

**ANDREWS UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**MS: EDUCATION CANDIDATE HANDBOOK  
Special Education/Learning Disabilities**

This *Handbook* has been published to assist in the planning and execution of the **Special Education program** of Andrews University. It does not supersede the *Andrews University Bulletin*.

Questions not answered in this *Handbook* or the *Bulletin* may be referred to the Chair of the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology at 269.471.3473.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Master's of Science: Education Special Education/Learning Disabilities (SPED/LD) emphasis

### OVERVIEW

Mission Statement .....	1
Who qualifies for the MS degree? .....	1
Why the Andrews University MS in education degree? .....	1
PROGRAM INFORMATION.....	2
MS: Education, Emphasis in Special Education/Learning Disabilities .....	2
Admissions Information .....	2
MS Program Procedures.....	2

### MS SPED/LD COURSE WORK & PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1.1 Admission Status .....	3
A. Regular: .....	3
B. Provisional: .....	3
1.2 Minimal Admission Requirements .....	3
1.3 Academic Advisement.....	3
1.4 MS: SPED/LED Program Course Work.....	3
A. Course Numbering/Levels .....	3
B. Program Course Work Requirements: .....	3
1.5 Transfer of Credits .....	4
A. From Another Recognized Institution .....	4
B. From a Previous Degree at Andrews University .....	4
C. Permission to Take Classes (PTC).....	4
1.6 Transfer of Degree Program .....	4
A. From a Master's Outside of the School of Education to the MS Education SPED/LD.....	4
B. From a Master's Within the School of Education to the MS Education SPED/LD .....	4
C. Transfer Timeline .....	5
1.7 Candidate Responsibility for Bulletin Requirements .....	5
1.8 Time Limitations .....	5
1.9 Inactive Status .....	5
1.10 Standards of Scholarship .....	5
A. Schedule of Studies .....	5

B.	Provisional Status .....	5
C.	Grade-Point Average .....	5
D.	Academic Probation .....	5
E.	Other Standards .....	6
1.11	Satisfactory Academic Progress .....	6

### **ADVANCEMENT TO DEGREE CANDIDACY**

2.1	Procedure .....	6
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### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

3.1	Application for Graduation .....	6
3.2	Completion of Program Requirements .....	6
3.3	Graduation Gown.....	6
3.4	Announcement/Name Cards .....	6
3.5	Lodging.....	6
3.6	Graduation Schedule.....	7
3.7	Conferral of Degree .....	7
3.8	Graduation in Absentia .....	7

### **STUDENT APPEAL PROCESS**

4.1	Conflict with Policy in General .....	7
4.2	Conflict with Policy in Particular .....	7
4.3	Conflict with a Faculty Member over Practice .....	8

# **Master of Science: Education**

## **Special Education/Learning Disabilities (SPED/LD) emphasis**

### **OVERVIEW**

The faculty and staff of the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology (ECP) are pleased that you have been accepted into the MS program in education. As the professional world continues to demand higher levels of knowledge and advanced degrees, graduate study is a wise and sophisticated step towards your career goal. The ECP Department is pleased to offer a comprehensive instructional program that includes courses which focus on learning, advanced instruction, worldview, and research.

#### **Mission Statement**

The School of Education's mission is to provide programs based on a redemptive Christian worldview to prepare professionals for global service.

#### **Who qualifies for the MS degree?**

The State of Michigan requires students to possess a valid State of Michigan General Education Teaching Certificate prior to the submission of an application for the Special Education Teaching Endorsement. Students who have been accepted in the Andrews University MAT program can petition to be concurrently accepted with dual enrollment into the MS program. The MS program can be used as the "major" in the MAT degree.

Typically the MS candidates include:

1. Individuals who have earned a Bachelors degree and are currently enrolled in the MAT program seeking a General Education Certification and a Special Education Endorsement.
2. Individuals who are already holding a General Education Certification, but are seeking an additional endorsement in Special Education.
3. Individuals who hold a Bachelors degree who are not seeking Michigan State Special Education credentials but are interested in the Special Education degree.

