

THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

A Report on the Efficacy of the Preparation of Teachers at UNC Institutions to Teach Students with Disabilities

May 2008

In 2007, the General Assembly passed legislation on the education of students with disabilities directing the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina to report on the efficacy of the preparation of teachers at UNC Institutions to teach students with disabilities. The legislation (SL2007-284) states:

The report shall include (i) evidence of the effectiveness of the current teacher education programs in preparing students to educate students with disabilities; (ii) documentation that the requirement for including specified demonstrated competencies in G.S. 115C-296(b) is being met; and (iii) identification of changes needed in teacher education programs to better prepare teachers to teach students with disabilities, and a timeline for the implementation of the changes.

This report provides summary responses from each of the fifteen UNC Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education with approved teacher education programs addressing 1) evidence of the effectiveness of the current teacher education programs in preparing students to educate students with disabilities, and 2) addressing the requirement for including specified demonstrated competencies in G.S. 115C-296(b) is being met. General Statute 115C-296(b) states:

The standards for approval of institutions of teacher education shall require that teacher education programs for all students include demonstrated competencies in (i) the identification and education of children with disabilities and (ii) positive management of student behavior and effective communication techniques for defusing and deescalating disruptive or dangerous behavior.

In addressing item (iii) within SL2007-284 regarding the identification of changes needed in teacher education programs to better prepare teachers to teach students with disabilities and a timeline for the implementation of the change, UNC teacher education programs have initiated a process to re-vision their teacher licensure and Masters in School Administration programs to ensure that the University has the highest quality programs in place for preparing teachers and school leaders. As a part of this re-visioning effort, UNC Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education are addressing the issue of how to better prepare teachers to teach students with disabilities. The overall process has been aligned to meet the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) expectations that teacher and school leader licensure programs incorporate newly adopted standards, that the programs systematically address the preparation of teachers to teach students with disabilities, and that the programs are organized to best meet the needs of K12 schools in across the state. Reports from campuses on re-visioned programs must be submitted to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction by June 30, 2009. Reviews of the new programs will occur between July 2009 and September 2009, program approval recommendations on the new programs will go to the SBE in fall 2009, and the new programs will be implemented not later than fall 2010.

**SUMMARY OF RESPONSES FROM
UNC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, AND DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION**

Appalachian State University (ASU) candidates are introduced in their first professional education course to the importance of meeting the needs of all children. This course is crosslisted between Curriculum and Instruction and Special Education. Students come to understand the meaning of diversity in terms of disabilities as well as ethnicity, gender, and race. Candidates are placed in diverse settings where they have opportunities to work first hand with children with disabilities. The need for flexibility and adaptation in meeting the needs of all students is reinforced as candidates move through their program. Elementary education majors, for instance, encounter the crosslisted CI/SPE course in learner diversity. Here they encounter a service learning obligation that calls for working directly with children with special needs. All students enroll in educational psychology where an emphasis is placed upon developmental aspects of children and the need for differentiated instruction. Middle grades majors explore in their Teaching Young Adolescent course ways to meet the instructional and social needs of exceptional children. Birth through Kindergarten candidates take three courses in child development within which they encounter information related to developmental patterns of special needs children. These majors also have an introductory course in special education, and an educational assessment and intervention course that focuses on infants with disabilities and their families. Special Education majors, of course, have an intense focus on exceptionalities and how they may be addressed in a variety of contexts. The lessons that are developed and implemented in the classroom by all ASU education majors are assessed on the basis of candidates' effectiveness in making learning accessible to all students.

ASU candidates encounter throughout their programs both information and techniques that assist them in situations that call for positive management of student behavior; in field settings, and especially in student teaching, our candidates practice communication techniques that are designed to defuse disruptive behavior. Student teachers are observed carefully in terms of their interactions with all students, and particular attention is given to how they interact with children with disabilities and how effective they are in building learning experiences that accommodate all learners. In addition, all students complete an "impact on student learning" experience during student teaching which calls for careful pre-assessment, differentiated instruction, post-assessment and reflection with emphasis placed upon meeting individual student needs. Special attention is given to placing student teachers and interns in classrooms where they will encounter children with exceptionalities, and supervisors are especially attentive to how the student teachers serve this population. It is anticipated that in the re-visioning of its teacher education programs called for by the State Board of Education, more emphasis will be placed upon preparing candidates to work with special needs populations.

