Master’s of Special Education
Educational Diagnostician

Program Handbook

College of Education
Department of Language, Literacy and Special Populations
Sam Houston State University
Huntsville, Texas 77341
936.294.1108

Masters of Education Program Handbook
Certification Programs
**Program Overview**

The general goal of the masters degree program in special education is to prepare for professional educators with advanced competencies related to the field of special education. Students are prepared to practice in accordance with the Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics and Standard practices for Texas Educators adopted by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Educational Diagnostician certification and Generic Special Education are offered in conjunction with a Masters in Education.

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Sam Houston State University

Sam Houston State University, located in Huntsville, Texas, serves one of the most diverse populations of any educational institution in the state. The university is committed to the development of its creative resources so that it can adapt to the changing educational needs of its constituency while maintaining the highest quality in the traditional curricula. Created by the Texas legislature in 1879 as Sam Houston Normal Institute its purpose was to train teachers for the public schools of Texas. During the following four decades, instruction was offered in the natural sciences, agriculture, home economics, manual training, geography, sociology, and foreign languages. The baccalaureate degree was first awarded in 1919.

The next twenty years witnessed rapid and dramatic changes, including a name change to Sam Houston State Teachers College in 1923. Two years later, the college was admitted to membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) as an accredited institution of higher learning. The institution began to expand its programs, and a graduate degree was authorized in 1936, a development which expanded the curriculum from its sole emphasis on teacher training to emphasis on preparation in a variety of fields.

Following World War II, an increase in students and faculty as well as a wide range of faculty-research activities provided impetus for the emergence of a multipurpose institution. By 1960, about 25 percent of the graduating seniors were receiving degrees in fields other than teaching. Degrees were offered in the social and communication sciences; the biological, physical, and soil sciences; business administration; the fine arts; the humanities; and education. A growing emphasis on research allowed faculty to make significant contributions in their fields beyond the classroom, and these activities were accompanied by an increasing diversity in the student body as more out-of-state and foreign students began seeking degrees at Sam Houston. In recognition of these developments, the institution’s name was changed by the Texas legislature to Sam Houston State College in 1965, and in that year the Texas legislature established as an integral part of the institution The Institute of Contemporary Corrections and the Behavioral Sciences.

During the following years, there was a rapid increase in the enrollment of students with diversified backgrounds, interests and aspirations, which necessitated continuous examination of programs, faculty, and facilities. The number of graduate degrees conferred increased significantly in the late 1960’s, and the Texas legislature, recognizing the changes that had taken place during the course of the institution’s history, changed the name of the institution to Sam Houston State University in 1969.

In the decade of the 1970s and 80s, the university continued to expand its offerings to keep pace with its dynamic environment by adding degree programs in such fields as computer science and environmental science. New graduate degrees, such as the Master of Library Science, the Master of Fine Arts, the Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice, and the Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Leadership were added. Significant improvement in faculty credentials and growth in faculty research activities accompanied these additions. Currently Sam Houston State University, a member institution of the Texas State University System, is organized academically into five colleges: Arts and Sciences, Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, Business Administration, and Criminal Justice. Candidates are offered an extensive range of bachelor and master’s degrees, as well as the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Criminal Justice and the Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Leadership. The university is recognized regionally, nationally, and internationally for the quality of its faculty and programs.
Masters of Special Education Degree Program Goals and Objectives

The College of Education has as its logo “Enhancing the Future Through Educator Preparation”—through programs dedicated to collaboration in instruction, field experience and research the candidates in SHSU’s Educator Preparation acquire the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary to create a positive learning environment. Employing a variety of technologies these candidates learn to plan, implement, assess, and modify instruction in order to meet the needs of our communities’ diverse learners. Within this framework the following goals and objectives were established for the special education masters program.

Mission

Our program's mission is to develop reflective practitioners with depth and breadth of knowledge in the theories, research, methods and strategies of effective instruction in the least restrictive environment for learners with special needs.

Goals

Our goals are to develop:

1. **Learner-centered knowledge** where the practitioner possesses and draws on a rich knowledge base of content, pedagogy, and technology to provide relevant and meaningful programs and services for all students.

2. **Learner-centered assessment and instruction** where the practitioner collaboratively uses non-discriminatory assessment results to plan, and assesses instruction to create a learner-centered community in the least restrictive environment.

3. **Equity in excellence for all learners** where practitioner collaborates with other professionals to plan and recommend programs and instructional methods for diverse groups of learners.

4. **Learner-centered communication.** While acting as an advocate for all students and the school, the teacher demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills.

