

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Audit and Review
Undergraduate and Graduate Program
Department of Special Education**

I. ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS/INITIATIVES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

MISSION STATEMENT: University of Wisconsin System

Each institution of the University of Wisconsin System shares in the mission of the System, which is to develop human resources, to discover and disseminate knowledge, to extend knowledge and its application beyond the boundaries of its campuses, and to serve and stimulate society by developing in students heightened intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities, scientific, professional, and technological expertise; and a sense of value and purpose. Inherent in this mission are methods of instruction, research, extended education, and public service designed to educate people and improve the human condition. Basic to every purpose of the System is the search for truth.

The Core Mission of the University Cluster Institutions

With the approved differentiation stated in their selected missions, each university in the Cluster shall:

1. Offer associate and baccalaureate degree level and selected graduate programs within the context of its approved mission statement.
2. Offer an environment that emphasizes teaching excellence and meets the educational and personal needs of students through effective teaching, academic advising, counseling and through university-sponsored cultural, recreational and extra-curricular programs.
3. Offer a core of liberal studies that supports university degrees in the arts, letters, and sciences, as well as specialized professional/technical degrees at the associate and baccalaureate level.
4. Offer a program of pre-professional curricular offerings consistent with the university's mission.
5. Expect scholarly activity, including research, scholarship and creative endeavor that support its programs at the associate and baccalaureate degree level, its selected graduate programs, and its approved mission statement.
6. Promote the integration of the extension function, assist the University of Wisconsin-Extension in meeting its responsibility for statewide coordination, and encourage faculty and staff participation in outreach activity.

7. Participate in inter-institutional relationships in order to maximize educational opportunity for the people of the state effectively and efficiently through the sharing of resources.
8. Serve the needs of women, minority, disadvantaged, disabled, and non traditional students and seek racial and ethnic diversification of the student body and the professional faculty and staff.
9. Support activities designed to promote the economic development of the state.

Select Mission of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

In addition to the system and core missions, the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater has the select mission to:

1. Offer an extensive range of undergraduate programs and degrees, including interdisciplinary programs in letters, sciences, and the arts, as well as programs and degrees leading to professional specialization.
2. Offer graduate education built clearly upon its undergraduate emphases and strengths with particular emphasis in the fields of business and education.
3. Expect scholarly activity, including research, scholarship and creative endeavor that support its programs at the associate and baccalaureate degree level, its selected graduate programs, and its special mission.
4. Provide supportive services and programs for students with disabilities.
5. Recruit minority and non-traditional students and provide support services and programs for them.
6. Serve as a regional cultural and resource center.
7. Provide continuing education and outreach programs as an integrated institutional activity.

College of Education Mission Statement

At the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, administrators, faculty, students, classroom teachers and school principals collectively believe that a teacher is a facilitator of learning and that learning is an active engaging process. Teachers are not simply dispensers of knowledge, but rather individuals who respond to their pupils' reactions to the learning process by constantly modifying classroom interactions. We believe teachers must be able to reflect on their classroom experiences so that they can better meet the individual needs of their pupils.

A conceptual framework under girding the teacher education program at UW-Whitewater has been developed. The framework is designed to be foundational in preparing teachers who are capable of facilitating learning. We start with the premise that all pupils can learn. As pupils continue in school, they construct meaning, develop, and grow in cognitive, physical, social-emotional, ethical, and aesthetic abilities. The ultimate goal of our teacher education program is to help students become capable investigators, meaning-makers, problem solvers, communicators, and reflective thinkers; Field experiences provide opportunities to relate

principles and theories from the conceptual framework to actual practice in classroom and schools.

Teachers create the conditions to facilitate development and growth in all learners. They engage these learners by planning for the learning process, applying the principles of learning, creating nurturing conditions in which learning can occur, evaluating their interactions with pupils and implementing change in instructional approaches based on learner performance. Teachers manage and understand reciprocal processes between themselves and their pupils. Preparing this type of teacher involves the interplay of important factors including:

- Academics
- Practice
- Process of Learning
- Experience

Academic preparation is primarily the result of the course work in the various majors that are offered in the College of Education. Students are also given the opportunity to engage in field experiences in schools during all phases of their preparation. Significant course work, coupled with practical field experiences in the schools, helps students understand the process of learning and how developmental changes in human beings have an important effect on their ability to learn. New ideas are taught and understood in the context of past experiences.