All **East Carolina University (ECU)** teacher education candidates seeking initial licensure, with the exception of special education and birth through kindergarten (BK), are required to satisfactorily complete SPED 4010 - Exceptional Students in the Regular Classroom. This course provides the knowledge and skills fundamental to effective teaching of individuals with exceptionalities in the regular classroom with emphasis on individualization, content modification, instructional techniques, and classroom management. Students in the BK licensure program complete SPED 2000 - Introduction to Exceptional Children which addresses the incidence, causes, education and rehabilitation of exceptional children. They also complete SPED 3005 - Instructional Programming in Special Education, SPED 3510 - Methods in Early Childhood Special Education and SPED 3511 - Practicum in Early Childhood Special Education. All teacher education candidates for initial licensure with the exception of special education

also are required to complete satisfactorily EDUC 4400 - Foundations of School Learning, Motivation, and Assessment. This course addresses preventive behavior management (communication, structure, etc.) and motivation techniques appropriate for individuals and whole classes. Students in the special education licensure program must complete satisfactorily SPED 3004 - Managing the Learning Environment. This class addresses methods and strategies for establishing a positive, strength-based classroom environment that incorporates developmental understanding of behavior, effective teaching structures, and social emotional learning.

ECU teacher education candidate's complete internships in public schools and in doing so serve students with disabilities in their classrooms. Over the past two years, 38% of the internship placements have been in schools that had a higher than state average percentage of students with disabilities. The evidence of candidate effectiveness in meeting the needs of students with disabilities is gathered and documented throughout the internship experience. Interns are visited and their progress recorded a minimum of four times during this 15-week experience. The progress report includes items addressing Planning (using diagnostic information about the student) and Instruction (modifying content, presentation, pacing, monitoring and feedback). ECU candidates also submit an Instructional Practice Work Sample that includes evidence of their instructional planning, delivery and assessment. The unit and lesson plans must show how the instruction has been differentiated for the needs of exceptional students and the accommodations that are provided. In addition, the candidate must use a variety of assessment techniques so that students with exceptionalities are provided the opportunity to demonstrate their learning. Each candidate must document the impact of their instruction on student learning by conducting a pre and post assessment of a unit of instruction. They use the pretest scores to make modifications to the unit and then analyze the posttest scores to determine gains and future instructional needs. The candidates are also required to prepare a Classroom Management Work Sample that includes preventive behavior management and motivation techniques, intervention strategies and implementation plans. Each of the items in the work samples is reviewed by the clinical teacher and evaluated by the university supervisor and must "meet expectations" in order to recommend the candidate for licensure.

At **Elizabeth City State University (ECSU)** the identification and education of children with disabilities is met by requiring all prospective teacher candidates to take and pass with at least a grade of 'C' the course SPED 346 Introduction to Special Education Law, Identification, Services, and Evaluation. In addition to these courses, Birth through Kindergarten (BK) majors also complete BKED 454 Inclusive Pre-School Environment, BKED 330, Educational Assessment Preschool, Infants and Toddlers. Annual Institutional Performance survey data collected by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction reveals the following results regarding how confident program completers, mentors, and their employers feel about the program completer's ability to teach diverse students:

ABILITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE LEARNERS			
IHE Performance Report Data from Satisfaction Surveys 2002-2007- Based on a 4.0 scale			
Year	Program Completer	Employer	Mentor
2005-2006	3.20	3.20	3.41
2006-2007	3.36	3.06	3.50

Source: Program Assessment Summary Report 2006-2007, Center for Research and Evaluation

The Introduction to Instructional Computers and Computers In Education courses require students to become familiar with research sites for assistive technology. Students taking these courses visit the "IDEA" Station (Individuals with Disabilities Entitled Access Station) in the Academic Computing Center on the ECSU campus. This experience allows candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

At ECSU student teachers are required to take EDUC 478 Seminar in Contemporary Educational Issues. One component of this course is the Crisis Prevention Institute's Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training for candidates. This training program is administered by a certified trainer and was selected because of its "philosophy of providing Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security for everyone involved in a crisis moment." Additionally, ECSU students also enroll in SPED 370 Implementing Positive Behavior Support Systems.

Fayetteville State University's (FSU) faculty and staff are committed to teaching, guiding, and supporting our students in all aspects of their experience, from course selection and scheduling, to connecting with peers and colleagues. All FSU students enrolled in a teacher preparation program must complete special education courses. The Birth through Kindergarten (BK) through Secondary undergraduate education programs offer a concentration in Special Education. This concentration curriculum prepares pre-service teachers to effectively deal with students with "special needs" that are included in the regular classroom, along with preparing them to teach students in most special education classrooms BK through 12th grade. This special concentration focuses on a value-centered approach toward the preparation of caring, uniquely-qualified candidates to address the needs of diverse populations in today's schools. It is strongly recommended that students seek a concentration in special education along with their major in either BK, Elementary Education, Middle Grades Education, or Secondary Education in order to be "highly qualified" to teach special education students in the state of North Carolina.

