

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the Education Specialist Credential Programs

Department of Special Education

Welcome to the Education Specialist Credential Programs! You have made a wise choice for your professional development. This chapter provides general information about the College of Education and Department of Special Education.

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The College of Education

The College of Education includes five departments (Elementary and Bilingual Education, Reading Education, Secondary Education, and Special Education). Cal State Fullerton's College of Education is the only university teacher preparation program in Orange County accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). NCATE is the most prestigious accrediting body in the nation,

The mission of the Department of Special Education is embedded in the Conceptual Framework of the College of Education. These core values, mission statement, and student outcomes and indicators are evident in curriculum and instruction of our programs and assessment of our candidates.

Education Unit Conceptual Framework



a transformational journey toward educational advancement and achievement

Core Values

We are a community of educators, educational partners, and students. Seven core values undergird our professional community. We value learning as a life-long process, professional literature that guides and informs our practice, responsibility to self and to the group, diversity as enriching the whole, multiple pathways to learning including the use of technology, critical inquiry that promotes positive student outcomes, and authentic and reflective assessment. We aspire to adhere to and model these in all our professional interactions. Through experiencing these core values in their educational journey, we believe our students will embrace and in turn, model them in their professional lives.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to teach, to serve, and to engage in scholarship. We teach our students to be critical thinkers and lifelong learners. We prepare professionals who improve student learning, promote diversity, make informed decisions, engage in collaborative endeavors, maintain professional and ethical standards, and become change agents in their workplaces.

We engage in scholarly work that informs the profession and serve the educational community by providing applied scholarship.

Student Outcomes and Indicators

After successful completion of a program of study, our credential recipients and program graduates are:

Outcome 1: Knowledgeable and Competent Specialists

- demonstrate strong foundation in subject matter or field of study
- demonstrate strong understanding and implementation of pedagogical skills or skills in their field
- demonstrate ability to use technology as a resource

Outcome 2: Reflective and Responsive Practitioners

- promote diversity
- make informed decisions
- engage in collaborative endeavors
- think critically

Outcome 3: Committed and Caring Professionals

- become change agents
- maintain professional and ethical standards
- become life-long learners

Characteristics of Cal State Fullerton Credential Programs

Why should you choose California State University, Fullerton for your Education Specialist Credential Program?

PROGRAM QUALITY

- In the last five years, CSUF has granted over 1,000 credentials to special education teachers.
- Programs are accredited by the National Council on Teacher Education (NCATE), the most prestigious accrediting body in the nation, and also by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC).
- Programs include Authorization in teaching English Learners.
- Our Internship Program is recognized state-wide.

RELEVANT CURRICULUM AND FIELDWORK

- Field based program allows students to apply theory to practice in classroom settings. Cohorts of students study and work together under the direction and supervision of a team of university and school faculty.
- Intern program allows qualified candidates to earn their credential while employed as classroom teachers.
- Undergraduate program plans allow students to blend teacher education program with their Bachelor's Degree and be certified to teach in under five years.

FACULTY AND LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Program faculty members are involved in our neighboring schools, collaborating with teachers to improve policy and practice. They have published numerous articles; obtained millions of dollars in annually funded grants; and are recognized regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- Partnerships with Orange County Department of Education and local districts allow students to work in the public schools as paraprofessionals, pre-interns, and interns while completing undergraduate and credential requirements.

Department of Special Education

The Department of Special Education at CSU Fullerton provides exemplary training for Special Education/Specialist Credential candidates, general education teachers clearing their preliminary credentials, and persons interested in improving techniques to work with children at risk for specially designed instruction.

The Mission of the Department of Special Education is to develop quality teachers who value lifelong learning. We offer credential programs for teachers specializing in Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Moderate/Severe Disabilities, and Early Childhood Special Education. Programs are designed to train educational generalists in inclusive non-categorical approaches for children with heterogeneous special needs. We believe in collaborations with general education, special education, all service providers, parents, and the community. We train teachers in pedagogy that is multi-paradigmatic and provides a variety of theoretical perspectives related to teaching. The primary teacher focus should be to meet the individual needs of the child and family. The instructional curricula provide credential and graduate candidates with a broad background in the physiological, environmental and social aspects of exceptionality. Candidates learn effective research based teaching strategies, interdisciplinary approaches, collaboration and communication skills, plus transition and positive behavior support, as they establish a conceptual base of understanding of persons with disabilities.

The faculty of the Department of Special Education is nationally recognized for contributions to the field. Combined teaching experience represents over 100 years of classroom practice. Faculty members are frequently invited presenters at state, national, and international conferences. They serve in leadership roles in state and national professional organizations and are widely published in peer-reviewed journals in the field. Both full-time and part-time faculty members teach courses and supervise field experiences in each of the department's three credential programs. Each year the Department grant writing effort generates significant external funding to support student programs and faculty research.

Credential, Certificate, and Graduate Programs

The Special Education Department offers the following programs for the professional development of teachers:

Education Specialist Credential Programs

- Education Specialist, Mild/Moderate Disabilities - Level I, Level II, and Intern
- Education Specialist, Moderate/Severe Disabilities - Level I, Level II, and Intern
- Education Specialist, Early Childhood Special Education - Level I, Level II, and Intern

Certificate Programs

- Resource Specialist
- Assistive Technology
- Early Childhood Special Education

Graduate Programs

- MSE Concentration in Special Education

The Department of Special Education also offers an undergraduate degree option for credential completion, known as the STEP Program.

Through coursework offered in the College of Education, Education Specialist credential holders may earn Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) and the Bilingual Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) certificates.

Career Options in Special Education

The above programs prepare professionals for the following careers and roles in special education:

- General Education Teacher
- Special Education Teacher:
- Early Childhood/K-12/Adult Mentor Teacher
- Resource Specialist Teacher (RSP)
- Inclusion Specialist Early Intervention
- Specialist Behavior Intervention Specialist
- Disabilities Specialist
- Member of College Assessment Team
- Member of Community College Disabilities Team
- Private Practice (tutoring)/Educational
- Therapist
- Staff Development Provider
- Education Consultant