



BUFFALO STATE
The State University of New York

Exceptional Education Department
Undergraduate Student Handbook
Special and Childhood Education (SCE) Program
with General Education 2023

Revised July 2026

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Department, School, and Unit Information

Welcome to the Exceptional Education Department

The Exceptional Education Department at Buffalo State University has a long and rich history of preparing special education teachers. The first teacher candidates from our department graduated in 1953, when efforts to educate students with disabilities were relatively new. In 1975, the United States passed a law requiring that a free and appropriate public education be provided to children with disabilities. Since then, the need for teachers to serve students with disabilities has grown, and the role of the special education teacher has evolved.

To meet the needs of students in our local communities and beyond, the Exceptional Education Department has Special Education programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition, we also have graduate programs in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Bilingual Education, and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).

We welcome you to the Exceptional Education family and celebrate your interest in becoming a teacher of *all* students. Please know that we are available and happy to assist you in your journey to becoming a teacher. You can contact us here:

Exceptional Education Department

Ketchum Hall 204

1300 Elmwood Avenue

Buffalo, New York 14222

(716) 878-5317 or (716) 878-3038

<https://exceptionaleducation.buffalostate.edu/>

Please note that the Exceptional Education Department is part of Buffalo State University's School of Education and Applied Professions: <https://educationandprofessions.buffalostate.edu/> and the Teacher Education Unit: <https://epp.buffalostate.edu/>.

Exceptional Education Department Mission

The mission of the Exceptional Education Department is to prepare teachers, scholars, and action researchers as exemplary leaders, and to advance the profession of special education through the science and art of teaching, learning, and collaborating. Our graduates contribute to the community by serving the needs of persons with disabilities and by broadening the general population's understanding and appreciation of individuals with disabilities.

Teacher Education Unit Mission

The mission of the teacher education faculty at Buffalo State University is to prepare facilitators of learning (initial programs) and accomplished educators (advanced programs) who are reflective, innovative, and student-centered. We strive to prepare professionals who can meet the challenge of

teaching all learners in a complex, technological, global society. Teacher education faculty engage their collective expertise in teaching; scholarship and research; and service to the community, university, and profession. Faculty value and strive to cultivate a professional climate that promotes teaching excellence, intellectual vitality, and communication through collaboration across programs, among faculty, students, and the larger community.

Teacher Education Unit Conceptual Framework

The Buffalo State University Teacher Education Unit is committed to the intellectual, personal, and professional growth of future and practicing professionals in the diverse fields of education. We seek to prepare reflective, innovative, student-centered educators who are committed to transform the lives and the communities in which they live and serve.



Teacher Education Unit Candidate Dispositions

Buffalo State Teacher and Leadership Candidates must demonstrate the following dispositions. These dispositions are introduced early, monitored throughout, and assessed at the end of the program. Candidates are:

1. Professional:
 - Follow the New York State Code of Ethics
 - Maintain confidentiality
 - Exhibit professional pride in appearance and demeanor
 - Demonstrate high quality communication skills in both written and oral communications
2. Reliable and Dependable:
 - Are punctual and organized
 - Complete essential tasks without prompting
 - Meet deadlines
3. Respectful:
 - Committed to meeting student needs
 - Practice judicious and empathetic interactions with students and colleagues on campus and in the community
 - Show care and thoughtfulness in using the intellectual and physical property of others
4. Committed to Student Learning:
 - Make decisions and plans that are student centered and foster higher-order thinking skills
 - Demonstrate understanding of the important contribution of diversity of thought, Background and ethnicity in high-quality educational experiences
 - Use culturally-relevant curricula
 - Demonstrate and affirm the expectation that all students can learn, and it is the teacher's

responsibility to investigate research and practice in differentiating instruction to reach all learners' needs

- Display in their lessons and plans a thorough knowledge of current theory, content, pedagogy, technology tools, and assessment practices

5. Reflective:

- Show an openness to continuous improvement
- Listen effectively
- Demonstrate receptivity to feedback by improving performance
- Tailor and reformat instruction based on assessed student needs

6. Enthusiastic:

- Show initiative and leadership
- Practice creative problem solving
- Demonstrate willingness to take calculated risks and to monitor students' receptivity to teaching innovations
- Are energetic, and open to new ideas

7. Collaborative:

- Work well with peers, faculty and mentors and seek to learn from them and share ideas
- Practice tactful communication skills, especially when sharing critique and constructive suggestions with others
- Seek appropriate leadership roles

Program Assessment and Accreditation

The Buffalo State Teacher Education Unit (TEU) is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The undergraduate program in the Exceptional Education Department is nationally recognized by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), indicating that it meets CEC's initial preparation standards which define the specialized expertise educators must master for the safe and effective practice of special education.

Like all Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) across Buffalo State University, the Exceptional Education Department models its assessment process on the Buffalo State Education Assessment System (BSEAS). This assessment system is a part of the quality assurance process whereby data on teacher candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions are collected, analyzed, and disseminated to develop action plans aimed at program improvement. The Exceptional Education Department has an Assessment Committee whose primary role is to facilitate the assessment process at all stages. This committee regularly shares data with the department faculty to monitor program quality and assure the preparation of highly qualified teacher candidates who positively impact P-12 student learning.

