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AUTHOR Kay, Patricia M.
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ABSTRACT

Discussed is the City University of New York's Competency Based Teacher Education Project to develop instructional modules for pre- or inservice training of teachers for the handicapped. Noted among project activities are the training of university faculty members and field testing of modules. A module includes five elements: an overview of the module's rationale, major assumptions, and place in the overall teacher training scheme; objectives which specify the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes a learner is expected to demonstrate; pre- and postassessment measures to determine the learner's level of competency before and after course completion; and instructional activities. Briefly described are project modules on family reactions to the handicapped child, parent involvement in the education of young handicapped children, interpersonal perception, and modality linking. (SB)

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Development of C.U.N.Y. Special Education Modules
Patricia M. Kay
Bernard Baruch College of The City University of New York

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My part in this panel today is to discuss the City University of New York's Competency Based Teacher Education Project (CUNY-CBTEP) - particularly those aspects of it that relate to instructional module development and, even more specifically, to instructional modules for the pre- or in-service training of teachers for the handicapped. The who, what, when, where, why and how of the CUNY Special Education modules are probably best understood when placed in the context of the general project goals and procedures, so that context is where I will start. From that I will move to the conception of modules and modular instruction that became a prime focus of the project, discuss how the modules were developed and tell you, briefly about the five special education modules that were developed.

Since January 1972, CUNY-CBTEP has been generally involved in a major effort to assist developing CBTE programs. Specifically, the project has sponsored conferences, workshops and seminars to provide a forum for the discussion of the many complex philosophical, practical, political and conceptual issues attending changes toward CBTE programming and to provide various consortia members with the necessary skills for implementing CBTE on college campuses and their cooperating public schools. As needs have dictated, some research, development and evaluation activities have been undertaken to provide "hands on" experiences for program developers and to generate materials and data needed for program implementation.

The Special Education component of that project has been primarily concerned with CBTE issues as they pertain to the training of educational personnel for the handicapped. That component has:

1. addressed issues in defining competencies which are needed by educational personnel for handicapped children;
2. developed and disseminated bibliographies, technical assistance papers and workshop materials to assist program personnel with research, assessment and evaluation issues attending CBTE;
3. trained a core of City University faculty members in the development of instructional modules for teacher education; and
4. engaged in field testing to evaluate developed modules, generate data about module use, and provide module users in both pre and in-service programs with a variety of strategies for implementation.

Throughout the history of the project we have viewed the availability of appropriate and relevant instructional materials for the training of Special Education personnel as a necessary

prerequisite for the implementation of any operating CBTE instructional program. Many CBTE programs are dependent upon instructional materials that are individualized and can provide alternate routes for attaining defined competence. Modules seemed to provide these factors and the decision was made to develop a set of prototype modules. The purpose was twofold (1) to assist faculty in the various CUNY units to acquire skills in module development and use and (2) to generate the materials necessary for studying processes of modularization at college and in-service levels.

A module as we have come to define it, is basically a small instructional package or unit that is complete unto itself. It typically contains five elements. The overview is a prospectus or introduction that presents the rationale behind the module, its major assumptions and where it fits into the overall scheme of becoming a teacher. Objectives specify the knowledge, skills and/or attitudes that the learner is expected to demonstrate upon successful completion of the module. Pre-assessments measure either the learners' prerequisite abilities and skills and/or the learners' previously acquired competency in the objectives of the module. Enabling or instructional activities present routes (usually alternate) by which the learner can accomplish the objectives and a post assessment permits the learner to demonstrate that he has accomplished the objectives and is ready for further instruction.

In the modules that we have developed there are, generally, sufficient directions to allow students to proceed through the materials at their own rate of speed and with little outside interference. Most modules can, however, be easily adapted for large or

small group instruction, and many contain both individual and group instructional activities. The emphasis throughout is on providing well designed instruction which is calculated to bring about specified outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

This module definition is shared by many but one of the major difficulties with many modules that had been developed when we started this project is that they were hastily concocted, incomplete and poorly evaluated. It is for this reason that the project undertook to develop, produce and evaluate the prototype modules. The CUNY modules were designed by college faculty and public school staff who had been members of the CBTEP Special Education Committee. Through a carefully designed module development process, starting with intensive two 1/2 day workshops, there was a deliberate attempt to produce materials of the highest possible quality. Each module that has been developed has benefited from the expertise of the authors in their fields plus the additional content expertise of the CUNY-CBTEP committee, as well as the advice of an external instructional materials development consultant, audiovisual specialists, an educational psychologist and professional editors.

There was no attempt to produce a set of modules which might as a whole define a modularized program. Each module that was developed was intended to stand by itself although there were several that were designed to be one of a coordinated cluster of modules.

Twelve modules have been completed by the project, five of them specific to special education:

Family Reactions to the Handicapped Child: Shirley Cohen, Hunter College
Module I in the cluster Parent Involvement in the Education of
Young Handicapped Children. Pre-service and in-service training
in awareness of the impact of a handicapped child on the life
of a family.

How Parents Can Help: Shirley Cohen, Hunter College. Module II in
the cluster Parent Involvement in the Education of Young
Handicapped Children. In-service training in awareness in
the ways in which parents can be usefully and effectively
involved in the education process.

Parents As Partners: Home-School Plans: Shirley Cohen, Hunter College.
Module III in the cluster Parent Involvement in the Education
of Young Handicapped Children. In-service training to expand
the teacher's skill in working with parents to foster children's
learning.

Interpersonal Perception: Lilyan Ruderman, Lehman College. A pre-
and in-service module in Special Education that is designed
to enhance the teacher's empathic ability and to put it to
positive use in the teaching of an academic task.

Modality Linking: Selection of Activities and Materials: Marvin Stober
and Wilease Fields, Teaching Resource Center. A module designed
to help the in-service teacher in Special Education learn to
match materials and modalities and to devise activities to
strengthen the learner's weakest modality.

Each of these modules is as complete as possible. For example,
Modality Linking has two parts or elements. The first concentrates on
teaching teachers to identify modality components and to classify
materials and tasks according to the components. Instructional activities for
that element include viewing a film, reading some excerpts on modality
strengths, listening to an audio cassette and answering questions about it,
and creating a series of activities and materials which teach to a
modality strength. The second element addresses the teacher's ability to
select activities and materials that meet specific modality requirements for
given children. The post assessment provides four sets of diagnostic
information in the form of descriptive summaries that a teacher might
write. Students must submit a lesson plan detailing activities and
materials that require progressively more of the child's weak modality

and less of his strong modality functioning.

This has been a very brief overview of the project as a whole, how the modules were developed, and what resulted. The important questions about how effective the modules are and the conditions under which they are most useful will be dealt with by Mr. Kilian.