#### **Why the Andrews University MS in Education degree?**

In addition to relevant coursework, invaluable real-world work experience, and an emphasis on Christian compassion, our program also features:

**On-line course formats**                      Some of our graduate level courses are offered on-line or through a web enhancement format

**An outstanding faculty**                      Our programs are built upon and supported by a foundation of a dedicated and specialized faculty. We have a reputation for academic excellence, and our candidates enjoy a high rate of professional and personal success all over the world.

**Accreditation**                      Our Teacher Preparation Programs are accredited by both the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the State of Michigan as well as approved by the North American Division Office of Education, General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists.

**Certification**                      The Teacher Preparation Programs are designed to qualify candidates for teacher certification in the State of Michigan as well as in most other states through accreditation reciprocity granted by holding current NCATE accreditation.

**Exploratory Learning**                      Educator candidates are involved in an ongoing process exploring interrelationships among broad interdisciplinary perspectives, the Special Education profession, and their own knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Encouragement to promote improvement in the field of Special Education is developed through perspicacious study and the application of empirical research findings.

**Small Class Sizes**                      In addition to a quality educational experience, classes are small enough to provide a personal learning experience. Classes are often conducted conference style, promoting direct involved

discussion between students, professors, and invited guests.

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **MS: Education, Emphasis in Special Education/Learning Disabilities**

The MS program leads to the Michigan State Endorsement in Special Education in the area of Learning Disabilities and a Masters of Science Degree in Education. **MS candidates seeking endorsement must qualify for a valid State of Michigan teaching certificate before the degree can be granted. This includes passing the *MTTC Subject-Area Exam (Learning Disabled)*.**

The MS program can be taken concurrently with the MAT program; this entails working on a general education and special education advance degree simultaneously. Special Education can satisfy as a major for the MAT program, so all of the MAT requirements must be fulfilled as indicated in the *Bulletin* and the *Master's of Arts in Teaching Handbook*. This option requires dual enrollment in the MAT and the MS.

The MS program does not have to lead to the Michigan State Certification in Special Education, but can lead to an advanced degree in Special Education for other career purposes. If a student chooses this path and does not complete the MTTC Subject Area Exam (LD), they must pass a comprehensive exam prior to graduation.

### **Admissions Information**

For all candidates, the first step is to complete an Andrews University Graduate Application. All official transcripts must be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies. Candidates must also complete the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) before admission or prior to the completion of 16 credits and/or half of the MS program. Students who do not complete the GRE prior to admission may be admitted on a provisional status.

### **MS Program Procedures**

- Apply for admission to the Andrews University Office of Graduate Studies
- Submit transcripts for evaluation by the Certification Registrar in the Teaching, Learning, & Curriculum Department (these can be unofficial)
- Develop a course plan in collaboration with an advisor using an outline of requirements prepared by the Certification Registrar
- Continue coursework
- Complete the GRE
- Apply for Advancement to Degree Candidacy (see page 9)
- Pass the *MTTC Subject-Area Exam: Learning Disabled* (If you are dual enrolled in the MAT, you will also need to take additional state exams. i.e., Basic Skills, Subject Area) (If you are transferring your General Education Certification from another state, you may need to take these aforementioned general education exams)
- Apply for field experience prior to the semester of enrollment
- Complete program and apply for teaching credentials with Certification Registrar
- EACH of the subjects of study must have a 3.00GPA with no lower than a B- in any course counting towards the major (see page 8)

## COURSE WORK STEPS

### 1.1 Admission Status

- A. Regular:  
If you meet all the admission requirements of Andrews University, School of Education and the specific requirements of the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum or the extension campus on which you propose to study, you are eligible for regular admission status.
- B. Provisional:  
If you do not meet all requirements for regular admission, but the judgment of the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum (TLC) or Dean/Director believes you show the ability to successfully undertake the proposed program, you are eligible for provisional status. At the time of provisional admission, the department or Dean/Director specifies the nature of any deficiencies, the plan and condition for their removal (see page 2, GRE). The class load limit for candidates on provisional status is normally 12 credits. If you fail to meet prescribed specifications, you may be dropped from the program.