Watermark. Buffalo State's TEU utilizes the data management system *Watermark* to assist in the data collection and analysis process. This system enables faculty and administrators to assess individual candidate progress and overall program performance. Data housed on *Watermark* include department created assessments (rubrics), unit-level assessments (rubrics and surveys), as well as performance on

standardized state certification exams. All data sources are aligned with CEC Standards as well as InTASC Standards and the TEU Conceptual Framework.

In pre-determined, selected courses, candidates are required to submit specific assignments, referred to as artifacts) via *Watermark*. Candidates failing to submit required artifacts will earn an Incomplete course grade (I) until the work is completed and submitted. More information will be provided by course instructors in courses which have required artifacts.

University Services and Resources

Buffalo State University offers a wide range of services and resources to support candidates. A few of these are highlighted here and others can be found on the university website: <https://suny.buffalostate.edu/>. Please note, some of these resources outline important university policies/procedures which candidates are responsible for understanding and following.

Academic Standards Office

South Wing 510, (716) 878-5222, <https://academicstandards.buffalostate.edu>

The Academic Standards Office provides support to candidates who are having a difficult semester, academically or financially. They can help candidates with working through probation, submitting academic appeals, and understanding university policies/procedures.

Academic Success Services

E.H. Butler Library, (716) 878-5223, <https://academicsuccess.buffalostate.edu>

The Academic Success Services offer academic support, including tutoring, a math center, and a writing center.

Barnes & Noble Bookstore

Campbell Student Union, (716) 878-5509, <https://buffalostate.bncollege.com>

Candidates can identify and purchase/rent textbooks and course materials from the official Buffalo State bookstore. Please note candidates can also acquire course materials from other vendors.

Career and Professional Education Center

Cleveland Hall 306, (716) 878-5811, <https://cape.buffalostate.edu>

Buffalo State's Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Center offers a range of services related to helping candidates gain employment. Services include resume writing workshops, mock interviews, and assisting in job searches.

Dean of Students Office

Campbell Student Union 311, (716) 878-4618, <https://deanofstudents.buffalostate.edu/>

The Dean of Students Office provides resources related to student welfare. This office deals with issues/concerns related to violence prevention, inclusion and equity, student leadership, etc.

Financial Aid Office

Moot Hall 230, (716) 878-4902, <https://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/>

The Financial Aid Office handles all questions and concerns regarding financial aid.

Information Technology

E.H. Butler Library, (716) 878-4357, <https://it.buffalostate.edu>

Buffalo State's IT Department provides technology support services for candidates, including an IT Help Desk that students can visit in person, call, or submit a ticket to for service.

Registrar's Office

Moot Hall 210, (716) 878-4811, <https://registrar.buffalostate.edu/>

The Registrar's Office provides information and support related to course registration, commencement, transcripts, and a variety of other student requests/needs (e.g., leave of absence, name change, withdrawal).

Student Accessibility Services Office

E.H. Butler Library 160, (716) 878-4500, <https://sas.buffalostate.edu>

The Student Accessibility Services Office works with candidates who have a disability and are in need of accommodations.

Student Accounts Office

Moot Hall 260, (716) 878-4121, <https://suny.buffalostate.edu/student-accounts>

The Student Accounts Office provides information on student tuition, invoices, and making payments.

Teacher Certification Office

Chase Hall 222, (716) 878-6121, <https://teachercertification.buffalostate.edu>

The Buffalo State Teacher Certification Office can assist candidates in navigating the various components required for obtaining teacher certification including taking seminars, passing certification exams, getting fingerprinted, and applying for certification.

Undergraduate Catalog

<https://academicaffairs.buffalostate.edu/undergraduate-catalog>

Buffalo State's Undergraduate Catalog provides detailed information about policies and procedures for undergraduates. Topics include: information on academic standing; academic misconduct policy; grading procedures; leave of absence procedures; protection under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); undergraduate course repeat policy; procedures for add/drop/withdrawal of a course; requirements for applying for commencement (graduation); and procedures for student complaint, grievance, and appeal. Candidates are encouraged to review this catalog in its entirety. Please note a revised version of the catalog is published each year.

University Police

Chase Hall 110, (716) 878-6333, <https://police.buffalostate.edu>

Candidates can obtain information about campus safety, or report concerns to Buffalo State's University Police. In the case of an emergency on campus, students should call the number listed above. If an emergency occurs off campus, candidates should call 911. Candidates can sign up for emergency alerts, including closings, at <https://suny.buffalostate.edu/emergency>.

Weigel Health Center

Weigel Health Center, (716) 878-6711, <https://weigel.buffalostate.edu>

The Weigel Health Center offers a variety of services and supports related to physical and mental health.

Special Education and Childhood Education Program

The remainder of this handbook provides information specific to the Special Education and Childhood Education (SCE) Program.

SCE Program Overview

The SCE Program is an undergraduate program that leads to eligibility for New York State Initial Teaching Certification in:

- Childhood Education (General Education) – Grades 1-6, and
- Students with Disabilities (Special Education) – Preschool - Grades 12.

The program is designed to prepare teacher candidates to effectively work with *all* learners, including those with and at risk for disabilities. Emphasis is placed on preparing teacher candidates to work in inclusive settings.

In addition to traditional coursework, teacher candidates in the SCE Program will engage in a variety of field-based experiences – working with mentor teachers and students in local schools to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to teaching. The program culminates with student teaching.

SCE Entrance Requirements

First Year Students

Entering first-year students who indicate an interest in the Special Education and Childhood Education (SCE) program on their Buffalo State application and have a minimum high school GPA of 2.6 (or equivalent) will be admitted directly to the SCE major.

