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ABSTRACT

The Demonstration Program in Special Education is the 1972 Distinguished Achievement Award Entry from Cheyney State College, Cheyney, Pennsylvania. This laboratory-based program facilitates the attainment of certification requirements in mental retardation for postbaccalaureate students. The program is reviewed as an alternative route to certification and is developed to meet the critical need for special educators identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Laboratory experiences are the focal point of the program, and there are no required courses. Passing grades are achieved after demonstration of teaching competencies. The program consists of a) 3 weeks of observing mentally retarded children in the classroom, b) 9 weeks of small group teaching in day or residential laboratory schools, and c) a full year of intern teaching. All of these experiences are followed by regular seminars, discussions, and individualized assignments. Evaluation is being implemented through a behavioral competencies rating scale, the Interpersonal Check List, a video tape analysis, and professional evaluation. (Tentative evaluation results are discussed.) (Author/BRB)

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A DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM TO FACILITATE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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INTRODUCTION:

The recent "Right to Education" agreement between the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children has considerably increased the need for special education teachers who are already in short supply. Responding to a need for special education teachers identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Cheyney State College designed a demonstration program directed toward preparing teachers for this shortage.

There are several strategies commonly employed by training institutions to prepare students for certification as special education teachers. Most programs require completion of extensive academic course work and some professional experiences leading to a bachelor's or a master's degree in special education. A number of colleges offer certification as an endorsement on another field of education, such as elementary education or secondary education. Also, teachers of regular classes may return to a college or university for completion of additional work needed for certification in special education.

The primary purpose of the Cheyney program was to develop a model that would demonstrate the feasibility of an alternate, shorter route to special education certification for post-baccalaureate students. The 1972-1973 program is a continuation and modification of a program begun in June, 1971 and completed in August, 1972. While the evaluation process of this program is not yet completed, there is substantial evidence that this type of program can be successful in preparing students for late entry into education by an alternate route than the traditional degree programs.

A serious question that is being raised against current teacher education programs, regular and special, is the heavy reliance on campus

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____ The interns will be able to summarize the significant historical contributions of specific individuals to the field of special education.

____ The interns will be able to apply skills gained in participating as teacher aides and teacher assistants in classes for the mentally retarded.

Unit III: June 26, 1972 to August 27, 1972

Fundamentals of Teaching the Mentally Retarded

After participating in small group instruction of retarded children and in seminars, discussions, conferences and projects:

____ The interns will be able to modify and adjust existing methods and techniques into effective curriculum procedures for the mentally retarded.

____ The interns will be able to arrange facilities and equipment for the therapeutic needs in educating the mentally retarded.

____ The interns will be able to develop an effective curriculum approach for a group of mentally retarded individuals based on the assets, limitations, and handicapping conditions of the student composition.

____ The interns will be able to utilize the interests and daily activities of the children as curriculum content.

____ The interns will be able to employ different methodologies for dealing with various learning needs.

____ The interns will be able to develop a functional and concrete reading program for the mentally retarded specific to their level of functioning.

____ The interns will be able to identify various approaches to teaching reading and their appropriateness for the education of the mentally retarded.

____ The interns will be able to select reading techniques and materials that are appropriate for use in various learning situations.

____ The interns will be able to design appropriate methods, materials, and techniques for the effective teaching of the mentally retarded at the primary, intermediate, and secondary levels of education.

____ The interns will be able to apply the learning deficiencies of the mentally retarded child to the formulation of curriculum objectives and content.

_____ The interns will be able to design a curriculum and program which will compensate for possible deficiencies in cultural and recreational experiences of the mentally retarded child..

_____ The interns will be able to develop a curriculum that conforms to the developmental levels of the mentally retarded children in the class.

_____ The interns will be able to use multi-sensory materials and methods in the teaching of mental retardates.

Unit III: September 7, 1972 to May 25, 1972

In Service Training

After taking full charge of a class of retarded children and teaching for a full school year:

_____ The interns will be able to conduct their own classes for the mentally retarded with direct supervision and training.

_____ The interns will be able to cite the psychological, educational, physical and emotional development and characteristics of atypical children and youth.

_____ The interns will be able to describe the relationship between the characteristics and personal and academic development.

_____ The interns will be able to illustrate the varieties and complexities of exceptional children and youth.

_____ The interns will be able to interpret the interests and needs of the exceptional individuals and their varying degrees of difficulty in their ability to satisfy their needs.

_____ The interns will be able to translate the learning and adjustment problems of the exceptional children and youth and their special application to the classroom.

