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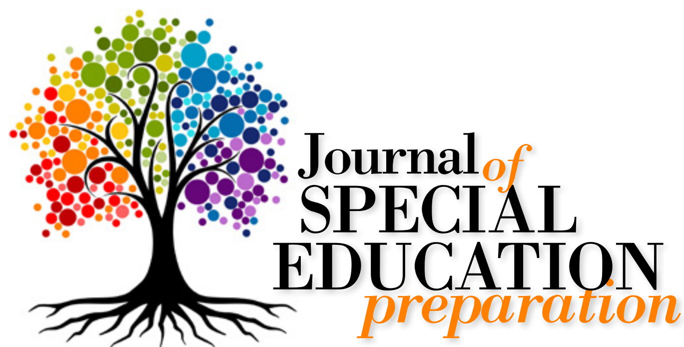

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FROM *the* EDITOR

Andrew M. Markelz
Founder & Editor of JOSEP
Ball State University

Welcome to volume two, issue two of the *Journal of Special Education Preparation*! Although *JOSEP* is a relatively new peer-reviewed journal within the field of special education, our previous issues have been well received within the community of special education faculty across the globe. To date, articles from our first three issues of *JOSEP* have been downloaded over 5,000 times! We credit the welcoming of *JOSEP* content to our valuable contributors and growing review board. We know that special education faculty, and the field of special education, will benefit from research-to-practice articles that provide information, resources, and tools to improve the education and experiences of preservice special education teachers and administrators. It is our mission at *JOSEP* to continue doing so.

In this special issue, we bring our readers a unique perspective from special education faculty who work at small special education preparation programs. The Small Special Education Programs Caucus (SSEPC) is a membership group within the Teacher Education Division (TED) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). The Purpose of SSEPC is to:

- Identify and address the unique qualities and needs of small special education personnel preparation programs.
- Facilitate professional development activities which will enhance the knowledge and skills of faculty members in small special education personnel preparation programs.
- Promote interprofessional support, collaboration, and linkage for the professional growth and improvement of faculty members in small special education personnel preparation programs.
- Facilitate and promote cooperation among small special education personnel preparation programs and Federal, State, and Local Educational Agencies.
- Facilitate support for innovation and development efforts by small special education personnel preparation programs.
- Promote and support the policies and activities of the Teacher Education Division and The Council for Exceptional Children in all its efforts concerning special education personnel preparations.

The SSEPC is an active group within TED with many benefits of membership. To be a member of SSEPC a person must be a faculty member of a public/private instate of higher education and:

1. Involved with preparation of undergraduate and/or graduate (excluding doctoral candidates); or
2. Employed in a department or program with seven (7) or fewer full-time Special Education Faculty (regardless of level of training provided by that program).

We recognize that faculty in small special education preparation programs may have unique benefits and challenges when preparing special education teachers. Therefore, the editorial team approached SSEPC members and asked if they would like to contribute to a special issue of *JOSEP* exclusively focused on small program issues. We are pleased to present six articles written by members of SSEPC. In addition, we continue our *International Spotlight* section featuring an article on the policies of special education in South Korea.

Small Programs Special Issue

In the first article of the small programs special issue, Wilkinson and Potts (2022) discuss how role play activities can be an accessible and

References

Golloher, A., Love, M. L., Krishnan, S. V., & Simpson, L. A. (2022) Program redesign to prepare transformative special educators. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(2), 18-29.

Howerter, C. S., Hughes, C. E., Sears, J., & Little, J. (2022). Two for one: Challenges and benefits of small elementary and special education dual certification programs. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(2), 52-59.

Kang, J., & Shin, M. (2022). Special education in South Korea: Policies and issues. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(2), 70-78.

Markelz, A. M., & Riden, B. S. (2022). How and why to write for the *Journal of Special Education Preparation*. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(1), 6-13. https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.1.6-13

Lynn, T., Farnan, S., Rueter, J. A., & Moore, A. (2022). Looking behind virtual lenses: Field experience, modeling, coaching, feedback, supervision, and partnerships. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(2), 42-51.

Ploessl, D. M., Hooper, W., & Raulston, C. G., (2022). Community partnerships: Leveraging service learning in small teacher preparation programs. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(2), 60-68.

Walker, J. D., Boothe, K., Lohmann, M., & Owiny, R. (2022). Working smarter: Using universal design for learning to spiral curriculum in small special education preparation programs. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(2), 30-41.

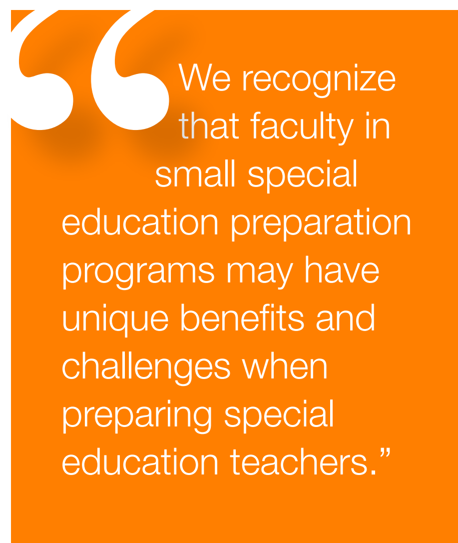
Wilkinson, C. A., & Potts, E. (2022). Role play activities in small programs: What, why, where, and how? *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(2), 6-17.

flexible option for preservice teacher skill development during university coursework. The authors provide an analysis of why role play activities are beneficial, suggestions on when to use role play scenarios, and steps and resources for creating and using your own role play activities within a variety of common university courses.

In the next article, Golloher and colleagues (2022) describe how one small Department of Special Education reinvented its program to center on anti-racism and anti-ableism to inspire the next generation of special education teachers to adopt a transformative vision for public education. The authors describe a roadmap that employs a "common trunk" of classes aligned with differentiated coursework needed for specialization that centers these principles while reducing assignments.

Walker et al. (2022) continue the conversation on small program redesign by demonstrating in their article how programs with resource limitations can design effective and efficient teacher preparation programs through a spiraled curriculum. The authors position their paper within a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) lens to realistically support the requirements and resilience needed by qualified special educators. Although special education faculty of small programs face unique challenges, the authors argue that a UDL framework can assist in spiraling curriculum for special education candidates by incorporating three key components: case studies, modeling/ role-plays/ feedback, and mentoring.

Next, Lynn and colleagues (2022) examine virtual methods that small special education preparation programs can use for field experiences, modeling, coaching, feedback, supervision, and partnerships. In doing so, faculty can leverage expertise to expand recruitment in programs and support teacher retention efforts. The authors ground their suggestions within the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) high-leverage practices (HLPs) to virtually support teacher candidates' using a developmental and scaffolded approach.



Many small special education programs only have a dual (general education/special education) certification program. At institutions of higher education such as these, special education faculty have a unique role to fill when preparing teacher candidates. Howerter and colleagues (2022) emphasize the importance of infusing special education throughout general education courses to truly create an integrated program. The authors use four case study dual certification programs to accentuate that an effective dual certification program requires collaboration, support, inclusion, patience, advocacy, and education.

In the final article of the small programs special issue, Ploessl et al. (2022) provide teacher education programs with a blueprint for integrating service-learning into early teacher education coursework in a way that benefits practice-based small teacher education programs and local communities. The authors provide readers with a phase-by-phase guide as well as key practices and strategies for service-learning implementation.

International Spotlight

The *International Spotlight* article is written by Kang and Shin (2022) who provide a comprehensive history and exploration of current issues of special education in South Korea. The authors outline the progression of social inclusion of individuals with disabilities in South Korea through legislative and regulatory action—specifically the continuation of five-year development plans. Multiple areas, however, still require advancement such as designing quality special education curricula, promoting disability awareness among the public, and the quality of preparation for both general and special education teachers. The authors discuss these contemporary issues with an emphasis on how policymakers, stakeholders, and practitioners can further facilitate authentic interaction among families and students with and without disabilities.

Coming Soon

JOSEP opened for the acceptance of public manuscript submissions, in January 2022. Since then, we have been receiving manuscripts and sending them out for peer-review. We look forward to compiling our next issue entirely of publicly submitted articles. Our goal is to publish the next issue in December of 2022. We continue to encourage potential contributors to read "How and why to write for the *Journal of Special Education Preparation*" by Markelz and Riden (2022) for guidance on the aim and scope of *JOSEP* prior to submission.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *JOSEP*!

Role Play Activities in Small Programs: What, Why, Where, and How?

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ABSTRACT
Preservice teachers need many opportunities to practice teaching skills prior to using the skills in high-stakes settings like real, live classrooms. Role play is an accessible and flexible option for embedding skill practice into individual courses. They may focus on specific high-leverage practices (HLPs) and enable preservice teachers to engage in activities to use skills learned across courses. This article provides an analysis of why to use role play, suggestions on when to use role play, and steps and resources for creating and using your own role play activities. We conclude with lessons learned by our Small Special Education Program.

KEYWORDS
Role play, small programs, special education, teacher preparation preparation

Professor Fields knows her preservice teachers need more practice with the collaboration skills she teaches them, but the question is how? The class has analyzed videos of collaboration gone wrong and of some functional collaborative groups, but there is a difference between identifying skills and using them. After talking with colleagues, she learns about the potential of role plays to address this need.

Teacher preparation is an ever-evolving field, with researchers and instructional faculty always searching for better ways to prepare preservice teachers (Mueller & File, 2015). Often the conversation about program improvement centers around getting preservice teachers more experience in the classroom. However, field experiences are rife with both logistical issues and the issue of preservice teachers practicing on students before they are competent and confident in the skill. Additionally, the logistics of appropriate supervision can be a great challenge in a small program with few faculty to share the load (Reid, 1994).

McDonald and colleagues (2013) proposed a cycle of learning explicitly including opportunities for preservice teachers to prepare and rehearse a practice before using it with learners. Benedict et al. (2016) have labeled these practice-based learning opportunities (PLOs). Brownell et al. (2019) identified seven PLOs that include elements of effective practice such as modeling, authenticity, and feedback. These seven include: (a) case learning, (b) rehearsal, (c) video analysis, (d) virtual reality simulations, (e) coaching, (f) lesson study, and (g) coursework aligned with field experiences. Ideally, preservice teachers would engage in a variety of PLOs throughout their preparation program; each appropriate at different stages of their development as teachers. For example, case learning is more appropriate for focusing on understanding and analyzing students (Brownell et al., 2019). Others, like rehearsal and lesson study, help preservice teachers improve their teaching skills (Brownell et al., 2019). The nature of PLOs creates opportunities for preservice teachers to combine pedagogical content skills and high-leverage practices (HLPs) in a practice environment with feedback that

will not directly impact students.

What are Role Plays?

Rehearsal is an umbrella term for PLOs like microteaching and role play, defined as "candidates teach to peers as if they were P-12 students" (Brownell et al., 2019, p. 342). Role play can help preservice teachers "explore realistic situations by interacting with other people in a managed way in order to develop experience and trial different strategies in a supported environment" (Glover, 2014, para 1). It is this structure and faux-immersion that sets role play apart from other forms of rehearsal. During a role play, candidates are provided roles in a school-based scenario, such as a teacher-parent conference, lesson facilitation, or a teacher-paraprofessional interaction. They may be given scripts, specific instructions for what to say or how to act, or simply given the scenario and asked to react to the interactions as they unfold (Glover, 2014). The same scenario can be re-played multiple times by multiple candidates based on suggestions made during feedback and reflection sessions with the instructor and classmates. An additional unique element is role play has the flexibility to provide practice opportunities for non-instructional skills. Role plays can be considered through the lenses of (a) acting role plays, which concentrate on practicing new skills; (b) problem-solving role plays, which may require learners to draw from a wide set of skills but for one specific purpose; and (c) "Almost Real Life" role plays, which mimic the complexities of the real world as much as possible (Hidayati & Pardjono, 2018). Regardless, prior instruction and preparation in the skills is important so learners feel like they gain something from the activity (Stevens, 2015).

Why use Role Plays?

There are many benefits to utilizing role plays in the higher education classroom. Role plays provide opportunities for practice, elements of authenticity, as well as chances to collaborate cross-curriculum. Role plays also combat many common challenges small Special Education teacher preparation programs face such as a lack of diversity, small cohorts of students, and small budgets (Reid, 1994).

Evidence Base

There is an evidence-base for use of rehearsal and role play in each of the four HLP areas. In the HLP area of instruction, there is evidence rehearsal improves use of technology to meet instructional goals (Yenmez et al., 2016), and with a clear rubric guiding peer and self-evaluation, it improves the use of explicit instruction (Cabello & Topping, 2018). Role play has been effective in preparing preservice teachers to appropriately interact with and help a learner who has mental health needs (Grief Green et al., 2020), including skills reflected in the social/emotional/behavior HLPs. Though research is lacking to declare role play and other forms of rehearsal as effective in HLPs related to assessment and collaboration, there is evidence of effectiveness in development of professionalism in medical (Ohta et al., 2021) and social work preparation (Gomez-Poyato et al., 2020).

Opportunities for Practice

Role plays provide multiple opportunities for practice in a safe, faculty-controlled environment (Presnilla-Espada, 2014). Mistakes can be made without direct, negative impact on a child or the relationship with the family. When mistakes are made, they create teachable moments, mentoring, and reflection (Presnilla-Espada, 2014).

The day of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting role play, Hannah is late to Professor Fields' class and causes disruption to the meeting already in progress as she asks questions to catch up. Her classmates feel like she was not invested in the meeting. After the role play is over, Professor Fields discusses the importance of punctuality and the possible impact a seemingly small issue might have. Had this situation occurred in an actual classroom, Hannah may have offended the student's family with her tardiness and interruptions. This would have impacted her future conversations with the family and possibly interactions with the student. It may also have negatively impacted her relationships with co-workers who felt she was not doing her fair share of the workload. Although Hannah's classmates were frustrated with her tardiness, they all learned from experience how it could impact the process.

Elements of Authenticity

While a role play is a staged scenario, there are elements of authenticity built in through content, character development, and the natural interactions of the preservice teachers. Faculty can draw from their own experiences to set up interactions, using complexities of real life to prepare candidates for what they will experience in schools. This can include practical information such as actual (anonymous) student data. For example, a role-played IEP meeting for Henry (name changed) will be much more authentic when it draws from the experience of a real repeating kindergartner pyromaniac who was moved around the foster care system while his mother's parental rights were being terminated. Looking at authentic data with background information, candidates get a more authentic view of the relationship between behavior and home life. Role plays do not have to be built on immediate faculty experiences to be true-to-life; scenarios and character information can be pulled from resourc-

es written in first-person accounts of situations. This universal design element helps increase motivation and relevance for the preservice teachers, thus allowing them to internalize and comprehend the content more efficiently (CAST, 2018). In role plays where preservice teachers are interacting with other students, their peers playing the student roles have directions and perspectives outlined so their behavior and language can intentionally guide the candidate's experience towards the practice goal. In teacher-teacher role play scenarios, two preservice teachers may interact in a situation such as co-teaching a lesson or a classroom management concern, they will apply their knowledge of collaboration skills. They must come to group consensus, often compromising somewhere in the middle of where each team member wanted to be. They practice active listening as well as sensitivity to student-related issues. These collaboration skills can be abstract concepts for preservice teachers with little to no field experience, but are strong indicators of teaching performance (Ingles, 2015).

Jamal and Sarah role play co-teachers who are having some classroom management issues. Jamal's role material for the general educator explains that Jamal knows a lot of the kids from the neighborhood and from having their older siblings. Jamal feels like he has a good relationship with the students and that this should carry him through any behavioral rough patches. He does not mind a slightly loud class and thrives a little on students not raising their hands—they had something to say and could not hold it back! In the meantime, Sarah's role material for the special educator describes how she values structure and routine and cannot understand how anybody can learn in a chaotic classroom. Sarah wants a fun classroom, but she's been collecting data and it's very clear that students are breaking rules because they are not being enforced. When Jamal and Sarah meet they have to work through their very different, and realistic, differences in order to both be effective in the classroom.

Collaborate in Cross-curricular activities

Within our Small Special Education Program (SSEP), we found unique opportunities for faculty to collaborate in cross-curricular role play activities. While some SSEPs may have only one special education faculty member, there may also be 1-2 faculty members in the psychology department who would love to bring their students in to role play discussing testing data during an IEP meeting. Another option is finding someone from the applied behavior analysis department who would be willing to collaborate on a functional behavior assessment/behavior intervention plan (FBA/BIP) role play activity. Faculty in social work might have candidates who could participate in a role play team meeting so as to provide insight on family relationships and serve as advocates for families in multiple activities. Again, this collaboration adds a layer of authenticity, connecting research to practice.

Professor Fields is talking about role play with Mr. Jennings, a colleague in the social work department. Mr. Jennings comments that his future social workers have a lot of field placement hours, but he would like to provide them with practice opportunities as he's teaching. They team up and create IEP role plays, prereferral role plays, and social skills group role plays, where preservice teachers and social workers can practice together.

Addressing Issues of Diversity

Small programs often lack diversity in their candidate populations (Drake et al., 2021). Identifying or creating role play scenarios allow faculty to introduce more diversity into their preservice teachers' worlds. Instructors can introduce topics of diversity by including roles such as same-sex parents, single parents, religious considerations, as well as other cultural and ethnic opportunities. For example, preservice teachers may find themselves working with a child of Deaf adults (CODA) in a role play. Preservice teachers can find themselves unprepared for the cultural norms of the Deaf community, as well as the accommodations which should be provided during meetings. The varied experiences faculty can create may address preservice teachers' cultural competence as well.

After a recent role play activity, Frances reflects on her role as a parent who was not fluent in English. She writes in her journal, "At the beginning of the meeting, they tried. They used smaller words and gestures, but when the terms got technical it was like they abandoned all thought of involving me in the meeting. I didn't really have a chance to be an active participant."

