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ABSTRACT

This publication was developed by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) to be used as a guide by teacher education institutions as they examine their programs in the light of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standard that relates to the education of exceptional students. In section 1, written by Joanne Rand Whitmore, a description is presented of the purpose and process of NCATE and the functions of NCATE standards. These standards, which serve as guidelines for the evaluation of preservice and graduate education programs, are grouped in six categories: (1) governance; (2) curriculum; (3) faculty; (4) students; (5) resources and facilities; and (6) evaluation and planning. The special education standard requires NCATE-approved programs to prepare all education/human services professionals to recognize and provide for the special needs of all children in regular educational settings. An interpretation is presented of the relationship between the special education standard and the six categories of the NCATE standards. Section 2 presents suggested self-evaluation questions, which are intended to assist an institution preparing its program to meet the NCATE special education standard. The appendix contains a reprint of a statement adopted by AACTE on the preparation of professionals for educating the handicapped. (JD)

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THE PREPARATION OF EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS  
FOR EDUCATING EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS:

A Resource for Responding to the NCATE Special Education Standards

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

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# THE PREPARATION OF EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS

## FOR EDUCATING EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS:

A Resource for Responding to the NCATE Special Education Standards

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose

This publication is intended to be used as a guide by teacher education institutions as they examine their programs in light of standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) that relate to the education of exceptional students. It has been developed by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) to help teacher educators better prepare all education professionals to contribute to the education of exceptional students. The term "exceptional" refers to students who require modifications in the education program in order to receive an education appropriate to their needs. It also refers to students who may not require special education, but simply attention to individual needs in such areas as socialization or physical access. Exceptional students have traditionally been identified as those who are mentally retarded, hearing impaired, speech or language impaired, visually handicapped, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, or who are gifted or talented. Designing programs to meet the unique needs of individuals, however, transcends labeling or classifying in these kinds of categories.

#### Involvement of AACTE

In 1977, the AACTE Board of Directors adopted a position statement affirming its "commitment to the advocacy of equal opportunity, unlimited access, unconditional acceptance, and total responsiveness to individual differences."

This statement reflects an awareness that all educators have a role in providing education for students, including those with disabilities. It calls for teacher education programs to prepare graduates with the necessary knowledge and skills to fill those roles. The text of the full statement can be found in Appendix A of this publication.

Since the publication of the statement, AACTE has worked in several ways to advance this position. AACTE has utilized its network of state associations and state leaders to increase levels of awareness about the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, P.L. 94-142, and to stimulate program change and faculty development which are responsive to the federal legislation. This effort, funded by the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (O.S.E.R.S.), was designed to capitalize on the knowledge of teacher education programs with O.S.E.R.S.-funded Deans' Grants. Deans' Grants assist an institution in preparing both regular and special educators at the pre-service level with the competencies needed to work with exceptional students.

Another project of the Association has been a study of educators with disabilities. This project has resulted in a publication entitled Educators with Disabilities: A Resource Guide. It includes a resource listing of over 900 educators with disabilities and a documentation of their experiences and the barriers which restrict their full professional contribution as educators. Funded through the U.S. Office for Civil Rights, the project is part of the American Council on Education's Higher Education and the Handicapped (HEATH) Project.

National Accreditation and Personnel Preparation  
for the Education of Exceptional Students

Beginning in July, 1982, teacher education institutions seeking accreditation or reaccreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) must meet a standard relating to the preparation

of all education professionals to contribute to the education of exceptional students. ~~This~~ NCATE standard is not designed to focus on the preparation of those who major in special education. Nor does it suggest that teacher education institutions must have preparation programs in special education. Rather, it reflects the view that general educators, while not required, to become special educators as well, play an important role in providing education for exceptional students. All educators, including administrators, support personnel, and related service providers need to be prepared to contribute to the education of all students. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, through its Task Force on Education of the Handicapped, has developed this publication as a guide to institutions seeking to respond to this NCATE standard.

#### Contents of Publication

##### Part I - Understanding the NCATE Special Education Standard

Dr. Joanne Rand Whitmore was invited to write Part I of this document describing the NCATE process and interpreting the Special Education Standards. Her work is based on her presentation at three regional AACTE workshops on the standards. She formulated the interpretation by synthesizing information gained through her experiences as institutional representative to AACTE, consultant to Dean's Grant Projects through the National Support Systems Project, and AACTE representative on the NCATE Council. Her interpretation goes beyond defining the meaning of the standards to incorporate expectations generated by major efforts to stimulate improvement in teacher education programs--i.e., the establishment of an AACTE policy and task force focused on the education of handicapped students, the work of the federally-funded Dean's Grants, and the adoption of the NCATE Special Education Standards.

To assure accuracy of specific content, Dr. Whitmore checked out her perceptions and interpretation with a number of professional colleagues. She

specially wishes to acknowledge with appreciation the following NCATE colleagues who gave their time to review her manuscript: Drs. Lyn Gubser, Gloria Chernay, William Gardener, William Grady, J. T. Sandefur, Dale Scannell, Steve Lilly, and Janice Weaver.

## Part II - Self-Study Questions

In this section suggested questions for self-study are presented. They are intended to assist an institution in preparing its program to meet the NCATE Special Education Standards. Suggested self-study questions are presented under each of the six categories of the Standards. These questions were developed under the guidance of the AACTE Task Force on Education of the Handicapped with input from numerous organizations concerned with personnel preparation and education of the handicapped. The questions have not been developed by NCATE; nor is this publication an official document of that agency. It has been developed by AACTE for institutions to use as they seek to develop, implement, evaluate, and redesign their programs. Information compiled in the process of answering these questions, however, may assist in the development of NCATE self-study reports. Some of the questions go beyond the minimum requirements of the Standards. Information collected in answering them can serve as baseline data against which progress toward preparing educators to contribute to the education of exceptional students and against which progress toward assuring equal access for disabled students and faculty in teacher education can be measured. Using this information, institutions should be able to develop more effectively a comprehensive plan for meeting these goals.

Diane Merchant

AACTE Project Director

Education of the Handicapped

## Part I

### UNDERSTANDING THE NCATE SPECIAL EDUCATION STANDARD

Joanne Rand Whitmore, Ph.D.  
Kent State University

As educators begin to prepare for an NCATE review, it is important for them to recall the purpose and process of NCATE accreditation and to seek any clarification needed relative to the expectations associated with the standards that will guide their institutional self-study. This document has been written to guide institutions in their preparation relative to the new Special Education Standards, 2.1.2 and G2.1.2. Since the standard is essentially the same for both undergraduate and graduate programs, it is appropriate and efficient to discuss 2.1.2 and G2.1.2 as one Special Education Standard. The slight differences in language are noted in Table 1, and some differences in interpretation and application will be evident to the reader at several places in this document. The meaning and intent of the standards are identical at both program levels. Only the expectations are slightly different due to differences in the professionals prepared by some advanced programs (e.g., school administrators, psychologists and counselors).

