

**SPECIAL EDUCATION  
M.S. Degree Program**

*Graduate Student Handbook*

**DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY  
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**DAVID O. MCKAY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**Brigham Young University**

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## **MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

### **About This Handbook**

This handbook details the policies, procedures, expectations, and resources for graduate students in the Special Education (SPED) Master of Science (M.S.) program. This version supersedes and replaces all previous SPED M.S. program memos, updates, and handbook versions. You will be notified of any changes in policies and procedures. You are responsible to meet the policies noted in the most recent version of the handbook.

When you were admitted you met the requirements of the program as it was established at the time of your admission; however, you have the option of completing the program requirements under which you were admitted or choosing the newer set of program requirements—should they change while you are in the program. The contact person for this handbook is the SPED Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Blake Hansen in 340-C McKay Building, BYU, Provo, Utah 84602; (801) 422-4631; email: [blake\\_hansen@byu.edu](mailto:blake_hansen@byu.edu).

### **Welcome to the Special Education Program**

This program combines research-based teaching with collaborative experiences in courses offered alongside your peers in related programs (e.g., School Psychology, Teacher Education), thus enhancing knowledge and skills. We are fortunate that a BYU education offers a spiritual, ethical and moral dimension of education. Our faculty is committed to assisting you as you learn and grow professionally in the program. We are certain that you will enjoy this experience and find great reward in hard work and devotion to your studies.

### **David O. McKay School of Education Departments and Programs**

The David O. McKay School of Education (MSE) is one of eight Schools/Colleges within the university that prepares educators. Our department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education is one of five in the MSE. The other four departments include: Teacher Education, Educational Leadership and Foundations, Instructional Psychology and Technology, and Communication Disorders.

Recently the McKay School of Education was nationally ranked at 78 in the U.S. News & World Report (2016 Edition). Rankings are based on expert opinion about program quality and statistical indicators that measure the quality of a school's faculty, research, and students.

### **Registering for Classes**

The M.S. program is a part-time, evening school program. The minimal University enrollment standards include: (1) register for at least two semester hours each semester or term in which you are using university resources (including consulting with your faculty advisor), and (2) register for a minimum of six semester hours during each academic year. The Graduate Catalog is found at <https://graduatestudies.byu.edu/content/graduate-studies-catalog>. You can find Graduate and Undergraduate courses at <https://registrar.byu.edu/academic-tools>.

## **ALLIANCE with Office of Graduate Studies**

The Graduate Studies (GS) department works with the department to recruit, admit, and support students through their graduate programs. G.S. also makes sure the University requirements are met. When you are admitted you are assigned a five-digit code—indicating the year and term you were admitted. You can refer to their website for information about admissions, program of study, program progress reports, grade point average requirements, deferrals or leave of absence, credit limits, graduation requirements, etc. See <https://graduatestudies.byu.edu/content/policies-and-procedures>.

## **University Standards and Policies**

### **General Honor Code Statement**

Brigham Young University exists to provide a university education in an atmosphere consistent with the ideals and principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Specific policies embodied in the Honor Code include (1) the Academic Honesty Policy, (2) the Dress and Grooming Standards, (3) the Residential Living Standards, and (4) the Continuing Student Ecclesiastical Endorsement Requirement. See the [Honor Code](#) website.

### **Continuing Ecclesiastical Endorsement**

You are required to have a Continuing Student Ecclesiastical Endorsement for each academic year in which you wish to register for any university credit. This includes thesis hours, internships, or off-campus programs. See the [Continuing Ecclesiastical Endorsement instructions](#).

***If Not LDS.*** If you are not LDS, you may be endorsed by the local leader of your preferred religious denomination or by the bishop of the LDS ward boundaries in which you live.

### **Preventing Discrimination and Sexual Harassment**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education, programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. Please see information that defines sexual harassment as inappropriate gender-based behavior and recommends actions that you can take to deal with such behavior at the following locations: [Sexual Harassment](#)

[Unlawful Gender Discrimination, Unlawful Sexual Harassment and Inappropriate Gender- Based Behavior](#)

## **Students with Disabilities Policy**

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have a disability, please see [University Accessibility Center](#) for information about resources, guidelines, orientation, and technology.

## **Diversity and Unity Policy**

The Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education, the David O. McKay School of Education, and Brigham Young University are committed to preparing teacher candidates to serve effectively in a diverse society and to promote respect for individual differences. To assist you in this preparation, the Educational Growth and Unity Association was developed. For more information about the McKay School's resources on Diversity and Unity, see Diversity and Unity.

## **Financial Support**

### **Graduate Mentoring Award (funded by BYU Graduate Studies)**

Graduate Mentoring Awards are designed to provide supplemental funding for graduate students who are mentored by faculty and, in turn, mentor undergraduate students in research, applied experiences, or teaching. Faculty may apply for these awards on the invitation of college deans. Information is available in January of each school year.

**Graduate Studies.** More information about funding can be found at **BYU** [Graduate Studies Funding](#). This includes scholarship applications as well as other funding sources.

### **Graduate Research Assistantships**

Students may apply for research and teaching assistantships through the Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education.

### **McKay School of Education**

**School of Education Scholarships.** The McKay School of Education offers various scholarships. The application is simple to complete and is generally due in winter semester. See information about applications for the [McKay School of Education Scholarships](#) (due March 31 of each year).

## **BYU Special Education Graduate Faculty**

[Cade Charlton, PhD](#)

Elizabeth Cutrer, PhD

[Gordon Gibb, PhD](#)

[Blake D. Hansen, PhD](#)

[Ryan Kellems, PhD](#)

[Christian Sabey, PhD](#)

### **M.S. in Special Education Program Overview**

#### **The Mission of the Special Education Program**

The BYU special education faculty developed the following mission statement to guide the special education programs:

We maximize the potential of diverse learners with individualized educational needs to elevate their quality of life. We accomplish this by supporting the mission and aims of a BYU education as we integrate teaching, research, and service. We specifically:

- Prepare competent and moral educators who select, implement, and evaluate research-based effective teaching practices and appropriate curriculum for learners with special needs.
- Prepare master special educators who provide leadership in problem solving and collaborative relationships with professionals and families.
- Add to the knowledge base of special education and related disciplines through research.
- Serve and advocate for learners with individualized educational needs and others who support them.

#### **The Purpose of the Master of Science Program**

The special education MS program prepares educators to provide collaborative leadership within multi-tiered systems of support to promote continuous improvement for individuals academically and/or behaviorally at risk.

The program is based upon a scholar-practitioner model of training. Many of the M.S. graduate students are currently employed as special educators. The scholar-practitioner model is an integrated approach to training that acknowledges the interdependence of theory, research, and practice.

When you graduate from this program, your preparation and credentials will qualify you academically and personally for numerous employment options. Graduates in the past have obtained positions as clinical professors, team leaders in schools-such as behavior consultants, special education district administrators, and special educators who use research-based practices in their classrooms. Some graduates have gone on to complete doctoral programs in educational areas.

## Orientation and the Thesis Advisory System

### Orientation

During your first term, you will receive an overview of the program, the faculty, the university, and graduate study in special education. This orientation is an important part of the CPSE 601 course, as you begin to develop your research topic and begin inviting faculty members to work with you on your committee.

For general questions about university procedures and graduation, consult the Office of Graduate Studies. You should review the information for **Current Students** at the BYU [Graduate Studies Website](#).

### Selection of a Thesis Chair/Advisory Committee

**Thesis Chair/Advisor.** Chair selection is mainly on the basis of your stated interest in studying a topic in a faculty member's area of research expertise. Upon your admissions, you were assigned a special education faculty member, who has been approved by the Dean and Graduate Studies as an advisor, to advise you and serve as your thesis chair. This professor serves as the link between you and the program. They convey department and program information and feedback about your evaluations, progress, and (if necessary) remediation of deficiencies in your course of study.

The first fall semester of study, you meet with your assigned advisor from the Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education to obtain agreement for the professor to serve and provide support for your research. The selection of a thesis chair is made official by getting the professor's signature (as chair) on the *Program of Study*. Official assignment of the Thesis Chair/Advisory Committee is made when faculty members sign the *Program of Study* form (also called "study list").

**Research/Thesis Committee.** The thesis committee's major role is to guide you through the program and to aid in the selection of courses, and to assist you in the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of your thesis. You are encouraged to visit faculty members, discuss their research interests, and determine the availability of faculty to serve on your committee. You must select at least two other graduate faculty to serve on your advisory committee. Choose these members based upon their expertise in your area of research and their willingness to serve on your committee. You may choose committee members from Special Education and/or other areas (e.g., School Psychology, Educational Leadership, Teacher Education, Communication Disorders), but who have expertise in your area of study.

### **Approval.**

All committees must be approved by the graduate coordinator and the department chair. Advisory assignments are made so that the advisory load is shared equally among faculty members. Typically, the advisor will serve the same graduate student throughout the program. Official assignment of the

thesis chair/advisory committee is made when faculty members sign the *Program of Study* form. Return this form to the special education Graduate Secretary.