### 1.2 Minimal Admission Requirements

To qualify for regular admission to the MS program, you must submit official, final transcripts of all previous undergraduate and graduate work taken and meet the general standards:

- A. A bachelor's degree from an accredited university or its equivalent
- B. Evidence of ability to pursue advanced study in graduate-level work with a cumulative undergraduate grade-point average of at least 2.60 on a 4.00 scale
- C. Submission of recent General Records Examination (GRE) scores taken within five years of application
- D. Adequate undergraduate and/or graduate preparation in the proposed field of study and general education. Assessment of preparation is done by the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum. (6 credits of education coursework in the undergraduate level.)
- E. Evidence of the ability to handle master's-level work in the English language. If your first language is not English, you must submit scores on an English language achievement test. (See *AU Bulletin* Admission of International Candidate.)
- F. A minimum of two satisfactory recommendations showing strong potential for educational leadership and service
- G. A written statement of purpose for graduate study in the MS program

### 1.3 Academic Advisement

During the first semester in the program discuss with and receive counseling from your education advisors about academic requirements and expectations. One of your goals in the first semester is to develop a course plan which meets program requirements. If you are also enrolled in the MAT program, also meet with that advisor to approve concurring coursework.

### 1.4 MS: SPED/LED Program Course Work

- A. Course Numbering/Levels  
400-499: Courses open to advanced undergraduate candidates and to graduate candidates are listed in the *Andrews University Bulletin*. These courses are marked with a bullet. Students in a graduate program should make sure they enroll in these courses for graduate credit.  
500-699: Courses for graduate candidates only.  
700-799: Courses for post-master's candidates only.
- B. Program Course Work Requirements:  
Candidates will need to carefully plan their MS program with their academic advisor and/or the Certification Registrar. The MS program consists of 32+ \* semester credits of graduate work that can require 24 months of full time study beyond the bachelor's degree.
  - 1. All MS candidates are required to take the Andrews University School of Education foundations course, EDFN500 Philosophical Foundations of Education and Psychology
  - 2. Prerequisites include EDPC/SPED525 or SPED228, EDPC514, EDPC540, EDTE420, and SPPA435, are considered prerequisite courses and can be transferred into your program.

3. The Professional core consists of the following credits of coursework: EDFN500, EDPC/SPED515, EDPC651, EDPC644, EDPC672, EDCI/SPED645, and EDRM505
4. Specialty courses which include EDCI/SPED617, EDTE625, EDCI/SPED665, EDTE588, and EDCI/SPED689
5. State and/or denominational teaching credentials are required before graduation. If you are seeking a MS degree without state certification you must obtain a petition
6. MS candidates can take no more than 6 credits of independent study and/or 6 credits of workshop/tour for a combined total of 9 hours
7. No more than 20% of MS core and specialty credits can be transferred from another institution

\* Students may combine the MAT with the MS degree, but additional credits beyond the 31 credits will be required to meet certification requirements.

## 1.5 Transfer of Credits

### A. From Another Recognized Institution

You may transfer graduate courses that you have taken at another recognized institution and apply them toward the MS degree at Andrews University by petition, provided:

1. The courses were taken less than six calendar years before your expected graduation year.
2. The grade earned in each course is **at least a B** (3.00) (B- does not apply).
3. The courses apply toward a comparable degree at that institution.
4. The courses meet similar requirements or electives within the MS program on your campus.
5. The transferring credits do not exceed one-fifth (6 credits) of the minimum credits required for the MS degree program.
6. Such courses are identified and recommended by your adviser/program director and approved by the Graduate Programs Director of the School of Education within the first semester or second summer of the student's study.
7. An official transcript listing transfer courses is on file in the Records Office, Andrews University.
8. A petition is submitted and approved **before** the course is taken if the course is to be taken after admission to Andrews University.
9. The Records Office computes two types of GPAs. One includes the transfer courses; one does not include transfer course grades.

