

CPR Report Submitted!

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- 5 **Institution:** Columbus State University
- 6 **Review Status:** Non-triggered Review (Triggered for MR)
- 7 **Degree level:** Masters
- 8 **Degree acronym:** MED
- 9 **Degree/Major:** MEd in Special Education – BD, LD, MR
- 10 **CIP Code:** 13100501, 13101101, 13100601
- 11 **College,
School/Division:** College of Education
- 12 **Department:** Teacher Education
- 13 **CPR Plan
followed:** Yes
- 14 **Future institutional
plans for program:** Maintain at present level
- 15 **Supplemental file:** MEd Spec Ed-BD Exec-Sum.doc
- 16 **File Type:** MS Word
- 17 **CPR Web site:** aa.colstate.edu/assess/cprtbl.htm

Executive Summary for the M.Ed. Special Education - Behavior Disorders

Major Findings of the Program's Quality and Productivity

Program Quality: Very Strong

In February 2005, a continuing approval review of the College of Education was conducted by a Board of Examiners (BOE) consisting of representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The 2000 NCATE Standards and the Georgia 2000 Standards were used to assess the unit and its programs. The BOE judged all standards to be met for the unit and for all initial and advanced programs.

Overall, the M.Ed. Special Education programs are strong and prepare highly qualified special education teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn. The Non-Traditional M.Ed. programs in Special Education have been an extremely strong part of the programs and have been helpful in increasing and maintaining enrollment. This may change with the new requirements that all students graduating from the program be "highly qualified" under the No Child Left Behind Act. This has resulted in an increase of 15 semester hours in the Non-Traditional M.Ed. program requirements so that students will graduate highly qualified in Reading Education. We are continuing to monitor this situation to see how these changes will impact admission and enrollment in the M.Ed. programs.

Program Productivity: Satisfactory

Overall enrollment in the M.Ed. Special Education programs increased by 37.4% in Fall 2002. When compared to the other M.Ed. programs housed in the Department of Teacher Education, the three special education programs combined (BD, LD, and MR) have the highest enrollment. The Special Education - Behavioral Disabilities (BD) program ranks seventh in average enrollment (16 students per year) among the ten M.Ed. programs housed in the Department of Teacher Education. Courses are offered on a one-year cycle, and enrollment in required courses is good. This helps to contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the department. The M.Ed. Special Education – Behavioral Disabilities program has a diverse group of majors (on average 75% female and 31% minority) from a wide range of age groups. Graduates of all M.Ed. Special Education programs are in high demand.

Among the M.Ed. programs in the Department of Teacher Education, the M.Ed. Special Education - Behavioral Disabilities program ranks seventh along with two other programs in number of degrees conferred annually (average of 5.75 per year). The number of special education degrees conferred by CSU is comparable to the number of special education degrees conferred by other USG state universities.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Quality

The M.Ed. programs in Special Education are currently being revised to enable it to be in compliance with the State of Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) mandate to be non-categorical. This means that all future graduates from the program will be

licensed in Special Education – General Curriculum, rather than the current categorical certifications of mental retardation, behavioral disorders, and learning disabilities. The program for students seeking initial certification and a graduate degree in special education through the Non-Traditional Masters Degree program has been revised so that all graduates will be considered to be “highly qualified” with a concentration in reading education.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Productivity

The impact of these program revisions may initially lead to a decrease in program admissions and decreased graduation rates as program requirements may lead students to question the value of pursuing a degree in special education, when they will be required to obtain additional coursework in a teaching content area of 15 semester hours. Graduation rates may also be impacted as students may be required to delay their graduation until they have completed the additional coursework. However, after an initial drop-off in both admission and graduation, enrollments should return to their current levels and subsequently so should graduation rates.

Beginning in the Fall 2006 semester, the State of Georgia will no longer require students to pass the Praxis II test for teacher licensure. In place of the Praxis series the State of Georgia Assessment for Certification (GACE) which will reflect the required changes to special education teacher preparation curricula, will be required. The special education curriculum will be aligned with the content covered on the GACE.

The Special Education Program Advisory Committee (PAC) oversees the M.Ed. program in Special Education – Mental Retardation and works to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to teachers. Recommendations to improve program productivity are as follows.

- Monitor recent changes in the Special Education programs to determine the impact of these changes and make appropriate adjustments.
- Advise teachers on recent changes and NCLB requirements for highly qualified status.
- Examine and refine the Graduate Recruitment and Retention Plan to determine ways to attract teachers into the special education programs.