In summary, your advisor and advisory committee may assist you in various aspects of the program as you:

- Become oriented to the program
- Register for appropriate courses
- Assure that all program admission deficiencies or conditional admission requirements are met (e.g., completion of post-baccalaureate licensure)
- Complete or modify the “Program of Study” form
- Obtain (department or college) financial assistance or a graduate assistantship
- Prepare for the oral defense of your thesis research and coursework
- Prepare for graduation
- Request references or other verification of your work as you search for employment opportunities

**Changes.** Change of advisors after students have become familiar with the faculty’s research interests may be possible upon request and with approval of the faculty involved, the graduate coordinator, and the department chair. If circumstances such as major changes in thesis topic, preference, or faculty availability arise, you may select a different chair.

## **Curriculum and Scheduling**

### **Cohort Learning**

Students are admitted every year as a cohort of students who work together through the same core academic program. Since most courses build on the knowledge and skills developed in previous courses, you must to take the schedule of courses with your cohort. Courses are taught in the evenings to accommodate teachers’ schedules during Fall, Winter, and Spring. Summer enrollment is also required.

### **Degree Requirements**

A Master’s of Science degree in the Special Education program requires successful completion of 36 semester hours of graduate coursework, including 6 hours of thesis work. The 36 semester hours are to be completed in accordance with the program curriculum. Courses align with the focus of the program.

### **Learning Outcomes**

The Special Education M.S. program has five primary learning outcomes. At the conclusion of your studies, you will have master-level skills and knowledge in the following areas:

- The graduate student will demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the principles of behavior analysis as applied to academic and social behavior.
- The graduate student will demonstrate an in-depth understanding of teaching and learning academic content in a multi-tiered system of supports.

- The graduate student will select, apply, and evaluate evidence-based interventions.
- The graduate student will produce, critique and utilize educational and behavioral research.
- The graduate student will understand and abide by ethical codes, standards of practice, and laws pertinent to educational and behavioral services.

These outcomes will be achieved through successful completion of the program, including the required courses and thesis research. See [Special Education M.S. Expected Learning Outcomes](#).

### **Program of Study**

The program of study is an agreement that will help you fulfill all course requirements. You are responsible to obtain this form, complete it and submit it to the Graduate Secretary no later than the middle of Fall Semester (first year of your program). The program of study is submitted to Diane Hancock, Graduate Secretary, and reviewed by the Graduate Coordinator for final approval. You can see it on your *Graduate Progress Report* at the AIM link on the myBYU website.

**Changes.** The program of study is a carefully considered plan which identifies the student's major, lists all courses required, and designates the graduate committee. Changes in your program or committee must be authorized by your committee and the graduate coordinator. If you request any exceptions to the required course work, you must work with your advisor to submit *Form 3b: Request for Program of Study Change* form for approval by your graduate committee (see the Graduate Studies website).

**Counseling Psychology & Special Education**  
**SPECIAL EDUCATION MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM**  
**Program of Study**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

BYU ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Req Type	Dept	Course Number	Hours	Pre-program type	Course Description	*Substitute Course Number
<b>BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS CORE COURSES (18 Semester Hours)</b>						
MAJ	CPSE	601*	3		Current Issues and Research: Principles of Behavior	
MAJ	CPSE	614*	3		Behavioral Assessment and Intervention	
MAJ	CPSE	615*	3		Academic and Behavioral Problem Solving	
MAJ	CPSE	618*	3		Ethics, Professional Conduct, and Legal Issues in Special Education	
MAJ	CPSE	619*	3		Positive Behavior Support	
MAJ	CPSE	620	3		Evidence-Based Academic Intervention for RTI	
<b>RESEARCH COURSES (9 Semester Hours)</b>						
MAJ	CPSE	673*	3		Single Subject Research Design	
THS	CPSE	699R	6		Master's Thesis	
<b>PRACTICE COURSES (4 Semester Hours)</b>						
MAJ	CPSE	688R*	4		Internship: Special Education	
<i>*CPSE 697R Special Projects may be substituted for CPSE 688R according to individual student needs and as approved by Committee and Graduate Coordinator. The reason for this substitution must be attached to the study list form.</i>						
<b>ELECTIVE COURSES (5 Semester Hours)</b>						
ELEC	<b>Select</b> CPSE	<b>Two</b> 602	3		Child and Adolescent Social/Emotional Assessment	
ELEC	CPSE	606	3		Psychoeducational Foundations	
ELEC	CPSE	629	3		Introduction to Research	
ELEC	CPSE	690R	3		Seminar in Special Education: Transition to Adulthood	
ELEC	EDLF	601	2		Leadership for Learning Communities	
ELEC	EDLF	614	2		Education of Diverse Populations	

\*BACB Approved Course Sequence

Minimum Hours Required: 36 \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Chair Signature	Printed Name	Date
Member Signature	Printed Name	Date
Member Signature	Printed Name	Date
Graduate Coordinator Signature	Printed Name	Date
Student Signature		Date

## Graduate Student Progress Reports

Graduate Student Progress Reports are available for your review at any time by accessing the AIM menu on the myBYU webpage. These reports list courses completed, courses remaining from your study list, and important updates and reminders from the Office of Graduate Studies. The graduate secretary makes this same information available to the graduate faculty.

## The Thesis

### Thesis Overview

A thesis is a written document that describes a completed research project which represents an original or extended contribution to the knowledge of the field. It is a result of your close collaboration with your advisory committee and includes two primary sections:

- Journal Ready Article
  - Introduction
  - Methods
  - Results
  - Discussion
- Review of Literature

The main purposes of completing a thesis are to help you:

- Add new information and skills to your academic repertoire
- Become familiar with the research literature in special education and your particular area of interest
- Provide a vehicle for you to demonstrate application, analysis, and synthesis of research and professional literature in special education
- Add to the knowledge base in the field of special education

Upon completion, you must submit an electronic copy of your thesis (in PDF format) to the university library. An electronic thesis or dissertation (ETD) document is similar to its paper predecessor, but differs in that ETDs provide a technologically advanced medium for expression. They may be prepared using nearly any word processor or document preparation system and, if desired, the incorporation of relevant multimedia elements. ETDs eliminate the requirement to submit multiple copies. With your approval, they can be available to anyone browsing the World Wide Web. Assistance on electronic submission may be obtained from the [BYU Electronic Thesis & Dissertations](#) website or Harold B. Lee Library staff. You may print a bound copy for your personal use.

Thesis Support Seminars, held each semester, provide you with a forum in which to discuss the progress of your thesis and related challenges or issues. These seminars provide some didactic instruction, such as how to conduct a literature search, write a literature review using current American Psychological Association writing guidelines, and how to secure Institutional Review Board approval for conducting research.

## APA Formatting Help

The Special Education program uses the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) writing guidelines as the authoritative source on all aspects of scholarly writing—from the ethics of duplicate publications to the word choice that best reduces bias in language. You can get APA help with this by going to the McKay School of Education website at [http://education.byu.edu/research/dissertation\\_aids.html](http://education.byu.edu/research/dissertation_aids.html). Additionally, help with your literature review and other aspects of thesis writing can be found at <http://guides.lib.byu.edu/generalsearch?sid=325599>.

## Planning Your Schedule

In all stages of thesis research and writing, you should maintain regular contact with your thesis chair for guidance in such matters as selection of your research topic, research design, organization, direction, coherence, and writing style. Such contact will save the time and expense of redoing work. Your written work will be reviewed several times. You should plan your research schedule to allow for resubmission of written work. Your thesis will represent you as a professional, so it is expected to be of high quality. It must demonstrate thoughtful, logical organization, and mature written expression. The quality of the written work is the responsibility of the student, not your faculty advisor or committee members.

Your thesis is expected to be free of typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. The most recent Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) is the required style manual for the department. Further please review BYU Graduate Studies Minimum Standards for Submitting Dissertations and Theses. Graduate Studies guidelines supersede APA guidelines.

A free resource, *APA for Novices*, written by the McKay School of Education scholarly editor Sharon Black, has been updated to align with the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA manual. Consult this guide when writing your thesis for stylistic and formatting information. Also see McKay School of Education's [MSE Thesis & Dissertation Aids](#). Another resource for formatting your thesis can be found at the McKay School of Education's APA Style Guidelines for Student Papers.

## Selecting a Thesis Topic

In conjunction with selecting an Advisory Committee Chairperson, you will select a research topic. This topic should be one which is interesting and motivating to you; however, it should also align with your chairperson's research interests and expertise. By doing so, your chair is able to guide and direct the literature review and the execution of your research study. Your Advisory Committee members should also have the skills and interests necessary to guide you in your work.

## Prospectus Defense

The prospectus is a written proposal which you present to your advisory committee. A strong prospectus demonstrates your breadth and depth of knowledge in your area of research, research procedures, and data analysis. Generally, it consists of the first three chapters of your thesis:

Introduction, Review of Literature, and Methods, and is expected to demonstrate your ability to produce high quality written work.