The FSU Department of Middle Grades, Secondary, and Special Education also offer a Masters of Arts in Special Education a Masters of Education in (General Curriculum) for students seeking full certification in special education. The School of Education has an Office of Exceptional Learning within the department where support is provided in the areas of behavior modification and behavioral support. This office provides outreach and technical support to school districts in the southeastern region of North Carolina.

FSU faculty recognize that experiential learning has a significant impact on the development of teacher candidates. The School of Education and K12 partnering schools have strived to provide field experiences in diverse, inclusive classrooms. This practice has assisted in preparing teachers for inclusive education. FSU has found that the impact of field experiences is further enhanced when undertaken early in the program and as part of a team that includes counterparts from special or general education programs. In summary, field experiences in inclusive classrooms and preparation for collaborative teaming and teaching have garnered significant support as integral components of our teacher preparation programs for special education students.

North Carolina A&T State University (NCA&T) has three full-time faculty members in the area of special education. These faculty members are housed in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction within the School of Education. The coordinator of special education programs serves a member of the Teacher Education Council. In general, a large percentage of teacher candidates are required to take SPED 350 – Introduction to Exceptional Children which is a three hour course which reviews characteristics of each disability area. Candidates also enroll in CUIN 401 – Classroom and Behavior Management. In addition to general classroom management techniques, a primary focus of this course surrounds Positive Behavior Supports, Functional Behavior Assessments. Also required is SPED 441 – Teacher/Family Community Resources for Exceptional Children which specifically addresses how teachers relate to families that have children with special needs.

Discussion of students with disabilities is woven throughout the entire teacher education curriculum. Particularly the methods block of instruction. When considering textbook adoptions, university faculty are encouraged to look for text which are inclusive of or integrate special populations. The School of Education has made an effort to offer the special education corollary as an option to all education majors. The coursework for this area is outlined below in Table 1.

Corollary Study Area	Coursework	
Special Education Corollary	SPED 325	Orientation to Cultural Diversity & Special Education (field experience) (3)
	SPED 354	Urban Schools (3)
	SPED 355	Introduction to Mild Disabilities (field experience) (3)
	SPED 539	Teaching Students with Persistent Reading Problems (3)
	SPED 546	Occupational Orientation & Transitional Skills (3)
	SPED 565	Teaching Exceptional Strategies for Students in Incl. Settings (3)
	<i>Special Education licensure seekers will take 2 additional courses</i>	
	SPED 548	Diagnostic Assessment & Prescriptive Techniques for Exceptional Individuals (3)
	SPED 564	Methods, Materials and Problems in Teaching the Special Needs Child (field experience) (3)

Additionally, the methods block of courses at NCA&T has been recently redesigned to ensure quality of instruction with less course overlap. Course content is now more concise, following a sequence that is evaluated based on standards. These courses include but are not limited to ELED 511 Reading in the Elementary School, ELED 544 Diagnostic Prescriptive Reading Instruction in Elementary Education, ELED 510 Language Arts in the Elementary School, ELED 512, Social Studies in the Elementary School, ELED 513 Science in the Elementary School and ELED 514 Mathematics in the Elementary School. Each of these courses include content to instruct and accommodate students with disabilities using evidence based strategies and techniques.

The NCA&T Teacher Education Council meets on a monthly basis and continues to assess and evaluate changes needed to better prepare teachers to serve students with special needs. Specifically, a subcommittee is leading the effort toward revisioning teacher education programs.

The College of Education at **North Carolina State University (NCSU)** primarily uses a course-based approach to meeting the requirements of G.S. 115C-296(b). Evidence of effectiveness in meeting the General Statute is demonstrated in various formats including NCATE/NCDPI Program Review, Employer and Graduate satisfaction surveys, and Stakeholder focus group results.

