

Program Report for the Preparation of Special Education Professionals Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION

COVER SHEET

1. Institution Name

Arkansas State University

2. State

Jonesboro

3. Date submitted

MM DD YYYY

09 / 11 / 2008

4. Report Preparer's Information:

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6. Name of institution's program

Instructional Specialist in 4-12 Special Education

7. NCATE Category

Special Education-Mild/Moderate Disabilities

8. Grade levels⁽¹⁾ for which candidates are being prepared

4-12

(1) e.g. Early Childhood; Elementary K-6

9. Program Type

- Advanced Teaching
- First teaching license
- Other School Personnel
- Unspecified

10. Degree or award level

- Baccalaureate
- Post Baccalaureate
- Master's
- Post Master's
- Specialist or C.A.S.
- Doctorate
- Endorsement only

11. Is this program offered at more than one site?

- Yes
- No

12. If your answer is "yes" to above question, list the sites at which the program is offered

13. Title of the state license for which candidates are prepared

Instructional Specialist in 4-12 Special Education

14. Program report status:

- Initial Review
- Response to One of the Following Decisions: Further Development Required, Recognition with Probation, or Not Nationally Recognized
- Response to National Recognition With Conditions

15. State Licensure requirement for national recognition:

NCATE requires 80% of the program completers who have taken the test to pass the applicable state licensure test for the content field, if the state has a testing requirement. Test information and data must be reported in Section III. Does your state require such a test?

jn Yes

jn No

SECTION I - CONTEXT

1. Description of any state or institutional policies that may influence the application of CEC standards. (Response limited to 4,000 characters)

Institutional Policies

The mission of Arkansas State University's Department of Educational Leadership, Curriculum, and Special Education (ELCSE) is to provide graduate programs related to the preparation and licensure of school leaders and special education faculty. The Master of Science in Education (MSE) degree, Instructional Specialist in Special Education Grades 4-12, offers educators a systematic plan that includes 30 credit hours of coursework designed to improve general educational and specific professional competencies. The curriculum incorporates the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Entry Level, the International Society for Technology Education Standards (ISTE), the Arkansas Standards for Special Education, and the College of Education (COE) conceptual framework. The purpose of the master's degree is to produce a cadre of high-quality specialists of special education as they relate to standards and performance-based measures. The program encompasses issues in special education relevant to characteristics of individuals with exceptional learning needs, assessment and identification, legal and ethical responsibilities, methods, diversity, social/emotional needs, diagnosis/correction of reading disabilities, behavior management, collaboration, data collection and analysis, and a supervised laboratory experience. For entry into the program, the university requires a valid teaching license, a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale, and a written commitment from a master teacher, coordinator or administrator of special education who agrees to function as a site mentor throughout the program of study.

The Department of Educational Leadership, Curriculum, and Special Education also offers a Program of Study (POS) for teacher candidates of special education who are pursuing a "licensure only" track. Specifically, the POS is appropriate for teachers who already have a master's degree or who simply do not wish to complete a master's program but still need to add 4-12 special education endorsement to his/her teaching license. A plan consisting of at least 21-24 hours of coursework in content regarding special education is required. The content includes characteristics, assessment, diagnosis and identification, legal and ethical responsibilities, methods of teaching individuals with exceptional learning needs, diagnosis and correction of reading disabilities, diversity, social/emotional needs, collaboration, data collection and analysis, behavior management, and a supervised laboratory experience with students with exceptional learning needs.

State Policies

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) requires that all teacher candidates in the area of 4-12 special education must (a) possess a standard initial teaching license, (b) complete required coursework (i.e., determined by the institution of higher education), (c) take the Praxis II: #0351 Knowledge Based Core Principles with a minimum score of 150; and, #0352 Application of Core Principles Across Categories of Disabilities with a minimum score of 141, (d) complete a supervised practicum, and (e) present a portfolio of artifacts from the coursework and internship (i.e., practicum and/or field experiences). Individuals who do not have an initial standard teaching license are ineligible to pursue licensure in special education.

The ADE also offers an Additional Licensure Plan (ALP) for teachers who have been employed by a public school district in Arkansas to teach in a special education classroom for a period of up to three years while he/she completes coursework for licensure. The school district is required to file an ALP for Special Education Endorsement for grades 4-12. The teacher candidate must (a) possess a standard teaching license, seek to add another area of licensure or endorsement, and (c) be assigned to teach in an area other than the one for which they are currently licensed.

2. Description of the field and clinical experiences required for the program, including the number of hours for early field experiences and the number of hours/weeks for student teaching or internships. (Response limited to 8,000 characters)

Clinical experiences begin as soon as the teacher candidate for 4-12 special education begins the program. Experiences include performance-based activities such as structured observations, interviews, teaching, and applying skills under the tutelage of a site-based mentor and a university supervisor. One of the strengths of the program is that most, if not all, of the candidates are practicing teachers with their own classrooms and students with exceptional learning needs; as a result, the interest level and motivation are extremely high. See Attachment E for a table summarizing the field experiences. Following is a narrative description.

During the prerequisite course ELSE 3643 Exceptional Child in the Regular Classroom candidates complete 8 hours of observations. These observations are conducted in a school setting where children with exceptional learning needs are grouped together for instruction by any variety of means – pull-out program, co-teaching, ability grouping, etc. The teacher being observed must be certified to teach children with exceptional learning needs. A structured observation form is provided and students write a reflection paper about the classroom environment, teaching strategies observed, effectiveness of strategies, assessment, inclusion techniques, and teacher/student interactions.

During the prerequisite course, ELSE 5633 Diagnosis and Correction of Mild Reading Disabilities, candidates work with an individual child with a reading disability. The site-based mentor assists in the performance-based project that includes candidates using multiple reading assessments to develop a diagnostic summary of the child’s reading strengths, weaknesses and recommendations. Candidates implement at least one of the recommendations and conduct a Response to Intervention. This activity requires an estimated 15 hours in field work.

During the last prerequisite course, ELSE 5033 Behavior Intervention and Consultation, candidates learn the basic components of Applied Behavior Analysis. With the assistance of their site-based mentors, candidates develop and complete a behavior analysis on a student for an academic skill and for a behavior concern. Using anecdotal data collection, candidates collect data and form a hypothesis about the behavior concern. They determine the data collection system to use and collect baseline data. Finally, they implement their intervention plans. After a minimum of four weeks of data collection, candidates write an analysis of the intervention. This activity requires an approximate 18-20 hours.

