Department of Special Education

Doctoral (Ed.D.) Program

1. Program Goals:

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Special Education is a degree offered by Illinois State University for persons seeking leadership positions in the field of special education. Doctoral students complete formal course work and professional experiences related to teacher preparation and program leadership and conduct research in the field of special education that culminates in completion of a doctoral dissertation.

The primary goal of the SED doctoral program is to produce graduates who are prepared to serve as special education higher education faculty members or leaders or administrators in the field of special education.

Intended Student Learning Outcomes:

Student learning outcomes for the SED Ed.D. program align with the Advanced Content Standards identified by the Council for Exceptional Children. The following is a narrative that outlines these advanced standards. A matrix that outlines which standards are addressed in SED Ed.D. courses is also available upon request.

Advanced Standard 1: **Leadership and Policy**[1]
Special educators in advanced programs learn to use their deep understanding of the **history of special education, current legal and ethical standards, and emerging issues** to provide leadership. Special educators **promote high professional self-expectations and help others understand the needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs.** They **advocate for educational policy based on solid evidence-based knowledge** to support high quality education for individuals with exceptional learning needs. As appropriate to their role, they **advocate for appropriate resources** to ensure that all personnel involved have effective preparation. Special educators use their **knowledge of** the **needs of different groups in a pluralistic society** to promote evidence-based practices and challenging expectations for individuals with exceptional learning needs. They model **respect for all individuals and ethical practice**. They help to create **positive and productive work environments** and celebrate accomplishments with colleagues. They mentor others and promote high expectations for themselves, other professionals, and individuals with exceptional learning needs.

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[1] The bolded phrases are important elements of the standards identified to provide guidance to performance-based program developers.

Advanced Standard 2:   **Program Development & Organization**

Special educators apply their **knowledge of cognitive science, learning theory, and instructional technologies** to improve instructional programs. They **advocate for a continuum of program options and services** to ensure the appropriate instructional supports for individuals with exceptional learning needs. They **help design and deliver, as appropriate to their role, ongoing results-oriented professional development** designed to support the use of evidenced-based practices at all relevant organizational levels. They use their understanding of **the effects of cultural, social, and economic diversity and variations of individual development** to inform their development of programs and services for individuals with exceptional learning needs. . Special educators **continuously broaden and deepen their professional knowledge**, and **expand their expertise with instructional technologies, curriculum standards, effective teaching strategies, and assistive technologies to support access to learning**. They use their deep understanding of how to **coordinate educational standards to the needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs** to help all individuals with exceptional learning needs to access challenging curriculum standards.

Advanced Standard 3:   **Research & Inquiry**

Research and inquiry inform the decisions of special educators who have completed advanced programs in guiding professional practice. Special educators **know models, theories, philosophies, and research methods** that form the basis for **evidence-based practices** in special education. This knowledge includes **information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies.** Special educators evaluate the appropriateness of **research methodologies** in relation to **practices presented in the literature**. They **use educational research to improve instructional techniques, intervention strategies, and curricular materials**. They foster an **environment supportive of continuous instructional improvement**, and engage in the **design and implementation of action research**. Special educators are able to use the **literature to resolve issues of professional practice, and help others to understand various evidence-based practices**.

Advanced Standard 4:   **Student and Program Evaluation**

Evaluation is critical to advanced practice of special educators. Underlying evaluation is the knowledge of **systems and theories of educational assessment and evaluation**, along with skills in the implementation of **evidence based practices in assessment**. Effective special educators **design and implement research activities** to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional practices and, as appropriate to their role, to **assess progress toward the**

organizational vision, mission, and goals of their programs. It is critical in evaluation that **nonbiased assessment procedures** are used **in the selection of assessment instruments, methods, and procedures** for both **programs and individuals**.

With respect to evaluation of individuals, special educators prepared at the advanced level are able to **apply their knowledge and skill to all stages and purposes of evaluation** including: prereferral and screening, preplacement for special education eligibility, monitoring and reporting learning progress in the general education curriculum and other individualized educational program goals.

Advanced Standard 5: Professional Development and Ethical Practice

Special educators are guided by the professional ethics and practice standards. Special educators have responsibility for promoting the success of individuals with exceptional learning needs, their families, and colleagues. They **create supportive environments that safeguard the legal rights of students and their families**. They **model and promote ethical and professional practice**. Special educators plan, present, and evaluate **professional development,** as appropriate to their roles, based on models that apply adult learning theories and focus on effective practice at all organizational levels. Special educators model their own commitment to continuously improving their own professional practice by **participating in professional development** themselves.

Advanced Standard 6: Collaboration

Special educators prepared at the advanced level have a deep understanding of the **centrality and importance of consultation and collaboration to the roles within special education** and use this deep understand to **integrate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs.** They also understand the significance of the role of collaboration for both internal and external stakeholders, and **apply their skill to promote understanding, resolve conflicts, and build consensus among both internal and external stakeholders** to provide services to individuals with exceptional learning needs and their families.