For 2007 NCATE/NCDPI Concurrent Accreditation Visit, NCSU teacher education programs developed matrices documenting how the programs addressed the education of special populations in specific courses through candidate produced artifacts. These courses vary in number by program: 10 (Agriculture, Mathematics, Middle Grades Language Arts), 8 (English, Business & Marketing), 7 (Social Studies, Science), 6 (Foreign Languages, Technology), 3 (Elementary Education). Among these courses are the Methods and Student Teaching courses which all programs require. Both the methods and student teaching courses require artifacts to document candidates' ability to teach special populations. In addition to these courses many programs at NCSU also require courses specifically designed to meet this requirement including: Assessment of Learning and Behavior and Teaching Children with Special Needs in the Elementary Classroom (Elementary Education) and Teaching Exceptional Students in the Mainstreamed Classroom (English, Math, Middle Grades Language Arts and Social Studies, and Science)

Each year, as part of the IHE Performance Report, NCDPI surveys most recent graduates, their school administrators, and their mentors. One survey item relates to the ability of the graduate to meet the needs of diverse populations. The item is rated using a 4-point scale (1 – low, 4 – high). In rating this item, over the past five years graduates, administrators, and mentors responses have remained consistent ranging from 3.16 to 3.56 with the following 5-year averages: graduates 3.38, administrators 3.27, and mentors 3.25.

In addition to NCSU's recent NCATE/NCDPI review and NCDPI satisfaction survey, the College of Education has held focus group meetings as a part of our UNC-Tomorrow response and State Board of Education Re-Visioning efforts. Over the course of the past year we have assembled various stakeholder groups to garner input from them related to our program effectiveness and priorities for our program re-visioning. The College of Education convened a group of business and civic leaders; community organizations, school practitioners, and parents; principals; college faculty; members of the University at-large and education professionals. These meetings produced a variety of suggestions, comments, and critiques of our programs. The ability of our graduates to meet the needs of students with special needs was not listed among the comments and critiques of our programs.

The standards within G.S. 115C-296(b) are embedded in the new candidate evaluation rubric being created for the new program review process. As a result, NCSU will, as a part of its re-visioning efforts, review existing programs and graduates' capacity to meet the needs of special populations and ensure that both comply with the General Statute and develop candidates who are able to effectively meet the needs of diverse populations of students.

The **North Carolina Central University (NCCU)** School of Education has a strong commitment to preparing teacher candidates to work with diverse students, including those with learning differences. All courses address working with students with special needs to the extent possible within the scope of the course and field experience. However, there is also one course in particular that gives special emphasis to preparing educators to understand and serve students with special needs in the regular classroom. This 3-credit hour course is EDU 3120: Inclusive Teaching of Students with Special Needs in the Regular Classroom. It includes field experiences in which candidates work with regular classroom teachers, special needs teachers, and special needs students.

Similarly, teacher candidates address classroom management across the curriculum, as they learn how to manage instructional time and student behavior in various types of classroom settings. Special attention is given to classroom management in EDU 3150: Instructional Planning and during the student teaching seminar EDU 41XX: Methods and Materials. In EDU 3150, candidates learn and practice strategies for classroom management and discipline. In EDU 41XX, candidates are student teaching and need weekly support as they gradually add on the full-time classroom teaching responsibilities. At this point in their development, they are practicing application of the knowledge, skills and dispositions for classroom management. Student teachers also have an assignment in which they read about the *seclusion and restraint* policies, interview the principal and cooperating teacher, and reflect on policy and practice. This is a required assignment with specific guidelines. The assignment is submitted to their university supervisor, who grades the assignment and provides feedback to the candidate.

Currently, NCCU's teacher education programs, like all teacher education programs in the state, are re-visioning based on new state standards for 21st century teachers and students. With public school partners, the campus has already begun to explore the standards and reflect on areas that need strengthening. NCCU has planned to examine possibilities for actually teaching "inclusively" with special educators in our methods courses to model this approach. The re-visioning will be complete by the end of the 2008-09 academic year.

At **UNC Asheville (UNC-A)** all licensure candidates are required to study the needs of children with disabilities in core courses. Strategies and materials used to teach candidates about special needs children and teaching strategies include the following:

- In Foundation of Education, all candidates are required to study Pierangelo and Giuliani, *What Every Teacher Should Know about Students with Special Needs*, for an overview of categories of exceptionalities and how teachers must accommodate students with a variety of learning differences in their classes.
- Candidates study IDEA and the laws pertaining to teachers' responsibilities for working with exceptional children. Particular focus is given to learning disabilities, ADHD, and emotional/behavioral problems as well as gifted children.
- Candidates discuss inclusion and analyze a video about a child in an inclusion class.
- A clinical assignment requires candidates to visit and reflect on their observations of a self-contained special education classroom and an inclusion classroom.
- Candidates tutor special needs and at-risk children in supervised clinical teaching experiences with reflection and discussion about teaching and learning.
- Field trips and seminars are organized, as appropriate, to meet with teachers, including art and music specialists, to discuss special needs programs in general, their school demographics, and how teachers teach to all children. This includes adaptations for students designated as Intensive Intervention, as well as other students identified as having special needs.
- Candidates learn about adaptations for students with special needs, ie: classroom arrangement, handing out and using tools and supplies properly, types of media that would be appropriate and how to adapt its use for specific disabilities (such as clay for physical therapy / fine motor skills development; large paper with thicker tools for gross motor skills development; larger scale work for students with visual challenges...).
- All candidates are required to take two courses in psychology which address both normal and abnormal developmental issues for children.