You will work with your thesis committee to prepare for your prospectus defense meeting. See the Appendix for the *Thesis Prospectus Procedures*.

### **Human Rights and the Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

Upon approval from the chair, complete the [IRB application](#) and include your already completed [online tutorial](#) IRB certificate. Submit these items to the Institutional Review Board (Office of Research and Creative Activities Office in A-285 Abraham O. Smoot Building):

1. Completed and signed IRB application
2. Candidate's IRB certificate
3. Committee members' IRB certificates

Once the IRB committee has approved the prospectus and you receive written confirmation, you can submit the prospectus electronically to the graduate coordinator and provide a paper copy of the "Thesis Prospectus Approval Form." (This form should already have signatures of the thesis chair and committee members from the prospectus meeting.) If approved, the graduate coordinator signs this form. You then submit the following to the Graduate Secretary:

1. Signed/dated Thesis Prospectus Approval Form, including signed Co-Authorship Agreement Form
2. Copy of the IRB letter granting approval to conduct the study

You can then proceed with the study as proposed and approved.

**Timelines:** This process can take 2-3 months! Please take great care to meet all of the deadlines. The following represent typical timelines. Check with your thesis chair for specific timelines for your research.

1-2 weeks: Time for the chair to review the prospectus.

1-2 weeks: Time to make changes as recommended by the chair.

2 weeks: Time for the committee to review the prospectus prior to the meeting.

1-2 weeks: Time for you to make changes after the prospectus meeting.

1-2 weeks: Time for the chair to approve the changes to the prospectus.

Up to 6 weeks: Time for the Institutional Review Board to review the proposal. Proposals are triaged by the IRB (not the researcher) according to their apparent degree of risk to human subjects. There are three general categories of proposals:

1. EXEMPT proposals represent the lowest risk and are typically approved in 2 days.
2. EXPEDITED proposals represent the next level of risk and are typically processed in 2 weeks.
3. FULL-BOARD proposals represent the highest level of risk and require review by the full board (12 members) of the IRB. Full-board proposal must be submitted before the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month (deadline).

**The IRB meets on the first Thursday of each month.** Full board proposals can take up to 6 weeks to be reviewed and processed. Because Special Education and School Psychology research often

involve vulnerable populations such as children or people with cognitive impairments, they are often seen as highest risk, full-board proposals.

1-2 weeks: Time to make changes as recommended by the IRB committee.

1-2 weeks: Time for the IRB committee to review and approve the changes.

1 week: Time for the graduate coordinator to review and approve the research.

## **Thesis Defense and Final Examination**

*Thesis Defense.* The thesis defense is a public meeting, scheduled through the Graduate School, in which you present and defend your thesis by answering questions about it. The university community is invited to attend the thesis defense meeting. Others (e.g., your family and friends) can be invited upon approval of the committee chair. Only the advisory committee and you are permitted to engage in dialogue during the meeting, and guests are dismissed following your presentation of the research.

See the Appendix for specific information on scheduling the thesis defense.

*Final Oral Examination.* The M.S. in Special Education program does not require a written comprehensive examination. However, during your thesis defense meeting you will be required to orally demonstrate knowledge and skills gained throughout your graduate studies. Each course should prepare you for successful completion of this examination. See the Appendix for the Oral Comprehensive Examination Procedures.

## **Research and Scholarship**

Generally, your thesis will have five chapters and be more thorough than most journal articles; however, it should be suitable for adapting for publication as a journal article. This will allow your research to be shared and contribute to the educational literature. At the prospectus meeting and at the final defense of the thesis, you will sign a *Co-Authorship Agreement* form (see Appendix), indicating how the committee agrees to proceed in submitting a manuscript for publication based upon your thesis. You are encouraged to co-author articles with the Advisory Chair and committee as a culminating part of your study.

## **Academic Policy Items**

### **Transfer Credit**

With department and university approval, transfer, senior, and post-baccalaureate studies credit may be applied toward the degree according to the individual criteria listed below. The maximum number of transfer credit hours should constitute no more than 25 percent of the total hours required for the program, not to exceed 15 credit hours in any program. Consult the section “Credit Policies” in the Graduate Studies Catalog for further information.

The minimum standard for transferring credit from another university is a “B” and content must be comparable to the equivalent BYU course. Application for transfer credit, including a transcript and

course syllabus, must accompany the required “Program of Study” proposal form before obtaining signatures. An official transcript must accompany requests for transfer credit. You must identify the course and credit you expect to transfer, noting which course you wish to substitute using the transfer credit. Requests for transferring credit are reviewed by the advisory committee and the graduate coordinator.

## **GPA Requirements**

The BYU Graduate Catalog specifies that a grade point average (GPA) at or above 3.0 in classes that are part of a student’s “graduate program of study” is required for graduation. This GPA is also required for continuation in the Special Education M.S. Program. Grades below B will be reviewed by the faculty during end-of-semester evaluations. No D credit may apply toward a graduate degree.

## **Minimum Registration Requirement**

All degree-seeking graduate students are required to meet the minimum registration requirements.

Minimum registration is six credit hours per year, plus:

- You must register for and complete at least 2 credit hours your first semester of graduate study.
- You must be registered for at least 2 semester hours when working on campus (which includes graduate assistantships).
- You must be registered for at least 2 hours during the semester of your thesis defense. (Spring and summer terms are counted together as being a single semester for these registration requirements.)
- You must earn acceptable grades (B- or higher) during each academic year (September 1 to August 20) to remain eligible to register in any semester of the following school year.

If you fail to meet these registration requirements, you will lose your registration eligibility. If you wish to continue, [\*Form 6: Application to Resume Graduate Study\*](#) must be submitted to the special education department. Students applying for readmission can expect their previous course work to be re-evaluated and, where appropriate, the requirements for their degrees may be revised to reflect current requirements. Readmission is not automatic, as the student is reviewed anew by the department for acceptance or denial to continue the graduate program.

## **Progress Toward Graduation**

The M.S. program is designed to be completed in **two years**. The university allows a maximum of five years of your admission acceptance date to complete a master’s degree only if a student is making satisfactory progress toward graduation during that time. Progress is defined as acceptably passing classes, progressing toward thesis completion, and passing the final oral exam. Your progress toward degree completion is evaluated by the graduate faculty twice per year, shortly after the end of the semester (See student progress report below). Transfer and non-degree seeking credit are also subject to the above time limits. It is your responsibility to monitor the time limit.

## Leave of Absence

You may request a leave of absence for the following reasons: medical, military, or mission. The 5 year time limit for the master's degree will still apply. While on leave, you will NOT be responsible for:

1. Minimum Registration (6 hours per academic year)
2. Satisfactory progress in the program (two evaluations per academic year)

Departments are not required to evaluate students for satisfactory progress during the leave period.

Students requesting a leave must submit the [Leave of Absence](#) Form as well as one of the following:  
**Medical:** letter from the doctor/therapist that includes the amount of time away recommended by the professional.

**Military:** copy of the military assignment that includes the length of the assignment

**Mission:** copy of mission call letter and when the student will return to school.

## Consent for Use of Student Work

You are asked to review and sign the *Consent Form for Student Work* and *Consent Form for Obtaining Data from Future Employer(s)* in the Appendix. Your written consent meets two primary purposes: (1) to share samples of student work with our accreditation agencies, and (2) to use exemplary student work as models for other students. You can refer to *M.S. in Special education Policy on Authorship* in the Appendix.

## Graduate Student Evaluation

The department uses several methods to assess your performance and progress as you work toward completion of the program.

## Course Grades and Thesis Research

Professors evaluate you on your course work and thesis research. A GPA of 3.0 is required to continue in any graduate program. A professor may refer a student whose performance is considered substandard to the Special Education Graduate Committee for review.

## End-of-Semester Graduate Student Evaluation

The Office of Graduate Studies requires a student evaluation report twice per year. This evaluation requires you to be rated by special education graduate faculty using one of three ratings: **satisfactory**, **marginal**, or **unsatisfactory**.

If rated **unsatisfactory or marginal**, you are informed by the department in writing. Along with the reasons for the rating, you will be informed of what you need to do to make satisfactory progress, the time/date when each task needs to be accomplished, the faculty members you should contact for more information or support, and potential consequences if you are unable to accomplish these tasks within the criterion specified.

**If you receive an unsatisfactory rating or do not receive an evaluation, you will not be eligible to obtain financial aid.**

If you receive a marginal and an unsatisfactory or two unsatisfactory ratings in succession, the department will (a) terminate your program at the end of the semester, or (b) submit (with you) a petition to Graduate Studies making a convincing case that you be allowed another semester to demonstrate satisfactory progress. A copy of the contract listing your responsibilities and a time line will be attached.

If you receive a marginal rating in one semester and are not making satisfactory progress in the next semester, you will receive an “unsatisfactory progress” rating. In other words, you cannot be rated as making marginal progress in two sequential semesters. Failure to correct marginal progress is automatically considered “unsatisfactory”.