They possess current knowledge of research on stages and models in both collaboration and consultation and ethical and legal issues related to consultation and collaboration. Moreover, special educators prepared at the advanced level have a deep understanding of the possible interactions of language, diversity, culture and religion with contextual factors and how to **use collaboration and consultation to enhance opportunities for individuals with exceptional learning needs.**

2. Systematic assessment of student learning (methodologies and capture points appropriate to the discipline

Please see the attached table of representative assessments related to the Advanced Standards identified as critical to the goals of the SED doctoral program.

3. Feedback from key stakeholders (indirect measures)

a) An exit survey is currently being developed for program completers. Students will complete this survey toward the end of the semester in which they graduate.

b) Brief annual surveys are administered to current SED doctoral students to assess levels of satisfaction with the program. These surveys afford students opportunities to express concerns about the program or inform the faculty about what is working well. The SED Doctoral Program Coordinator gathers and analyzes the survey data and reports results – in aggregate form with personal identifiers of students or faculty removed – to the SED graduate faculty.

c) SED graduate faculty members review program curriculum, programmatic details (e.g., doctoral program handbook, course offerings, admissions criteria, etc.), student feedback data, and results of student assessments at regularly scheduled sub-committee meetings or at one of their bi- or tri-semester Graduate Faculty meetings. For the past 2 years, the SED Graduate Faculty has met for a full-day May retreat to focus entirely and directly on assessment and revision of the doctoral program.

d) Liaisons for off-campus doctoral cohorts meet regularly with the SED Doctoral Program Coordinator to review program details.

e) Feedback from online survey administered to SED doctoral program alumni has been shared with the SED Doctoral Program Coordinator who then shares feedback with the SED Graduate Faculty.

4. Analysis of results/feedback mechanisms and response

Feedback from surveys and interviews with program completers, alumni, employers, and off-campus liaisons are compiled and shared with SED Graduate Faculty who work with the SED Doctoral Program Coordinator to address potential needs for revision of program requirements, curriculum, course formats, etc. For the past 2 years, the SED Graduate Faculty has met for a full-day May retreat to focus entirely and directly on assessment and revision of the doctoral program. During that retreat, all feedback data are shared and considered for application during program revision work.

Respectfully submitted by

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SED Doctoral Program Coordinator
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Assessments for SED Doctoral Program

Name of Assessment[1]	Type or Form of Assessment[2]	When the Assessment Is Administered[3]	Advanced Content Standards					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
			Leadership and Policy	Program Development and Organization	Research and Inquiry	Individual and Program Evaluation	Professional Development and Ethical Practice	Collaboration
1 **[Licensure assessment, or other content-based assessment]**	Dissertation or Course Grades	Final dissertation defense – students must meet passing criteria to earn degree	X [Standard(s) addressed depend on dissertation focus and content]					
2 **[Assessment of content knowledge in special education]**	Comprehensive Examination (SED's is project-based)	Just prior to candidacy (before dissertation proposal development)	X [Standard(s) addressed depend on dissertation focus and content]					
3 **[Assessment of candidate ability to plan instruction]**	SED 512 (Applied Research in Special Education) – Students design instructional programs, the effectiveness of which is measured within a single-subject research design	This is the main course project for SED 512 – project is evaluated at the end of the course		X	X			
4 **[Assessment of student teaching]**	SED 598.01 (Professional Practice in Personnel Preparation) - Students teach an SED undergraduate or Master's-level course with or under the supervision of an SED faculty member	1:1 course taken during the student's doctoral program					X	

[1] Identify assessment by title used in the program; refer to Section IV for further information on appropriate assessment to include.

[2] Identify the type of assessment (e.g., essay, case study, project, comprehensive exam, reflection, state licensure test, portfolio).

[3] Indicate the point in the program when the assessment is administered (e.g., admission to the program, admission to student teaching/internship, required courses [specify course title and numbers], or completion of the program).

Name of Assessment[4]		Type or Form of Assessment[5]	When the Assessment Is Administered[6]	Advanced Content Standards					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
				Leadership and Policy	Program Development and Organization	Research and Inquiry	Individual and Program Evaluation	Professional Development and Ethical Practice	Collaboration
5	[Assessment of candidate effect on student learning]	SED 514 (Personnel Preparation in Special Education); students develop and conduct a needs assessment and, based on the needs assessment results, students develop a professional development presentation for preservice or inservice teachers	This is the main course project for SED 514 – the project is evaluated at the end of the course					X	X
6	Additional assessment that addresses CEC standards (required)]	SED 540 (Seminar in Contemporary Topics in Special Education)	The main course project for SED 540 (a compre-hensive literature review) is evaluated at the end of the course	X					
7	Additional assessment that addresses CEC standards (optional)]	SED 513 (Special Education Program Evaluation)	This is the main course project for SED 513 – project is evaluated at the end of the course		X		X		X
8	Additional assessment that addresses CEC standards (optional)]	SED 579 (Advanced Technological Applications in Special Education)	This is the main course project for SED 579 – project is evaluated at the end of the course					X	

[4] Identify assessment by title used in the program; refer to Section IV for further information on appropriate assessment to include.
[5] Identify the type of assessment (e.g., essay, case study, project, comprehensive exam, reflection, state licensure test, portfolio).
[6] Indicate the point in the program when the assessment is administered (e.g., admission to the program, admission to student teaching/internship, required courses [specify course title and numbers], or completion of the program).