



SIUE Now Enrolling For Robust Masters Of Arts In Teaching Special Education

April 28 2021 9:49 AM



Individuals interested in advancing their education and/or making a career change have a prime opportunity to help meet a critical need in the state and revitalize local communities by pursuing a Masters of Arts in teaching (MAT) in special education.

The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Education, Health and Human Behavior's (SEHHB) accredited MAT special education program offers robust and integrated coursework focused on applied field experiences, evidence-based instructional techniques, research-proven strategies, resources and technologies to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

The Illinois State Board of Education ranks SIUE's special education program 'exemplary' in teacher performance and persistence. Program graduates boast an impressive 100% pass rate on a high-stakes assessment.

"The MAT program is intended for individuals holding a bachelor's degree who wish to transition into a special education career," said Susanne James, PhD, associate professor of special education and program director of the MAT special education. "There is a teacher shortage in special education, and SIUE is a leader in education dedicated to addressing that need. Our MAT special education program prepares highly-qualified educators who add value to their communities through exceptional student support and development."



SIUE is the only in Illinois and one of 14 universities nationwide to have a classroom simulation lab, called the SIUE [Virtual Professional Practice Lab](#) (VPPL). The VPPL is an innovative, mixed-reality technology that simulates experiences and interacts with participants to deliver real-world opportunities to master skills in teaching. It is an important component of the MAT as it gives students the opportunity to practice their instructional skills before applying them in the classroom.

"Entering the MAT program is one of the best decisions I have made," said Lunetha Robinson, of Belleville. "The cohort exposed me to the Virtual Professional Practice Lab, which gave me the confidence to complete my field placements. In addition, it gave me the opportunity to build lasting relationships with future teachers."

“The MAT program has allowed me to pursue my goals with a group of individuals who are driven, kind and passionate about becoming the best educators they can be,” added Terry Chapman, of O’Fallon. “The opportunity to earn your master’s while working in the field, and being able to take what you learn and apply it every day is just a small part of what makes this program special.”



Research shows that individuals who already work in hard-to-staff school districts want to stay and make a difference in their communities. “Those already working in a school district will be able to complete their practicums where they work,” James noted. “Students will complete the program in two years, including summers. Evening courses are offered through a mix of online and hyflex courses.”

Program graduates receive an Illinois Learning Behavior Specialist I license to teach K-12 special education. Military tuition rate, enhanced scholarship and tuition waivers are available.

To join the summer 2021 MAT special education cohort or for more information, contact James at sjames@siue.edu.