Before examining the specific guidelines for institutional self-study in response to the standard, it will be helpful to review the purpose and process of NCATE accreditation and the background of the Special Education Standard. Then, specific interpretation of the Special Education Standard will follow to clarify expectations associated with it. The interpretation will go far beyond an attempt to define minimal NCATE requirements. Rather, the interpretation will define the full intent of the standard, integrating information from leaders of AACTE, Dean's Grant Projects, and NCATE. Such an approach is believed to be constructive and in keeping with the "spirit" of the standard.

Table 1

The Special Education Standard

2.1.2 Special Education (Effective date: July 1, 1982)

All educators should have the knowledge and skills necessary to enable them to respond to the individual differences of learners. The presence of exceptional learners in regular classrooms requires that general and special educators perceive their professional roles as less distinct and more complementary. They must increasingly view themselves as differentiated members of an instructional team to provide an appropriate education for exceptional learners. For the purposes of this standard, exceptional learners are defined as persons who possess sufficiently unique educational needs to necessitate their being provided the quality of special education and related services needed to enable them to realize their full potential.

Professional education programs should prepare all school personnel to contribute to the education of exceptional learners. Such programs should prepare educators to be able to recognize and refer exceptional learners for diagnosis and to contribute to the design and implementation of curricular programs, instructional techniques and classroom management strategies to accommodate their educational needs. In the process of acquiring these skills and attitudes,

\* *the pre-service teacher should have field experiences, including observations and interactions with exceptional students in regular classrooms.*

Institutions electing to provide preparation programs for those who have chosen to specialize in teaching students with identified special educational needs must provide a teacher education program that emphasizes the total responsibility of the schools and all of their personnel to meet the needs of such students. Factors such as the ethnicity, age, sex, or handicapping condition of otherwise qualified students may be accorded favorable consideration in the admission process.

2.1.2 Standard: The institution provides its graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide an appropriate education for exceptional learners.

G-2.1.2 Standard: The institution gives evidence of providing students in advanced curricula the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the educational needs of exceptional learners--in the content for the specialty, the humanistic and behavioral studies, the theory relevant to the specialty, with direct and simulated experiences in professional practice, as defined in Standard G-2.2. (Effective date: September 1, 1983)

\* *G-2.1.2 reads: within the advanced curricula, students should be involved in a variety of appropriate activities within formal coursework, field and laboratory experiences.*

## The Purpose and Process of NCATE

A distinguishing characteristic of professions is the existence of standards for licensure that govern the approval of individuals or institutional programs for participation in the profession. A profession is marked by the practice of self-monitoring that involves continuous evaluation directed toward the goal of upgrading practices and protecting consumers or clients. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education was established and structured in order to provide these professional functions for the field of education. The third purpose of national accreditation, stated in the Introduction to NCATE Standards (1982) is: "to advance the teaching profession through the improvement of preparation programs."

NCATE standards, comprising descriptive preambles as well as statements summarily defining each of the standards, serve as guidelines for the evaluation of preservice (basic) and graduate (advanced) programs related to teacher education. Programs are accredited based on their overall compliance with the standards grouped in six categories: governance, curriculum, faculty, students, resources and facilities, and evaluation and planning. The standards are not prescriptive of program characteristics or philosophy. Rather, they comprise a skeletal structure upon which an institution's programs can be developed with varying, unique characteristics. Institutions may exercise considerable flexibility and creativity in how they meet the standards that are intended to provide a sound base for their teacher education programs.

The origin of each standard is professional discourse tapped by Council members through the professional literature, organizations, conferences and meetings. The Council membership is structured to assure input from the public sector as well as all major professional constituencies. One-third of the Council members represent higher education through AACTE; one-third represent educators in the field through NEA; and one-third or more represent

the public sector and specialized professional groups such as The Council for Exceptional Children, The National Association of Educators of Young Children, The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology.

NCATE standards are developed through a judicious and democratic process. A standing committee of the Council considers submitted proposals for new or revised standards, or generates proposed standards in response to input received through various channels of professional discourse. The Council is informed regularly of the workings of that subcommittee as members solicit input during the process of developing proposals to create or change standards. When the Council approves a recommended proposal from the Standards Committee, information about the proposal and the Council's action is disseminated through professional publications, such as the NCATE Update, to solicit reactions from professional individuals and groups for a period of at least six months. When the Council gives final approval to a proposal, 18 months are allowed before institutions are held responsible for compliance with the standard.

The process of reviewing programs according to approved standards is equally judicious and democratic. It is a process intended to be professionally constructive and to stimulate creative program development and improvement. The process begins with an institutional self-study, usually conducted over a period of more than a year and summarized in a disseminable document called The Institutional Report (IR). A visiting team is constituted, with the assistance of a computer, from a pool of persons trained to visit campuses to validate institutional reports. After a three-day visit to the institution, the team arrives at consensus regarding the institution's strengths and weaknesses relative to each standard and reports in writing to the Council its judgment as to whether each standard is met or unmet for each program submitted.

The composition of the visiting team is a balanced representation of professional groups--i.e., higher education (AACTE), NEA, other professional groups--and includes representatives of the citizens and public school boards of education. Team membership also is balanced in terms of geographical, sex, and racial representation. The diverse composition of the visiting team may result in some conflict of professional opinion regarding the interpretation of specific standards as consensus is sought. However, reported judgments as to whether standards were met or unmet represent team agreement. The review process provides a safeguard to institutions through procedures that guarantee due process and an opportunity to appeal the decisions. After receiving the Visiting Team Report (VTR), within three weeks of the team visit, the institution is required to respond in writing to the director of NCATE, supporting the VTR or providing additional information necessary for an accurate picture to be received by the Council and a fair decision rendered.

The Council is responsible for making the decision regarding accreditation for each program submitted for review by the institution. An audit committee of three to five members studies the Institutional Report, the Visiting Team Report, the institution's letter of rejoinder, and any other necessary documents in order to formulate its recommendation to the Council. The audit committee assesses the overall strengths and weaknesses of each program relative to the standards, as well as the number of standards met and unmet, in order to determine its recommendation of program accreditation or denial. The review process is based on the professional nature of accreditation. Therefore, the professional judgment of team members and Council members is central to the process; there is no quantitative or rigidly prescriptive formula by which programs are approved or denied accreditation.