In ELSE 6073 Educational Techniques for Working with Individuals with Moderate and Severe Disabilities, candidates must complete 10 hours of observation and field work in a self-contained classroom. For the first four hours, candidates observe the special education teacher as he works with his students; for the next hour, the teacher assists the candidates on targeting a skill to develop a task analysis and an the teaching strategy for implementing (i.e., forward chaining, backward chaining, etc.) and possible reinforcers. During the last five hours, candidates implement the task analysis and collect data. Results are analyzed and synthesized into a reflective paper. This activity requires approximately 12-15 hours.

In ELSE 6053 Educational Procedures for Working with Individuals with Mild Disabilities candidates complete a Differentiated Unit Plan (DUP) in a content area that explicitly includes modifications and/or accommodations for including any individual with a mild cross-categorical disability. The DUP must be linked to the general curriculum. A series of 6-8 lessons are required on a particular topic. Candidates are to work with their site-based mentor in developing the DUP and then the lessons have to be taught in the general education classroom when the students with exceptional learning needs are included. Candidates turn in their DUP along with a series of reflections about the implementation of the plan. The site-based mentor also writes up a summary of a candidate’s performance. This activity requires

approximately 18-20 hours in the field.

In ELSE 5043 Educational Diagnosis and Assessment in Special Education, Candidates complete a battery of assessments on school-age student. Primary assessments, such as the WoodCock Johnson and the Weschler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT), are required for all candidates to complete, and the rest are selected based on the needs of the child as determined by the candidate. Upon completion of the battery of assessments, candidates analyze and synthesize the information into a diagnostic summary. This summary is then used in the methods course for developing an IEP. Candidates must successfully complete this course before taking ELSE 6063 Educational Procedures for Teaching Individuals with Emotional/Behavior Disorders. This activity requires from 20 to 22 hours.

In ELSE 6063 Educational Procedures for Teaching Individuals with Emotional/Behavior Disorders and/or ELSE 6073 Educational Procedures for Teaching Individuals with Moderate/Severe Disabilities, candidates use the diagnostic summary (developed in ELSE 5043 to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Candidates work with their site-based mentor in the development of the IEP, specifically the goals and objectives. Candidates develop a series of lesson plans for meeting selected goals/objectives, and they must implement the intervention in their classroom with the assistance and input from the mentor. These activities require from 28 to 30 hours. Another field activity in this course is for candidates to observe a fully licensed special education teacher that works with individuals with EBD, and/or a rehab counselor working in a school district with students and/or EGD. Candidates use a structured observation form to observe in the classroom for a minimum of 12 hours. These activities require from 40 to 42 hours.

ELSE 6813 Laboratory is the capstone course for the 4-12 special education licensure. Candidates spend the entire semester in the classroom setting completing a variety of projects/activities that are performance-based and require them to apply their special education skills. Within this course, candidates complete multiple projects to include a minimum of two behavior change projects, evaluation, IEP, and a series of lesson plans. A minimum of three lessons are observed and feedback is provided by the site-based mentor and the university supervisor. As a reminder, these teachers are all licensed, practicing teachers that are adding the special education licensure to their initial teaching license. In summary, the internship capstone course provides an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate proficiency in applying skills from their special education courses to expand their teaching expertise and reflect and evaluate on their own performance. Candidates must document skills that have been utilized in communicating effectively, soliciting input from appropriate sources, and ultimately making critical decisions to arrive at a successful conclusion, all shared through weekly reflections. At the conclusion of the Lab/internship, all work becomes a part of their portfolio. Teachers use an approved format with the required documentation which is evaluated using a scoring rubric. This portfolio in its entirety requires a high level of organizational proficiency and allows a clear sense of the candidate's development over the duration of the field/internship experiences. Students spend approximately 10 weeks completing activities and projects in the capstone course, for an estimated 100-150 hours. (See Appendix E for Summary Table).

3. Description of the criteria for admission, retention, and exit from the program, including required GPAs and minimum grade requirements for the content courses accepted by the program. (Response limited to 4,000 characters)

There are four gates in the program where knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the candidates are assessed and appropriate decisions are made regarding the candidates' admittance or continuance in the program.

Gate #1-Admission Requirements

Candidates seeking admission into the Master of Science in Education degree program in 4-12 special

education must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate School and the specific program requirements.

Unconditional Admission Status:

1. Hold a valid teaching license.
2. Achieve a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.
3. Have a written commitment from a facilitator, coordinator or administrator of special education who agrees to function as a site mentor during the program of study.

Conditional Admission Status:

- 1, 3, above apply
2. Achieve a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.00 scale on the last 60 hours.

Any candidate granted Conditional Admission Status will be advanced to Unconditional Admission Status when the candidate completes 12 graduate semester hours 4-12 Special Education Program of Study with no course grade lower than a "B." Candidates who fail to remove conditional status upon completing 12 semester hours of graduate work in the program will be dropped from the degree program.

Gate #2-Progress Review by Department Advisor

Upon admission to the program, candidates are assigned an advisor within the department. The advisor must be consulted each semester prior to registration. At that time the advisor will evaluate the candidate's progress and continuance in the program.

Any candidate whose cumulative GPA on all courses taken for graduate credit falls below 3.00 will be placed on probation. Candidates may remove probation by raising their cumulative GPA to 3.00 or better. Failure to make a grade of "B" or better in each course taken while on probation will result in suspension from further graduate work if the candidate's cumulative GPA continues below 3.00.

Candidates who have a grade of "F" in any graduate-level course will be ineligible to register for further graduate work for a period of one-year and then must reapply to the program.

Gate # 3-Successful Completion of the Praxis II: 4-12 Special Education/Portfolio Review

Candidates must successfully complete two Praxis II assessments, #0351 and #0352, in Special Education with a score of 150/141 or above, respectively. This must be achieved before candidates are eligible for the lab. In addition, the advisor reviews the required artifacts that are placed within the candidate's portfolio to ensure compliance with program standards. Candidates who have not kept their portfolio current or who have not included appropriate artifacts/evidences will not be allowed to continue until the portfolio becomes current and to the level of quality required to successfully meet the portfolio requirement. Students, not meeting portfolio requirements or successful completion of the Praxis II, will not be allowed to progress to the internship until changes and improvements are completed.

