

To: IPFW Senate

From: Judith Garrison, Chair,  
Graduate Subcommittee

Date: February 16, 2009

Re: Proposal for Graduate Certificate in Special Education

Graduate Subcommittee supports the proposal for the Graduate Certificate in Special Education, and finds that the proposal requires no Senate review.

Approving

P. Bingi

S. Carr

T. Downy

J. Garrison

G. Hickey

L. Hite

A. Livschiz

Y. Zubovic

Not Approving

Absent

B. Fife

**IPFW**  
**Request for a New Credit Certificate Program**

Campus: Fort Wayne

Proposed Title of Certificate Program: Graduate Certificate in Special Education

Projected Date of Implementation: August 2009

TYPE OF CERTIFICATE: (check one)

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATES – These programs generally require 12-29 credits of undergraduate-level academic work.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES – These programs generally require 12-29 credits of graduate-level academic work or undergraduate academic work carrying graduate credit.

POST-BACCALAUREATE CERTIFICATES – These programs generally require 12-29 credits of undergraduate-level academic work, although students enrolling in these programs must have completed their baccalaureate degrees.

I. Why is this certificate needed? (Rationale)

The Special Education Program in the Department of Professional Studies, in the School of Education, proposes a graduate certificate in Special Education to meet the need for teachers with a license in Mild Intervention. The license in Mild Intervention allows a teacher to work with students (preschool – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) who have mild disabilities, which included students with learning disabilities, mild and moderate mental disabilities, and emotional disabilities. Through conversations with local school corporations, we can confirm that there is a significant need for highly-qualified special education teachers with a license in Mild Intervention. This certificate program will meet the education requirements for the initial license in Mild Intervention.

Students currently enroll in courses at IPFW and other universities to complete requirements to obtain the license in Mild Intervention. The graduate certificate program would provide a structured program that ensures quality of instruction and stability for students. The program would allow students to complete all of the required courses at IPFW, so they are not taking courses at multiple universities. Additionally, this graduate program would allow for a systematic process to track and account for students taking courses for completion of the Mild Intervention License.

II. List the major topics and curriculum of the certificate.

The certificate will include 24 credits in eight, three-credit courses. The 8 courses are currently offered as partial requirement for the Master of Science in Education with a major in Special Education. The students enrolled in the new graduate certificate program would be enrolled in the same courses as the students admitted to the Masters program. The courses are listed below:

EDUC K505 Introduction to Special Education for Graduate Students

EDUC K525 Survey of Mild Handicaps

EDUC K535 Assessment and Remediation of the Mildly Handicapped I  
Co-requisite: EDUC M501 Service Learning for Diversity

EDUC K536 Assessment and Remediation of the Mildly Handicapped II  
Co-requisite: EDUC M501 Service Learning for Diversity

EDUC K541 Transitions across the Life Span

EDUC K553 Classroom Management and Behavior Support

EDUC K565 Collaboration and Service Delivery

EDUC K595 Practicum in Special Education (3 credit hours)

III. What are the admission requirements?

Candidates will apply to the program by submitting an application, letter of intent, three letters of recommendation, transcript of BA or BS degree, with a minimum of a 2.5 GPA, initial teaching license pertinent to teaching K-12 level students or a BS degree which can lead to a general education teaching license, and resume.

IV. List the major student outcomes (or set of performance based standards) for the proposed certificate.

Students graduating from this program will be able to:

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Develop a comprehensive view of special educational leadership through the completion of professional expectations and an understanding of current research-based practices.

Analyze the dimensions related to the role of a mild disabilities educator.

Employ decision-making processes related to educating children with mild disabilities.

Plan and implement research-based programming and instruction for students with learning disabilities, mental disabilities, and behavior disorders

Develop the skills needed to serve as leaders in their communities in matters dealing with students with special needs.

Demonstrate competence in all of the Council for Exceptional Children professional standards, which will increase their ability to be successful teachers of students with mild disabilities.

