



# PROGRAM

## ASSESSMENT

### Special Education, Collaborative Teacher Special Education, BS/MED (Alt) (Fall 2016-Summer 2017)

The Special Education, Collaborative Teacher initial certification teacher preparation program prepares teacher-candidates to serve students from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The program is accredited by the Alabama State Board of Education and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. As well, it has received national Specialized Professional Associations (SPA) recognition from the Council for Exceptional Children, our profession's major professional organization. The Collaborative Teacher program was substantially revised beginning Fall 2015 in order to provide students with a wider range of employment opportunities. Over the last several years we have seen an increase in enrollment. The number of students who completed the program in the 2015/2016 academic was 29 (20 undergraduate, 9 alternative master's). The master's program is offered on-campus and on-line.

## Student Learning Outcomes

### 1. Specificity of Outcomes

The chart below identifies specific student learning outcomes.

CEC Initial Preparation Standards	
Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences	Beginning special education professionals understand how exceptionalities may interact with development and learning and use this knowledge to provide meaningful and challenging learning experiences for individuals with exceptionalities.
Learning Environments	Beginning special education professionals create safe, inclusive, culturally responsive learning environments so that individuals with exceptionalities become active and effective learners and develop emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and self-determination.
Curricular Content Knowledge	Beginning special education professionals use knowledge of general and specialized curricula to individualize learning for individuals with exceptionalities.
Assessment	Beginning special education professionals use multiple methods of assessment and data sources in making educational decisions.
Instructional Planning and Strategies	Beginning special education professionals select, adapt, and use a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to advance learning of individuals with exceptionalities.

Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	Beginning special education professionals use foundational knowledge of the field and their professional ethical principles and practice standards to inform special education practice, to engage in lifelong learning, and to advance the profession.
Collaboration	Beginning special education professionals collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, individuals with exceptionalities, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways to address the needs of individuals with exceptionalities across a range of learning experiences.

## 2. **Comprehensive Outcomes**

The outcomes and standards identified represent the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) *Initial Level Special Educator Preparation Standards*. In fact, it has received national Specialized Professional Associations (SPA) recognition from the Council for Exceptional Children, our profession's major professional organization, which is a very involved and rigorous program assessment. The standards are also consistent and aligned with other professional organization standards, including the interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). The program is accredited by the Alabama State Board of Education and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The faculty believe that the learning outcomes are comprehensive and reflect the expectations for initial teacher certification

In order to receive these accreditations, programs must submit a self-study outlining how they meet or exceed expectations on the identified standards. The program is required to demonstrate that graduates achieve a certain level of competency in the identified standards.

## 3. **Communicating Student Learning Outcomes**

### Faculty

Special Education Faculty work together to ensure that the courses and field work reflect professional standards and evidence-based practices. A restructured special education program was implemented beginning in Fall 2015. This revised program was the result of two years worth of data collection and program restructuring and was a collaborative effort involving all special education faculty. We continue to review data annually to determine if we need to make adjustments to our program. All faculty review program reports submitted.

All faculty review program reports and discuss at a faculty retreat devoted to curriculum and program issues. This year's retreat is scheduled for May 2.

### Students

All syllabi contain our program's learning outcomes. Additionally, state and national standards are typically listed or referenced with course objectives.

Our next national and state accreditation (2021) will require that students are introduced to learning outcomes at the beginning of their program and are assessed on these learning outcomes several times throughout their program. Students will be provided with feedback on their progress toward outcomes,

and, if necessary, actionable remediation plans will be developed to assist students in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for which they are not at the expected level.

The College is in the process of developing and piloting several new assessments that will be used to measure student learning outcomes. These will eventually replace some of the assessments we are currently using.

## Curriculum Map

4. The curriculum map provided outlines the seven student learning outcomes. Components of those objectives are introduced, developed and emphasized throughout the program. The courses below represent the program courses for BS students. Alternative M.Ed. students take additional advanced courses including RSED 7400/6-Curriculum and Teaching in Specialization, RSED 6230/6-Assistive Technology, RSED 7410-Program Implementation: Leadership.

