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Listed below are some selected paragraphs of the NCATE draft report that was submitted by the Education of Exceptional Person's Program at IUP in 2004. These paragraphs may help outline the types of field-based projects and practica that students are required to complete relative to the EDEX 419/519 course syllabus that has been duplicated.

Outside of the traditional coursework that integrates field-based projects into course content, students must complete a minimum of 14 credit hours of fieldwork. Two separate pre-student teaching experiences are prescribed and the student teaching/culminating semester consists of a 12 credit field placement. All of this prescribed coursework and fieldwork is in addition to the University's Liberal Studies (i.e., general education) mandates.

It should be noted that five years ago when IUP's Education of Exceptional Person's Programs was reviewed by NCATE/CEC, it was noted that there was a lack of field experiences in ethnic and culturally diverse settings. This poses a major obstacle for the traditional student at IUP because the closest field placement that is able to provide teacher candidates the opportunity to work with students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds requires a commute of over one hour. However, because Program faculty desired to make a concerted effort to better prepare our teacher candidates to work with students from diverse backgrounds, significant changes in how our pre-field experiences are conducted were made during the past five years. In the current structure of the program, the semester that the student completes one of their three field experiences they must have the entire day on Wednesdays free. In other words, they enroll in Monday/Friday classes, Tuesday/Thursday classes, and/or night classes. This permits the students to carpool together and complete their field experience that takes place during the junior year in an urban/diverse setting.

Graduate students are provided similar coursework and field-based experiences in their program. Graduate students seeking certification only in special education complete 21 credit hours of college coursework. Imbedded in these 21 credits is a requirement for candidates to be in the field for a minimum of 80 clock hours in a variety of settings (e.g., working with students with learning disabilities, emotional disorders, mental retardation, physical/multiple disabilities). In addition to these 80 clock hours, graduate students must complete six credit hours in a practicum/internship site.

Graduate Certification Only Program in Education of Exceptional Persons: Students enrolling in this program are required to already have a teaching certificate. The vast majority of students selecting this program have completed a Bachelor's degree in elementary education and now desire a special education endorsement. These students take 24 credit hours of coursework. All but one course (i.e., 3 credit hours) is offered within the Department. In addition, four of these courses have a 20 clock-hour pre-practicum requirement attached to the course. This allows these teacher candidates to be exposed to a variety of settings where students with different disabilities are educated. In addition to the 80 clock-hours (i.e., 4 courses x 20 pre-practicum hours = 80 clock hours) of field experience that are attached to coursework, two separate practicum/internships are mandated. The courses that are required in this program are outlined in Appendix D. One will note by reviewing this document that once students obtain their initial certification in special education, they then have the option of completing a Master's degree in Special Education. Approximately 75% of the students who obtain their initial certification at the graduate level opt to continue in the Master's program.

A. EDUC 342: Pre-student Teaching Clinical II (one credit)

Pre-student Teaching Clinical II is generally scheduled during junior year, during or after methods courses have been taken. Students must complete a minimum of 36 hours across the

semester, which does not include travel time. Students must be at the school site for six hours per week. They may visit the school more than once per week, but each visit must be at least four hours. Students are also required to attend seminars on campus or at their sites three times across the semester.

To address the writing-intensive nature of this course, students are required to keep journals detailing their observations. They must also participate in two moderated chat discussions about teaching tips and/or observations made during the semester. Lastly, each student must research a disability-related issue that surfaced during observations and create a brochure that addresses this issue.

The cooperating teacher and university supervisor assign the course grade for Pre-student Teaching Clinical II. The grade is based on the written material submitted, as well as students' professional and responsive behaviors at the school.

#### **B. Graduate Field and Clinical Experiences**

The EDEX Graduate Program includes a series of field experiences for teacher candidates. A twenty-hour field experience is required for each of five courses related to characteristics of students with disabilities. These courses are listed in Appendix D (i.e., EDEX 515, EDEX 516, EDEX 517, EDEX 518, EDEX 519). Additionally, each student completes two 3-credit practica, one focusing on students with mild disabilities and one focusing on students with severe disabilities.

#### **Developmental Sequence of Field Experiences and Clinical Experiences**

The series of five 20-hour experiences introduce graduate students to the educational experiences of students with disabilities. During these experiences, teacher candidates are required to observe groups of students and to work with individual students with disabilities. Candidates have opportunities to develop data collection skills for a variety of behaviors. They also have the opportunity to teach study skills, social skills, self-help skills, communication skills, and academic skills. Practice teaching is related to instructional approaches introduced in each course (i.e., EDEX 515-519).

The 3-credit practica build on the field experiences, providing a sequence of requirements that result in the graduate student teaching a full-day schedule. During Week 1, students are required to observe the new setting. The candidate begins to assist with instruction, working with individuals or small groups on practice activities. During Week 3, the graduate student conducts assessments and plans daily lessons for one small group. Planning and implementing instruction continues during weeks 4 and 5 with increasing numbers of groups. Additionally, the graduate student plans and implements a formal behavior management plan after consulting with the cooperating teacher. During the remainder of the practicum, graduate students implement individual, small group and whole class activities for a minimum of half a day, each day.

#### **Full Range of Experiences**

The field experiences are connected to 5 courses: EDEX 515, Early Childhood Education; EDEX 516, Education of Persons with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders; EDEX 517, Education of Persons with Mental Retardation or Developmental Disabilities; EDEX 518, Education of Persons with Physical or Multiple Disabilities; and EDEX 519, Education of Persons with Brain Injuries or Learning Disabilities. This provides each graduate student with opportunities to work with students with a range of disabilities, including learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, physical handicaps, multiple disabilities, and mental retardation.

For the clinical experiences, students participate in one practicum with students with mild disabilities and one practicum with students with severe disabilities. When making placements, we arrange that one experience is at the elementary level and one at the secondary level so that students work with a range of ages and disabilities.