“When I am working with a family who has a child who is struggling, often everyone is at a loss as to what to do next and they do not have hope. My job allows me to figure out why a child is not responding to intervention through general education, help parents pursue community resources, and assure them that there is additional support we can offer their child. I love figuring all of this out and giving families and children hope for future education.”

—Taryn

Special education is individualized education designed to address the unique needs of students with disabilities and help them achieve their maximum potential.

Special education students include those with learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, intellectual disabilities, autism, emotional and behavioral disorders, physical impairments, special health care needs, hearing and visual impairments, and other low-incidence disabilities. Special education provides support for children’s success in school and later in life.

The shortage of trained, qualified special education teachers is critical in Texas and throughout the United States. To address this need, Texas State University offers Career Alternatives in Special Education (CASE), a unique program that trains and certifies people interested in a second career in special education. CASE is a post-graduate, full-certification program with an optional master’s degree in special education.
Course Work
The CASE program, through a cohort model, places participants into existing Texas State classes for a total of 48 to 51 semester hours (16 or 17 courses) of general and special education courses, depending on previous course work. These courses typically can be completed in a year and a half of full-time attendance at Texas State.

Courses consist of curriculum and instruction courses, reading courses and eight special education courses. A master’s degree requires no extra course work, provided all graduate college requirements have been met.

After successful completion of these courses, students may bypass student teaching, enroll in a two-semester internship, and be hired in a Central Texas school district on a full-time teacher’s salary. Texas State faculty will continue to provide supervision for one year, and a mentor teacher will be assigned to facilitate the first teaching year.

Upon successful completion of the internship, and after passing the state certification tests, students will obtain an all-level Texas teaching certificate in special education.

The CASE program has three basic phases.

1. Phase one is the time necessary to complete all general and special education courses necessary for certification. The courses can be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. Graduate special education classes are offered once a week at night during the fall and spring semesters. Summer session classes are offered during the day, five days a week.

2. Phase two is an optional internship year in which the participant is hired as a new teacher on a one-year probationary certificate in a Central Texas school district while continuing to be supervised by Texas State faculty and a mentor teacher. Special education internships are available only to successful CASE participants. During phase two, participants can choose to complete an unpaid semester of student teaching instead of the internship. Passing the appropriate Texas teacher certification exams is also required during this phase. An all-level Texas Teacher’s Certificate in Special Education will be awarded at the completion of phase two.

3. Phase three is the student’s first year as a fully certified teacher.

Admission Policy
In addition to the general requirements for admission to the Texas State Graduate College, the CASE program requires a minimum GPA of 2.75 on the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work leading to a bachelor’s degree.

Each applicant must submit the following:
• an online Graduate College application through ApplyTexas
• application fee
• one official transcript from each college or university attended
• official Graduate Record Exam (GRE). See www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/sped.html for details about GRE requirements.
• two letters of recommendation
• recent résumé
• copies of certifications or licenses if applicable
• statement of purpose that identifies and describes research interest

Visit www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/apply for access to online application, where to submit application documents and additional details. Application deadlines are June 15 for the fall semester, October 15 for the spring semester and April 15 for summer semester. The Graduate College will continue to process applications received after the deadline on a first-come, first-served basis, with no guarantees for admission consideration.

Financial Assistance
For information about scholarships, financial aid and deadlines, visit The Graduate College website at www.gradcollege.txstate.edu and click on Financing Your Graduate Education. Please note that program admission priority deadlines must be met in order to be considered for scholarships, fellowships and assistantships.

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There continues to be a severe and chronic shortage of qualified special education teachers across the nation.
—Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education

texastate.edu/ci/case