Working with Small Budgets

Small programs also work with small budgets (Reid, 1994). Computer-simulated experiences are available for sale through various platforms (e.g., Mursion, SimSchools), and may seem realistic; however, they are costly for small special education programs. Some companies charge rates based on the number of students enrolled in a program: the more students, the cheaper the cost (Mursion Virtual Classroom, n.d.). While this is an economic benefit for larger schools, serving hundreds of preservice teachers each year, for a SSEP, only serving 15-20 students per cohort, the cost will increase rapidly. Role play scenarios, on the other hand, can be created from a wide range of textbook materials readily available to instructors

TABLE 1: Resources for Role Play Contexts

Resource	Summary
Boothe, K. A., & Hathcote, A. R. (2021). *A case study approach to writing individualized special education documents: From preschool to graduation.* Council for Exceptional Children.	Follows a single learner's journey from early intervention through transition. Includes detailed information from multiple perspectives including, uniquely, the school social worker and external vocational professional.
CEEDAR: https://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/portfolio/content-specific-simulated-interaction/#toggle-id-3	Description of a structured series of PLOs, with role play being the first two of four stages.
Danforth, S., & Boyle, J. R. (2007). *Cases in behavior management* (2nd ed.). Pearson.	Focused on behavior management. Most cases are 2-3 pages, describing an incident and then background information.
Friend, M. & Cook, L. (2016) Interactions: *Collaboration skills for school professionals* (8th ed.). Pearson.	Each chapter contains small 1-2 page vignettes encouraging communication, problem-solving, and conflict resolution.
Hallahan, D. P., Kauffman, J. M., & Pullen, P. C. (2009). *Cases for reflection and analysis for Exceptional Learners* (11th ed.). Pearson.	Supplementary casebook for Exceptional Learners textbook-can be used independently. Cases include IDEA categories and multiple perspectives including families with diverse backgrounds. Cases are 4-5 pages and include reflection questions.
Halmhuber, N. & Beauvais, K. J. (2002). *Case studies about children and adolescents with special needs.* Allyn & Bacon.	Provides a context for learning, describing one particular school district prior to student-specific cases. Cases cover IDEA categories. Cases are 3-4 pages long with multiple characters outlined, reflection questions and activities.
Ingles, S. (2015). *Developing Critical Skills: Interactive Exercises for Pre-service Teachers* (1st ed.). Kendall Hunt.	Provides disposition rubrics for self-reflection and team evaluations
IRIS Center: https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/	Modules, case studies, and activities on various topics in Special Education including, but not limited to, IEPs and FBAs.
Kauffman, J. M., Pullen, P. L., Mostert, M. P., & Trent, S. C. (2011). *Managing classroom behaviors: A reflective case-based approach* (5th Ed). Pearson	Most cases focus on specific student behaviors. The faculty manual is a valuable shortcut for defining the necessary perspectives.
Kauffman, J. M. (2005). *Cases in emotional and behavioral disorders of children and youth.* Pearson.	Focused on different aspects and types of EBD. Most are 1-2 pages and focused on student behavior. Includes specific questions and prompts for each case study.
Overton, S. (2016). *Collaborating with families: A case study approach.* Waveland. (Original work published 2005)	Case studies with complex backstories. A grid lays out issues covered in each case (i.e., employment issues, dangerous behavior, cultural diversity, disability label). Cases are 10+ pages each.
Weishaar, M. K., & Scott, V. G. (2006). *Practical cases in special education for all educators.* Houghton Mifflin.	Cases mostly align with IDEA labels and include contemplation and exemplar focuses. Cases are 4-5 pages and include multiple perspectives and reflection questions. Many include scripted dialogue between parties.
Weishaar, M. K. & Scott, V. G. (2005). *Case studies in assessment of students with disabilities.* Pearson.	Cases provide assessment data which focuses on academic skills rather than disability categories, including written language, reading, transition, and oral language & bilingual. Each topic provides two cases, elementary and secondary settings. Cases are 4-5 pages in length and include questions related to assessment concerns and test interpretation.

(see Table 1), or from the memory and experiences of faculty, at minimal to no cost to preservice teachers or the instructors, making them a clear choice for the budget conscious.

How Does One Use Role Plays?

Professor Fields is savvy enough to know she cannot just march into class, hand out a role play, and expect her preservice teachers to practice and develop skills. She knows she needs to do some prep work, but what?

Though spontaneous role play is possible, it looks more like dramatic improv than a true learning experience. To ensure preservice teachers meet learning objectives, it is important to set up and plan the experience. We suggest the following five-step approach.

Step 1: Provide Context

How much background preservice teachers need will depend greatly on the purpose of the role play, but it is important for each participant to understand the situation and their role's perspective. Some role play resources provide very specific data (i.e., reading scores) and a rich backstory, but many do not. Mixing materials from a variety of sources such as family background and assessment data can provide a more rich context. There exist a number of resources faculty can use for role plays (see Table 1).

Many of these resources are case studies. Faculty can use the case studies to build background for role play but will need to adjust so there is a problem to solve or an issue to discuss within the role play. Some of the resources predate Rosa's Law, so be ready to adjust language as well to reflect the change to intellectual disability.

After instruction on interacting with parents, Professor Fields is preparing role plays where special educators are calling the parents of one of their learners. She wants the experience to mimic the reality that each party knows things, thinks things, feels things the other party does not. She creates two paragraphs of background each for the special educator role and the parent role and gives each preservice teacher only their role. One of the roles includes a problem and the goal for the interaction.

Step 2: Assign Roles

Ideally, each preservice teacher has a role during the activity, so they are an active participant and learner (Stevens, 2015). In a large class or when the number of preservice teachers and the number of roles are not the same, it is best to add roles for alternates or understudies. Using small groups increases the number of learners actively engaged in the role play, but if the learning objective calls for a small group of learners engaging in the role play while all others watch, prepare the observers with specific tasks so they are actively engaged. Hidayati and Pardjono (2018) suggest assigning each observer a specific role to watch instead of providing general directions about attending to all parties. Give observers prompts to guide their observation of the event, which can then serve as a scaffold to the final reflection. For example, role playing an individualized education program (IEP) meeting would require many roles (see Table 2), possibly making it more efficient to have the rest of the class observe one meeting than trying to create multiple meetings. Depending on the size of the class, two parents may be assigned, as well as a student. The two-parent option allows the faculty to construct a variety of scenarios in which the participants are role playing talking to divorced/married parents, and different/same-sex couples. Adding a case student into the meetings allows for practice with student-centered dialogue. Preservice teachers can practice asking the case student questions about each component of the IEP rather than the more common practice of speaking around the student. The following are a sample of prompts appropriate for guiding observations in a role play of a transition-focused individualized education program (IEP) meeting:

1. Provide an example of a student-centered comment made during the meeting. Who made the comment and how was it received?
2. Did the student have a voice?
3. How was data used to make decisions?

Provide ample time for participants to prepare for the activity. While the context provides details necessary for the activity, preservice teachers should spend time "fleshing out" the character, in terms of strengths, needs, interests, teaching strategies most often used in class, etc. Preservice teachers can draw from observations during their field experiences or their own time as a student in school, or the perspectives of their own parents and past teachers. For roles that do not match the preservice educator's area of study (i.e., general educator, parent, principal), this planning time may focus on generating questions someone in their role may have or considering what the person brings to the table.

Professor Fields assigns Jordan to be a parent for the first role play. He reads the background she constructed and prepares a list of concerns he would have as the parent. Meanwhile, Alejandra reads the background for the teacher role and decides how she wants to begin the phone call. She identifies relevant details and makes up those she feels are vital but are not provided.

Step 3: Explain the Rules

For preservice teachers to get the most out of role plays, they need to learn what the rules and norms are for the interaction. Rules are "written expectations for

TABLE 2: Example Roles for an IEP meeting

Role	Responsibilities to meeting
School Psychologist	• Explains evaluation results-starting with strengths of the child • Explains how assessments are meaningful and directly related to this particular student's needs • Heavily involved in making sure PLAAFP statements correctly reflect evaluation results • Can provide input on testing accommodations based on experience in evaluation administration
Parent	• Describes child's strengths and needs from home perspective • Keeps focus of conversation on child • Advocates for child • Advise committee on techniques used at home
Special Education Teacher	• Most often is faculty member with most contact with student • Expert in accommodations, modifications, and individualized planning to address specific needs of student • Encourages self-advocacy when student is present
General Education Teacher	• Curriculum focus helps determine to what extent will this child be successful participating in the general education setting (Effects Statement) • May or may NOT have direct contact with student • Can identify needs of staff to support student • Can draw comparisons on students in general education academic performance and this student's data
School district representative	• Facilitator- keeps people on task • Peacekeeper • Notetaker • Facilitates "Active listening" • Ensures meeting conforms to legal requirements of federal statutes • Commits district resources
Child/Student	• Expert on own interests, preferred teaching methods • Should help guide transition conversations

Note: Modified from The IRIS Center. (2019). IEPs: Developing high-quality individualized education programs.

behavior" whereas norms are "familiar ways of interacting in a classroom" (Evertson et al., 2003, p. v). Norms revolving around respect, responsibility, and learning help create the supportive environment necessary for preservice teachers to take the risk of practicing new skills (Evertson et al., 2003). These may seem obvious to faculty, but it is important faculty assume nothing and work with the class to come to common understanding of rules and norms. As in any class, the faculty member may set some rules, but then have preservice teachers work together to create a list of norms for themselves. Prompt the class to consider their professional dispositions, perhaps by studying the department's list, and to draw from experiences in collaboration, both previous personal experience (i.e., how have you been respected and disrespected in the past?) and prior knowledge from coursework. The below list is an example of what a class may develop.

- Take turns speaking
- Practice active listening
- Avoid cultural stereotypes
- Stay student-centered

Once developed, it is helpful to visibly post the rules and norms while preparing for and engaging in role play, and to go over the list immediately prior to interactions. In a course where there are multiple role plays throughout the semester, revisit the list to evaluate its appropriateness each time.

Step 4: Facilitate

Once the context is set, the participants are prepared, and rules have been established, it is time to begin the role play. Depending on the objective of the interaction, it may be extremely clear who initiates dialogue (i.e., teacher calling a parent) or the group may need to determine the initiator, dependent upon their roles and in consultation with

each other (i.e., the principal welcomes everyone to the IEP meeting and begins introductions). The faculty member's role is to observe during these activities, though they may intervene when necessary. Examples of time faculty may intervene include when faculty observe:

1. Culturally stereotypical behaviors and "teachable moments." With a lack of diversity in smaller programs often comes an assumption of some stereotypical norms in different cultures. The thorough exploration of "characters" prior to the activity itself should help control for most of this, but it is important to call out stereotypical behaviors immediately. While some faculty may choose to hold off on any interruptions during the activity, culturally stereotypical behaviors may cause offense to others in the group and shift the dynamics of the activity.

Professor Fields has described a parent as living in a neighborhood where their child observes violence regularly. The preservice teacher assigned this role speaks using an accent and includes gestures linked to gang. Professor Fields steps in immediately to have a discussion about respect, bias, and making assumptions.

2. A group coming to conclusion too easily or stalling out before reaching conclusion. One benefit of small programs that turns into a concern for role play activities is the strong level of comfort cohort members have with one another. Faculty may need to prompt conflict in order for preservice teachers to move out of their comfort zones and address contrasting ideas.

Professor Fields notices one group is no longer talking and appears to be done. She asks each person if they are happy with the conclusion, and then reminds them of important aspects of the role play they have not discussed, or did not consider intentionally. "The parents were really unhappy with the way their son was being treated, does this conclusion placate them or actually solve the root issue?"

3. Someone stepping out of character in the midst of activity.

In the middle of the parent-teacher conference role play, Alfred, playing the role of general educator, stopped the conversation to grab his lunch from his girlfriend standing at the classroom door. The faculty member discussed the behavior right then and there, explaining the "parent" was skipping her lunch break from work to be at this meeting. How might the parent react to seeing you eating in front of her or taking time out to chat with a significant other during her child's meeting?

Step 5: Reflect

Researchers across disciplines agree reflecting after the role play is at least as important as the role play itself (Joyner & Young, 2006; Ronning & Bjorkly, 2019). It can serve many purposes, but ultimately "reflection helps a professional to become more self-regulated, conscious and self-critical" (Ronning & Bjorkly, 2019, p. 417). The reflection process can be completed as a whole group discussion, one-on-one conferencing, independent writing tasks, or some combination of these. You may want to allow time between the activity and the reflection for candidates to digest the experience through contemplation and review of video recordings, if available. Often, faculty provide preservice teachers with feedback before engaging in the reflection process.

Quality reflection requires some structure. Without structure, reflection tends to be a summary of what happened during the role play, not a reflection on the preservice teacher's behavior or thoughts about the interactions. Rubrics can provide that structure. Joyner and Young (2006) used rubrics for self-reflection and peer feedback for medical role plays, including prompts to rate communication skills (rapport, empathy, attitude), patient centeredness, verbal and non-verbal communication, and clinical skills. Rubrics for education role plays may prompt participants to evaluate and provide feedback to peers regarding preparedness, professionalism, and overall engagement in the tasks.

Structure can also be achieved through the use of reflection prompts. Prompts should encourage candidates to reflect role play behaviors, comments, and outcomes as well as next steps. Some reflection prompt examples are:

1. Defend decisions made during the activity or address any conflicts which occurred during the meeting.
2. When you were in the role of parent, how did the teacher's words make you feel? If the words or nonverbal communication upset you or made you proud or happy, why? What exactly sparked these emotions? Did you feel the teacher was invested in your imaginary child? Why or why not?
3. Did you feel heard, and like you heard all others? Was the solution more one person's idea than another? Why or why not?
4. In the professional role, what would you do next? The meeting is over, you walk out the door, how do you follow through with the results of the meeting?

Finally, have the preservice teachers reflect on next steps in their own professional development. A preservice teacher can reflect on how, as a special education teacher, they would go about sharing the results of the implementation of a BIP with the parents. The candidate may also reflect on how, as a student teacher, they will spend some time with the school's behavior specialist to gain more experience with the FBA process. Another preservice teacher may decide to read more research on family-centered planning based on his experience during the meeting.

TABLE 3: IEP meeting considerations

HLP alignment	• Collaboration • Assessment • Social/Emotional/Behavioral • Instruction
Embedded skills	• Data analysis • Data-based decisions • Culturally-responsive approaches • Student-centered dialogue • Active listening
Required roles	• IDEA requirements
Faculty considerations	• Invite Psychology, Counseling, Social Work majors to take this course and play the corresponding roles
Possible course outcomes	• Effectively communicate assessment results to parents and caregivers of young children with special needs • Describe the purpose and forms of assessments • Apply the assessment results to Individual Education Plans (IEP) for development of appropriate goals and objectives for students with disabilities • Effectively communicate state and federal mandates related to assessment of children with disabilities
Assessment tool(s)	• Completed IEP • Individual rating scores • Team rating scores

Sarah was the parent in the role play and is reflecting on the experience. As she considers some of the words used to describe her imaginary son, and how little the teachers listened to her concerns, Sarah realizes how important it is to adjust her behavior so she does not do these things when teaching.

Where to use Role Plays?

Opportunities for role play scenarios can be created in many teacher preparation courses. The four examples presented here: (1) Assessment, (2) Transition, (3) Behavior management, and (4) Collaboration are broad titles that may include a wide range of courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

Assessment courses

When presenting student data to stakeholders, teachers utilize professional dispositions such as active listening, compromise, and demonstrating cultural competence. In fact, facilitating effective meetings with professionals and families has been identified as an HLP (McLesky et al., 2017). In assessment courses, preservice teachers can practice these skills through role-playing IEP meetings with classmates. (See Table 3).

In addition to working on these skills, IEP meetings allow for the application of course content. The special educator, school psychologist, and general education teacher have to understand the assessment data to be able to share it with other members of the team. Data analysis in relation to appropriate goal-setting is a common student learning objective in Assessment courses.

Transition courses

By its very nature, transition, whether it be into kindergarten, college, or the workforce, has to revolve around the desires of a learner and their family (Jones & Gallus, 2016). It can be hard to develop the skill of negotiating what the student wants, what the family wants, student assessment data, and available resources. Role plays can simulate the process and engage preservice teachers in working as a team with community members to set long and short-term transition goals, and create the plan to achieve those goals. (See Table 4).

Behavior management courses

One of the top reasons for exiting the teaching profession is poor behavior management (Burnsting et al., 2014; Grant, 2017). Role play activities such as phone

TABLE 4: Transition planning considerations

HLP alignment	• Collaboration • Assessment • Social/Emotional/Behavioral • Instruction
Embedded skills	• Student & family-centered planning • Culturally-responsive approaches • Active listening
Required roles	• Special Education teacher • School counselor • Community members such as employers
Faculty considerations	• Allow preservice teachers time to explore actual community resources in their neighborhoods • Invite guests from the community join the sessions • Allow Counseling majors to take this course and play the corresponding role
Possible course outcomes	• Describe self-determination and how is it fostered in adolescents and young adults with disabilities • Effectively involve families in the transition planning of children with disabilities • Demonstrate culturally sensitive practices in transition planning • Identify community resources necessary for effective transition planning
Assessment tool(s)	• Completed Transition plan • Community member feedback form

calls to parents and meetings to discuss functional behavioral assessments (FBA) can provide multiple opportunities for addressing non-compliant behaviors in the classroom. The FBA, specifically, can include multiple cross-curricular connections. (See Table 5).

Collaboration courses

Faculty within our SSEP find that collaboration skills of preservice teachers are difficult to assess, but they are vital for success in the classroom (Ricci & Fingon, 2017). Whether a course concentrates on the relationships with other professionals or with parents, key elements must include active listening, problem-solving, negotiating, respectfully disagreeing, sharing ideas, and asking questions (McLeskey et al., 2017). Role play in a collaboration course can consist of scenarios similar to those of other courses addressed above, including phone calls home. While the primary objective in the collaboration course would be to improve preservice teachers' communication and collaboration skills, scenarios can easily help meet secondary objectives related to diversity, social-emotional needs and concerns, and instruction. (See Table 6 on Page 17).

Lessons Learned

Though role plays clearly have a place in teacher education, they are not a panacea and create challenges of their own. First, role plays cannot be the only practice-based learning opportunity preservice teachers experience in their preparation. They are good for early experiences to practice skills, for considering situations from multiple perspectives, and for building comfort with the unknown, but they are not a replacement for working with real learners. Role plays do not bring in all real-life variables of the classroom. Faculty can use role plays in combination with other practice-based learning opportunities.

