Why SEED? Why NIU?

You may wonder why you should choose a major in the SEED department at NIU. Here are seven top reasons why our candidates pick NIU.

1. **Personalized Attention**

   From their very first semester on campus, candidates in our department meet one-on-one with their academic advisor and receive individualized, personalized advising. This personalized advising continues to the point of graduation. In addition, small class sizes in all programs mean that faculty provide special attention to all candidates and get to know them. No classes are taught by teaching or graduate assistants.

2. **Engaged Faculty**

   Across all programs within SEED, faculty teach lower and upper division courses and have won numerous teaching awards. Faculty have real-world teaching experience with children and adults in their area of expertise. They also are actively engaged in cutting-edge educational research in nearby schools. Many candidates complete research with faculty as part of their undergraduate or graduate experience.

3. **Authentic Teaching Experiences**

   All candidates complete multiple teaching experiences in schools during semesters leading up to student teaching, thereby gaining hands-on experience with students in authentic teaching environments. Our candidates far exceed the minimal number of hours in field experiences that the state requires. The College of Education also offers additional teaching experiences in Texas and China through the Educate U S and Educate Global programs. These are almost free of charge.

4. **Cohort Model**

   Undergraduate candidates complete their professional semesters (typically during their junior and senior years) in cohorts, which means that they take classes with the same group of peers across several semesters. This cohort model provides candidates with emotional and academic support and leads to close, lifelong friendships.
5. **Access to Technology**

All candidates in the department have access to computer labs housed in the College of Education and all over campus. Special education majors gain hands-on experience learning about technology for students in the Assistive Technology lab and Vision Disabilities technology lab. Very few programs nation-wide have state-of-the art Assistive Technology labs like SEED.

6. **Fully Accredited**

Each SEED program is accredited by a variety of discipline-specific professional organizations. The ongoing accreditation process results in high standards for our candidates and continuous improvement in our curricula.

7. **Graduates Get Hired**

Graduates of our department typically are hired in teaching positions within the first year of graduation. Vision candidates typically have three job offers before they graduate. Some of our student teachers are offered positions within the district in which they student taught.

**Our Candidates**

- 95% are satisfied or very satisfied with their program
- 97% feel prepared or very well prepared for future roles
- 95% indicated early field experiences were helpful or very helpful
- Over 95% of undergraduate candidates obtained jobs after graduation
- Over 96% met or exceeded standards on rigorous assignments
- 26 completed Honors projects
- 7 co-authored 6 manuscripts with faculty
- 34 co-presented 30 presentations with faculty
- 162 completed internships in Illinois, Texas, and abroad
- 12 served on department and university committees
- 102 lived in the TEACH House
- 279 volunteered in the community
- Our candidates far exceed the minimal number of hours in field experiences that the state requires
- Our candidates are awarded over $20,000 in department scholarships annually