**Marginal** progress may include the following:

- a. failure to submit program of study form
- b. failure to establish a graduate committee
- c. registering for thesis hours when little or no work has been done
- d. failure to submit an approved thesis/dissertation prospectus
- e. minimal contact with chair or advisory committee members
- f. prospectus or thesis/dissertation draft not approved
- g. limited progress toward courses and requirements on Program of Study
- h. poor performance in clinical/externship/applied experience
- i. poor performance in research

**Unsatisfactory** progress may include the following:

- a. grade in a course falling below B-
- b. failure to complete program of study form
- c. failure to establish a graduate committee
- d. failing a course
- e. registering for thesis hours when little or no work has been done
- f. failure to submit an approved thesis/dissertation prospectus
- g. failure of comprehensive exams
- h. minimal or no contact with chair or advisory committee members
- i. prospectus or thesis/dissertation draft not approved
- j. lacking progress toward courses and requirements on study list

- k. poor performance in clinical/externship/applied experience
- l. rated as marginal in previous review and has not remediated weak areas
- m. concerns about ethical or professional behavior
- n. poor performance in research
- o. failure to resolve any problems or fulfill any requirements indicated in a previous marginal or unsatisfactory review

According to the BYU Graduate Studies catalog, you may also be dismissed from the program if you:

- Fail to maintain minimum registration
- Receive a marginal or unsatisfactory rating in a periodic review by the academic department and are unable or unwilling to comply with conditions for continuance outlined by the department
- Fail to make what the department or the university deems to be satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree
- Fail the thesis defense and final oral examination
- Violate the university's standards of conduct or the Honor Code

## Evaluation Domains

All students are evaluated on three domains (knowledge, performance, and dispositions) after the end of each Fall and Winter Semester. This evaluation is intended to identify and facilitate remediation of deficiencies in a timely manner and to convey to you progress and standing in the program.

Included with the three domains of knowledge, performance, and dispositions is an assessment of your progress in meeting timelines and all program requirements.

*Knowledge Evaluations.* Evaluation of your progress in the knowledge domain is based upon grades in courses and the professors' perceptions of your work. An additional component of your knowledge is also reflected in the effectiveness and efficiency of the progress of your research. A self-assessment of your developing knowledge on a progressive basis (at least at the end of each semester) is important for you in determining any needed changes in your study habits or commitment to learning.

*Performance Evaluations.* Evaluation of your performance is based primarily on the evidence of your skill development in the areas of competence expected for your courses, and the skills associated with your thesis research.

*Dispositions Evaluations.* Evaluation of your dispositions results from faculty interactions with you in a variety of settings, including your university classes and other formal and informal associations. The planned frequency of the mentoring process through your advisor and committee allows considerable opportunity for giving and receiving feedback regarding all aspects of your progress. You should seek opportunity for this input. Your progress is dependent, in part, upon the amount and frequency of specific feedback about your strengths and challenges as you move through this developmental process.

You are expected to develop and maintain a *disposition* or attitude that is consistent with educational training and personal and professional roles, by:

- Maintaining effective working relationships with faculty, staff, supervisors, colleagues, and students
- Understanding human diversity and remaining current with the standards of professional services
- Acquiring and portraying the personal traits necessary to be successful in all aspects of your work
- Meeting professional obligations and practice in an ethical, legal, moral, and professional manner
- Understanding and incorporating the Honor Code of the University
- Committing to the role of an ethical and responsible special educator
- Valuing and committing to a lifetime of learning and service by gaining more knowledge, developing new skills, and seeking to make personal improvements through openness and genuineness.

See the Appendix for the *End-Of-Semester Graduate Student Evaluation form*.

*For information on disputes in the student evaluation please see the ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES AND TERMINATION OF GRADUATE STATUS in the Appendix.*

## Graduation Processes

### Application for Graduation

1. Apply for graduation before or during the first month of your final semester if you have completed all of the course work on your approved program of study or if you are currently registered for the remaining classes. You should also be close enough to completing your thesis to meet all scheduling deadlines for graduation this semester. You can apply online via myBYU under the “School” tab. Your ecclesiastical endorsement must be current for the semester/term you apply to graduate.
2. Register for at least **two** semester hours of credit during your final semester (audit and home study do not apply). If you are not registered for at least two credit hours, contact the Office of Graduate Studies at (801) 422-4091 immediately. For this purpose, Spring and Summer terms count as one semester; therefore you need only register for two semester hours either of these terms.
3. Obtain a copy of the [\*Minimum Standards for Submitting Dissertations and Theses\*](#) from the Office of Graduate Studies website or from your department secretary. Schedule your final oral examination through your department [\*Form 8c: Departmental Scheduling of Final Oral Examination\*](#) at least **two weeks** before the examination date and no later than the deadlines published by the department for that graduation.
4. The Office of Graduate Studies will send you an e-mail reminding you to review your *Official Graduation Clearance Check* online through AIM.

### Graduation Deadlines

Deadlines for all phases of program completion are sent to you annually by the graduate secretary. These deadlines supersede those of the Graduate School. **If you fail to meet the published graduation deadlines, you will need to reapply for graduation.**

### The Exit Interview

You must have an exit interview with the graduate coordinator prior to graduation. This interview is scheduled in advance of the graduation deadline (but after completion of the thesis defense) to allow a review of your file. The graduate coordinator also asks about the quality and appropriateness of your graduate experience and gathers suggestions from the student. This provides important information for program improvement. Please assure that your exit interview meeting is scheduled.

### Graduation Ceremonies

You are encouraged to participate in commencement and convocation services for your graduation. This is an exciting time to celebrate with your family, friends, fellow students, and faculty members. Immediately following convocation services, an open house is held for all graduates of the McKay School of Education, where you can eat and mingle with others.

All graduation requirements must be met by the university deadlines in order to graduate at the official graduation times. Graduations occur in June, August, December and April; however, ceremonies are only held in April and August. If you have successfully defended your thesis, but have not completed all requirements for an April or August ceremony, you may apply to walk during the convocation service (but officially graduate the following semester). To apply see [Graduation Convocation Instructions](#) through the McKay School of Education Student Services. You must certify that the convocation you are applying for is not more than one convocation prior to your official convocation. As such, you certify that you understand that the convocation you have petitioned to walk through is not your official convocation. Additionally, you will attest that you have or will have completed all graduation requirements before your official convocation. You will acknowledge that approval to walk through the requested convocation does not constitute an official graduation from Brigham Young University. You will note that if you are approved to walk in the requested convocation, your name will not appear on the convocation program.

## **Professional Development**

### **Dissemination of Research**

The department encourages you to participate in the professional community by disseminating written information to broad audiences and by presenting at professional conferences. You may also have opportunities to present your thesis research at a school-sponsored forum for student research. You are strongly encouraged to seek these and other opportunities to share your work.

The student travel policy will support undergraduate or graduate students presenting as first-authors and when the paper is a dissemination of your primary research, not the faculty sponsor's research. The amount will be \$250 for national conferences; \$100 for regional conferences; and \$25 for state conferences. **Funding is only available once per calendar year.** You must complete an application and submit it to the department secretary to be considered for this support. See the Appendix for this application.

Also, you may apply for presentation awards through the Graduate Student Association (GSA). See your GSA representative or visit the [GSA website](#) for more information. Graduate students presenting original research at conferences are eligible to compete for a Research Presentation Award (RPA) averaging \$400. RPAs are intended to enable graduate students to travel to important conferences within their discipline in order to present their scholarly and creative work. RPAs are awarded two times each year and are distributed within two months after the application deadline. The application deadline is in the middle of an award period which allows students to apply who have either already presented their research or who are planning to within the specified time period. Approximately 1/3 of the applicants receive an award.

### **The Council for Exceptional Children**

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) program standards are used by the special education faculty to develop advanced teacher preparation through course curriculum and programs. These standards tie with the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium and the Utah Effective Teaching Standards to build a strong performance-based program.

CEC is an invaluable resource for teachers, researchers, and for state policymakers. Standards include the CEC Code of Ethics, Professional Practice Standards, Mentoring Standards, and standards for beginning special education teachers, administrators, educational diagnosticians, transition specialists, and paraeducators.

All students are encouraged to learn more about CEC and become affiliated as student or professional members of this organization. You may become a member of both national CEC as well as the BYU Student Council for Exceptional Children if you are not employed full time as a special educator. Full-time teachers may become professional members. Early involvement with this organization allows you to become familiar with the professional services and support that will become especially valuable to you after you complete your graduate studies. This early involvement also facilitates the development of a richer professional orientation by exposing you to the critical issues relevant to a broadly trained professional. For more information, see [Council for Exceptional Children](#).