Transfer Students and Buffalo State Students Changing Majors

Transfer students from other institutions and Buffalo State students changing from another major who have a minimum GPA of 2.6 will be admitted directly to the SCE major. For transfer students, the GPA may be based on either the last semester of full-time study or the cumulative GPA across multiple institutions, whichever the Associate Chairperson of Undergraduate Programs determines to be the better representation of the student's academic ability.

Applicants Who Do Not Meet the GPA Requirement

Students who do not meet the minimum GPA requirement may be admitted to a different major at Buffalo State. They may apply to the SCE major after:

- Successfully completing at least 12 credits at Buffalo State; and
- Earning a minimum Buffalo State GPA of 2.6.

Students are encouraged to contact the Associate Chairperson of Undergraduate Programs in the Exceptional Education Department to discuss a plan for transitioning into the SCE major.

Note to Non-Majors

Most Exceptional Education (EXE) courses are restricted to majors. Non-majors may not register for these courses until they have been formally accepted into the SCE major. Students interested in the SCE program who have not yet met the admission requirements may enroll in EXE 100, SPF 202, SPF 203, and SPF 302. They should also work with their academic advisor and consult the following resources when selecting courses that will apply to the major after admission:

- General Education requirements (available on the university website)
- Concentration requirements (found in this handbook)
- Distribution requirements (found in this handbook)

Students with questions about admission to the major or course planning should contact the Associate Chairperson of Undergraduate Programs in the Exceptional Education Department.

SCE Program Academic Advisement

When accepted into the Special Education and Childhood Education Program, each teacher candidate is assigned an academic advisor (a faculty member in the Exceptional Education Department) and notified in writing of the advisor's name, office location, phone number, and email address. Teacher candidates can also find their advisors' office hours posted on their office doors.

The importance of working with an academic advisor cannot be overstated. Degree and certification requirements are complex. Teacher candidates should meet with their advisors regularly to clarify program requirements, develop a plan, and monitor/adjust that plan over subsequent semesters. This will allow them to complete their degrees in a timely manner.

While teacher candidates may meet with their advisor at any time, it is particularly important to meet with them during advisement weeks (usually the second half of October and the second half of March) to plan out courses for the following semester. Teacher candidates will be notified through Buffalo State email and/or Navigate 360 regarding department advisement weeks. Advisors will notify their advisees of how to sign up for an advisement appointment (e.g., an electronic forum). It is teacher candidates' responsibility to sign up for an appointment and attend that appointment. Failure to do so may result in not being prepared to register for courses on time. Teacher candidates will only be given PIN numbers required for registration once they have met with their advisor.

Teacher candidates should prepare for their advisement session by reviewing this handbook, the Undergraduate Catalog (<https://academicaffairs.buffalostate.edu/undergraduate-catalog>), their Degree Works audit, and the master schedule for the upcoming semester. Teacher candidates should have some tentative courses in mind. Generally, advisors will make general recommendations of courses for general education, the concentration, and the distribution, along with specific courses for the major. Then, it is the teacher candidates' responsibility to develop a schedule that reflects the advisor's recommendations and takes their own individual personal, family, and employment factors into consideration.

Opportunities for SCE Majors

Teacher candidates are encouraged to learn about the many opportunities available to education majors at Buffalo State. These include student groups (e.g., Bengals Passionate About Education, Best Buddies), a national honor society (Kappa Delta Pi), and short-term faculty-led study away programs to various countries around the world (International Professional Development Partnerships, IPDP). To learn about these opportunities, candidates should visit the School of Education and Applied Professions and Exceptional Education Department websites, check their Buffalo State email regularly, and/or talk to their advisors and professors.

Accelerated Pathways (4+1 Pathways)

Accelerated pathways are an option for an undergraduate teacher candidate to have seamless entry into a graduate program and an accelerated course of study toward an advanced degree.

SCE Majors in good standing can apply for an accelerated pathway that leads into a graduate program. If accepted, they can take up to 9 credits of graduate coursework while still an undergraduate student. For more information, see: <https://exceptionaleducation.buffalostate.edu/accelerated-pathways>

Additional Sources of Program Information

In addition to this handbook and academic advisement, teacher candidates in the SCE Program can seek program-related information from several sources:

- 1) The Exceptional Education Department website can be found at <https://exceptionaleducation.buffalostate.edu/>. The site hosts information about the department, advisement, opportunities, this handbook, etc.
- 2) The Exceptional Education Department sends messages to teacher candidates via Buffalo State email. Teacher candidates are expected to check their email accounts daily so they do not miss important information.

SCE Program Framework

SCE Program Framework Overview

The SCE Program was developed with a foundation of high-leverage practices (HLPs). High-leverage practices (HLPs) have been defined as “a set of practices that are fundamental to support K-12 student learning, and that can be taught, learned, and implemented by those entering the profession” (Windschitl, Thompson, Braaten, & Stroupe, 2012, p. 880).

Since the SCE Program prepares teachers of both general education and special education, the set of HLPs developed for the program reflect the skillset needed by teachers of *all* students, with an emphasis on inclusive settings. The program HLPs were developed with consideration of published lists of HLPs for both general education (University of Michigan, n.d.) and special education (McLeskey et al., 2017).