Department of Special Education Mission Statement

The Department of Special Education faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater strive to prepare teachers for the 21st century who demonstrate professional integrity and competence to work with students with diverse abilities and backgrounds, with families of the students they teach with other professionals and with members of their communities. We seek to accomplish this by maintaining high expectations for our students, by promoting self-reflection among our students, by facilitating our students' ability to engage in inquiry that broadens their vision and perceptions, and by providing access to a diverse, researched and theory-based curriculum. We view ourselves as a community of teaching scholars who model those abilities we expect of our students. We accomplish this through collaboration with one another, with our peers in the University community, and with the citizens of our community. We model the scholarship of discovery and the scholarship of application through our research, publication activities and community service. Individually we represent diverse philosophies, opinions, talents and skills. *Together we draw from and celebrate that diversity!*

Department of Special Education Conceptual Framework

The Department of Special Education builds upon the Reflective Practitioner Model as represented in the College of Education Conceptual framework. Students are provided developmental feedback through out the curriculum through the use of course and exit portfolios. Content of the special education program is founded upon the national standards established by the Council for Exceptional Children and the INTASC principles as adopted by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. These are integrated within the program course syllabi. Students are expected to demonstrate master of this knowledge and skill components through the exit portfolio.

DEGREE PROGRAMS

The program at UW -Whitewater provides a broad variety of training options at the undergraduate and graduate levels. At the bachelor's degree level, students may choose to complete entry level teacher licensure in eight (8) separate exceptionality categories. Master's degree program options include these same licensure options as well as non-licensure training programs in transitional/special needs and a general individualized graduate degree program. All graduate level curricula include advanced courses designed to offer students greater insights into the field of special education.

Undergraduate and Graduate Licensure Options

The following program options are available at the University of Wisconsin-White water. Appendix C "Licensure Plans" provide detailed information regarding the specific curriculum for each program.

Early Childhood: Exceptional Educational Needs (EC: EEN):

Enhance the development of infants. This curriculum offers an emphasis in early intervention strategies. Students learn to design individualized programs for toddlers and preschooler's with special needs. Families-as-equal partners are an integral part of the program.

Emotional/Behavioral Disorders (E/BD):

This curriculum prepares teachers for programs serving students diagnosed with mild-severe emotional and/or behavioral disorders at either the elementary or secondary level.

Learning Disabilities (LD):

This curriculum prepares teachers for elementary or secondary level LD positions.

Mental Retardation /Cognitive Disabilities (MR)/(CD):

This training program includes three licensure sequences. One to prepare teachers serving students with mild and/or moderate disability K-9 or 6 / 12 licensure, and the other for teachers serving students with severe and/or profound disability with K -12 licensure.

Program options offered only at the Master's Degree level

General Program

Designed primarily for already licensed special educators not seeking additional licenses or for professionals serving individuals with Exceptional Educational Needs (EEN) through community or social service agencies.

Transitional/Special Needs' Program

This curriculum reflects the current trend toward assisting individuals with disability in making a successful transition from secondary to post secondary environments by preparing professionals or various roles/responsibilities in the transition process.

Undergraduate Training Options

Dual Licensure

Students may attain licensure in general education and/or in several areas of special education, i.e., E/BD, LD, EC:EEN, MR/CD. Each program area incorporates opportunity (ies) for experiences within inclusive educational environments.

Minor in Special Education

This undergraduate minor is designed for students interested in learning more about individuals with exceptionalities. It does not result in teaching licensure.

Academic Assessment Initiatives

The Department of Special Education is undergoing a folio review by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and NCATE. In compiling the folio for CEC/NCATE, the Department of Special Education has conducted an assessment of the coursework associated with each of our undergraduate training programs. This assessment process was conducted in two ways. First, the Common Core Standards published by CEC were integrated into the core courses which are common to each of the licensure programs within the department. Secondly, the CEC Standards which are specific to each of the licensure programs were then integrated into the coursework associated with each program.

A detailed analysis of this data is presented in appendix A and B. To assist with the interpretation of this data, the reviewer is advised to locate the name of the CEC Standard (knowledge and skill) listed along the left side of the data forms. On the right hand of the data forms, we have identified the specific courses which address that knowledge or skill standard. In addition, a specific reference is made to the location in the course syllabi where that standard is **addressed** and/or **assessed**.

