

University of Delaware Special Education Methods Block

What is the special education methods block?

The UD special education methods block consists of **five courses** that equips our students, who have chosen special education as a concentration area, with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to effectively support and engage students with diverse learning needs. We call it a “**block**” because the courses are blocked together so that we can design a course schedule that will allow for consistent time in the field.

The five courses are:

- EDUC431: Applied Behavior Analysis
- EDUC432: Curriculum and Instruction for Exceptional Learners
- EDUC435: Educational Evaluation for Exceptional Learners
- EDUC437: Diagnosis and Instruction for Literacy Problems
- EDUC428: Critical Reflection of Teacher Decision Making

All the above courses **include field assignments** designed to help our students gain practice with and better understand the responsibilities associated with being a special education teacher.

Why do we place UD students in pairs (for the most part)?

1. Due to the size of our program, it can be challenging to find placements. Placing in pairs decreases the number of placements we need and ensures our students are having quality field experiences.
2. Being paired allows our students to gain experience with co-planning, co-teaching, and collaboration—all necessary skills in teaching.

How often are the methods students present in your classroom?

They will be expected to **spend full days** in your classroom **on Tuesdays and Thursdays**. In addition, there will be **two specific weeks** (*see calendar*) when their UD courses are cancelled so that they can spend five consecutive days in the field (M-F). These are when most if not all of their teaching assignments take place. If a scheduled field day falls on a PD Day for you, our students are still expected to attend if possible. If your school is closed during a scheduled day in the field, our students will not have to make up the day.

What do our students need out of their placement?

- A teacher who is willing to mentor our students and share their ideas, challenges, feedback, and of course, students.
- Access to observing instruction, teaching and working with students with IEPs/504 plans.
- **Opportunities to be actively involved** in what happens in the classroom/special education setting-this can involve working with individual students, teaching small groups, co-teaching lessons, grading work, assisting with duties, etc. We want you to put them to work!!
- Feedback, guidance, encouragement, and support 😊

Can I host UD students if I teach in a general education setting that includes students with IEPs?

Yes! We realize that special education teachers teach in diverse settings. Some of you may be the general education teacher who is dually certified responsible for teaching students with and without IEPs. Some of you may be the special education teacher in a co-teaching situation with a general education teacher. And others may pull groups of students out of their general education classrooms during the day and teach in a small group resource room type setting. All these settings can work. Our students just need to be given access to students with IEPs and be able to observe how services are delivered during the school day.

What happens if I have questions or concerns or need to adjust their schedules, teaching assignments, etc.?

You and your UD students will be assigned a **FIELD INSTRUCTOR** from UD who will be available to guide you, respond to questions, and facilitate any adjustments that need to happen. Our field instructors will check in regularly, visit your classroom, and observe the UD students teach at least 2 of their lessons (conferencing with them afterwards). They share their contact information and will try their very best to support you and the UD students 😊

Is there a lot of paperwork or extra work for me to do?

No! For the most part, you are allowing UD students to assist you, work with your students, while providing guidance and support. Our students will communicate with you when they have an assignment to do. You will be given lesson plans for any lessons they have to teach in advance, so you know what to expect. At the end of the experience, you will just have to complete a final evaluation for each of your methods students and submit it online. That is the only “paperwork” we will collect from you during the experience.

Why should I do this?

We need you! And...UD methods students can help to ease your load!

- Every Tuesday and Thursday and during two full field weeks, you will have 1-2 sets of extra hands to assist with your daily workload. Put your UD students to work! They are eager to be involved.
- Students in your class who need extra support/guidance can receive it.
- Our students can breathe in new life and excitement. Children love having new faces in the classroom to work with them.
- Delaware teachers will receive 25 recertification hours for the renewal of a continuing license.
- You will have the pleasure of knowing that you made a huge impact in the professional development of a young teacher. Our students continually tell us that their field experiences are the most impactful to their learning and development.