Gate #4-Portfolio - Comprehensive Exit Assessment

At the completion of the lab, all candidates for licensure in 4-12 Special Education are required to complete a comprehensive exit assessment that consists of a portfolio review. The portfolio is in part a collection of artifacts from authentic performance-based assessments that confirm the candidate has met Arkansas and CEC standards. The candidate must be affirmed in each standard in order to receive credit for the exit review and receive recommendation for licensure in 4-12 special education or continuation in the MSE-Instructional Specialist in 4-12 Special Education.

**4. Description of the relationship ⁽²⁾ of the program to the unit's conceptual framework.
(Response limited to 4,000 characters)**

The mission of the College of Education (COE) is to generate and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, and service and to apply that knowledge toward improving education and the quality of life for all individuals in a pluralistic and democratic society. A conceptual framework (Learning to Teach/Teaching to Learn) aligns with this mission. A strong relationship exists between the CEC

Standards, the Arkansas Standards, and the unit's conceptual framework, which are equally important to the pedagogical status of the program and are embedded in the coursework and performance based requirements.

The Arkansas Standards for 4-12 Special Education are divided into five broad categories. Standards 1-5 relate to the teacher candidate's ability in terms of (a) the content she or he is teaching, (b) the planning of curriculum, (c) the delivery of instruction based on individual learning needs, (d) the student/teacher relations and (e) the essential collaboration skills with stakeholders.

The COE conceptual framework was revised in 2008 and is the latest phase of the evolution of this framework. The objective is to prepare the professionally emerging teacher in the specific areas of knowledge and skills delineated in Learning to Teach/Teaching to Learn. These performance-based standards have been identified by P-12 professionals, the academic community of Arkansas State University, and national and state standards for the profession. It consists of nine standards including:

- Professionalism: The teacher candidate behaves in a professional, ethical, and legal manner.
- Communication skills: The teacher candidate demonstrates effective communication skills.
- Diversity: The teacher candidate utilizes a variety of teaching strategies to develop a positive teaching-learning environment where all students are encouraged to achieve their highest potential.
- Curriculum: The teacher candidate plans and implements curriculum appropriate to the students, grade level, content, and course objectives.
- Teaching Models: The teacher candidate implements a variety of teaching models.
- Classroom Management: The teacher candidate utilizes appropriate classroom management strategies.
- Assessment: The teacher candidate utilizes a variety of assessment strategies to monitor student learning and to determine adjustments in learning activities.
- Reflective Teaching: The teacher candidate utilizes action research to enhance teaching and learning.
- Subject Matter: The teacher candidate understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

In terms of professionalism Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice (CEC) addresses similar issues regarding respectful, ethical, and professional practice. In the category of communication, Standard 6 Language and Communication as well as Standard 10: Collaboration relate to the teacher candidate's ability to communicate effectively with students based on their level of giftedness and the candidate's ability to communication effectively with stakeholders. Diversity, as a component of the unit conceptual framework, is embedded throughout all CEC standards. In addition, Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences is strongly linked to the concepts and components of the diversity category in the unit conceptual framework. Curriculum, classroom management, reflective teaching, and subject matter are components of CEC Standard 4: Instructional Strategies and Standard 7: Instructional Planning. Finally, the assessment piece of the unit conceptual framework is closely aligned to CEC Standard 8: Assessment. Consequently, there is a strong and apparent correlation between the College of Education conceptual framework and the program standards that guide the program in 4-12 Special Education (Appendix E-chart).

(2): The response should describe the program's conceptual framework and indicate how it reflects the unit's conceptual framework.

5. Indication of whether the program has a unique set of program assessments and their relationship of the program's assessments to the unit's assessment system⁽³⁾. (Response limited to 4,000 characters)

Action research is utilized throughout the unit to ascertain and enhance the health of individual programs and the unit as a whole. Annually, the MSE Instructional Specialist in 4-12 Special Education is reviewed by examining data collected via specific CEC assessments, prescribed unit internal program assessments (Candidate Surveys, Internship Summative Evaluations, and Portfolio Evaluations), and external program assessments (state licensure exams). An annual improvement action plan, required

throughout the unit, is devised and sent to the Program Evaluation Committee for review and acceptance. In addition, a report of the results of the previous year's action plan is developed and disseminated to the Unit Assessment Committee. (See Attachment E)

(3) This response should clarify how the key assessments used in the program are derived from or informed by the assessment system that the unit will address under NCATE Standard 2.

6. Please attach files to describe a program of study that outlines the courses and experiences required for candidates to complete the program. The program of study must include course titles. (This information may be provided as an attachment from the college catalog or as a student advisement sheet.)

Section 1 Context Attachment C Program of Study

See **Attachments** panel below.

7. This system will not permit you to include tables or graphics in text fields. Therefore any tables or charts must be attached as files here. The title of the file should clearly indicate the content of the file. Word documents, pdf files, and other commonly used file formats are acceptable.

Section 1 Context Attachment D-3

See **Attachments** panel below.

8. Candidate Information

Directions: Provide three years of data on candidates enrolled in the program and completing the program, beginning with the most recent academic year for which numbers have been tabulated. Report the data separately for the levels/tracks (e.g., baccalaureate, post-baccalaureate, alternate routes, master's, doctorate) being addressed in this report. Data must also be reported separately for programs offered at multiple sites. Update academic years (column 1) as appropriate for your data span. Create additional tables as necessary.

Program: 4-12 Special Educaiton		
Academic Year	# of Candidates Enrolled in the Program	# of Program Completers ⁽⁴⁾
2007-2008	19	16
2006-2007	13	13
2005-2006	15	9

(4) NCATE uses the Title II definition for program completers. Program completers are persons who have met all the requirements of a state-approved teacher preparation program. Program completers include all those who are documented as having met such requirements. Documentation may take the form of a degree, institutional certificate, program credential, transcript, or other written proof of having met the program's requirements.

9. Faculty Information

Directions: Complete the following information for each faculty member responsible for professional coursework, clinical supervision, or administration in this program.

