

# Master of Arts in Teaching Exceptional Education– Early Childhood Special Education Licensure

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### What do I get?

Degree: Master of the Arts in Teaching (MAT)  
Virginia Teaching License: Early Childhood Special Education, birth-age 5

### Who is eligible to apply?

Anyone who already holds a bachelor’s degree or anticipates receiving his or her degree within the year and is interested in a career as an early childhood special educator (pre-K) or early interventionist/developmental specialist is eligible.

### When does it start and how long does it take?

The program begins in the summer. Many full-time students can complete the program in two semesters and two summers. This depends in part on the student’s previous coursework. Part-time students are subject to varying timelines.

### What kind of practical experience will I receive?

Each semester teacher candidates participate in area schools to complete course requirements. Prior to student teaching, students also have a formal field experience when they take EXED 626/627. Permission is required for candidates who work as paraprofessionals and would like to use their work placement to meet practicum requirements. Students who work are encouraged to seek employment that enriches their teacher education studies.

### Do I have to write a thesis?

At this time the ECSE program is using comprehensive exams to serve as the cumulative program assessment.

When are the classes and can I work and take classes at the same time?

Classes in this program, except summer classes and field placements, are held late afternoon and evening to allow candidates to work as graduate assistants, substitute teachers, or paraprofessionals. The spring semester includes one 8 week full day student teaching internship. In order to get the most out of the whole graduate school experience, part time work is appropriate except during student teaching when students are expected to be FULLY available to the demands of that experience. Good financial planning will enable students to take full advantage of the opportunities within the program and the university.

How many students are in the program?

Each summer approximately 5-12 candidates enter the program. If you are a full-time student, you can expect to have the same group of classmates for many of your classes if they are full time students as well. Some courses are open to students in other programs and, consequently, may be larger.

Who are these students?

Because this program is designed for candidates who already hold a bachelor's degree, the range of students' backgrounds is diverse. Bachelor's degrees include business, education, foreign language, the arts, social sciences, sciences, technological careers, communication sciences, and the like. Some students enter the program directly from having received their undergraduate degree, but many students return for their master's degree years after having received their bachelor's.

Can I student teach outside the area as opposed to near Harrisonburg?

At this time student teaching placements are limited to school districts and early intervention agencies in and around James Madison University, typically within an hour drive.

Can I afford it?

Careful planning will help you come prepared to get the most of this experience. A loan can help you achieve your goal sooner. For some, working and saving for another year may allow you to fully engage in classes without worrying about finances. The financial aid office is available to assist you. In addition to graduate tuition (see specifics on JMU web site), there are textbooks, miscellaneous fees, and various tests required by the state of Virginia (see details under the "tests and fees" section).

Departmental and college-wide scholarship applications are usually available during the January/February time frame for currently enrolled students and students who have accepted admission into the graduate program. Please be watchful for notices of their availability. Students are encouraged to apply for as many scholarships for which they are eligible. <http://welcome.coe.jmu.edu/scholarships/>

## **The Application Process - 3 Steps**

### **Step 1: Transcript Review and Interview**

Schedule a meeting with Dr. Allison Kretlow (program coordinator). You will need to bring a copy of your undergraduate transcript(s), unofficial is sufficient to determine eligibility and any prerequisite courses that may be needed. \*

E-mail (preferred): [kretloag@jmu.edu](mailto:kretloag@jmu.edu)  
Telephone number: (540) 568-6787  
Office: 3130-E Memorial Hall

Location: College of Education, Memorial Hall, 3130E  
365 S. High Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Mailing address:  
MSC 6909  
800 S. Main St  
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

## Step 2: Applying to Graduate School

Complete the on-line graduate school application, applying to the Special Education post-baccalaureate M.A.T. (NOT the 5<sup>th</sup> year format) <http://www.jmu.edu/grad/>

The order of applying and taking tests for applying to the graduate school is not important. Applications will be reviewed after all items have been received.

Required for application:

- 1) Official transcripts from all colleges or universities attended.
- 2) Satisfactory test scores on the Praxis I
- 3) Two letters of recommendation, one from someone who can speak of your ability as a student and another who can speak of your professional dispositions
- 4) Professional resume
- 5) 2-3 page written statement describing your professional background, the educational issues or topics that you would like to address during your master's program and your long-term professional goals

**NOTE** Your application to the **Graduate School**, if accepted, will likely be “conditionally” accepted. After all the conditions have been met, including being fully accepted into **Teacher Education, Step 3 below**, your status can be upgraded to “unconditional”. It is your responsibility to let your advisor know when all conditions have been met. These conditions must be met before registering for the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of classes.

