



University of New Mexico
Special Education Program

Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program?

The UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program is a special program within the UNM Special Education Program. It provides UNM graduate students with the opportunity to complete a series of coursework in Educational Diagnosis that has been approved by the NM Public Education Department (PED). After successfully completing this coursework series, students are eligible to apply to the NM PED for licensure as an Educational Diagnostician.

2. What are the NM PED requirements for licensure as an Educational Diagnostician?

The NM PED requirements for licensure can be found on their website:

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/>

In general, NM PED requires a combination of coursework/internship, background experience, and successful completion of a licensure examination.

3. When am I eligible to apply to the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program?

You may apply after you have been admitted to a UNM graduate program (see #14 below), and after you have successfully completed the prerequisite courses (see #4 below) and the foundational Special Education courses (see #5 below).

In addition, when you apply to the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program, you must be able to document a minimum of two years of successful experience as a licensed classroom teacher or with a minimum of two years of school-based experience in a closely related field.

Important Note: While you only need to document two years of appropriate background experience at the time that you apply to the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program, it is important to be aware that when you apply to NM PED for licensure, you should be able to document your background experience as follows (per NM PED requirements):

“background experience to be met by:

- (1) holding a valid New Mexico teaching license, counseling license, or professional licensure in another area of instructional support; or
- (2) demonstrating three (3) years of documented, verified satisfactory experience in one or a combination of the following areas: work in community-based programs serving children or adults with special needs or developmental disabilities; mental health work related to educational diagnosis; clinical practice related to educational diagnosis; vocational evaluation; or teaching”



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4. Can you tell me what courses fulfill the prerequisite requirements?

The prerequisites should be completed with grades of 'B' or better in each course and include:

- Math (3 credit hours)
- Statistics (3 credit hours)
- Human development (3 credit hours)
- Reading methods (6 credit hours)
- SPC ED 201 or 501 (3 credit hours)

The **math** requirement is satisfied by completion of Intermediate Algebra, College Algebra, Pre-Calculus, or Calculus with a grade of B or better, or placement exam results at least equivalent to college algebra (e.g., passing College Algebra CLEP exam, adequate ACT or SAT scores, or COMPASS Algebra Score >54 or COMPASS College Algebra Score >33). UNM course numbers: MATH 121, 150, 162/163, 180/181, 264. Equivalent coursework from other institutions may be accepted.

The **statistics** requirement is satisfied by completion of an Introduction to Statistics or more advanced statistics course with a grade of B or better. UNM course numbers: STAT 145, EDPY 511 (pre- or co-requisite EDPY 505), EDPY 502 (pre- or co-requisite EDPY 500), EDPY 574, EDPY 603. Equivalent coursework from other institutions may be accepted.

The **human development** requirement is satisfied by completion of a human development course with a grade of B or better. UNM course numbers EDPY 503 or PSY 220. Equivalent coursework from other institutions may be accepted.

The **reading methods** requirement is satisfied by completion of courses related to the teaching/assessment of reading for diverse students. These courses must be completed with a grade of B or better. UNM course numbers: SPCD 514, SPCD 586, SPCD 587, EDUC 330L, EDUC 331L, EDUC 438, LLSS 435, LLSS 532, LLSS 537L. Equivalent coursework from other institutions may be accepted. *Important note: We will accept a maximum of 3 credit hours from courses that teach specific, commercially available reading programs, provided that the courses are reflected on a university transcript. We do not accept in-service training and other professional development courses.*

For specific information on your situation and coursework, please contact Dr. Joanna Cosby at (505) 277-2167 or jcosbey@unm.edu



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5. What are the foundational courses?

The foundational courses are UNM's SPCD 510: Special Education Law, SPCD 517 or 527: Assessment of Diverse Exceptional Children, and SPCD 519: The Application of Applied Behavior Analysis in the Special Education Classroom. You must successfully complete these three courses before you apply to the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program.

These courses must be completed at UNM and you must have earned a grade of at least a 'B' in each, with a minimum GPA of 3.2 in these courses. Courses from other institutions will not be accepted to fulfill these requirements.

6. When are applications for the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program accepted?

Generally, complete applications to the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation program will be reviewed each spring.

7. What if I would like to apply and get started right away, but don't have all of my prerequisite/foundational courses completed?

You must have your prerequisite and foundational courses completed before you can apply to the program. However, it may be possible for you to take a few of the courses prior to your application to the program. Please speak with Dr. Joanna Cosbey if you want to explore this option.

8. If I take some of the courses prior to applying to the program, am I guaranteed a spot in the upcoming cohort?

No. Admission to the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program is a competitive process. Applications will be reviewed and all students will be notified of the admission committee's decision.