5. **Learner-centered professional development.** The practitioner is dedicated to all students' success and demonstrates a commitment to learn, to improve the profession, and to maintain professional ethics and personal integrity.
Objectives

The SHSU Special Education Masters Degree Graduate will demonstrate strengths in three strategic teaching competencies: knowing the concepts, principles, research, and discourse of the special education profession; applying this knowledge to improve inclusive teaching practice, and possessing a disposition that reflects an appropriate ethical stance and professionalism. Specifically, we want our graduates to:

1. know the theories and research of the field of special education and apply them to improve instruction for learners with special needs;
2. apply scientifically based instructional practices;
3. know and use appropriate assessment tools with individuals and apply the results to develop appropriate instructional strategies with diverse learners, preschool through adult;
4. use technology to manage professional responsibilities and to support learning and teaching;
5. work collaboratively with children, parents, administrators, and colleagues;
6. advocate for the rights of children and adults with disabilities;
7. serve as change agents through professional involvement and advocacy;
8. be reflective practitioners;
9. demonstrate a high level of professionalism and a commitment Council For Exceptional Children’s Code of Ethics.
KNOWLEDGE (Develop a comprehensive knowledge base, professional dispositions, and the skills that enable them to be effective instructional leader) aligns to:

1. Know the theories and research of our field and apply them to improve instruction for students with Exceptional Learning Needs.
2. Be reflective practitioners

TECHNOLOGY (Use technology to create an authentic learning environment that promotes problem-solving and decision making) aligns to:

1. Use technology to support learning and teaching of students with exceptional learning needs.

COMMUNICATION (Use effective communication skills with a diverse group of stakeholders) aligns to:

1. Know and use the discourse of our profession
2. Work collaboratively with students, parents, administrators, and colleagues
3. Advocate for the rights for all children
4. Demonstrate a high level of professionalism, a commitment to academic honesty, and a joyful enthusiasm for learning

ASSESSMENT (Demonstrate an understanding of assessment as an on-going process so as to become effective evaluators of children, programs, and themselves) aligns to:

1. Know and use appropriate assessment tools with individuals, groups, and for identification and program effectiveness
2. Demonstrate the ability to assess, evaluate, and design school and district level special education programs

FIELD EXPERIENCE WITH DIVERSE LEARNERS (Demonstrate an ability to teach and/or mentor a variety of learners and/or peers in diverse settings using culturally responsive and learner sensitive instruction) aligns to:

1. Know and use appropriate instructional strategies with diverse learners, preschool through adult
2. Know and develop effective individualized education plans for students with exceptional learning needs. Programs
3. Serve as change agents through professional involvement
Each candidate in an advanced program for teachers or other school professionals:

1. Demonstrates ability to be understanding, respectful and inclusive of diverse populations. (CF 3; CF 5)
2. Demonstrates an attitude of reflection and thoughtfulness about professional growth and instruction. (CF 1)
3. Demonstrates a commitment to literacy, inquiry, and reflection. (CF 1; CF 4)
4. Practices ethical behavior and intellectual honesty. (CF 3)
5. Demonstrates thoughtfulness in communication and an awareness and appreciation of varying voices. (CF 3)
6. Demonstrates a commitment to adapting instruction or programs to meet the needs of diverse learners. (CF 5)
7. Demonstrates knowledge of second language acquisition and a commitment to adapting instruction or programs to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. (CF 3; CF 5)
8. Leads diverse learners to higher level thinking in cognitive, affective and/or psychomotor domains. (CF 5)
9. Uses assessment as a tool to evaluate learning and improve instruction for all learners. (CF 4)
10. Demonstrates a commitment to using technology to create an authentic learning environment that promotes problem-solving and decision making for diverse learners. (CF 2)

The Educational Diagnostician Program at Sam Houston State University consists of a 36-hour course of study leading to a Master of Education Degree in Special Education and certification as an Educational Diagnostician.

Admissions Procedure

The first step in the process is to apply for Graduate Studies at Sam Houston State University. To do this, go to [http://www.shsu.edu/~grs_www/SpecialEducation.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~grs_www/SpecialEducation.html) and complete the application for Graduate Studies at the ApplyTexas website [https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX](https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX). Have all transcripts mailed to the Coordinator of Graduate Studies, P.O. Box 2478, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas 77341-2478

1. For regular admission, you must have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher in your last 60 hours of coursework.
2. Visit the website [http://www.shsu.edu/~grs_www/SpecialEducation.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~grs_www/SpecialEducation.html) for the instructions for your two recommendations and writing sample instructions.