Conclusion about the Program’s Viability at CSU

The M.Ed. Special Education program at CSU is an extremely viable one. As indicated by the evaluation of the NCATE/PSC Board of Examiners in February 2005, the quality of the program is very strong. All NCATE/PSC standards were judged to be met for all initial and advanced programs.

The viability of the program is also ensured by the collaborative relationship that exists between the College of Education and P-12 teachers. Representatives from these groups work together to make improvements to the special education programs at CSU and to impact special education in our region. The M.Ed. program in special education is a

valuable resource for teachers in our region who want to grow professionally and gain expertise in the field of educating students with diverse educational needs.

Graduates of the M.Ed. Special Education program are also a valuable resource for our undergraduate program in special education. A substantial number of program graduates teach in systems served by CSU, especially Muscogee County. Our graduate programs in special education have helped to create a cadre of leaders within our Partner School Network. Graduates often serve CSU as pre-student teaching cooperating teachers and cooperating teachers for student teaching. They are an invaluable asset in assisting with the development of our undergraduates.

The number of M.Ed. Special Education degrees conferred by CSU has increased since 2001 and is comparable to the number of degrees conferred by other USG state universities. With the critical shortage of highly-qualified special education teachers, we need to provide every possible opportunity for teachers to grow professionally and enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching students with exceptional learning needs.

Program Improvement Plan

In response to the findings of the Comprehensive Program Review, the faculty members and administrators of the M.Ed. in Special Education: Behavioral Disorders propose the strategies outlined below to improve the quality, productivity and viability of the program. These strategies will be facilitated by the Special Childhood Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

<i>Departmental Plans and Priorities</i>	<i>CPR Indicator</i>	<i>Projected Timeline</i>
1. Refine the College of Education Recruitment Plan to focus on specific methods for recruiting Special Education graduate students from diverse backgrounds	Productivity Viability	2006-2007
2. Explore various funding sources to provide scholarships for students seeking advanced degrees in Special Education	Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing
3. Continue to make appropriate program revisions to comply with requirements implemented by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for the development of non-categorical programs in Special Education	Quality Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing

The Interim Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs have reviewed the plan and will commit financial and personnel resources to accomplish priorities 1 and 3 for program improvement. Resources from external funding will be necessary to support priority 2. The Program Coordinator will communicate additional resource requests as needed to the appropriate administrator within the College of Education at Columbus State University.

Summary Recommendation and Supporting Rationale

Recommendation: *Maintain the Program at the Current Level*

The program quality is very strong. There are factors beyond our control that have an impact on the M.Ed. program. Since teachers need to be “highly qualified” in a content area subject beginning with the Fall 2006 semester, many are starting to reconsider the need for a master’s degree in special education when they can get a master’s degree in any content field and receive an increase in pay and be considered highly qualified. Some of the special education teachers in our service region are considering the pursuit of a master’s degree in an area other than special education.

As previously mentioned, CSU will continue to work to improve the current M.Ed. program in special education by responding to new initiatives (e.g., Georgia Performance Standards, No Child Left Behind Act), improving the curriculum, providing better support and resources for students, and intensifying recruitment efforts. By enhancing the quality of the program, we hope to attract more potential students.

Executive Summary for the M.Ed. Special Education General Curriculum/Learning Disabilities

Major Findings of the Program's Quality and Productivity

Program Quality: Very Strong

In February 2005, a continuing approval review of the College of Education was conducted by a Board of Examiners (BOE) consisting of representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The 2000 NCATE Standards and the Georgia 2000 Standards were used to assess the unit and its programs. The BOE judged all standards to be met for the unit and for all initial and advanced programs.

Overall, the M.Ed. Special Education programs are strong and prepare highly qualified special education teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn. The Non-Traditional M.Ed. programs in Special Education have been an extremely strong part of the programs and have been helpful in increasing and maintaining enrollment. This may change with the new requirements that all students graduating from the program be "highly qualified" under the No Child Left Behind Act. This has resulted in an increase of 15 semester hours in the Non-Traditional M.Ed. program requirements so that students will graduate highly qualified in Reading Education. We are continuing to monitor this situation to see how this will impact admission and enrollment in the M.Ed. programs.