_____ The interns will be able to trace the history of the special education movement, facilities, and progress, and current research literature.

_____ The interns will be able to explain the dynamics and interpersonal relationships in the classroom.

_____ The interns will be able to describe the theoretical framework for classroom managements of exceptional children incorporating teacher-management acts and the social psychology of groups.

_____ The interns will be able to illustrate methods of increasing organizational effectiveness and improving the process of interaction and the conditions of learning in the special class.

_____ The interns will be able to demonstrate special education teaching skills in conducting their own classroom situations for the mentally retarded.

_____ The interns will be able to prepare an in-depth study of the educational achievement and needs of exceptional children.

_____ The interns will be able to diagnose the specific learning difficulties and deficiencies and procedures for developing and implementing individual educational prescriptions.

_____ The interns will be able to apply precise and appropriate diagnostic measures.

_____ The interns will be able to devise educational interpretations from medical and psychological tests and reports.

_____ The interns will be able to develop a comprehensive survey of the major speech disorders and defects found among elementary and secondary school learners.

_____ The interns will be able to gather data concerning the programs, methods, materials, equipment, and resources that are utilized for speech improvement and correction.

_____ The interns will be able to demonstrate the procedures and roles of the classroom teacher in the speech correction program.

_____ The interns will be able to state specific speech problems that are found in our school-age population.

_____ The interns will be able to explain the speech problems as they effect the individual in his over-all functioning.

_____ The interns will be able to be sensitive to and diagnose dysfunctional classroom conditions.

_____ The interns will be able to organize children and classroom conditions which facilitate individual and group development.

Before each segment of the program, interns received an outline of planned training experiences and a description of specific behavioral competencies to be mastered.

SUPERVISION:

Major support to the interns in the classrooms is provided by the college through the services of a full-time supervisor. While the employing schools also provide supervision, primary direction came from the

college supervisor. An important process in supervision involved the use of video-tape analysis of micro-teaching situations. The supervisor and intern jointly analyzed the tape, and on occasion, with the permission of the intern, the tape was presented for analysis by the intern group-as-a-whole. The tapes were retained for evaluation of the total program.

Weekly seminars on campus were used for the purpose of "group supervision" on common needs of the interns. The seminars were also devoted to broadening the understandings of the interns on the characteristics, needs, and problems of exceptional children other than the retarded. Phone contacts with the program director and the supervisor were encouraged to deal with pressing needs.

The competencies of interns were assessed before and after each segment to determine the level and number of competencies which they can deliver. Courses and experiences previously completed were evaluated.

To accommodate students who desired course credits and grades for transfer to graduate programs and to accommodate the program to the course structure of the college, students were given credit and grades for the following courses after they demonstrated their ability to deliver the competencies generally appropriate to each courses:

Course No.	Course	S.H.
014-326	Nature and Needs of the Mentally Retarded	3
912-411	Methods in Reading	3
014-321	Curriculum Development and Special Class Methods I	3
014-322	Curriculum Development and Special Class Methods II	3
081-311	Psychology of Exceptional Children	3
014-233	Speech Problems	3

Additional course credits were given to students as they completed individually chosen options in the program.

EVALUATION:

An evaluation design was developed by an outside evaluator in conjunction with a college evaluation [illegible]. It comprises several dimensions.

1. Special Education Behavioral Competencies Rating Scale:

   A check-list type of rating scale was developed by the program staff which covers the major categories of teacher competencies-personal qualities, classroom management, diagnostics, curriculum methods and materials, professional relationships and counseling. The scale was administered by randomly distributing the items in each category, partially to reduce the "halo" effect. The scoring procedure yields a score for each category as well as a total score. It is possible, thereby, to determine specific areas of growth and deficiency.

   The scale was administered to the interns, the intern supervisor and the school supervisor. It was administered on two occasions—at the beginning of their teaching experience and at the end of their first year of teaching.

   For comparison, the rating scale was also similarly administered to an equal number of special education student teachers of the college who had satisfactorily completed the traditional four-year curriculum.

2. Critical Problems in Training:

   On three designated intervals, the interns were instructed to list, in order of importance, the three most critical problems they are facing in the training program. They were also asked to indicate briefly how they think the problem may be worked through. The

analytic procedures followed in this study was developed by the outside evaluator (Mitchell, Muton, Wood, 1962). The data is intended to determine the degree to which the intern views his critical problems in intrapersonal, interpersonal, situational or other terms. It is also intended to disclose changes in patterns of problems across training for the individual as well as for the group.