3. You may register for and take 2 classes during one semester under "Conditional Admission." During this semester, you are not eligible for financial aid. If you are successful in your classes, you can be fully admitted with letters of recommendation from all instructors.

4. Schedule advisement after you receive your letter of approval for admission. Your faculty advisor will be assigned and listed on your letter of admission.

5. Work toward your Master's Degree in Special Education, following the course sequence for Educational Diagnostician. There is limited enrollment in advanced testing classes.

6. It is very helpful to register during early registration (available after your first semester). Otherwise, some classes are filled (particularly those at the University Center); others are cancelled if there is not sufficient enrollment.
   - Note that some courses have strict prerequisites, and there is a specific sequence for testing courses:
     - SPED 5305: prerequisites SPED 5302
     - SPED 6310: prerequisite SPED 5305
     - SPED 6312: prerequisite SPED 6310 or concurrent enrollment (taken during the final semester of your program)

7. You must apply for graduation by the following times:
   - in early April for December graduation
   - in early October for May graduation
   - in late February for August graduation

8. Before graduation you need to pass written and oral comprehensive examinations. To apply to take comprehensive examinations, contact the graduate secretary in the Language, Literacy and Special Populations Office at 936.294.4045 at the beginning of the semester in which you expect to graduate. Due to faculty vacations and absences during the summer, oral comprehensive examinations are scheduled only during the Spring and Fall. You must be enrolled during the semester when you take your oral exams.

9. Many students are employed as educational diagnosticians during the Practicum, SPED 6312. This course is taken at the end of your program and it is recommended that all coursework be completed prior to SPED 6312.

10. The TExES for Educational Diagnosticians is a rigorous examination that is taken during the last semester of coursework.

11. Review for the TExES for Educational Diagnosticians and a sample examination are scheduled during SPED 6312. You apply for certification as an Educational Diagnostician after completing the program and passing the Educational Diagnostician TExES and completing all coursework.
12. Open your computer account. Upon acceptance into the program, you will receive an e-mail with your username and a link to follow to activate your computer account. *NOTE: This e-mail will be sent to your primary e-mail address you listed on your application.* So make sure it is valid beforehand. Once you click on the link, follow the on-screen prompts to activate your account. Be sure to set up your account and SAM Mail since instructors often communicate with students before classes begin via SAM Mail.

### Graduate Studies Admission Criteria

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
2. Application through ApplyTexas institution.
3. A 3.0 GPA (4.0 scale), on last 60 hours of coursework before earning the bachelor's degree or at least 2.5 GPA on all previous college studies (some programs require higher GPA).
4. Two letters of recommendation
5. Writing sample
6. State required immunizations.
7. An applicant who does not meet the requirements for admission may qualify for conditional admission for one semester only. (No conditional admission for international students). If you do not enroll during the semester of conditional admission then you will need to obtain regular admission status before beginning the program during another semester.

### Advising Procedures

An advisor will be assigned upon receipt of your application to Graduate Studies in the Department of Language, Literacy and Special Populations. Your letter of acceptance will provide the name and contact information for your advisor. Communicate with your advisor regularly to assure that no surprises occur in your program scheduling. Keep your advisor informed of any changes in your email or mailing address. If you do not check your SHSU email account daily you need to have your account forwarded to the address you check most frequently—call the help desk at 936.294.1150 for assistance. Each graduate student is responsible for becoming familiar with the rules and regulations pertaining to graduate study and the requirements for advanced degrees.
Educational Diagnostician Practicum Experience

Program Completion and Practicum: The final semester of the candidate’s program will entail their demonstration of professional competencies in a school setting. An on-site mentor and a university supervisor will judge the performance of the candidate. The final compilation of the diagnostician portfolio will take place during this period.

Practicum requirements are uniquely designed to prepare personnel for the challenging role of the educational diagnostician. Each practicum and internship requires a combination of assessment and in-class experiences including actual testing experience, in-class activities, and assignments. Students are responsible for securing their own practicum experience site.

1. Practicum assignments are based on SBEC and CEC guidelines (attachment).

2. In-class and out of class assignments constitute approximately 150 hours of preparation, testing, and analysis of assessment data.