Faculty Member Name	Cindy Nichols
Highest Degree, Field, &	Ed.S. Elementary Administration and Special Education Administration/Southeast

University ⁽⁵⁾	Mo. State University
Assignment: Indicate the role of the faculty member ⁽⁶⁾	Instructor, Department of Ed. Leadership, Curriculum and Special Education
Faculty Rank ⁽⁷⁾	Full-time Instructor Director of 4-12 Special Education
Tenure Track	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES
Scholarship ⁽⁸⁾ , Leadership in Professional Associations, and Service ⁽⁹⁾ : List up to 3 major contributions in the past 3 years ⁽¹⁰⁾	Presentation NCPEA National Conference, July 2008: Using Mel Levine in a Special Education Course Member of Council for Exceptional Children 2007- Present Member of CEC and Divisions: Early Childhood, Learning Disabilities, Teacher Education Division
Teaching or other professional experience in P-12 schools ⁽¹¹⁾	Member of Education Renewal Zone Co-Teaching School Support Team 2007- Present Supervised Interns in the Special Education Master's Program Supervised Interns and Student Teachers in Undergraduate Teacher Education Programs Teacher of the Learning Disabled Students Grades 6-8 Elementary Principal Special Education Director Served on advisory board for Raider Open Door Academy for the Nettleton Public Schools Adjunct Instructor for Arkansas State University, Southeast Missouri State University, Three Rivers Community College, and Southwest Baptist University Special Education Consultant to public schools Licensures: Missouri: Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Behavior Disorder (K-12), Elementary Education (1-8), Elementary Principalship, Special Education Administration

Faculty Member Name	Daniel Cline
Highest Degree, Field, & University ⁽⁵⁾	Ed.D. School Administration Special Education Indiana University
Assignment: Indicate the role of the faculty member ⁽⁶⁾	Faculty
Faculty Rank ⁽⁷⁾	Professor
Tenure Track	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES
Scholarship ⁽⁸⁾ , Leadership in Professional Associations, and Service ⁽⁹⁾ : List up to 3 major contributions in the past 3 years ⁽¹⁰⁾	Presentation at the 2007 Annual Conference of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration: The Process of ISLLC/ELCC Standards Implementation in School Leadership Preparation Programs Secretary, university AAUP-Executive Committee Member, university Faculty Senate
Teaching or other professional experience in P-12 schools ⁽¹¹⁾	Experience in P-12 Schools: Evaluator for the Lumina Grant providing Advanced Placement programs for seven Arkansas Delta Schools Current Licensure: North Dakota Secondary Teaching

Faculty Member Name	Joan Henley
Highest Degree, Field, & University ⁽⁵⁾	Ph.D. Curriculum and Instruction/Special Education University of Missouri-Columbia
Assignment: Indicate the role of the faculty member ⁽⁶⁾	Director of the P-4 Special Education Program and Faculty (Instructor of core content in special education)
Faculty Rank ⁽⁷⁾	Associate Professor
Tenure Track	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES
	Publication in Training in Developmental Disabilities (2008). Comparison of Assessment Results of Children with Low incidence Disabilities. Presentation at National Council of Professors of Educational Administrators (August, 2008)

Scholarship ⁽⁸⁾ , Leadership in Professional Associations, and Service ⁽⁹⁾ :List up to 3 major contributions in the past 3 years ⁽¹⁰⁾	Creating Learning Communities in an On-Line Classroom. International Publication in Education Around the World (2007) Robbing Elementary Students of Their Childhood The perils of No Child Left Behind International Publication. Academic Exchange Quarterly (2006). Aspiring school leaders reflect on the internship. International Publication. Hawaii International Conference on Educational Proceedings. (2005). Transition services for students with disabilities: A review of practices in northeast Arkansas
Teaching or other professional experience in P-12 schools ⁽¹¹⁾	Experience in P-12 Schools Consultant for area schools on behavior issues Corning, Cardwell, The Learning Center, Mountain Home (2005-Present) Supervised Student Teacher Internships for University of Texas-Tyler (2002-2003) Supervised Student Teaching Program for Missouri State University-West Plains, MO (1999-2002) Director of Special Education and MSIP Coordinator Winona School District, Winona, MO (1997-1998 Elementary Principal, Assistant Superintendent Alton, Missouri (1992-1996) Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator and Teacher; West Plains, MO Teacher for Title I Reading, special education, kindergarten, second grade, 6-8 grade reading, coordinator of Special Education Junction Hill C-12, West Plains Missouri Current Licensure: Missouri: Elementary Education, Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education, Reading Specialist, Principal, Superintendent, Special Education Director. National: Board Certified Behavior Analyst

Faculty Member Name	Joe Nichols
Highest Degree, Field, & University ⁽⁵⁾	Ed.D. Educational Leadership Saint Louis University
Assignment: Indicate the role of the faculty member ⁽⁶⁾	Faculty
Faculty Rank ⁽⁷⁾	Associate Professor
Tenure Track	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES
Scholarship ⁽⁸⁾ , Leadership in Professional Associations, and Service ⁽⁹⁾ :List up to 3 major contributions in the past 3 years ⁽¹⁰⁾	Article in the online Journal of College and Character (2006): Who s Minding the Kids? Cyberslacking in The Classroom: An Ethical Dilemma for Aspiring School Administrators Chapter in The 2006 Yearbook of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration: Project Based Instruction: Eight Questions You Should Ask Special Education Teacher Applicants and How to Score Them Member, College of Education Council of Professional Education Committee
Teaching or other professional experience in P-12 schools ⁽¹¹⁾	Experience in P-12 Schools: Advisory Board: Raider Open-Door Academy Charter School. Nettleton Public Schools Advisor to Manila AR Public Schools. Organizing and Implementing a Special Education Transition Fair. Blytheville, AR Public Schools. Developing an Alternative Special Education Program for High School Students. Current Licensure: Missouri Superintendent Elementary Principal Special Education Director Special Education MR, K-12 PE, K-12 Health, K-12 Driver Educa

Faculty Member Name	John Beineke
Highest Degree, Field, & University ⁽⁵⁾	Ed.D. Social Science Education/ American History Ball State University
Assignment: Indicate the role of the faculty member ⁽⁶⁾	Dean and Faculty
Faculty Rank ⁽⁷⁾	Professor
Tenure Track	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES
Scholarship ⁽⁸⁾ , Leadership in	

Professional Associations, and Service ⁽⁹⁾ :List up to 3 major contributions in the past 3 years ⁽¹⁰⁾	Article in the Journal of the European Teacher Education Network (2004): How Can Rural Schools Inform the Practice of Urban Schools Member, Arkansas Professional License Standards Board 2007-2010 Member, Board of Arkansas Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1999-2008
Teaching or other professional experience in P-12 schools ⁽¹¹⁾	Experience in P-12 Schools: Member, Board of Foundation for Jonesboro School District Governing Committee for ASU Partnership with Jonesboro, Nettleton, & Valley View Public Schools Supervised Interns & Student Teachers Secondary Teacher & Department Chair Current Licensure: Arkansas Curriculum Specialist K-12 Middle Level Social Studies Secondary Social Studies Indiana Social Studies K-12 Iowa Social Studies 7-12