3. The Interpersonal Check List (ICL):

The ICL is an 128 item check-list which provides an analysis of the differences between the intern's self-assessment as a teacher and his characterization of the ideal special education teacher. The ICL was developed by Larry (1963) and can be scored for 16 interpersonal variables.

4. Video-tape Analysis:

Video-tapes of interns in the classroom were made at several intervals and were studied for impressions on their growth in teaching competencies.

5. Professional Evaluation:

Evaluation information were also drawn from the following sources:

A. A visitation team from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

B. Reports on each observation made by the college supervisor.

C. The director of special education of Intermediate Unit #24 of Chester County, Pennsylvania.

RESULTS:

Evaluation of the second year of the program waits upon the completion of the program. However, studies undertaken during the first year and during the first half of this year's program provide substantial evidence of the efficacy of this type of program as an alternate route. Primary responsibility for evaluation was assigned to an outside evaluator.

The strongest trends in the data collected by the evaluator implies that the students gained in their conscious appreciation of the skills required of the special education teacher. This is mainly reflected, according to the evaluator, in increased feelings of confidence, particularly related to their personal motivation and awareness and skill in curriculum development for retarded children. They felt less confident about the development of clinical and diagnostic skills.

In studying the data of the competencies check-list, the evaluator found that, initially, 62% of the students rated themselves higher than the Cheyney supervisor. Those with more contact with exceptional children prior to entry into the program were rated as having more competencies than those with no contact. Personal qualities, as viewed by all raters, were highest among the seven areas examined.

At the end of training, more confidence was demonstrated in student self-ratings as evidenced by the fact that 70% of them judged themselves more favorably than their supervisor. All three groups of raters were in agreement on what skills were more highly developed than others.

In determining when the greatest increment in competency development took place, it was found that they were approximately equally distributed throughout the program.

It was felt that limited contact by school supervisors with Cheyney students made their judgments less reliable than the other raters.

In examining the critical problems identified by the students, the evaluator concluded that role problems were most frequently mentioned, accounting for 65% of all problems. Other problems creating considerably less concern included intra- and inter-personal problems, situational problems and concerns for the future.

The ICL data was studied to discover how the student views himself as a teacher and his views of the ideal teacher. The working hypothesis related to conscious self-deception was that training would reduce the distance between these two views. Twenty-three percent of the students demonstrated no change; 15% showed greater discrepancies; and 62% reduced the distance. It was concluded that the results support the hypothesis.

The program was also studied by an evaluation team of educators from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. They observed the program and interviewed students and personnel. In their general conclusions, they expressed the view that very little precedent exists for such a program. The dimension of competency-based teacher education is in evidence and the model presented has merit. They found that the students are supportive of this type of program and see it as necessary and valuable.

Special educators who observed the program indicated satisfaction with the "learning by doing approach" which characterizes the program. One director of special education stated that, in his view, program students demonstrated significantly more competencies as teachers than the newly-employed graduates of the traditional four-year curriculums.

The personnel involved in various aspects of the program are:

Dr. Carl Lampner, Director, who designed and administered the program; Dr. Adoulphus P. Thompson, Dean of Teacher Education at Cheyney State College, advisor; Mrs. Katherine Russell Wilson, Chairman of Elementary and Special Education, advisor and part-time trainer; Miss Gloria Jean Stone, supervisor; and Mr. Errol Jeffrey-Smith, and Mr. Herbert C. Durnell, part-time trainers; Dr. Howard E. Mitchell, Director of the Human Research Center of the University of Pennsylvania, outside evaluator.

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CHEYNEY STATE COLLEGE
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SUMMARY

DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Demonstration Program in Special Education of Cheyney State College facilitates the attainment of certification requirements in mental retardation for post-baccalaureate students. The program is viewed as an alternate route to certification and was developed to meet the critical need for special educators identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Fifteen students were selected for admission to the program. Students were required to have earned a bachelor's degree and were not in a regular teaching position during the year prior to entering the program.

The Cheyney model presents a laboratory-based approach to teacher education. It reverses the usual procedure of requiring extensive academic preparation, supported by some laboratory experiences and terminating in student teaching. The model offers a program in which laboratory experiences is the hub of training and is supported by seminars, studies, and individual projects.

A functional approach to teacher training is the mode operandi. The objectives do not require students to take courses and receive passing grades but expects them to demonstrate that they can deliver a specified group of teaching competencies. Courses were largely eliminated from the program.

This design enhanced the ability of program staff and students to develop individualization. The strengths and weaknesses, needs, problems and interests of the students were assessed largely on the basis of observation of their work with retarded children. Individual and group conferences were employed to guide the direction of both individual and group development.

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