Program Productivity: Satisfactory

Overall enrollment in the M.Ed. Special Education programs increased by 37.4% in Fall 2002. When compared to the other M.Ed. programs housed in the Department of Teacher Education, the three special education programs combined (BD, LD, and MR) have the highest enrollment. The Special Education - Learning Disabilities (LD) program ranks second in average enrollment (28.5 students per year) among the ten M.Ed. programs housed in the Department of Teacher Education. Courses are offered on a one-year cycle, and enrollment in required courses is good. This helps to contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the department. The Special Education - Learning Disabilities (LD) program has a diverse group of majors (on average 82% female and 26% minority) from a wide range of age groups. Graduates of all M.Ed. Special Education programs are in high demand.

The M.Ed. Special Education - Learning Disabilities program ranks fifth among the M.Ed. programs in the Department of Teacher Education in number of degrees conferred annually (9.5 per year). The number of special education degrees conferred by CSU is comparable to the number of special education degrees conferred by other USG state universities.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Quality

The M.Ed. programs in Special Education are currently being revised to enable it to be in compliance with the State of Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) mandate

to be non-categorical. This means that all future graduates from the program will be licensed in Special Education – General Curriculum, rather than the current categorical certifications of mental retardation, behavioral disorders, and learning disabilities. The program for students seeking initial certification and a graduate degree in special education through the Non-Traditional Masters Degree program has been revised so that all graduates will be considered to be “highly qualified” with a concentration in reading education.

Beginning in the Fall 2006 semester, the State of Georgia will no longer require students to pass the Praxis II test for teacher licensure. In place of the Praxis series the State of Georgia Assessment for Certification (GACE) which will reflect the required changes to special education teacher preparation curricula, will be required. The special education curriculum will be aligned with the content covered on the GACE.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Productivity

The impact of these program revisions may initially lead to a decrease in program admissions and decreased graduation rates as program requirements may lead students to question the value of pursuing a degree in special education, when they will be required to obtain additional coursework in a teaching content area of 15 semester hours. Graduation rates may also be impacted as students may be required to delay their graduation until they have completed the additional coursework. However, after an initial drop-off in both admission and graduation, enrollments should return to their current levels and subsequently so should graduation rates.

The Special Education Program Advisory Committee (PAC) oversees the M.Ed. program in Special Education – Mental Retardation and works to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to teachers. Recommendations to improve program productivity are as follows.

- Monitor recent changes in the Special Education programs to determine the impact of these changes and make appropriate adjustments.
- Advise teachers on recent changes and NCLB requirements for highly qualified status.
- Examine and refine the Graduate Recruitment and Retention Plan to determine ways to attract teachers into the special education programs.

Conclusion about the Program’s Viability at CSU

The M.Ed. Special Education program at CSU is an extremely viable one. As indicated by the evaluation of the NCATE/PSC Board of Examiners in February 2005, the quality of the program is very strong. All NCATE/PSC standards were judged to be met for all initial and advanced programs.

The viability of the program is also ensured by the collaborative relationship that exists between the College of Education and P-12 teachers. Representatives from these groups work together to make improvements to the special education programs at CSU and to impact special education in our region. The M.Ed. program in special education is a

valuable resource for teachers in our region who want to grow professionally and gain expertise in the field of educating students with diverse educational needs.

Graduates of the M.Ed. Special Education program are also a valuable resource for our undergraduate program in special education. A substantial number of program graduates teach in systems served by CSU, especially Muscogee County. Our graduate programs in special education have helped to create a cadre of leaders within our Partner School Network. Graduates often serve CSU as pre-student teaching cooperating teachers and cooperating teachers for student teaching. They are an invaluable asset in assisting with the development of our undergraduates.

The number of M.Ed. Special Education degrees conferred by CSU has increased since 2001 and is comparable to the number of degrees conferred by other USG state universities. With the critical shortage of highly-qualified special education teachers, we need to provide every possible opportunity for teachers to grow professionally and enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching students with exceptional learning needs.

Program Improvement Plan

In response to the findings of the Comprehensive Program Review, the faculty members and administrators of the M.Ed. in Special Education: Learning Disabilities propose the strategies outlined below to improve the quality, productivity and viability of the program. These strategies will be facilitated by the Special Childhood Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

<i>Departmental Plans and Priorities</i>	<i>CPR Indicator</i>	<i>Projected Timeline</i>
1. Refine the College of Education Recruitment Plan to focus on specific methods for recruiting Special Education graduate students from diverse backgrounds	Productivity Viability	2006-2007
2. Explore various funding sources to provide scholarships for students seeking advanced degrees in Special Education	Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing
3. Continue to make appropriate program revisions to comply with requirements implemented by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for the development of non-categorical programs in Special Education	Quality Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing

The Interim Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs have reviewed the plan and will commit financial and personnel resources to accomplish priorities 1 and 3 for program improvement. Resources from external funding will be necessary to support priority 2. The Program Coordinator will communicate additional resource requests as needed to the appropriate administrator within the College of Education at Columbus State University.

