

## CHAPTER 6

# The Early Childhood Special Education Directed Teaching Experience (SPED 489 C/D)

The Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Credential Program is a professional education program that has been designed to allow future ECSE teachers to acquire the competencies necessary for successful teaching in early intervention (EI) and ECSE settings.

### ***Welcome to the SPED 489C/D Directed Teaching Experience***

Dear SPED 489C/D Student Teacher:

Welcome to the early childhood special education teaching experience. Special Education 489C/D fulfills the directed teaching experiences necessary to achieve a specialist credential in Early Childhood Special Education. The experience is designed to provide hands-on teaching experience with supervision from both the University supervisor and the master teacher.

This chapter provides details of the weekly activities required of candidates in SPED 489 C/D. You will want to familiarize yourself with these requirements so that you can work with your master teacher to determine a plan to achieve them.

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### ***CA CTC Definition of Credential for Education Specialist, Early Childhood Special Education***

The following information was excerpted from [Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Education Specialist Credentials](#), California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

**Education Specialist, Early Childhood Special Education:** Early childhood special education includes the provision of educational services to children from birth through pre-kindergarten who are eligible for early intervention, special education, and/or related services under federal and state laws. Children with a primary disability of deafness or hearing impairment, deaf-blindness, visual impairment including blindness, or orthopedic impairment must be served by a professional holding the authorization specific to the low incidence disability.

**Certificate, Early Childhood Special Education** A certificate program in Early Childhood Special Education was adopted for holders of the Education Specialist Instruction Credentials in Mild/Moderate Disabilities and Moderate/Severe Disabilities, to be able to expand the

authorization to include birth through Pre-K. However, any specialist credential holder may earn the certificate.

### **Early Childhood Special Education Competencies**

SPED 489 C/D fieldwork activities are aligned with the Early Childhood Special Education Competencies, which are a blend of standards from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Council for Exceptional Children. The competencies below were adapted from the Council for Exceptional Children (2003) "Knowledge and Skill Base for All Beginning Special Education Teachers of Early Childhood Students" in [\*What Every Special Educator Must Know: Ethics, Standards, and Guidelines for Special Education \(5<sup>th</sup> Edition\)\*](#). (pp. 74-79). They are based on recommendations of the 2005 Early Childhood Special Education Advisory Board Committee at CSUF.

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES**

##### **Assessment**

- Gather relevant background data
- Selects appropriate formal and informal assessments for infants, young children, and their families
- Administers formal and informal measures to assess the development and learning of young children
- Appropriately modifies assessment strategies for individual needs
- Assists families in identifying concerns and priorities
- Creates and maintains records to assess, evaluate instruction, and monitor child development and learning
- Interprets information from formal and informal assessments with respect to articulated assessment questions
- Uses assessment information in making eligibility or program decisions for young children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Reports assessment results using effective communication skills
- Participates as a team member to integrate assessment results in the development and implementation of IFSPs and IEPs
- Assists families in identifying concerns, resources, and priorities
- Participates and collaborates as a team member in conducting family-centered assessments
- Evaluates services with families

##### **Instructional Planning**

- Involves the family in setting instructional goals and monitoring progress
- Implements, monitors, and evaluates IFSPs and IEPs
- Sequences, implements, and evaluates individualized learning objectives
- Develops, implements, and evaluates task analyses
- Implements intervention strategies incorporating information from multiple disciplines
- Plans and implements developmentally appropriate individual and group activities in consideration of cultural and linguistic differences
- (i.e., play, environmental routines, parent-mediated activities, group projects, cooperative learning, and systematic instruction)
- Integrates affective, social, and life skills with the curricula
- Incorporates and implements instructional and assistive technology into educational programs
- Uses functional assessment to develop intervention plans

- Prepares activity, daily, and weekly lesson plans
- Prepares and organizes materials to implement lesson plans
- Uses instructional time effectively
- Makes adjustments to instruction based on continual observation

**Individual Learning Differences and Instructional Practices**

- Uses intervention strategies that affirm and respect family, cultural, and linguistic diversity
- Uses strategies to facilitate integration with non-disabled peers into various settings
- Uses instructional practices based on knowledge of the child, family, community, and curricular expectations
- Uses knowledge of future educational settings to develop learning experiences and select instructional strategies
- Prepares young children for successful transitions
- Teaches young children to problem-solve and use strategies to get their needs met
- Uses procedures to increase the self-management, self-reliance, and self-esteem of young children
- Uses strategies to promote maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments

**Learning Environments and Social Interactions**

- Establishes and maintains positive relationships with individuals both with and without exceptional learning needs
- Provides a stimuli-rich indoor and outdoor environment that utilizes materials, media, and technology including adaptive and assistive technology
- Organizes the physical, temporal and social learning environments to maximize young children's active participation in group and home settings through
- Organizes, develops, and sustains learning environments that support positive intracultural and intercultural experiences
- Designs and manages daily routines
- Creates an environment that encourages and teaches self-advocacy and increased independence
- Uses universal precautions
- Implements nutrition plans and feeding strategies
- Uses health appraisal procedures and makes referrals as needed
- Identifies realistic expectations and enforces them for personal and social behavior in various settings
- Modifies the learning environment to manage behavior
- Uses the least intensive, varied, and effective behavior management strategies consistent with the needs of the young child

**Language and Communication**

- Uses strategies to support and enhance communication skills of young children at-risk or with exceptional needs
- Uses communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of activities and curriculum for young children and their families whose primary language is not the dominant language
- Supports and facilitates family and child interactions as the primary contexts for learning and development

**Collaboration**

- Establishes and maintains positive collaborative relationships with families
- Communicates effectively with families from diverse backgrounds about curriculum and the young child's progress

- Assists families in planning for transitions
- Maintains confidential communication about individuals with exceptional learning needs
- Fosters respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals
- Participates in team models in ECSE
- Collaborates with school personnel and/or community members in integrating young children with exceptional needs into various settings
- Observes, evaluates, and provides feedback to para-educators

**Professional and Ethical Practice**

- Provides evidence of knowledge and practice of CEC and NAEYC Code of Ethics
- Conducts professional activities in compliance with applicable laws and policies
- Demonstrates commitment to developing the highest education and quality of life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs
- Demonstrates sensitivity for the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation of individuals
- Practices within skill limit and obtains assistance as needed
- Uses verbal, non-verbal, and written communication effectively
- Conducts self-evaluation of instruction and reflects on practice to improve instruction and guide professional growth
- Recognizes signs of child abuse and neglect in young children and demonstrates knowledge of following reporting procedures
- Respects family choices and goals
- Demonstrates application of research and effective practices critically in early childhood settings

***Student Dispositions***

Throughout the program, you are also assessed on your dispositions toward the teaching profession. Outcomes of our College of Education programs are to graduate candidates who are: Knowledgeable & Competent Specialists; Reflective & Responsive Practitioners; and Committed & Caring Professionals. To successfully achieve these outcomes, we believe that candidates must possess particular dispositions toward teaching and learning. These dispositions are assessed in each semester of directed teaching.

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DISPOSITIONS TOWARD TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**KNOWLEDGEABLE & COMPETENT SPECIALISTS**

- **Commitment to Learning:** The candidate demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning more about students and content areas. The candidate takes initiative in practicing skills for working with small and large groups. The candidate readily participates in classroom routines.
- **Use of Language:** The candidate is diligent in appropriate and correct use of oral and written language.

## **REFLECTIVE & RESPONSIVE PRACTITIONERS**

- **Attention to Diversity:** The candidate values multiple aspects of diversity. He or she respects children and adults of varied cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, social classes, abilities, political beliefs, and disabilities.
- **Self-Reflection:** The candidate reflects on and evaluates his or her own behavior and work. The candidate is willing and able to recognize difficulties or deficiencies and begins to develop potential solutions.
- **Collaboration:** The candidate takes advantage of opportunities to communicate and/or work with professional colleagues and other adults.
- **Feedback:** The candidate is receptive and responsive to professional feedback incorporating suggestions into practice. He or she is willing to consider multiple perspectives of his or her own performance.

## **COMMITTED & CARING PROFESSIONALS**

- **Professional Demeanor & Responsibility:** The candidate is prompt, is not unnecessarily absent, notifies appropriate individuals when absence is necessary, completes assignments on time, and follows through on commitments. The candidate dresses appropriately for the situation and wears appropriate attire for teachers in the school. The candidate is poised and professional in his or her demeanor and communication with others.
- **Professional Growth:** The candidate seeks out and takes advantage of opportunities for professional growth beyond the minimum expectations of what is required in classes (e.g., attends faculty meetings, workshops, parent meetings, visits other classrooms, etc.)

## ***Responsibilities of the Student Teacher***

The student teacher is in the advantageous position of being in charge of the classroom, yet having the strong support of a master teacher, the university supervisor, and the principal of the school in which s/he is doing directed teaching.

### **The student teacher is expected to:**

1. Give top priority in time, attention, and preparation to the directed teaching assignment.
2. Attend orientations, scheduled by the school and district, prior to the beginning of his/her directed teaching assignment, and report to the school as directed by the university supervisor.
3. Limit class load during the two semesters of professional education. Students must obtain approval from the Chair of the Department of Special Education for more than 18 units.
4. Keep off-campus responsibilities to a minimum.
5. Report at the time designated to the appropriate authority in the school to which the student teacher is assigned.
6. Dress professionally and in accordance with the school site standards.
7. Be punctual and regular in attendance.
8. Spend the beginning days of the directed teaching assignment in observing and assisting the master teacher in various assignments.
9. Behave in a professional manner at all times.
10. Begin teaching only when in the judgment of the master teacher and the university supervisor the student teacher is ready.
11. Arrange time with the supervising teacher for assistance in planning and evaluating.
12. Inform the master teacher, the school, and the university supervisor as soon as possible in case of unavoidable absence.

13. Attend the seminars scheduled for student teachers.
14. Determine with the master teacher the curricular units of teaching for which the student teacher will be responsible.
15. Prepare thoroughly and carefully for each day of teaching.
16. Make both long range and short range plans.
17. Check unit plans, lesson plans, assignments, materials, etc., with the master teacher and the university supervisor.
18. Hold frequent evaluation and planning conferences with the master teacher and the university supervisor.
19. Initiate planning for ways in which competencies are to be met; assume responsibility for seeing that these are demonstrated, and that completion is recorded and filed using the appropriate forms provided.
20. Continually engage in self-evaluation of teaching performance.
21. Learn pupils' names as soon as possible.
22. Become acquainted with the cumulative records, IEPs, or IFSPs and any other files pertinent to the pupils with whom the student works.
23. Become aware of the types of populations served by the school to which the student is assigned.
24. Know the school regulations and rules affecting the pupils for whom the student teacher is responsible.
25. Become acquainted with the various learning materials used for the classes
26. Become acquainted with the material and personnel resources available to teachers in the building, department, and school.
27. Attend faculty meetings, PTA and other school-related functions when these do not conflict with university coursework.
28. Fill out reports promptly.
29. Recognize that the master teacher and the school are legally responsible for the student teacher's activities as well as the activities of pupils.
30. Observe the University and school regulations covering student teachers and directed teaching.
31. Follow the schedule of the school district for vacations.
32. Take responsibility for ensuring that all forms are completed and submitted to the master teacher and University Supervisor at appropriate times.
33. Inform the university supervisor of any incidents that may potentially jeopardize the students' safety.
34. Inform the master teacher of suspected child abuse. Report suspected child abuse in accordance with state law.

### **Guidelines for Students in Directed Teaching**

The CSUF student is expected to participate in all activities normally expected of a teacher. When a CSUF student is teaching in their own classroom the same responsibilities hold as when the person is student teacher. The following suggestions are provided to assist the student in the performance of his/her role:

1. Prepare thoroughly and carefully for each day of teaching.
2. Appear appropriately dressed and well groomed at all times.
3. Be punctual and regular in attendance.
4. Inform the Master Teacher as soon as possible in case of unavoidable absence. Also inform the University Supervisor.
5. Attend faculty meetings, parent conferences and other school-related functions whenever it is possible to do so.

6. Attend seminars and other meetings scheduled for the CSUF student by the University Supervisor.
7. Observe the University and school regulations with regard to Directed Teaching.

The student is expected to develop and demonstrate adequate mastery of the competencies related to each field experience. Any deficiency in these competencies during directed teaching should form the basis for a remedial plan agreed upon between the student, Master Teacher, Site Principal and/or University Supervisor.

### **Documenting Competencies**

SPED 489 C/D is competency-based, and the course is graded pass/fail for 6 units of credit. Candidates must achieve all competencies to pass SPED 489C/D. Incompletes are not given for this course. Candidates who fail to meet all competencies and course requirements will need to repeat the course in its entirety.

Candidates are graded according to the following criteria: Please refer to the syllabus provided for the current semester for a comprehensive listing of course requirements and due dates. The following is a general overview of basic course requirements.

1. **Attend** scheduled seminar meetings.
2. **Demonstrate** mastery of the Education Specialist Competencies. It is the student teacher's responsibility to be familiar with these competencies and to track progress toward their achievement.
3. **Complete** of all assigned material and requirements.
4. **Verify** at least 30 hours of classroom contact per week; a minimum of 240 hours of University supervised field-based attendance.
5. **Fulfill** all suggestions for improvement from your master teacher and University supervisor
6. **Maintain** an ongoing journal/notebook, which should include the following and be reviewed with your University supervisor and master teacher on a weekly basis. At the end of the last week, the binder should be turned in to the University supervisor. Candidates should retain a copy of all materials.
  - daily/weekly schedule
  - observations by supervisor and/or master teacher
  - support log
  - daily log/journal of teaching activities
  - a reflective journal entry at least once a week
  - a log of your contacts with parents, paraprofessionals, general education staff, administrators, students etc.
  - course assignments and ongoing data collection
3. **Write** lesson plans: You must write, perform, evaluate and be observed by your University Supervisor and/or Master Teacher for at least one individual and one group lesson. This is a minimum requirement and more maybe required by the University Supervisor and/or Master Teacher. Use the lesson plan format from SPED 430.
5. **Monitor** your ongoing development as a teacher through maintenance of your professional portfolio. Keep copies of the evaluation materials for each teaching placement in your portfolio.

<b><i>Description of the SPED 489 C/D Directed Teaching Experience</i></b>
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Candidates are required to participate in fieldwork in various sites. Because the Early Childhood Specialist Credential is a birth to age 5 credential, candidates are required to have a skill-base in all levels. They must spend time in at least three different placements from a district continuum of Least Restrictive Environment (for example, an inclusive setting, a special day classroom or center-based setting, and a home or community-based setting). The particular experience is decided upon with the Program Advisor. Additionally, every candidate must spend time with infants and toddlers and their families AND preschool age children. All of these experiences must be formally documented in the candidate's portfolio.

Regardless of your placement, you will be introduced to special education, and you will observe, participate, and co-teach in classes, learn and practice basic concepts of classroom management; participate in the assessment process; write instructional objectives, participate directly in classroom instruction and IEP writing and meetings with your assigned Master Teacher; and demonstrate your developing proficiency of the Special Education Competencies.

Over the 8-week directed teaching experience, you will be gradually inducted into teaching. You will begin by observing your Master Teacher and will gradually assume responsibilities of a classroom teacher. These experiences are carefully structured and outlined later in this chapter. Each week will end with reflective journaling.

Development of professional level communication skills is facilitated by assignments involving interviewing parents, students, other professionals and all levels of school site personnel. Assignments also emphasize demonstration of clarity and focus in oral and written communication, in report making, teaming, and especially when communicating with parents/care providers, where the issue of "informed consent" is vital.

Performance objectives in special education infant-toddler directed teaching (489C) and special education preschool directed teaching (489D) are demonstrated by the candidate in the public school classroom and/or community. Coursework and field experiences are coordinated to allow each candidate the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in an actual educational setting. When it is determined that a specific competency has been performed satisfactorily, the university supervisor or the master teacher will verify competency. Verification of competencies attained during field experiences will be included in the candidate's portfolio. Performance objectives in the Induction Level will be collaboratively designed and demonstrated by the candidate, the support provider and the university induction coordinator.

As you become more autonomous in the classroom, you will be required to develop, implement, and evaluate lessons. Depending on the classroom context, you may want to use one or more of the following lesson plan formats available on the *Handbook* Website.

- Lesson Plan Format (Elementary and Bilingual Education Adapted for Special Education)
- Lesson Plan Format (Special Education Teacher/Child Behaviors)
- A lesson plan format provided by your master teacher

Your Master Teacher will often observe your classroom activities and provide feedback about your teaching strengths and areas of needed improvement. It is important to maintain good rapport with your Master Teacher. You will want to:

1. Review all of the requirements for this semester with your Master Teacher and plan how you will meet these requirements.

2. Be sensitive to the need for effective human relations.
3. Maintain open, truthful, and direct communication.
4. Respect the Master Teacher's ideas.
5. Communicate your concerns and needs.
6. Listen effectively and actively.
7. Receive suggestions for improvement in a professional and responsive manner.

### **Evaluation of Competency**

Competencies for the teaching of infants and toddlers are satisfied by meeting the requirements of the coursework in SPED 514 as well as the Infant-toddler field competencies. The master teacher and the university supervisor are responsible for determining whether the specific objectives have been accomplished. Competencies are demonstrated through the completion of the Field Competencies form is included in the Appendix of this handbook. As each objective is met by the candidate, the designated authorized person will verify it. The completed form is returned to the Directed teaching Coordinator at the end of the program.

Performance competencies in preschool directed teaching experiences are demonstrated by the candidate in the public school classroom and community and by meeting the requirements of the coursework in SPED 515. Coursework and field experiences are coordinated to allow each candidate the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in a real school setting. When it is determined that a specific competency has been performed satisfactorily, the university supervisor or the master teacher will verify it on the competency forms. The candidate must demonstrate all of these competencies by the end of the professional education program. Note that not all competencies will be met in the first assignment.

## ***SPED 489 C/D Directed Teaching Requirements and Assessments***

During this semester, you will participate in a variety of assessments, including the following:

- **Student-Initiated Assessments**
  - **Portfolio** - you will continue the development of your portfolio.
  - **Reflective Journal**– you will complete weekly journals of your directed teaching activities.
  - **Support Log** – you will document interactions with your master teacher and University supervisor.
  - **Self-Evaluation of Early Childhood Special Education Competencies** – you will self-assess your proficiency in the Early Childhood Special Education Competencies.
- **Master Teacher-Initiated Assessments**
  - **Master Teacher Observations and Feedback** - your master teacher will provide formal and informal feedback about your classroom teaching and practices.
  - **Master Teacher Evaluation of Early Childhood Special Education Competencies** – your master teacher will assess your proficiency in the Early Childhood Special Education Competencies.
  - **ECSE Midterm and Final Evaluation** - your master teacher will assess your completion of requirements.
- **University Supervisor-Initiated Assessments**
  - **University Supervisor Observations** – your University supervisor will observe and provide feedback on your classroom teaching and practices.
  - **University Supervisor Evaluation of Early Childhood Special Education Competencies** – your University Supervisor will assess your proficiency in the Early Childhood Special Education Competencies.

- **University Supervisor Assessment of Dispositions** – your University supervisor will assess your dispositions.
- **Portfolio Review** – Your University supervisor will review your portfolio.
- **EDSE Midterm and Final Evaluation** - your University supervisor will assess your completion of requirements.

Several evaluation forms will need to be completed by your master teacher and University supervisor. You are responsible for obtaining all signatures, discussing all evaluations with the evaluator, and setting goals to achieve these requirements within the directed teaching experience. Failure to meet all requirements and competencies may result in your having to repeat SPED 489 C/D. Incomplete grades are not assigned in SPED 489 C/D. See the *Handbook Website* for these forms.

### ***Interns/Employed Candidates***

When candidates are employed, every effort will be made to follow an on-the-job support model. Candidates teaching on an ECSE University Internship Credential will be asked to take their “intern days” to participate in the demonstration/application lessons. Candidates teaching with an ECSE University Internship Credential will be required to do all of the same field assignments. For more information, see Chapter 7, Special Policies and Issues for Interns.

### ***Weekly Activities and Evaluation***

Cooperating and master teachers as well as University Supervisors are asked to continuously evaluate the candidates under their direction. At the midterm and the end of each fieldwork and directed teaching experience, there are appropriate evaluation forms to use (See Appendix).

At the end of each segment of fieldwork and in collaboration with the University supervisor, the master teacher will evaluate the student’s performance. This evaluation will become a part of his/her Department file.

Since evaluation is a continuous process, the master teacher and University Supervisor each provide progressive informal evaluations and then a formal one at the end of the directed teaching segment. Any evaluation prior to the final evaluation should be aimed primarily at assessing the progress of the student teacher in ways which will permit the master teacher and University supervisor to give guidance and direction for further improvement. Evaluation should provide sufficient realistic and frank information about the strengths and weaknesses so that these are clear to the student teacher and will serve as a guide to improvement.

The midterm and final evaluations are based on a scoring rubric which can be found on the *Handbook Website*. The final evaluation also includes a final check-off of the Competency forms and a written narrative which is placed in the student teacher’s department file. The final evaluation should be regarded as equivalent to letters of recommendations. This final evaluation should provide a statement of the student teacher’s potential. In general, one should take into consideration the student teacher’s performance in comparison with that of other student teachers and the student teacher’s progress during the term. Since development of the student teacher to his/her full potential as a professional person often takes more time than the brief student teacher experiences provide, the evaluator needs to look for evidence in growth of knowledge, understanding, and skills. In addition, the evaluator needs to make as sound an assessment as he/she can about the potential of the student as a teacher.

Midterm and final evaluations include the following categories of assessment:

1. Competencies
2. Directed teaching Notebook
3. Lesson Plans
4. Participation in and Evaluation of IFSP/IEP Meetings
5. Behavioral Assessment, Development, and Implementation of Behavior Interventions
6. Developmentally Appropriate Assessment Practices and Program Development

The specifics on which the student teacher is to be rated are indicated on the evaluation forms. Guidelines for each specific rating are on the top of the form. Student teachers are urged to use preliminary evaluations as their primary tool for guiding student teachers toward improvement.