The 17 SCE Program HLPs are organized into five domains: communication and collaboration, instructional design, instructional delivery, classroom management, and assessment. The HLPs will be discussed, taught, observed, practiced, and assessed throughout the program. Teacher candidates should become familiar with the HLPs and strive to gain proficiency in them throughout the program. A list of the HLPs follows.

McLeskey, J., Barringer, M-D., Billingsley, B., Brownell, M., Jackson, D., Kennedy, M., ...Ziegler, D. (2017). *High-leverage practices in special education*. Arlington, VA: CEC and CEEDAR Center.

University of Michigan. (n. d.) *Teachingworks: High leverage practices*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.teachingworks.org/work-of-teaching/high-leverage-practices>.

Windschitl, M., Thompson, J., Braaten, M., & Stroupe, D. (2012). Proposing a core set of instructional practices and tools for teachers of science. *Science Education*, 96(5), 878-903.

SCE Program High-Leverage Practices (HLPs)

	High Leverage Practice	Description of High Leverage Practice
Communication and Collaboration	HLP 1: Communicate and collaborate effectively with colleagues, parents/guardians, school leaders, and other professionals.	Teachers use effective interpersonal skills to communicate (orally and in written form) and collaborate with colleagues, parents/guardians, school leaders, and other professionals to support student learning and well-being. The goal of communication and collaboration in schools is to: (a) develop and adjust instructional plans, (b) coordinate expectations, (c) delineate responsibilities, and (d) identify resources to maximize student outcomes.
	HLP 2: Advocate for students and families to secure needed services and promote social justice.	Teachers use school and district resources to advocate for all students. Advocacy includes working with students, families, and professionals to secure necessary supports for student learning and well-being, inside and outside of the school setting. Teachers also encourage students to self-advocate, with the goal of fostering self-determination over time.
Instructional Design	HLP 3: Use knowledge about the curriculum and students' present levels of performance to identify short- and long-term goals.	Teachers use multiple sources of information including grade level standards, learning progressions, individualized education program (IEP) goals and benchmarks, and students' learning histories to identify short- and long-term goals. They prioritize what is most important for students to learn, with emphasis on providing meaningful access to the general education curriculum. They understand essential elements of curriculum, identify critical prerequisites, and assess student performance in relation to these components.
	HLP 4: Design a sequence of lessons towards a specific learning outcome.	Teachers help students to develop important factual knowledge, concepts, skills, and strategies that provide the foundation for more complex learning. Teachers sequence lessons that build off each other and make connections explicit in both planning and delivery. They activate students' prior knowledge and show how each lesson fits with previous lessons. Ongoing changes (e.g., pacing and examples) occur throughout the lesson sequence based on student performance.

	HLP 5: Choose and adapt curriculum materials and tasks specific to learning goals.	Teachers assess individual or group needs on an ongoing basis. They use these data to select or adapt curriculum materials and tasks so that students can meet instructional goals. Accommodations or modifications may include use of relevant technology, modification of independent work, changes to task directions, scaffolded instruction, or extended time to complete tasks.
Instructional Delivery	HLP 6: Make learning explicit through modeling, guided practice, and independent practice.	Teachers make learning of factual knowledge, concepts, skills and strategies explicit through modeling, guided practice, and independent practice opportunities. They strategically choose representations, examples/non-examples, and language to facilitate student understanding, anticipate common misconceptions, highlight essential content, and remove distracting information. They overtly teach steps or processes needed to understand and complete tasks successfully and independently.
	HLP 7: Use strategies to promote active student engagement in whole class and small group instruction.	Teachers design and implement instruction to promote active student engagement, which includes active student response and participation. They promote engagement by connecting learning to students' lives and by using a variety of strategies shown to increase student engagement: (a) teacher-led strategies, such as choral responding and response cards, (b) peer-assisted strategies, such as cooperative learning and peer tutoring, (c) student-regulated/self-management strategies, and (d) technology-supported strategies. As a part of this process, teachers monitor student engagement, and they provide positive and constructive feedback to sustain engagement.
	HLP 8: Scaffold instruction during lessons.	Teachers use scaffolds, temporary supports for students, to facilitate students' progress towards meeting lesson objectives. Teachers scaffold content, tasks, and materials based on students' readiness to meet objectives. Teachers use scaffolds flexibly, evaluate their effectiveness, and gradually remove them once students gain increased understanding and independence. Some scaffolds are planned prior to lessons and some occur as lessons unfold in response to student performance.
	HLP 9: Teach students to work independently.	Teachers integrate explicit cognitive and metacognitive strategy instruction into academic content to help students accomplish goals and self-regulate their own learning. Teachers understand learning involves: (a) content knowledge, (b) cognitive processes to solve problems, regulate attention, organize thoughts and materials, and (c) self-monitoring. Teachers promote student independence by teaching students to monitor and evaluate their own performance in relation to goals and make necessary adjustments to improve learning.

