

Graduate Certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders

1. Introduction

The College of Education proposes a graduate certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The certificate will be a collaborative effort between the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling, and the Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology in the College of Education and the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders in the College of Health Sciences. Students will complete a total of 15 graduate credit hours.

1.1 Need

As the prevalence of ASD increases throughout the nation and state, the challenges of providing quality programming for students in general and special education are growing. Using a unique distance delivered model, the certificate has the potential to provide advanced credentials in this critical need area for special education teachers and related personnel professionals across Kentucky.

The primary purpose of the proposed certificate is to provide special education teachers and related personnel from across the state with advanced credentials that will allow them to implement evidence-based and research-based strategies. The certificate will accomplish the following: (a) efficiently and effectively equip professionals to meet federal and state demands for quality; (b) provide professionals with the knowledge and skills to identify, use, and recommend research-based practices for students who have ASD, including students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and (c) provide personnel with knowledge and skills to work collaboratively with district and school-level teams. The specialized five course ASD Graduate Certificate program will include competencies in the following areas: (a) implementing evidence-based and research-based instruction, (b) using data from formal and informal assessments to guide instruction, and (c) serving as specialists in district and school-wide programs to support students with autism in improving areas of communication, socialization, behavior, and access to the general education curriculum. Biannual Autism Institutes will provide students with opportunities to practice and apply skills in simulated and real-world contexts.

1.2 Content

The content of this graduate certificate in ASD will focus on serving individuals on the ASD spectrum, across the lifespan. An interdisciplinary approach will provide students with a foundation of characteristics, etiologies, assessment issues/strategies, communication, collaboration, and research-based interventions used with individuals with ASD. Students will learn to critically analyze current trends, issues, and therapies used with individuals with ASD, providing a comprehensive array of practical research-based instructional approaches to use. An emphasis on collaboration with families and other professionals, facilitating access to the general curriculum, and appropriate

assessment will be included throughout coursework. The ASD certificate will culminate in a face-to-face institute where students will connect content knowledge for courses taken with practical applications. Students will demonstrate skills in areas such as implementing research-based strategies and/ or behavior supports, collaborating for planning and delivery of instruction, working with diverse families and service providers, and evaluating appropriate technologies based on student needs. Students will demonstrate proficiency via role-play, case studies, video examples, and/or direct observation of individuals with ASD. Students will have an opportunity to learn from one another and experts in the field in a face-to-face format.

2. Details

2.1 Admission Requirements

A pre-requisite to admission to the ASD certificate program is admission to the University of Kentucky Graduate School. That requires evidence of an awarded baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher learning. In addition to full admission to any existing graduate program, Graduate School admission status may be post-baccalaureate or non-degree. Students will also need to have successfully passed EDS 601.

2.2 Faculty

The Overview of Characteristics and Instructional Strategies for Individuals with ASD course will be taught by Dr. Amy Spriggs. The Advanced Instructional Strategies for Individuals with ASD course will be taught by Dr. Victoria Knight. The Communication, AAC, and Technology for Individuals with ASD course will be co-taught by Dr. Melinda Ault and Dr. Jane Kleinert. The Collaboration and Consultation course will be taught by Dr. Lisa Ruble. Serving Individuals with ASD Institute course will be taught collaboratively by the aforementioned professors. All professors listed are members of the Graduate faculty.

2.3 Administration

The certificate will be administered by the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling. Certificate check sheets will be approved by Dr. Victoria Knight.

2.4 Division of Labor

Courses will be taught by the respective faculty as part of the distribution of effort in teaching or during the summer

2.5 Resources

The certificate in ASD will not require additional resources.

2.6 Program Design

The program is designed for students to progress through coursework in a sequential order. Students will complete the program in approximately 2 years. All courses with the exception of the institute will be taught via distance learning. The institute will be taught on campus in an intensive one – two week block. The graduate credit hours for the certificate will be 15 (e.g. 5 courses worth 3 credit hours each).

2.7 Program Design

The certificate program in ASD will have five required courses. Prior to beginning the first course, students will need to have successfully completed EDS 601 (Applied Behavior Analysis)

Required Courses

EDS 660	Overview of Characteristics and Instructional Strategies for Individuals with ASD (3 credit hours)
EDS 661	Advanced Instructional Strategies for Students with ASD (3 credit hours)
EDS 662/ CSD 649	Communication, AAC, and Technology for Individuals with ASD (3 credit hours)
EDP 671	Seminar in Psychoeducational Consultation in the Schools (3 credit hours)
EDS 663	Serving Individuals with ASD Institute (3 credit hours)

2.8 Assessment

Students will be assessed throughout all of courses in both a formative and summative manner. Students will rate themselves upon entering the ASD certificate on their skills and knowledge of individuals with ASD. Upon exiting the program, students will again rate themselves on their growth in skills and knowledge of individuals with ASD. Students will also be assessed on the degree to which they can implement strategies learned with fidelity. Fidelity checks will be conducted at the culminating course, EDS 663 (Serving Individuals with ASD Institute).

3.0 Course Outline

See attached course syllabi:

EDS 660
EDS 661
EDS 662/CSD 649

EDP 671
EDS 663

3.1 Certificate Associates

Autism Spectrum Disorders Certificate Associates:					
Faculty Member	Department	Offer Foundation Course?	Offer Other Courses?	Supervise Research or Service?	Director of Certificate?
Dr. Victoria Knight	EDSRC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dr. Amy Spriggs	EDSRC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Dr. Melinda Ault	EDSRC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Dr. Lisa Ruble	EDP	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Dr. Jane Kleinert	CSD	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

** The certificate in ASD will not require additional resources.

3.2 Potential Impact

Cost of Tuition	Possible Number of Students	Possible Career Opportunities	Possible Increase in Salary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident: 15 hours @ \$519/hr = \$7785 Non-Resident: 15 hours @ \$1100/hr = \$16500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 - 30 students each summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fayette County Public Schools (Awarded Rank 3.2 - AB +15 hours graduate work) Fayette County Public Schools (Hours Toward Rank 2.1 - MA) Fayette County Public Schools (Hours in addition to Masters.. Rank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$152 - \$843 per year increase (for teachers between 0 and 10 years experience) \$2570 - 3537 per year increase (for teachers between 0 and 10 years experience) \$942 - \$1005 per year

		2.2 MA + 15 hours graduate work)	increase (over Master's increase for teachers between 0 and 10 years experience)
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