

Program Summary
Special Education Clear Credential Program
California State University, Fresno

Program Design

Leadership within the Special Education credential program: The Education Specialist programs (M/M and M/S Preliminary and Clear) are housed in the Department of Literacy, Early, Bilingual and Special Education (LEBSE), within the Kremen School of Education and Human Development (KSOEHD) at Fresno State. These credentials are overseen by the Director of Teacher Education (Dean of KSOEHD). The Dean of the Kremen School of Education and Human Development reports directly to the Provost and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who is the chief academic, fiscal, and administrative officer for Academic Affairs in the University. The Department Chair of LEBSE provides the next level of leadership, as the Special Education faculty is housed in that department. The Education Specialist credentials have a Program Coordinator, and the faculty work collaboratively in many of the leadership responsibilities. The Education Specialist faculty also work closely with the faculty of the Curriculum and Instruction Department, the Office of Field Placements, the Internship Program, the Education Services Center, and local school districts to provide a cohesive credential program.

Communication within the credential program and with the institution is varied and frequent. Prospective clear credential candidates are required to attend an individual advising session prior to admission to the program. The SPED program faculty meets bi-weekly to review and improve the program. ***Stakeholders***, including our District partners, also provide input through our Advisory Board, input meetings, and as adjunct professors, and personnel in partner schools are involved in both the planning and delivery of courses and fieldwork. Faculty attend BTSA area meetings in the region, and the SPED Advisory board is used to facilitate transitions for participating teachers. Collaboration with a variety of partner school district personnel occurs throughout the Clear Credential program. Site administrators are included as collaborative partners in supporting the participating teachers through induction and the university supervisor will meet with them individually. The induction program collaborates with local birth to 22 special education services and agency organizations and P-12 to support participating teacher induction program activities with district and partner organizations' professional development efforts, as needs identified by participating teachers arise.

The structure of coursework and field experiences in the credential program incorporate a purposeful, logically sequenced structure of extended preparation and professional development. Participating teachers complete 6-semester units of sequenced coursework that combines discussions and applications of research to practice, online Learning Communities for peer discussion and support, in-class meetings with Learning Communities, and school site application and supervision. The course content is sequenced to align with the Formative Assessment of California Teachers (FACT) online modules, which include four areas of focus: Context for Teaching and Learning, Assessment of Teaching and Learning, Inquiry into Teaching and Learning, and

Summary of Teaching and Learning. Students complete each module with support from their District Support Provider and University Supervisor. The FACT modules are part of an inquiry-based formative assessment system that is built upon the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTPs) and Induction Standards. Through the FACT modules, students engage in a plan→teach→reflect→apply process. As they complete the modules, participating teachers collect evidence and self-assess to reflect upon and improve their teaching. Participating teachers engage in collaborative experiences with colleagues and resource personnel, and the design of coursework is responsive to individual teacher needs as participants select professional development opportunities aligned with their Individualized Induction Plans and personal interests. The courses and experiences prepare the clear participating teachers to meet the academic learning needs of all students. The university collaborates with the region's districts to provide the clear credential program as well as professional development opportunities to retain these high quality teachers.

Program modifications over the recent two years include a significant and thorough program redesign to address revised state standards. This is essentially a new program.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

Description of the sequence of coursework: This program is aligned with the MA in Special Education allowing participating teachers to pursue advanced study and apply knowledge with consideration of their employment assignments and Education Specialist authorization. Courses, experiences, fieldwork application, and professional development are designed to enhance the participating teachers teaching abilities through research-based programs/strategies, inquiry-based methodology and reflective practices.

Course- and Field-work alignment: The program design provides systematic opportunities for the application and demonstration of pedagogical knowledge and skills acquired in the preliminary credential program through the development of the IIP, as well as collaborative online Learning Community discussions. The faculty/instructors for the Clear Credential courses also teach in the preliminary credential and have strong knowledge of the standards and those assignments used to assess the knowledge and skills and will be observed in their teaching setting. Each participant has an assigned University Supervisor and a District Support Provider, each of whom provides intensive individualized support and assistance to each participant. Participants are required to have 4 observations during the Clear Credential coursework (2 University Supervisor; 2 District Support Provider). The observation sequence includes pre-observation communication, an on-site classroom observation, and a post-observation reflection and debriefing session with the observer.

The individualized nature of the FACT system, the alignment of support and inquiry to the CSTPs, induction standards, and configuration within the Master's Degree course sequence ensure that the program is responsive to individual participating teacher needs and relevant to contemporary conditions of teaching and learning, as well as contributes to furthering participating teacher's personal and professional educational goals.

The California Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) process emphasizes the importance of developing equitable learning environments to meet the needs of all students in the classroom. Student achievement is the focus of all decisions related to instruction and support. It is the primary work of the teacher, IEP team decisions, and PLC/Accountable Community work. The coursework and employment provide an arena for the participating teacher to model the belief that all students (ethnic, race, socio-economic, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, student with disabilities, advanced learners, and students with a combination of instructional needs) must learn and achieve.

Assessment of Candidates

How, when candidates are assessed for program competencies: Participating teachers are formatively assessed throughout the completion of coursework and the FACT modules, an inquiry-based formative assessment system built upon the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. The Clear Credential program at Fresno State employs the FACT, which explicitly follow a plan→teach→reflect→apply process and are based upon CSTPs and Induction Standards, and are aligned with academic content standards. Throughout the process, students build a professional portfolio to demonstrate knowledge, skills, reflection, and improvement of teaching practice. In their portfolios, students provide a variety of evidence, including self-assessment, observation, analysis of student work, and planning and delivering instruction.

In addition to completion of the FACT modules and forms, participants are required to have 4 observations during the Clear Credential coursework (2 University Supervisor; 2 District Support Provider). The observation sequence includes pre-observation communication, an on-site classroom observation, and a post-observation reflection and debriefing session with the observer. The on-site observation tool evaluates multiple levels of teaching performance based on the CSTPs and IPSs (e.g., classroom environment, engagement, instructional design and delivery, assessment, technology, support for diverse learners, etc.).

Participating teachers collaborate with their support providers and University Supervisors to develop professional goals (and Individualized Induction Plan) based on the teacher's assignment, identified developmental and professional needs, prior preparation and experiences. The IIP clearly outlines an action plan, with dates, research, application, and expected impact on teaching/student achievement. This form is revisited and information is collected in the portfolio as evidence of the research, application, and impact on student achievement.

What advice candidates receive about how they will be assessed in the program and informed of the results of those assessments: Students are assessed in a variety of ways throughout the program. Assessments are primarily formative and competency-based. Students are provided feedback throughout their completion of coursework; they collect their work in a portfolio that is reviewed at multiple points during the Clear credential coursework.