Please see **Appendix A** for Assessment of Core Course Data *Note: the self-study contained 21 pages of data; those pages are not included in this online document. Please contact the department directly for this Appendix.*

Please see **Appendix B** for Assessment of Licensure Program Data. *Note: the self-study contained 25 pages of data; those pages are not included in this online document. Please contact the department for this Appendix.*

Advising Data

The Department of Special Education considers the advising process to be an essential element of the faculty-student relationship. Each semester, the department sponsors a "group advising day" where all undergraduate students receive general information related to the advising process, admission to professional education, grade point requirements etc. Following the group advising session, students receive individual advising by faculty in their respective programs. Students who are unable to attend the group advising day are expected to sign up for individual advising during the following three week period. No students are allowed to register for classes until they have completed an advising form that has been signed by an advisor.

Based upon the recommendations from the 1995 Audit and Review, two formal evaluations of the departments advising procedures took place during this period of this review. The first took place in Spring of 1996 and the second took place in Spring of 1997. Data from both surveys confirmed that students were very pleased with the level of advising taking place in the department. This feedback also confirmed that students had ample opportunity to meet with an advisor in advance of the class registration period. Moreover, students reported that the advising was accurate and efficient.

Exit Surveys

Since Spring of 1996, the department has been implementing a professional portfolio process. The portfolios are developed during the semester of student teaching and in concert with the Student Teaching Seminar. In brief, students are required to develop a philosophy of education that is presented according to educational themes chosen by the student. The narrative that is written in relationship to each theme is to demonstrate the relationship that exists between the student's philosophy, the professional standards of the field, and the artifacts chosen by the student to include in their portfolio. Please see **Appendix C** for a description of the portfolio process. *Note: : included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

At the end of the student teaching semester, each student is required to submit a professional portfolio for faculty evaluation and feedback. Following this evaluation, students participate in a small group oral presentation with faculty and peers. During this presentation, students review the primary thematic issues indicated within their portfolio. A written evaluation of the oral presentation is provided to the student by both faculty and peers. Please portfolio evaluation forms in **Appendix D**. *Note: included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

Following this process, students are asked to complete an exit survey that provides feedback to the department about the portfolio process. In Spring of 2001, a comprehensive summary of the 5 year portfolio process will be compiled by the department. This summary will include data from each phase of the portfolio assessment process. In **Appendix E**, you will find feedback from students regarding the Student Teaching Seminar which is where the portfolios are developed. You will also find student feedback that was taken from the Follow-up Portfolio Evaluation Survey in 1997. Feedback like that presented in the **Appendix F**, have been instrumental in assisting the department to develop a process which is meaningful to the student as well as providing important exit data to the faculty. *Note: : Appendix F information is included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

Graduate Student Exit Data

Graduate students in the Department of Special Education have the option of writing a comprehensive examination, or completing a thesis. The majority of graduate students complete the comprehensive exam rather than the thesis. Students who exhibit sound technical writing ability, are encouraged to complete the thesis especially if they have an interest in post graduate studies. About 85-90 % of students are successful in passing the comprehensive examination on the initial attempt. Students choosing the thesis option generally rewrite the chapters until such time as they meet the expectations of their thesis committee.

Graduate Curriculum Assessment Data

The Graduate Program is currently undergoing significant restructuring. During the 2000-2001 academic year, graduate faculty will undertake a comprehensive analysis of all graduate courses similar to that presented in this report for the undergraduate programs. The standards being utilized for the graduate program will reflect National Board Standards and not necessarily those of CEC. The new graduate program proposal will go before the UW-W Graduate Council in December, 2000. The proposed changes are located in **Appendix G**. *Note: : included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

Professional Roles of Graduates

Graduates of the Department of Special Education are primarily training to fulfill the role of classroom teacher or educational consultant in the area of licensure. Graduates work in a variety of educational settings including public schools, group homes, residential settings, home-based services and corrections.

Quality of Graduates: Alumni and Employer Surveys

Refer to Section 11. C. Trend Data.

Admission to Graduate Schools

Refer to Section 11. D. Demand for Graduates

Employment Upon Graduation with Masters Degree

Refer to Section II.D. Demand for Graduates

Evaluations By Outside Parties

See accreditation information in section 11. E.

Program Highlights

Admissions Procedures

Admission to the College of Education requires the passing of the Pre- Professional Skills Test, maintenance of a 2.75 GPA for admission and verification and interview regarding candidate's experiences with children including those from diverse backgrounds.

Program Continuation

Students majoring in special education are expected to meet Departmental Continuation Standards. These standards are designed to provide a wide range of experiences working with children, adolescents and adults with handicaps. Fulfillment of these experiences is an avenue to test students' attitudes toward working with the handicapped, as well as providing a background to complement and make the academic program more relevant. Students who do not complete the standards will need to meet with their adviser to discuss their extent of involvement

1. You are expected to participate in a minimum of 20 hours of field experience each semester working with the handicapped. A listing of cooperative programs and field placement forms are available in the departmental office. Students who are enrolled in a

special education course that requires field experiences during a specific semester, or are enrolled in directed teaching, are exempt from this standard. Assistance in locating an appropriate field experience site/program can be obtained from your adviser. Students enrolled in formal field experiences must maintain acceptable ratings from cooperating teacher and faculty evaluations.