Faculty Member Name	Kay Luter
Highest Degree, Field, & University ⁽⁵⁾	Master of Science in Education MED Gifted Education University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Assignment: Indicate the role of the faculty member ⁽⁶⁾	Full-Time Instructor
Faculty Rank ⁽⁷⁾	Instructor
Tenure Track	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Scholarship ⁽⁸⁾ , Leadership in Professional Associations, and Service ⁽⁹⁾ :List up to 3 major contributions in the past 3 years ⁽¹⁰⁾	Member Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators
Teaching or other professional experience in P-12 schools ⁽¹¹⁾	Classroom teacher 1962 1968 1969 1982 Coordinator of Gifted Programs 1982-1985 Supervisor of Gifted Programs 1985 - 1996

Faculty Member Name	Mitchell Holifield
Highest Degree, Field, & University ⁽⁵⁾	Ph.D. Educational Leadership Southern Illinois University
Assignment: Indicate the role of the faculty member ⁽⁶⁾	Faculty
Faculty Rank ⁽⁷⁾	Associate Professor
Tenure Track	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES
Scholarship ⁽⁸⁾ , Leadership in Professional Associations, and Service ⁽⁹⁾ :List up to 3 major contributions in the past 3 years ⁽¹⁰⁾	Presentation at the 2007 National Council of Professors of Educational Administration Conference: Ethical Reasoning: A Performance-Based Rubric Member, Arkansas Professional Standards Licensure Board Member, National Council of Professors of Educational Administration
Teaching or other professional experience in P-12 schools ⁽¹¹⁾	Experience in P-12 Schools: Master Principal Coach, Arkansas Leadership Academy, Wynne School District Facilitator, Arkansas Administrator Mentor Training Program, Arkansas State Department of Education Consultant

(5) e.g., PhD in Curriculum & Instruction, University of Nebraska.

(6) e.g., faculty, clinical supervisor, department chair, administrator

(7) e.g., professor, associate professor, assistant professor, adjunct professor, instructor

(8) Scholarship is defined by NCATE as systematic inquiry into the areas related to teaching, learning, and the education of teachers and other school personnel.

Scholarship includes traditional research and publication as well as the rigorous and systematic study of pedagogy, and the application of current research findings in new settings. Scholarship further presupposes submission of one's work for professional review and evaluation.

(9) Service includes faculty contributions to college or university activities, schools, communities, and professional associations in ways that are

consistent with the institution and unit's mission.

(10) e.g., officer of a state or national association, article published in a specific journal, and an evaluation of a local school program.

(11) Briefly describe the nature of recent experience in P-12 schools (e.g. clinical supervision, inservice training, teaching in a PDS) indicating the discipline and grade level of the assignment(s). List current P-12 licensure or certification(s) held, if any.

SECTION II - LIST OF ASSESSMENTS

In this section, list the 6-8 assessments that are being submitted as evidence for meeting the CEC standards. All programs must provide a minimum of six assessments. If your state does not require a state licensure test in the content area, you must substitute an assessment that documents candidate attainment of content knowledge in #1 below. For each assessment, indicate the type or form of the assessment and when it is administered in the program.

1. In this section, list the 6-8 assessments that are being submitted as evidence for meeting the CEC standards. All programs must provide a minimum of six assessments. If your state does not require a state licensure test in the content area, you must substitute an assessment that documents candidate attainment of content knowledge in #1 below. For each assessment, indicate the type or form of the assessment and when it is administered in the program. (Response limited to 250 characters each field)

Type and Number of Assessment	Name of Assessment (12)	Type or Form of Assessment (13)	When the Assessment Is Administered (14)
Assessment #1: Licensure assessment, or other content-based assessment (required)	#351 Knowledge Based Core Principles and, #352 Application of Core Principles Across Categories of Disabilities	Praxis II National Exam	Prior to ELSE 6813 - Lab/Internship - requirement for entry
Assessment #2: Assessment of content knowledge in special education (required)	4-12 Special Education Portfolio	Portfolio	Prior to ELSE 6813 - Lab/Internship and completion of Program of Study prior to application for licensure
Assessment #3: Assessment of candidate ability to plan instruction (required)	Differentiated Unit Plan (DUP)	Program/Instructional Plan	During the course ELSE 6053 Educational Procedures for Individuals with Mild Disabilities and another one during ELSE 6813 Lab/Internship
Assessment #4: Assessment of student teaching (required)	Teacher Observation	Teaching Observation Evaluation	During ELSE 6813 Lab/Internship
Assessment #5: Assessment of candidate effect on student learning (required)	Behavior Change Project	Project	During ELSE 5033 Behavior Intervention and ELSE 6813 Lab/Internship
Assessment #6:			During ELSE 5043 Educational

evaluation. Special educators understand how **issues of human diversity** can impact families, cultures, and schools, and how these complex human issues can interact with issues in the delivery of special education services. They understand the **relationships of organizations of special education** to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies. Special educators use this knowledge as a ground upon which to construct their own personal understandings and philosophies of special education.

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Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

2. Development and Characteristics of Learners. Special educators know and **demonstrate respect** for their students first as unique human beings. Special educators understand the **similarities and differences in human development** and the characteristics between and among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs (ELN). Moreover, special educators understand how **exceptional conditions** can **interact** with the domains of human development and they **use this knowledge to respond to the varying abilities and behaviors of individual's** with ELN. Special educators understand how the experiences of individuals with ELN can impact families, as well as the individual's ability to learn, interact socially, and live as fulfilled contributing members of the community.

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Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

3. Individual Learning Differences. Special educators understand the **effects that an exceptional condition** can have **on an individual's learning** in school and throughout life. Special educators understand that the beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures can affect relationships among and between students, their families, and the school community. Moreover, special educators are **active and resourceful in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the individual's exceptional condition** to impact the individual's academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career options. The understanding of these learning differences and their possible interactions **provides the foundation** upon which **special educators individualize instruction** to provide meaningful and challenging learning for individuals with ELN.