An appeals process is well defined for the institution under review in the event that there is dissatisfaction with the outcome or the process. Denial

of accreditation affords the institution an opportunity to engage in program improvement and to resubmit for accreditation at a later date. Program approval allows the institution to continue to offer the program with NCATE approval for a seven-year period. However, five years after approval is granted, an interim visit by a small team occurs and that team recommends to the Council whether the next full review of the institution's programs should occur at the end of seven years or be extended to occur ten years after the last full review. Extension to a ten-year period occurs where strong programs have been maintained and no major changes have occurred warranting evaluation at the end of seven years. The intent of the NCATE review process is to be constructive and helpful to institutions. It is expected that the identification of programmatic weaknesses will lead to program improvements and that the enumeration of strengths will reinforce sound practices in programs of exemplary accomplishment.

#### The Background of the Special Education Standard

The creation of the Special Education Standard certainly was an outgrowth of major political and educational trends of the 1970s: specifically, the declaration that all children are entitled, as part of their civil rights, to an appropriate public school education. However, the standard was not simply a response to Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, passed in 1975. It equally reflected a movement within the AACTE leadership directed toward helping education mature as a profession.

In 1974 Robert Howsam, Dean Corrigan, George Denemark, and Robert Nash were asked by the Board of Directors of AACTE to study and develop a report that would reveal the current structure, process, and governance of teacher education and would chart a course for the future. In 1976 those prestigious authors presented to AACTE the document, Educating a Profession. That comprehensive report challenged educators to begin a systematic effort to help

education become a full profession, defining its current status as that of a semi-profession. A major requirement to be met in order to become fully professional was identified as the establishment of a "professional culture"-- i.e., the identification of specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviors that would comprise the collective base for practice and decision making by members of the profession. That document challenged educational leaders to move in the direction of "restructuring" or "redesigning" teacher education programs, which some individuals and groups interpreted as necessary "reform."

The content of Educating a Profession reflected a growing awareness of the need to prepare teachers effectively for new roles emerging from socio-political mandates to achieve multicultural education and mainstreaming of the handicapped. It advocated the preparation of professionals who could individualize instruction to accommodate individual differences through clinical/diagnostic methods. It acknowledged that efforts to mature as a profession, and to better meet the high ideals of providing an appropriate education for all children, would contribute significantly to an increase in public respect and support as well as to a restoration of professional self-confidence.

In 1977, the AACTE Board of Directors adopted a position of "commitment to the advocacy of equal opportunity, unlimited access, unconditional acceptance, and total responsiveness to individual differences" (Beyond the Mandate: The Professional Imperative, p. 2, Appendix A). A Task Force on Education of the Handicapped had formulated the position statement that was adopted as policy.

Also during the mid-1970s, Dean's Grant Projects, funded by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH), were established and a body of information developed rapidly regarding the needed response of teacher education to Public Law 94-142. That body of information was synthesized and concisely summarized by leaders among the Dean's Grant Projects with input and editorial review by

all projects. The final product of that collaborative effort has been disseminated through AACTE in a publication entitled, A Common Body of Practice for Teachers: The Challenge of P.L. 94-142 to Teacher Education (1980). Other related grants funded by BEH (or its successor, Special Education Programs (SEP)) were awarded to assist AACTE in the dissemination of Dean's Grant Project information and to stimulate further reform in teacher education. Those grants were described briefly in the introductory section of this document.

During the late 1970s AACTE representatives on the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, working collaboratively with representatives from other professional groups such as NEA and CEC, developed the NCATE Special Education Standard for basic programs (2.1.2) that was approved in March, 1981, and became effective in July, 1982. In the final stages of gaining Council approval, the focus of the new standard was expanded to include exceptional children commonly referred to as "gifted." Essentially the same standard was adopted for advanced programs (G2.1.2) in March, 1982, with programs being required to meet the standard in reviews occurring after September, 1983.

This background to the establishment of the Special Education Standard is an important backdrop to the interpretation that will follow. AACTE's policy statement, Beyond the Mandate, is found in Appendix A. In that concise statement, the scope of concern and the direction of movement within AACTE was made clear. It was intended that the professional response of teacher education to P.L. 94-142 would result in the significant improvement of professional preparation programs and, consequently, in educational opportunities for all children. The AACTE proposed response of programs was described by the task force as "...part of our continuing quest for quality education to maximize the potential of each individual" (p. 2). It also was stated that the mandate was

occurring in the context of a long-held "...commitment to develop and maintain an optimum learning environment for every individual..." in our schools (p. 3).

The Special Education Standard is interpreted most simply as the requirement that NCATE-approved programs prepare all education/human services professionals to recognize and effectively provide for the special needs of all children in regular educational settings. That requirement calls for a program perspective that focuses on preparing students to recognize individual differences and to appropriately design or modify the regular classroom learning environments and experiences in response to those individual differences. The AACTE and NCATE position is that, in order to produce graduates professionally competent in recognizing and providing for individual learner needs, programs must:

- a. be infused with the philosophical commitment;
- b. engender appropriate attitudes and values in students;
- c. have a curriculum permeated by the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to develop the desired professional competence;
- d. provide models in the educational practices of the higher education faculty and administrators;
- e. prepare professionals to function effectively as members of differentiated instructional teams.

The title of this standard probably is a misnomer in that the target is all programs preparing regular classroom teachers, administrators, school psychologists and counselors, school nurses, librarians, as well as special educators who provide assistance to classroom teachers and other professionals. It was designed primarily for those professionals not designated as special educators, although it was expected that all professionals would be prepared to participate effectively in the process of determining the most appropriate programs for individual children.

In relation to the background of the Special Education Standard it is important to understand that this movement toward preparing all teachers to work effectively in a clinical/diagnostic mode with exceptional learners was a forceful movement within AACTE long before the adoption of the NCATE standard. Furthermore, that movement and press for the redesign of teacher education programs would have continued even if the NCATE standard had not been established. Therefore, educators should not be influenced by any perceived withdrawal of support for implementation of P.L. 94-142; it is a professional commitment made by our association based on the belief that we can become fully professional only to the extent that we respond effectively to better prepare professionals to provide the most appropriate educational opportunities for all children, including the handicapped and the gifted.

#### Interpretation of the Special Education Standard

Since the Special Education Standard is based on a philosophical commitment, and a specific perspective on education, this interpretation describes compliance with the standard as being reflected in the evaluation of programs on all six standards, though it is stated only under Curriculum, 2.1.2. Early discussion of the proposed new standard included the possibility of modifying the wording in all six standards to make explicit the linked expectations across standards. However, the Council decided that the same effect could be accomplished through interpretation of 2.1.2 without modifying the language in all standards. This guide to institutional preparation for NCATE review will direct your attention to those original modifications that were discussed. An interpretation of the relationship between the Special Education Standard and all six standards follows.

