PhD in Special Education with Emphasis in Behavior Disorders

Degree Overview and Requirements

The Doctorate of Philosophy program in Behavior Disorders supports advanced instruction and research in Behavior Disorders. Candidates complete individualized programs of study to meet their learning objectives and prepare for further research in the field. The candidate will build on prior graduate coursework through special education doctoral coursework, specified behavior disorders coursework, and dissertation preparation and defense. Students meeting entrance criteria will be conditionally admitted to the program, assigned an advisor, and expected to enroll in designated requisite coursework.

1. After completion of 9 credit hours, including 3 credits of quantitative methods plus 6 credits of special education doctoral core coursework, students must pass a qualifying examination to be fully admitted into the department.

2. Upon successful completion of the qualifying examination, students form a program committee and develop a program plan. The committee shall consist of four or more graduate faculty members (at least three from within the department and at least one from outside the department). The program plan will delineate coursework and competency activities to meet department requirements.

3. Once the majority of course-work and competencies are completed (80-90%), students will be required to pass a comprehensive examination to advance to candidacy.

4. Upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination, students will form a dissertation committee and develop a research proposal. The dissertation committee may be the same as the program committee or may change based on the need to include faculty members with specific areas of expertise. Once all committee members approve the proposal, students can begin implementation of the dissertation study.

5. Upon completion of the study, students must submit a written draft to the dissertation committee and orally defend their work.

6. Students will graduate only after all dissertation committee members approve the written dissertation and oral defense.

7. Students must also comply with all College of Education and Office of Graduate Studies guidelines.

Admissions

Applicants are required to meet two sets of minimum qualifications for admission: the requirements of the PhD in Special Education program (http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/programs/special-education/doctorate.php) and the minimum requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies (http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/admissions/eligibility-process/minimum-requirements.php). Because requirements vary, you must refer to a degree program’s graduate admission page to learn about specific admission criteria, application deadlines, eligibility and application process. Before official admissions to the University of Missouri, your application materials will be reviewed by both the Office of Graduate Studies and the degree program to which you’ve applied.