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Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

4. Instructional Strategies. Special educators possess a repertoire of evidence-based **instructional strategies to individualize instruction** for

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individuals with ELN. Special educators select, adapt, and use these instructional strategies to promote **positive learning results in general and special curricula** and to appropriately modify learning environments for individuals with ELN. They enhance the learning of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills of individuals with ELN, and increase their self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem. Moreover, special educators emphasize the development, maintenance, and generalization of knowledge and skills across environments, settings, and the lifespan.

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Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

5. Learning Environments and Social Interactions. Special educators actively create learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. In addition, special educators foster environments in which diversity is valued and individuals are taught to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world. Special educators shape environments to encourage the independence, self-motivation, self-direction, personal empowerment, and self-advocacy of individuals with ELN. Special educators help their general education colleagues integrate individuals with ELN in regular environments and engage them in meaningful learning activities and interactions. Special educators use direct motivational and instructional interventions with individuals with ELN to teach them to respond effectively to current expectations. When necessary, special educators can safely intervene with individuals with ELN in crisis. Special educators coordinate all these efforts and provide guidance and direction to paraeducators and others, such as classroom volunteers and tutors.

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Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

6. Language. Special educators understand typical and atypical language development and the ways in which exceptional conditions can interact with an individual's experience with and use of language. Special educators use individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills to individuals with ELN. Special educators are familiar with augmentative, alternative, and assistive technologies to support and enhance communication of individuals with exceptional needs. Special educators match their communication methods to an individual's language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences. Special educators provide effective language models and they use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for individuals with ELN whose primary language is not English.

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Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of language for and

with individuals with ELN through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

7. Instructional Planning. Individualized decision-making and instruction is at the center of special education practice. Special educators develop long-range individualized instructional plans anchored in both general and special curricula. In addition, special educators systematically translate these individualized plans into carefully selected shorter-range goals and objectives taking into consideration an individual’s abilities and needs, the learning environment, and a myriad of cultural and linguistic factors. Individualized instructional plans emphasize explicit modeling and efficient guided practice to assure acquisition and fluency through maintenance and generalization. Understanding of these factors as well as the implications of an individual’s exceptional condition, guides the special educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials, and the use of powerful instructional variables. Instructional plans are modified based on ongoing analysis of the individual’s learning progress. Moreover, special educators facilitate this instructional planning in a collaborative context including the individuals with exceptionalities, families, professional colleagues, and personnel from other agencies as appropriate. Special educators also develop a variety of individualized transition plans, such as transitions from preschool to elementary school and from secondary settings to a variety of postsecondary work and learning contexts. Special educators are comfortable using appropriate technologies to support instructional planning and individualized instruction.

Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

8. Assessment. Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress. Special educators understand the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment related to referral, eligibility, program planning, instruction, and placement for individuals with ELN, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Special educators understand measurement theory and practices for addressing issues of validity, reliability, norms, bias, and interpretation of assessment results. In addition, special educators understand the appropriate use and limitations of various types of assessments. Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to assure non-biased, meaningful assessments and decision-making. Special educators conduct formal and informal assessments of behavior, learning, achievement, and environments to design learning experiences that support the growth and development of individuals with ELN. Special educators use assessment information to identify supports and adaptations required for individuals

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with ELN to access the general curriculum and to participate in school, system, and statewide assessment programs. Special educators regularly monitor the progress of individuals with ELN in general and special curricula. Special educators use appropriate technologies to support their assessments.

Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

9. Professional and Ethical Practice. Special educators are guided by the profession's ethical and professional practice standards. Special educators practice in multiple roles and complex situations across wide age and developmental ranges. Their practice requires ongoing attention to legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations. Special educators engage in professional activities and participate in learning communities that benefit individuals with ELN, their families, colleagues, and their own professional growth. Special educators view themselves as lifelong learners and regularly reflect on and adjust their practice. Special educators are aware of how their own and others attitudes, behaviors, and ways of communicating can influence their practice. Special educators understand that culture and language can interact with exceptionalities, and are sensitive to the many aspects of diversity of individuals with ELN and their families. Special educators actively plan and engage in activities that foster their professional growth and keep them current with evidence-based best practices. Special educators know their own limits of practice and practice within them.

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Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

10. Collaboration. Special educators routinely and effectively collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways. This collaboration assures that the needs of individuals with ELN are addressed throughout schooling. Moreover, special educators embrace their special role as advocate for individuals with ELN. Special educators promote and advocate the learning and well being of individuals with ELN across a wide range of settings and a range of different learning experiences. Special educators are viewed as specialists by a myriad of people who actively seek their collaboration to effectively include and teach individuals with ELN. Special educators are a resource to their colleagues in understanding the laws and policies relevant to Individuals with ELN. Special educators use collaboration to facilitate the successful transitions of individuals with ELN across settings and services.

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Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

SECTION IV - EVIDENCE FOR MEETING STANDARDS

DIRECTIONS: The 6-8 key assessments listed in Section II must be documented and discussed in Section IV. The assessments must be those that all candidates in the program are required to complete and should be used by the program to determine candidate proficiencies as expected in the program standards. Assessments and scoring guides should be aligned with the SPA standards. This means that the concepts in the SPA standards should be apparent in the assessments and in the scoring guides to the same depth, breadth, and specificity as in the SPA standards.

In the description of each assessment below, the SPA has identified potential assessments that would be appropriate. Assessments have been organized into the following three areas that are addressed in NCATE's unit standard 1:

- Content knowledge (Assessments 1 and 2)
- Pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills and dispositions (Assessments 3 and 4)
- Focus on student learning (Assessment 5)

Note that in some disciplines, content knowledge may include or be inextricable from professional knowledge. If this is the case, assessments that combine content and professional knowledge may be considered "content knowledge" assessments for the purpose of this report.

For each assessment, the compiler should prepare a document that includes the following items: a two page narrative that responds to questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 (below) and the three items listed in question 5 (below). This document should be attached as directed.

1. A brief description of the assessment and its use in the program (one sentence may be sufficient);
2. A description of how this assessment specifically aligns with the standards it is cited for in Section III. Cite SPA standards by number, title, and/or standard wording.
3. A brief analysis of the data findings;
4. An interpretation of how that data provides evidence for meeting standards, indicating the specific SPA standards by number, title, and/or standard wording; and
5. Attachment of assessment documentation, including:
 - (a) the assessment tool or description of the assignment;
 - (b) the scoring guide for the assessment; and
 - (c) candidate data derived from the assessment.