3. All experiences and internship requirements must be approved by a university supervisor.

4. General criteria for satisfactory performance in the internships are provided in the individual course syllabi.

Program Standards

Each course syllabus indicates on the standards matrix which state and national standards are addressed in that course. Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Knowledge and Skill Base for all Beginning Educational Diagnosticians Standards, State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) Standards for Educational Diagnostician Certificate and Special Education Standards are included in this handbook. Candidates should become familiar with these sets of standards.
The courses for the Educational Diagnostician Program are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPED 5301</td>
<td>Education of Individuals with Disabilities <strong>Online Course, fall &amp; spring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 5302</td>
<td>Assessment in Special Education <strong>Face-to-Face, fall &amp; spring</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 5303</td>
<td>Study of Cognitive and Low Incidence Disabilities <strong>Online Course, spring &amp; summer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 5304</td>
<td>Teaching Learners with Mild/Moderate Disabilities <strong>Online Course, fall &amp; spring</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 5305</td>
<td>Individual Tests of Intelligence <strong>Face-to-Face, fall, spring, &amp; summer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6304</td>
<td>In-Home Training and Family Issues <strong>Online Course, summers only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6305</td>
<td>Study of Behavioral Disorders in Children <strong>Online Course, fall &amp; spring</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6307</td>
<td>Behavior Change and System Support <strong>Online Course, spring &amp; summer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6308</td>
<td>Practicum and Methods in Special Education <strong>Hybrid-meets monthly, fall &amp; spring</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6310</td>
<td>Assessment of Young Children &amp; Low-Incidence Pops <strong>Face-to-Face, fall, spring, &amp; summer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6311</td>
<td>Seminar in Special Education <strong>Online Course, summers only</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 6312</td>
<td>Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians- <strong>Hybrid-meets monthly, fall &amp; spring</strong></td>
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**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q:** What do I do to complete my program?

**A:** Follow these steps:

1. Complete your application at [https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX](https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX)
2. Make sure that you send in your transcript from the institution that conferred your bachelor’s degree to Graduate Studies. If your transcripts are from SHSU, then we do not require an additional copy.
3. Submit the required writing sample and letters of recommendation to Graduate Studies.

**Q: What do I need to do to register for classes?**

**A:** You can go to the SHSU web page [http://www.shsu.edu/~reg_www/howtoregister/](http://www.shsu.edu/~reg_www/howtoregister/) for instructions or you can call the Graduate Studies Office at 936.294.1971 regarding catalogues, class schedules, housing, financial aid or other information. The graduate secretary, Marah Robinson, is able to help with registration (936.294.4045, mbr003@shsu.edu.)

**Q: How do I set up my computer account in order to register?**

**A:** You can do this online at [https://ww2.shsu.edu/legacy/Activation](https://ww2.shsu.edu/legacy/Activation). The helpdesk number is 936.294.1950. Faculty, and staff at SHSU will begin sending you email before classes begin, so be sure to check email frequently. Particularly if you are enrolled in an online class, you can expect to receive email about the textbook, orientation meetings, and assignments before classes begin.

**Q: What is the sequence for taking classes?**

**A:** The following courses are required prerequisites with departmental approval:

- SPED 5302 before SPED 5305
- SPED 5305 before SPED 6310
- SPED 6310 before SPED 6312 or concurrent enrollment during last semester of courses
- SPED 6310 is generally toward the end of your program.
- SPED 5301 is a survey course that is generally taken at the beginning of the program.
- SPED 6308 requires considerable fieldwork in a school site where you can implement individual interventions. If you are new to special education, you will need to have completed sufficient coursework to implement interventions.
- Other courses may be scheduled at your convenience.

**Q: What is the procedure for registering for SPED 5305 (Individual Tests of Intelligence)?**

**A:** Since this class requires individual supervision, there can be a substantial waiting period for enrollment. Those nearest the end of their program have priority for enrollment. Please contact Dr. Sharon Lynch (with your student number for clearance) at LYNCH@shsu.edu as soon as you know the semester in which you plan to enroll in SPED 5305. You need to have SPED 5302 complete.

**Q: What is the procedure for registering for SPED 6310?**

**A:** Since this class requires individual supervision, there can be a substantial waiting period for enrollment. Those nearest the end of their program have priority for enrollment. Please contact Dr. Sharon Lynch (with your student number for clearance) at LYNCH@shsu.edu as soon as you know
the semester in which you plan to enroll in SPED 6310. You need to have SPED 5305 complete.

**Q: What is the procedure for registering for SPED 6312?**

**A:** Since this class requires individual field supervision, there can be a substantial waiting period for enrollment. Those at the end of their program have priority for enrollment. Please contact Dr. Sharon Lynch (with your student number for clearance) at LYNCH@shsu.edu as soon as you know the semester in which you plan to enroll in practicum. You need to have met the prerequisites before approval.