A challenge of using role plays is the resources involved in creating them, especially for small programs who have fewer faculty to collaborate in creating role plays. There are few role play resources that can be picked up and used without adjustment of any kind, which means faculty are either creating role plays from scratch or spending time adjusting existing case study resources to make them into role play scenarios. Small program faculty tend to have higher teaching loads and teach a broader range of courses than in larger programs, making the investment of time an obstacle. Table 1 lists resources to help get started. Becoming a member of the Small Special Education Program Caucus (SSEPC) of the Teacher Education Division (TED) of the Council for

TABLE 5: FBA/BIP considerations

HLP alignment	• Collaboration • Assessment • Social/Emotional/Behavioral
Embedded skills	• Observational skills • Qualitative writing • Student-centered dialogue • Culturally-responsive approaches • Active listening
Required roles	• Special Education teacher • General Education teacher • School psychologist • Behavior specialist • Parent/Guardian • Student (depending on age of case student)
Faculty considerations	• Explicit instruction in A-B-C analysis and fidelity checks should be completed prior to observations and meetings • Allow ABA and Psychology majors to take this course and play the corresponding roles
Possible course outcomes	• Implement procedures for conducting functional assessments and developing appropriate behavior support plans • Evaluate the complexity of factors (social, educational, home, assistive technology and biological) influencing a child's classroom functioning • Evaluate community-based and internet-based sources of services, networks and organizations regarding children with emotional and behavioral disorders
Assessment tool(s)	• Completed FBA and BIP • Reflection journal

Exceptional Children (CEC) would help faculty find others to collaborate with in developing role plays.

A critical component in the success of a role play is the existing relationship between the preservice teachers. Individuals who know each other well may find it harder to engage as if they were strangers (as in teacher-to-parent role plays) or in roles with different levels of power (administrator-teacher; teacher-paraprofessional). When preparation programs are designed in cohorts, which is common in small programs, this is exacerbated. Regardless of existing relationships, many preservice teachers find it difficult to engage with peers in roles that are adversarial, making it difficult to mimic the problem-solving and collaboration required for real life scenarios. Therefore, faculty can provide more rich contexts to help preservice teachers feel invested in their role. Consider including a bulleted list of what each individual wants and cares about for easy reference during the role play. Alternatively, consider pairing candidates with on-campus drama clubs or bringing in outside stakeholders or faculty to play roles.

A final concern with using role plays is assessment. If multiple role plays are happening at one time, there is a lot happening in the classroom, with different pods of learners engaged and talking at different parts of the process. The faculty member needs to be walking among the groups, listening, perhaps prompting if conversations are fizzling out prematurely. Ultimately, the preservice teachers are practicing a skill, and the faculty member will never know if they used the skills correctly unless they observe each of the role play groups in their entirety, presenting a time constraint. However, the same concern about assessment can be said about any form of rehearsal and practice-based learning opportunity. To address this, faculty can build questions to prompt preservice teachers to reflect on their performance, with self and peer assessment serving as feedback to faculty.

In education there are no silver bullets, and no single instructional strategy is appropriate for all situations. Role play is one strategy for providing preservice teachers with opportunities to practice skills in a protected and supportive

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environment, and it compliments other forms of rehearsal and practice in preparing quality teachers. The complexity of real-world scenarios in role plays allows preservice teachers to practice a wide range of skills, even if the primary context and application is focused in one area. Role plays may align with one or two HLPs by design but note it would be easy to structure the role play such that all HLP areas of practice were incorporated. Preservice teachers need to be able to engage in the complex tasks of everyday teaching, where HLPs are not in silos but work together. Role play provides this opportunity.

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TABLE 6: Phone calls home considerations

HLP alignment	• Collaboration
Embedded skills	• Verbal communication skills • Problem-solving • Compromising • Culturally-responsive approaches • Active listening
Required roles	• Special Education teacher • Parent/Guardian
Faculty considerations	• Each person in the scenario has a note card with his/her own perspective • Parent/Guardian does not know why teacher is calling, teacher does not know what information parent may have • In order to remove nonverbal cues from distracting participants, position partners out of view, similar to phone call environment
Possible course outcomes	• Demonstrate communication strategies and approaches when providing input to colleagues as part of an interdisciplinary team. • Explain the importance of productive relationships and interactions among school, home, and community to enhance student learning.
Assessment tool(s)	• Disposition checklist- classmates participating as observers can complete this • Reflection journal

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Program Redesign to Prepare Transformative Special Educators

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ABSTRACT
Teacher educators are in a unique position to prepare future educators to disrupt the status quo and enact changes that ensure equitable access to educational opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities. It is critical that those who prepare future special education teachers (SETs) ensure they are prepared to engage with the broader school community to foster inclusivity and positive outcomes for all students, in addition to designing specially designed instruction (SDI) responsive to the unique learning needs of individual students with disabilities. Addressing this task requires candidates who are prepared to employ high leverage and evidence-based practices, culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy, and universal design for learning. In this article, we describe how one small Department of Special Education sought to reinvent its program to center anti-racism and anti-ableism to inspire the next generation of SETs to adopt a transformative vision for public education. The result was a cohesive course roadmap that employs a "common trunk" of classes aligned with differentiated coursework needed for specialization for each credential that centers these principles while reducing assignments. The newly aligned roadmaps ensure candidates in our programs will be ready to situate their work with students with identified disabilities within the context of the broader goals of public education.

KEYWORDS
Course alignment, culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy, program revision, special education, teacher preparation, universal design for learning

As Shaull (2000) reminds us in his forward to Friere's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* "There's no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education either functions as an instrument . . . to bring about conformity or freedom" (p. 34). This observation is apparent in the structures of public education today. In the United States, public education was established as a means of ensuring citizens could participate in the great democratic experiment (Kober & Rentner, 2020). Concerns about the average voter's ability to understand the functioning of the government and to participate in the democratic process resulted in calls for the development of public education systems and influenced the structure of the systems.

Although public education has been offered for free, it has not always been freely accessible to all. Early public-school students were primarily white, male, and able-bodied (Annamma, 2015). This resulted in white, able-bodied men in positions of power reinforcing the status quo and the barriers to keep out students of color and students with disabilities (Bahena et al., 2012). Societal movements in the mid-20th century disrupted this status quo and led to changes to public schooling, including mandates to desegregate schools and educate students with disabilities. Despite these movements, we

continue to grapple with the legacy of racism and ableism in public schools. Students with disabilities and/or from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds continue to fare worse than their non-disabled white peers (Fuchs et al., 2018).

Addressing these issues requires *transformative* educators who seek to restructure classrooms and schools so that they welcome and celebrate these historically marginalized learners. It is not possible to be neutral in these matters. One cannot be *not r*acist or *not* ableist (Kendi, 2019). If the goal is to enact changes that ensure equitable access to educational opportunities for all students, special education teachers (SETs) must understand the historical roots that separated general and special education students along with CLD students from white students. They must explicitly adopt anti-ableist and anti-racist attitudes to address these causes.

> "Transformative educators … seek to restructure classrooms and schools so that they welcome and celebrate these historically marginalized learners."

Three Pillars of Preparation for Transformative Special Education Teachers

In response to these historical issues, a growing body of research has emerged on three interrelated areas of pedagogical practice that seek to ensure *all* students benefit from public education: evidence-based practices (EBPs), culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy (CRSP), and universal design for learning (UDL). The field of special education has long emphasized the importance of responding to individual students' unique learning needs, relying on empirical practices to identify the strategies most likely to support student learning. Over time this growing body of empirical evidence has resulted in the establishment of evidence-based practices (EBPs) to improve student outcomes (Cook & Cook, 2011) and the identification of high-leverage practices (HLPs) SETs entering the field must master (McLeskey, et al., 2022). This history of empiricism focused attention on the role of SETs in critically analyzing the effectiveness of their instruction through ongoing progress monitoring and data-based decision-making. SETs have been taught to individualize instruction with specific emphasis on the understanding that what works for one student may not work for another student.

Although the HLP/EBP movement has focused on the development of effective instructional strategies to meet the unique needs of students receiving special education services, CRSP (Ladson-Billings, 2021) and UDL (CAST, 2018) have sought to remove barriers to accessing general education curriculum experienced by historically marginalized students. CRSP centers the experiences of CLD students. This is done by honoring students' funds of knowledge in order to engage them in authentic experiences relevant to their lives outside of school. These practices are in contrast to educational practices that have historically sought to assimilate CLD students into the status quo defined by white, middle-class, Americans. Not unlike CRSP, UDL seeks to ensure access to the general education curriculum by providing multiple options for engagement, representation, and action and expression in the classroom. The UDL framework stresses students may need to access and use information differently to meet the same learning goals. In contrast, ableist notions that all students must engage in the same tasks and produce the same end products to demonstrate learning. Research in CRSP and UDL has identified many practices that engage students from diverse backgrounds and/or with differing abilities in meaningful learning (Aceves & Orosco, 2014; Israel et al., 2014).

These three pillars are essential for the preparation of transformative educators, so much so that the pillars and practices are referenced in federal education policy (CAST, 2022) and state credentialing and licensure requirements (Muñiz, 2019). SETs are tasked, therefore, not just with creating specially-designed instruction (SDI) that is responsive to the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, but also with engaging with the broader school community to foster inclusivity and positive outcomes for all students. While other papers address the critically important work of understanding effective teacher preparation practices (e.g., see Dunst et al., 2020, for a synthesis of the literature), in this article, we discuss how one small Department of Special Education is working to reinvent its program to center anti-racism and anti-ableism to inspire the next generation of SETs to adopt a transformative vision for public education.

Context

We want to acknowledge that the work described in this article is time-intensive, and faculty in small programs may be limited in their ability to engage in similar work given the many demands on their time. Several factors

converged to create both a supportive context and a sense of urgency for this work within our department. First, it is important to note that this work took place in a California teacher preparation program. Compared to most other states and territories, Californian schools rely more heavily on segregated service provision for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). According to data from the U.S. Department of Education (2022), California is in the bottom quarter of states and territories for percentage of students with disabilities considered to be fully included with peers (educated in the general education classroom at least 80% of the day). Additionally, California schools are exceptionally diverse, which is reflected in the data for students receiving special education services. California has the highest percentage of any state of students receiving special education services that are classified as English learners (~26%) and one of the lowest percentage of students with IEPs who are identified as white (~21%).

Historically, our department has always centered equity and inclusion work in our preparation of pre-service special educators. Like many SET preparation programs, our program was centered on preparing candidates that would support positive and inclusive changes for students with disabilities in our community. However, our program redesign occurred at a time when educational researchers, advocates, and our communities called for an even greater focus on not just inclusion, but to address systemic racism in school systems. This helped in reshaping our program to focus on the intersecting issues of equity in schools and led to concurrent conversations about embedding anti-racism/anti-ableism in coursework, addressing state-level changes to our credential program requirements, and responding to feedback provided by our candidates. Within this context, we were motivated to identify ways to strengthen our program and we received support from the college in the form of summer funding to do so. Each of these factors influenced our program redesign and are described in the following sections.

College-Wide Conversations About and Commitment to Anti-Racism

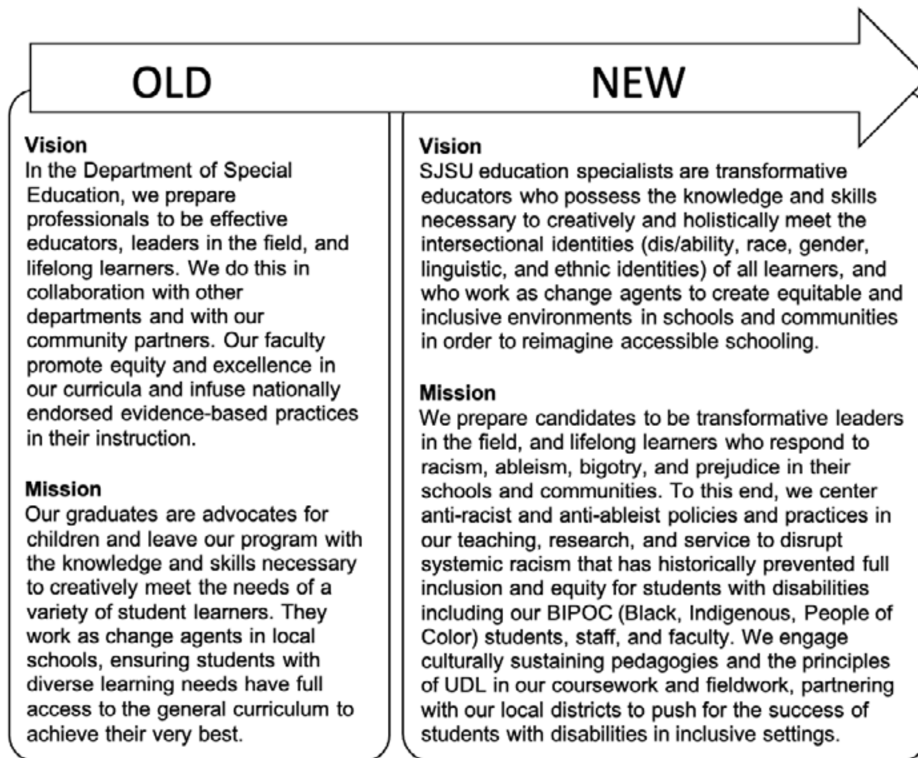
Against the backdrop of ongoing racial violence and political unrest that motivated the Black Lives Matter movement, faculty across our College of Education engaged in conversations regarding the importance of centering anti-racist and anti-ableist ideologies in all programs. These conversations led the college leadership (i.e., the Dean, Associate Dean, and Council of Department Chairs) to request all departments reflect upon their programs to identify possible mechanisms reinforcing racist and ableist ideologies and to develop strategies to disrupt these mechanisms. In our department, we agreed that the first step in this effort would involve a revision of our program's vision and mission statements. This work occurred as an iterative process in which faculty reflected on the college's vision and mission statement as well as our existing departmental vision and mission statements. We also reviewed statements from other programs, which allowed us to consider what might be viewed as essential features of special education that were not captured in the broader college mission. We engaged in several rounds of discussions as we rewrote the statements. Once the statements were drafted, feedback was solicited from critical stakeholders, including the college leadership, our community partners, and advisory board members (e.g.., district representatives, including directors of special education, principals, and teachers), and current and former students.

As can be seen in Figure 1, although the old vision and mission statements included language about candidates leaving our program as "effective educators," "leaders," and "change agents," they were lacking explicit statements about the purpose of this work and emphasized working with individual students. Faculty realized the mission and vision statements did not include explicit language around the SET candidates' roles in promoting equity and inclusion in schools, nor did the previous statements include explicit wording about preparation to work with the diversity of the students they would encounter in schools, beyond noting the diversity in abilities. The revised vision and mission statements responded to these concerns by highlighting the goal of producing SETs who engage in transformative work that is responsive to students' intersectional identities and who use their knowledge and skills to create equitable and inclusive environments for accessible schooling. These revisions contextualize the work of SETs to include both individual work with students with disabilities and engagement with the broader community to create schools that are accepting of all students and set the stage for coursework changes.

State-Level Changes to Credential Requirements

Fortuitously, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) issued new standards regarding the preparation of SETs at the same time these conversations on anti-racism and anti-ableism were occurring across the college and in our department. The credential changes were influenced in part by the California Statewide Task Force on Special Education report (2015)

FIGURE 1: Old and New Vision and Mission Statements



which identified teacher preparation elements that contributed to barriers in establishing inclusive programs and supporting the diverse student population across the state. Changes were made to the authorization statements of the three credentials we offered in our program: mild to moderate support needs (MMSN), extensive support needs (ESN), and early childhood special education (ECSE). These changes expanded the range of student credentials SETs could be assigned to teach. Previously, students were assigned to SETs based on the disability category listed in their IEPs, leading to some students being relegated to self-contained classrooms based on their disability and not their learning needs. Instead of disability categories, students are now assigned to SETs based on the required level of support. This change allowed us to move away from talking about prescriptive approaches based on disability categories in our courses and focus on ways to provide support for students based on level of needs, allowing a greater emphasis on the use of HLP/EBPs, CRSP, and UDL.

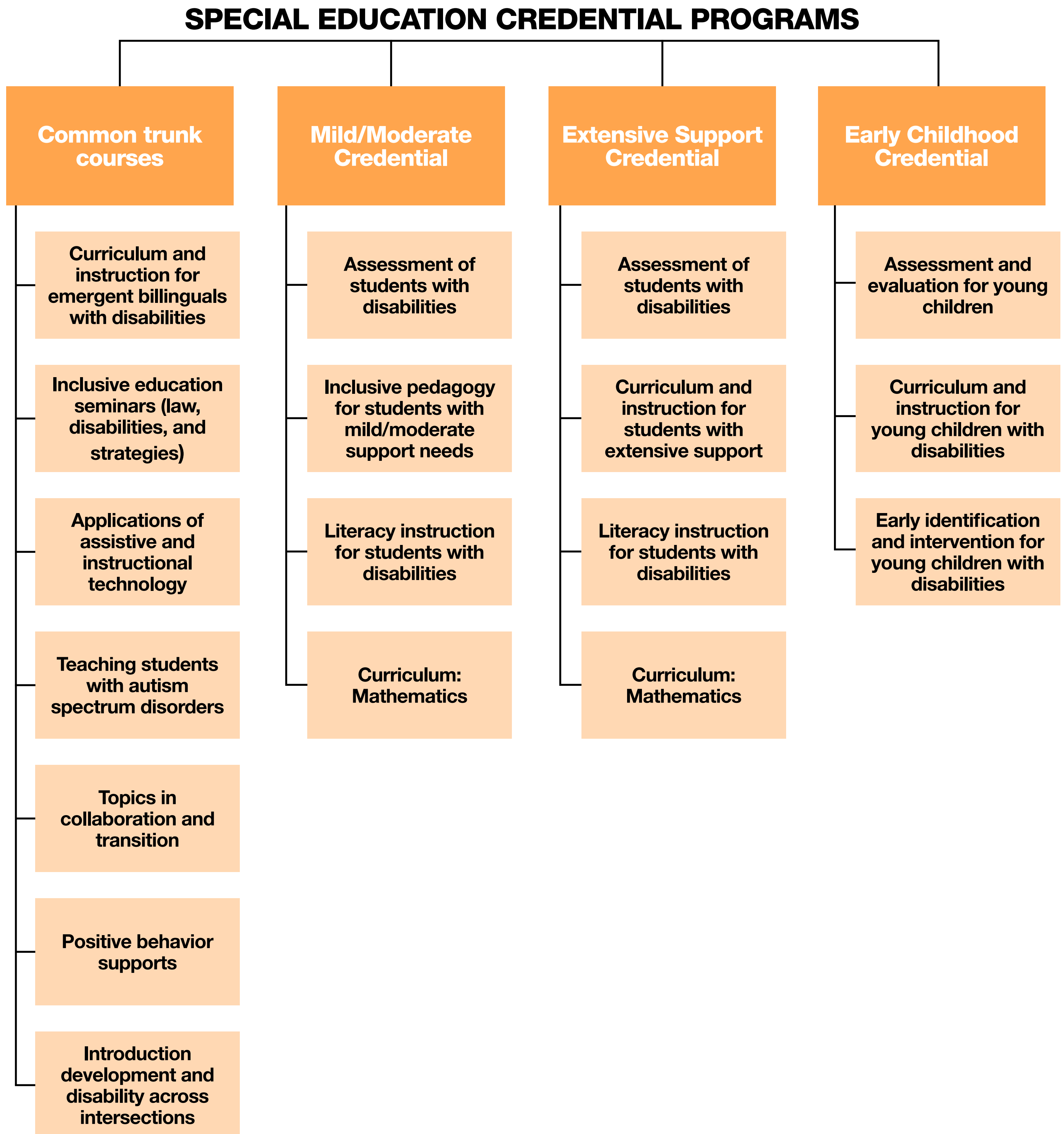
In addition to changes in credential authorization statements, CTC also implemented additional fieldwork components which included increasing the required hours of fieldwork, requiring fieldwork in both general education and special education placements, and mandating the passing of a Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA). These changes provided an opportunity for us to create an early fieldwork course that included general education and inclusive education placements, supporting our mission of preparing candidates to be advocates for inclusion in our communities. Often candidates leaving our program remarked that the students in programs where they found jobs were "not ready" for inclusion. Their remarks indicated to us that they were unsure how to meaningfully provide services in inclusive placements given their lack of experience in such placements –an issue that is not surprising given California's reliance on providing services in more restrictive placements. By pairing inclusive fieldwork placements with coursework on inclusive strategies (i.e., how to implement HLP/EBPs using CRSP and UDL strategies), our hope is candidates will leave our program better prepared to advocate for and implement changes to their future employment settings that will support more inclusive opportunities for students with IEPs.

