Program Rating Sheet - William Carey University
Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Undergraduate Special Education Teacher Prep Program

Note: This NCTQ program rating is based on scores on applicable key standards. For more on standard scores and program ratings, see our methodology.

Summary of Scores on Undergraduate Special Education Standards*

**Key Standards**
- Selection Criteria
- Early Reading
- Common Core Elementary Mathematics
- Common Core Content for Special Education
- Student Teaching
- Instructional Design for Special Education

**Other Standards**
- Outcomes

* Elementary and secondary programs are evaluated with a different set of Teacher Prep Review standards. For more on which standards apply to each type of program, see our methodology.

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Key Standards

Selection Criteria
Scoring Comment
The standards for admission into either the institution or its teacher preparation program should select teacher candidates from only the top half of the college population.

The program only partly meets the standard because while it is housed in an institution that is relatively selective, the level of selectivity is not sufficient to ensure that candidates have the requisite academic talent. The program also does not require that all candidates have a high enough grade point average and take an appropriate entrance exam.

Early Reading
Scoring Comment
The research-based content proven to be necessary for teaching all children to read should be clearly evident in course materials such as lecture topics, assignments and textbooks. All of a program's required reading courses — not just some courses — should impart what is necessary to teach reading.

The program meets the standard because its coursework covers all five of the components of effective reading instruction:

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension Strategies

Common Core Elementary Mathematics
Scoring Comment
Teacher candidates, even those who excel in math, generally require three semesters of coursework, complemented by adequate field practice in order to progress from a procedural to a conceptual understanding of the essential mathematics topics taught in the elementary grades.

The program does not meet this standard because it requires that teacher candidates take little or no coursework designed to develop their conceptual understanding of elementary mathematics topics. It thus fails to ensure that all essential topics are adequately covered, regardless of the design of the instruction.

Common Core Content for Special Education
Scoring Comment
Because they cannot teach what they do not know, special education teacher candidates need to have a solid grasp of literature and composition, American and world history, geography and science.

Commendably, special education teacher candidates in this state can obtain certification to teach in the elementary grades alone, rather than the overly broad certification to teach in grades PK-12. However, the program only partly meets this standard because the combination of institution and program requirements ensures sufficient coverage of the elementary content special education teachers need solely in:

- Literature

Coverage is somewhat deficient in:
- History
Coverage is very deficient in:
- Science

Student Teaching

Scoring Comment
A high-quality student teaching experience depends on: 1) sufficient feedback as defined by five or more observations with written feedback provided at regular intervals, 2) clear communication to school districts that cooperating teachers must be both strong mentors of adults and highly effective instructors, and 3) the capacity of the program to play an active role in the selection of cooperating teachers, as evidenced by its solicitation of substantive nominating information.

While the program requires observations to be spaced at regular intervals and asserts its critical role in the selection of cooperating teachers, it only partly meets this standard because it does not provide student teachers with written feedback after five or more observations and does not clearly communicate to school districts the desired characteristics of cooperating teachers.

Instructional Design for Special Education

Scoring Comment
The central feature of accommodations for students with high-incidence special needs is the design of instruction that allows them to access the general education curriculum. Preparation for special education teacher candidates must contain sufficient instruction and practice on the minor modifications, major adaptations or major enhancements to the curriculum that will allow students with special needs to learn access content in English/Language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

The program only partly satisfies this standard because while it requires several courses (or the equivalent) with a strong focus on instructional design in a particular content area or in multiple content areas, this coursework falls well short of requiring a sufficient number of assignments requiring teacher candidates to design instruction that can meet a range of student needs.

We note a substantial number of relevant assignments in additional required coursework for special education candidates that is not offered by the special education department and/or has a clinical focus but nonetheless clearly addresses instructional design in content instruction.

Other Standards

Outcomes

Scoring Comment
Like K-12 institutions, colleges and universities must commit themselves to gathering the data needed for teacher preparation program accountability. Some institutions are privileged by the initiatives taken by their state to provide them with outcomes information, but all institutions have the capacity to obtain such information, independent of state initiatives if necessary.

The teacher preparation institution only partly meets the standard. The institution:
- Surveys its graduates' employers about their professional performance; and
- Collects this form of data on an established timetable that supports regular program evaluation,

However, it does not:
- Survey its graduates regarding topics relevant to program evaluation;
- Secure data from teacher performance assessments administered to candidates just prior to or at graduation; or
- Secure growth data on its graduates' students.
Standard scores: ★★★★ Strong Design, ★★★★ Meets standard, ★★★★ Passes standard, ★★★★ Nearly meets standards, ★★★★ Partly meets standard, ★★★★ Meets a small part of standard, ★★★★ Does not meet standard; N/A Not applicable; NR Not rated (most likely because data not provided).

Ensuring every child has an effective teacher