**Q: What is required to be certified as an Educational Diagnostician?**

**A:** Certification as an Educational Diagnostician requires that you complete your Master's Degree, pass Comprehensive Examinations, successfully complete the TExES Examination for Educational Diagnosticians, and all required coursework. Then you will apply for certification through the State Board for Educator Certification.

**Q: How do I register for Comprehensive Examinations?**

**A:** Contact Ms. Marah Robinson at mbr003@shsu.edu before the beginning of the semester in which you plan to take your comprehensive exams (the semester in which you plan to graduate). Oral examinations are scheduled in the Spring and Fall semesters only. Many students choose to complete their written examinations in the summer and take orals in the fall when they graduate.

**Q: How do I apply to graduate?**

**A:** Visit http://www.shsu.edu/~reg_www/destination/index.html and click “Application for Degree” to apply to graduate. Applications are due in October for May, in February for August, and in April for December.

**Q: When can I take my TeXES for Educational Diagnostician?**

**A:** This is a rigorous examination that should be taken during your last course in the program. Review sessions are offered during to practicum experience to help prepare you for the exam.

**Q: Can you be hired as an educational diagnostician before completing the program?**

**A:** To be hired as a diagnostician prior to completion, you need an emergency permit. Some districts have lead teachers in special education who conduct ARDs and conduct some testing. Many students are employed as educational diagnosticians or ARD facilitators during their practicum, SPED 6312.

**Q: What about an emergency permit?**

**A:** You apply for this emergency permit through your school district. Your district will send your paperwork through the certification office at SHSU. Sam Houston will issue an emergency permit through the Certification Officer (936.294.1105) if you meet the following conditions: at least 24 hours completed in the Diagnostician Program, 6 hours of testing classes completed with a grade of B or better, including SPED 5305 with a grade of B or better.

**Q: How much does the program cost?**

**A:** Visit the Bursar’s Office at http://www.shsu.edu/~csh_www/financial.html to estimate costs.
SHSU costs are favorable in comparison to nearby graduate programs.

Q: Is financial aid available?
A: Visit the Financial Aid website at http://www.shsu.edu/~fao_www. TEACH Grants are available if you plan to stay in the classroom upon graduation. Check on loan forgiveness program is you teach in a Title I school. There also are special education graduate scholarships; you must apply on ScholarX in February for the following fall. Limited departmental scholarships are available periodically, usually for the fall. Check with Marah Robinson at smbr003@shsu.edu regarding departmental scholarship availability. There are graduate scholarships that you can apply for using ScholarX. To qualify for scholarships you must be fully admitted to graduate school. Visit the website at http://www.shsu.edu/~fao_www/.

**Comprehensive Exams**

Comprehensive Examinations: Written and oral comprehensive examination will take place following the candidate’s completion of 30 semester hours of graduate coursework. Candidates should view the examination as an opportunity to demonstrate their depth of knowledge, acquisition of best practices-based competencies, command of the professional literature and research, and ability to “go beyond” the required coursework. High grades in courses do not necessarily guarantee success on the comprehensive exam. Comprehensive Exams will not be read in the summer due to limited faculty during that time. The application to complete comprehensive exams can be obtained from the departmental secretary for Language, Literacy, and Special Populations at 936.294.4045. Request that an application be sent to you at the beginning of the semester in which you plan to take your comprehensive examinations. Specific application due dates will be included in your packet.

Students with Disabilities: If a student with a disability is in need of special arrangements in order to take comprehensive exams they must register with the counseling center and provide university modification sheets with their application. The student should also take responsibility to discuss individual needs with his/her instructors.

On-Line Connections: Announcements, PowerPoint presentations, assessments, on-line group discussions, and other course postings are options to be encountered during cohort course work. Candidates should secure access to the appropriate hardware and software for interfacing with the instructor’s postings, including email communication. The University’s Blackboard and Learning Management System will be the on-line vehicle. Candidates should familiarize themselves with the workings of this system.

Degree Plans: Candidates will have a degree plan detailing the requisite course of study, including transfer work accepted from other institutions. Decisions about transfer work will be made within the Department and no more than six hours of transfer work are typically accepted.

State-Mandated Examinations: During the last semester of course work, student in the Graduate program for educational diagnosticians are able to take the required TExES exam. For those who do not possess Certification in Generic Special Education, they should arrange to take the Generic
Special Education TExES prior to undertaking the diagnostician testing courses such as the Individual Assessment course, Practicum, etc.