Similarly, the addition of TPA to our credentialing requirements led to a consideration of how we support candidates in demonstrating specific competencies in coursework and fieldwork placements. Using the TPA as a summative assessment, we backward planned how and when candidates would demonstrate specific skills in their preparation program. The process of addressing the TPA led to in-depth discussions on the alignment of coursework and fieldwork (described below) and challenged us to identify how skills would be developed across courses offered concurrently and sequentially.

Practical and Logistical Considerations

Finally, as we were engaging in this work to envision how we could build a more robust program for our candidates, we were faced with practical and logistical considerations associated with running three credential programs within a small department, particularly ensuring that each course would enroll enough students to avoid cancelation. Additionally, students expressed frustration with what was perceived to be busy work, with the length of time needed to complete our program (2 years), and with the lack of summer courses. The reality was that most of our students were interns who sought to take courses in the summer when they

FIGURE 2: Common Trunk and Unique Coursework for the Three Credential Programs



were not teaching. Because faculty did not engage in course alignment, it was also common for major assignments to be due at the same time in multiple courses. This limited SET candidates' ability to engage meaningfully in the work we were asking of them. Program evaluation found students were not independently making connections between courses (e.g., understanding how assessment practices learned in one course impacted lesson plan development in another course). Based on these observations, we decided to take an intentional approach to planning coursework and the major assignments were used to evaluate student progress in the courses.

To address both state-level changes and student and faculty concerns, we established a "common trunk" of coursework for students in all three credential programs (see Figure 2). The courses in the common trunk addressed HLP/EBPs that are common across credentials, such as planning for collaboration and transition, using assistive and instructional technology, and supporting multilingual learners. This common trunk provided an opportunity to ensure all SET candidates, regardless of their credential area, developed a solid foundation of knowledge and skills in the three pillar areas deemed important to achieving the vision and mission of the department in preparing transformative SETs (HLP/EBPs, CRSP, and UDL). Additionally, this common trunk allowed for innovations in curriculum development, pushing our instructors to work together to ensure the content in each of the common courses addressed the learning needs of candidates in each of the credential programs. The remaining differentiated courses enabled students to gain deeper familiarity with the practices more salient to their future professional roles. For each credential, these differentiated courses included assessment and methods courses. These changes allowed us to shorten the program to three semesters, and with increased summer coursework, students could complete the program in one calendar year.

This alignment work, described in the next section, also addressed the issue of many assignments due at the end of the semester. As instructors of both common trunk and differentiated courses collaboratively reviewed and revised their syllabi, it became evident that some assignments could be eliminated or restructured to fit within a learning progression across courses taken in the same semester. Also, this process reduced the number of assignments due at the end of the semester. We engaged in deep conversations about how our courses supported students' successful entry into fieldwork and completion of the new TPA, and about ways which our curricula promoted our core values of anti-racism, disrupting deficit notions of disability, promoting UDL, and using HLP/EBPs. Additionally, focusing on the learning progressions of the students allowed us to identify opportunities to use textbooks across several courses to maximize student learning and reduce student textbook costs.

Enacting the Three Pillars

To establish a foundation for preparing high-quality SETs, all program development work was built on and guided by the three pillars of our program. New SETs must enter classrooms with the knowledge and skills necessary for serving diverse student populations in a variety of learning environments. Our goal is to graduate candidates that can address the holistic needs of their students and consider their academic, behavioral, and social-emotional wellness. Guided by recommendations for enacting responsive practices (see Paris & Alim, 2017) our coursework redesign considered the cross-pollination of the UDL Guidelines (CAST, 2018) and CRSP, that is to not only develop the candidates' abilities to implement HLP/EBPs that support positive student outcomes, but to do so in ways that leverage student assets and is responsive and supportive of their cognitive, cultural, and linguistic diversity (Ladson-Billings, 2021). Rather than seeing UDL or CRSP as solutions to issues faced by certain student groups, our approach is meant to prepare candidates to see equity and access as a right for all students. In the next section, we highlight how these areas intersected with examples of how students interact with and implement these pillar areas across multiple courses.

Implementing Evidence-Based and High-Leverage Practices

Mirroring the recommendations in the literature to embed pedagogical development in practice-based settings (see McCleskey et al., 2019), our program redesign systematically developed the candidates' ability for enacting HLP/EBPs as a top priority in course planning and ensured that across courses and semesters key HLP/EBPs were introduced, practiced, and assessed. Although the enactment of contextually situated EBPs in academic disciplines and instructional settings had previously driven our course planning, the adoption of HLPs by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC; McCleskey et al., 2022) shifted the focus to how these practices could be infused across our coursework to reflect the dynamic nature of serving students with disabilities across instructional settings. While EBPs are modeled and practiced in discipline-specific methods courses (e.g., class-wide peer tutoring, dialogic reading in literacy methods), the HLPs are developed across coursework cov-

TABLE 1: Selected Resources for Disability Representation

GENRE	TITLE
Readings by Disabled Authors	
	*Guide Dogs Don't Lead Blind People**
	*Gaining Power Through Communication Access**
	*Lost Cause**
	(M)othering Labeled Children (Cioè-Peña, 2020)
	We're Not Broken: Changing the Autism Conversation (Garcia, 2021)
	Black Disabled Art History 101 (Moore, 2017).
First-Person Narratives	
	Interviews with AAC users
	Interviews with parents of children / young children with disabilities
Non-Traditional Media	
	Crip Camp (Newnham & LeBrecht, 2020)
	Special Books by Special Kids videos (SBSK, 2022)
	Deej (Rooy & Rutenbeck, 2017)
	The Miseducation of Larry P podcast (Romney et al., 2019)
	The Power of 504 (Veltri et al., 1997)
Anti-ableism Assignments	
	Create literacy lesson plan / dialogic reading plan with disability representation
	Create a social (liberatory) narrative with students

*Works included in Disability Visibility (Wong, 2020)

ering assessment (e.g., HLP- multiple forms of information), instructional methods (e.g., HLPs-explicit instruction, scaffolded supports) and educational technology (e.g., HLP-assistive and instructional technology), before being practiced and assessed in two semesters of fieldwork.

Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Pedagogy

Recognizing that home and school experiences for students are equally important for the effective implementation of HLP/EBP, our program embeds CRSP in all coursework. CRSP preserves linguistic and cultural pluralism by honoring and centering the stories and practices of people of color while rejecting the notion that their variation from the dominant culture is pathological (Paris & Alim, 2017). Scholars have suggested educators can practice CRSP by developing social and cultural awareness, building a classroom community based on trust and a positive mindset, using students' cultures and funds of knowledge to promote deep learning and higher-order thinking, and raising critical consciousness of the students and staff through rigorous interrogation of the contexts of learning (Ladson-Billings, 2021; Paris & Alim, 2017). Creatively and holistically meeting the intersectional needs of students requires that SETs select and implement HLP/EBPs considering both the learning needs and the cultural contexts. For example, candidates implementing a social story intervention (EBP) for teaching social skills must also consider the cultural norms and the student's funds of knowledge that intersect with social development.

By seating "disability at the table of social justice and multicultural education" (Connor, 2012, p. 1), the faculty added ability to the CRSP power matrix of whiteness, maleness, heteronormativity, and wealth. This broadened CRSP lens allowed us to draw parallels between the experiences of individuals from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds and those with disabilities. The faculty identified two paths to further this endeavor: (a) faculty development and (b) coursework modification.

Although not all faculty had expertise in this area, multiple supports for engaging in this work were provided

at university, college, and department levels. Many of the faculty joined a college-wide initiative to read anti-racist materials including books like *White Fragility* (DiAngelo, 2018) and *How to be an Anti-Racist* (Kendi, 2019) to raise critical consciousness and be able to examine power and privilege in educational systems. To increase the focus on establishing anti-ableist course materials, a college-wide book study of *Disability Visibility* (Wong, 2020), an anthology of work by disabled authors describing their experiences with disability was offered. Participation in this book club prompted a discussion of departmental policy requiring the use of person-first language (i.e., "people with disabilities," "person with hearing loss") versus the use of identity-first language (i.e., "disabled person," "deaf individual") when referring to the disabled community, ultimately leading us to update the policy to reflect that the decision on language must be informed primarily by opinions of disabled people. These opportunities also prompted a discussion about including the voices of people with disabilities in our coursework to highlight contentions between special education programs and the disability community.

Coursework Modification

As faculty developed their own social and cultural awareness, they worked to include points of inquiry and praxis throughout course materials, particularly to discuss intersectionality and promote notions of divergence rather than deficit (Banks, 2014; Connor, 2012). For example, faculty decided to include Latina mothers' perspectives in the course on teaching emergent bilinguals through the work of Cioè-Peña (2021). The course also adapted the evidence-based practices originally formulated for monolingual learners to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Additionally, discussions on racial disproportionality and over-representation, restorative justice, and the school-to-prison pipeline were included in courses across the program (Anamma et al., 2014).

Given that the current special education system essentially stems from a deficit paradigm and nearly all the textbook materials echo the medicalized perspective of disability as deficient, unchanging, and essential (Baglieri & Shapiro, 2017), the faculty agreed that it was important to include supplementary materials through additional readings by disabled authors, first-person narratives, non-traditional media materials, and assignments that included disability representation, as shown in Table 1. In addition, the department removed ableist/deficit language from the course titles and descriptions to reflect the new vision and mission statement. For example, we renamed the course *Methodologies for English Learners with and without Disabilities* to *Promoting Access: Teaching for Social Justice at the Intersections of Language and Disability* and the course titled *Curriculum and Instruction for Mild and Moderate Disabilities* to *Inclusive Pedagogy for Students with Mild/Moderate Support Needs.*

By embedding the principles of anti-racism and anti-ableism into assignments we challenged SET candidates to reflect on and transform their understanding of disability and support the development of strategies to connect HLPs/EBPs with CRSP. Several faculty used *Undoing Ableism: Teaching About Disability in K-12 Classrooms* (Baglieri & Lalvani, 2019) to help them consider how to redesign assignments. The discussion of CSRP was included in multiple courses to ensure candidates considered all the ways to reflect on and celebrate multiple identities, including disability. For example, faculty teaching literacy instruction agreed to require SET candidates to develop literacy lessons that included disability representation. Similarly, the course in curriculum and instruction included an assignment to develop a social (liberatory) narrative that uses anti-ableist perspectives to address a social or behavior challenge.

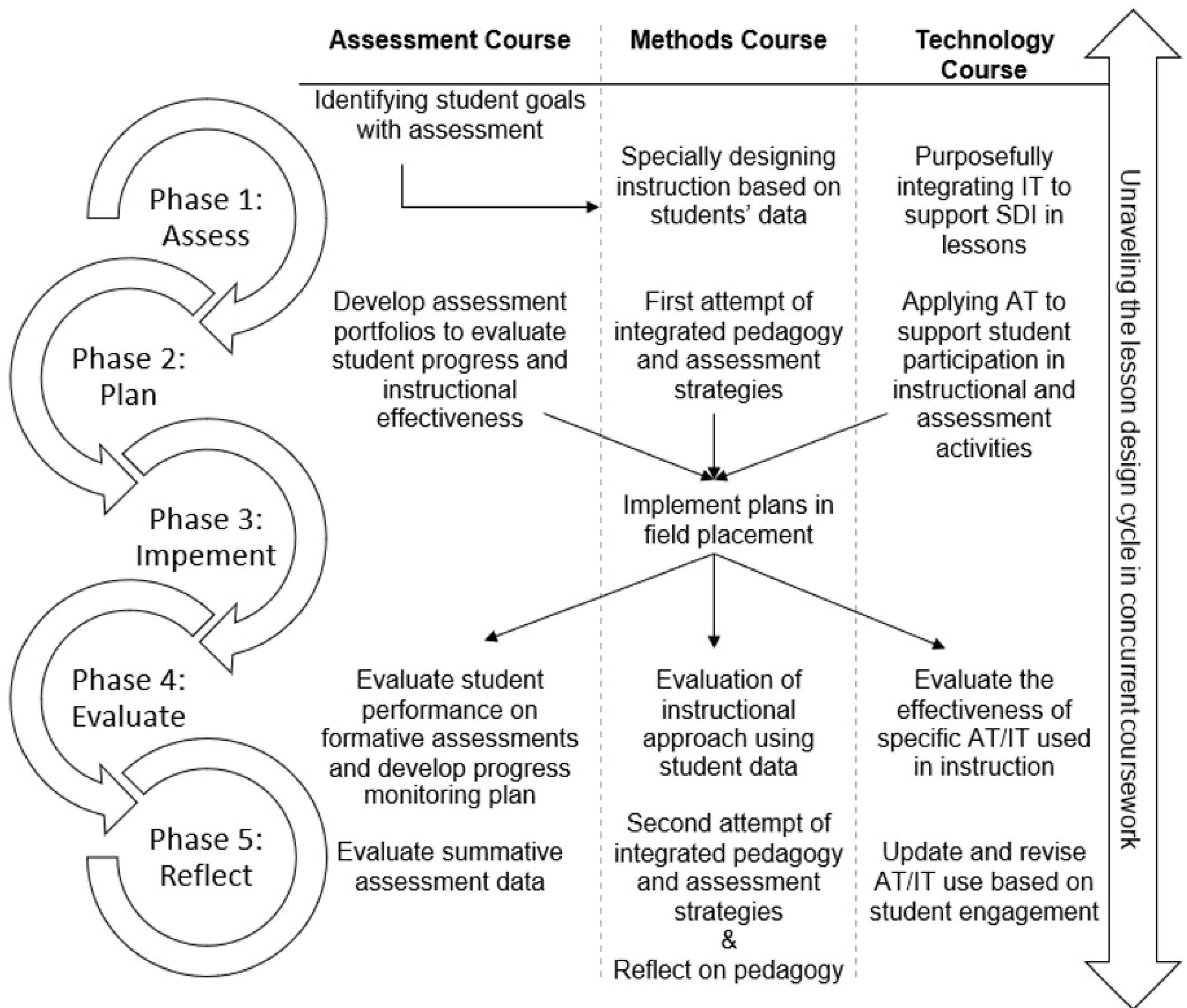
Universal Design for Learning

As part of our vision to produce SETs "who work as change agents to create equitable and inclusive environments in schools and communities in order to reimagine accessible schooling," we adopted UDL as the third pillar of our program. UDL and the UDL Guidelines (CAST, 2018) offer educators a framework for proactively designing learning environments that are meaningfully accessible and inclusive to all students (Hall et al., 2012) and provide a useful and consistent framework for considering each element of curriculum development and instruction (Rao et al., 2014).

Implementation of the UDL Guidelines supports candidates to consider *how* students will be assessed across lessons or units of study, *what* methods and materials they will use to deliver content to students and communicate *why* students are engaging with or learning about specific topics or skills. For example, when considering using a social story (an EBP), candidates would consider how this social story might be constructed (e.g., paper book vs digital book) and when it would be used with students (e.g., whole group versus individual readings) based on their understanding of the learning needs of both individual students and the whole class.

Like many SET preparation programs, we offered separate classes that developed SET candidates' knowledge and skills for addressing the assessment, instructional, and social/behavioral aspects of classrooms, likely leading to some of the disconnect we observed in

FIGURE 3: Assignment Alignment Across One Semester of Coursework



Note: SDI = specially designed instruction; IT = instructional technology; AT = assistive technology

our candidates. Thoughtful and meaningful incorporation of UDL practices provided us with a consistent thread to make connections between multiple courses and support our candidates in considering all elements of learning environments.

Connecting the Pillars Across Coursework

In our program redesign, our goal was to ensure that candidates saw each HLP/EBP modeled in their coursework as an interconnected part of the teaching and learning cycle. Historically, each program pillar was emphasized in individual courses and programs, but not necessarily as systematically as in our redesign. While all instructors agreed that the principles of our program pillars should be embedded throughout candidates' programs, it became clear through both candidate feedback and early fieldwork observations that candidates were not developing their understanding or skills for enacting a data-based instructional cycle that effectively enacted HLP/EBPs, UDL, and CRSP. As we examined the courses offered in the first semester of the program, we recognized that it would be possible to deepen candidates' understanding and abilities for enacting these pillars by aligning assignments across our traditional special education coursework offerings.