### **Graduate Student Association**

The Brigham Young University Graduate Student Association (BYU-GSA) provides a campus-wide voice representing graduate students in order to facilitate change. In addition to graduate student advocacy, BYU-GSA works to enhance the unique culture at BYU by developing the academic, spiritual, and social facets of graduate education. BYU-GSA offers research presentation awards, free dinners and events, social outings, free religion courses, statistical help, inexpensive bus passes, and intramural sporting events. One graduate student from the SPED M.S. program will be invited to serve on the Graduate Student Council as the representative for your program. For more information, see [GSA website](#).

### **Grad-to-Grad Mentoring**

Communication from the Graduate Student Council as well as feedback from a survey conducted through Graduate Studies suggest the need for a student mentor program in which experienced graduate students mentor new graduate students. The Graduate Student Association (GSA), in conjunction with Graduate Studies, has established guidelines for a Grad-to-Grad Mentor Program that may be adjusted to fit the individual needs of each department on campus. Grad-to-grad mentoring benefits both students and departments by positioning new students to succeed in their graduate programs, by providing the means to promote student success, and by helping students avoid problems that require departmental action, thus saving time and work for graduate coordinators and secretaries.

### **The Brigham Young University - Public School Partnership**

The Brigham Young University-Public School Partnership (BYU-PSP) is a joint venture between the University and the School Districts of [Alpine](#), [Jordan](#), [Nebo](#), [Provo](#) and [Wasatch](#). This partnership was founded in 1983 and was a setting of the [National Network for Educational Renewal \(NNER\)](#). The foundational principle of the BYU-Public School Partnership is the improvement of public education by working simultaneously to affect positive change in teacher education and student learning. Brigham Young University annually graduates over 1,000 teachers and about 40 administrative candidates.

The facilitating arm for the initiatives of the BYU-PSP is the [Center for the Improvement of Teacher Education and Schooling \(CITES\)](#). A Governing Board directs the BYU-PSP and constitutes each Superintendent of the five participating school districts, the Dean of the McKay School of Education, and the Executive Director of CITES. This Board collectively identifies the areas of need that can be

most effectively addressed by the combined efforts of the University and the School Districts. The CITES office is located in the McKay Building on the BYU campus.

### **BYU Fingerprint Background Clearance & Photo ID Policy**

Inherent in all BYU education programs and numerous research projects conducted by the BYU campus community is the requirement to access public and private schools. There are mandated safeguards that monitor access to school children by non-school personnel. In compliance with State law and a mutual agreement between BYU and BYU Partnership school districts, the following policy is in effect: BYU faculty, staff, and **students** must now be properly identified with a BYU Educator Preparation Program (EPP) ID card and provide evidence of fingerprint background clearance before accessing public/private K-12 schools in both partnership and non-partnership schools. **BYU Fingerprinting Background Clearance must be maintained throughout your enrollment in the program.**

*If you have NOT previously held a teaching license with the State of Utah:* go to the McKay School of Education Student Services website to learn what you do for [Fingerprint Background Clearance](#).

### **Description of Facilities**

#### **Technology Education Computing Lab**

The Technology Education Computing Lab (TEC Lab) is a comprehensive educational computer lab, located in Room 180 of the McKay Building. The lab provides educational technology support to the McKay School of Education and the Secondary Education programs in the BYU Educator Preparation Program (EPP). The goal of the TEC Lab is to improve the quality of teaching and learning by helping faculty and students integrate technology into their experiences at BYU and in the public schools.

This large computer lab is available for your use in writing papers, reports, and completing other assignments. This lab contains computers, scanners, printers, and other electronic equipment. Lab assistants are available to assist you. Please review information about the services, technology, and software available in the [Technology, Education, Computing Lab](#).

#### **University Writing Center**

The Writing Center provides students from all disciplines with one-on-one help with their writing at any stage in the writing process. Peer tutors from many disciplines are committed to helping students become better writers by focusing on the global aspects of writing, such as thesis construction, organization, transitions, idea development, logical coherence, style, and argument clarity. Please review information about the services available at [BYU Writing Center](#).

#### **Statistics Lab**

The statistics department has various open labs scheduled where you can receive help with statistical procedures. The times and room numbers vary each semester. You can email [statsec@hannibal.byu.edu](mailto:statsec@hannibal.byu.edu) to receive the current schedule.

All Graduate Students are entitled to two FREE hours of consultation at the [Consulting Center](#) within BYU's [Statistics Department](#). An additional FREE hour of consultation is offered to graduate students if the Center is involved in the planning state of their research. Cost reductions are given to graduate

students when their advisor is present at the initial consultation. Charges are usually waived for collaborative research that leads to joint authorship.

### **Graduate Student Mailboxes**

Your name will be put on a file in the filing cabinet in the CPSE Department office as a place for professors to give you written information. You may also receive mail or other information in your file. Please check it regularly.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Program Forms and Guidelines**

See forms on following pages.

# Student Travel Authorization



This authorization should be completed by student(s) traveling without being accompanied by a university employee. When accompanied by a university employee, the employee should file the trip authorization in Y-Expense and indicate he or she is traveling with a group.

**STUDENT INFORMATION:**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Address City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 # of Students in Group: \_\_\_\_\_ (Attach a list of the group)

**TRIP INFORMATION:**

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Destination: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Departure: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Return: \_\_\_\_\_

Expense Type	Estimated Expenses
Airfare	
Hotel	
Rental Car	
Meals	
Other	
<b>Total Trip Expenses</b>	\$ -

Op Unit	Account	Class	Amount
ESTIMATED EXPENSES FOR DEPT UNITS:			\$ -
ESTIMATED EXPENSES YET TO BE ASSIGNED:			\$ -

<b>STUDENT APPROVAL:</b>	<b>DATE:</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT APPROVAL:</b>	<b>DATE:</b>

Instructions: Complete form and print. Obtain approval signatures before travel takes place. After the trip, include a copy of this approved document with your receipts in a PDF format attached as a receipt using the document "Expense Report for a Campus Visitor or Student" in Y-Expense.

**COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY & SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
**End-of-Semester Graduate Student Evaluation**

STUDENT:

ADVISORY CHAIR:

**RATING SCALE***Satisfactory Performance is adequate or above.****Marginal (Needs Improvement) Performance is inadequate. Requires plan for remediation (including specific tasks, timeline, and faculty contact)******Unsatisfactory Performance is well below expected level and requires plan for remediation (including specific tasks, timeline, and faculty contact), or student has shown unwillingness to respond to a previous remediation plan outlined to bring marginal performance to satisfactory level.***

<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Acceptable grades in course work Application of knowledge in applied/practical settings Comprehensive examinations; portfolio progress	
<b>Comments/Feedback</b>	<b>S M U</b>
<b>Performance</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Practicum/Internship evaluations On-site evaluations Evaluations of university supervisors Performance evaluations Performance in research work	
<b>Comments/Feedback</b>	<b>S M U</b>
<b>Dispositions</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Ethical performance and professionalism Interactions with faculty, site-supervisors, school administrators Interactions with students/clients Compliance with BYU Honor Code Regular contact with advisory chair	
<b>Comments/Feedback</b>	<b>S M U</b>
<b>Program Progress</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Submission of study list and committee in timely manner Approval of prospectus Progress or completion of thesis/dissertation Courses completed in line with semester-by-semester outline in handbook	
<b>Comments/Feedback</b>	<b>S M U</b>
<b>OVERALL RATING REPORTED TO OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>Comments/Feedback</b>	<b>S M U</b>

Students making marginal or unsatisfactory progress are informed:

1. what they need to do to make satisfactory progress
2. when each task needs to be accomplished
3. what faculty member(s) they should contact for more information or support
4. what will happen if these tasks are not accomplished (e.g., and unsatisfactory rating for the next semester, termination from the program, etc.)

If a student receives a marginal and an unsatisfactory or two unsatisfactory ratings in succession, the department will:

Terminate the student's program at the conclusion of the semester **OR**

Submit a petition to Graduate Studies making a convincing case that the student be given another semester to demonstrate satisfactory progress.

A copy of a contract listing student and faculty responsibilities and a time line should be attached.

If a student receives marginal rating in one semester and is not making satisfactory progress in the next semester, the student should be rated as making unsatisfactory progress. In other words, a student should not be rated as making marginal progress in two sequential semesters. Failing to correct marginal progress is unsatisfactory.

## **Thesis Prospectus Procedures**

Prior to the prospectus defense, you work substantially with your thesis advisory chair, and under the direction of the chair, provide draft copies of the prospectus to committee members for feedback. The thesis prospectus meeting is a time to meet with your thesis committee to discuss, revise, and approve the proposed research.

**Prior to the meeting:** **Three weeks** prior to this meeting, provide the committee chair with either a paper or digital a copy of the prospectus. The chair will review it, provide feedback (changes may be necessary), and will recommend you begin the process of the prospectus defense by providing draft copies of the prospectus to committee members for feedback. After making changes and at least **two weeks** prior to the prospectus meeting, you will provide each committee member with either a paper or digital copy of the prospectus (check with each member to determine preferences). If the committee decides that your prospectus is not ready to be presented, you will be required to make changes prior to scheduling the meeting. Once the committee agrees that the prospectus is free of major theoretical, methodological, and writing errors (including formatting, spelling, and grammar), your chair will tell you to schedule the meeting for the defense.