	HLP 10: Select, implement, and evaluate instructional and assistive technologies to support student learning.	Teachers select, implement, and evaluate instructional and assistive technologies based on the needs of individual students or groups. Instructional technology is used to enhance instruction designed to meet learning goals. Assistive technology is used to support individual students in accessing the curriculum and learning environment. When planning for the use of technology, teachers use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to provide all students equal opportunities to learn.
	HLP 11: Identify and implement an instructional strategy or intervention in response to common patterns of student performance or individual need.	Teachers select and implement instructional strategies or interventions based on an analysis of individual or group performance. Selected strategies or interventions have a strong research base and are implemented to assist students in meeting identified learning goals. Throughout implementation, teachers monitor student performance and modify practices based upon analysis of the data.
	HLP 12: Self-analyze teaching for the purpose of improving instruction and learning.	Teachers engage in routine self-analysis (i.e., reflection) of their teaching practices and the impact on student outcomes. Teachers analyze their teaching formally and informally: (a) on a micro level during instruction to make on-the-spot instructional decisions, and (b) on a macro level, such as after an instructional segment or on a month-to-month basis. Effective teachers retain, reuse, and extend practices that improve student learning and adjust or discard those that do not.
Classroom Management	HLP 13: Establish and implement effective classroom and individual student management plans to increase student social and academic outcomes.	Teachers establish clear rules, procedures, and consequences (for appropriate and inappropriate behaviors) that are explicitly taught and reinforced throughout the school year with the goals of reducing challenging behavior and increasing academic engagement time. When a student's behavior is chronic and impedes their learning, teachers conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA), and develop and implement a behavior intervention plan (BIP).
	HLP 14: Provide high rates of specific feedback.	Teachers provide feedback for correct and incorrect responses to guide and improve student learning and behavior, and to increase student motivation, engagement, and independence. Feedback may be verbal, non-verbal, or written. Effective feedback is: (a) strategically-delivered, (b) goal-directed, (c) timely, (d) developmentally-appropriate, (e) ongoing, (f) scaffolded, and (g) provided until learners reach established goals.

	HLP 15: Create and facilitate a safe, respectful, productive, and positive learning environment.	Teachers organize the physical layout and materials of the classroom to promote student safety, engagement, productivity, and independence. Teachers also develop and maintain a positive social/emotional environment in the classroom by promoting respectful student-student and teacher-student relationships. In order to do this, teachers develop an understanding of the students' families, communities, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Teachers also engage in high levels of positive teacher-student interactions which demonstrate warmth, caring, and encouragement.
Assessment	HLP 16: Develop/select and implement specific assessment measures to determine relevant information about students' present levels of performance.	Teachers develop or select a variety of technically-sound assessment measures to identify student strengths and areas of need. They implement the assessments with fidelity, and as appropriate, use of student accommodations as per individualized education programs (IEPs).
	HLP 17: Interpret and communicate assessment data to make important educational decisions.	Teachers interpret a variety of assessment data, from both formal and informal measures, to identify student strengths and areas of need. They clearly communicate this information to members of educational teams, including parents, in order to make important educational decisions. They use assessment data to (a) make recommendations about educational programming, (b) plan instruction, and (c) monitor student progress.

SCE Program Coursework

Teacher candidates in the SCE Program must complete the following four components of coursework, each of which is described in more detail in the following sections of the handbook:

- 1) General Education
- 2) Major
- 3) Concentration
- 4) Distribution

Many requirements can be double or triple dipped – meaning a course can count in more than one area. For example, an English course for the Gen Ed Humanities requirement could also count for the English concentration and/or the English distribution. Teacher candidates, with advisor assistance, are encouraged to find courses that meet multiple requirements to reduce the overall number of courses needed. Candidates can track their progress with completing degree requirements on Degree Works and with the program checklist found at the end of this handbook.

General Education Requirements

All students at Buffalo State must complete the general education requirements. The current version, *General Education 2023* (<https://generaleducation.buffalostate.edu/program>), includes:

- Communication - Written and Oral (6 credits)
 - CWP 101 (3)
 - CWP 102 (3)
 - Note: must earn a minimum grade of C in both CWP 101 and 102
- Diversity: Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (3 credits)
 - Note: EXE 100 meets this requirement and is also required for the major
- Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning (3 credits)
 - Note: MAT 122 is a recommended course that meets this requirement
- Natural Sciences and Scientific Reasoning (3 credits)
- Credits from 3 Different Categories (9 credits)
 - Humanities
 - The Arts
 - US History and Civic Engagement
 - Social Sciences (Note: SPF 203 meets this requirement and is also required for the major)
 - World History and Global Awareness
 - World Languages
- Credits from Any Category and in any Combination (9 credits)

Total credits for General Education 2023: 33 credits

Major Coursework

Special Education and Childhood Education Majors are required to complete 63 credit hours of major coursework. The major courses are across three departments with different course prefixes (EXE, EDU, SPF) as shown below. Teacher candidates should also note the minimum GPA requirements to register and the grades needed in the courses to move forward in the program.

Courses	Department	Course Prefix	Minimum GPA Requirement to Register	Minimum Course Grade Required to Continue with Courses with Same Prefix
Special education	Exceptional Education	EXE	2.6	C
Childhood (general) education	Elementary Education, Literacy, and Educational Leadership	EDU	2.5	C
Foundations	Social and Psychological Foundations	SPF	N/A	N/A

The following is a list of courses needed for the major, along with the required pre-requisites and co-requisites. They are listed in the recommended sequence they should be taken. If a teacher candidate is going to take the courses out of order, they should do so in consultation with their academic advisor.

