

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Education
Teacher Education

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the doctoral program in Special Education at Wayne State University. We take pride in providing opportunities for leadership development in special education. We seek to view special education in the context of good educational practices for all students and provide many options by which you may build your expertise and engage in leadership development activities during your doctoral program.

As part of the application and interview process for the doctoral program, we ask that you write and present a position paper regarding a current topic in special education. We will review this paper and discuss it with you as part of your admission interview. Our goal is both to help you further clarify your own position regarding key issues in the field and provide us an opportunity to understand your capacity for scholarship and contributions to the field of special education.

As you prepare your paper, please follow these guidelines:

1. Choose one of the attached topics or select a topic of your own choosing. Topics must focus on key trends within special education and provide both an opportunity for you to synthesize relevant research, practice, and policy and to state your own position and rationale. You should show the interaction of theory, research, and practice.
2. The paper should follow manuscript guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA).
3. Use citations within the last five years unless you are presenting a historical perspective on the issue.
4. Submit the completed manuscript along with a cover letter to Ms. Edith Chirpka, Education Admissions, Room 489, College of Education, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan 48202.

If you need additional information, contact Dr. Marshall Zumberg, Program Coordinator at (313) 577-0918.

Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Marshall Zumberg, Ph.D.

Special Education Program Coordinator

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

SPECIAL EDUCATION DOCTORAL PROGRAM **POSITION PAPER TOPICS**

1. Beginning with the passage of the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act, a move towards inclusion of students with disabilities in general education is growing. Describe the development of this trend, its place in overall best practices and school reform, and your position regarding the movement towards inclusion for students with mild through severe disabilities.
2. Many differences are apparent in education of students in higher income areas and in low income rural and urban areas, particularly those that serve high concentrations of children of color. What does this mean for special education? What differences are apparent between urban, rural, and suburban special education services? What are trends? What do you think should be done and why?
3. As the movement towards inclusive education has gained strength, the differences in philosophy and approach between general and special education becomes clearer to some. This occurs as the roles of special educators are changing dramatically. Describe your understanding of best teaching practices in general and special education, key controversies in both, and the needed relationship of special education services to promote effective learning and growth for students with disabilities.
4. Several areas of disability have been controversial in terms of definition, etiology, and educational practices. These particularly include Specific Learning Disabilities, Serious Emotional Disturbance, Mental Retardation, and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). Select one or more of these disability areas and describe these controversies, trends in the debate, and your own viewpoint.