9. If I am accepted in the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program, when will I start?

Due to limited resources, for the time being, new cohorts are scheduled to begin every two years, so the next cohort is scheduled to begin Fall 2012. While you are waiting for the next cohort to begin, you can continue working on courses towards your graduate degree at UNM.



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10. Do I have to apply to the MA in Special Education even if I already have an MA in another field (e.g., Counseling or Education)?

The role of an Educational Diagnostician is extremely important in the lives of students and their families, and in the professional leadership in a school. The role requires deep knowledge of teaching and learning of diverse students with varying abilities and challenges, as well as a high level of competence and professionalism. Even though you have an MA in another field, you must be currently admitted to a graduate level program at UNM in order to apply to the Special Education Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program. It doesn't necessarily have to be in Special Education (current admission in a closely related UNM graduate program may be considered), but both the UNM Special Education program and the NM PED require that Educational Diagnosticians have a strong background in special education.

It would probably make the most sense to apply to the graduate level program in Special Education at UNM. The UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program is integrated with the UNM graduate level program in Special Education, with some of the courses overlapping (depending on which program you select), and the possibility for some of your Educational Diagnostician courses to "count" as electives (depending on decisions that you would make with your advisor). If you'd like to talk more about your options for graduate programs, please contact Dr. Joanna Cosbey.

11. Do I have to have an MA in Special Education to be considered for the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program?

No, you do not need to have completed your MA. coursework in any field to be considered for acceptance into the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program. However, all students admitted to the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program must already be admitted to a graduate program at UNM (e.g., MA, EdS, PhD, or EdD): either one of the graduate programs in Special Education (i.e., ISLB certificate, MA, EdS or PhD) or in a closely related field.

As the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program is integrated with the graduate level program in Special Education, some of the courses overlap (depending on which program you select), and some of your Educational Diagnostician courses may "count" as



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electives (depending on decisions that you would make with your advisor). Please contact Dr. Joanna Cosby for help identifying an appropriate graduate program.

The NM PED requires that you hold a masters degree from an accredited college or university at the time that you apply for the license. Both our program and the NM PED require that Educational Diagnosticians have a strong background in special education.

12. Can I complete the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program while completing an MA, EdS, EdD, or PhD in Special Education?

Yes! You will still need to complete the Educational Diagnostician courses in the required sequence (see questions #4 & #5).

13. Can I earn an MA, EdS, PhD, or certificate in Educational Diagnosis?

Currently the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program is not a degree or certificate granting program. Successful completion of the program makes you eligible to apply for licensure as an Educational Diagnostician through the NM Public Education Department.

14.. Do I have to be enrolled in a graduate program at UNM when I apply?

Yes. The UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program is an opportunity for which current graduate students at UNM may apply.

15. How many hours are required to complete the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program?

The UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program is a 30-hour program. This includes 7 classes (with 3 associated labs) and a 300-hour clinical internship.

The courses are as follows:

- SPCD 564L: Educational Diagnosis: Introduction to Assessment for Eligibility for Special Education Services
- SPCD 561L: Educational Diagnosis: Diagnostic Assessment of Young Children
- SPCD 563L: Educational Diagnosis: Multidisciplinary Collaboration for Diagnostic Assessment
- SPCD 566L: Educational Diagnosis: Differential Diagnosis I*
- SPCD 567L: Educational Diagnosis: Differential Diagnosis II*
- SPCD 568L: Educational Diagnosis: Diagnostic Assessment of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students (pre-req of LLSS 556)*
- LLSS 556: First and Second Language Development
- SPCD 569: Educational Diagnosis: Clinical Internship
- SPCD 596L: Educational Diagnosis: Advanced Application of Skills (1 credit-hour lab courses associated with courses labeled with *)



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16. When are the courses offered?

In general, at this time, one course is offered per semester (Fall and Spring) due to limited resources. The exception to this is LLSS 556: First and Second Language Development. This course is offered three times per year, so you can take it any time. However, you should make sure that you take it before you take SPCD 568L: Assessment of Multicultural Exceptional Children.

17. Does it matter when I take the courses?

Yes. Once you are accepted you must take the courses in sequence as they are offered. The exception to this is LLSS 556 which can be taken any time but **MUST** be taken prior to enrollment in SPCD 568L: Educational Diagnosis: Diagnostic Assessment of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students.

18. Can I take any classes at night or on-line?

None of the courses are currently available on-line. However, all of the courses will be offered in the evening one day a week so that you can work on your graduate degree and/or continue working while completing this program.

19. Do you have a website for the UNM Educational Diagnostician Preparation Program?

Not yet. Our website is under construction and should be available soon. In the meantime, you can find information about our program on Dr. Joanna Cosbey's website:

www.unm.edu/~jcosbey

You can also find information about NM PED's requirements for a license as an Educational Diagnostician on their website (www.ped.state.nm.us).

20. Who do I contact for more information?

Dr. Joanna Cosbey, Ph. D., OTR

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