### Step 3: Applying to Teacher Education via TK20

**After you have been admitted to the Graduate School and have received your student ID, you may apply for admission to Teacher Education. Your application to Teacher Education is the first step in the process toward obtaining your Virginia State License to teach.**

#### **PRAXIS I MAY BE TAKEN PRIOR TO submitting your application to Teacher Education**

- 1) **Complete the application** to teacher education USING TK20\*
- 2) **Take the Praxis I** –Math, Reading Comprehension and Writing **NOTE** Praxis I is waived for candidates with SAT scores of 1100 or higher, the minimum scores for each section is 530 Math and 530 Verbal.
- 3) To be fully accepted into the Early Childhood Education Teaching Licensure program, candidates must have a **minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.75** or must establish a JMU GPA of 2.75 or better by taking 9 or more credit hours. These may include GPSY 160 and EDUC 360, content prerequisites or courses within the program.

\* To access TK20 services:

Complete an online, intent to enroll form <http://coe.jmu.edu/esc/Admissions.shtml>

- (1) Print off and take/send to your advisor for signature
- (2) Take the signed form to the Education Support Center – Mem Hall Rm 7230.
- (3) After you have submitted your intent to enroll form, you will receive an E-mail directing you to access the TK20 website (within 2-3 days of submitting form)

Next complete the Teacher Education Application form found in TK20. You will be directed to find the application artifact, complete it and save it in TK 20. The application will include:

- 200 word response in a text box to “Why I want to become a teacher?”
- Self rating on professional dispositions
- Welcome Letter
- List of Admission requirements- with a reminder about Child Abuse Prevention and Universal Precautions trainings
- FAQ sheet for TK 20
- Reference Forms

Within 24 hours after subscribing, you will receive an email from TK 20 saying that you can now access your account.

**APPLICATION to TK 20 WILL BE AVAILABLE ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SEMESTER UNTIL 1 WEEK BEFORE REGISTRATION BEGINS FOR THE NEXT SEMESTER.**

By having access to the Tk20 system, you will be able to:

1. Complete your teacher education application forms online. This includes applications for admission to the program and for student teaching.
2. Build your artifacts (products) electronically, online use by you for years, even after graduation.
3. Create electronic portfolios for documenting your work for presentation to the faculty and prospective employers.
4. Have a fully documented record of your field experience work and your experience with student teaching/clinical practice.
5. Access to performance evaluation and feedback.
6. Receive news and updates on College of Ed services, programs, and events.
7. Access up to date information on employment opportunities.

## Registering for Classes

Students who are not yet accepted, but who wish to register for a class may do so with permission of the program coordinator and course instructor and by registering as a “Special Student.” See the Graduate School for details. To register as a degree seeking student **you must have** a student identification number (E-ID) obtainable after you have been accepted into the graduate program.

Beyond the first semester or 12 credit hours, students must have met all of the requirements for “unconditional acceptance” before being able to register for additional classes.

### To register:

1. Go to <https://ecampus.jmu.edu/>
2. Sign in at **E-campus**, using the information received from the Graduate School.
3. To obtain a password, go to <http://accounts.jmu.edu/login>

### Teacher Education and EXED M.A.T Program Prerequisite Courses:

- GPSY 160: Human Development Across the Life Span
- EDUC 300: Foundations of Education
- EXED 200/508: Nature and Issues of Disabilities/Exceptionalities
- Grade of C or better in an undergraduate writing and math course

**\*\*EXED 200/508** is a **pre-requisite** to all other EXED courses

## The Graduate Program – EXED ECSE M.A.T.

Schedule of course offerings and sequence for full time students\*

Prefix, course # (credits hrs) course Title	Offered
EXED 200/508 (3) Nature and Issues of Disabilities/Exceptionalities	Summer
EXED 502 (3) Nature and Issues of Mild Disabilities	Summer
EXED 503 (1) Application of Ed Tech for Students with Disabilities	Summer
EXED 622 (3) Assessment in Early Childhood Special Education	Fall
EXED 623 (3) Programming in Early Childhood Special Education	Fall
EXED 626 or 627 (3) Practicum: Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities or Early Childhood Special Education	Fall
EXED 505 Service Delivery in Early Childhood Special Education	Spring
EXED 621 Nature and Issues of Early Childhood Special Education	Spring
EXED 626 or 627 (3) Practicum: Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities or Early Childhood Special Education	Spring
EXED 650 (6-12) Student Teaching in Special Education	Spring
EXED 625 (3) Medical and Technological Aspects of ECSE	Summer

Additional courses may be required for licensure, are determined by the individual needs of the candidate, and are approved by the advisor. Students should meet with the graduate coordinator prior to beginning coursework.