Student Learning Outcomes	Introduced	Reinforced/Developed	Emphasized/ Demonstrated Mastery
SLO 1-Learner Development and Individual Differences	RSED 3000 <i>Diversity of Learners</i> RSED 3010- <i>Introduction to Special Education</i> RSED 6000/6- <i>Advanced Survey of Exceptionality</i>	RSED 5120/6120/6- <i>Curriculum in Elementary Special Education</i> RSED 5130/6130/6- <i>Curriculum in Secondary Special Education</i> RSED 5170/6170/6- <i>Transitions from Birth-Adulthood</i>	RSED 4920/3- <i>Internship</i> or RSED 7920/6- <i>Internship</i>
SLO 2-Learning Environments	RSED 5160/6160/6- <i>Framework for Collaboration</i>	RSED 4910- <i>Practicum</i> or RSED 7910/6- <i>Practicum</i> (3 different practica)	RSED 4920/3- <i>Internship</i> or RSED 7920/6- <i>Internship</i>
SLO 3-Curricular Content Knowledge	RSED 3010- <i>Introduction to Special Education</i> RSED 6000/6- <i>Advanced Survey of Exceptionality</i>	RSED 5120/6120/6 <i>Curriculum in Elementary Special Education</i> RSED 5130/6130/6- <i>Curriculum in Secondary Special Education</i> RSED 5170/6170/6 <i>Transitions from Birth-Adulthood</i> RSED 5190/6190/6- <i>Community-Based Instruction and Related Services</i>	RSED 4920/3- <i>Internship</i> or RSED 7920/6- <i>Internship</i>
SLO 4-Assessment	RSED 3110- <i>Assessment for Eligibility</i> RSED 4140- <i>Assessment for Program Planning</i> Or RSED 7120/7126- <i>Advanced Assessment</i>	RSED 4910- <i>Practicum</i> or RSED 7910/6- <i>Practicum</i> RSED 5130/6130/6- <i>Curriculum in Secondary Special Education</i> RSED 5190/6190/6- <i>Community-Based Instruction and Related Services</i>	RSED 4920/3- <i>Internship</i> or RSED 7920/6- <i>Internship</i>
SLO 5-Instructional Planning and Strategies	RSED 5150/6150- <i>Elementary Teaching Methods</i> RSED 5130/6130	RSED 4910- <i>Practicum</i> or RSED 7910/6- <i>Practicum</i>	RSED 4920/3- <i>Internship</i> or RSED 7920/6- <i>Internship</i>

	Or RSED 7220/7226		
SLO 6-Professional Learning and Ethical Practices	RSED 5160/6160/6- <i>Framework for Collaboration</i>	RSED 4910- <i>Practicum</i> or RSED 7910/6- <i>Practicum</i>	RSED 4920/3- <i>Internship</i> or RSED 7920/6- <i>Internship</i>
SLO 7-Collaboration	RSED 5160/6160/6- <i>Framework for Collaboration</i>	RSED 4910- <i>Practicum</i> or RSED 7910/6- <i>Practicum</i>	RSED 4920/3- <i>Internship</i> or RSED 7920/6- <i>Internship</i>

## Measurement (5-7)

### 5. Outcome-Measure Alignment

The table provided below depicts the Learning-Objective/Outcomes alignment with key assessments. The types of assessments (6), including data collection (7), are briefly described first.

#### Direct Measures

1. The *Professional Work Sample for Special Education Program* focuses on planning for multiple instructional interactions, implementation and discussion of one instructional interaction, reflection of multiple instructional interactions, and analysis of student learning. Master's level students must also address research connections. Each indicator is rated on a four point scale with 4=exemplary, 3=competent, 2=approaching competence, and 1=not approaching competence. Undergraduate students complete a practice PWS in their final practicum. The final PWS is completed and evaluated by the university supervisor during the students' internship.

Expected performance: It is expected that all graduates will receive a rating of *competent* or *exemplary* on each indicator.