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<tr>
<td>SPED 5301</td>
<td>Education of Individuals with Disabilities</td>
<td>This course provides an introduction to the strengths and needs of persons with disabilities, with implications for identification and educational programming for regular and special educators. Legislation and case law addressing the rights of individuals with disabilities are discussed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 5302</td>
<td>Assessment in Special Education</td>
<td>This course addresses basic measurement principles, formal and informal assessment, and the connection of assessment to instruction. Students gain experience with diagnostic tools for assessing achievement, social behavior, adaptive behavior, language, and perceptual-motor skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6305</td>
<td>A Study of Behavior Disorders in Children</td>
<td>This course will focus on theories, characteristics, and treatment of mild, moderate, and severe behavioral disorders in children and youth. Issues involving definition, classification and intervention for remediation of such disorders as aggression, autism, depression, and delinquency will be covered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 5304</td>
<td>Teaching Methods for Learners with Mild to Moderate Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>Course content centers upon a rationale for instruction of students with mild to moderate disabilities and presents a variety of methods, materials, and instructional strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6307</td>
<td>Behavior Change and System Support</td>
<td>Practical techniques for managing student behavior and for facilitating parent involvement in the education of students with disabilities will be presented. Classroom management techniques for challenging and socially inappropriate behaviors will be emphasized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 5303</td>
<td>Study of Cognitive and Low Incidence Disabilities</td>
<td>This course is designed to provide an in-depth study of the strengths and needs of persons with intellectual disabilities and other low-incidence disabilities. Topics addressed include etiology, family partnerships, educational needs, inclusive programs, and transition issues across the lifespan.</td>
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<td>Course Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 5305</td>
<td>Individual Assessment of Cognitive Functioning/WESCHSLER Scales</td>
<td>This course is designed to acquaint students with the theory, problems, ethical standards, and techniques of administering individual tests of intelligence. Specifically, each student will learn to administer, score, and interpret the latest edition of the WISC, WAIS, and the WPPSI. Prerequisite: SPED 5302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6308</td>
<td>Practicum and Methods in Special Education</td>
<td>Students gain direct experience in the use of curriculum, methods, and materials for learners with special needs. Additional topics include assessment, modifications, adaptations, learning strategies, direct instruction and collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6304</td>
<td>In-Home Training and Family Issues</td>
<td>This course addresses the impact of autism and low incidence disabilities on the family, and ways to enable families to assist their child with a disability. Consultation with a family is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6310</td>
<td>Assessment of Young Children and Low Incidence Populations</td>
<td>This course provides instruction and practice in administration, scoring, interpretation, and reporting results of individual tests and assessments for young children, individuals with mental retardation, and persons with low-incidence disabilities. Informal techniques such as play-based assessment, portfolio assessment, and contextual assessment are presented. Prerequisites: SPED 5302, SPED 5305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6311</td>
<td>Seminar in Special Education</td>
<td>This course prepares students for the role of the educational diagnostician. Topics addressed include special education law, consultation and collaboration, second language learners with special needs, and research-based &quot;best practices&quot; in special education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 6312</td>
<td>Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians</td>
<td>This course provides a field-based practicum under the direction of a certified educational diagnostician. It is designed to provide intensive study in the role of the educational diagnostician. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor; SPED 537, 595, 677</td>
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Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 19 
EDUCATION 

PART 7 
STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION 

CHAPTER 239 
STUDENT SERVICES CERTIFICATES 

SUBCHAPTER C 
EDUCATIONAL DIAGNOSTICIAN CERTIFICATE 

RULE §239.83 
Standards for the Educational Diagnostician Certificate 

(a) The knowledge and skills identified in this section must be used by educational diagnostician preparation programs in the development of curricula and coursework and will be used by the State Board for Educator Certification as the basis for developing the assessments required to obtain the Standard Educational Diagnostician Certificate. These standards must also serve as the foundation for the professional growth plan, and continuing professional education activities required by §239.85 of this subchapter (relating to Requirements to Renew the Standard Educational Diagnostician Certificate).

(b) Standard I. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy, and legal foundations of evaluation and special education.
   (1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
      (A) state and federal regulations relevant to the role of the educational diagnostician;
      (B) laws and legal issues related to the assessment and evaluation of individuals with educational needs;
      (C) models, theories, and philosophies that provide the basis for special education evaluations;
      (D) issues, assurances, and due process rights related to evaluation, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services; and
      (E) rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, schools, students, and teachers and other professionals in relation to individual learning needs.
   (2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
      (A) articulate the purpose of evaluation procedures and their relationship to educational programming; and
      (B) conduct evaluations and other professional activities consistent with the requirements of laws, rules and regulations, and local district policies and procedures.