This included an assessment course (differentiated for credential programs), a methods course (differentiated for credential programs), and a course on educational technology (common trunk) taught in the same semester to better simulate an instructional cycle and the enactment of the ELP/EBPs. This work formed the foundation for courses on positive behavior support, collaboration and co-teaching, teaching emergent bilingual students, and literacy in later semesters. The pillars of our program helped guide this alignment as we reflected on the ways in which candidates needed to be prepared to use assessment to guide the instruction design.

We offer the following example to illustrate how preparation programs can build on foundations of HLP/EBPs, UDL, and CRSP to align assignments across multiple courses as candidates (a) engage in a data-driven instructional planning process in their assessment course, (b) thoughtfully engage learners in flexibly planned and culturally responsive lessons in their curriculum and instruction class, and (c) provide flexible means of representation and action and expression through technology in a course on educational technology. In coordinating across concurrently offered courses, instructors can reinforce the connections between each step of the instructional cycle while at the same time remaining focused on developing candidates' proficiency in one step in this process. Figure 3 highlights how topics are covered in these courses and how assignments completed in one class are purposefully built upon in another course to highlight the connections between assessment, instructional planning, purposeful use of AT/IT, implementation of lessons, and reflection of pedagogical efficacy.

In the assessment course, UDL and CRSP encourage the adoption of an assets-based orientation to student development as candidates consider how students experience assessment strategies (representation), the ways in which students demonstrate their learning (action/ expression), and their motivations to participate in assessment activities (engagement). We, therefore, wanted candidates to establish robust assessment plans, rooted in established HLP/EBPs, for planning and crafting IEPs and flexible methods for formative and summative assessment of student progress toward IEP and curricular goals. Knowing that candidates would be developing instructional plans and strategies for using assistive and instructional technology in other courses, the assignments in the assessment class asked students to add an evaluation plan to their instructional plan assignment completed in their methods course. They would submit this evaluation plan both in their assessment course and in their methods course. Similarly, they were asked to consider how to employ AT/IT to ensure students have the tools necessary to demonstrate their learning within their instructional plan, which they submitted both as part of their assessment course and assistive technology course. To manage student workload, the iterations of these assignments were spread out over the semester (See Figure 3).

Meanwhile, in the methods course, students developed instructional plans that included considerations for cultural responsiveness of their materials, instructional sequencing, and enactment of HLP/EBPs. In preparing to implement each of these pillars, SET candidates are tasked with taking what they know about their students, based on available data and observations (i.e., assessments) and designing learning environments that are culturally responsive and inclusive for all learners. Preparing candidates to consider the cross-pollination of CRSP and the UDL Guidelines for engagement and representation allows programs to highlight that engagement is not only captured at the beginning of lessons and units but is maintained over time by interesting and culturally relevant lessons that ensure students have barrier-free access to instructional activities and materials. Preparing candidates to approach lesson planning and implementation in this way reinforces instruction in special education, or the enactment of HLP/EBPs, most definitely does not take a one-size-fits-all approach, but instead takes an individualized approach that offers all students options and varied pathways for developing new knowledge and skills. To support candidates' developing skill in using UDL to promote student access to the curriculum, they first begin developing their instructional plan in the methods class, then consider how to enhance this plan with AT/IT, which they submit in the educational technology course.

Connecting components of theory and practice across courses took thoughtful planning and was guided not only by UDL and CSRP but also by the HLP/EBPs in discipline-specific and common trunk courses. To further highlight assessment, instructional practices, and the use of technology are all interconnected and not standalone elements of instruction, we purposefully allowed students to begin a comprehensive assignment in one course and continue to add elements to the assignment in other courses. Through this process, students could see how all these instructional practices (i.e., the three pillars) come together to support student success across learning environments.

Putting it all Together

Through the engagement of all our faculty, the program redesign resulted in

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a combination of coursework and fieldwork intended to enrich candidates' understanding of their role in meeting the vision of public schools. For new SETs, the ability to systematically choose and implement HLP/EBPs in a manner that is both culturally sustaining and responsive while maximizing UDL and individualized support develops over time and with guidance from mentors. It was important, therefore, that the program redesign highlight that HLP/EBPs, UDL, and CRSP are not *add-ons* or *standalone* components of curricular development for students with disabilities. Rather than narrowly conceiving our work as *remediation of disabilities*, our revised program reflects the important role SETs play in supporting disabled students' learning as well as their full participation in all aspects of schooling.

Another important outcome of this work has been the development of a streamlined program, allowing candidates to complete their credentials in one calendar year (summer, fall, and spring semesters). Through our intentional collaboration, we were able to remove unnecessary redundancies while highlighting cross-curricular alignment, allowing students to deepen their understanding of how to employ HLP/EBPs, CRSP, and UDL in an integrated fashion. These changes require ongoing collaboration between faculty members to ensure that the course syllabi continue to complement each other and to ensure each of the three semesters build upon each other (e.g., building upon the curriculum unit assignment described in Figure 3 to include positive behavior support strategies and collaborative strategies for instruction with co-teachers in future semesters). As candidates progress in this program, we intend to monitor their outcomes to determine the impact of this course alignment on their ability to demonstrate effective teaching practices in their final fieldwork placements.

Program redesign is not necessarily easy work, but this important shift ensures disabled students are provided the best opportunity for in school and post-school success while also communicating to the entire community that all students are valued and supported. Elements of diversity and divergence are to be celebrated as they allow each student to authentically engage in our democratic experiment.

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Working Smarter: Using Universal Design for Learning to Spiral Curriculum in Small Special Education Preparation Programs

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ABSTRACT

Although small teacher education preparation programs (STEPP) may struggle to implement robust program design frameworks compared to their larger preparation program peers, a collaborative design can help smaller programs with resource limitations. This collaboration can facilitate the design of effective and efficient teacher preparation programs (TPP) with a spiraled curriculum. Through scaffolding in TPPs, a spiral of support is defined as the process of learning continuous threads of information, gradually building to content mastery. These scaffolded components include case studies, role playing/modeling/feedback, and mentoring within the UDL framework. The use of case studies throughout a TPP provides a "continuum" of learning to prepare teachers to develop knowledge, skills, and practical experience within a diverse K-12 student population. Given a spiral of instruction to include role-play, modeling, feedback, and mentorship, preservice teachers can also engage in real world teaching and learning that go beyond the constraints of a classroom.

KEYWORDS
Higher education, small programs, special education, teacher preparation

Drs. Mullins and Mendez end the academic year frustrated with the design of their special education teacher preparation program. As the only two special education teacher educators in the College of Education, they realize they have limited capacity to revamp the program. Further, with limited resources, they do not have the ability to add faculty or make large purchases. They know their pre- and in-service teachers need more support, but it often feels impossible to meet all of their needs and goals within the program. Given these challenges, Drs. Mullins and Mendez begin brainstorming ways to support their future educators in a way that taps into already available, or easy to access resources, while also utilizing best practices.

To prepare special educators who are knowledgeable, resilient, effective, and capable, it is imperative that initial teacher preparation training and ongoing support are in place (Belknap & Taymans, 2015; Bishop et al., 2010). Therefore, special education teacher educators are challenged to develop models of instruction that support resiliency and knowledge. However, small teacher education preparation programs (STEPP) may struggle to implement robust program design frameworks compared to their larger preparation program peers. Fewer faculty, fewer specialized course offerings, less course delivery flexibility, and community expectations require different strategies, insights, and ideas to maximize learning. Through a collaborative design, this paper will demonstrate how smaller programs with resource limitations can design effective and efficient teacher preparation programs (TPP) through a spiral of curriculum. A spiral of support is defined as the process of learning

continuous threads of information, gradually building to content mastery. In addition, building TPPs through a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) lens realistically supports the requirements and resilience needed by qualified special educators. Using UDL as an instructional framework addresses a range of teaching and learning challenges and the design of inclusive learning environments can meet a wider range of students' needs. Further, UDL can be leveraged as a way to ensure instruction is accessible by creating a spiral of supports that allows smaller programs to get the biggest "bang for their buck" with limited faculty and resources.

Universal Design for Learning in Higher Education

Given that teacher satisfaction with preservice teacher training can be predictive of early-career attrition (DeAngelis et al., 2013), it is imperative that TPPs are designed with quality instruction. One such way to ensure that instruction is designed to meet all learners is through the UDL framework. The UDL framework is based on three principles: (a) multiple means of representation, (b) multiple means of engagement, and (c) multiple means of action and expression (CAST, 2018). Multiple means of representation occur in the recognition network of the brain and focuses on the experience of learning (Rose & Strangman, 2007). The affective network of the brain is used when faculty find ways to involve students in their learning, also known as multiple means of engagement. Finally, multiple means of action and expression occur in the strategic networks of the brain and focus on how students demonstrate their knowledge. Much of the research on UDL in higher education focuses on how instructors use these principles in the college classroom.

Multiple Means of Representation

Multiple means of representation can be achieved in TPPs in many ways. Providing lessons using multiple formats is one such way. Friedman & Friedman (2013) found that using social media in both face-to-face and online classes has been an effective way to represent material. Additionally, faculty can offer both a recorded lecture as well as interactive activities as a way to meet this UDL principle (Simonds & Brock, 2014). In small programs, this can be as simple as recording small clips of class lectures and then posting them for the class to review at a later time or date. Finally, Boothe et al. (2018) suggest that faculty provide a copy of PowerPoint presentations to students, and offer both a digital and hard copy of textbooks.

Research also supports the use of highlighting critical information as an effective way to represent content. As faculty in small programs, we know resources are limited and instructors do not always have time to take notes for students. Students can be responsible for creating summaries of lectures and then posting them for their classmates (Gradel & Edson, 2010). One easy way to encourage this collaboration is for instructors to create one semester long shared document and invite students to collaborate on note taking. Alternatively, students can highlight key information with graphic organizers or use a checklist to identify core concepts (Scott et al., 2015).

Multiple Means of Engagement

There are several ways for TPPs to incorporate UDL's multiple means of engagement into the classroom. Research supports the use of scaffolding, student collaboration, alternative accessible content, easily accessible faculty, multiple modes of lectures, frequent assessment, examples or guides to assignments, real-world examples, and aligning assignments with course objectives (Boothe et al., 2018). Whether you teach face to face or virtually, collaboration is an important component of learning. One way to do this is to utilize cooperative learning strategies such as the "Ask 3" method where students will ask three classmates a question before asking the instructor (Gradel & Edson, 2010). This method extends opportunities for engagement for all students while reducing the impact on the instructor. Case studies are another way instructors in TPPs can address multiple UDL principles. Specifically, case studies can provide an alternative way to provide students with content knowledge (e.g., stories, videos, data, etc.), explore multiple answer pathways (e.g., student recommendations, eligibility determinations, etc.), and connect with other learners (e.g., mock meetings, discussions by roles, etc.). Further, using the same case studies throughout a TPP program, promotes student engagement and investment in learning, addressing multiple means of engagement.

Research on engagement also notes the importance of faculty accessibility, especially for instructors teaching online. Marks et al. (2016) found that students prefer their instructors hold regularly scheduled office hours and want them to be accessible through email. When it comes to being accessible, Rao et al. (2014) suggest that faculty set consistent office hours for at least two days. In a study conducted by Lohmann et al. (2018), phone calls and text messages were the main ways online students engaged with the instructor. For instructors who do not want to share their personal phone number, a messaging application can be used. To support instructors in TPPs, it is important to set parameters around when calls and texts will be forwarded to instructors from

those services. Students should also be informed about the turnaround at which they can expect a return call or email, which could be once or twice a day. Engaging students can also be achieved by reaching out to students individually during the first week of class and, if teaching online, hosting virtual meetings weekly (Boothe et al., 2018; Lohmann et al., 2018). All of these strategies support student engagement in TPPs, which is critically important since there are clear links between student engagement and retention (Hattie & Anderman, 2013).

Multiple Means of Action and Expression

Multiple means of action and expression can be achieved in efficient ways in TPPs to streamline instruction, improve student learning, and address the needs of diverse learners. Boothe et al. (2018) identified several themes in the literature focused on the best ways to incorporate this UDL principle in the college classroom. These themes include: (a) obtaining accessible technology, (b) clarifying assignment expectations, (c) offering flexible opportunities and choice to demonstrate content knowledge, (d) providing opportunities to practice skills with proper support, and (e) using conceptual mapping tools. Smith (2012) found that when clarifying assignment expectations, it is best to provide examples from previous students' work. Rao and colleagues (2014) suggest the importance of having a specific day and time that all assignments/activities are due. This UDL principle can also be met by providing a rubric or guide for students to view the assignment (Rao et al., 2014; Smith, 2012).

Providing choice in assignments is another effective way to meet the needs of students and meet the action and expression principle. One way to accomplish this is to set an assignment objective and allow students to choose the way in which they want to respond, such as writing an essay or creating a podcast (Tobin, 2014). This can be easily accomplished in any sized program with assignment choice boards and rubrics that outline assignment objectives. In fact, choice boards can remain consistent across courses, while only altering the outcomes. One such choice board prompt might be "In a manner of your choosing (written paper, video presentation, infographic, or comic strip, etc.), answer the following questions..." Smith (2012) offers additional options for demonstrating content knowledge, which includes: (a) using graphic organizers to plan assignments, (b) creating a web-based or digital project, and (c) using speech to text applications. When students participate in live discussions, instructors can allow students to participate verbally or in written format (Vu & Faddle, 2013). In a small research study conducted by Boothe and colleagues (2020), respondents were highly satisfied with how a choice-based assessment allowed them to demonstrate knowledge of the content.

It is recommended that teachers implement UDL in small chunks so as to not overwhelm themselves, and this is no different for faculty in small programs (Novak, 2016). Tobin and Behling (2018) recommend starting UDL implementation small by selecting one change to implement in the classroom at a time. The UDL framework supports small programs by creating a foundation of strategies, assignments, supports, resources, and materials that can be used repeatedly.

While Drs. Mullins and Mendez are both experts on UDL and implement several strategies across the UDL guidelines, their individual course content is often disjointed and misaligned with program goals. They decide to analyze their program and begin their discussions by bringing their course syllabi together to determine where and when students are learning key concepts. They outline a desired progression of skills and concepts, building in complexity as students move through the program. These discussions lead to the development of critical course outcomes or assessments throughout the entire program. Eventually, Drs. Mullins and Mendez are ready to decide how to teach the content through a UDL lens. They are ready for a smarter, not harder workload!

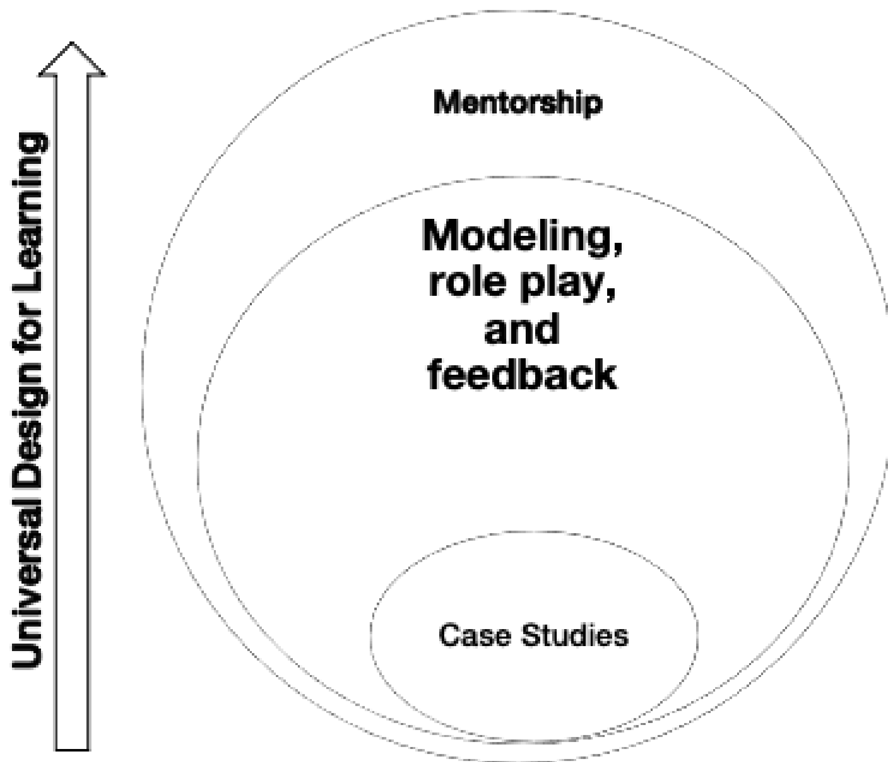
Spiral of Supports

Utilizing the UDL framework, STEPP can create a spiral of support for their pre- and in-service teachers. A visual of such support can be referenced in Figure 1. This spiral builds over time and starts with case studies. After students become more familiar with understanding and mastering course content in the case studies, they engage in modeling and role-play and receive feedback on their performance. Finally, teacher candidates take what they have learned through the case studies and engage in field placements or internships with a mentor. This spiral of support for pre- and in-service teachers includes the aforementioned three strategies, as well as opportunities to expand upon these strategies through the lens of UDL.

Case Studies

One way to support authentic learning is to use a situated learning approach (Snape & Fox-Turnbull, 2013). Case studies can help future educators understand and problem solve through situations that occur in the classroom. These scenarios present information about students, classrooms, or school interactions and require future teachers to engage in problem solving and decision making. Using case studies with preservice teachers helps them to better appreciate and understand the

FIGURE 1: Spiral of Learning



classroom environment while cultivating motivation (Ching, 2011). Although case studies may be presented through paper or digital platforms, video case studies can also prove to be an effective way to promote learning. Utilizing video case studies also increases the development of problem-solving strategies (Shin et al., 2019).

As a starting point, a case study manual is one way to bring cohesiveness to a TPP. This manual can be used throughout a program and each instructor can designate which case studies, or parts of case studies, are in each course. This manual can include hypothetical students at various levels in their academic careers, with a range of disabilities, along with corresponding test documents, meeting notes, or anecdotal information. A sample overview of the potential documents, grades, and disability categories are presented in Figure 2. The testing data and Individualized Education Program(IEPs) can be tailored to state or local document formats to provide students with a realistic experience. This crosswalk of cases, grade levels, disabilities, courses, and outcomes can be developed as a starting place for the case study manual. While this is a large undertaking to complete all at once, these case studies can be built slowly over time, until they are complete. Instructors can write these studies themselves based on fictitious students, or pre- and in-service teachers can write case studies as part of their coursework assignments early in the TPP. Not every program may need every case listed in Figure 2 since some programs may only focus on a subset of licensure requirements. It should be noted, however, that once these cases are complete, they would be used repeatedly throughout the TPP, with the exception of minor adjustments or updates.

