ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The special education program is an innovative and demanding program preparing special education teachers to meet the unique needs of a diverse range of K-12 students with learning disabilities and emotional impairments. Candidates are prepared to implement evidence-based instructional practices promoting access to and success in the general education curriculum through assessment, intentional instruction and evaluation. WMU’s special education program also includes preparation leading to certification in elementary education K-8.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students begin their studies in the pre-professional program. Special admission is required into the professional, upper-level courses (typically after students’ sophomore year).

→ Completion of 56 credits
→ Completion of all WMU intellectual skills development requirements, if required
→ Completion of an approved college-level writing course with a grade of “C” or better
→ Completion of ED 2500: Human Development, or an approved course, with a grade of “CB” or better
→ Achievement of a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher
→ Achievement of upper-level criteria for reading, math and writing proficiency
→ Completion of background check and submission of Judgment of Sentence or Register of Action for any convictions, if necessary
→ Submission of a formal application to the CEHD Office of Admissions and Advising

Students have the opportunity to participate in three unique study abroad opportunities, ranging from short-term to full-semester experiences.

Michigan school principals ranked 97% of new teachers prepared at WMU as “effective” or “highly effective” in 2018-19.
SPECIAL EDUCATION at WMU

PROGRAM STRENGTHS

→ Students participate in a practicum experience every semester, in addition to 9-10 weeks teaching students in learning disabilities and 5-6 weeks teaching students with emotional impairments in field-based internships.

→ The special education program faculty have experience utilizing virtual reality technology for training teachers, as well as other innovative instructional techniques.

→ Accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, Council on Exceptional Children and Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

CAREER POSSIBILITIES

→ Special education K-12
→ Elementary education K-5: all subjects
→ Elementary education K-8: all subjects in a self-contained classroom

STUDY ABROAD

→ Students in the WMU special education program have the unique opportunity to intern teach in Germany and the United Kingdom through a long-standing agreement with the U.S. Department of Defense Schools. Internships last for 15 weeks during both the fall and spring semesters, enabling student interns to experience European culture while earning 14 academic credits each semester. Interns teach on a military base where the student population consists primarily of American military children.

→ During the summer, student may engage in a three-week study abroad experience, conducting active research by studying the impact of globalization on systems in Senegal, West Africa.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

→ Future Teachers of Color
→ Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education
→ Student Council for Exceptional Children
→ Western Student Education Association

THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IS VERY CLOSE-KNIT AND TAKES EACH OF THEIR STUDENTS INTO ACCOUNT PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY.

Joanne DiGiuseppe, special education alumna