- V. Explain how student learning outcomes will be assessed (student portfolios, graduate follow up, employer survey, standardized test, etc.) and describe the structure/process for reviewing assessment findings for the purpose of ensuring continuous improvement of the certificate.

Student outcomes will be assessed using the existing unit assessment system in the Special Education Master's Program. This includes individual student portfolio reviews and employer surveys. Portfolios will be reviewed based on the certificate objectives listed above during the capstone practicum experience. Follow-up employer surveys will be conducted on the existing unit assessment system schedule. The aggregate data will be reviewed annually by the program faculty.

- VI. Describe student population to be served.

Students in the certificate program will hold a general education teacher license or have a BS degree which can lead to a general education teaching license, with an interest to teach students with special education issues.

VII. How does this certificate complement the campus or departmental mission?

The mission of IPFW states, *“Our mission is to offer a broad range of high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education programs that meet regional needs; to support excellence in teaching and learning; to advance and share knowledge through research and creative endeavor; and to work with the community to develop intellectual, cultural, economic, and human resources.”*

The IPFW School of Education Mission Statement is to prepare professionals in teaching, counseling, and leadership, who demonstrate the capacity and willingness to continuously improve schools and related entities so that they become more effective with their clients by:

1. Becoming more caring, humane, and functional citizens in a global, multicultural, democratic society;
2. Improving the human condition by creating positive learning environments;
3. Becoming change agents by demonstrating reflective professional practice;
4. Solving client problems through clear, creative analysis;
5. Assessing client performance, creating and executing effective teaching, counseling and educational leadership, by utilizing a variety of methodologies reflecting current related research; and
6. Utilizing interdisciplinary scholarship, demonstrating technological, and critical literacies, and effectively communicating with all stakeholders.

This graduate certificate complements the campus and School of Education missions by working with community school professionals to design and offer education and licensure in Mild Intervention. In Indiana and across the country there continues to be a shortage of teachers who are licensed to work with students with mild disabilities. This graduate certificate program in special education would assist in licensing additional teachers in the schools with the Mild Intervention.

VIII. Describe any relationship to existing programs on the campus or within the university.

This graduate certificate program will be a part of the Special Education Program in the Department of Professional Studies. Special education faculty and adjunct faculty will be the instructors for the program. These courses are currently offered as part of the Masters of Science in Education with a major in Special Education program. After the student completes this graduate certificate program, he/she may apply these courses to the completion of the Masters of Science in Education with a major in Special Education, which is a 36-credit hour program.

- IX. List and indicate the resources required to implement the proposed program. Indicate sources (e.g., reallocations or any new resources such as personnel, library holdings, equipment, etc.).

The resources required for the graduate certificate program will primarily be the faculty in special education and additional adjuncts. The courses required for the graduate certificate program are currently offered as partial requirements for the MS Education with a major in Special Education. Program oversight will be conducted by the director of the Special Education Program.

Library holdings are currently adequate, but additional videos and books may be obtained as part of the normal fall semester acquisition process. The faculty will submit bi-annual grants as part of the Special Needs Library Grant process. It is expected that these grant funds along with normal library acquisitions will be appropriate for the graduate certificate program. No additional equipment or support staff will be necessary. The students in the proposed program will not require different reference materials or resources different from the students enrolled in the MS in Education with a major in Special Education.

- X. Describe any innovative features of the program (e.g., involvement with local or regional agencies, or offices, cooperative efforts with other institutions, etc.).

The program is structured in such a way that students can enroll in courses in a manner that will allow them to complete program requirements while they remained employed in the classroom. IPFW is committed to offering programs that meet the needs of students who work full time, have families, and are pursuing their higher education goals unconventionally. The proposed program is consistent in this regard.

This program will build on a strong working relationship with area schools and social service agencies that work with special needs populations. This relationship is currently strong and vital as ongoing joint ventures currently exist. The graduate certificate program will require continued collaboration as our program students train for leadership roles in Special Education. In particular, collaborative relationships provide students with access to real world application of their skills and real world issues for study.