The prospectus meeting must be scheduled with the advisory committee at least **two weeks** in advance. Inform Diane Hancock of the planned meeting and work with the student receptionist to schedule a meeting room.

### **What to bring to the meeting:**

- A computer (if you are projecting your presentation to a screen)
- A projector (you can check one out from Diane or from the TEC lab)
- Mac adaptor for the computer/projector, if necessary
- One copy of the “Thesis Prospectus Approval Form” and “Co-authorship Agreement Form” (found in your student handbook)
- Hard copies of your PowerPoint slides if you are presenting using this software (optional)
- Your personal calendar/planner so you can agree upon due dates with your committee

### **Typical structure of prospectus meeting:**

1. Committee chair introduces committee members and MS/EdS candidate, if necessary.
2. Committee chair invites a committee member to give the invocation.
3. Committee chair states the purpose of the meeting and how the meeting will proceed.
4. Committee chair may volunteer to take notes for you, so you can concentrate on the discussions rather than on taking notes.
5. MS/EdS candidate presents an oral summary of the literature review, research questions, proposed methods, and proposed data analysis. (It is helpful if the committee members have a written summary to follow, e.g., PowerPoint show, written outline. It is also helpful for you to bring a written copy of the prospectus for a reference during the discussions).
6. Committee members will ask questions of you for clarification of concepts written in the Introduction, Review of Literature, and Methods sections. The members then discuss relevant issues with you to gain consensus on the changes that need to occur before proceeding with Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval.
7. Committee chair will ask you to step out of the room while the committee decides whether you are ready to proceed with the study.

8. Committee members sign “Thesis Prospectus Approval Form” and “Co-authorship Agreement Form.” Thesis chair submits these forms to the department secretary either directly following the meeting or upon receiving IRB and graduate coordinator clearance. (The final oral examination cannot be scheduled until these forms are submitted to the department secretary).
9. Committee agrees upon dates for completing thesis work that are congruent with departmental and university deadlines (use the dates from the departmental form, not the university form: “Graduation Deadlines for Graduate Students”).
10. Committee chair invites you back in to the room and informs him/her of the committee’s decision:
  - a. Reconvene at a later date so the proposed study can be reviewed after substantial revisions have been made.
  - b. Proceed after making changes recommended by the committee, and after receiving IRB approval
  - c. Proceed to get IRB approval from BYU and schools/districts where you will conduct research.
11. Candidate collects copies of the thesis (paper or electronic copies) from committee members and schedules an appointment with committee chair to discuss committee members’ recommendations.

**Following the meeting:** The MS/EdS candidate then makes all changes determined appropriate by the advisory chair. You send the revised prospectus to the chair (and, if necessary, the committee), for approval.

**Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education  
Special Education M.S. Program  
Thesis Prospectus Approval Form**

**Name of Student** \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisory Committee:**

We, the undersigned, met as a group on \_\_\_\_\_ (date), evaluated the thesis prospectus, counseled with the student, and now submit the attached prospectus certifying that it meets departmental standards of thoroughness and quality of scholarship. We further agree to conduct a preliminary examination of the thesis prior to scheduling a date for the final oral defense to determine the readiness of the candidate for the defense.

Committee Chair Signature	Printed Name
Member Signature	Printed Name
Member Signature	Printed Name

**Prospectus cleared by BYU Institutional Review Board\* (attach signed clearance notification)**

\*Successful completion of your prospectus defense will allow you to proceed with acquiring Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for conducting your research. You must complete the tutorial and application found on the Office of Research and Creative Activities (ORCA) webpage <http://orca.byu.edu/IRB/> and submit your IRB tutorial completion certificate, along with your IRB proposal to the ORCA Office at A-285 ASB.

**Coauthorship Agreement Form (attached):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

**Approval:**

The attached prospectus has been approved by the Department. The student may proceed with the study as proposed and approved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Department Chair/Graduate Coordinator**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Co-authorship Agreement Form  
for M.S. in Special Education Students**

1. We, the undersigned, have read and understand policies of the M.S. in Special Education Program at Brigham Young University governing assignment of authorship of manuscripts to be submitted for publication.
2. We agree upon authorship based upon our projections of professional and scientific contributions to the study. *(See attached policy regarding authorship.)*
3. We agree that the student has six months following the completion of his/her degree program to submit a manuscript for publication based upon the thesis in order to remain first author of the study. After that time, the student’s advisor has the authority to prepare the manuscript for publication, to assume first authorship, and to negotiate the order of additional authors.

I. The following represents our *preliminary agreement* on authorship of the study:

Date of Prospectus: \_\_\_\_\_

The proposed title of the study is: \_\_\_\_\_

First Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Second Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Authors: \_\_\_\_\_

Minor contributors listed in a note (no substantial authorship): \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures:

Thesis Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

II. The following represents our *final agreement* on authorship of the study:

Date of Final Defense: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of the study: \_\_\_\_\_

First Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Second Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Authors: \_\_\_\_\_

Minor contributors listed in a note (no substantial authorship): \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures:

Thesis Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

c: Student File

### **M.S. in Special Education Policy on Authorship**

This document is meant to provide clarification on the M.S. in Special Education policy on authorship. Authorship is a way of giving credit and accepting responsibility for research and writing done in academic and professional work. It should be noted that most of the research and writing conducted in the M.S. in Special Education program is of a collaborative, team nature. It is rare that one individual designs, conducts, analyses and writes up an entire piece of research, thus the question of authorship becomes relevant.

Various disciplines handle the issue of authorship differently. In the cases of education and psychology, first authorship usually signifies the greatest level of responsibility and credit for the published work. **The M.S. in Special Education policy on authorship adheres to the following guidelines from The American Psychological Association (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists (2002) section 8.12;**

- (a) Psychologists [Professionals] take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed or to which they have substantially contributed.
- (b) Principal authorship and other publication credits accurately reflect the relative scientific or professional contributions of the individuals involved, regardless of their relative status. Mere possession of an institutional position, such as department chair, does not justify authorship credit. Minor contributions to the research or to the writing for publications are acknowledged appropriately, such as in footnotes or in an introductory statement.
- (c) Except under exceptional circumstances, a student is listed as principal author on any multiple-authored article that is substantially based on the student's thesis. Faculty advisors discuss publication credit with students as early as feasible and throughout the research and publication process as appropriate.

The M.S. in Special Education authorship policy also follows the guidelines listed in the APA Publication Manual (2001):

Authorship is reserved for persons who receive primary credit and hold primary responsibility for a published work. Authorship encompasses, therefore, not only those who do the actual writing but also those who have made substantial scientific contributions to a study. Substantial professional contributions may include formulating the problem or hypothesis, structuring the experimental design, organizing and conducting the statistical analysis, interpreting the results, or writing a major portion of the paper. Those who so contribute are listed in the byline. Lesser contributions, which do not constitute authorship, may be acknowledged in a note. These contributions may include such supportive functions as designing or building the apparatus, suggesting or advising about the statistical analysis, collecting or entering the data, modifying or structuring a computer program, and recruiting participants or obtaining animals. Conducting routine observations or diagnoses for use in studies does not constitute authorship. Combinations of these (and other) tasks, however, may justify authorship. As early as practical in a research project, the collaborators should decide on which tasks are necessary for the project's completion, how the work will be divided, which tasks or combination of tasks merits authorship credit, and on what level credit should be given. This is especially appropriate if one of the collaborators is new to the publishing process.

Collaborators may need to reassess authorship credit and order if major changes are necessary in the course of the project (and its publication). This is especially true in faculty-student collaborations, when students may need intensive supervision or additional analyses may need to be conducted beyond the scope of a student's thesis.

The corresponding author (the author who serves as the main contact) should always obtain a person's consent before including that person's name in a byline or in a note. Each author listed in the byline of an article should review the entire manuscript before it is submitted.

Authors are responsible for determining authorship and for specifying the order in which two or more author's names appear in the byline. The general rule is that the name of the principal contributor should appear first, with subsequent names in order of decreasing contribution. If authors played equal roles in the research and publication of their study, they may wish to note this in the second paragraph of the author note.

Authors are also responsible for the factual accuracy of their contributions. The opinions and statements published are the responsibility of the authors, and such opinions and statements do not necessarily represent the policies of APA or the views of the editors.

