



# *Major to Career Guide*

# Special Education

Degree: Bachelor of Arts

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## *Introduction*

Special education teachers will work with those who have specific learning disabilities including mental retardation, speech or language impairment, emotional disturbance, visual and hearing impairment, orthopedic impairment, autism, brain impairment, multiple disabilities, and the gifted and talented. Some special education teachers have their own classrooms for teaching students with a variety of special needs. Others work as resource room teachers providing individualized help pulling the students from the regular education classes for a period of time. Others teach with regular education teachers in classes combining general and special education teachers.

## *What are some of the job tasks?*

- Help develop with other educational specialists an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each special education student
- Assess the instructional needs of individual students and modify curriculum materials for them
- Use formal and informal assessment to document the progress of each student
- Evaluate results and prepare the paperwork required by the school administration and government

## *What are some potential occupations?*

Special Education Teacher  
College Professor

## *What are some desirable personal qualities?*

- Intelligence, creativity, imagination, inventiveness, and energy
- Desire to try new ideas
- Well organized
- Broad knowledge of the arts, sciences, and history
- Knowledge of the laws pertaining to special education
- Ability to talk easily with all kinds of people
- Patience
- Ability to maintain discipline
- Compassion and empathy for others
- Desire to help others
- Good communication skills
- Language and mathematical skills
- Social and persuasive abilities
- Knowledge of medical terminology and human anatomy
- Attention to detail

## *Additional information*

Students can gain insight into this field by serving as aides to special education teachers.

All states require certification for public teaching.

Special education teacher must first earn certification in elementary or secondary school teaching and then meet requirements for certification in special education in most states.

Certification normally requires completion of graduate work as well as student teaching or an internship.

## *Who hires?*

- Public and Private Primary and Secondary Schools

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