It is preferred that the response for each of 5a, 5b, and 5c (above) be limited to the equivalent of five text pages, however in some cases assessment instruments or scoring guides may go beyond five pages.

All three components of the assessment (as identified in 5a-c) must be attached, with the following exceptions: (a) the assessment tool and scoring guide are not required for reporting state licensure data, and (b) for some assessments, data may not yet be avail

1. State licensure tests or professional examinations of content knowledge. CEC standards addressed in this entry could include all of the standards. If your state does not require licensure tests or professional examinations in the content area, data from another assessment must be presented to document candidate attainment of content knowledge. Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV (Answer Required)

Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV

Assessment #1 State License Exam Praxis II

See **Attachments** panel below.

2. Assessment of content knowledge⁽¹⁵⁾ in special education. CEC standards addressed in this assessment could include but are not limited to Standards 1 and 2. Examples of assessments include comprehensive examinations; written interpersonal/presentational tasks; capstone projects or research reports addressing cross-disciplinary content; philosophy of teaching statement that addresses the role of culture, literature, and cross-disciplinary content; and other portfolio tasks (16) . (Answer Required)

Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV

Assessment 2 Portfolio

See **Attachments** panel below.

(15) Content knowledge in early childhood professional preparation includes knowledge of child development and learning (characteristics and influences); family relationships and processes; subject matter knowledge in literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the visual and performing arts, and movement/physical education; as well as knowledge about children's learning and development in these areas.

(16) A portfolio is a collection of candidate work. The information to be reported here requires an assessment of candidates' content knowledge as revealed in the work product contained in a portfolio. If the portfolio contains pieces that are interdependent and the portfolio is evaluated by faculty as one assessment using a scoring guide, then the portfolio could be counted as one assessment. Often the assessment addresses an independent product within the portfolio rather than the complete portfolio. In the latter case, the assessment and scoring guide for the independent product should be presented.

3. Assessment that demonstrates candidates can effectively plan classroom-based instruction (e.g., unit plan) or activities for other roles as special educators. CEC standards that could be addressed in this assessment include but are not limited to 7. Examples of assessments include the evaluation of candidates' abilities to develop lesson or unit plans. An example would be a differentiated unit of instruction

Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV

Assessment #3 Differentiated Unit Plan

See **Attachments** panel below.

4. Assessment that demonstrates candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions are applied effectively in practice. CEC standards that could be addressed in this assessment include but are not limited to 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. The assessment instrument used in student teaching and the internship or other clinical experiences should be submitted (Answer Required)

Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV

Assessment #4 Teaching Evaluation

See **Attachments** panel below.

5. Assessment that demonstrates candidate effects on student learning. CEC standards that could be addressed in this assessment include but are not limited to 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Examples of assessments include those based on student work samples, portfolio tasks, case studies, follow-up studies, and employer surveys. (Answer Required)

Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV

Assessment 5 - Behavior Change Project

See **Attachments** panel below.

6. Additional assessment that addresses CEC standards. Examples of assessments include evaluations of field experiences, case studies, portfolio tasks, licensure tests not reported in #1, and follow-up studies. (Answer Required)

Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV

Assessment #6 Formal Assessment Project

See **Attachments** panel below.

7. Additional assessment that addresses CEC standards. Examples of assessments include evaluations of field experiences, case studies, portfolio tasks, licensure tests not reported in #1, and follow-up studies.

Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV

Assessment #7 IEP Project

See **Attachments** panel below.

8. Additional assessment that addresses CEC standards. Examples of assessments include evaluations of field experiences, case studies, portfolio tasks, licensure tests not reported in #1, and follow-up studies.

Provide assessment information (items 1-5) as outlined in the directions for Section IV

Assessment #8 Graduate Exit Survey

See **Attachments** panel below.

SECTION V - USE OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO IMPROVE PROGRAM

1. Evidence must be presented in this section that assessment results have been analyzed and have been or will be used to improve candidate performance and strengthen the program. This description should not link improvements to individual assessments but, rather, it should summarize principal findings from the evidence, the faculty's interpretation of those findings, and

changes made in (or planned for) the program as a result. Describe the steps program faculty has taken to use information from assessments for improvement of both candidate performance and the program. This information should be organized around (1) content knowledge, (2) professional and pedagogical knowledge, skill, and dispositions, and (3) student learning.

(Response limited to 12,000 characters)

Overview and Overall Findings

The program evaluation process for the graduate 4-12 Special Education program that leads to licensure has stimulated much discussion in the special education department and offered many new insights. In addition to the actual data findings, this process allowed members of the department to examine and reflect on current assessment practices and begin to implement department wide improvements. This process has strengthened our program by allowing us to come together as a faculty and reevaluate practices that have been used for many years, to look at the latest effective practices in special education teacher preparation at the 4-12 special education level. As a department, we have opened dialogues of discussion around improving coursework to reflect the latest effective practices, and revamp and revise the teacher preparation courses.

Overall, the assessments documented within this report suggest that teacher candidates who complete the 4-12 Special Education licensure program overwhelmingly demonstrate a high level of performance (and competence with) CEC Standards #1-10. Our faculty is pleased with our teacher performance over the past three years. Our candidates appear to have the experience and program support necessary to meet and exceed the 10 standards set forth by CEC. The data have proven to be invaluable and we will continue to collect, analyze and modify our assessment activities based on on-going review of the outcomes. When we began to prepare for the NCATE review, as a department, we examined the assessments we had in place for evaluating student performance. We realized that we were not only lacking in good, performance based assessments and rubrics that would provide us with the information we needed to determine program performance, but we also were not providing our candidates with the information up front on the expected performance for the assessments. We spent over a year revising syllabi and assessments to develop clear rubrics clearly aligned with the CEC standards. The results we have gathered over the past three years, have clearly demonstrated that these efforts have paid off by providing us with detailed information on exactly how candidates in the program are performing, and candidates also have a clear understanding of how they are being evaluated. Last year, we realized that we really did not have a good assessment in place that allowed students to evaluate the 4-12 special education program, so we developed a graduate exit survey. We have gathered one year of data from graduates that has proven invaluable in providing us with feedback from our candidates who have gone through the program.