Competencies at UNC-A are assessed in the following ways:

- Candidates are required to adapt lessons for special needs children, referencing the Pierangelo and Giuliani text, in all capstone methods classes and are assessed on their Unit Lesson Plans.
- Candidates are assessed for their abilities to teach diverse students in the Exit Criteria at the mid term and at the end of the student teaching experience.
- Candidates complete an action research project in which they study the impact of strategies on student learning and they disaggregate the data to determine the impact on children with special needs.

The **UNC Chapel Hill (UNC-CH)** School of Education revised its Special Education (K-12) General Curriculum program and began offering revised program coursework during the 2007-08 academic year. The program is designed to prepare the educator to work with students with mild to moderate disabilities in inclusive education settings with a strong focus on collaboration with the regular classroom teacher. Since this program is relatively new, evaluation of our students and /or graduates' impact on special education service delivery has not occurred at this time. The program has enrolled students from Wake, Chatham, Orange, and Alamance counties who are seeking their licensure in Special Education. Ongoing evaluation of our students' completion of required skills and competencies is a major component of our curriculum

Several courses within the UNC-CH curriculum focus on the identification and education of students with disabilities. One of the initial courses in the curriculum, Foundations of Special Education, provides an intensive focus on the characteristics of students with mild to moderate service needs, the laws and regulations that govern special education services, service delivery arrangements that promote students'

with disabilities access to the general curriculum, and issues and practices in the assessment and identification of students with disabilities. Moreover, several of the method related courses focus on response to intervention in designing and implementing functional and individualized learning strategies for students with disabilities or who are at risk for specialized learning needs.

Another required course at UNC-CH entitled, Classroom Engagement and Behavior Management, focuses specifically on positive management of student behavior as well as the use of effective communication strategies for defusing and deescalating disruptive behaviors. Specifically, the course focuses on adaptive, motivational, and instructional strategies to facilitate student engagement in classroom activities. Teacher education candidates learn to develop and implement a classroom instructional design facilitating a positive behavior support system for all students. Non-aversive techniques for managing off task and inappropriate behaviors and strategies for promoting positive peer relations, self control, and conflict resolution are emphasized as well.

In the College of Education at **UNC Charlotte (UNCC)** undergraduate candidates have uniquely strong preparation in the areas of knowledge and skills related to students with disabilities and inclusion in North Carolina's public schools. Students participate in a two course sequence to accomplish this goal: (1) Introduction to Students with Special Needs (SPED 2100) and (2) Modifying Instruction for Diverse Learners (EDUC 4290/4291). The two sections of Modifying Instruction for Diverse Learners is presented for majors in elementary education (EDUC 4290) and for majors in middle/secondary teaching fields (EDUC 4291). Special education majors and majors in K12 licensure areas (e.g., foreign languages; fine and performing arts) may choose one of the two courses, based on their teaching level aspirations.

Undergraduate candidates are exposed to methods of identification of K-12 children / youth with disabilities at the beginning of their teacher preparation programs and again, during the semester preceding their student teaching. In SPED 2100, candidates are instructed in the federal and state mandates on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) procedures. These requirements include the referral process, pre-referral intervention, evaluation, identification, service delivery options (e.g., spectrum of services from consultation to self-contained and special schools) and implementation of the Individualized Instructional Program (IEP). Instructors across sections of SPED 2100 assess candidates' competencies related to the roles of general and special educators in the identification of students with disabilities and evaluation process through items on weekly quizzes specific to these topics.

Instructors of SPED 2100 also instruct candidates on positive management of disruptive student behavior. Specifically, in SPED 2100 candidates are instructed in effective tips and techniques they can use in their classrooms. Candidates are expected to understand the purpose of Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan. They also research the effectiveness of various behavior management strategies.