2. Participation in a student organization/group concerned with the handicapped or an education association is expected. Some of these organizations are: SCEC, SAS, ACE, Best Buddies, In Education, and SWEA.

3. At least 15 credits in coursework in the Department of Special Education at this University are required prior to acceptance into Directed Teaching.

4. Maintain a GPA of 2.75 for entrance to student teaching and application for licensure. Successful completion of coursework is linked to completion of individual class projects, and portfolios and demonstration of movement forward in meeting INTASC and CEC Standards.

Student Staffing Procedure

Procedures are currently in place for assisting students experiencing difficulty in meeting basic professional standards of conduct (disposition as reflected in INTASC Standards) or academic performance in their coursework. Faculty members collaborate with students in creating an effective plan of action to assist students to both complete coursework and field experiences successfully or make new career choices based upon personal reflection regarding their current performance. Additional information regarding the staffing procedures is available in **Appendix H**. *Note: included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

Graduation Requirements

Students in the Department of Special Education must successfully complete all coursework with a 2.75 GPA, directed teaching and present an exit portfolio demonstrating mastery of the INTASC principles for the field. In addition, the portfolio should include samples of student work to demonstrate a positive impact upon student learning during the directed teaching experience.

Diversity Components

The Department of Special Education is committed to providing students experiences working with both diverse staff and students. The faculty represent diverse cultural heritages, including Native South African, Indian/Hindu, and Columbian. In addition, the College of Education is committed to communicating the importance of understanding and working with students of cultural backgrounds different than that of the teacher candidate. At the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, students begin to address experiences with diverse populations as a component for admission to the College of Education. In addition, field experiences provide students a wide array of opportunities to work with students of diverse backgrounds. This includes participation in Milwaukee for all College of Education students during the initial Observation and Participation previous to entry in to the professional coursework in the major.

Students in the department of special education routinely participate in field experiences and directed teaching in diverse urban and suburban settings such as Madison, Milwaukee and Janesville. Table 1 provides the number of students that participated in field experiences and directed teaching in diverse classrooms in three target cities for the past 3 years. All three districts have a diverse student body in relation to minority and low-income enrollment. All students in the major participate in Janesville Public Schools during the general education field experience insuring all students will have a formal experience in a diverse setting during their education program. Course content addresses issues of diversity across the curriculum. (See Appendix A Course Syllabi for additional information.)

Finally, the diversity of the student body at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is represented by approximately 1% of students identifying themselves as a member of an ethnic minority group and .04% based upon disability status. The College of Education sponsors a minority teacher preparation program, which recruits and provides direct academic support to minority teacher education candidates. In addition the university provides two programs for students with disabilities to support Disabled Student Services and Project Assist (developed by the department of Special Education).

Table 1: Participation in Diverse Settings

	Pre-Admission Observation and Participation	Special Education-Field Work	Special Education Majors-Collaborative Field work in General Education	Special Education-Directed Teaching
Madison Public Schools		*50% of all students participate in either rural or urban settings		1997-1998-NA 1998-1999- 12 1999-2000- 4
Milwaukee Public Schools	1997-1998- 46 1998-1999- 56 1999-2000- 54	*		1997-1998-NA 1998-1999- 9 1999-2000- 10
Janesville Public Schools		*	1997-1998- 65 1998-1999- 48 1999-2000- 62	1997-1998 NA 1998-1999- 16 1999-2000- 11

Responses to Audit and Review Evaluation Report

The department has made significant improvements in its assessment plan. Specific action taken as a result of the Audit and Review Report of 1995-96 include the following:

1. A department recruitment plan has been developed and is being implemented to address the programs with relatively low enrollment.
2. In 1996 and in 1997 the department administered an advising survey to determine overall satisfaction with department advising procedures. Data collected indicate a very high level of satisfaction regarding department advising procedures.

- 3 All members of the department have had computer upgrades since the last review period.
4. Winther Hall classroom technology has been significantly improved since the last review period.
5. Grant production during this review period has significantly improved since the last review period. Federal grant submissions during this review period are in excess of \$5,000,000.

Refer to **Appendix I** for the evaluation report from the University Assessment Committee.