#### Standard 1 and G-1: Governance

A School, College, Department of Education (SCDE) in compliance with the

Governance and Special Education Standards, particularly for basic programs, will have a majority of the members of its governing unit who are experienced teachers "significantly involved in and informed about teacher preparation and school issues," including those related to mainstreaming and gifted education. Linking the two standards (1.1 and 2.1.2) for purposes of interpretation, one can expect the majority of members to evidence "continuing experience" through such activities as:

- a. supervising students in classrooms in which there is significant diversity--i.e., students with special needs--and programming to accommodate individual differences;
- b. providing inservice education to prepare practicing teachers to more effectively provide for individual differences, including handicaps;
- c. working with public schools in the development of curriculum and the planning for staff development related to individualizing instruction;
- d. engaging in research addressing issues related to "mainstreaming"--e.g., the effects of modifying the curriculum for individual differences, socialization of handicapped children in the regular classroom, conditions for successful "mainstream placement" of exceptional students.

Similarly linking interpretations of standards 1.2 and 2.1.2, one may expect the mission of the SCDE, and the institution's statement of philosophy, to reflect a commitment to preparing all professionals to provide for individual learner needs through appropriate modification or structuring of the learning environment, the curriculum, and instructional methods. Furthermore, the policies and practices of the institution should clearly reflect this philosophical commitment, including support for the active engagement of faculty members in collaborative problem solving with public school personnel, in field-based inquiry/research, and in providing inservice education. The institution's

commitment to the Special Education Standard will further be reflected in the membership and agendas of the governing unit, indicating that leaders in teacher education are addressing the issues and seeking input from students and faculty members with special needs or handicapping conditions.

Standards I.3 and G1.3 pertain to the relationship between the governing unit of teacher education and other administrative units in the college or university. An institution in responding fully to the Special Education Standard probably will be influencing the practices of other units of the college or university. Specifically, education faculty members may be influencing provisions for handicapped students in relation to admissions policies and procedures, the provision of counseling and other support services, and the quality of the teaching and advisement provided handicapped students within other academic units.

#### Standard 2 and G-2: Curricula

The Curriculum Standards for both basic and advanced programs are the most comprehensive and complex in their requirements. Key points stated in the preamble (2.0) which deserve careful attention are the requirements: (a) that the curriculum be based on a systematic approach; (b) that it be designed based on the conceptualization of professional roles explicitly stated in program objectives; and (c) that the curriculum reflect the results of research and the considered judgments of the profession regarding the goals of education in our society. Those key points, as well as others in the family of curriculum standards, are directly related to the Special Education Standard. The total curricular design of each professional preparation program must provide for the systematic development of knowledge and competencies required to fulfill roles determined by research and professional study to be necessary to accommodate well the needs of children with special learning needs.

As it is clearly stated in the preamble (2.0), "many different programs could be devised which would result in the acquisition of the desired teaching

behaviors." What is required is that the fundamental process of designing programs be followed: (a) identification of program goals; (b) specification of the teacher's role necessary to achieve the goals; (c) preparation of specific program objectives; (d) design of a curriculum to achieve the objectives; (e) evaluation of program graduates, and use of evaluative feedback to revise the curriculum. A critical requirement explicitly stated in 2.1 and G2.1 is that "Permeating each component is a recognition that the teacher preparation curricula emphasize the individual and special needs of exceptional people" (NCATE Standards, pp. 14, 31). That requirement is interpreted to mean that knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (KSAVs) should be developed in basic programs through the general studies (2.2) and humanistic and behavioral studies (2.3.2) components as well as in the obvious component of professional studies (2.3).

It also is expected that appropriate content relative to the Special Education Standard will permeate the professional components--i.e., (a) content for the teaching speciality (2.3.1), (b) teaching and learning theory and lab/clinical experiences (2.3.3), and (c) practicum experiences (2.3.4). Similar wording is contained in Standard G2.1.2 (see Table 1). It is interesting to note that before the NCATE standard was adopted, leaders of the Dean's Grant Projects concluded that the goals of preparing teachers to work effectively with exceptional individuals cannot be reached simply by the addition of a course on exceptionality; they posited that special education content must be an integral part of "regular" preparation programs, infused throughout the professional curriculum.

The Special Education Standard for basic and advanced programs is summarized well by these words in 2.1.2: "The institution provides its graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide an appropriate education for exceptional learners" (NCATE Standards, p. 15). The interpretation of this standard can be divided into two parts based on the content of the preamble: (a) knowledge and skills enabling teachers to respond to individual differences, and

(b) skills for collegial teamwork requiring some modification of professional roles.

The first sentence under the Special Education Standard for basic and advanced programs states, "All educators should have the knowledge and skills necessary to enable them to respond to the individual differences of learners."

The first requirement, consequently, is that the undergraduate and graduate curriculum must prepare students to be "able to recognize and refer exceptional learners for diagnosis" (p. 15). One is led next to ask, what knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (KSAVs) are needed to assure that a teacher will be able to accurately recognize and refer exceptional learners? The Dean's Grant Projects, which targeted preservice programs, can guide our interpretation of how an institution should respond to this standard or what characteristics an institution in compliance may exhibit. Though the focus is on basic programs, the reader can determine easily how the content would be modified to prepare effective professionals in support, supervisory, or administrative roles. Remember the guidelines provided by the projects seek optimal institutional response to P.L. 94-142 rather than minimal efforts to meet the NCATE Standard.

In the Common Body of Practice for Teachers, "clusters of capabilities" or families of competencies have been outlined to guide programs preparing regular classroom teachers for mainstreaming (see Appendix B). Three clusters address the question of what capabilities or KSAVs are needed to prepare teachers to recognize and refer exceptional learners. Those clusters are grouped in relation to (a) professional values, (b) knowledge of exceptionalities, and (c) referral skills.

The development of professional values. Cluster X., Professional Values, specifies that the curriculum must develop in teacher education students the concepts and values related to:

- a. children's civil rights to an appropriate public school education;
- b. the least restrictive environment, or providing education in the most enabling environment;
- c. the student's right to due process in all placement decisions; and
- d. the individual's right to an appropriate education.

In describing the elements of that cluster, the authors included the need for faculty members to model related values and to reflect those values when selecting field experience sites. In order for students to acquire the desired professional values, it was suggested that the curriculum of each program must include the development of knowledge and understanding relative to the content and history of Public Law 94-142, the civil rights of pupils, the ethical code of the profession regarding responsibilities teachers hold for individual pupils, and legal processes and procedures. The authors believed that, without the development of an appropriate philosophical base and awareness of responsibilities, teachers are not apt to develop and use skills for the recognition and referral of exceptional learners.