Content Knowledge

We believe that the content knowledge of teacher candidates in this program provide teachers in special education a solid knowledge base upon which to build performance skills and expertise. The Praxis II assessment is required by the state of Arkansas and provides a closely aligned test to the 10 CEC standards, both in the general knowledge and skills, but also in the application of core teaching principles across the different categories of disabilities. After the first year of systematically collecting and analyzing the data from the Praxis II, we realized that some of our candidates may not be as prepared as we would have hoped for them to have a successful lab/internship experience. We believe that the content information that is assessed by the Praxis II is critical knowledge for a teacher candidate to have in order to be able to develop and hone teaching skills in the special education area. Therefore, we opted to require passage of the Praxis II assessments before teacher candidates were allowed to take the lab; this new policy went into effect beginning with candidates entering the program in the fall of

2007. Beginning in the fall of 2008, most of the teacher candidates in the program had to have passed the Praxis II before taking the lab/internship. We are anxious to receive the results and feedback from candidates as to how this requirement has helped.

When the special education department began to prepare for our NCATE report, we examined our program to determine where candidates gained professional and pedagogical, skill, and dispositions. We realized that we did not have nearly enough field experiences for our students. Part of the reason for this is because for special education licensure in the state of Arkansas, you must have an existing teaching license in some licensure area. The theory was that before candidates should be given an initial teaching license in special education, he/she should first have an initial teaching license in a general education area. While the theory is good, the actual practice has resulted in several problems. The existing shortage of special education teachers has resulted in school districts being desperate for special education teachers to fill classrooms and provide services for individuals with exceptional learning needs. To meet this demand, the state of Arkansas agreed to give alternative licensure to individuals who had some type of initial teaching license for three years; during that time, they are to work on the special education coursework that is needed in order for them to obtain permanent special education license. As a result, we probably have well over 90 percent of our candidates in special education classrooms without having ever had a special education course until they begin our program. As a department, we were not providing enough field experiences because we were under the mistaken assumption that these were practicing teachers with their own classrooms. However, even though they have their own classrooms, overall, most of these teachers have very limited knowledge on exactly what they are to do with students with ELN. Therefore, we revisited all of our courses and we have added structured field experiences that have to be monitored by the site-based mentor that is a requirement for all special education teacher candidates, and/or by the university supervisor or instructor.

Assessment Instrument Standardization and Redesign

The second concern that has already been briefly touched upon earlier is the consistency and rigor of assessment instruments used throughout the program. In an effort to ensure the implementation of best practices program-wide, we redesigned several forms and rubrics including the lesson plan, Teaching Evaluation form, and other assignments within coursework. The redesign was the result of much input, dialogue, and piloting from all faculty members within the department, making revisions and tweaking the instruments along the way. For example, the Differentiated Unit Plan and the lesson plan now provide a more rigorous and standardized method of evaluating teacher candidates' ability to plan instruction for students with ELN. All of the components are aligned to specific CEC standards. The new rubrics provide faculty and candidates with very clear and standardized expectations, and candidates have a clearer understanding of what they need to do to improve performance. In addition, the revised format allows for alignment to NCATE's three point evaluation categories of "unacceptable-1, acceptable-2, and exemplary-3." (Note: The department opted for exemplary instead of target because we believe that this is clearer to candidates rather than target and acceptable because candidates have difficulty differentiating between the two). These assessments were piloted beginning with the 2005-2006 school term. Slight revisions have been made on the terminology but otherwise have remained consistent over a three-year period providing the department with valuable assessment information.

The steps that we have taken to redesign and standardize several key assessments have lead to improved candidate performance in the program and we believe will continue to do so. We believe the improvements have been the result of the fact that 1) faculty are assured that these assessments align with best practices in the field of special education as well as CEC Standards, and 2) candidates are provided with a consistent and uniform evaluation method throughout their program at different evaluation gates, and 3) a standardized method of evaluation and assessment allows the faculty to communicate with each other, as well as teacher candidates, using consistent and common language, and

4) because the entire program faculty provided input and guidance on the creation of these assessment tools, which we believe will lead to implementation and assessment procedures that will be more consistent and hence more reliable. Furthermore, we have insured that all adjunct faculty have the assessment instruments and are clearly versed on how to use the assessment providing continuity and consistency.

Another step that we have put in place beginning with candidates that are entering the program in the fall of 2007 is moving to an electronic platform for data collection. The College of Education has opted to use LiveText, which is an electronic platform that allows for candidates to place all assessment and portfolio information in an electronic format. Instructors score assessments within LiveText providing comments and immediate feedback to candidates on their performance. LiveText also provides the department with ongoing, detailed data analysis on the various assessments and other assignments within coursework. We believe that LiveText will provide a more reliable, and consistent method for collecting assessment data.

Effects on Student Learning

One of the key skills essential for the special education teacher is one's ability to monitor student progress and make instructional changes based on those results. The program evaluation process allowed the 4-12 special education program to closely evaluate current practices and examine how effects on student learning are assessed. In an age of accountability and increased outcome expectations, it is vital that teacher candidates graduate only after they are completely prepared to assess their impact on student learning. Given the current trends in special education (i.e., inclusive education and Responsiveness to Intervention) and the importance of ongoing progress monitoring, the faculty in the special education department opted to use a Behavior Intervention Change Project as a way to measure candidates' ability to assess impact on learning and to provide a demonstration of how they could do so. Candidates are initially exposed to the process in the prerequisite course ELSE 5033 Behavior Intervention and Consultation where they have to do a behavior change using single-subject research design for a student. This provides candidates with an opportunity to conduct an intervention change and receive feedback before they conduct the final one during the lab/internship course which is a capstone for the special education P4 license. Candidates have expressed how much the project has improved their understanding of accountability measures and of how to collect, measure, and analyze data to make ongoing programming decisions.

Summary

The program review process has provided the 4-12 special education faculty with an opportunity to evaluate and reflect on current program practices. While our candidates appear to meet and/or exceed expectations, there are always opportunities for improvements. We will continue to make data-driven decisions based on assessment data.

SECTION VI - FOR REVISED REPORTS OR RESPONSE TO CONDITIONS REPORTS ONLY

1. Describe what changes or additions have been made in response to issues cited in previous recognition report. List the sections of the report you are resubmitting and the changes that have been made. Specific instructions for preparing a revised report or a response to condition report are available on the NCATE web site at <http://www.ncate.org/institutions/process.asp?ch=4> (Response limited to 24,000 characters.)

Please click "Next"

This is the end of the report. Please click "Next" to proceed.