Note: not included in this document.

E. Information Shared with Constituencies

Consumer Participation

Ongoing interaction with consumers is maintained by the Department of Special Education. A partnership between Janesville Public Schools and the department provides a unique opportunity for cooperating teachers involved in our general education field experience to also receive alternative supervision by university faculty to develop skills in collaboration between general and special education. In addition, consumers are invited to participate in meetings with faculty as program revisions occur for direct feedback to the program regarding potential changes to curriculum. This occurred during the Spring of 1999 as a response to changes in the graduate curriculum. Currently the undergraduate model is under revision with expected consumer feedback in Fall 2001. Finally both the university and individual programs disseminate surveys to graduates regarding their academic experience at UWW. The results are utilized to determine consumer satisfaction as well as program needs. Students in the department of special education provide direct feedback to faculty through course evaluations and by participation of a Student Council for Exceptional Child representative attending all faculty department meetings.

In addition, an interdisciplinary advisory board is being utilized in conjunction with the proposed graduate program. In April of 2000, a 20 member advisory board convened on this campus to review and provide feedback on matters concerning the proposed program. This committee will be utilized further to assist the department in structuring a graduate program that is innovative and is capable of meeting the needs of educators in the region.

Assessment Information Shared with Faculty:

The department Chair meets with faculty throughout the year to plan, implement, and evaluate department improvements.

Faculty retreats are held two times per year. Faculty discuss and assess department goals and initiatives and future planning is conducted accordingly.

Weekly department and committee meetings ensure that faculty have ample opportunity to engage in meaningful discussion about all department activities.

III. STRATEGIC PURPOSES AND PERFORMANCES

A. Centrality

According to the UWW Vision Statement, "UW-Whitewater is and will continue to be primarily and undergraduate university serving career oriented students..." and further states "...will have significant graduate program in selected areas built upon existing undergraduate programs of excellence...including business, education, communication, and human services". The undergraduate and graduate Special Education teacher preparation programs support the vision that we prepare professionals at the graduate and undergraduate level to work in a field which continues to provide numerous opportunities for our graduates.

Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

A description of the department's graduate and undergraduate programs is provided in Section 1 of this report.

Relationship to Other Programs

The Department of Special Education offers one course that is required of all education majors in the College. Psychology of the Exceptional Child (480-205) enrolls 250 students per semester.

Special Education Majors are required to take courses in the following departments in concert with either the pre-professional block or the professional block:

Educational Foundations
Curriculum and Instruction
Communicative Disorders

Faculty from Curriculum and Instruction Early Childhood, and Special Education Early Childhood EEN have jointly planned an interdisciplinary Early Childhood Program that has gone through the university curriculum process and has been approved by the Board of Regents. This collaborative program is slated to begin in spring of 2002.

Project ASSIST is a UW-W student support program that works closely with the department. Project ASSIST continues to be a successful practicum site for graduate students seeking licensure in learning disabilities. It is also a fieldwork site for graduate students in the Transitional/Special Needs Masters Program.

B. Goals and Objectives

Undergraduate

The undergraduate licensure programs in the Department of Special Education are designed to prepare students for careers in the special education field. Given the extreme shortage of special education teachers throughout the state, it is a very significant goal. Special education licensure programs provided in the department include Elementary and Secondary Learning Disabilities, Elementary and Secondary Cognitive Disabilities, Elementary and Secondary Emotional Disorders, and Early Childhood: EEN.

Graduate

Students enrolled in the graduate program in Special Education have three training options. First, they can pursue a Masters Degree in conjunction with any of the licensure programs by taking

additional graduate level coursework. Second, they can enroll in the 30-36 credit General Education Masters in Special Education where they take elective coursework in consultation with the advisor. Thirdly, students may enroll in the 30-36 credit Transitional/Special Needs Masters Program.

It is important to note that the department is currently restructuring its entire graduate program. The new graduate program proposals will be advanced through the College and University Curriculum Committees during the 2000-2001 academic year. The outcomes and data associated with this new program will be provided in the next audit and review report.

Collaboration

The department has excellent working relationships with other units on campus, including the Departments of Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Foundations, Psychology, and Communication Disorders. It also works closely with Project ASSIST which serves as a practicum site, the Graduate Studies Office that provides needed assistance in grant related projects, and the Janesville School District which is host to the Co-teaching Project.