(c) Standard II. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities.
   (1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
      (A) ethical practices regarding procedural safeguards (e.g., confidentiality issues, informed consent) for individuals with disabilities;
      (B) ethical practices related to assessment and evaluation;
      (C) qualifications necessary to administer and interpret various instruments and procedures;
      (D) organizations and publications relevant to the field of educational diagnosis.
   (2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
      (A) demonstrate commitment to developing quality educational opportunities appropriate for individuals with disabilities;
(B) demonstrate positive regard for the culture, gender, and personal beliefs of individual students;
(C) promote and maintain a high level of competence and integrity in the practice of the profession;
(D) exercise objective professional judgment in the practice of the profession;
(E) engage in professional activities that benefit individuals with exceptional learning needs, their
families, and/or colleagues;
(F) comply with local, state, and federal monitoring and evaluation requirements;
(G) use copyrighted educational materials in an ethical manner; and
(H) participate in the activities of professional organizations in the field of educational diagnosis.

(d) Standard III. The educational diagnostician develops collaborative relationships with families,
educators, the school, the community, outside agencies, and related service personnel.
(1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
(A) strategies for promoting effective communication and collaboration with others, including
parents/guardians and school and community personnel, in a culturally responsive manner;
(B) concerns of parents/guardians of individuals with exceptional learning needs and appropriate
strategies to help parents/guardians address these concerns;
(C) strategies for developing educational programs for individuals through collaboration with team
members;
(D) roles of individuals with disabilities, parents/caregivers, teachers, and other school and
community personnel in planning educational programs for individuals; and
(E) family systems and the role of families in supporting student development and educational
progress.
(2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
(A) use collaborative strategies in working with individuals with disabilities, parents/caregivers, and
school and community personnel in various learning environments;
(B) communicate and consult effectively with individuals, parents/guardians, teachers, and other
school and community personnel;
(C) foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and education professionals;
(D) encourage and assist individuals with disabilities and their families to become active participants
in the educational team;
(E) plan and conduct collaborative conferences with individuals who have exceptional learning
needs and their families or primary caregivers;
(F) collaborate with classroom teachers and other school and community personnel in including
individuals with exceptional learning needs in various learning environments;
(G) communicate with classroom teachers, administrators, and other school personnel about
characteristics and needs of individuals with disabilities;
(H) use appropriate communication skills to report and interpret assessment and evaluation results;
(I) provide assistance to others who collect informal and observational data;
(J) effectively communicate to parents/guardians and professionals the purposes, methods, findings,
and implications of assessments; and
(K) keep accurate and detailed records of assessments, evaluations, and related proceedings (e.g.,
ARD/IEP meetings, parent/guardian communications and notifications).

(e) Standard IV. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student
assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.
(1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
(A) the characteristics, needs, and rights of individual students in relation to assessment and
evaluation for placement within a continuum of services;
(B) the relationship between evaluation and placement decisions; and
(C) the role of team members, including the student when appropriate, in planning an individualized program.

2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
(A) use assessment and evaluation information to plan individualized programs and make instructional decisions that result in appropriate services for individuals with disabilities, including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
(B) interpret and use assessment and evaluation data for targeted instruction and ongoing review; and
(C) assist in identifying realistic expectations for educationally relevant behavior (e.g., vocational, functional, academic, social) in various settings.

(f) Standard V. The educational diagnostician knows eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.
(1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
(A) characteristics of individuals with disabilities, including those with different levels of severity and with multiple disabilities;
(B) educational implications of various disabilities; and
(C) the variation in ability exhibited by individuals with particular types of disabilities.
(2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
(A) access information on the cognitive, communicative, physical, social, and emotional characteristics of individuals with disabilities;
(B) gather background information regarding the academic, medical, and family history of individuals with disabilities; and
(C) use various types of assessment and evaluation procedures appropriately to identify students with disabilities and to determine the presence of an educational need.