Course Number	Course Title	Pre-requisites and Co-requisites
EXE 100	Nature and Needs of Individuals with Special Needs (majors only section)	Pre-req: pre-major or major status
SPF 203	School and Society	N/A
SPF 202	Child Development and Education	N/A
SPF 302	Educational Psychology: Elementary Education	Pre-req: CWP 102 minimum grade of C; SPF 202
EXE 221	Foundations of Effective Assessment and Instruction in Special Education	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.6 cumulative GPA; EXE 100 minimum grade of C
EDU 211	Introduction to Literacy	Pre-req: major status, minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA; EXE 221 minimum grade of C

EXE 362	Behavior and Classroom Management	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.6 cumulative GPA; EXE 100 minimum grade of C
EXE 364	Educating Students with Severe Disabilities	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.6 cumulative GPA; EXE 221 minimum grade of C
EXE 321*	Remediating and Adapting Literacy Instruction for Students with and at Risk for Disabilities	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.6 cumulative GPA; EXE 100 minimum grade of C; EXE 221 minimum grade of C; EDU 211 minimum grade of C Co-req: EDU 322; EXE/EDU 323 (Literacy Block)
EDU 322*	Literacy Instruction in the Elementary School	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.6 cumulative GPA; EDU 211 minimum grade of C Co-req: EXE 321, EXE/EDU 323 (Literacy Block)
EXE/EDU 323*	Field Placement in Literacy Methods for Students with and without Disabilities	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.6 cumulative GPA; EXE 100 minimum grade of C; EXE 221 minimum grade of C; EDU 211 minimum grade of C Co-req: EXE 321; EDU 322 (Literacy Block)
EXE 390	Strategies and Technology to Access and Adapt Content Area Instruction	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.6 cumulative GPA; EXE 221 minimum grade of C
EDU 310	Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA; EDU 211 minimum grade of C
EDU 316*	Teaching Elementary School Mathematics (6 credits)	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA; EDU 322 minimum grade of C
EDU 313	Teaching Science in Early Childhood and Childhood Settings	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA; EDU 211 minimum grade of C
EXE 311	Writing IEPs Across the P-12 Grade Span	Pre-req: major status; minimum 2.6 cumulative GPA; EXE 100 minimum grade of C
EDU 404*	Practicum in Elementary Teaching (6 credits, Student Teaching)	Pre-req: major status; 2.5 minimum cumulative GPA; minimum grade of C in all methods courses
EXE 420*	Practicum in Special Education (6 credits, Student Teaching)	Pre-req: major status; 2.6 minimum cumulative GPA; minimum grade of C in all methods courses

*A note regarding field-based courses and student teaching: Some major courses are considered field-based, meaning a portion or all of the course is taught and carried out in the field (typically at a local P-12 school). This includes student teaching. To be eligible, candidates must meet designated requirements and attend an orientation prior to the placement. Some field-based courses also require an application (i.e., Literacy Block and Student Teaching). Additional information will be provided through Buffalo State email and advisement sessions.

Concentrations

As per a New York State Education Department requirement, all Special Education and Childhood Education Majors must complete a 30-hour concentration (approximately 10 courses) in one area. The purpose of the concentration is to provide depth of knowledge in one area. Teacher candidates are required to take a minimum of 30 credit hours in one of the following concentration areas:

- English
- Spanish
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Liberal Arts

In order to provide the in-depth experience required by the state, a minimum of 18 credits in the concentration must be at the upper division (300 or 400) level. Concentration courses must be taken for a letter grade; they may not be taken on a pass/fail basis.

Teacher candidates can choose a concentration when applying to the major or later through a Change of Major form. Teacher candidates are advised to select a concentration as soon as possible and stay with that choice throughout the program. The concentration can be switched but doing so could delay graduation.

Since many concentration courses may also be used in completing the general education and/or distribution requirements, candidates should be aware of the possibility for double or triple dipping.

Transfer students, especially individuals with an AA/AS degree, may have completed some courses that will count in a concentration. The teacher candidate's advisor, in conjunction with the Associate Chair, will determine which courses taken at a previous institution will count in the concentration.

English Concentration

The English Concentration consists of a total of 30 credit hours chosen as described below. At least 18 credit hours must be at the upper division (300 or 400) level. It is strongly suggested to work closely with the academic advisor in all concentration planning.

REQUIRED COURSES (18 credits)

ENG 190 - Intro to Literature

ENG 362 - Children's Literature

SPC 205 - Intro to Oral Communication (or COM 100 or SPC 103 or HUM 200)

Advanced Writing Course

Choose one:

ENG 300W - Writing for the Professions (recommended)

ENG 305W - Creative Writing: Narrative (check with instructor before taking) (Fall only)

or

ENG 306W - Creative Writing: Poetry (check with instructor before taking) (Spring only)

ENG 370 - Found. of Lang. or ENG 311 - Methods in Teach. Lang. (Fall only)

Ethnic American Literature

Choose one:

ENG 240 - African American Literature to 1940 (Fall only)

ENG 241 - African American Literature since 1940 (Spring only)

ENG 353 - Native American Literature (Spring only)

ENG 354 - Ethnic-American Minority Literature (take section for education majors)

ELECTIVES (12 credits)

Four additional ENG courses

Spanish Concentration

The Spanish Concentration consists of a total of 30 credit hours chosen as described below. At least 18 credit hours must be at the upper division (300 or 400) level. It is strongly suggested to work closely with the academic advisor in all concentration planning.

Language courses must be taken in sequence and 300 level language is a pre-requisite for all other courses. Therefore, careful scheduling of courses for this concentration will be necessary. All teacher candidates pursuing this concentration should initially take the CLEP exam to receive credit for prior work and knowledge in Spanish, as well as to determine initial level of coursework. A fee is required for this exam. Information about the exam is available in the Admissions Office.