Skills for recognition and referral. Given the development of appropriate values, the teacher education student then needs to develop skills necessary to the process of recognizing and referring. Those KSAVs are outlined under Clusters VII and VIII in the Common Body of Practice. Cluster VII pertains to knowledge of exceptionalities and individual differences. Throughout the teacher education curriculum, knowledge and understanding of pupil characteristics that indicate special needs should be developed at an appropriately rudimentary, basic level for non-special educators. Accompanying information about characteristics should be consideration of how special needs can be met effectively by the classroom teacher through the use of available resources, particularly various specialists in the schools (e.g., psychologists, educational audiologists, social workers, resource teachers, etc.) and modified instructional

materials. In developing this knowledge and understanding, the curriculum should include field experience with handicapped children in regular educational settings and specialists who provide supportive resources to meet the needs of those children.

Cluster VIII, Referral Skills, includes the knowledge and skills necessary for data collection to be used in referral procedures and the development of skills for participating effectively in the process of referral. This component of the teacher education curriculum should begin with the development of skills for systematic observation and data collection. The authors of A Common Body of Practice also suggested the inclusion of knowledge that the failure to refer an exceptional child violates professional ethics and the development of an understanding that the referral of an exceptional child does not indicate the failure of the classroom teacher. Skills for participating in the referral process include the development of appropriate attitudes and abilities necessary to communicate effectively and to engage in conflict resolution with other professionals.

Those three clusters of capabilities defined by Dean's Grant Projects identify the KSAVs they believed necessary in order to prepare professionals to recognize and refer exceptional learners for diagnosis. According to the NCATE standard, teachers also must be "able ... to contribute to the design and implementation of curricular programs, instructional techniques and classroom management strategies" (NCATE Standards, p. 15). Two of the Dean's Grant Projects' clusters of capabilities address KSAVs related to this portion of the NCATE standard. Cluster I defines KSAVs related to curriculum: i.e., knowledge of the principles and structures of curriculum and general knowledge of the K-12 curriculum. Dean's Grant Projects also assert that it is important that teacher education students understand how curriculum is related to child development and to schools as social institutions.

Skills for individualizing educational programs. Cluster IX, Individualized

Teaching, in A Common Body of Practice specifies the KSAVs necessary for preparing or participating in the preparation of individualized plans. Those KSAVs are related to the use of diagnostic/prescriptive skills and feedback from formal assessments to formulate an appropriate educational plan for a child. The skills suggested include how to modify curriculum according to individual needs through the application of such techniques as task analysis, telescoping or compacting, providing enrichment or remedial experiences, and utilizing a variety of strategies and materials to accommodate various learning styles. Accordingly, teacher education students must be prepared to adapt the basic curriculum as needed to accommodate the learning styles of individuals. Effective teacher education programs provide students with diverse models for individualizing instruction. They also develop the professional skills of record keeping and monitoring pupil progress, as well as modifying curriculum and instruction based on evaluative feedback.

In addition to recognizing students for referral and participating in the design of an appropriate educational program, teachers must be able to respond to the individual differences of learners through skills for classroom management and developing interpersonal relationships among students. Relative to the Special Education Standard and the goal of effective mainstreaming, the Dean's Grant Projects have identified specific KSAVs in both of those areas which are equally appropriate for accommodating the needs of handicapped and gifted students.

In relation to classroom management, the Dean's Grant Projects recommended the development of a variety of techniques for managing behavior. Cluster III specifies that all teacher education students need to develop skill in the analysis of behavior and need to have knowledge, skills, and appropriate attitudes/values relative to the utilization of behavioristic approaches (e.g., contingency management, behavior modification), intervention tactics (e.g., group alert-

ing), and preventive tactics (e.g., organization, the arrangement of materials, and classroom climate). In addition, it is recommended that students develop skills for guiding transitions between learning activities, understanding group dynamics, and developing student leadership and self-management.

If exceptional students are to receive an appropriate education within regular classrooms, teachers must have skills to facilitate the social integration of diverse individuals into a classroom community. This goal requires that teacher education programs develop in students the KSAVs necessary to help all children become more cooperative, sensitive, and responsible as members of a community/group. Certainly teachers also ought to understand the importance of physical access for handicapped students in regular classrooms.

Skills for collegial teamwork. It is stated under standards 2.1.2 and G2.1.2 that "the presence of exceptional learners in regular classrooms requires that general and special educators perceive their professional roles as less distinct and more complementary. They must increasingly view themselves as differentiated members of an instructional team to provide an appropriate education for exceptional learners" (NCATE Standards, p. 14). To function as a member of a collegial team requires knowledge and skills in the areas of consultation, communication, and negotiation, according to the Dean's Grant Projects. A Common Body of Practice identified two clusters of capabilities relative to this area of professional development: (a) professional consultation and communication skills, and (b) teacher-parent-student relationships.

In Cluster IV, Professional Consultation and Communication, KSAVs are identified relative to developing competence in communication as an initiator and a receiver; skills necessary to be an effective user of consultation; and skills for collaboration and, particularly, for negotiation when there are significant differences in philosophy or priorities within a collegial team. Fundamental to this area of professional competence are skills in interpersonal relations.

Cluster V, Teacher-Parent-Student Relationships, focuses on skills necessary for dealing effectively with students and their families. Dean's Grant Projects have claimed that in order to respond to P.L. 94-142, teachers need to understand "disenfranchised families" and their needs (e.g., minority groups alienated by virtue of possessing a specific characteristic such as race, handicap, talent/giftedness, or socioeconomic status). They need to develop KSAVs that will lead to effective participation in parent conferences and on multi-disciplinary teams evaluating student needs.

It is important to note that in all areas of skill development, it is important to provide teacher education students with opportunities to apply their acquired knowledge in clinical and field settings. All programs, including special education, must emphasize the shared responsibility of the schools and all personnel to contribute to meeting the special needs of individual students. Special education programs also need to develop the KSAVs necessary to effectively assist students and teachers in regular classrooms--especially the development of knowledge of the standard curriculum, and understanding of regular classroom life, and skills for consultation and collaborative teamwork.

To summarize the requirements of 2.1.2 and G2.1.2--as a major component of the basic and advanced curriculum standards, it is accurate to say that NCATE-approved programs will have statements of philosophy and mission that include concerns about responding competently to the needs of exceptional learners and that they will have a systematic approach to developing the KSAVs required to fulfill the roles prescribed by the philosophy. Specifically, knowledge about exceptional learners and individual differences will be introduced early, reinforced and extended in professional courses to a level of mastery permitting flexible application by the time a student completes the program. Skills will be developed for diagnosing/assessing needs, modifying the basic curriculum and instruction or designing appropriate educational experiences in response to

individual needs, monitoring student progress, and developing short and long-term plans appropriate for individuals. In advanced programs, students will acquire skills for effective leadership, support, and administration that will facilitate successful education of handicapped and gifted students in regular settings.