2. The *Special Education Classroom Observation Instrument* is aligned with the College of Education's Conceptual Framework and the Council for Exceptional Children's Initial Preparation Standards. The broad indicators assessed include organization and management of the learning environment, instructional strategies to engage learning, assessment of learning, an collaboration/communication/professionalism. The observation instrument is used to evaluate students' performance in each of their field placements. Each indicator is rated on a four-point scale with 4=exemplary, 3=competent, 2=approaching competence, and 1=not approaching competence. Subscores for each standard are analyzed to inform preparation in the five areas assessed. The form is completed by the university supervisor and cooperating teacher. Students are evaluated using this instrument during each of three practica. Performance expectations increase throughout the practicum sequence. The classroom observation scores reported for this report are the ones collected at the end of the students' program during their internship.

Expected performance: It is expected that all graduates will receive a rating of *competent* or *exemplary* on each indicator.

3. *AU's EDUCATEAlabama Internship Assessment* is an assessment used in all teacher education programs. It is based on the Alabama State Department of Education's assessment for in-service teachers of the same name. The assessment consists of 24 indicators divided into five standards: content knowledge, teaching and learning, literacy, diversity, and professionalism. Candidates are

collaboratively assessed by their university supervisor and cooperating teacher using this instrument. As well, students complete a self-evaluation, which is discussed with the university supervisor and cooperating teacher. Students are evaluated using this instrument during each of three practica. Performance expectations increase throughout the practicum sequence. The scores reported for this report are the ones collected at the end of the students' program during their internship. Each indicator is rated on a four-point scale with 4=exemplary, 3=competent, 2=approaching competence, and 1=poor performance. Subscores for each standard are analyzed to inform preparation in the five areas assessed.

Expected performance: It is expected that all graduates will receive a rating of *competent* or *exemplary* on each item.

4. The *Professional Dispositions Checklist-Initial Teacher Preparation Program in Special Education* considers key professional behaviors expected of teachers. The indicators are aligned with the College of Education's Conceptual Framework and the Council for Exceptional Children's Initial Preparation Standards. Students are evaluated using this instrument during each of three practica and internship. The form is completed by the university supervisor and cooperating teacher. Each indicator is rated as either *acceptable*, *unacceptable*, or *not observed*. Students who are not rated as acceptable in practicum or internship, may be required to repeat the practicum or internship and receive a "U".

Expected performance: It is expected that all graduates will receive a rating of "acceptable" on each disposition.

Outcome-Measure Alignment		
Learning Outcomes and Standards	Assessment Measure	Indicator/Items
1. Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment	Items-1.2, 2.4, 4.4, 4.6
	Classroom Observation Instrument	Indicators-1, 2
	Professional Work Sample	Indicators-1,2
2. Learning Environments	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment	Items-2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.7, 4.2
	Classroom Observation Instrument	Indicator-1
	Professional Work Sample	Indicator-1
	Professional Dispositions	Disposition-3
3. Curricular Content Knowledge	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment	Items-1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5
	Classroom Observation Instrument	Indicators-1, 2, 3
	Professional Work Sample	Indicators-1, 2, 3, 4
4. Assessment	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment	Items-2.5, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11
	Classroom Observation Instrument	Indicators-3
	Professional Work Sample	Indicators-2, 3, 4
5. Instructional Planning and Strategies	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment	Items-1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7
	Classroom Observation Instrument	Indicators-1, 2
	Professional Work Sample	Indicators-1, 3, 4
6. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment	Items-5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5
	Professional Dispositions	Dispositions-9, 14
7. Collaboration	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment	Items-5.1, 5.3, 5.4
	Classroom Observation Instrument	Indicators-4
	Professional Dispositions	Disposition-9

## Results

## **8. Reporting Results**

The program assessment results for data collected between Fall 2016 through Summer 2017 for program completers are provided in the following sections. Of the 29 program completers, 20 were undergraduates and 9 were alternative master's students. Note: Percentages are rounded.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measure	Item/ Indicator/ Disposition	Ratings				Summary
			Not Approaching Competence/Poor	Approaching Competence or Unacceptable	Competent Or Acceptable	Exemplary	
1. Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment-Items	1.2	0	0	17	12	Program graduates demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skills related to Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences. All indicators aligned with this learning outcome were <i>competent</i> (62%) or <i>exemplary</i> (38%).
		2.4	0	0	20	9	
		4.4	0	0	20	9	
		4.6	0	0	13	16	
	Classroom Observation Instrument-Indicators	1	0	0	13	16	
		2	0	0	13	16	
	Professional Work Sample-Indicators	1	0	0	26	3	
		2	0	0	22	7	
2. Learning Environments	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment-Items	2.2	0	0	17	12	Program graduates demonstrated sufficient knowledge, skills, and abilities related to Learning Environments. Only one (<1%) rating was at the <i>approaching</i>
		2.3	0	0	20	9	
		2.5	0	1	17	11	
		2.7	0	0	14	15	
		4.2	0	0	12	17	
	Classroom Observation Instrument-Indicator	1	0	0	13	16	
	Professional Work Sample-Indicator	1	0	0	26	3	

