



The Program in Visual Impairment at Florida State University offers courses leading to a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree in Visual Disabilities. Graduates are eligible for Florida certification as teachers of those with visual impairments. The program is approved by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) — which allows graduates to be eligible for certification in most other U.S. states.

Students may also add the endorsement in orientation and mobility to qualify to teach travel skills.

Those already certified to teach may be eligible to enroll in classes specifically designed to help them become certified to teach students with visual disabilities. Permission of the program coordinator is required.

The program is also offered in the Broward and Dade County areas — affording students the opportunity to earn a B.S. degree from FSU without moving to Tallahassee.

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<http://www.coe.fsu.edu/cerds/>
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Program in Visual Impairments

Department of Childhood Education, Reading and Disability Services

Now Offering Undergraduate and Graduate Courses in Broward and Dade Counties

Teaching Students with Visual Impairments

Students with visual impairments — children who are blind or who have low vision — require specialized assistance to develop the skills and knowledge needed to function in society. Because they are not able to learn by watching others, these children need instruction from teachers who work specifically with them and their families to develop skills in a variety of academic and non-academic areas, which include:

- reading using braille and other systems
- use of electronic technologies
- adaptive personal hygiene techniques
- selection and care of clothing
- meal planning and food preparation
- housekeeping skills
- knowledge of human sexuality
- leisure and recreation skills
- social skills
- career and vocational readiness skills
- self-advocacy skills

Teachers of students with visual impairments should be self-starters who like to work in one-on-one or small group activities. They particularly enjoy challenges and solving the kinds of unique problems that arise when their students become independent. Teachers generally have case loads of approximately 10-15 students, ranging from birth to 21 years old.

Employment in the Field

Results from a recent study indicate that there is a need for 5,000 new teachers of students with visual impairments across the United States. Every year in Florida, jobs go unfilled and students unserved, because so few people know about this rewarding and satisfying field of education.

Admission requirements:

Individuals interested in earning a B.S. degree in Visual Disabilities must submit an undergraduate application to FSU and pay the application fee. (<http://admissions.fsu.edu/>)

Students are strongly encouraged to make contact with the program coordinator.

By the second semester of classes, all participants — including those admitted as special students — must meet the Florida State University Teacher Education requirements stated below:

- Completion of A.A. requirements for education majors
- Passage of all parts of the College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST)
- Minimum GPA of 2.5

Careful advising is recommended for all interested students.

Teachers of students with visual impairments work primarily in local school districts, in one of two positions:

- **Itinerant teachers** have students assigned to them at several schools and arrange their schedules to meet their students' varying needs.
- **Resource room teachers** have a classroom at one school where several students are assigned. They provide support to students and general educators at that site throughout the school day.

Teachers of children with visual impairments provide and sharpen key skills in their students — ones that prove valuable in both home and community environments. These teachers, especially those with additional teaching credentials in other areas of education, are also in high demand by residential schools for the blind.

Program Curriculum/Coursework

- Introduction to Visual Impairment
- Introduction to Orientation and Mobility
- Literary Braille
- Teaching Independent Living Skills
- Anatomy and Diseases of the Eye
- Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments
- Academic Modifications in the Public School Class
- Teaching Social and Career Skills to Visually Impaired Learners
- Advanced Braille and Mathematics for the Blind
- Low Vision
- Teaching Reading and Writing to Students with Visual Impairments
- Educational Management of Students with Visual Impairments
- Teaching Students with Visual Impairment and Other Disabilities
- Student Teaching

For more information or to apply for admission, contact

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