KSAVs must be developed in methods courses as well as in foundations and other basic professional courses (e.g., Introduction to Exceptionality, Diagnostic/Prescriptive Procedures, Introduction to Education, etc.). In developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, students must have opportunities to observe and interact in regular classrooms containing diverse exceptionalities and to develop skills in practica with exceptional learners, collegial teams of professionals, and parent contact and involvement (Standards 2.3.3 and 2.3.4). Teacher education students must be taught to critically evaluate educational practices and policies, including evaluating their own effectiveness, according to the guidelines provided by Dean's Grant Projects.

#### Standard 3 and G-3: Faculty

As was stated in relation to the Governance Standard, it is expected that faculty members responsible for teacher education programs generally will be knowledgeable about the related issues and committed to preparing professionals in accordance with the full intent of the Special Education Standard. They also will be actively involved in cooperative problem solving in the schools through systematic inquiry or research, planning and evaluating with school personnel, and/or providing inservice education. A sufficient number of faculty members will be providing competent supervision to students who are developing the necessary skills for effective individualization of instruction in clinical/laboratory and field experiences.

In addition to the above requirements of the teacher education governing unit and faculty, it is expected that many faculty members will be significantly involved in the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the teacher education

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curriculum in light of the requirements of the Special Education Standard. Faculty members in programs responding most fully to the "spirit" of the Special Education Standard will be modeling/practicing what they teach through accommodating individual differences in their classes. The program faculty will include professionals with the needed expertise to help them respond to the requirements of the mission (i.e., knowledge of exceptionality, expertise in assessment and developing IEPs, skills for modifying and evaluating curriculum and instruction, and knowledge of legal aspects of special education). The faculty will evidence serious efforts individually and collectively to upgrade their own knowledge and skills through inservice or faculty development activities, participation in systematic inquiry or research, the development of individual and group plans for knowledge and skill development (e.g., conducting studies in schools), and working collaboratively with other professionals to share their expertise. In institutions with optimal programs, one finds incentives provided for such developmental activity. The inclusion of faculty members with specific handicapping conditions also evidences a commitment to the philosophy stated. Effective programs seek to utilize the counsel and expertise of faculty members and students with special needs.

Standard 4 and G-4: Students  
Standard 5 and G-5: Resources and Facilities

Institutions in compliance with the Special Education Standard will reflect their commitment through encouraging and supporting handicapped students interested in pursuing teacher education programs or other education-related fields. Admissions practices will not allow discrimination based on handicapping conditions and support services provided will increase the probability of handicapped students successfully completing their programs in teacher education. In addition, inaccessible resources and facilities will not prevent students with handicapping conditions from full participation in programs. Of central importance

relative to these standards is evidence of the institutional commitment to encourage handicapped students, to provide appropriate support, and to model the attitudes and values desired for the stated goals of teacher education.

#### Standard 6 and G-6: Evaluation

This standard is one that has been emphasized in recent years due to its critical level of import to the goal of improving the quality of teacher education programs. The relationship to the Evaluation Standard is the same for the Special Education Standard as it is for other standards, such as Multicultural Education. Specifically, all evaluation procedures (i.e., of courses, graduates, programs, and the institution) should reflect the commitment to prepare professionals increasingly more competent in responding to the special needs of students. Information gained from such evaluation procedures should not only be collected but utilized to continually improve program quality. It also is expected that the long-range plan for the institution and for programs include specific plans for continuous improvement in addressing this Special Education Standard through systematic efforts in faculty development, curriculum revision, and collaborative work in the public schools.

#### Summary

Responding more competently to the special needs of learners in regular classrooms has become a central mission of AACTE that is directed toward the goal of maturing education as a profession. The addition of one or two courses in exceptionality to programs is not an adequate response. The spirit behind the NCATE Special Education Standard is the generation of a commitment that will permeate educational programs. In one sense, the guidelines in this document outline the ideal, the goal. The Council recognizes the fact that change, particularly education reform, is a very slow and complex process. However, the standard was adopted to make explicit the expectations now held for all NCATE-approved programs. The key expectation is that an institution seeking initial

or renewed accreditation will have made significant progress toward full compliance with the Special Education Standard and will have engaged in serious self-evaluation resulting in long-range plans to assure steady progress toward full compliance.

Institutions engaging in self-study should not focus on identifying minimal requirements necessary to be found in compliance with the standard. Rather, leaders in those institutions should help all program faculties capture the spirit of the standard and move steadily forward in becoming more fully in compliance. As many professionals know, the requirements of this Special Education Standard are what the best teachers always have done:

- a. recognized and prized individual differences;
- b. sought to adapt curriculum and instruction according to student needs;
- c. utilized resources of other professionals; and
- d. evaluated regularly.

We are seeking perhaps more sophisticated skills in teaching now, but fundamentally the current goal is more similar than different from previous professional goals.

One last reminder: As you engage in self-study relative to the Special Education Standard, seek to involve all faculty members in the self-study process; to provide support for program revision and faculty development identified in the process as needed, and to encourage the establishment of long-range plans based on identified programmatic and institutional needs. Seek to provide evidence that there is a systematic and comprehensive approach to preparing all professionals to work effectively with diverse learners, i.e., to recognize the special characteristics of students and to refer them for appropriate services, and to modify classroom learning experiences according to individual needs. The product of this process is expected to be an upgrading of all teacher education programs.

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## Part II

### SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS

#### 1.0 GOVERNANCE

##### Suggested Questions for Self-Study

- A. How are the needs of exceptional students addressed in the institution's philosophy statements or statements of purpose?
- B. What institutional policies reflect a supportive environment for the preparation of all educators to contribute to the education of exceptional students?
- C. What institutional activities reflect a supportive environment for the preparation of all educators to contribute to the education of exceptional students?
- D. How is commitment to the education of exceptional students reflected in the membership of the governing unit?

#### 2.0 CURRICULA

##### Suggested Questions for Self-Study

- A. How are content and experiences relating to needs of exceptional students integrated throughout the curricula of the program?
- B. In what ways do preservice teachers gain knowledge, skills, and/or experiences in the following specific areas:
  - (1) Recognition of exceptional conditions and an understanding of their implications for teaching?
  - (2) Referral of students for diagnosis and determination of needed program modifications?
  - (3) Understanding of the role of the general educator as contributing to the identification and evaluation of exceptional students and as participating on a team making decisions about program design for exceptional students?
  - (4) Communicating with specialists (e.g., special educators, psychologists, speech and language pathologists) on needs and plans for exceptional students?
  - (5) Communicating with parents of exceptional students?
  - (6) Classroom instruction for exceptional students?
  - (7) Integrating students with disabilities into the regular classroom who do not need special education, but who may need help in such

areas as socialization or physical access?