## Scheduling the Thesis Defense

**PLEASE NOTE: You will not be allowed to schedule your defense during any interim period between semesters/terms.**

Prior to the defense meeting, the student has worked substantially with his/her chair and has provided draft copies of the completed thesis/dissertation to the chair and possibly to the committee members for feedback. You has also completed the following tasks:

Prior to Scheduling the Defense	3 Weeks Prior to the Defense	<i>No later than 2 Weeks Prior to the Defense</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Check to make sure the following documents are signed and in your file in Diane’s office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Approved Prospectus Form</i></li> <li>• <i>Co-Authorship Agreement Form</i></li> <li>• <i>IRB Approval Form</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Apply for graduation (see University deadlines).</li> <li>3. You may want to schedule a “data review” meeting with your committee after having collected your data and before holding your thesis/dissertation defense.</li> <li>4. You may also want to schedule a tentative date/time for your defense with your committee. Inform the program director of this date.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide each committee member and the program director with a paper or digital copy of your thesis/dissertation.</li> <li>2. Your advisory committee has no more than one week to review your thesis/dissertation and sign <a href="#"><i>Form 8c: Department Scheduling of Final Oral Exam</i></a>, verifying your readiness to defend your thesis/dissertation.</li> <li>3. Collect signatures on <i>Form 8c</i> and give the signed form to your program director, who will verify that the format, citations, bibliographic style, and illustrative materials fulfill university style requirements. The program director must sign this no later than 2 weeks prior to your defense date.</li> <li>4. If you are required to make changes, you must make and have them approved 2 weeks prior to the defense date.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Obtain <i>Form 8c</i> from your program director.</li> <li>2. Schedule a room with the front desk secretary and give the signed <i>Form 8c</i> to Diane <b>no later</b> than 2 weeks prior to the defense date.</li> <li>3. Diane schedules the thesis/dissertation defense with the university.</li> </ol>

### Thesis Defense Meeting General Outline

1. Committee chair invites you into the meeting and introduces committee members and MS candidate, if necessary.
2. Committee chair invites a committee member to give the invocation.
3. Committee chair dismisses you and visitors/observers, then discusses with the committee if you are ready to defend the thesis (this step may happen prior to the commencement of the meeting).
4. Committee chair clarifies the purpose of the meeting and how the meeting will proceed.
5. Committee chair may volunteer to take notes for you, so you can concentrate on the discussions rather than on taking notes.
6. MS candidate presents a brief oral summary of the literature review and research questions. The presentation of the following components of the thesis is more substantial: methods, data analysis, results, and discussion. It is helpful if the committee members have a written summary to follow (e.g., PowerPoint show, written outline). This whole presentation generally takes no more than 15-20 minutes. It may take longer if committee members ask questions of you during the presentation.
7. If questions are reserved until following the presentation, committee members then ask questions for clarification of concepts and to gain consensus on the information presented in the thesis.
8. Observers of the thesis defense may be dismissed at this point.
9. Committee members commence the Comprehensive Oral Examination of the MS candidate.
10. Committee chair asks you to step out of the room while the committee decides whether you have passed the thesis defense and oral examination.
11. Committee members complete the following forms:
  - a. *Committee Member Evaluation of Final Oral Examination*
  - b. *Form 10 - Report of Committee Action for Final Oral Examination*
  - c. *MS in Special Education Comprehensive Oral Exam evaluation form.*
  - d. *Form 8d - Approval for Submission of Dissertation, Thesis, or Selected Project* is signed by the committee members when the final form of the thesis is ready for submission to the library.
  - e. *Grade change form* (for 699R thesis hours) is signed by the graduate coordinator and submitted after thesis is completed and approved by the Dean's office.
12. The committee chair invites you back to the room and informs him/her of the committee's decision. Possible thesis defense outcomes are determined by vote of the committee:
  - a. Pass: no changes are necessary; the thesis is accepted, signed, and copies made for the Library.
  - b. Pass with qualifications: The thesis needs minor changes. The committee chair holds up the results of the defense until the changes have been satisfactorily completed.
  - c. Recess: The thesis needs revision, further writing, or other fixing. Another defense is necessary but must be held at least one month later.
  - d. Fail: The student's degree program is terminated immediately.
13. The thesis committee and candidate discuss and sign the *Co-authorship Agreement Form* as appropriate.
14. Candidate collects copies of the thesis from committee members and schedules an appointment with committee chair to discuss committee members' recommendations.

## Getting Your Thesis Approved

1. Review the Graduate Studies Form ADV 11: [Minimum Standards for Submitting Dissertations and Theses](#) for details regarding formatting and submission standards.
2. If you pass the oral defense of your thesis with qualifications, you will be required to make the changes recommended by your advisory committee, as directed by your committee chair. Upon making these changes, you must get signatures from each committee member on Form 8d: [Approval for Final Dissertation or Thesis](#).
3. Then you will submit an electronic copy of your thesis to the Graduate Coordinator along with *Form 8d*. This version is reviewed for format and content. The Graduate Coordinator reserves the right to discontinue reviewing theses with more than six typographical, grammatical, or formatting errors, returning the thesis to you for changes prior to resubmission.
4. After you make all required changes the Graduate Coordinator will sign *Form 8d*, then you will submit the following to the Dean's Office (301 MCKB):
  - A printed copy of your entire thesis (single sided)
  - A printed copy of the full Table of Contents (including Level 4 and 5 headings) so the logic of the headings can be checked
  - Signed Form 8d: *Approval for Final Dissertation, Thesis, or Selected Project*
5. The Dean's Office typically takes up to 10 work days for this review (longer, if closer to deadlines). Corrections to the thesis are likely to be required at this level of review; if there are to be changes to be made, then you and your committee chair are notified.
6. Provide a revised version of your thesis electronically to the Dean's Office along with the paper copy with the original recommendations from the Dean's Office.
7. After you have made all of the changes the Dean's Office requires, the Dean signs *Form 8d*, and you are then required to submit your thesis to the Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) website. Upload it as a pdf file with bookmarks for levels 1, 2, and 3 to the [BYU ETD website](#). The library offers classes and individual instruction on working with this website. The date on the title page of an ETD should be the month and year the college dean approver signs the Approval for Final Dissertation or Thesis (ADV Form 8d). Attending a class will save you a lot of time, particularly when deadlines are fast approaching!
8. After you have uploaded your thesis to the ETD website, the Graduate Coordinator approves it (checks to see if the file is working correctly – all necessary headings are bookmarked, and the bookmarks lead to the right pages). If it is not approved, you will need to make changes and resubmit your thesis on this website.
9. Upon receiving Graduate Coordinator approval, the file is automatically sent through the ETD website to the Dean's Office for approval. If it is not approved by the Dean's Office, you will need to make changes and resubmit your thesis on this website.
10. You will receive an email indicating approval by the Dean's Office. At this status, you will take your signed Form 8d and title page to the Graduate Studies Office 105 FPH. You may want to order personal bound copies on the [BYU Print and Mail](#) website, but this is not required.
11. *To note:* Graduate Studies will accept electronic signatures on the ADV form 8d (the form used for graduate student ETD submissions). Signatures are obtained using EchoSign, which offers an easily managed process to insert the required name, and then email the next person on the 8d for their signature. All signatures must be on one document, regardless if an electronic signature is used in conjunction with original signatures. Additional information is available on the Graduate Studies [EchoSign Instructions](#) page.

## **Oral Comprehensive Examination Procedures**

The following procedures have been established by the special education faculty as guidelines for the Oral Comprehensive Examination.

The M.S. in Special Education program does not require a written comprehensive examination. However, during your thesis defense meeting you will be required to orally demonstrate knowledge and skills gained through your graduate studies. Each course should prepare you for successful completion of this examination.

The purpose of this oral examination is to provide you, as a master special educator, with the opportunity to verbally demonstrate your knowledge of the relationship between your coursework and your thesis research.

### Preparation for the Examination:

- Six (6) weeks prior to the examination date, the Graduate Chair and Thesis Advisor write at least 4-5 questions that best reflect the student's coursework and thesis research.
- It is strongly recommended that the student develop outlines of major topics for each M.S. course in relation to the student's thesis research. However, written outlines or other written work may not be used during the oral examination.
- The student will receive guidelines describing how the comprehensive examination committee members will evaluate the exam.

### Examination Guidelines:

- The examination will take place during the student's thesis defense meeting.
- All thesis advisory committee members will evaluate the student's responses to the questions, unless the thesis chair exempts a member (e.g., committee member from outside of the department).
- A "Pass" on all 5 questions results in successful completion of the comprehensive examination. ("Pass" requires a minimum of 2 in each category for each question; see attached rubric).
- If a student receives a "Pass" on at least 3 questions but does not pass 1 or 2 questions, then the student must work with his/her thesis advisor to develop a plan for demonstrating competency. This may entail providing written answers to the thesis advisor and/or committee.
- A "Pass" on the retaken question(s) results in successful completion of the comprehensive examination. ("Pass" requires a minimum of 2 in each category for each question; see attached rubric).

- Exception to retaking comprehensive examination questions: Any student who receives a zero (0) on any question does not pass the comprehensive examination and may not complete retaking the exam during the current exam period.

Scheduling a Retake or Second Administration of the Comprehensive Examination:

- If a student's first attempt at the comprehensive examination is not successful, the student is allowed to "retake" the examination during another semester. A new set of questions will be provided. A retake does not have to occur during the following semester.
- It is suggested that any student who is asked to retake the comprehensive examination receive guidance from his/her thesis advisor for studying and preparing for the next exam.
- If results from a second administration of the comprehensive examination prove to be unsatisfactory, the student will be dismissed from the program.