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measure	Item/ Indicator/ Disposition	Ratings				Summary
			Not Approaching Competence/Poor	Approaching Competence or Unacceptable	Competent Or Acceptable	Exemplary	
	Professional Dispositions -Disposition	3	0=Unacceptable		29=Acceptable		<i>competence</i> level. All other ratings on items and indicators aligned with this outcome area were <i>competent</i> (59%) or <i>exemplary</i> (41%). For professional dispositions, 100% of the ratings were <i>acceptable</i> .
3. Curricular Content Knowledge	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment-Items	1.1	0	0	17	12	Program graduates demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skills related to Curricular Content. Only one (<1%) rating was at the <i>approaching competence</i> level. All other ratings on items and indicators aligned with this outcome area were <i>competent</i> (65%) or <i>exemplary</i> (35%).
		1.2	0	0	16	13	
		1.3	0	0	14	15	
		1.5	0	0	14	17	
	Classroom Observation Instrument-Indicators	1	0	0	13	16	
		2	0	0	13	16	
		3	0	0	18	11	
	Professional Work Sample-Indicators	1	0	0	26	3	
		2	0	1	22	7	
		3	0	0	28	1	
		4	0	0	28	1	
4. Assessment	AU Educate Alabama Internship	2.5	0	1	17	11	Program graduates demonstrated sufficient
		2.8	0	0	16	13	
		2.9	0	0	17	12	

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measure	Item/ Indicator/ Disposition	Ratings				Summary
			Not Approaching Competence/Poor	Approaching Competence or Unacceptable	Competent Or Acceptable	Exemplary	
	Assessment-Items	2.10	0	1	16	12	knowledge and skills related to Assessment. All but three ratings (1%) on the items and indicators aligned with this outcome area were rated as <i>competent</i> (68%) or <i>exemplary</i> (31%).
		2.11	0	1	16	12	
	Classroom Observation Instrument-Indicator	3	0	0	18	11	
	Professional Work Sample-Indicators	2	0	0	22	7	
		3	0	0	28	1	
		4	0	0	28	1	
5. Instructional Planning and Strategies	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment-Items-	1.1	0	0	12	17	Program graduates demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skills related to Instructional Planning Strategies. All students were rated as <i>competent</i> (61%) or <i>exemplary</i> (39%) on the items and indicators aligned with this outcome area.
		1.2	0	0	16	13	
		1.3	0	0	14	15	
		1.5	0	0	14	15	
		2.4	0	0	20	9	
		2.6	0	0	15	14	
	2.7	0	0	14	15		
		Classroom Observation Instrument-Indicators	1	0	0	13	
	2		0	0	13	16	
	Professional Work Sample-Indicators	1	0	0	26	3	
		3	0	0	28	1	
		4	0	0	28	1	
6. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment-Items	5.1	0	0	10	19	Program graduates demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skills related to Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. All students were rated as
		5.2	0	0	13	16	
		5.3	0	0	12	17	
		5.4	0	0	10	19	
		5.5	0	0	10	19	
	Professional Dispositions	9	0=Unacceptable		29=Acceptable		