(8) Understanding of legal processes and procedures relating to the education of exceptional students?

C. What aspects of educating exceptional students are included in the following required preservice courses:

(1) Foundations (e.g., Introduction to Education)?

(2) Education Psychology?

(3) Methodology?

(4) Other required courses?

D. Do students in the various teaching specialty areas take a course(s) or complete coursework that incorporates concepts relating to exceptional students?

E. In what course(s) are students taught to critically evaluate educational policies, institutional practices, curricula, textbooks, classroom environment, evaluation instruments, and teaching strategies from a perspective that reflects an understanding of the needs of exceptional students?

F. What short-range and long-range plans have been developed to further strengthen an understanding of the needs of exceptional students in all aspects of the teacher education curriculum? What is the time line for implementing these plans? Who is responsible for implementation of the plans?

G. What provisions are made for students whose disability may require modifications in the teacher education curriculum, such as substitution of courses, or more time to complete the degree program, or increased attention to practica experiences or student teaching?

H. What provisions are made by either the institution or education unit to involve successful disabled persons (such as faculty or guest speakers) in the program?

### 3.0 FACULTY

#### Suggested Questions for Self-Study

A. Does the faculty include some specialists who have expertise in, and/or experience with, and commitment to the education of exceptional students? If full-time specialists are not employed, have attempts been made to secure special education expertise through selective employment, part-time or adjunct faculty or joint programming with other institutions?

B. Does the faculty include any disabled persons?

- C. Does the institution provide staff development for faculty with little experience in the education of exceptional students?
- D. What type of training and incentives have been utilized to assist the faculty in integrating material relating to the education of exceptional students wherever possible into their areas of responsibility?

#### 4.0 STUDENTS

##### Suggested Questions for Self-Study

- A. Has the institution reviewed its teacher education program relative to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and to the campus-wide plan for compliance?
- B. Has the institution reviewed its admission policies to ensure that they are based on "factors related to success in teacher education programs," rather than arbitrary assumptions which might prevent full access to qualified exceptional students?
- C. When the education unit is involved in counseling, advising, or early orientation does it ensure that counselors or advisors are sensitive to the needs of students with disabilities?
- D. How are faculty assisted in adjusting to the special learning needs of exceptional students?
- E. How many disabled students have been admitted into and graduated from the teacher education program in the last three years? How many have been certified?

#### 5.0 RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

##### Suggested Questions for Self-Study

- A. Are resources available that relate special learning needs to classroom practices, teaching strategies, and instructional material development?
- B. Do mobility-impaired students have physical access to classes and activities of their choice?
- C. What kinds of library/media resources does the institution provide that help individuals with special needs to participate in its educational program?
- D. Are aids such as interpreters, readers, taped or Brailled material and technological aids provided as needed for disabled students and faculty?

## 6.0 EVALUATION, PROGRAM REVIEW, AND PLANNING

### Suggested Questions for Self-Study

- A. Does the teacher education unit have an on-going, systematic assessment plan for evaluating and improving its preparation of all professionals to contribute to the education of all exceptional students?

#### 6.1 Evaluation of Graduates

- B. Does evaluation of graduates address the ability of regular education graduates to contribute to the education of exceptional students?
- C. How have the results of these evaluations been used to modify and improve program content and experiences?

#### 6.2 Use of Evaluation Results to Improve Programs

- D. What aspects of personnel preparation for educating exceptional students are addressed in program evaluations submitted by students, faculty, supervising teachers, and school administrators?
- E. What strengths and weaknesses have been identified through these program evaluations?
- F. How have evaluation results been used to improve the preparation of all educators to meet the needs of exceptional learners?

#### 6.3 Long-Range Planning

- G. How is the education of exceptional students reflected in the long-range planning in the total teacher education program?

## BEYOND THE MANDATE: THE PROFESSIONAL IMPERATIVE

### *Educating Professionals for Educating the Handicapped*

Adopted By  
The AACTE  
Board of Directors,  
June 1978

This statement reflects the Association's commitment to the advocacy of equal opportunity, unlimited access, unconditional acceptance, and total responsiveness to individual differences.

The statement had its genesis in the deliberations of the AACTE Board of Directors, discussions with the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, activities of the AACTE/Teacher Corps Staff Development Project, and in the recommendations of an AACTE study committee chaired by Dean Corrigan, University of Maryland.

It is presented here in the interest of improving the quality of educational personnel preparation programs, and ultimately, the quality of education for all American children and youth.

#### **Text of the Statement**

Our profession has a continuing commitment to improve the quality of education. This commitment is exemplified by our advocacy of equal opportunity, unlimited access, unconditional acceptance, and total responsiveness to individual differences. Our support for the education of all exceptional individuals is not simply an endorsement of a mandate which is the culmination of a singular struggle in behalf of a neglected minority; it is a present part of our continuing quest for quality education to maximize the potential of each individual.

The mandate implicit in recent court decisions and legislation serves as still another catalyst for evolutionary change, one which can ultimately guarantee the rights of all children and youth to an appropriate education. The importance of this mandate centers on the inequities which it corrects. Its significance is also embedded in the nature of responses required of educators, parents, and the general public. Without substantive changes in attitudes, in instructional programming, and in the priorities for allocating resources, this movement will

neither benefit the individuals it is intended to serve, nor have an impact on the larger society.

#### *New Perspectives*

Broad, pervasive societal-educational changes are needed if the potential of each individual is to be realized. A new way of viewing people is needed, one which de-emphasizes competition along narrow uni-dimensional lines and provides instead for the recognition of individual worth in multifaceted ways. A new approach to the identification of disabilities is required, one which is seen as a means of providing resources adequate to the needs of all individuals, rather than a system for categorizing persons which fractionalizes society while ignoring the values of diversity. A new perspective on handicaps is essential, one which recognizes the specific relevance of the disability to a particular task, rather than perceiving it as generic and exclusionary. A new definition of schooling is mandated, one which regards the learning environment and the school task toward which it is directed in *individual* terms rather than one which focuses on cognitive, too-exclusively abstract, language-based skills. A new concept of education is implied, one which assumes that all educators and society at large share a commitment to developing and maintaining optimum learning environments for every individual from birth through adulthood; education is not the isolated responsibility of a sequence of teachers, each confined to a classroom in a school building for a predetermined span of time.