### B. From a Previous Degree at Andrews University

You may transfer graduate courses taken at Andrews University as part of another completed graduate degree providing the following are satisfied:

1. The courses were taken less than six calendar years before your expected graduation year.
2. The grade earned in each course is **at least a B** (3.00) and the cumulative grade-point average on your campus is at least 3.00.
3. The courses meet similar requirements or electives within the MS program.
4. Transfer credits do not exceed one-fifth (6 credits) of the minimum credits required for the MS program.
5. Such courses are recommended by the adviser/program director and approved by the Graduate Programs Director/Dean, Andrews University.
6. Includes the grades earned in courses transferred from another master's program on your campus in the computation of the grade-point average. (Both the overall grade-point average and the grade-point average of the remaining courses taken for the MS degree meet the minimum 3.00 required for graduation.)

### C. Permission to Take Classes (PTC)

Only 12 credits taken on PTC status may apply toward the MS degree, but not all classes taken on PTC status necessarily apply to your approved degree program. To transfer PTC courses into your program, you must submit a petition that is approved by your adviser, your department chair/coordinator, and the SED Graduate Programs Office (or program director/dean for off-campus students). (See appendix 6)

## 1.6 Transfer of Degree Program

### A. From a Master's Outside of the School of Education to the MS Education SPED/LD

If you wish to transfer from outside the School of Education, you must complete a "Transfer of School" form and attach a Statement of Purpose. Forms are submitted to the SED Graduate Programs Office for processing.

### B. From a Master's Within the School of Education to the MS Education SPED/LD

If you wish to transfer between departments or programs you must complete a "Transfer of Program" form and attach a statement of Purpose. Forms are submitted to the SED Graduate Programs Office for processing.

C. Transfer Timeline

If you wish to transfer, policy allows this transfer to occur up to the end of second semester of enrollment in the first program. Exceptions can be made, but additional paperwork may be required.

### 1.7 Candidate Responsibility for Bulletin Requirements

You should become familiar with the regulations governing academic matters. The *School of Education Section in the AU Bulletin* covers general questions about academic policies that you are to observe. Although the policies of the *Bulletin* have the weight of faculty action, practice and precedent, occasionally special circumstances may suggest an exception. The petition process handles such circumstances through the SED Graduate Programs Office.

### 1.8 Time Limitations

You must complete the requirements for the MS degree within six calendar years from the beginning of the first semester of coursework irrespective of admission classification. Transfer courses must also be taken within these time limits. However, outdated course work **taken at Andrews University** may be considered appropriate for updating if between six and ten years from your expected graduation date.

### 1.9 Inactive Status

Inactive Status results when you have not written or made a personal visit to your adviser/program director or the Dean of the School of Education at Andrews University for more than two years. The SED Graduate Program Secretary will try to contact you to determine if you are actively pursuing your program of studies and are making progress. After deactivation you must request the SED Graduate Programs Office for reinstatement before you may continue in your MS program. Upon reactivation you must meet the requirements of the *Bulletin* in force at that time.

### 1.10 Standards of Scholarship

A. Schedule of Studies

You must fulfill satisfactorily the schedule of studies outlined in your "Advancement to Degree Candidacy" (see **Advancement to Degree Candidacy**, section 2.0) form as submitted and approved.

B. Provisional Status

If you have been accepted provisionally:

1. Due to low admission GPA standards, you must achieve a cumulative Andrews University grade point average of 3.00 for the first 12 credits after acceptance in courses graded A-F to continue in the program.
2. Because of English language deficiencies, you must meet the minimal English language proficiency requirement by the time you have completed no more than 50 percent of your coursework or suspend progress in your graduate program until the deficiency has been removed.
3. Because GRE scores were not submitted, you must submit scores before you are advanced to degree candidacy.