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measure	Item/ Indicator/ Disposition	Ratings				Summary
			Not Approaching Competence/Poor	Approaching Competence or Unacceptable	Competent Or Acceptable	Exemplary	
	- Dispositions	14	0=Unacceptable		29=Acceptable		<i>competent</i> (38%) or <i>exemplary</i> (62%) on the items and indicators aligned with this outcome area, with the majority of ratings <i>exemplary</i> . For professional dispositions, 100% of the ratings were <i>acceptable</i> .
7. Collaboration	AU Educate Alabama Internship Assessment-Items-	5.1	0	0	10	19	Program graduates demonstrated sufficient knowledge, skills and abilities related to Collaboration. All students were rated as <i>competent</i> (36%) or <i>exemplary</i> (64%) on the items and indicators aligned with this outcome area, with the majority of ratings <i>exemplary</i> . For professional dispositions, 100% of the ratings were <i>acceptable</i> .
		5.3	0	0	12	17	
		5.4	0	0	10	19	
	Classroom Observation Instrument-Indicator	4	0	0	10	19	
	Professional Dispositions-Disposition	9	0=Unacceptable		29=Acceptable		

As noted, we are in the process of developing and piloting new assessment instruments and identifying artifacts (projects) related to state and national accreditation requirements and SPA recognition. Further, beginning Fall 2018 all initial teacher certification candidates will be required to take the edTPA, a

performance-based assessment. Consequently, several of our current assessments will be retired. This will effect our ability to aggregate results across years from the same measures.

## **9. Interpreting Results**

The goal of any initial teacher training program is for program graduates to be competent in the key indicators expected of beginning teachers. The results of key assessments indicate that our current program prepares students to enter the teaching field as competent professionals. An analysis of the data indicate that we have several relative strengths in our program, in which the majority of ratings were exemplary. These strengths include learning outcomes in *Professional Learning and Ethical Practice* and *Collaboration*. In both of these areas, assessment results indicated substantially more *exemplary* ratings than *competent* ratings. Further, all dispositions were rated as *acceptable*.

While there were only 5 scores below competent, there was a noticeable overall difference in the ratio of *competent* to *exemplary* ratings from last year. Specifically, this year there were fewer *exemplary* ratings. A possible explanation for this is that last year we did not have data for the Alternative Master's students. This year 31% of the students were Alternative Master's students. These are students who are completing a teacher preparation in a shorter amount of time. As well, we have found that often times these students have not had the prior experiences in school settings and working with individuals with disabilities (e.g., volunteering special education classes, being a mentor to individuals with disabilities) that traditional students have.

Scores from the PWS continue to be the lowest. An examination of PWS responses indicates we need to provide more direction and support to students with regard to completing this assessment. Additionally, with regard to the Alternative Master's students, faculty feedback from comprehensive exams indicates that while overall students have the expected knowledge, there are a few areas that could be improved (i.e., identifying specific eligibility criteria for different disabilities, explaining the eligibility process). This knowledge could possibly influence ratings in the *Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences*, *Learning Environment*, and *Assessment* learning outcomes areas.

A factor that might contribute to the fact that all of our students' performance met our expectations, except for 5 ratings, is the developmental nature of our program and the expectations we have for student continuation in the program. That is, the assessment data reported in this report is collected during the students' internship, which is the culminating educational experience. Students have to meet certain requirements before they are allowed to intern. Additionally, students are required to repeat field experiences and classes for which their performance does not meet expectations. Specifically, students must retake classes in which they earn a grade lower than a C, they must pass certain standardized exams before they are admitted into the program and other exams before they can intern, and they must retake practicum classes if they receive an *unsatisfactory* grade.

## **10. Communicating Results**

The program assessment results will be shared with all program faculty on May 2, when we meet to discuss program evaluation data and student progress, and develop an action plan. This report has already been discussed with several program coordinators and an advisor. Preliminary ideas (see 11) for addressing needs were identified and will be shared, discussed, and refined with all of the faculty.

## Use of Results

### **11. Purposeful Reflection and Action Plan**

The tentative action plan at this time involves two activities. This plan will be refined after our May 2 program retreat.

Activity 1-Embed elements of tasks from the edTPA assessment into courses to ensure that students are prepared for this consequential assessment (students must pass the edTPA in order to receive teacher certification).

Activity 2-Create a minimum of 3 learning modules focused on content identified in the Comprehensive Exams as needing to be further developed.

These modules will be focused on (1) eligibility criteria, (2) eligibility process, and (3) learner characteristics.

While these are designed and will be required for Alternative Master's students, the modules will be a helpful resource for our undergraduate students.

Alternative Master's students will be required to complete each module with 80% accuracy. Students will complete one module during each of their three practicum experiences.