Case Studies and UDL

It is important to remember that embedding the UDL framework is a process and can be done over time. From a UDL perspective, the case study manual can be built out to support more learners by embedding the following instructional tools and strategies. Ideally, these ideas should be built in as case studies are written, but given the limited resources and individualization of small programs, it would also be reasonable to add one or two new ideas each semester, building the studies over time.

Engagement. If the document is a living document, teacher candidates can select case study student names at the start of each semester or names can be selected based on current events or popular actors, musicians, or historical figures. Utilizing local formats from surrounding school districts will prompt relevance and authenticity. Students will also see value because it may be a document they will eventually need to be familiar with. Cases can be used for discussion or role-play, and enhancing collaboration and community building within the classroom. If the same cases are used throughout the program, students will know the expectations and will not feel threatened by the material since it will build over time with complexity and expectations.

Representation. Cases should include both narratives and charts to display testing information and any other applicable information. The manual can also include a glossary or acronym bank to help students decipher terms. Students can help create this resource as they explore the case studies. This provides opportunities to identify critical vocabulary and big ideas. If cases are connected through the coursework and brought to students' attention, they will naturally tap into prior knowledge and make connections. Finally, free and easily accessible video clips can be added to each

case study to enhance understanding. For example, a case study on "Student KL" who has been found eligible for a specific learning disability (SLD) might be paired with a video clip that shows "Student KL" participating in a reading program. While the video is certainly not the individual in the case study, the clip can provide additional information about how a student who is struggling with reading might learn when provided direct instruction. Admittedly, this might be time consuming for faculty to find and match with case studies, but this is also where pre- and in-service teachers may be able to help by engaging in an assignment that asks them to find video examples of specific students (e.g., an elementary aged student who refuses to follow directions).

Action and Expression. As students interact with case studies, they can be given options for engagement with the material. This may include solving problems in the case studies by creating storyboards, videos, or comic strips. Students should be made aware that cases could be solved in multiple ways, with more than one right answer. When discussing elements of the special education eligibility process or components of an IEP, instructors can provide concept maps or outlines to help students organize information. This could also be expanded into eligibility or IEP checklists students develop or utilize when engaging in case study review.

Drs. Mullins and Mendez realize that while they both use case studies in their courses to teach content, when they compare their cases, the content either overlaps or is missing key concepts. They decide to collaborate and share their case studies to create one document that can be used throughout their program. They deliberately focus on student populations that are applicable to their TPP and keep the case studies broad enough to be used across multiple classes. Once they have a few case studies written, they designate which parts of each case will be used by each course, scaffolding and building content mastery throughout the program with the corresponding content of the case studies. They base these decisions on their earlier conversations about scaffolding and program goals. Finally, they decide to set goals for the future so they can continue building upon their case studies.

FIGURE 2: Case Study Overview

Case Information Examples (select one or several)
☐ Student background (social history)
☐ Student background (academic history)
☐ IQ testing documentation
☐ Educational testing documentation
☐ Teacher reports
☐ Student report cards
☐ Classroom tests (formative or summative)
☐ Classroom work samples
☐ State or national norm-based tests
☐ IEPs
☐ Parent concerns
☐ Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)/ Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
☐ Extended School Year documentation
☐ Related services documentation (speech, occupational therapy, etc.)
☐ Transition plans
☐ Video clips (free and accessible)
Grade Levels (select one or several for a continuum)
☐ Preschool
☐ Lower elementary (K-2)
☐ Upper elementary (3-5)
☐ Middle school
☐ High school (9-10)
☐ High school (11-12)
☐ Transitional years
Disabilities (select one)
☐ Specific learning disability (SLD)
☐ Other health impairment (OHI)
☐ Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
☐ Emotional/ behavioral disability
☐ Speech or language impairment
☐ Visual impairment, including blindness
☐ Deafness
☐ Hearing impairment
☐ Deaf-blindness
☐ Intellectual disability
☐ Traumatic brain injury
☐ Multiple disabilities

Modeling, Role Play, and Feedback

Building upon the aforementioned case studies, teacher candidates can expand upon their knowledge through a process that includes modeling, role-play, and feedback. Although there are many facets of preparation for TPPs, this is an additional way to scaffold skills and provide active learning experiences. Active learning and practicing skills required for classroom instruction is vital

for preparing teacher candidates (Barker, 2012) and consequently, ensuring fidelity of interventions (Cash et al., 2022). In TPPs, modeling occurs when teacher educators demonstrate effective teaching tools (Moore & Bell, 2019). When students observe teacher educators modeling skills, it increases their knowledge and confidence in using those strategies in their own practice (Zipke et al., 2019).

One way to provide active learning is through the use of role-plays (Kilgour et al., 2015). Role-plays offer teacher candidates the opportunity to practice skills and receive feedback from instructors and classmates. The use of role-plays increases student engagement in learning (Stevens, 2015) and supports teacher candidates in mastering skills such as classroom instruction (Gregory & Masters, 2012), behavior management (Sawyer et al., 2017), and communication with families and colleagues (Gartmeier et al., 2015). These role plays can be conducted either in-person or via virtual reality tools, such as Teach Live (Dieker et al., 2017). Since students will have opportunities to repeatedly hear about each case study throughout various courses, they will be familiar with the case study students and case study team players. This knowledge can be used as a springboard for role-playing scenarios, such as eligibility meetings, IEP meetings, Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan (FBA/BIP) meetings, phone calls to parents or guardians, Manifestation Determination Reviews, and parent/teacher conferences.

The role-play process should start with modeling the behaviors or processes. This modeling should be completed by the instructor and include all required steps, demonstrated in an accurate manner. This provides pre- and in-service teachers with a positive model of expectations. After modeling, pre- and in-service teachers should engage in role-play. This role-play can be organized in a number of ways, some of which will be expanded upon in the UDL section in the following paragraphs. Individuals can be assigned roles as outlined in the case studies (e.g., parents, administrators, general education teachers, advocates, etc.) and an assigned outcome (e.g., decide eligibility, determine IEP placement, review data, etc.) for discussion.

When teacher candidates are provided the opportunity to practice skills, it is vital that they receive specific feedback. Research supports the use of feedback, as long as it is done in a timely manner (Robinson & Wizer, 2016; Schelly et al., 2011). Constructive feedback can focus on knowledge of processes, laws, and policies, as well as how students interacted with other members of the case study team. This specific praise can help reinforce students' understanding of the course content and students' ability to engage in a professional manner within a team. This feedback enhances students' fidelity in implementing evidence-based practices (EBPs; Cash et al., 2022; Schles & Robertson, 2019). In addition, when teacher candidates are provided with quality feedback on their performance, they learn to provide specific feedback to their students (Cash et al., 2022), an evidence-based practice that promotes desired behaviors by praising students for exhibiting those behaviors (Markelz et al., 2022). Quality feedback must be specific and personalized to the student and their work (Ellis & Barnes, 2020) and can be delivered through multiple means, to include pictorial representations, written, verbal, or a combination of several modalities.

Modeling, Role Play, Feedback, and UDL

Universal Design for Learning principles can be utilized to enhance and expand upon role-playing in TPPs. While there may be some overlap between the principles, each suggestion can also stand alone as a way to reach more future teacher educators. Much like case studies, it is best practice to start with the UDL framework, but additions and expansion over time are also reasonable.

Engagement. Pre- and in-service teachers can be engaged in the role-playing process by allowing for as much choice as possible with their case study roles. Depending on the goals or desired outcome of the role-play, students might be able to choose which person they would like to role-play from the case studies. Students can choose to add information to the scenarios, providing more depth or context to their decision-making. Behavior specific feedback should be embedded in all feedback, however, it can be expanded to include notations about effort, improvement, and strategies for future role-plays or real-life scenarios. Further, students can also complete self-assessments or reflections through checklists for specific behaviors or templates for reflection on the outcome of the process. This might also include adherence to laws and/or regulations and special education content knowledge. A sample checklist for self-reflection of an IEP role-play is shown in Figure 3. Although the provided example may need to be altered depending on the case studies and desired outcomes, it presents a sample overview that could be used in the role-playing process. For STEPP, these self-reflection and feedback forms can be created by students as a demonstration of content mastery and then utilized throughout the entire TPP.

Representation. To further enhance the modeling and role-play experience, instructors can provide students with visuals such as color-coded or visual keys, indicating each participant's role. Another option might include using videos that depict the desired outcomes

FIGURE 3: Sample IEP Role-Play and Self-Reflection Activity

Directions: Take on the role as assigned below and meet the desired outcomes. During the meeting, advocate for your position, the student, and the outcome.
Step 1: As you move through the role-play, place a checkmark next to each component covered during the meeting. While some prompts suggest passive participation, it is your responsibility to meet the meeting objectives and you are limited by the checklist.
Step 2: At the conclusion of the role-play, complete the reflection at the end of the checklist.

Case Study

Case Study: Student Polly O. My Role: Parent of Polly O.

Desired Outcome: Work collaboratively with the school team to create a new IEP for Polly O. based on your knowledge of her case study.

1. Sign in to the meeting_____
2. Ask for all team member's names and roles_____
3. Ask for an agenda for the meeting_____
4. Make sure the following are discussed during the beginning of the meeting:
    a. Present level_____
    b. Goals_____
        i. Are goals measurable? _____
        ii. Is there a description of how goals will be measured? _____
    c. Related services_____
    d. Accommodations/ Modifications_____
5. Ask to add your parent concerns to the present level_____
6. Ask team to explain placement decision_____
7. Check for a start and end date for services_____

Reflection: Respond to all or some of the following prompts.

1. In what ways did you advocate for your student?
2. In retrospect, what do you wish you had done differently?
3. How did each person's role in this role-play impact how you interacted with the team?
4. Do you believe the team listened and honored your contributions? If yes, how so? If no, why do you think they weren't?
5. How did what happened in this meeting connect to what you know about laws, policies, processes, and course content?

and correct processes of each participant in a situation similar to the familiar case study students. The instructor can use videos, in addition to their own modeling. For those who may need additional modeling or prompting, sentence or phrase starters can be provided to guide individuals through a case study role-play. For example, students in an IEP role-play may receive starters for each step, such as "Welcome to today's meeting, our agenda is as follows…" and "Now, let's discuss the goals. Starting with the first one…" Again, for STEPP, students can also generate these as a way to demonstrate understanding of content and processes or a whole class discussion can be used to develop these starters for the course.

Action and Expression. To support students with navigating case studies through role-play, providing both digital and paper copies to students will support how students can manipulate the information and materials. This might also include color-coding or separate folders for different types of information (e.g., law information, list of acronyms). If possible, role-plays can run simultaneously in the classroom and upon conclusion, groups can share the different ways a situation can be addressed or a problem solved. This allows participants to see multiple examples and solutions (i.e., multiple means of representation).

Since STEPP may not have access to avatars or simulators, outside guests can be invited in to engage in modeling or role-play as one of the case study participants. Guests might include parents, an administrator, or even another instructor who might be assuming a role as a teacher or school psychologist. To support the process, pre- and in-service teachers should receive differentiated feedback. Once role-plays are complete, instructors can assign self-reflection on roles and outcomes of the scenario and students can list questions about where they want feedback. For example, students can be asked, "What specific feedback do you need from me or your peers about your role-playing or about your scenario decisions?" These responses can be answered as a whole group through a problem solving process.

After designing case studies to support their students, Drs. Mullins and Mendez know they need more than just a one-dimensional case study. Dr. Mullins shares that modeling, role-play, and feedback have worked well in her Introduction to Special Education course and could be used to extend the case studies. After brainstorming, they identify specific case studies and scenarios that can be role-played by students. They create a list of skills their students will need to master, as it aligns with their TPP. Knowing that students must be familiar with the case studies first, they select courses in the middle and towards the end of their program and create a plan for modeling the identified skills across their courses. Finally, they discuss options and opportunities to provide feedback with self-reflection and assessment checklists and tools. They create these together so it is consistent across the TPP.

Mentorship

Another aspect of effective teacher preparation is the use of mentorship to support teacher candidate growth and development. Mentoring is used to help preservice teachers learn the skills and instructional behaviors needed for teaching success (Hobson et al., 2012). Previous research indicates that teachers use their field experiences and the guidance received in those experiences in their own future classrooms (Bullock, 2009). When teacher candidates receive mentorship through university-based supervision, they learn effective lesson planning skills, instructional techniques, and have increased confidence in their teaching abilities (Vumilia & Semali, 2016). Because of this, mentorship in fieldwork is fundamental.

However, in smaller programs, the ability to reach every student, in every setting, can be daunting. The role-play scenarios instructors observe and support might provide some solace about future teachers' aptitudes, but mentorship and supervision remain an important component of teacher success in the field. One way to address the problem of mentorship and supervision is through video feedback. Although bug in ear technologies are effective (Schaefer & Ottley, 2018), they may not be feasible for small programs. However, most individuals have cell phones, tablets, or laptops that can record or connect to live video meetings throughout the school day. Given that most universities have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with local partner schools, video recording or video streaming should be a permissible practice. If not, this can be added to an MOU for field supervision. Additionally, a variety of programs currently exist to support feedback during fieldwork, but not all programs may be able to afford these options. A simple live video chat or video meeting can also work well if a small program cannot afford a video service or travel expenses to go to each teacher candidate's site. Videos can be streamed live and recorded for discussion. Candidates can be put in small groups to watch and discuss teaching strategies with a mentor, who may be an instructor or a principal, administrator, or veteran teacher from the community. These mentor meetings can be scheduled regularly to review teaching videos and discuss how to best support the teacher candidates.

Mentorship and UDL

The mentorship of teacher candidates fits well within the UDL framework. Effective mentorship offers multiple means of engagement, representation, and

FIGURE 4: Sample Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan with Prompts (Excerpt)

Lesson Plan Topic: Investigating Moon Phases

Lesson Component	**Verbal Prompt**	**Additional Notes**
Opening/ Hook	"Remember last week when we recorded our moon phases based on our readings?"	Continue recapping previous material and activities. Show video of phases on the screen as a review.
Opening/ Objectives	"Today we are going to create our own models so we can show we understand moon phases. Our goal is to create every phase using materials I will provide. Once you have created a phase, you will record it on your group lab sheet, then you will keep moving through all the phases, creating them with materials and recording them."	Show students the group lab sheet. Model how to fill in one phase's square by drawing how the materials were used to make each phase.
Directions	"Listen to my instructions first. Once I tell you to "move," please get into your science groups and have a seat at your group science table. Okay, move."	Be sure to follow up with behavior specific praise about what students are doing that align with expectations.
Directions	"Now that you are in your science groups, I am going to pass out the materials and explain the rules for using each of them. You will be receiving a flashlight, an inflatable globe, and a small white balloon."	Give students rules for using materials, especially the flashlight.

action and expression. While the ways in which pre- and in-service teachers are mentored may vary, UDL can still support these efforts.

Engagement. To further support students and provide mentorship, teacher candidates can be put in pairs or trios for mentorship support. If the instructor or mentor creates a positive and safe space for candidates to share videos or streams, everyone can benefit from the mentor's feedback. Another option that can expand upon video interactions is a running dialogue between a candidate and a mentor on a working document. Mentors can provide specific prompts, asking individuals where and how they need support and engage in a running and ongoing journaling dialogue. Finally, candidates can be supported with coping skills and strategies with a resource bank of options to reduce daily classroom stressors. Mentors can model ways to handle specific stressors and provide a list of scaffolded options for students. These options can be housed on a learning management system (LMS) or any other shared document. The list might include meditative videos for relaxation, websites that list positive choices for taming stress, directions for breathing exercises, and even evidence-based articles that explain best ways to reduce frustration, stress, or anxiety.

Representation. During feedback with future educators, mentors can provide direct support for strategies or unfamiliar practices by embedding resources in their in-person or online discussions. This will ensure that future educators have access to not only the need to make a change, but also know how the change is defined, what is involved in making that change, and what that change would look like in the classroom. In addition, these explanatory resources can be presented through modeling, videos, text, or other representations. Although the following level of generalization may not be feasible for every program, one way to support local school systems and provide supported opportunities to generalize might be a paid long-term position in local schools. If a candidate demonstrates excellence in understanding case studies and role-play, perhaps they could pair with a local school and accept an "apprentice" position where supervision and mentorship are still occurring while they move into a full-time teaching position. This would require careful planning with local school divisions and extensive mentorship from the teacher preparation program, but it could provide generalization opportunities and fill open positions in local schools.

> Incorporating these components will help faculty meet the need of producing well-prepared and effective special educators who are ready to face the real world of teaching students with disabilities.

Action and Expression. As previously noted, the role of mentor can be expanded to include a variety of individuals from the university or the community, to include adjunct instructors, administrators, or veteran teachers. When possible, multiple mentors can be assigned to groups of teacher candidates to provide different approaches to feedback and information and differentiation in modeling. When teacher candidate videos are used, mentors can use think-alouds as a way to explain how a problem could have been solved or a lesson improved. For teacher candidates who may have struggled through case studies or role-playing, prompts and checklists can be provided to them through lessons or classroom procedures. An excerpt of a prompted lesson plan is provided in Figure 4.

Now that Drs. Mullins and Mendez have a spiral of support in their program with case studies, modeling, role play, and feedback, they begin to set their sights on providing mentorship to their future educators. Given that their school partnerships cover a large geographical area and they have limited opportunities to travel to field sites, Drs. Mullins and Mendez explore ways to provide mentorship in unconventional, yet effective ways. They begin to brainstorm options that include video recordings, a larger pool of mentors, and small group mentorship. They decide to use a video platform as a trial run, while simultaneously recruiting a larger pool of volunteer mentors.

The challenges in a small teacher preparation program can sometimes feel daunting for Drs. Mullins and Mendez, yet, their initial frustrations have subsided with careful planning. Creating foundational case studies that can be utilized as a springboard for every class in the program brings cohesiveness to the program, alleviating redundancy and addressing missing concepts. These case studies, in addition to the role-play, modeling, and feedback, provide the perfect catalyst to fieldwork and mentorship. Drs. Mullins and Mendez feel confident that the practices they are implementing are effective, and now, resource friendly for supporting the needs of all teacher candidates.

