

**Requirements for the Early Childhood Special Education major**

- Students must complete the liberal learning requirements as defined by The College of New Jersey. This includes a course in US history; a course in children's literature (ECE 102, LIT 310 or WGS 225); a course in music, art or theatre (IDS 401); and a lab science. Students must complete a second major from the list provided above.
- Students must complete the following coursework at the undergraduate level: SPE 103, ECE 201, SLP 102, RAL 222, ECE 202, ECE 203, SPE 324, SPE 326, SPE 214, RAL 322, ECE 302, ECE 490, ECE 498.
- Students should complete MAT 105 or MAT 106 as part of their liberal learning requirements.
- Students must complete the following coursework at the graduate level in order to gain teacher certification. This coursework includes the following required courses: SPED 621, ECED 530, ELEM 520, SPED 622, ECED 670, EDUC 513, SPED 521, SPED 700, SPED 695, SPED 648, SPED 597.
- Prior to placement in a field experience, students must receive Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Prevention (HIB) training.
- Students must complete a minimum of 32 undergraduate course units while fulfilling all requirements of their dual major program and of the Liberal Learning program to be eligible for the BS degree. Graduate courses completed during the undergraduate course of study do not apply toward the BS degree.

**Admission**

1. The EECE and SELL departments reserve the right to limit enrollments in the program when necessary or desirable.
2. Entrance into teacher candidacy is granted at the end of Spring semester, Sophomore year, only to those students who have met the departmental requirements as well as those of the School of Education and of the College. A student must have a minimum of 16 earned course units, a grade of B- or higher in ECE 202 and in ECE 203 and a minimum GPA of 2.75 or higher. Praxis core scores are required of students based upon the cutoff scores on the SAT or ACT tests as determined by the State. Students are required to provide evidence of passing scores on the praxis core before receiving formal admission into the program.
3. Departmental application forms must be filed by students desiring to transfer from other departments in the College. The application process includes completing an application and a written response to a designated topical question. Interviews of applicants are required. A minimum GPA of 2.75 is required to transfer into the program.
4. Proficiency level of all students admitted to the major will be continually assessed. Students not meeting acceptable proficiency levels in the areas of oral language, spelling, writing, reading, and mathematics skills may not be permitted to continue in the program.
5. Students must evidence satisfactory performance in the Educators Disposition Assessment administered in SPE 103, ECE 201, RAL 222, SPE 214, and SPE 324. Student dispositions are also assessed throughout the program and will be used as a criterion for admission and retention in the program. It is expected that dispositional standards, particularly in the area of professionalism, should be upheld by students throughout the program, both within and outside of their coursework and in accordance with the TCNJ Student Conduct Code.

5. Students transferring from another department should check the early childhood special education website (<http://specialeducation.pages.tcnj.edu/>) for specific information pertaining to transfer students.

### **Academic Regulations**

In compliance with the State of New Jersey's regulations, a student must have met the following requirements before enrolling in the pre-professional experience block of courses, beginning the third year:

- earned a "B-" or higher in ECE 202 and ECE 203
- hold a grade point average of 2.75
- completed the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators exams and earned at least the State-mandated minimum scores or have been exempt from taking the exams based on SAT or ACT scores
- demonstrated acceptable dispositions and teaching proficiency

Students wishing to take more than 4.5 units of coursework in one semester must have permission of the advisor, Department Chair, and Assistant Dean and have a GPA of 3.3 or higher. Students may not take more than 4.5 units of coursework until after they have completed 8.0 units of undergraduate coursework at TCNJ.

Any course in which a student receives a grade lower than the program criteria may be repeated only once. Students unable to meet departmental criteria as noted will be dismissed from the department. Dismissal will be made at the end of a Fall or Spring semester.

At the completion of the fourth year of study, the student's grade point average will be assessed to determine if the standard for graduate study at TCNJ has been met.

