



THE GEORGE
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Graduate School of Education and Human Development
Department of Special Education and Disability Studies

Youth Transition, Career, and Vocational Services: A Distance Education Master of Arts Program

**** Recruiting for Spring '12 ****

**** Tuition Stipends Available ****

The Program

This 39 credit, on-line Youth Transition, Career, and Vocational Services Master's degree program prepares professionals as change agents in teaching, leadership and support roles that assist youth with disabilities and youth at-risk to make successful transitions through high school to post-secondary education, employment and independent adulthood. Students will build knowledge and skills for performing the roles and functions of transition specialists through assessment, interdisciplinary planning, collaboration, and implementation of services for individuals with disabilities. The program encourages student involvement in research, scholarship, publishing and leadership activities as adjuncts to their program of study.

The program responds to the on-going needs expressed by educators and rehabilitation personnel, research concerning youth with disabilities, and legislative requirements to provide transition services for all youth with disabilities. The IDEA Amendments of 2004 (P.L. 108-446) mandate transition services which include on-going assessment, curriculum planning, and collaboration with a variety of stakeholders to include community agency personnel, school administration and faculty, and parents. In addition, this program meets the Transition Guideposts of the U.S. Department of Labor National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth (NCWD-Youth,) and the CEC Advanced Knowledge and Skills Base for Transition Specialists (2008) which are recognized by most states.

Program Objectives: Students will

- Understand and employ various interest inventories, surveys and other formal and informal transition/ career/vocational assessment instruments
- Identify a variety of transition outcomes and instructional options specific to the community for each post-school outcome area
- Understand characteristics of urban youth environments and their impact on risk and resilience. Research has established a clear link between chronic exposure to unique social and environmental stressors and a number of poor outcomes among youth, including aggression, anxiety, school failure and depression.
- Understand characteristics of rural youth and environments that yield limited educational and employment opportunities.
- Demonstrate procedures to ensure the inclusion of specific transition-related content when address academic standards
- Employ universal design for learning to address individual students' learning style preferences

- Provide information to families about transition- related education and services, and post-school options in specific outcome areas in understandable ways
- Collaborate with and participate in transition-focused interagency coordinating bodies
- Design instructional and career-oriented experiences with a youth development framework, based on the following assumptions for effective programs:
 - A focus on strengths, capabilities, and developmental needs rather than on problems, risks, and vulnerabilities
 - Appreciative, health-based approaches
 - Appropriate and positive supports from adults and peers
 - An incorporation of self-determination skills
- Design effective youth development programs are characterized by the following:
 - Promoting comprehensive and flexible youth development
 - Engaging youth in planning for the future
 - Including a curriculum that blends school-based and community-based approaches
 - Designing programs to be intensive during middle to high school transition years, in grades 9–12 and through age 21 if needed
 - Accounting for variation in the development of adolescents and their needs for long-range planning and services before age 16
 - Focusing the IEP postsecondary goals to help students move away from home, establish a social life, become lifelong learners, and work a part- or full-time job
 - Designing individual programming around a coordinated set of activities and systematic approach as required by IDEA 2004

Several unique features are embedded in the program:

- Train-the-Trainers Leadership Component. Participants will receive additional material and assignments to prepare them to provide leadership to assist school/ agency-based peers to acquire essential knowledge and skills to delivery transition services within their schools and agencies. They will prepare to be recognized by their district as a ‘transition leader’ or the resource person for best practices in the range of transition issues
- Self-Determination Philosophy. All course content reflects a self-determination philosophy – the belief that students with disabilities must be actively engaged and take ownership of their transition planning, must receive direct instruction in self-determination skills, and have opportunities to practice the skills necessary to assume adult rights and responsibilities.
- Multi-disciplinary interaction. The program invites participants from all sectors of the educational and human service system concerned with youth transition. Broad-based participation provides opportunities for improved understanding among a wide-range of professions involved in comprehensive transition planning for the achievement of successful post-school outcome.

All courses are aligned with the *CEC Advanced Knowledge and Skills Base for Transition Specialists* (2008) and the *Transition Guidepost For Success of the U.S. Department of Labor National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth (NCWD-Youth)* which are recognized by most states.