Meeting Standard

The department has an excellent reputation for being one of the premier training institutions for special education teachers in the state. Our students are highly recruited throughout the state by school administrators who believe our graduates are fully equipped to meet the multiple challenges of the discipline. Moreover, the curriculum in special education has integrated the standards of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, NCATE, the Council for Exceptional Children, and recently, the National Board Standards. **As a result of the previous DPI and NCATE reviews, this department was recognized for its excellence.**

Meeting Needs

The field of special education has faced a critical shortage of teachers both nationally and in Wisconsin. The decline in the number of educators being prepared is a cause of concern, and the continued large number of emergency licenses being issued suggests that this shortage will continue in select areas of special education for some time. Factors still indicate a stronger demand than for most other areas of education, in part because of the higher attrition rate and in part because of the number of special education teachers who transfer to general education. State of Wisconsin Supply and Demand Data indicate that graduates of special education programs are more likely to find jobs in Wisconsin than any other area of education. Area school districts such as Milwaukee, Racine, Janesville, Beloit and Rockford suffer critical shortages of special education teachers and they actively recruit students from this campus. This need is also being experienced in nearby states such as Illinois, Minnesota, and Michigan where special education teachers are in great demand. Please see **Appendix J** for a summary of employment outlooks in specific fields of special education in Wisconsin. *Note: : included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

The Department of Special Education trains more special education teachers than any other program in the UW-System including UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee. In addition, the Transitional/Special Needs Graduate Program is the only one of its kind in Wisconsin. Approved by the Board of Regents in 1990, this program has trained transition specialists to coordinate transition services in the public schools, technical colleges, universities, and adult support

agencies throughout the state and the region.

Changes

Since the last audit and review, the department has undertaken some important initiatives that deserve mention in this report. First, the Cognitive Disabilities Program has gone through significant curriculum revisions to ensure that all course content is consistent with DPI and CEC Standards. Secondly, the Early Childhood EEN Program has been completely restructured in collaboration with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. This innovative program will begin in spring of 2002. Thirdly, all core and licensure courses have integrated NCATE and CEC Standards in course syllabi. This was done not only for accreditation purposes, but also to allow each program to assess the extent to which essential competencies were being acquired by students. Finally, the graduate program has been restructured and is expected to be implemented in fall or 2001.

C. Trend Data

Degrees Granted

Over the past three year period, there has been a general decline in the number of graduates from licensure programs in special education. In 1997-98, a total of 72 students graduated from licensure programs in the department. In 1998-99, a total of 54 students graduated and in 1999-00, a total of 49 students graduated from licensure programs in special education.

During the past three year period, a total of 68 students graduated from the Learning Disabilities Program. A total of 38 students graduated from the Emotional Disorders Program while a total of 36 completed the Early Childhood: EEN Program. Thirty-three students graduated from the Cognitive Disabilities Program during the past three year period.

Graduate Enrollment Trends

In 1999, an analysis of graduate student trends over a five year period in the Department of Special Education was submitted to Dean Barnett. Please see **Appendix K** for this report. *Note: included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

Service Course Enrollments

The department offers one general service course (480-205: Psychology of the Exceptional Child) that is required of all education majors. Five sections of this course are offered each semester and each section has a cap of 50 students. A total of 250 students enroll in this course each semester.

Average Credits to Degree

The approximate average credit to degree for this period is 144.8. The minimum number of credits in which a Special Education Major can complete a degree with licensure is 130. An increasing number of students are seeking licensure in more than one disability area to increase their chances of being employed in districts with multi-categorical programs.

SCH/FTE

During the previous five year period, the SCH/FTE ratio in the department also declined. Please see **Appendix L** for the SCH/FTE ratio analysis during the past 5 year period. *Note: not included in this document.*

D. Demand for Graduates

Full time Graduate FTE in the department has declined over the past five year period. In fall of 1996, the Graduate FTE in the department was 63. This number dropped to 40 in fall of 1997. It dropped to 35 in fall of 1998 and rose slightly to 39 in fall of 1999. The department has maintained its ranking of third in the COE in terms of graduate FTE. Only Curriculum and Instruction and Counselor Education has more Graduate FTE than Special Education.

Employment Outcomes

According to the 1998-1999 Career Services Report, 100% of the graduate students in special education who responded to the employment survey were employed in their area of training.

NOTE: Accurate statistics for graduate FTE is very difficult to determine. This is due to the fact that many graduate students enroll in graduate programs as a Non-candidate for Degree for the initial 9 credits of instruction. At that point, students apply for a specific degree program and that is when the FTE is counted toward the home department.

Bachelor Degree Placement

The Department of Special Education has not collected data regarding employment outcomes for students with bachelor degrees. Due to the extreme shortage of special education teachers in the state, most graduates are employed immediately following graduation.