Conclusion

Instructors working in small programs face many challenges due to high course loads, fewer resources, and administra-

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tive duties. By utilizing UDL, faculty in STEPP are demonstrating to teacher candidates how to "practice what they preach" while freeing up time to focus on other key components of their job. The UDL framework can be used to assist in spiraling curriculum for special education candidates by incorporating three key components: case studies, modeling/role-plays/feedback, and mentoring. Incorporating these components will help faculty meet the need of producing well-prepared and effective special educators who are ready to face the real world of teaching students with disabilities.

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Looking Behind Virtual Lenses: Field Experience, Modeling, Coaching, Feedback, Supervision, and Partnerships

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ABSTRACT

Small special education programs (SSEPs) are composed of limited faculty tasked with educating interns dispersed across large geographical areas (Reid, 1994). These needs underscore a call for more flexible educational program options. Moreover, Kebritchi et al. (2017) found professors in higher education institutions sought a variety of instructional methods to critically respond to barriers experienced by SEPPs. The purpose of this article is to highlight virtual methods utilized by SSEPs for field experiences, modeling, coaching, feedback, supervision, and partnerships to leverage faculty expertise effectively and efficiently, to expand recruitment in programs, and to support teacher retention efforts. Using the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) High Leverage Practices (HLPs) of Instruction, Collaboration, and Assessment (McLeskey et al., 2017), this article will look behind the virtual lens to uncover how SSEPs faculty can support interns using a developmental and scaffolded approach.

KEYWORDS

Assessment, coaching, feedback, field experience, modeling, supervision, virtual instruction

Accreditation of educator preparation programs (EPPs) "provides a framework that has pushed educator preparation programs to continually self-assess and conduct evidence-based analysis of their programs and their efficacy" (Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2022b, para. 2). Klingner et al. (2016) found many new teachers are ill-equipped to meet their student's diverse and vital learning needs. Responding to increased demands on EPPs to train interns to meet the critical needs of exceptional learners, the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center, and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) collaboratively identified 22 High Leverage Practices (HLPs), essential areas of practice that should guide EPPs in the development, implementation, and evaluation of special education interns (McLeskey et al., 2017). The HLPs are innovative and situated around four main pillars: instruction, collaboration, social/emotional/behavioral practices, and assessment (McLeskey et al., 2017) and these HLPs can be used as guides for implementation of virtual methods for field experience, modeling, coaching, feedback, supervision, and partnerships for faculty within EPPs. In this article, the four authors provide examples of the lived experiences of working in Small Special Education Programs. Multiple tools are used to facilitate course delivery methods, including: (a) video-conferencing, (b) web-based platforms/learning management systems, (c) filmed classroom instruction/video modeling, (d) virtual reality classroom environments, and (e) video-coaching platforms. Table 1 includes a brief description of each tool and a link to more information. The vignette portrays the

TABLE 1: Tools Used to Facilitate Virtual Instruction, Collaboration, and Assessment

Course Delivery Method	Example Tools	Website
Video Conferencing	Zoom	https://zoom.us/
	Microsoft Teams	https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software
	Google Hangout	https://hangouts.google.com/
	Go to Meeting	https://www.goto.com/
Web Based Platforms and Learning Management Systems	Canvas	https://www.instructure.com/canvas
	Blackboard	https://www.blackboard.com/
	Moodle	https://moodle.org/
	D2l Brightspace	https://www.d2l.com/brightspace/
Filmed Classroom Instruction and Video Modeling	Atlas	https://atlas.nbpts.org/login?next=%2F
	CEEDAR Center/CEC HLPs	https://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/high-leverage-practices/
	Reading Rockets	https://www.readingrockets.org/
	Vanderbilt's IRIS Center	https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/
	Project STAIR	https://www.smu.edu/simmons/Research/Research-in-Mathematics-Education/Explore/STAIRR
Virtual Reality Classroom Environments	Mursion	https://www.mursion.com/
	TeachLivE	https://www.ucf.edu/research/research-project/teachlive/
Video-Coaching Platforms	Edthena	https://www.edthena.com/
	Go React	https://get.goreact.com/
	COACHED	https://coachedweb.azurewebsites.net/

authors' lived experiences to further unpack virtual methods utilized in four SSEPs for field experiences, modeling, coaching, feedback, supervision, and partnerships.

Dr. Lynn Ruemoornan (called 'Dr. R' by her students), a faculty member within an SSEP, struggled to do everything required of her. As the lead special education faculty member in a department of three, teaching both undergraduate and graduate students, she found it daunting to balance responsibilities. Preparing interns to meet the Council for Exceptional Chil-

dren (CEC) Professional Preparation Standards for certification; providing meaningful feedback and coaching; supervising field experiences; and forging successful school partnerships across a large, rural geographical area was more challenging than anticipated. She struggled to balance the time needed to do all these things well. Dr. R decided to list all the things that were overwhelming to her. Her list included: limited faculty, rural isolation, program accreditation demands, supervising field experiences and interns, supporting recruitment and retention efforts, and responding to COVID-19 school closures. "How will I ever find the time for all of this?" she asked herself.

Field Experiences

Field experience is one of the best methods for preparing interns for the complexities of classroom teaching (i.e., Phillion et al., 2005). Nagro and deBettencourt (2017) defined field experience as "any teacher preparation activities within authentic school-based settings that integrate course work and require teacher candidates to work directly with students" (p. 8). Field experiences allow for the application of theories and concepts learned in the classroom setting to real life practice-based learning with the supervision of trained faculty (Leko & Brownell, 2011). Additionally, as outlined in CAEP's (2022b) Standard 2, EPPs are required to utilize field experience in intern preparation. These practice situations afford the opportunity for interns to think critically, to problem solve, and to reflect on their experiences (Ludlow et al., 2007). In their review of literature, Nagro and deBettencourt (2017) concluded:

> Field experiences allowed teacher candidates to link pedagogy with knowledge, provided opportunities to implement evidence-based practices, prepared teacher interns to educate and manage behaviors of students with disabilities, required teacher candidates to problem solve in authentic settings, and engaged teacher candidates in all aspects of the profession. (p. 12)

Dr. R found locating appropriate field placements in her small, rural university program challenging, and she needed creative ways for her interns to gain experience. Just as she thought she had some ideas, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 caused the few local schools she had contact with to suspend in-person learning, necessitating her team to find more opportunities for innovative field experiences.

Scaffolded Field Experiences

Rich field experiences for interns require engagement in a variety of grade level settings and student populations. To be recognized by CAEP, EPPs are required to include a variety of field experiences in which grade spans and disability areas are reflected in the areas for state licensure/certification (Berlinghoff & McLaughlin, 2022). Benedict and colleagues (2016) recommended a scaffolded set of experiences which increase in intensity for interns to be fully prepared. In early field experiences, Dr. R utilized case studies through filmed classroom instruction and virtual reality classroom environments in the EPP. Interns participated in these experiences and were taught how to professionally reflect on the educator's instructional impact on student learning using COACHED (Capturing Observations and Collaboratively sHaring Educational Data; Kunemund et al., 2021). These precursor instructional experiences were foundational in the early preparation experience before transitioning into in-person field placements.

Innovative Field Experiences

One example of an innovative field experience includes interns conducting mini lessons in a before and after school tutoring program at a local school. Once schools closed because of the COVID-19 global pandemic, virtual tutoring of students occurred through the utilization of video-conferencing tools. Some barriers existed for families due to lack of access to reliable internet connections, so the local library and organization partnerships stepped in to facilitate students' internet access. Additionally, as schools began to reopen, Dr. R designed opportunities using video conferencing which allowed interns to deliver lessons during the school day. Explicit lesson plans incorporating functional and adaptive behavior skills were written and taught by interns to local high school students within the life skills classroom through video conferencing. The classroom teacher facilitated technology usage within the classroom, and interns incorporated innovative technology applications to increase engagement in the virtual setting. This virtual response pivot proved to be a valuable experience, as it enhanced the interns' skill set to include virtual instructional skills and the utilization of novel student engagement techniques.

Modeling

Dr. R found the breadth of evidence-based instructional strategies she needed to teach interns overwhelming due to few faculty designated to teach methods courses and the few courses within the program designed to cover all strategies and interventions used in specially designed instruction. Further complicating her work, Dr. R was asked to transition the current face-to-face graduate program to an online delivery model to increase the graduate student enrollment. In addition to her regular teaching load and other faculty responsibilities, Dr. R was

provided two semesters to plan for the transition. Dr. R valued using HLPs, practicing engaging instructional strategies in the classroom, utilizing authentic field experiences, and building community with interns. Now there was the additional challenge of transitioning these to the online learning environment effectively.

Modeling in EPPs is required as standard practice (CAEP, 2022b) and occurs first in the development process. Modeling helps interns develop methods to process their learning and make connections to best practices (Jung et al., 2016). Moreover, Darling-Hammond (2006) wrote modeling in EPPs helps interns not only know how to think like a teacher, but also how to begin to act like a teacher. Through the modeling embedded in EPPs, interns begin to develop the metacognitive strategies required in teaching and reproduce expected thinking, behavior, problem solving, and reflection skills.

Modeling Instructional Practices

Effective modeling of evidence-based practices helps interns to implement practices with fidelity. Interns view video clips that demonstrate the use of specific approaches (i.e., Concrete, Representational, Abstract), which can give them context to how instructional interventions are taught in a classroom setting. Dr. R uses guided questions about a practice and requires the interns to demonstrate the practice to peers, providing multiple opportunities to learn it. Dr. R found utilizing professionally created video clips demonstrating various teaching methods, the HLPs (McLeskey et al., 2017), and evidence-based practices were effective in providing interns with the context needed to prepare for teaching. The expansive video library, *Project STAIR: Supporting Teaching of Algebra: Individual Readiness,* supports interns in learning the principles of data-based individualization, explicit and systematic instruction, and readiness for algebra through various demonstrations with students with disabilities (Powell et al., 2021). In addition, the HLP video clips, created by Kennedy et al. (2018), and Accomplished Teaching, Learning, and Schools (ATLAS) video clips compiled by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards provide the necessary video models for interns to practice effective strategies to support all students when field work is not possible.

Modeling Assessment Practices

Dr. R uses video modeling to prepare interns for administering norm-referenced assessments and found a considerable amount of time was required to create useful videos that taught interns the skills needed. The faculty team who helped create these videos in the university recording studio spent approximately 100 hours recording during the first summer session. Moreover, since norm-referenced assessments were routinely updated, the videos have been rerecorded three times over the past several years. The faculty used the following guidelines for effective implementation: (a) individual videos of no more than 20 minutes for each subtest, (b) prepared materials used for norm-referenced instruments such as marking basals, ceilings, and start points, (c) planned placement of materials for an optimal camera view, (d) duct tape mark placed on the table ensured materials were within the camera view, and (e) tested lighting effects and camera angles as necessary to produce the best video recording. Faculty who used a high-quality external microphone in their recordings were more likely to be clearly heard in the videos.

Coaching and Feedback

Dr. R was intentional with course design throughout the program and sought to be consistent from course to course and semester to semester. Initially, Dr. R's team was especially concerned with how they would provide coaching and feedback to online interns. After consideration, Dr. R. determined they would utilize a video-coaching platform and time-stamped comments to help with this endeavor. In addition, the team realized that intern-led meetings using a video-conferencing tool would not only help to facilitate a sense of community but also foster collaborative conversations among interns and provide many opportunities to provide feedback.

According to Joyce and Showers (1981), coaching interns provide sustained professional guidance when an "observation and feedback cycle" (p. 170) is used to ensure fidelity of practice. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) defines the role of a coach as one who provides expert support focused on pedagogy. CAEP (2022b) standards require Dr. R's faculty to provide feedback and coaching to support the development and demonstration of expected knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors. This coaching at various stages of the interns' development ensures the interns' abilities to apply, through demonstration, their knowledge and learning through the curriculum and clinical experiences (CAEP, 2022b).

Video-Coaching and Feedback for Assessment Administration

Dr. R's faculty team implements coaching and feedback in a variety of educational formats but has found the use of video-coaching especially applicable to support web-facilitated instruction (Ottley et al., 2019) and test administration. During field-based

assessment courses, interns record administration of norm-referenced assessments then upload these videos to the selected platform. Once the videos are uploaded, the faculty annotate the videos with time-stamped comments which allows the interns to review the feedback provided (Ottley et al., 2019). Likewise, faculty can pause the videos and provide time-stamped comments (Rowland et al., 2021) that are aligned with CEC EPP and CAEP standards. For example, a faculty member may comment, "Be careful to read directions verbatim, *which of these pictures go here* instead of *which one of these pictures go here*."

Feedback allows faculty to provide a constructive critique. When followed by planned activities requiring critical reflection, interns make adjustments and changes before errors compound negative practices that could impact student learning. This coaching, combined with a self-reflection rubric of the standards, requires interns to evaluate areas of concern and opportunities for growth while citing evidence from the video submissions. In one example, interns were required to reflect on the learning experiences in the class which included lectures, presentations, collaborative group discussions, and video administrations. These self-evaluations further supported the cyclical nature of the coaching and feedback relationship between the interns and faculty. Dr. R's faculty found the use of video-coaching particularly beneficial as their interns were dispersed across large geographic areas and this methodology proved to be time and cost saving, while also allowing for cyclical feedback, instructional efficacy, and expert support (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

TABLE 2:
State Educator Evaluation Standards and Marker Examples

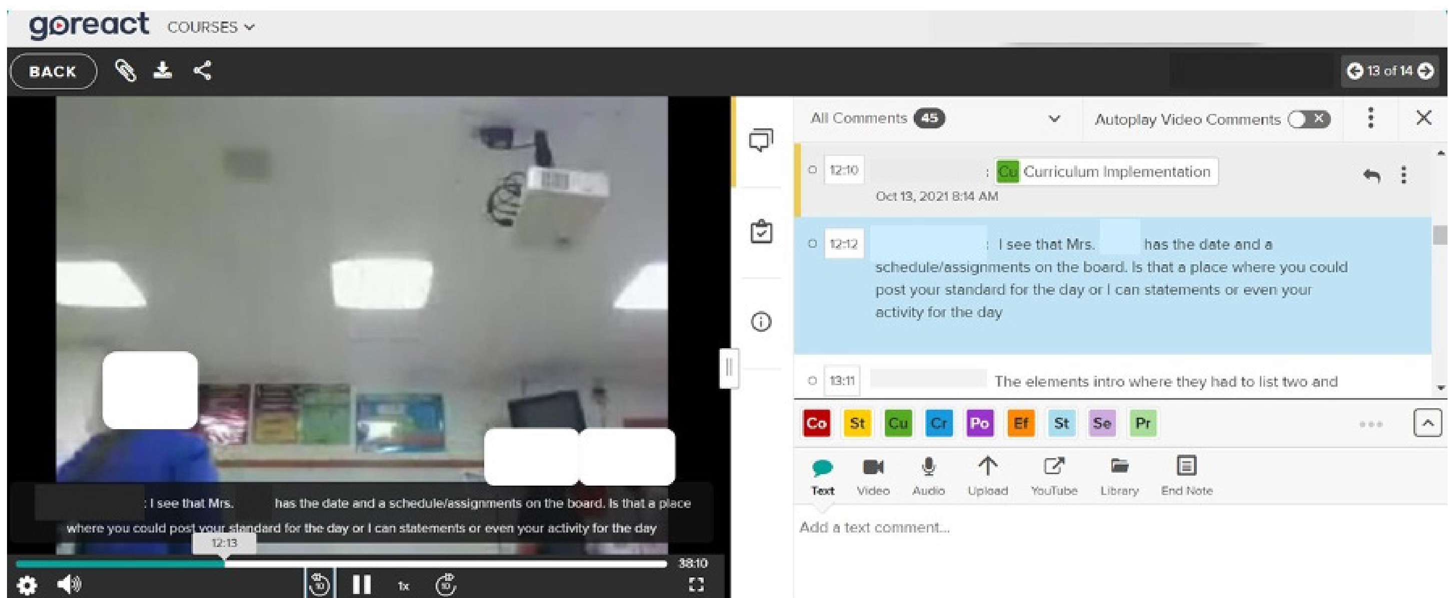
Marker Abbreviation	State Educator Evaluation Standard
Co	Standard 1: Content knowledge aligned with standards
St	Standard 2: Student learning (differentiation)
Cu	Standard 3: Curriculum implementation
Cr	Standard 4: Critical thinking
Po	Standard 5: Positive classroom environment
Ef	Standard 6: Effective communication
St	Standard 7: Student assessment/data analysis
Se	Standard 8: Self-assessment/improvement
Pr	Standard 9: Professional collaboration

Video-Coaching and Feedback for Modeling Instruction

In another use of a video-coaching program, interns teach and video record lessons on three separate occasions throughout the semester. Upon submission of the first video after week seven of the semester, Dr. R uses a video-coaching program to leave time-stamped comments as feedback. The feedback uses a combination of EBPs and the state educator evaluation standards to create "markers" (each standard had its own color-coded marker), which were applied as time coded stamps throughout various points in the lessons (see examples in Table 2). As the internship supervisor, Dr. R views the video submissions and marks points to provide personalized, anecdotal feedback within the video at the exact time the behavior was observed, modeling reflective instructional practice for the interns. For example, in one video, Dr R's time-stamped feedback and connection to the educator standard on eliciting students' critical thinking was coded and the following feedback was noted, "Let's reflect and brainstorm together another strategy or activity to go about getting them to think deeply about the concepts you want them to learn." The interns review their videos with feedback as many times as necessary. They can correct their practice faster when they are able to see themselves and Dr. R's feedback at exactly the right moment. Finally, coaching occurs via a video-conferencing program at the end of the observation by reviewing the feedback provided through the standards rubric, time-coded markers, and anecdotal feedback.

During the second video submission, after week eleven of the internship, interns use the state educator evaluation standards as markers to evaluate their own videos prior to meeting with Dr. R. Currently, the interns also utilize reflection within their videos to time-stamp their own self-reflective feedback. Dr. R reviews the interns' markings prior to their video-conferencing session, which gave her insight into the interns' level of reflection and served as a guide for her coaching of the interns. During the final video submission, after week fourteen of the internship, Dr. R repeats the same process as in the first video submission by marking the video and requiring interns' reflection prior to the video conference session, thus, noting the growth in the interns'

FIGURE 1: Time-Stamped, Color-Coded, Real Time Feedback Example



skills demonstration and instructional implementation. An example of the platform and time-stamped, color-coded, real time feedback can be found in Figure 1. Interns reflect on feedback to develop goals to improve performance between observations (Cornelius & Nagro, 2014), proving invaluable to the interns' learning as evidenced in their end of the course evaluation comments.