As candidates approach their final year of teacher preparation classes, they are required to take EDUC 4290/4291. In EDUC 4290/4291 candidates are instructed on problem-solving approaches used in the Response to Intervention (RtI) model and informed of their roles and responsibilities as general educators in this important process. Case scenarios are used in EDUC 4290/4291 allowing candidates ample practice in participating on Student Intervention Teams.

Along with extensive coverage of instructional modifications for students with disabilities, candidates are also instructed on effective strategies for classroom management, Positive Behavior Support (PBS), and behavioral intervention plans. Candidates are assessed on RtI, identification of disabilities, and positive

behavior supports through assignment options specific to these topics (e.g., interview a person with a disability, design a behavior recording sheet for a student in a clinical placement).

As a culminating assessment of candidates' knowledge and skills related to the identification of, and responsiveness to the needs of students with disabilities within general education classrooms, they are required to conduct a case student analysis. In this assignment all candidates must identify a case student (with a disability or suspected disability), gain extensive background information from his/her classroom teacher on the case student, conduct an analyses of the current modifications in place (if any) and make further recommendations for accommodations for the case student based on what they have learned throughout the semester.

In the student teaching semester, all candidates are observed/ evaluated on multiple occasions on their effectiveness in differentiating instruction for learners with special needs and on their classroom management skills.

UNC Greensboro (UNCG) prepares all teacher candidates to understand the needs of students with disabilities through several initiatives.

- Presentations on special education and inclusive education for students with disabilities are provided to UNC-G students in a sophomore level course entitled Teaching as a Profession.
- Recognizing the needs of special learners and techniques for meeting them are infused in field experiences and advanced seminars for all prospective elementary and middle school teachers.
- Prospective secondary school teachers at UNC-G take a course entitled Diverse Learners.
- A new dual undergraduate major in elementary and special education prepares teachers to facilitate greater collaboration between general and special educators. In this program teacher candidates are expected to acquire the curriculum knowledge and literacy skills associated with elementary programs, as well as the remedial strategies, classroom management and assessment skills associated with special education. UNC-G Students complete internships in both elementary and special education settings.
- A UNC-G special education faculty member has assigned time for teaching methods faculty in general education about the instructional needs of students with disabilities.
- The chairs of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and of the Department of Specialized Education Services at UNC-G are revising the programs in elementary and middle grades education, which will result in more extensive preparation of teacher candidates who can create inclusive educational environments in North Carolina public schools.

UNC Pembroke's (UNCP) School of Education addresses the preparation of teachers to work with students that have disabilities in the following ways:

- All students completing all undergraduate teacher education programs at UNC Pembroke are required to successfully complete the 3 semester hour course “SED 3000 – Introduction to Exceptional, Diverse, and At-Risk Students.” Students must earn a grade of at least a “C” to be considered successful as required by the UNCP Teacher Education Program. The course presents the theories and practices related to the successful integration of exceptional, diverse, and at-risk students into appropriate programs and educational settings. Students are introduced to the characteristics, psychological/educational aspects, collaboration, behavioral management, best-practice principles, and current and future challenges of individuals with special needs.
- The majority of the plans of study developed by the Regional Alternative Licensure Centers (RALCs) typically reflect the requirement for one course related to the study of exceptional children as one of

- Within the past 2 years, the UNCP Teacher Education Program began offering courses leading to a Professional Concentration in Special Education as an academic choice for undergraduate teacher education students.
- During the spring 2008 semester, faculty in the UNCP Special Education Program received funding from the UNC General Administration for the support of a 2+2 Online Special Education Program development. Funding will be used to support the development of the entire Special Education curriculum into online/hybrid delivery formats.
- Several professional studies courses were recently revised to ensure integration of “Core Standard 3: Teachers are successful in teaching a diverse population of students; Indicator 4: Teachers adapt their teaching for the benefit of students with special needs.” As such, faculty teaching the professional studies courses and faculty who are teaching respective methods courses are expected to include information regarding the teaching of exceptional children in the respective course content.
- Each fall and spring semester one of the professional seminars required of all students interns is a seminar focused on proper seclusion and restraints of students. This half-day seminar is presented by a Behavioral Specialist from the Exceptional Children’s Programs with the Public Schools of Robeson County. Also, all UNCP methods faculty are required to participate in this same training, delivered as one professional development activity for the teacher education faculty.