### **Transfer Students**

The program is sequential in nature and structured with courses offered only during certain semesters. Potential transfer students must realize that this may prolong their programs by as much as one year in some cases. Transfer students who are accepted into the program must schedule courses with advisement of the program coordinator.

Outside transfers must complete an admissions process through the College admissions office. Departmental review of external transfer applications occurs immediately subsequent to the date published by the College. Interview of applicants may be required. A minimum grade of B is required in English Composition. Students transferring from other schools should check the special education website for specific information pertaining to transfer students.

### **Program Entrance, Retention, and Exit Standards**

Every major program at the College has set standards for allowing students to remain in that program, to transfer within the College from one program to another, and to graduate from a program. The following are the standards for the Early Childhood Special Education program. Minimum grades are noted in parentheses.

- Retention in the program is based on the following academic performance standards in these “critical content courses”: SPE 103 (B-), ECE 201 (B-), SLP 102 (B-), ECE 203 (B-), RAL 222 (B-) and SPE 326 (B-). Students who have taken any of the above courses two times without earning the requisite grades will be dismissed from the program. Also see the retention requirements for individual majors in the Schools of the Arts and Communications; Humanities and Social Sciences; Engineering; and Science.
- In addition, students must evidence satisfactory performance in Disposition Standards and/or Teaching Performance standards as measured in SPE 103, ECE 201, SLP 102, ECE 203, SPE 214 (B-), SPE 324 (B-), RAL 322 (B-), ECE 302 (B-), ECE 490 (B-), ECE 498 (B-). Satisfactory dispositional standards must be upheld outside of coursework as well, for example, in contexts such as interactions with peers and major cohorts, advising, communication with faculty and staff.
- In addition, a minimum grade of B- is required in all graduate courses.
- Transfer into the program from another program within The College is based upon the following performance standards in these “foundation” courses: ECE 102 (B-) or MAT 105 (C-) or BIO 104 (C-); SPE 103 (B-).
- To graduate, the student must earn a minimum grade of C- in MAT 105 or MAT 106, B- in all critical content courses (see list above), as well as a B- in all other required education courses.
- In addition, students are required to get a minimum grade of C- on their Education major breadth distribution courses (U.S. History, and Lab science).
- A student’s other course work will depend in part on his or her second major. See requirements for individual majors in the Schools of the Arts and Communications; Humanities and Social Sciences; Engineering; and Science.
- At the end of their 4th year, students must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 for admission to graduate study at TCNJ.
- In order to be eligible for undergraduate student teaching (Clinical Practice 1:ECE 490), a student needs to meet the following criteria:
  - Minimum GPA of 3.0 or higher.
  - Demonstrate satisfactory levels of teaching performance and professional dispositions, and minimum grade of “B-“ in SPE 214, SPE 326, RAL 322, ECE 302. A rating of satisfactory on Teaching performance is defined as: No concerns have been indicated on the student’s teaching performance by the instructor, field supervisor, or cooperating teacher. The candidate has been rated as proficient or higher in all of the criteria. Overall satisfactory performance on the Professional Dispositions Assessment is being defined as: No concerns have been indicated on the student’s dispositions by the instructor, field supervisor, or cooperating teacher. Further, there should be no dispositional concerns raised in contexts outside of students’ formal coursework and student actions in all settings should be in accordance with the TCNJ Student Conduct Code. The candidate has been rated as proficient or higher in all of the dispositional criteria.
  - Student has taken the Praxis II for Early Childhood Education (currently test # 5025). See the following URL for more information on this test.  
<http://www.ets.org/praxis/nj/requirements/>

- The Departments of Elementary and Early Childhood Education (EECE) and Special Education, Language and Literacy (SELL) maintain the right and have the responsibility to dismiss students from the major who have not made satisfactory progress completing the major components of the program which includes successful ratings on the Teaching Performance Assessment Rubric and the Professional Dispositions Rubric as well as fulfilling all other department requirements or expectations.