



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
WHITEWATER

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

SPECIAL EDUCATION- COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Special Education is a collaborative community of teacher scholars whose mission is to prepare teachers to become agents of change on behalf of all children and families. Graduates of our programs will possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the learned bodies of the Council for Exceptional Children and the National Association for the Education of Young Children and will:

- Implement evidence-based practices;
- Advocate for equitable education in inclusive settings across the lifespan;
- Facilitate purposeful change; and
- Value life-long learning and reflective practices.

The mission of the licensure program in the Department of Special Education at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater is to prepare teachers for the 21st century who demonstrate professional integrity and competence to work with students with diverse abilities and backgrounds and their families.

The Department of Special Education at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, consistent with the university, college and departmental missions will:

- Facilitate the development of reflective professionals who will effectively facilitate the teaching/learning process among diverse students and their families through demonstrated competence in WTS/CEC/NCATE/INTASC knowledge, skills, and dispositions;
- Apply research-based, culturally-responsive curriculum and instruction to serve diverse students and their families in multiple settings;
- Embrace the concept of lifelong learning and develop the ability to collaborate with families and other professionals from multiple disciplines;
- Develop skills to advocate on behalf of children and families;
- Use technology to enhance and extend the abilities and opportunities of students;
- Facilitate the development of students with knowledge, skills and dispositions in the following 5 core values: Communication Skills, Human Relations and Professional Dispositions, Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge, and Teaching Practice.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are statements of what a student will know or be able to do when they have completed a program. They represent the knowledge and skills a program has determined are most important for students to gain from that program. The most useful SLOs are specific and measurable so the program can accurately assess the degree to which students have achieved each outcome, and they align with college and institution mission and values. Data on achievement of SLOs is used to make improvements in the program and increase student success.

The following SLOs emanate from the Council for Exceptional Children Preparation Standards (accreditation body for Special Education programs) and address 4 main areas: Learner and Learning, Content Knowledge and Professional Foundations, Instructional Pedagogy, and Professionalism and Collaboration. Further delineation occurs based on the Initial Specialty Sets of Standards specific to the Cognitive Disabilities emphasis.

Students who graduate from UW-Whitewater with a degree in Special Education: Cognitive Disabilities will meet the following student learning outcomes:

- Understand how exceptionalities may interact with development and learning and use this knowledge to provide meaningful and challenging learning experiences for individuals with exceptionalities.
- Create safe, inclusive, culturally responsive learning environments so that individuals with exceptionalities become active and effective learners and develop emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and self-determination.
- Use knowledge of general and specialized curricula to individualize learning for individuals with exceptionalities.
- Use multiple methods of assessment and data-sources in making educational decisions.
- Select, adapt, and use a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to advance learning of individuals with exceptionalities.
- Use foundational knowledge of the field and their professional Ethical Principles and Practice Standards to inform special education practice, to engage in lifelong learning, and to advance the profession.
- Collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, individuals with exceptionalities, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways to address the needs of individuals with exceptionalities across the range of learning experiences.