Required Coursework:

SPED 210	Principles of Universal Design – An overview and introduction to universal design for learning (UDL) including contemporary issues, application of digital and assistive technologies, tools for developing a comprehensive plan for the implementation of UDL.	3
SPED 280	Developmental Assessment of Adolescents - Formal and informal psychoeducational assessment; assessment instruments commonly used with upper-elementary, junior, and senior high school students; the writing of psychoeducational reports.	3
SPED 236	Introduction to Career, Vocational and Transition Services - Introduction to programs that provide career and technical education and transition services to individuals with disabilities.	3
SPED 230	Vocational Assessment - Investigation of vocational appraisal processes and techniques for individuals with disabilities. Includes assessment for transition using field-based assignments. Three credits of practicum experience for students specializing in vocational evaluation.	3
SPED 231	Instructional Methods in Special Education and Transition - Techniques used in programming for the needs of individuals with disabilities as they prepare for transition to postsecondary programs and employment. Emphasis on skills related to professional liaison and support roles in the design of instructional arrangements and cooperative training.	3
SPED 233	Curriculum in Transition Special Education - Theory and practice in planning, implementing, and evaluating curriculum for individuals with disabilities. Emphasis on techniques for modifying curriculum and materials for individualized programming.	3
SPED 255	Interagency/Interdisciplinary Collaboration - Overview of models and strategies for coordinating services across disciplines and among school and community agencies for special populations. Emphasis on interdisciplinary team coordination, communication, decision making, planning, and follow-up for individuals with disabilities.	3
SPED 222	Legal Issues and Public Policy for Individuals with Disabilities - Examination, interpretation, and analysis of legislation and policies affecting the education and career development of individuals with disabilities. Emphasis on federal legislation in the context of national policy reform in disability services.	3
SPED 235	Employment Models for Individuals with Disabilities - Rationale, occupational resources, and programming strategies for job placement and the development and coordination of employment programs for individuals with disabilities	3
SPED 234	Seminar-Professional Development in SPED/Transition - Analysis and development of advanced professional writing skills, including literature synthesis, persuasive writing, and proposal writing.	3
SPED 295	School/Community Based Internship - A 300-hour supervised internship in school- and community-based settings involved in career, vocational, and transition services.	6
EDUC 295	Introduction to Qualitative Research - Development of a conceptual understanding of research design and quantitative analysis options for the consumer of research. Appropriate use of vocabulary and interpretation of research findings. Critique of research articles and/or development of a small-scale proposal.	3

Additional Coursework:

- Students who have a limited background in special education will be required to take SPED 201: Overview of Special Education.
- Students who have had coursework similar to EDUC 295 can take EDUC 298.

Tuition:

The tuition for FY12 (Summer – Spring) is \$1722 per course—Check with your school district or agency/organization for tuition reimbursement.

Tuition Stipends are available to cover most of the cost. (You or your school district will be responsible for the difference.) If you are interested in applying for a stipend, contact project staff to obtain the additional criteria.

Admissions Criteria and Application Procedures:

All applications must be submitted online:

<https://app.applyyourself.com/AYApplicantLogin/ApplicantConnectLogin.asp?id=GWUGRAD>

On the application, PLEASE BE SURE that you mark under Master's Programs - Secondary Special Education and Transition Services; NOT Transition Special Education Teacher Certification

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with a minimum GPA of 2.75
- Official transcript which indicates completion of B.A. or M.A. in special education or related field
- Acceptable scores on GRE or MAT
- Two letters of recommendation
- Resume
- Statement of Purpose and goals related to transition planning for disability populations (250-500 words)
- Applications are required to be submitted online.
- Applicants must have frequent access to the internet.
- The program director and at least 1 faculty member will review all applications to determine acceptance.

Everything can be submitted online except for the official transcript. It is suggested that you request the schools you attended to mail that directly to the Admissions office. Your application can be expedited with an unofficial transcript, faxed to Jean Wright, Admissions Processor, fax: 202-994-7207. However, you must have official transcripts submitted by the end of your first semester to continue in the program. You are encouraged to submit your application and supporting documents as early as possible.

You will need the following codes and information to complete the application:

College:	22	GSEHD
Level:	02	Graduate
Degree:	1163	Masters of Arts
Major:	677	Secondary Special Education & Transition Services
Campus:	3	Off-Campus – Distance Education (online)

For more information about the program, please email Dr. Michael Ward at mjward@gwu.edu or Bridget Green at greenb@gwmail.gwu.edu.