If you are on provisional status you may not register for independent study or workshop credits, advance to degree candidacy, or take student teaching/field experience.

C. Grade-Point Average

To remain in the program you must maintain a grade-point average of 3.00 overall and in your major or concentration. Only grades of B- or better count toward the major or concentration. Although C grades are permitted outside the major, an overall grade-point average 3.00 or better must be maintained. No grade of C-, D or F may count toward a degree. If you repeat a course, the credits and quality points earned in the most recent course will be used to calculate the GPA. Accumulation of more than four grades below a B- (including U), normally terminates your enrollment.

D. Academic Probation

If the cumulative grade-point average in your MS work drops below 3.00 in any given semester, you will be placed on academic probation. You and your adviser/program director must develop a plan to raise your grade-point average above 3.00, normally within the next semester. The Adviser/Program Director and SED Graduate Programs Office must approve this plan. When your cumulative grade-point average again reaches 3.00, the Graduate Programs Office will reinstate you to regular standing. However, if you have not reached the minimum grade-point average within the time limits stated in the approved plan, you may be dropped from the program. If you are on

academic probation status you may not register for independent study, workshop credits, or project credit except by permission from the Graduate Programs Office of the School of Education, Andrews University, be advanced to degree candidacy, or do student teaching/field experience.

E. Other Standards

The MS degree does not accept course credits by examination.

**1.11 Satisfactory Academic Progress**

For full information concerning Satisfactory Academic Progress required for continued financial aid eligibility, read the *Andrews University Bulletin*.

## **ADVANCEMENT TO DEGREE CANDIDACY**

**2.1 Procedure**

Upon completion of 50% (16 credits) of your course work, you must apply for advancement to degree candidacy (or the summer **before** graduation if you attend in the summers only). Forms and instructions are available from the SED Graduate Programs Office (Bell Hall Room 164) or from the Program Director on extension campuses. At the time you file an application for advancement to degree candidacy, you must have:

- A. Removed all deficiencies
- B. Achieved regular status
- C. Demonstrated English language proficiency (where required)
- D. Maintained a cumulative grade-point average of 3.00 or higher.
- E. Cleared all DGs and Incompletes

If you have completed 75% (24 credits) of your program you may not be allowed to register for further course work until the advancement to candidacy forms have been approved.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

**3.1 Application for Graduation**

You must file your application for degree conferral/graduation with the Records Office at Andrews University according to the dates shown in the Andrews University *Academic Calendar*. If you have missed the deadlines, your degree on deferral/graduation must be deferred until the next regularly scheduled time.

**3.2 Completion of Program Requirements**

- A. Complete **all** program requirements and have such verified by your adviser/program director, the Certification Registrar, the Andrews University Graduate Dean and School of Education Dean.
- B. Remove all **I** and **DG** grades that apply to your degree at least two weeks before graduation.
- C. Receive financial clearance from the Student Finance Office of your campus (Andrews or extension) one week prior to commencement.
- D. Assure that you have completed all state exams and/or degree comprehensive exams prior to applications for graduation.

**3.3 Graduation Gown**

Your graduation gown can be purchased at the Bookstore.

**3.4 Announcement/Name Cards**

You may purchase announcements and name cards through the Bookstore. Personalized and generic announcements are available. For more information call 269-471-3287.

**3.5 Lodging**

You may have friends who need lodging for the occasion. If not, call 269-471-6602 or 269-471-3397 to reserve a room on campus. Make these arrangements as soon as possible as this will be a busy weekend.

### 3.6 Graduation Schedule

It is a full weekend. Rehearsal practice is Thursday evening. There are ceremonies Friday evening, Saturday morning and Sunday morning. Be sure to check the schedule of events. Some programs may involve your family member and/or significant others.

