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Education Programs

Inclusive Education (Special Education) Graduate Diploma

Location Offered:

Nanaimo

Credential:

Graduate Diploma

Program Length:

16 Months

The Program

VIU's Inclusive Education (Special Education) Graduate Diploma embodies an innovative approach to the field of Inclusive Education. Grounded in current research and evidence-based practices, our program challenges each educator to critically examine historical and contemporary Inclusive Education policies and approaches to formulate a best practice specific to their context. Faculty bring their expert knowledge and extensive experiences to guide, support and maximize student learning in each part of the program.

This program is an online distance based program. The program consists of required and elective course work and is non-cohort based with continuous enrollment. The program requirements can be completed entirely online with some electives offered in person during the Intersession term at one or more of the VIU campuses. Students may begin the program at the start of any semester and will be able to select courses as they go.

The 30 credit program is nested in four frames of reference:

1. **Context for Development and Learning:** Students consider the context for development and learning including characteristics of the individual with special needs; issues such as social context, cultural perspectives, poverty, and mental and social health; and implications of research.
2. **Informative Assessment:** Students focus on the purposes, processes, and implications of assessment information.
3. **Responsive Teaching:** Students demonstrate the ability to develop, implement, and evaluate an Individual Education Plan (IEP) in consultation with classroom teacher(s), parents, students, and district and community resource personnel for students with a variety of special needs.
4. **Re-imagining Inclusive Education:** Students think beyond current practices and examine critical issues in the field of Inclusive Education that impact children with special needs and their families in order to re-imagine the field of Inclusive Education.

Graduates of the program will command content knowledge, develop skill-specific competencies and acquire relevant experiences prescribed by the BC Ministry of Education for Inclusive Education specialist teachers.

The Inclusive Education (Special Education) Graduate Diploma program is offered as a flexible model for practicing teachers. As a continuous intake program, students will be able to complete the program at their own pace, and once completed are eligible to apply to ladder into the Master of Education in Special Education where they will complete three more courses in order to qualify for the Master of Education in Special Education degree.

Program Outline

Graduate Diploma Planning

Given the flexible model of the program, students should consult with the Program Coordinator to discuss their plan to satisfy the graduate diploma requirements, including the option to apply to ladder into the Master of Education in Special Education program.

Graduate Diploma Requirements

To be granted the Inclusive Education (Special Education) Graduate Diploma (IEGD), students must meet the following requirements.

Total Requirements

Students must complete a **minimum of 30 credits** comprised of 24 required credits and a minimum of 6 elective credits.

Required Courses

Students must complete the following:

GDSE 583 - (Social and Emotional Development)
GDSE 584 - (Assistive Technology and UDL: Foundations & Exemplary Practices)
GDSE 585 - (Collaborative Planning for Student Success)
GDSE 591 - (Literacy and Numeracy in Inclusive Education)
GDSE 594 - (Learning Disabilities)
GDSE 620 - (Introduction to Inclusive Education (Special Education))
GDSE 692 - (Individual Intervention Planning)*
GDSE 693 - (Individual Assessment)*

**GDSE 692 plus GDSE 693 are equivalent to the former GDSE 592 course.*

Elective Courses

Students must complete a minimum of 6 credits by taking at least two of the following:

GDSE 582 - (Special Topics: Investigation of Practice)
GDSE 586 - (Gifted Learners Investigation of Practice)
GDSE 587 - (Developing Functional Curricula)
GDSE 588 - (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Investigation of Practice)
GDSE 589 - (Autism Spectrum Disorders: Investigation of Practice)
GDSE 590 - (Conference Related Special Project)**
GDSE 593 - (Planning for Inclusion: Differentiation)
GDSE 595 - (Working with High Risk, Marginalized, and Vulnerable Youth)

** GDSE 590 is a required course for those applying to ladder into the Master of Education in Special Education.

Completion Requirements

The Graduate Diploma will be awarded upon successful completion of all program requirements with a minimum of a “B” or “CR” grade in all courses.

Admission Requirements

- Possession of a valid BC teaching credential or equivalent.

Recommendations for Admission

A minimum of two years of successful teaching is recommended.

Notes on Admission

- Students who meet or exceed the minimum admission requirements may not necessarily be admitted to the program.
- Students’ ability to register in classes will be subject to seat availability.

Transfer from other Institutions

Applicants may apply to the Program Coordinator for possible transfer of credits from other accredited Graduate programs with a maximum of 9 credits accepted.

Career Opportunities

Domestic graduates of this program will be well-poised to assume Inclusive Education positions at the school and district level. School districts in British Columbia report great difficulty in recruiting qualified Inclusive Education teachers.

Start Date and Application Deadline

As this program offers continuous intake, applications including submission of all official documents must be received by one month prior to the beginning of each semester. For more program information contact the Education Department at 250-753-3245, Ext. 2530 or 1-888-920-2221, Ext. 2530, or email educ.gp@viu.ca.

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