

# Graduate Studies Programs

## *Assistive Special Education Technology at The Education Collaborative*

### About the Program

The Simmons graduate program in Assistive Special Education Technology is an innovative program designed to provide professional development for educators who wish to specialize in the field of assistive and adaptive technology. Faculty prepare educators and therapists for leadership roles in the implementation, evaluation, and administration of assistive technology-oriented teaching methods for learners with special needs. The focus of the Simmons program is on designing pragmatic accommodations for learners with special needs in general education settings who are participating in curriculum activities. This program is held at our off-site location, The Education Collaborative in Dedham, Massachusetts.

### Degree Options

There are two degree options that students may pursue – the Education Specialist (Ed.S.) and the Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.). The Ed.S. degree is an advanced graduate degree that provides a student who currently holds a master's degree with an area of educational specialization. The M.S.Ed. meets the educational needs of an individual who holds a bachelor's degree and is seeking a master's degree. Both degree options require 36 credits of study.

### Course Subjects and Overview

#### **SPND 422 Differentiated Instructional Strategies Using Technology Across the Curriculum**

Educators are responsible for incorporating a full range of technologies into Universal Design for learner access to the classroom curriculum, and into their students' Individualized Education Plans. This course provides real world experiences, resources and skill development in using the latest software, assistive technologies and best practices. Make decisions with guidance resulting in practical solutions that can be readily implemented in inclusive classrooms.

#### **SPND 423 Using Multimedia to Create Curriculum Interventions for Learners with Special Needs**

Multimedia is a powerful tool for modifying or providing access to the curriculum. Participants will explore the features of a collection of multimedia authoring software tools, learn to integrate these features into the planning and design of customized curriculum that meets the diverse and exceptional needs of learners, and learn to develop and use authentic assessment rubrics to review project work.

#### **SPND 453 Language and Cognitive Development and Alternative Assessment Using Technology**

Learn software selection strategies and examine an extensive collection gathered to create a supportive curriculum-based learning environment for learners with intensive special needs. Create long range plans to address computer based needs for learners of developing skills. Use developmentally appropriate access devices and authoring tools to design learning along a continuum of language and cognitive development. Design alternative assessment methods to show what individual learners achieve.

*“The Simmons Assistive Technology Program has provided me a rich and deep experience with the teaching methods and tools that make it easier for my students with the most significant needs to learn successfully. Having skills in alternative access, differentiated instruction, and universal design for learning, levels the playing field in the teaching and learning process.”*

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GRADUATE STUDIES

**SPND 456 Curriculum Support for Learners with High Incidence Special Needs Using Technology**

Learn numerous technology-based strategies and resources for helping students with high-incidence learning disabilities and other learning style differences to become more successful and independent learners. This course will combine current research with technology tools that support basic skills, written expression, literacy and reading skills, organization, study skills, note-taking and research projects.

**SPND 458 Curriculum Access Using Assistive Technology Devices**

Legislation addressing the needs of learners with special needs in public education mandates the use of assistive technology. A special education professional is required to design curriculum access using such methodologies. This course introduces the vast array of products on the market today that enable a special needs student to access the computer and function at their optimal level in the classroom. There are extensive hands-on opportunities to explore various assistive technology methods from low tech solutions to high tech devices with a focus on functional application of these technologies for students with intensive learning special needs.

**SPND 463 Universal Classroom Design: Creating an Accessible Curriculum in the Inclusive Classroom**

Universal classrooms use digital media to mold existing and emerging curriculum materials and approaches to teaching, making it more responsive to the needs of diverse learners. Develop K-12 curriculum and teaching strategies sensitive to all learners, especially students in regular classrooms with high incidence disabilities such as mild cognitive and fine motor difficulties or ADHD.

**SPND 470 Curriculum Modifications Using Augmentative and Alternative Communication Technologies**

Learn technology for augmentative/alternative communication (AAC). Candidacy, assessment and goals of intervention will be discussed within the framework of alternative access options and functional outcomes. Try different AAC systems and devices. Learn computer applications for authoring an integrated system for enhanced participation, functional communication, language development and issues related to inclusion in the classroom.

**SPND 473 Providing Specialized Curriculum and Environmental Access Using Customized Technology Tools**

Examine current alternative access technologies and related accommodations for supporting written and expressive communication for learners with physical and multiple disabilities. Learn access assessment guidelines as well as a variety of highly specialized strategies so that learners with intensive special needs can participate in the standard or modified educational curriculum.

**SPND 475 Evaluation of Educational Software and Internet Resources for Curriculum Support**

Examine educational software, including reference materials, simulations, tools, problem solving, early learning and drill and practice. Develop evaluation criteria for software and Internet websites. Learn how technology can facilitate research, organization, and problem solving across the curriculum. Explore the roles of student and teacher. Learn to evaluate and select appropriate educational software and websites to integrate with your curriculum.

**Contact Us**

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