**MS in Special Education  
Oral Comprehensive Exam**

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Conceptual Level</b>	<b>Accuracy and Thoroughness</b>	<b>Oral Expression</b>
<b>4. Evaluation Level</b> – The student presents an evaluative judgment of the issue including evidence based on the processes of comparison, discrimination, interpretation, summarization, and conclusion.	<b>4.</b> The discussion is accurate, comprehensive and thoroughly supported.	<b>4.</b> The response is very organized, succinct and clear.
<b>3. Analysis or Synthesis Level</b> – The student breaks the concepts into parts and discusses interrelationships then brings the parts together into a different, original, or new whole.	<b>3.</b> The discussion is accurate and most of the important relevant issues are addressed and well supported.	<b>3.</b> The response is organized, succinct and clear.
<b>2. Comprehension or Application Level</b> – The student grasps the meaning of the material and interprets it through paraphrasing and/or providing examples. Also demonstrates the ability to apply rules, methods and theories in new situations.	<b>2.</b> Most relevant issues are addressed. The information provided is generally accurate and documented.	<b>2.</b> The response is somewhat organized, succinct, and clear.
<b>1. Knowledge Level</b> – The student recalls knowledge of facts and theories.	<b>1.</b> A few relevant issues are addressed. A number of inaccuracies exist.	<b>1.</b> Poor organization. Not succinct or clear.

*(A "Pass" requires a minimum of 2 in each category)*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Concept</b>	<b>Accuracy/ Thorough</b>	<b>Oral Express</b>	<b>Comments</b>

Evaluator's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Overview of the Cognitive Domain of Bloom's Taxonomy

### 1.0 Knowledge

The recognition or recall of: common terms, specific facts, methods and procedures, basic concepts, and/or basic principles. For evaluation purposes, answers at the knowledge level involve little more than bringing to mind material appropriate to the question. Responses at the knowledge level may or may not reveal personal understanding of the subject matter.

**Representative Responses: Definitions, descriptions, identifications, labels, lists, matches, names, outlines, reproductions, selections, statements.**

### 2.00 Comprehension

Lowest level of understanding, comprehension level responses demonstrate basic understanding of terms, facts, concepts, methods and/or principles. Comprehension is exhibited through personal interpretation, paraphrasing, translation or extrapolation of relevant information. While *comprehension* level responses may demonstrate the writer's ability to make use of existing material(s) or idea(s) as necessary to answer the question, the responses do not necessarily cite or link relationships to other material(s) or idea(s) or examine the material(s) or idea(s) as to their greater implications.

**Representative Responses: Conversions, defenses, distinctions, estimations, explanations, extensions, providing examples, personal inferences, paraphrasing, predictions, rewrites, summarizations.**

### 3.00 Application

The capability and capacity to apply concepts, methods, principles, laws, and/or theories to new and/or practical situations, Application level understanding may be revealed through demonstrations of general concepts, methods, concepts, or may center upon abstract manipulations of technical principles, ideas, and/or theories.

**Representative Responses: Changes, computations, demonstrations, discoveries, manipulations, modifications, operates, preparations, productions, relates, shows, solves, uses.**

### 4.00 Analysis

The breakdown of processes, concepts, material or other ideas into their constituent elements or parts such that the relative hierarchy of those ideas are made clear and/or the relations between the ideas expressed in the answer are made explicit. An *analysis* answer (a) recognizes unstated assumptions, (b) recognizes logical organization or logical fallacies in reasoning, (c) distinguishes between facts and inferences and/or (d) conveys the basis, arrangement, and relevance of the material(s) or idea(s).

**Representative Responses: Break downs, diagrams, differentiations, discriminations, distinguishes, illustrates, points out, relations, selections, subdivisions.**

### 5.00 Synthesis

The unification, formulation or integration of elements and parts so as to form a different, original, or creative whole. Synthesis answers demonstrate the writer's ability to work with pieces, parts, elements, etc. and arrange the, in such a way as to constitute a pattern, organization, or structure not clearly revealed before. *Synthesis* responses reveal a writer's ability to integrate learning from different areas into a plan for solving a problem.

**Representative Responses: Categorizations, combinations, compositions, derivatives, designs, modifications, plans, rearrangements, reconstructions, reorganizations, revisions, rewrites.**

### 6.00 Evaluation

Representative of the highest level of understanding, *evaluation* level responses support abstract judgments about the value of material, methods, and/or ideas for given purposes. Evaluation level responses: (A) judge the logical consistency of written material, (b) judge the adequacy with which conclusions are supported by data, (c) judge the "value" of a principle, law, method, theory, etc. by use of supportive internal criteria, and/or (d) judge the "value" of a principle, law, method, theory, etc. by use of supportive external standards of excellence.

**Representative Responses: Appraisals, compare and contrast, critiques, discriminations, justifications, interpretations.**

### Consent to Use Student Work

I, the undersigned, hereby give permission to the BYU Department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education (CPSE), the BYU David O. McKay School of Education (MSE), and Brigham Young University (BYU), or any of them, (collectively referred to as “BYU”), to use at their discretion for non-commercial, educational purposes any intellectual property which I generate in the course of my taking classes at BYU (the “Student Work”). Such Student Work may include completed class assignments, portfolios, lesson plans, inventions, and other forms of Student generated intellectual property. Possible BYU uses for the Student Work include, but are not limited to, evaluation and accreditation of University programs and activities, research, publications, scholarly presentations, the dissemination of the Student Work on CDs, websites or through other electronic means, public display using the MSE plasma screen or other display devices, or use in classes as reference and sample materials or for other instructional purposes. I understand that I will continue to own the Student Work, and that I will be given proper attribution as the owner of the Student Work pursuant to my instructions specified at the bottom of this document.

I agree that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty or adverse effects. If I wish to withdraw consent, I will deliver written notice of withdrawal to my CPSE program coordinator.

Student Name	Signature	Date
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Witness Name	Signature	Date
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*(Check and initial one option)*

- Use my full name in association with my Student Work.
- Use only my first name in association with my Student Work.
- Do not use my name in association with my Student Work.

### **Consent Form for Obtaining Data from Future Employer(s)**

I, the undersigned, hereby give permission to BYU to contact my future employer(s) for up to five years after graduation to gather data about my teaching performance. This data will be aggregated and will not be reported individually.

#### **Authorization to Release Employment Information**

I, the undersigned, hereby authorize my past, current or future employer(s) to provide answers to questions, documents or other information relating to my work-related performance during my tenure with such employer. This authority is granted on the condition that any data received by BYU will be aggregated and will not be reported individually or in a manner that would identify me personally. This authorization will expire five (5) years following the date on which the authorization is given. I further hereby release my current, past or future employer(s) from any loss or injury that I may experience as a consequence of such employer providing any information to BYU.

I agree that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty or adverse effects. If I wish to withdraw consent, I will deliver written notice of withdrawal to my CPSE program coordinator.

Student Name	Signature	Date
Witness Name	Signature	Date

## **Academic Grievances and Termination of Graduate Status**

### **Grievance Procedures**

If a graduate student feels her/his work has been unfairly or inadequately evaluated, the first step is to contact the faculty member. Usually the issue is amicably resolved on an informal basis between the student and faculty member. If consulting with the faculty member or the graduate committee chair does not resolve a grievance, a graduate student should describe the problem to the department graduate coordinator and/or the department chair. If difficulties persist, the student may ask the college dean and finally the graduate dean for review. All grievances must be presented within a year of the semester in question. Please review information regarding the [Graduate Student Academic Grievance Policy](#).

### **Termination of Graduate Status**

Termination of graduate status may result from failure to meet certain requirements of admission, registration, program progress or performance, such as:

1. Fail to satisfactorily complete the conditions of acceptance.
2. Fail to fulfill the university's minimum registration requirement.
3. Fail to meet the degree time limit (5 years).
4. Make a request to withdraw (with the intent to pursue a degree at another university, for personal reasons, or in response to department recommendation).
5. Receive a Marginal or Unsatisfactory rating in a periodic review by the academic department and you are unable or unwilling to comply with conditions for continuance outlined by the department.
6. Fail to make what the department or the university deems to be satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree.
7. Fail the departmental comprehensive examination.
8. Fail the final oral examination (defense of dissertation, thesis, or project).
9. Violate the university's standards of conduct or Honor Code.

### **Appeal of Termination**

If you are dismissed or are facing dismissal, you may respond to or appeal that termination or impending termination. Such responses or appeals should be directed, in writing, to the Department Chair. If you wish further consideration, you may appeal to the Dean of the School of Education. Ultimately, a final appeal may be made to the Dean of Graduate Studies, who, if circumstances warrant, may appoint a committee of impartial faculty members to review the matter.

### **Discontinuance**

Graduate students who wish to withdraw from the university must initiate that process at the Discontinuance Office, B-150 ASB, (801) 422-7705.