Funding Opportunities for Doctoral Studies in Special Education

Vanderbilt University's Peabody College

**Doctoral Training in Special Education**
The Department of Special Education has a legacy of conducting groundbreaking research, establishing innovative practices, and developing widely used methods and materials for practitioners, researchers, parents, and policy makers. The Ph.D. degree in Special Education ([peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Special_Education.xml](http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Special_Education.xml)) is conferred through Vanderbilt’s Graduate School. This degree program, which prepares students for leadership positions as special educators in schools, colleges, universities, research settings, and human service agencies, is competency based and emphasizes research and teaching. Your program of study will consist of core requirements and an individually designed series of courses and competencies. Through the core requirements, you will acquire fundamental research methodology skills requisite for advanced positions in special education. You can select your focus of study from high-incidence disabilities (learning disabilities, behavior disorders), early childhood special education, severe disabilities and autism, or visual impairments.

**Funding Available in Program Areas**
The Department of Special Education is the recipient of leadership training grants from the Office of Special Education Programs in the U.S. Department of Education. These grants provide doctoral students with tuition, monthly stipends, health insurance, and professional travel. To be eligible for these grants, students must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Other funding streams are available for those who do not meet these requirements.

*Please see reverse for programs*

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**Application Procedures**
For general information about the application process, contact

Alfred Brady
(615) 322-8195
sped-admissions@vanderbilt.edu

For specific questions about program areas, contact the faculty identified.

Vanderbilt University is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action. The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center is a national center for research devoted to facilitate discoveries and best practices that make positive differences in the lives of persons with developmental disabilities and their families. [kc.vanderbilt.edu](http://kc.vanderbilt.edu)
High Incidence Disabilities
Contact: joseph.wehby@vanderbilt.edu or steve.graham@vanderbilt.edu
The High Incidence Program has three leadership grants to prepare doctoral students for faculty positions in colleges and universities. The overarching goal of these three grants is to prepare faculty to train future special educators to improve outcomes for students with severe learning and behavior disabilities who are served in the most intensive tier of an RTI/PBS system in low-performing schools. More specific goals are to prepare doctoral students to:
- Train teachers to use scientifically validated programs in reading, writing, mathematics, and behavior disorders;
- Conduct research to develop new validated programs and to extend knowledge about the effects of these programs on diverse populations;
- Train teachers to use ongoing progress monitoring to inform instructional decision making.

Early Childhood Special Education
Contact: ann.kaiser@vanderbilt.edu
The doctoral program in Early Childhood Special Education/Early Intervention is a research-intensive four-year program that prepares trainees to assume positions as university faculty and researchers. Trainees in the program collaborate closely with mentoring faculty and are continuously involved in research and professional development activities throughout their program. The program emphasizes training in research methods applied to the study of young children with disabilities, their families and their service providers. In addition, the program is designed to promote professional competency in the following areas:
- Understanding and working with culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families;
- Ensuring access and progress of young children with disabilities in the general early childhood curriculum;
- Providing coordinated services in natural environments to improve outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

High-Need Students with Severe Disabilities or Autism
Contact: carolyn.hughes@vanderbilt.edu
This program aims to increase the number of well-qualified higher education faculty who have the skills and knowledge to improve research, teacher training, and educational outcomes for high-need students identified with severe disabilities or autism in grades K-12, including secondary transition. Program goals include:
- Hands-on experiences in high-need schools via internships supervised by Vanderbilt faculty mentors and in collaboration with school personnel;
- Collaboration with experts in autism, intellectual disabilities, severe disabilities, and research methodology through internships with the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center;
- Rotating internships and seminars that address competency-building across research, teaching, and service experiences;
- Coursework in research methods and content areas to build skills to complete doctoral program milestones in a timely fashion.

www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool/