

Professional Certificate Program

As of September 1, 2000, all beginning teachers and most teachers from out-of-state receive Residency Certificates as their first Washington teaching certificate. Within five years of full time teaching, teachers are expected to enroll in a program to earn the advanced certificate, The Professional Certificate. The ultimate goal of the Professional Certification is to help teachers demonstrate the positive impact they have on student learning while supporting the teacher's continued growth goals.

The Professional Certificate Program starts with a Pre-Assessment Seminar (3 credits), and typically concludes approximately a year and a half later with a Culminating Seminar (2 credits). Between the Pre-Assessment and Culminating Seminars is the program "core": consisting of a 4 credit Summer Seminar and 6 additional credits that have been approved by the Professional Growth Team. The majority of work for all three seminars takes place on Evergreen's Olympia campus. The additional 6 credits can be taken at any college or university, or, if approved and transcriptable, through a school district, ESD, or other professional organization.

PRE-ASSESSMENT SEMINAR

The Pre-Assessment Seminar activities form the first phase of the program and include an orientation to the program and structured self-reflection. During this initial phase of the program professional colleagues help the candidate carefully assess his/her professional capacities, including identifying any that need to be further developed in order to reach the professional certificate standards. The pre-assessment seminar ends with the development of an approved professional growth plan.

SUMMER SEMINAR

In the Summer Seminar an in-depth look is taken at current and critical issues in education that are closely aligned with the Professional Certificate criteria, particularly criteria 5 (cultural sensitivity) and 11 (advocating for the diverse needs of students). The purpose of this summer seminar is for the teacher to reflect deeply on the philosophical underpinnings of their practice, especially as it relates to their current practice and the lives of their students.

CULMINATING SEMINAR

The Culminating Seminar is centered around developing and refining evidence about the candidate's teaching through an electronic portfolio containing video and printed support material. The evidence in the portfolio serves to verify that the candidate has met the Professional Certificate criteria.

CANDIDATES WITH FIVE OR MORE YEARS OF OUT-OF-STATE EXPERIENCE

Candidates who have completed 5 or more years of successful out-of-state certificated teaching prior the beginning the Professional Certificate Program are eligible for the "Advanced Track". Candidates on this track take the Pre-Assessment Seminar, and are involved in the same experiences during this course as those in the regular track — however at the end of this seminar their professional growth team has the optioning of waiving all or some of the remaining professional certificate program requirements.

Tentative Start of the next Pre-Assessment Seminar is January 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Special Education Courses

This is a five course sequence of core special education courses (24 credits total) designed to enable students to make significant progress towards earning the Special Education endorsement – enough to develop a strong core of special education competencies and become eligible for the 24 credit pre-endorsement waiver. To earn the full endorsement students need to provide evidence that they have met all the state special education endorsement competencies, pass the special education endorsement test (WEST E) and, in most cases, complete additional coursework/practicum work in special education.

CORE

- Introduction to Special Education (6 credits, Summer)
- Special Education Assessment (4 credits, Fall)
- Behavior and Classroom Management in Special Education (4 credits, Winter)
- Curriculum and Instructional Strategies for Exceptional Learners (6 credits, Spring)
- Professional Seminar in Special Education (4 credits, Summer)

ANTICIPATED ELECTIVES

- Better IEPs (4 credits, Summer)
- Special Education Law (4 credits, Summer)
- Practicum in Special Education (variable credits, ILC/independent learning contracts, Fall, Winter, Spring)

INFORMATION ABOUT THE WEST-E/PRAXIS II TEST FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Test # 20353: Education of Exceptional Students: Core Content Knowledge

- This subject assessment covers the following SPED knowledge competencies: K1.1-K2.7; K2.10-K2.13; K2.25-K5.7; K5.10-K6.4; K6.6-K6.7; K7.1-K8.1; K8.3; K8.5-K8.7; K8.9-K9.6
- The assessment does not cover the skill competencies, nor the following knowledge competencies: K2.8-K2.9; K2.14; K5.8-K5.9; K6.5; K6.8; K8.2; K8.4; K8.

OTHER INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

The Introduction to Special Education course is open to anyone. Students interested in this SPED sequence must meet with Evergreen's Certification Officer, Maggie Foran, to determine if they have prior coursework applicable to the endorsement. The Certification Officer may also ask for additional evidence from current and prior SPED experiences as evidence of completion of some of the skill competencies. The Certification Officer may waive Evergreen's Introduction to SPED course if a similar course has already been completed. The Certification Officer will give Evergreen's Field Placement Officer Loren Petty a list of names approved to take any courses beyond the Introduction course. Students must communicate intent to register with the Field Placement Officer, so he can notify Registration and Records that they are approved for registering. Students must also discuss possible field placement site preferences with the Field Placement Officer and agree to the placements obtained.

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COURSE DETAILS

Introduction to Special Education

This program provides an overview of the history of special education, legislation affecting special needs students and their teachers, general considerations and teaching strategies for working with students with disabilities, characteristics of disabilities, and responsibilities of educators. The class is intended for pre-service teachers, practicing teachers who wish to earn an endorsement in special education, and any individuals interested in learning more about people with disabilities, their needs, and their rights.

Special Education Assessment

This course will cover the central competencies in the area of special education assessment. It will provide a basic knowledge of the purposes, implementation and interpretation of formal and informal assessments. Participants will gain an understanding of how to administer, score, interpret and report on formal and informal assessments and analyze the accessibility and appropriateness of assessments for students with disabilities. They will then use this knowledge to determine the effectiveness of an Individual Education Plan, as well as to make modifications and accommodations to the general curriculum. Students will be required to complete 36 hours of practicum.

Behavior and Classroom Management in Special Education

This course will cover behavior and classroom management techniques with special education students. Participants will explore the types of diversity in the classroom and learn how to work effectively with diverse learners. They will discuss various classroom management models and identify best practices for effective teaching and learning in individual, small group and large group settings. Assignments will include designing a learning environment that encourages participation and facilitates behavior management. Participants will also look at federal, state and local guidelines and laws regarding behavior management and discipline in the schools. They will learn to recognize students who are at-risk for violent behaviors and research behavioral techniques for decreasing undesirable behaviors and increasing positive behaviors. Social skills, self advocacy and self management for behavior disordered students will be covered. Students will be required to complete 36 hours of practicum.

Curriculum and Instructional Strategies for Exceptional Learners

This course will cover the advantages and limitations of instructional strategies and practices for teaching individuals with disabilities. Students will learn about modifications and accommodations to integrate exceptional learners into the general education curriculum, and how to design special curricula based on IEP assessment results, and the state's learning goals, EALRs and benchmarks. A practicum of 36 hours is required.

Professional Seminar in Special Education

This course is the concluding experience for the 24 credit special education core sequence; topics include current special education research with an emphasis on best practices. Additional topics include: effective skills in communicating and collaborating with parents, paraeducators and professionals; early childhood special education trends and curriculum; planning the transition of special education students between the school setting and into a post-secondary environment; and use of technology in special education.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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