(g) Standard VI. The educational diagnostician selects, administers, and interprets appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.
(1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
(A) basic terminology used in assessment and evaluation; (B) standards for test reliability;
(C) standards for test validity; (D) procedures used in standardizing assessment instruments;
(E) possible sources of test error;
(F) the meaning and use of basic statistical concepts used in assessment and evaluation (e.g., standard error of measurement, mean, standard deviation);
(G) uses and limitations of each type of assessment instrument;
(H) uses and limitations of various types of assessment data;
(I) procedures for screening, prereferral, referral, and eligibility;
(J) the appropriate application and interpretation of derived scores (e.g., standard scores, percentile ranks, age and grade equivalents, stanines);
(K) the necessity of monitoring the progress of individuals with disabilities;
(L) methods of academic and nonacademic (e.g., vocational, developmental, assistive technology) assessment and evaluation; and (M) methods of motor skills assessment.
(2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
(A) collaborate with families and other professionals in the assessment and evaluation of individuals with disabilities;
(B) select and use assessment and evaluation materials based on technical quality and individual student needs;
(C) score assessment and evaluation instruments accurately;
(D) create and maintain assessment reports;
(E) select or modify assessment procedures to ensure nonbiased results;
(F) use a variety of observation techniques;
(G) assess and interpret information using formal/informal instruments and procedures in the areas of cognitive/adaptive behavior and academic skills;
(H) determine the need for further assessment in the areas of language skills, physical skills, social/emotional behavior, and assistive technology;
(I) determine a student's needs in various curricular areas, and make intervention, instructional, and transition planning recommendations based on assessment and evaluation results;
(J) make recommendations based on assessment and evaluation results; (K) prepare assessment reports; and

(h) Standard VII. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of student diversity for evaluation, planning, and instruction.

(1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
(A) issues related to definition and identification procedures for individuals with disabilities, including individuals from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
(B) characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental backgrounds of students and their families, including cultural and linguistic diversity, socioeconomic diversity, abuse/neglect, and substance abuse;
(C) issues related to the representation in special education of populations that are culturally and linguistically diverse;
(D) ways in which diversity may affect evaluation; and
(E) strategies that are responsive to the diverse backgrounds and particular disabilities of individuals in relation to evaluation, programming, and placement.

(2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
(A) apply knowledge of cultural and linguistic factors to make appropriate evaluation decisions and instructional recommendations for individuals with disabilities; and
(B) recognize how student diversity and particular disabilities may affect evaluation, programming, and placement, and use procedures that ensure nonbiased results.

(i) Standard VIII. The educational diagnostician knows and demonstrates skills necessary for scheduling, time management, and organization.

(1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
(A) time management strategies and systems appropriate for various educational situations and environments;
(B) legal and regulatory timelines, schedules, deadlines, and reporting requirements; and
(C) methods for organizing, maintaining, accessing, and storing records and information.

(2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
(A) select, adapt, or design forms to facilitate planning, scheduling, and time management;
(B) maintain eligibility folders; and
(C) use technology appropriately to organize information and schedules.

(j) Standard IX. The educational diagnostician addresses students' behavioral and social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies.

(1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
(A) requirements and procedures for functional behavioral assessment, manifestation determination
review, and behavioral intervention plans;
(B) applicable laws, rules and regulations, and procedural safeguards regarding the planning and implementation of behavioral intervention plans for individuals with disabilities;
(C) ethical considerations inherent in behavior interventions;
(D) teacher attitudes and behaviors that influence the behavior of individuals with disabilities;
(E) social skills needed for school, home, community, and work environments;
(F) strategies for crisis prevention, intervention, and management;
(G) strategies for preparing individuals to live productively in a multiclass, multiethnic, multicultural, and multinational world; and
(H) key concepts in behavior intervention (e.g., least intrusive accommodations/ modifications within the learning environment, reasonable expectations for social behavior, social skills curricula, cognitive behavioral strategies).
(2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
(A) conduct functional behavioral assessments;
(B) assist in the development of behavioral intervention plans; and
(C) participate in manifestation determination review.
(k) Standard X. The educational diagnostician knows and understands appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities.
(1) The beginning educational diagnostician knows and understands:
(A) instructional strategies, technology tools and applications, and curriculum materials for students with disabilities within the continuum of services;
(B) varied learning styles of individuals with disabilities;
(C) curricula for the development of motor, cognitive, academic, social, language, affective, career, and functional skills for individuals with disabilities;
(D) techniques for modifying instructional methods and materials for individuals with disabilities;
(E) functional skills instruction relevant to transitioning across environments (e.g., preschool to elementary school, school to work);
(F) supports needed for integration into various program placements; and
(G) individualized assessment strategies for instruction (e.g., authentic assessment, contextual assessment, curriculum-based assessment).
(2) The beginning educational diagnostician is able to:
(A) interpret and use assessment and evaluation data for instructional planning; and
(B) use assessment and evaluation, planning, and management procedures that are appropriate in relation to student needs and the instructional environment.