Study abroad is encouraged, especially in summer. More information can be found through the International Education Office. The office also provides alternative placement testing for heritage speakers.

REQUIRED COURSES (18 credits)

SPA 101 - Beginning Spanish I

SPA 102 - Beginning Spanish II

SPA 201 - Intermediate Spanish I

SPA 202 - Intermediate Spanish II (Fall only)

SPA 301 - Intro to Hispanic Cultures (Spring only)

SPA 302 - Spanish Conversation and Composition (Spring only)

ELECTIVES (12 credits)

Four additional upper-level (300-400 level) Spanish courses by advisement

Mathematics Concentration

The Mathematics Concentration consists of a total of 30-32 credit hours chosen as described below. At least 18 credit hours must be at the upper division (300 or 400) level. It is strongly suggested to work closely with the academic advisor in all concentration planning.

Pre-requisite courses below the 120-level required for any concentration course will not count towards fulfilling concentration requirements. Teacher candidates who completed three or more years of high school math may be eligible to waive some lower-level math prerequisites. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis through consultation with their advisor and the Mathematics Department.

REQUIRED COURSES (23 credits)

MAT 121 - Elementary Mathematics from an Advanced Standpoint I (4 cr.)

MAT 122 - Elementary Mathematics from an Advanced Standpoint II (4 cr.)

MAT 126 - Calculus (or MAT 161 & 163 Calculus) (4 cr.)

MAT 127 - (or MAT 162 & 164 Calculus) (Prerequisite MAT 126) (4 cr.)

MAT 223 - Elementary and Middle School Mathematics from an Adv. Standpoint (4 cr.)

MAT 311 - Introduction to Probability and Statistics

ELECTIVES (9 credits)

Choose 3 courses:

MAT 270 - Discrete Mathematics (take early as it is a pre-req for many other courses)

MAT 322 - Modern Geometry (prereq. MAT 270) (offered every three semesters; planned offerings: Fall 2026, Spring 2028, Fall 2029, Spring 2031)

MAT 325 - Probability and Statistics (prereq. MAT 270) (Fall only)

MED 383 - Learning and Teaching Problem Solving (prereq. MAT 270) (offered every three semesters; planned offerings: Spring 2027, Fall 2028, Spring 2030, Fall 2031)

MAT 351 - Number Theory

MED 307 - Use of Teaching Aids in the Teaching of Mathematics (offered every three semesters; planned offerings: Spring 2026, Fall 2027, Spring 2029, Fall 2030, Spring 2032)

Science Concentration

The Science Concentration consists of a total of 30 credit hours chosen as described below. At least 18 credit hours must be at the upper division (300 or 400) level. It is strongly suggested to work closely with the academic advisor in all concentration planning.

ELECTIVES (30 credits)

BIO 333 - Intro. Organismal Biology & Diversity (Fall only)

BIO 111 - Intro. to Biology

BIO 211 - Introduction to Cell Biology and Genetics

BIO 213 - Intro. Ecology, Evolution, & Behavior

BIO 308 & 309 - Human Anatomy & Phys & Lab (BIO 100 & 212) (Fall only)

CHE 111 - Fundamentals of Chemistry I

CHE 112 - Fundamentals of Chemistry II

CHE 301 - Analytical Chemistry (Fall only)

FOR 312 - Chemistry & Criminalistics

PHY 104 - Physics for K-8 Teachers

PHY 107 - General Physics I

PHY 108 - General Physics II

PHY 111 - University Physics (Fall only)

PHY 112 - University Physics II (Spring only)

GES 101 - Intro. Geology with Lab

GES 131 - Intro. Astronomy (Spring only)

GES 111 - General Oceanography (Fall only)

GES 123 - Environmental Earth Science

GES 124 - Geologic Hazards

GES 241 – Meteorology (every other Spring)

GES 306 - Sedimentology and Stratigraphy (every other Spring)

GES 307 - Geomorphology (every other year)

GES 452 - Hydrogeology (every other year)

Note: The following four courses are specially designed for elementary teachers:

SED 311 - Processes in Physical Science

SED 312 - Processes in Life Science

SED 313 - Processes in Earth Science

SED 323 - Science as Inquiry

Social Studies Concentration

The Social Studies Concentration consists of a total of 30 credit hours chosen as described below. At least 18 credit hours must be at the upper division (300 or 400) level. It is strongly suggested to work closely with the academic advisor in all concentration planning.

REQUIRED COURSES (12 credits)

ECO 101 - The Economic System

GEG 101 - World Natural Environment

PSC 102 - Introduction to American Government

HIS 106 - History of American Life or HIS 107 - History of American Life II

ELECTIVES (18 credits)

GEG 300 - World Regional Geography (*offered occasionally*)

GEG 309 - Introduction to Urban Geography (*offered occasionally*)

GEG 359 - Arctic Geography from an Inuit Perspective (*Fall only*)

GEG 360 - Geography of Asia

HIS 302 - History of Women in America

HIS 304 - Europe from Napoleon to the First World War

HIS 306 - History of Africa to 1919

HIS 308 - History of Early Canada

HIS 311 - History of American Immigration and Emigration

HIS 313 - Politics and History in the Middle East

HIS 314 - Modern Latin America

HIS 318 - History of the Soviet Union

HIS 321 - History of Medieval Europe (*pre-requisite: HIS 115*)

HIS 340 - History of the Buffalo/Niagara Region

HIS 389 - Topics vary

HIS 415W - New York State History

PSC 315 - State and Local Government Politics

PSC 335 - International Relations of the Middle East

PSC 337 - Politics of Globalization

Liberal Arts Concentration

The Liberal Arts Concentration consists of a total of 30 credit hours chosen as described below. At least 18 credit hours must be at the upper division (300 or 400) level. It is strongly suggested to work closely with the academic advisor in all concentration planning.