At **UNC Wilmington (UNCW)** all candidates in teacher preparation programs in the Watson School of Education are required to take a course on meeting needs of special students. Three designated levels are offered (EDN 319: Elementary, EDN 320: Middle grades, EDN 321: Secondary) to ensure that candidates receive grade level-specific preparation depending upon their intended licensure area. Major focus areas for these courses are:

(1) characteristics of students with special needs, (2) alternative methods for dealing with student differences that impact academic and social behaviors, and (3) classroom management and behavioral development techniques. Teacher candidates complete assignments such as designing a classroom management system that focuses upon developing and reinforcing positive behaviors, narrative reports that describe ways to integrate exceptional and culturally diverse students into classroom settings by adapting strategies to meet their needs, descriptions of collaboration techniques with parents and other professionals, lesson and unit plans that identify appropriate instructional modifications, and case studies of students with special needs. In addition, all of the courses require field experiences working with students with special needs in regular classroom settings. As part of these field experiences, candidates have to complete assignments describing how they modified instruction and/or management strategies for students with special needs.

In addition to the UNC-W courses described above, each program in the Watson School has methods courses specific to the licensure area that include assignments and modifications of instruction designed to prepare candidates to address the needs of special students. As part of completing course assignments, candidates have to prepare unit plans and demonstrate instructional strategies that identify how they would modify their teaching for special needs students. They also have to address how they would manage student behavior in different instructional settings such as group discussions, peer tutoring, simulations, lab activities, field trips, etc.

During the internship semester, UNC-W student teachers complete an assessment project which requires them to reflect as they gather demographic data and then spend time with their partnership teachers discussing the data that they gathered. The idea is to foster the ability to collect data with the goal of

creating learning and instruction to meet the needs of their diverse learners. Collaborative decisions are made regarding ways to manage behaviors and facilitate the instruction to best meet the needs of diverse learners. Emphasis is placed on how interns know and can demonstrate that their students are learning the skills that they are teaching. The use of the No Child Left Behind subgroups, including students with disabilities, to disaggregate data stimulates new thinking about diversity of learners. They must present pre- and post-test data that shows the impact of their teaching.

Western Carolina University's (WCU) undergraduate professional education program required four courses in Professional Studies contain significant content to prepare students in the teacher preparation program to “*...include demonstrated competencies in (i) the identification and education of children with disabilities and (ii) positive management of student behavior and effective communication techniques for defusing and deescalating disruptive or dangerous behavior.*”.

- EDCI 231 Historical, Social, and Philosophical Foundations of Education (3) Survey of historical, sociological, and philosophical aspects of education and current influences including diversity and technology. Introduction to teacher education framework. Field experience required.
- SPED 335 (or 336 or 337) Teaching Exceptional Children (2) Overview of exceptional children; emphasis on methods and materials for integrating students into regular classrooms. PREQ: Admission to the teacher education program or permission of department head.
- PSY 320 Child and Adolescent Development (3) Theories and principles of development of individuals from diverse backgrounds from conception through adolescence. PREQ: Completion of EDCI 231 with a grade of "C" or better or permission of the psychology department head.
- PSY 321 Educational Psychology (3) Application of psychological principles to teaching; cognition, learning, motivation, measurement, individual differences-including cultural differences and exceptionalities, and behavior management. PREQ: PSY 320 or PSY 322, admission to teacher education program or permission of the psychology department head. Field experience required.
- One course required in the graduate professional studies core is specifically designed to comprehensively address diversity. SPED 620 Education in a Diverse Society (3) Prepares teachers to meet the learning needs of diverse student populations.

Evidence that WCU is successful in preparing teachers to facilitate learning of all students, including those with exceptionalities and to positively manage classroom is found in three outcome measures:

1. The evaluation instrument used for performance in student teaching measures two relevant factors, classroom management and facilitating learning for all learners. The average ratings at WCU on a scale of four were 3.71 for five years on both factors where 3 equals “meets performance expectations.”
2. In the first year of teaching the NC Department of Public Instruction surveys completers of the program and their principals and mentors regarding how well the new teachers are prepared to manage classrooms and teach diverse learners. On a four point scale, WCU completers have had average ratings of 3.4 over the last five years.
3. WCU has four semesters of data showing impact on P-12 pupil performance by student teachers indicating success in facilitating learning for P-12 diverse learners.

Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) requires candidates to complete a Teacher Work Sample (TWS) in the spring semester prior to graduation. The Special Education: General Curriculum (SPED: GC) candidates are responsible for providing an electronic submission of their TWS. A Teacher Work Sample (TWS) is a product that demonstrates one's ability to plan, deliver, and assess a standards-based instructional sequence; document student performance; and reflect upon the effects of instruction on student learning. Candidates must provide evidence of performance relative to the following standards:

- Contextual Factors: The candidate uses information about the learning-teaching context and student individual differences to plan culturally-relevant instruction and assessments of student learning.
- Learning Goals: The candidate sets significant, challenging, varied and appropriate learning goals.
- Assessment Plan: The candidate uses multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals to assess student learning before, during and after instruction.
- Design for Instruction: The candidate designs instruction for specific learning goals, student characteristics and needs, and learning contexts.
- Instructional Decision-Making: The candidate uses on-going analysis of student learning to make instructional decisions.
- Analysis of Student Learning: The candidate uses assessment data to profile student learning and communicate information about student progress and achievement.
- Reflection and Self-Evaluation: The candidate analyzes the relationship between his or her instruction and student learning in order to improve teaching practice.

The Special Education Program at WSSU has a 100% Praxis II passing rate within the last three years. Students are encouraged to participate in Praxis II preparation workshops provided by the program coordinator. In addition, the WSSU Special Education General Curriculum includes practice and discussion items of Praxis II in all special education courses.

The WSSU Special Education General Curriculum program adheres to all guidelines outlined in G.S. 115C-296 by utilizing the following offices in the School of Education and Human Performance:

1. The Teacher Education Advisement and Partnership (TEAP) Center provides pre-admission advising by working directly with students who have not been formally admitted to Teacher Education. The center provides one-on-one sessions and group activities that focus on professional dispositions, Praxis 1 requirements and other student development services.
2. The Office of Student Teaching is responsible for coordinating and/or facilitating all early field and clinical experiences for students majoring in Teacher Education programs.

APPENDIX A

2006-2007 IHE Survey Results of UNC Undergraduate Completers: Satisfaction with Preparation for Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners

**North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
2006-07 IHE Performance Report: Employment and Program Satisfaction**

To determine the satisfaction with Teacher Education Programs of individuals who have completed the programs and their employers, a survey was distributed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to recent undergraduate program completers employed in the public schools of NC, their mentors, and their principals. The results presented in this table report the satisfaction with preparation of UNC program completers for meeting the needs of diverse learners. Results are reported on a 4.0 scale.

UNC Teacher Education Programs IHE Survey Results for Undergraduate Completers			
	Satisfaction with Preparation for Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners		
Campus	<i>Program Completer</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Principal</i>
ASU	N=145 3.21	N=221 3.32	N=191 3.19
ECU	N=154 3.39	N=179 3.35	N=199 3.30
ECSU	N=14 3.36	N=18 3.50	N=16 3.06
FSU	N=40 3.35	N=36 3.39	N=41 3.30
NCA&T	N=10 3.40	N=16 3.19	N=16 2.63
NCCU	N=22 3.14	N=18 3.06	N=18 3.22
NCSU	N=32 3.47	N=53 3.17	N=43 3.24
UNC-A	N=27 3.26	N=23 3.39	N=17 3.41
UNC-CH	N=41 3.56	N=46 3.52	N=46 3.57
UNC-C	N=147 3.33	N=174 3.39	N=148 3.39
UNC-G	N=116 3.41	N=148 3.45	N=119 3.29
UNC-P	N=33 3.45	N=35 3.44	N=30 3.43
UNC-W	N=94 3.28	N=127 3.31	N=134 3.17
WCU	N=54 3.31	N=56 3.45	N=45 3.29
WSSU	N=8 3.13	N=10 3.40	N=7 3.29

APPENDIX B

Legislative Reference - SL2007-284

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007**

**SESSION LAW 2007-284
HOUSE BILL 26**

AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT A RECOMMENDATION OF THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO DIRECT THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA TO REPORT ON THE EFFICACY OF THE PREPARATION OF TEACHERS TO TEACH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly finds that additional data are needed to determine the adequacy with which the State's teacher education programs are preparing teachers to teach students with disabilities. The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, in consultation with the State Board of Education, shall study the effectiveness of the current teacher education programs in preparing new teachers to educate students with disabilities.

SECTION 2. The Board of Governors shall report its findings and recommendations to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by May 15, 2008. The report shall include (i) evidence of the effectiveness of the current teacher education programs in preparing students to educate students with disabilities; (ii) documentation that the requirement for including specified demonstrated competencies in G.S. 115C-296(b) is being met; and (iii) identification of changes needed in teacher education programs to better prepare teachers to teach students with disabilities, and a timeline for the implementation of the changes.

SECTION 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 16th day of July, 2007.

s/ Marc Basnight
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved 2:22 p.m. this 27th day of July, 2007