### 3.7 Conferral of Degree

Conferrals of degrees are awarded when you have successfully completed **all** degree requirements. There are two commencement services each year, scheduled for May and August. Degree conferral without the graduation ceremony is available in December.

### 3.8 Graduation in Absentia

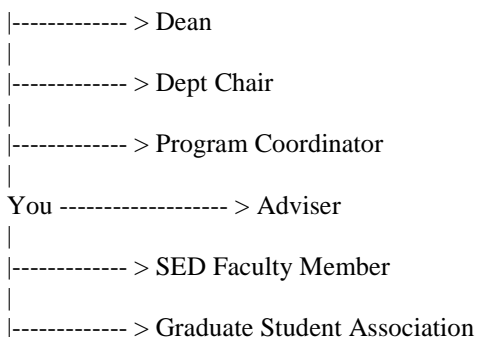
You may graduate in absentia by indicating your request to the Records Office.

## STUDENT APPEAL PROCESS

If you find yourself in conflict with or questioning any practice, decision and/or policy that, in your mind, impacts upon you adversely you may discuss the matter with responsible School of Education personnel in an attempt to have the situation considered, improved or settled. The nature of the conflict will, in part, determine the procedure to follow. Fundamental to any procedure, however, is the basic commitment to Christian principles. (References to Department Chair, Dean, University Ombudsman, Academic Policies and Curricula Committee, and Vice President for Academic Administration refer to Andrews University personnel.) (References in this Handbook to Adviser/Program Director refer to the on-campus/extension campus representative, respectively. **Off-campus MS students** would refer to the extension campus Program Director and **on-campus MS students** would refer to their campus adviser.) (References to Graduate Programs Office refer to Dean of the School of Education located on the campus of Andrews University.)

### 4.1 Conflict with Policy in General

When you question an established policy, you may discuss it with your adviser, Department Chair, Program Coordinator, Dean, and/or any faculty member; or you may direct the question to the Graduate Student Association for general discussion by other students.



### 4.2 Conflict with Policy in Particular

When you feel adversely affected by established policy, you should discuss it first with your adviser. This may result in petitioning to waive the policy in this particular case.

You ----> Adviser ----> Program Coordinator ----> Dept Chair----> Dean

If you cannot get your adviser to support your petition, you should discuss it next with the Department Chair. At this point, you may file a petition seeking a waiver or the chair may intervene by bringing the matter to the Dean's Administrative Council.

You ----> Program Coordinator ----> Petition ----> Dept Chair----> Dean

**OR**

You ----> Dept Chair ----> DAC ----> Appropriate resource

If either of the above protocols does not bring satisfactory resolution to the problem, you may bring the matter to the Dean of the School of Education. If the Dean cannot settle the situation, you may refer the matter to the SED Graduate and Undergraduate Academic Policies and Curricula Committee.

You ----> Dean

**OR**

You ----> Dean ----> AP & CC

If the problem still does not have a resolution you may discuss the matter with the University Ombudsman or the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

You ----> University Ombudsman

**OR**

You ----> Vice President for Academic Affairs (Final Appeal)

#### **4.3 Conflict with a Faculty Member over Practice**

If conflict arises between you and a faculty member, the ideal protocol from a Christian perspective is that you seek a resolution first with the faculty member in question.

You ----> Faculty Member

When you feel that the above procedure may, in itself, affect you adversely, you should contact your adviser who may then mediate on your behalf.

You ----> Adviser ----> Program Coordinator ----> Dept Chair----> Faculty Member

If you consider either of the above procedures counterproductive, you may bring your grievance directly to the Dean of the School of Education.

You ----> Dean ----> Faculty Member

In those rare instances when you consider all of the above procedures to be intimidating or fail to bring relief you may bring your problem to the University Ombudsman.

You ----> University Ombudsman ----> Appropriate Personnel

In those extreme instances when none of the above procedures bring satisfactory resolution to the problem, you then have the right to bring the matter to the President of the University.

You ----> President

The president's decision is final in this type of conflict.

## APPENDICES