Quality of Graduates: Alumni Surveys

Institutional alumni surveys reveal that special education graduates believe the training they received at UW -W highly prepared them for the various functions associated with their careers. On a 7 point scale, former undergraduate and graduate special education majors rated the level of their preparation as a five or higher on 17 of the 18 elements being assessed. Please see Appendix M for the alumni survey results for special education majors, Special education minors, and graduate students.

Career Options

See employment outlook summaries in **Appendix J**. *Note: : included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

Supply and Demand

See **Appendix N**. *Note: : included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices.."*

E. Accreditation

All training programs are fully accredited by the Department of Public Instruction, the North Central Association, and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. The Department of Special Education takes pride in the excellent reputation it has established for preparing teachers and other professional personal. A significant reason for the quality of the program graduates is the personal interest and close working relationships that exist between faculty and the students. Because the average class size ranges from 16 to 20, students receive individual and personal attention resulting in an effective and qualitative teacher preparation program. Our graduates are actively recruited by school districts statewide as well as nationally.

F. Location Advantage

The University of Wisconsin-White water is advantageously located in the most populous region of the state. Students have access to a wide range of rural and urban practicum sites. Size and demographic configurations across sites are diverse offering many opportunities for meeting career interests and certification requirements.

G. Comparative Advantage

UW-Whitewater trains more special education teachers than any other university in Wisconsin. Feedback from students indicate a level of appreciation that courses are taught by professors rather than graduate assistants, that class sizes are smaller and therefore more personable, and that the campus is within a reasonable driving distance for commuters. Due to the offering of graduate level classes in the evenings and during summer session, employed graduate students have expressed appreciation that they can complete all or most of their graduate coursework without taking a leave from their job.

H. Community Impact

As indicated earlier in this report, UW-W trains more special education teachers than any other institution in the state. Graduates of this university are perceived as being among the best trained in the state. School administrators often contact this department personally to recruit future teachers. Moreover, the Janesville Co-teaching Project is the only one of its kind in the state. No other training program provides the same level of co-teaching experience for undergraduate students than UW-W. Again, program graduates are sought after due to the depth and breadth of experience afforded to them.

I. Strategic Planning

Due to the general decline in student enrollment over the past five year period, the department has developed a Recruitment Plan that is currently being implemented. Please see a copy of this plan in **Appendix O**. *Note: included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

The department is also restructuring its graduate program. Please see a copy of the proposed graduate program in **Appendix G**. *Note: included in separate file, "Special Education Appendices."*

In addition, the department is developing a proposal to offer an introductory course related to disabilities and society. This course is being designed for general education majors and is targeted for fall of 2001.

IV. Resource and Availability and Development

A. Faculty and Staff Characteristics

The Department of Special Education currently has 10 tenured or tenure-track faculty members. In addition 4 academic staff provide instructional support to the department. Faculty are engaged in both scholarly activities and continued support to public schools through consultation and in-service training. Faculty are also engaged in state and national initiatives including serving on state or national professional boards.

Levels of Professional Preparation

All ten tenured or tenure track faculty hold doctorates in special education or related fields. Five faculty members are currently tenured and three faculty hold the rank of Full Professor. All members of the faculty have memberships in professional organizations.

Appropriateness of Expertise to the Needs of the Program

The faculty and staff are comprised of twelve females and two males. The department has made a concerted effort over the past five years to increase the number of male faculty. The department has experienced a reduction in the number of applicants for tenure track positions during this period and this has been reflected in the decline of male applicants as well.

Faculty are meeting the academic needs of the program. All faculty have expertise in more than one exceptionality. The breadth of expertise among the faculty allows for periodic realignment of faculty loads and instruction in order to meet emerging or changing department and programmatic needs. All faculty are involved in student advising, student teaching supervision, and classroom instruction. The department considers and values input from all faculty and staff during personnel decisions.

Unit Cohesiveness in Enhancing Program Quality

All faculty and staff operate within the 12 hour instructional load formula. The student teaching supervision formula in the department is 20 to 1. Faculty and staff typically supervise 5 student teachers for a three credit load equivalent. When supervision needs exceed the availability of faculty and staff, adjunct instructors are hired to assist the department. The department carefully evaluates each adjunct instructor to ensure program quality is not compromised.

Ability to Meet Affirmative Action Goals

The department has met affirmative action goals. Faculty consist of one woman of Asian Indian descent, one woman of Hispanic descent, and one woman of African descent. The enrollment of minority students and the enrollment of male students has been unsatisfactory over this period of review.

