

Early Childhood Special Education Clinical Practice (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.

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.

Course Description

Special Education 489C/D fulfills the Clinical Practice s 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 Clinical Coach and the Mentor Teacher. Fieldwork activities are aligned with the [California Commission on Teacher Credentialing Teaching Performance Expectations](#) (TPEs) specific Early Childhood Education.

Formal Evaluations

Throughout the program, Teacher Candidates are formally and informally assessed on their dispositions toward the teaching profession as well as on their ability to meet the TPEs across the length of the Clinical Practice.

Should a Mentor Teacher, Clinical Coach, or Program/Fieldwork Coordinator have dispositional or competency-related concerns, a Teacher Candidate Improvement Plan may be developed. Improvement Plans are generally written by the Clinical Coach in collaboration with the Mentor Teacher and Department/Program/Fieldwork Coordinator(s). Improvement Plans consist of specific objectives that the Teacher Candidate will focus on and be required to meet in order to remain in the course/program.

In both semesters of Clinical Practice, Initial Dispositions are formally evaluated online between weeks 3 and 5 of Clinical Practice by the Mentor Teacher and the Clinical Coach. For interns, only the Clinical Coach will complete the Dispositions Assessment. The Initial Dispositions Evaluation is conducted early in the semester to ensure students are demonstrating the basic readiness skills and professionalism needed for successful Clinical Practice. A minimum total score of 2.0, without any “unacceptable” ratings, are required to continue in Clinical Practice.

At the end of the second semester of Clinical Practice, a more advanced Final Dispositions Evaluation is conducted by the Candidate’s Mentor Teacher and Clinical Coach (for Interns, the Clinical Coach only completes the evaluation). The Final Dispositions Evaluation documents the Candidate’s ability to demonstrate advanced professional dispositions related to the College of Education’s Conceptual Framework.

Also at the end of the Clinical Practice, the same raters complete the TPE evaluation. A minimum score of 2.75 is required for passing the course.

Should a Teacher Candidate receive a disposition evaluation with a total score below 2.0, or a score of 1 (unacceptable) on any single disposition item, or is otherwise dismissed from their placement by school personnel and/or the Clinical Coach, the Department (e.g., Fieldwork Coordinator, Department Chair) will collect information from relevant individuals (e.g., Teacher Candidate, Mentor Teacher, Clinical Coach, Administrator) to assess the rationale and fairness of the decision. The Department will then determine whether to (a) issue a NC and program removal, (b) issue a NC and develop a Candidate Improvement Plan (CIP), or (c) re-place the Teacher Candidate and develop a CIP. Two NCs in Clinical Practice will result in the Teacher Candidate being removed from the program.

At the end of the Clinical Practice, the same raters complete the TPE evaluation. A minimum score of 2.75 is required for passing the course. Should a Teacher Candidate receive a disposition evaluation with a total score below 2.0, or a score of 1 (unacceptable) on any single disposition item, or is otherwise dismissed from their placement by school personnel and/or the Clinical Coach, the Department (e.g., Fieldwork Coordinator, Department Chair) will collect information from relevant individuals (e.g., Teacher Candidate, Mentor Teacher, Clinical Coach, Administrator) to assess the rationale and fairness of the decision. The Department will then determine whether to (a) issue a NC and program removal, (b) issue a NC and develop a Candidate Improvement Plan (CIP), or (c) re-place the Teacher Candidate and develop a CIP. Two NCs in Clinical Practice will result in the Teacher Candidate being removed from the program.

Teacher Candidates should keep in mind that as a guest in the Mentor Teacher's classroom, the Mentor Teacher may dismiss the Teacher Candidate from the classroom upon demonstration of any unprofessional, unacceptable behavior that is viewed as being a disruption to the functioning of the classroom.