

Dordt Adds Master in Special Education

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Recommended Citation

Van Voorst, Bethany (2022) "Dordt Adds Master in Special Education," *The Voice*: Vol. 68: Iss. 1, Article 16.
Available at: <https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/voice/vol68/iss1/16>

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education claiming to build disciples to a story of a trade school claiming to produce master electricians. The trade school didn't offer any fieldwork, only paper tests around the ideas of electrician work. Would you hire them? Most likely not. Doing the work is a valuable piece of learning how to be an electrician. It is the same for future disciples of Christ. If Christian schools are claiming that they are equipping students for Kingdom work, making disciples of the world, or that they are shaping worldviews, students need the opportunity to practice and contribute to developing Christian culture by doing real work for real people. God is sovereign over all things, every square inch, and we get the opportunity to raise up a generation that will work for restoration.

All this means is that Christian schools are holding high standards for academic rigor and developing students to use their gifts to glorify God. Christian schools must be mindful of the competing worldviews while standing firm when preparing students to do kingdom work wherever God calls them.

There are many reasons that a person may choose Christian education, but I hope that the measurement for whether it was "worth it" is seeing peculiar people that are being transformed in these peculiar schools to glorify God *wherever* they are called.

Christian educators, let's heed the challenge of making Christian education worth it. Let's invest in prioritizing peculiar, Kingdom workers that desire to serve others and work toward restoration.

SHEILA (ENGELTJES, '10) MULDER,
INSTRUCTOR OF EDUCATION



Dr. Kathleen VanTol has over 35 years of experience in education and currently serves on the task force for Iowa's Special Education Guidance System.

DORDT ADDS MASTER IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Dordt University Graduate Studies Department is now accepting applications for the new Master of Special Education (M.SPED) program.

"Dordt's Master of Special Education will prepare you to teach students with special needs across a range of settings and ages," says Dr. Kathleen VanTol, professor of education. "Students with disabilities need teachers who both care about them and have the tools and techniques to help them be successful. In this cross-categorical program, teachers will learn those research-based practices which will enable them to support students who have a variety of learning and behavioral challenges."

The 30-credit program is entirely online and can be completed in as little as two years. Students also have the opportunity to take courses in Applied Behavior Analysis to qualify for the Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) exam.

"This new program allows teachers to build on their existing strengths and prepare for their future professional needs such as instructional strategy,

behavior analysis, assessment, and interventions," says Dr. Steve Holtrop, professor of education and director of graduate studies.

The M.SPED program will partner with Dordt's Thrive Center, a teaching center providing areas of behavior therapy and skills acquisition for children. The center employs therapies based on the principles of applied behavior analysis, collaborating with schools, families, and agencies to achieve the best outcome for each client.

"Dordt's strengths in special education combined with opportunities in the Thrive Center, help teachers boost the caring, competence, and confidence needed to help all students thrive," says Holtrop. "This is a

great opportunity for educators to hear God saying, 'whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me,'" as is said in Matthew 25:40.

BETHANY VAN VOORST



LEARN MORE

To learn more about the Master of Special Education, visit dordt.edu/msped.

