions about the application process should be directed to the Office of Graduate Admission.
Phone: (203) 254-4184
Fax: (203) 254-4073
E-mail: gradadmis@fairfield.edu

OFFICE OPERATIONS
Days: Monday-Friday
Hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Location: Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J. Center

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND ALLIED PROFESSIONS WEBSITE
www.fairfield.edu/gseap

ONLINE CATALOG

For detailed course descriptions and other University information, please refer to our online catalog www.fairfield.edu/catalogs.

For gainful employment disclosures, see www.fairfield.edu/gainfulemploy.