The course sequence can be adjusted for part-time students.

## Graduate Assistantships

More information about assistantships can be found at:

<http://www.jmu.edu/cgop/assistantships.shtml>

Assistantships provide an opportunity to work alongside professors in a professional setting. Most employers prefer students who are available for at least a year. However, some positions may be available only for spring or fall semester.

Graduate assistantships in the department (20 hours/wk) offer a tuition waiver equivalent to three classes per semester and a living stipend that is paid on a bi-weekly basis. Contract dates vary by department and details (stipends, tuition waivers, time requirements, etc.) will be discussed when an offer has been extended.

- To be eligible students must be unconditionally **or** conditionally accepted into a graduate program.
- Positions are limited so early application is encouraged – (Jan-Feb. for following Fall)

- Positions may be offered as soon as a student has been accepted into the Graduate School. Positions remain open until filled.

**To apply for a Graduate Assistantship within the department:**

Applications are available in the Department of Exceptional Education Office, Memorial Hall 3126. Complete the application form and return it with a resume attached to the Department of Exceptional Education Office where you picked up the form. Assistantships are not available during student teaching.

**Testing & Fee Requirements for the EXED MAT  
(effective 9/10)**

<i>Test/Fee</i>	<i>Recommended Timeline</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>How to register</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Application Fee to Graduate School	March 15 for following summer acceptance	Required for application to graduate school	See p. 3	\$55
Praxis I  532 is passing score	Fall for admittance the following summer	Required component of graduate school application and Teacher Education application	<a href="http://www.ets.org">http://www.ets.org</a> Register for <b>Reading</b> (0710 or 5710), <b>Math</b> (0730 or 5730) and <b>Writing</b> (0720 or 5720) –  Can take all 3 in the same morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$50 annual registration</li> </ul> Paper-based (PPST) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$40 for each test</li> </ul> Computer-based (CBT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$80 per test/\$130 combined</li> </ul>
TK20	Before classes begin	<b>Before</b> registering for fall semester classes	<a href="http://coe.jmu.edu/esc">http://coe.jmu.edu/esc</a>	\$100
VCLA Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment	Spring – during second semester of classes	<b>Before</b> registering for student teaching	<a href="http://www.vra.nesinc.com">http://www.vra.nesinc.com</a> Register for both reading 091 and writing 092 subtests	\$110-\$130
Licensing Fee	During student teaching	Submitted with teacher licensure application		\$50 – in-state \$75- out-of-state

*Registration information, including test dates, test sites, computer-based options and scheduling, is available from the websites in the above chart. Additional information and support is available at the ESC website <http://coe.jmu.edu/esc>*

**Important Dates:**

- Application for Student Teaching – Complete during first fall semester for the following fall student teaching. See Education Support Center web site below for details.
- Application for Graduation – See dates on Graduate School website. Applications are due early the semester you plan to graduate.

## Contact & Location Information

(Tel. area code – 540)

[www.jmu.edu](http://www.jmu.edu)

Dr. Allison Kretlow, Graduate Coordinator	Memorial Hall, Room 3130-E	568-6787	<a href="mailto:kretloag@jmu.edu">kretloag@jmu.edu</a>
EXED Department Office	Mem. Hall 3126	568-6193	<a href="http://www.jmu.edu/coe/exed/">http://www.jmu.edu/coe/exed/</a>
Education Support Center	Mem. Hall 7230 Teacher Education	568-6274	<a href="http://jmu.edu/coe/esc">http://jmu.edu/coe/esc</a>
JMU College of Education	Memorial Hall 395 S.High Street	568-2812	<a href="http://jmu.edu/coe">http://jmu.edu/coe</a>
Graduate School	17 West Grace Street	568-6169 568-6131	<a href="http://www.jmu.edu/grad/">http://www.jmu.edu/grad/</a>
Outreach Program	Memorial Hall	568-4253	<a href="http://www.jmu.edu/outreach/index.shtml">http://www.jmu.edu/outreach/index.shtml</a>
JMU Registration	Warren Campus Ctr, Rm 300	568-3737	<a href="http://www.jmu.edu/registrar/handbook.shtml">http://www.jmu.edu/registrar/handbook.shtml</a>
Financial Aid	Warren Hall, Room 302A	568-7820	<a href="http://www.jmu.edu/finaid">http://www.jmu.edu/finaid</a>
Parking Services	At Parking Deck 381 Bluestone Dr.	568-3300	<a href="http://web.jmu.edu/parking/">http://web.jmu.edu/parking/</a>