Summary Recommendation and Supporting Rationale

Recommendation: *Maintain the Program at the Current Level*

The program quality is very strong. There are factors beyond our control that have an impact on the M.Ed. program. Since teachers need to be “highly qualified” in a content area subject beginning with the Fall 2006 semester, many are starting to reconsider the need for a master’s degree in special education when they can get a master’s degree in any content field and receive an increase in pay and be considered highly qualified. Some of the special education teachers in our service region are considering the pursuit of a master’s degree in an area other than special education.

As previously mentioned, CSU will continue to work to improve the current M.Ed. program in special education by responding to new initiatives (e.g., Georgia Performance Standards, No Child Left Behind Act), improving the curriculum, providing better support and resources for students, and intensifying recruitment efforts. By enhancing the quality of the program, we hope to attract more potential students.

Executive Summary for the M.Ed. Special Education – Mental Retardation

Major Findings of the Program’s Quality and Productivity

Program Quality: Very Strong

In February 2005, a continuing approval review of the College of Education was conducted by a Board of Examiners (BOE) consisting of representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The 2000 NCATE Standards and the Georgia 2000 Standards were used to assess the unit and its programs. The BOE judged all standards to be met for the unit and for all initial and advanced programs.

Overall, the M.Ed. Special Education programs are strong and prepare highly qualified special education teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn. The Non-Traditional M.Ed. programs in Special Education have been an extremely strong part of the programs and have been helpful in increasing and maintaining enrollment. This may change with the new requirements that all students graduating from the program be “highly qualified” under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This has resulted in an increase of 15 semester hours in the Non-Traditional M.Ed. program requirements so that students will graduate highly qualified in Reading Education. We are continuing to monitor this situation to see how this will impact admission and enrollment in the M.Ed. programs.

Program Productivity: Satisfactory

Overall enrollment in the M.Ed. Special Education programs increased by 37.4% in Fall 2002. When compared to the other M.Ed. programs housed in the Department of Teacher Education, the three special education programs combined (BD, LD, and MR) have the highest enrollment. The Special Education – Mental Retardation program ranks tenth in average enrollment (10.75 students per year) among the ten M.Ed. programs housed in the Department of Teacher Education. Courses are offered on a one- year cycle, and enrollment in required courses is good. This helps to contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the department. The Special Education – Mental Retardation program has a diverse group of majors (on average 88% female and 21% minority) from a wide range of age groups. Graduates of all M.Ed. Special Education programs are in high demand.

Among the M.Ed. programs in the Department of Teacher Education, the M.Ed. Special Education – Mental Retardation program ranks seventh along with two other programs in number of degrees conferred annually (an average of 2.5 per year). The number of special education degrees conferred by CSU is comparable to the number of special education degrees conferred by other USG state universities.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Quality

The M.Ed. programs in Special Education are currently being revised to enable it to be in compliance with the State of Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) mandate to be non-categorical. This means that all future graduates from the program will be licensed in Special Education – General Curriculum, rather than the current categorical

certifications of mental retardation, behavioral disorders, and learning disabilities. The program for students seeking initial certification and a graduate degree in special education through the Non-Traditional Masters Degree program has been revised so that all graduates will be considered to be “highly qualified” with a concentration in reading education.

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The Special Education Program Advisory Committee (PAC) oversees the M.Ed. program in Special Education – Mental Retardation and works to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to teachers. Recommendations to improve program productivity are as follows.

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Program Improvement Plan

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Recommendation: *Maintain the Program at the Current Level*

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any content field and receive an increase in pay and be considered highly qualified. Some of the special education teachers in our service region are considering the pursuit of a master's degree in an area other than special education.

As previously mentioned, CSU will continue to work to improve the current M.Ed. program in special education by responding to new initiatives (e.g., Georgia Performance Standards, No Child Left Behind Act), improving the curriculum, providing better support and resources for students, and intensifying recruitment efforts. By enhancing the quality of the program, we hope to attract more potential students.