#### *Professional Roles*

Such a concept of education requires a modification of existing professional roles as well as the creation of new roles. The professional educator will need to be a person with new skills, attitudes, and personal qualities — a person who

is a non-traditional thinker, one who is a change agent, a conserver of human resources, one who values knowledge production. His/her orientation will be dynamic, based on a continuing renewal concept of knowledge, attitude, and behavior acquisition. This professional is an accepting person—capable of giving unconditional acceptance to students' differences, as well as recognition to the contributions of parents and others who share responsibility for a child's education. He/she is trained as a member of a differentiated instructional team, able to utilize both human and technological resources, able to function as a team member—sometimes in a leadership role, other times as a supportive observer, sometimes as a catalyst, and other times as a consumer of technical assistance.

### *Educational System*

The educational system in which this professional educator will function will be expanded at both the pre- and post-school levels, and it will be more highly individualized. The extension of education below age five will provide opportunities for early identification of potential disabilities, the reduction of environmentally-imposed handicaps, and partial elimination of educational handicaps, by means of quality instructional intervention. The extension of education at the post-secondary level will enable schools to rethink the basic skills as those essential for survival and concerned with the quality of life, and to redefine program completion in terms of competency acquisition.

The development of individual educational plans can also increase the quality of education along several already existing lines while adding new dimensions to them: 1) from infrequent testing designed for comparing students' performance to continuous evaluation utilized for monitoring the learner's progress; 2) from arbitrarily imposed grade levels to actual entry levels of performance; 3) from static, stratified pupil placement based on a single data source to dynamic, varied placements determined by many observations of individual strengths and weaknesses; 4) from instructional programs whose objective is the presentation of knowledge, to those which require accountability based on impact; 5) from narrow academic programs to those which offer a full range of enrichment and

supportive services; 6) from unilateral decisions regarding placement and program, to parent/professional-group decisions resulting in shared responsibility for the learner's total needs. These emphases on improving education for the handicapped will ultimately result in the improvement of education for *all* children.

### *Personnel Preparation Programs*

The task of schools, colleges, and departments of education engaged in the preparation of professional educators will be to design training programs responsive to these new emphases. They will need to address, among others, several major issues: expanding the life space of preservice programs to provide room for new competencies and well integrated field experiences; revitalizing inservice education programs to make them more responsive to the needs of school personnel; reconceptualizing the nature of professional roles; developing curricula in which the concept of individualization is another strand to be woven into the fabric of teacher education, rather than a new patch applied to its worn exterior; modeling cross-departmental/inter-disciplinary approaches to planning, teaching, research, and service. In solving the problems raised by these issues, cooperation with others outside the college of education will be imperative: with the university at large, school personnel, teacher centers, teacher organizations, and state departments of education.

In order to accommodate handicapped applicants in the education professions, colleges will need to develop new policies for admission, counseling, and placement, all aimed at providing full access while at the same time maintaining rigorous quality control. Also, institutions of higher learning will need to provide support for cooperative knowledge-base building, which recognizes research and development activities aimed at the improvement of practice. Above all, teacher educators will need to model the kinds of accepting behavior they seek to develop in professional education personnel.

In order to provide quality instruction for all children through professionals prepared by colleges of education, PROGRAMS TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE MUST ASSURE THAT:

- the instructional problems encountered in the transition to the least restrictive alternative model are recognized as researchable questions meriting the investment of effort by the broad community of educational researchers;
- the broadened range of tasks resulting from the inclusion of the handicapped as a primary responsibility of regular education is understood as having implications for the training of all educators;
- the growing body of literature relating to the identification and education of the handicapped and their families is accessible to all preservice students and members of the practicing profession;
- all graduates of professional education programs who enter the field are knowledgeable about the rights of all children inclusive of the handicapped and are prepared to assume their professional role in implementing the due process procedures evolving from legislation;
- necessary support systems for expanded programs are provided: barrier-free buildings, increased library facilities, additional media resources;
- opportunities for professional renewal are made available to all members of the education community, including faculty of institutions of higher education, through planned staff development programs;
- programs for preparation of education professionals are designed to reflect a broadened human services orientation, emphasizing the link between parents and professionals and the necessity of coordinated team effort.

The educational community's response is based on the premise that the isolation of any group erodes the social cement needed to transform an aggregation of individuals into a society. While the mandate for the education of all the handicapped is based on a civil rights imperative, the magnitude of the task implicit in the spirit of this mandate presents an unparalleled opportunity for growth.

A special Association Task Force on Education of the Handicapped, working closely with the AACTE Commission on Programs and Projects, developed the text of the statement which was then adopted by the Board of Directors.

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## CLUSTERS OF CAPABILITIES

proposed to guide the preparation of educators  
(a skeletal outline of clusters suggested in  
A Common Body of Practice for Teachers)

I. Curriculum

general knowledge, K-12 curricula;  
understanding of curriculum prin-  
ciples, structures;  
understanding of the relationship  
to child development and schools  
as social institutions  
skilled in preparation of indivi-  
dualized plans.

II. Teaching Basic Skills

- a. literacy skills: reading,  
writing, spelling, arith-  
metic, study, speaking
- b. life maintenance skills:  
health, safety, consumer-  
ism, law
- c. personal development skills:  
goal setting, decision mak-  
ing, problem solving, career  
development, recreation

III. Class Management

skills to include: applied be-  
havior analysis, group  
alerting, guiding transitions,  
materials arrangement, crisis  
intervention techniques, and  
creating a positive affective  
climate.

IV. Professional Consultation and  
Communications

knowledge and practical skills  
required for effective con-  
sultation and other profes-  
sional communication

## IV. (Continued)

ability to negotiate objectively  
and equably

V. Teacher-Parent-Student Relation-  
ships

skilled in dealing with parents,  
students, and siblings of handi-  
capped students  
understanding of "disenfranchised  
families" and their needs

VI. Student-Student Relationships

ability to manage the social struc-  
ture of mainstream classes by  
generating cooperative, helpful  
behavior  
skilled in developing heterogen-  
eously cooperative grouping and  
peer and cross-age tutoring

VII. Exceptional Conditions

rudimentary understanding of  
exceptional children, their  
special needs, and how to accom-  
modate those needs  
knowledge of specialists and re-  
sources available to assist with  
special educational needs

### VIII. Referral

skilled in systematic observations  
and data collection for referral  
process

knowledge of referral procedures,  
the responsibilities involved,  
and ways to capitalize on refer-  
ral resources

### IX. Individualized Teaching

demonstrated competence in  
assessing individual educa-  
tional needs and in adapting  
instruction to the individual  
skilled in keeping records of  
individual progress toward  
objectives

knowledgeable about diverse  
models for individualized  
instruction

### X. Professional Values

values which give primary  
attention to individual  
students, their needs and  
rights

guided by ethical codes re-  
garding their responsibili-  
ties to individual pupils  
knowledge of the law and its  
implications, including due  
process

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