Staff Course Responsibilities

Refer to **Appendix P** for the Fall, 1999 faculty and staff assignments in the department.

Staffing Changes and Needs

The department has recently filled a tenure track position in the Emotional Disorders Program. This was a result of a two year search. During the 2000-2001 academic year, the department will conduct two national searches to fill vacancies caused by resignations of tenure track faculty in summer of 2000.

B. Teaching and Learning Enhancement

Department faculty and staff are committed to maintaining professional standards of the discipline. All faculty and staff are involved in on-going professional development activities. During this review period, members of the department have received the College of Education Awards for Teaching, Service, and Research. In addition, a member of this department received the UW-W Academic Staff Service Award. Furthermore, this department was recognized by Chancellor Greenhill who nominated us in 1995 and in 1996 as the outstanding unit in the UW System.

Advising

All department faculty participate in the advising process. Registration holds are placed on each student until it is verified that they have met with their program advisor. Opportunities for group and individual advising are afforded to students every semester.

Undergraduate Research

Several faculty have been involved in fostering undergraduate research during this period of review. In 1996, three undergraduate students presented the findings of their research at the International Council for Exceptional Children Convention in Orlando, Florida. In 1999, a group of 13 undergraduate students participated in the Midwest Leadership Symposium in Kansas City. Four additional students participated in the CEC Convention in Charlotte. Yet another student was invited to present her study at the UW-W Undergraduate Research Conference and the National Research Conference in North Dakota.

Student Learning Based Outcomes

The faculty are committed to implementing an outcome based curriculum and assessment program. Student outcomes are assessed using multiple measures across the knowledge and skill domains of the learned bodies of the discipline. The professional portfolio process is described earlier in this document.

New Course Development

From the period of June, 2000 to August, 2001, a total of 15 new workshops have been or will be offered by the department. These workshops pertain to emerging issues in the field such as conflict resolution, behavior management, special education law to name a few. These workshops as well as the summer institutes associated with the proposed new graduate program, will be targeting interdisciplinary personnel such as school psychologists, social workers, administrators and general and special educators.

The department also is offering once course (Medical Aspects) that is completely web based.

Interdisciplinary Course Development

A collaborative effort between the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and this

department has resulted in the development of a new Early Childhood Program which is slated to begin in spring of 2002. A number of new courses were developed or revised in relationship to this new program.

This department has also consulted with over ten departments on this campus with respect to the development of a general education course dealing with disability and society.

C. Research and Other Scholarly and Creative Activities

During the period of review, faculty and staff published a total of 43 journal articles, book chapters, books, or monographs.

D. External Funding

During the period of review, the department has submitted over six million dollars of external funding proposals. The department submitted federal proposals for nearly five million dollars in the past two years alone. The department hit rate on federal proposals has declined in recent years due to our attempts to secure research grants which are often awarded to Research 1 institutions.

E. Professional and Public Service

Faculty and staff in this department are extremely active with respect to professional and public service. Faculty and staff have given presentations at **international or national** conferences/meetings a total of **57** times during the period of review. In addition to countless regional, state and local presentations, this faculty has held leadership positions in a number of state and national organizations including the Wisconsin Learning Disabilities Division (WDLDD), Wisconsin Emotional Disorders Division (WCBD), and the National Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT). All faculty and staff in the department hold memberships in professional organizations.

F. Resources for Students in the Program

The department averages about 2.5 graduate assistantships per year during the period of review. The department has been successful in hiring work study student over this period. The department hires an average of 5 students per year in the work study program. Recently, we have been experiencing a decline in the number of students who apply for work study positions in the department.

G. Facilities, Equipment, and Library Holdings

Each faculty is assigned a small private office with basic office furniture including a desk, book shelves, and file cabinets. All faculty have computers with printers. Much progress has been made in the past five years in providing state of the art computers and advanced software programs to each faculty member. All faculty have access to the internet and Email services.

The Special Education Department maintains a collection of assessment and testing instruments that are used by students enrolled in the assessment courses. A modest fee is collected from students to ensure these materials are up to date and available.

Library holdings in disability areas are average to poor. The recent reduction of professional journals within the library has been a source of consternation for students who often visit the library only to find the information they need is not available to them.

The department currently has 1.5 FTE for secretarial support. Given the level of grant productivity (5 million dollars requested during last two year period) in the department, there is a critical need for additional secretarial assistance with respect to grant production and grant related activities when they are funded. It is important to note that the support needed to **develop** a grant is just the same whether the grant is funded or not.