REQUIRED COURSES (18 credits)

English Courses & Social Studies Courses

ENG 362 Children's Literature

Choose any 300 or 400 level English course

Choose any 300 or 400 level ECO, GEG, HIS, or PSC course

STEM Courses

Choose one:

MAT 223 - Elementary and Middle School Mathematics from an Advanced Standpoint

PHY 104 - Physics for K-8 Teachers

SED 311 - Processes in Physical Science

SED 312 - Processes in Life Science

SED 313 - Processes in Earth Science

One ENT, MAT, or science course at the 200 level or higher

One ENT, MAT, or science course at the 300 level or higher

ELECTIVES (12 credits)

4 additional courses from the categories above or in languages other than English (LOTE)*

*Notes:

- As part of this concentration, you can choose up to 4 language other than English (LOTE) courses (e.g., ASL, Spanish).
- LOTE courses provide opportunities to develop valuable multilingual communication skills, work toward an ASL micro-credential, and/or build a foundation for pursuing TESOL certification at the graduate level.
- To learn more about the ASL micro-credential or TESOL certification at the graduate level, please talk to your advisor who can connect you with appropriate faculty/staff.

Distribution

As per a New York State Education Department requirement, all Special Education and Childhood Education Majors must complete a distribution. While the concentration gives teacher candidates a deep understanding of one area, the distribution requirement is designed to ensure breadth of knowledge. Teacher candidates are required to take two courses in each the following distribution areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

Distribution courses must be taken for a letter grade; they may not be taken on a pass/fail basis.

Since many distribution courses may also be used in completing the general education and/or concentration requirements, teacher candidates should be aware of the possibility for double or triple dipping.

Transfer students, especially individuals with an AA/AS degree, may have completed some courses that will count in the distribution. The teacher candidate's advisor will determine which courses taken at a previous institution will count in the distribution.

Checklist for Special Education and Childhood Education (SCE)

Majors

Revised July 2026

GE 2023

(33 Credit Hour MINIMUM)

Basic Written & Oral Communication

-minimum grade of C required

CWP 101 _____

CWP 102 _____

Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning

-MAT 122 recommended

Math/Quant. Reasoning _____

Natural Science & Scientific Reasoning

Science _____

Diversity

Diversity EXE 100 _____

Credits from Three Different Categories

Categories: Humanities, The Arts, US History and Civic Engagement, Social Sciences, World History and Global Awareness, World Languages (see note)

Social Sciences SPF 203 _____

Other Category _____

Other Category _____

Credits from Any Category and Any Combination

Categories: Diversity, Math and Quantitative Reasoning, Natural Sciences, Humanities, The Arts, US History and Civic Engagement, Social Sciences, World History and Global Awareness, World Languages (see note)

Other _____

Other _____

Other _____

Other (if needed) _____

NOTES:

-No more than two courses from primary major can count anywhere in GEN ED program.

-Foreign language from HS can count to satisfy requirement, but it doesn't change the minimum number of credit hours needed to satisfy GEN ED.

-Double dipping cannot occur between GEN ED categories

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (SCE) MAJOR

(63 Credit Hours)

-minimum grade of C required for EXE & EDU courses

-major courses cannot be taken pass/fail

-suggested course sequence below; work with academic advisor on individual course plan

-all coursework must be completed prior to student teaching

Semester 1

SPF 203 School & Society _____

EXE 100 Nature/Needs Ind. _____

Semester 2

SPF 202 Child Development _____

Semester 3

SPF 302 Educational Psych. _____

Semester 4

EXE 221 Found. Assess./Instr. _____

Semester 5

EDU 211 Intro. to Literacy _____

EXE 362 Behavior/Class. Man. _____

EXE 364 Educ. St. w/ Sev. Dis. _____

Semester 6

EXE 321 Rem./Adapt. Literacy _____

EDU 322 Literacy Instr. Elem. _____

EXE/EDU 323 Field Pl. Literacy _____

EXE 390 Strat./Tech. to Adapt. _____

EDU 310 Teach. S.S. Elem. _____

Semester 7

EDU 316 Teach. El. Math (6 cr.) _____

EDU 313 Teach. Science Elem. _____

EXE 311 Writing IEPs _____

Semester 8

EXE 420 Stud. Tch. Spec. Ed. (6cr.) _____

EDU 404 Stud. Tch. El. Ed. (6cr.) _____

Literacy Block

Student Teaching

CONCENTRATION

(30 Credit Hours)

-18 credit hours of

concentration must be at 300/400 level

-concentration courses cannot be taken pass/fail

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

Conc. _____

DISTRIBUTION

(24 Credit Hours)

-distribution courses cannot be taken pass/fail

Eng. _____

Eng. _____

Math _____

Math _____

Science _____

Science _____

Soc. St. _____

Soc. St. _____