Video-Coaching and Feedback for Collaboration

Real Time Group Meetings (RTGMs) are collaborative group conversations between interns occurring online via video-conferencing tools. Like table talks in traditional face-to-face instruction, the use of RTGMs allows interns to discuss a topic, problem, or issue as they share their learning as a team. RTGMs encourage peer-supported learning and interns provide feedback and support to their team as they work toward a common goal. RTGMs are scheduled during a graduate student writing assignment. Within the RTGMs, the Group Report Form (GRF) is used to summarize the group's discussion and to provide evidence of each member's participation in the meeting (see Figure 2). For the RTGMs to be successful, each intern is assigned a role to perform during the meeting (Hentz & Jones, 2013). These roles are (a) Host--This intern organizes a mutually agreeable time and date, sends the meeting link to the team, video-records the meeting, and submits the recording, (b) Scribe--This intern records the results of the meeting on the GRF and submits the GRF, and (c) Facilitator--This intern facilitates the meeting by asking questions, making clarifying statements, and making sure all members are equally engaged in the conversation. During these meetings in the writing seminar, interns discuss the drafts of a paper and the areas where support is needed. Once the meeting is over, each intern makes edits to their drafts based on the feedback provided and participates in a faculty-coached writing conference held via video-conferencing with each RTGMs group.

Supervision and Partnerships

Dr. R and her team understand the need to improve partnerships with both rural and urban schools to increase field experiences in both programs. Due to her university's geographic isolation, providing feedback and supervision are a costly and challenging task. While these partnerships reaped significant benefits and were a win/win for all involved, to ensure authenticity, fidelity, and efficacy of the supervision and partnerships, Dr. R found a significant amount of her time dedicated to planning and collaboration.

Feedback and supervision are critical to interns' development and these opportunities must occur in purposeful ways to allow practice "in a safe environment" (Janssen et al., 2015, p. 138). These safe environments for practice are implemented in school field placements, and Dr. R's faculty experiences challenges when providing feedback and supervision for interns in these placements. Schmidt et al. (2015) explained, "Due to significant management, time, and travel associated with traditional models of field-based teaching supervision, the costs to support such programs in rural schools are high" (p. 37). In addition to the management, time, and travel necessary to provide adequate feedback

FIGURE 2: A Group Report Form (GRF) Example

Real-Time Group Meeting (RTGM) Group Report Form

1. Group #:

2. Those present at the meeting by job duties:
    - Host
    - Scribe
    - Facilitator

3. Those absent from the meeting (if any) and why?

4. Date and Time: Record the start and end times of the meeting here.

Discussion Topic:

Spend 30 minutes to 45 minutes discussing the interpretive report. There are two requirements that must be completed 24 hours in advance of the meeting. (1) Each person will post on the group's discussion page a draft of their interpretive report and (2) Each person will describe the one most valuable piece of information they found during the process of writing the draft of the interpretive report and share it with the group during the meeting.

Job Duties:

• Host: Sets up the meeting and sends the meeting link to group members. Video-records the meeting and submits the video recording.

• Scribe: (1) From the group discussion board page, copy and pastes the paragraphs describing the one most valuable piece of information for each member of the RTGM including yourself. (2) After the meeting, write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing the meeting.

• Facilitator: It is your responsibility to be sure that everyone participates in the meeting and discusses the topic equally. The facilitator should read the contributions of each member prior to the start of the meeting and engage each member appropriately. As the facilitator, you should ask relevant questions during the RTGM and make clarification statements to involve your group members and extend the conversation.

5. Summary of discussion (1-2 paragraphs).

6. Individual Group Member Contribution: (This will be posted on the group's discussion page 24 hours before the meeting and will be used to focus the conversation and discussion). Scribe, copy and paste the contributions by the name of each group member in the space below.

and supervision, Dr. R also participates in on-going collaboration with school district partners to ensure success, requiring considerable time and energy. Darling-Hammond (2006) wrote one critical feature of effective EPPs was instruction and learning closely aligned "with extensive and intensely supervised clinical work" thus allowing "interns to learn from expert practice in schools that serve diverse students" (p. 307), underscoring the importance of feedback and supervision within collaborative school partnerships. Dr. R's team finds many benefits occur when effective feedback and supervision are delivered and collaborative partnerships are developed. For example, Interns as the Teachers of Record (TOR) assisted partner school districts with the increasing issue of teacher shortages and interns were vetted as future teachers by partner districts during their field placements (Rich et al., 2020).

As her faculty continues to focus on developing "co-constructed mutually beneficial" partnerships (CAEP Standard 2, 2022b, p. 1), strong collaborative partnerships are often a positive, natural consequence of field experiences, placements, and employment. The win/win nature of these partnerships also produces secondary benefits for the EPP, such as the recruitment of adjunct instructors and internship supervisors. Additionally, districts' administrators refer teachers to Dr. R's graduate program. While these partnerships yield tremendous benefit, the increased geographical dispersion of interns also serves as an additional feedback and supervision burden, as noted by Burrack (2008).

Supervision Structure

Dr. R's program is a dual major and requires multiple placements to meet certification requirements for both areas (i.e., elementary education and special education). For effective supervision, two cooperating teachers (CT) and two university internship supervisors (US) provide feedback, supervision, and coaching through virtual collaboration which utilizes video conferencing tools. Furthermore, due to the geographical distance of the participants, video conferencing sessions are held between the field experience director, interns, CTs, and USs to provide training, an essential feature to focus all on the developmental needs of the interns (Diacopoulos & Butler, 2019).

Undergraduate Online Supervision

Supervision, when distance between placements is a factor, requires creativity and the use of technology. Dr. R holds weekly online seminars via video conferencing. In addition, she utilizes the video-coaching program described above which allows internship supervisors to view interns teaching live (synchronous) for their first observation. This online format for observations lowers travel costs for the university and improves supervision scheduling for the internship supervisors. With a smartphone or webcam, interns capture high-quality video of their teaching with ease, without requiring extra equipment or significant training (Paulsen & Schmidt-Crawford, 2017). A developmental supervision process facilitates reciprocal conversations (whether verbally or through an online modality) and listening and learning evolves into instruction through coaching the interns (Diacopoulos & Butler, 2019) as they move into subsequent observations and their own self-reflection. This supervision, guided by self-reflection, utilizes Nagro and Monnin's (2022) process, in which interns reflect on their own instructional decision-making and make changes to improve instruction for their students. This is done by analyzing the interns' self-assessment of their own reflective comments during a video conference with Dr. R, providing supervision through the evidence-based practice of reflection and "video recording of one's own teaching" (Soslau & Alexander, 2021, p. 147).

Graduate Online Supervision

In another application of online internship supervision within the EPP, supervisors meet with their assigned intern three times during the semester for approximately 45 minutes each via a video-conferencing program. These virtual supervision sessions allow the supervisor to discuss the interns' progress and to address any concerns the intern may have. Internship supervisors use a rubric aligned with the state educator evaluation standards to assess each of the interns. Interns self-reflect on their strengths, weaknesses, and progress made during the semester and discuss specific areas for improvement with the supervisor. The self-reflection is a metacognitive activity (Goupil & Kouider, 2019), which provides an opportunity for interns to think aloud about their own abilities, while they also develop a plan of action for future practice.

Final Thoughts

As Dr. R prepared to transition from traditional face to face models of teaching to online instruction, she was first overwhelmed and frustrated. However, through weekly conversations with her SSEP faculty members she began to prioritize her to do list and to focus on the important task of using technology to support her instruction. In addition to working with her team, Dr. R was able to go to her annual professional conference to meet other special education faculty and to learn fresh, innovative

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ideas. She attended a session in which other professionals in SSEPs shared how they navigated the challenges of working in a small program to benefit their students. She was excited to come away with so many notes full of ideas! But not long after, doubt crept in . . . "I have so many ideas and changes to make, but how do I get started without feeling overwhelmed?" Dr. R reconnected with her colleagues at other small programs through social media (Twitter: SSEPCTED, Facebook: TED - SSEPC, Instagram: SSEPCTED). Her colleagues reminded her to start small to avoid feeling overwhelmed, to continue collaborating with colleagues across the globe, and to utilize the connections, resources, and relationships made through her membership in Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Teacher Education Division (TED) and the Small Special Education Programs Caucus (SSEPC) of TED. Dr. R found the support from her professional social network was what she needed to rejuvenate and tackle the challenges she might encounter.

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Two For One: Challenges and Benefits of Small Elementary and Special Education Dual Certification Programs

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ABSTRACT

There are challenges and opportunities when teaching in an integrated elementary and special education (ELEM/SPED) dual certification program. Infusing special education in general education courses and collaborating with general education colleagues to create a truly integrated program is imperative. In this article, we provide a case study of four ELEM/SPED education dual certification programs, focusing on coursework and field requirements. We emphasize that the implementation of an effective ELEM/SPED dual certification program requires collaboration, support, inclusion, patience, advocacy, and education.

KEYWORDS

Elementary and special education, dual certification, small special education program, teacher preparation programs

The need for dual certification programs has grown exponentially over the past few years. *The Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA; 2015) requires teacher preparation programs (TPPs) to prepare all educators to work with all students. *The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* (IDEA; 2004) calls for all students with disabilities to have access to the general education curriculum, therefore TPPs must prepare teachers to work with all learners regardless of their ability level.

Historically, TPPs for special and general education operated separately from one another. More recently school system administrators have experienced an increased need for TPPs to prepare teachers to work with general and special education students alike (Brownell et al., 2011; Mickelson et al., 2022; Young, 2011). *According to the 39th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of IDEA,* approximately 65% of students with disabilities spend 80% or more of their day in the general education classroom, and 95.1% of students spend at least some part of their school day in the general education classroom (U.S. Department of Education, 2021). Therefore, the need for dual certification programs has become increasingly necessary (Oyler, 2011).

Stages of Collaboration

There are three stages of depth of collaboration in preservice teacher education as identified by Pugach et al. (2011). In the first stage, which was common in TPPs from 1975-1982, Pugach et al. (2011) described a movement towards training teacher candidates to work with students with disabilities, albeit in programs that were separate and excluded general education teacher candidates. Students with disabilities were moving to public schools from institutional and residential settings so special education teachers were trained to work with these students in separate locations within the public-school settings. There was no overlap in services within the general education curriculum. During the second stage, 1983-2001, there was a trend toward more collaborative practices wherein some professional education organizations began to discuss how to integrate general and special education standards. In the public schools, students with disabilities were being included at an increasing rate as least restrictive environment (LRE) mandates were enforced.

Around 2001, the third stage focused on preparing teacher candidates for standardized licensure testing and updated teacher evaluations. In 2004, Response to Intervention became an avenue for identifying students with disabilities with much emphasis on initial input from the general education teacher. These changes may have influenced a national trend toward collaborative teacher preparation programs along with an increase in enrollment in such programs (Pugach et al., 2011). By this point, students with disabilities continued to be fully involved in the general education curriculum to the extent they were able.

The lack of success in inclusive classrooms can be aligned to the lack of integrated preparation in preservice teaching programs (Young, 2011). Blanton and Pugach (2011) discuss how TPPs provide a variety of ways for individuals to seek teaching certification and licensure. Most teacher candidates receive certification in either general education or special education, but rarely in both. Blanton and Pugach (2011) created a classification system for dual certification programs which includes: discrete program model, integrated program model, and merged program model. Discrete programs are defined as separate general and education programs, which function separately except for a few courses. Integrated programs are redesigned programs wherein both general and special education curricula overlap. Merged programs address the needs of all students through a shared curriculum that prepares all teacher candidates to teach both elementary and special education. Although dual certification programs are on the rise, little has changed in the sense of implementation of dual certification programs, and the three models are still relevant today. The current movement is towards a merged program, which does not differentiate between elementary and special education, but rather is all inclusive.

For the purpose of this case study, the authors define dual certification programs as the combination of general elementary (ELEM) and special education (SPED) programs which lead to certification in both areas (Blanton & Pugach 2020). The four programs in the case study include two universities and two state colleges within the same university system in the southern United States. Although these programs contain common elements (e.g., course content and field experience requirements), there are marked differences in the structure of courses and execution of practicum hours and student teaching. The goal, however, remains the same: to prepare teacher candidates to work with all learners, serving as either the general education or special education teacher.

Common Context of Education Programs

In 2009, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission established Rule 505-2.108 (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2019). Through this rule, state officials would no longer grant a single special education certification that was K-12, but instead began a program where elementary special educators could achieve the status of "highly qualified" and receive a certification that spanned elementary grades and special education. This allowed for special educators to specialize in elementary school curriculum. The university system in this article contains eight universities that offer this dual certification while at least 20 others continue to offer stand-alone Elementary or Special Education K-12 degrees leading to certification in one or the other.

Historically, teacher shortage has been an ongoing problem within the United States. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (2021) provided 10 recommendations for guidance in TPPs including: "States should seek innovative opportunities to address ongoing challenges—s uch as lack of diversity in the profession and the need to modernize the processes of licensure and certification—as they consider licensure and certification revisions" (Blanton & Pugach, 2011, p. 226). As a result, several institutions have begun developing programs such as paraprofessional to professional tracks, fully online programs, teacher residency models, and additional field placements. Universities have used innovative technology such as GoReact, Zoom, and Mixed Reality Simulation to further enhance their programs and attract non-traditional students to a more traditional certification program instead of resorting to district-led programs and regional alternative certification tracks which directly compete with university and college programs.

The fact remains that in many universities, it is the elementary or early childhood programs that are keeping Colleges of Education afloat. In 2021, there were 2364 Bachelor of Education degrees conferred in Georgia (University System of Georgia, 2021). Of those, 38% were in the Elementary Education/Special Education area. One university in this article awarded 150 bachelor's degrees in the ELEM/SPED area while only 39 in all other areas of education.

Overview of Coursework and Practicum

Teacher preparation programs take on many forms. They vary in certification options, programs of study, field experiences, and modes of content delivery. This case study includes four TPPs: two small colleges and two universities within the same university system in the southern US (see Table 1). Table 1 provides an overview of these institutions.

The faculty in the four case studies identify as ELEM/SPED dual certification programs where all teacher candidates are prepared to earn certification in both elementary education and special education, and therefore fit the description of merged programs according to Blanton and Pugach's (2011) model. In each program, the goal is to "adequately prepare candidates for both roles" (Blanton & Pugach, 2011, p. 226).

Each of the dual certification programs launched in the early 21st century, with the oldest beginning in 2006. Teacher candidates had similar backgrounds and

TABLE 1: Overview of Universities/Colleges

	Large University A	Large University B	Small College A	Small College B
First Dual Cohort	2014	2012	2009	2006
Location	Three campuses (dual program only on one campus) Most students from surrounding rural areas and two, large metropolitan areas	Students from rural and suburban areas	One campus 1.5 hours from urban centers. Many students from rural backgrounds.	One campus 20-30 miles from urban centers; students from rural and suburban backgrounds
Total student enrollment (Fall 2021)	27,091	18,155	2,565	3,101
Size of cohorts	11-34	150-190	25-35	20-60
Major changes	Reduced number of course per Professional Standards Commission for fall 2022	Added an online option in 2021	Added a special education practicum placement in 2022.	Added paraprofessional to teacher program in a separate, online cohort in 2020.

demographics regardless of geographical location within the university system. Not surprisingly, of the four in this article, the largest institution had the largest cohort size. Interestingly, the other large institution had the smallest dual certification cohort size, but it also offered the option for traditional certification in elementary education or special education. Faculty in all the programs continuously seekd methods to increase enrollment such as offering options for online courses and remote supervision of field experiences. Recent changes affecting all of the programs included directives from the state Professional Standards Commission (PSC) which reduced the number of courses and discontinued the Teacher Performance Assessment (EdTPA) and Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) entrance exams.

The largest university in this case study began its dual certification program with its first cohort in 2014 (see table 2). Although large in enrollment, the main campus is located in a small-town setting. There are three campuses university wide, yet the dual certification program is only offered on one campus. Most students come from the surrounding rural areas with others from two major urban centers. With a directive from the PSC to reduce the number of required program hours, faculty chose to remove a child development course, a technology course, and combine two math courses.

The other university began as a small college that offered an evening program for nontraditional students (see table 3). In 2012, the university system merged it with another college to become a state university and replaced the evening program with the dual certification program. Students come from both rural and urban areas and attend classes at all four campuses, online, and in the local public school system. Since this program covers a large geographic area, faculty divide cohorts into Professional Development Communities (PDC) of 18-22 students based on field work placement and where the students live. In 2021, faculty added an online only PDC which consists of online-only courses and remote clinical supervision. This program also offers an option where students work as paraprofessionals while completing their coursework.

The first small college in this case

TABLE 2: ELEM/SPED Dual Certification Programs of Study Overview - University A

Integrated classes (SPED/ ELEM)	SPED Only	ELEM Only	Field Experience
Classroom Management Methodologies of Inclusive P-5	Characteristics of Learners with Disabilities SPED procedures (law/ IEP) Assessment in SPED	ELEM Arts & Literature across the curriculum Cultural Diversity & ESOL/TCLD ELEM Language Arts ELEM Math Methods ELEM Science Methods ELEM Social Studies Methods	Inclusive P-5 placement 30 hours Pre-Internship-80 hours Internship I (yearlong) 245 hours Internship II (Student Teaching)- 600 hours TCs receive a variety of placements in grades Prek-5th in inclusion, co-taught, or resource room settings

TABLE 3: ELEM/SPED Dual Certification Programs of Study Overview - University B

Integrated classes (SPED/ELEM)	SPED Only	ELEM Only	Field Experience
Classroom Management Language and Cognition Child Development Strategies for Supporting Children and Families from Divers Communities Assessment	Characteristics of Students with Disabilities Teaching Students with Special Needs Assessment in Special Education Introduction to Applied Behavior Analysis	Teaching Reading and Writing to ELEM Teaching Science ELEM Social Studies for ELEM Teaching Music ELEM Teaching Art ELEM Children's Literature and Language ELEM Arts & Literature Across the Curriculum Curriculum Methods and Materials ELEM Language Arts Methods ELEM Math Methods ELEM Science Methods ELEM Social Studies Methods	144 hours Special Education 144 hours elementary (2 six-week segments) SPED (144 hours) Elementary (144 hours) 144 hours SPED 144 hours Elementary grades 4-5 Student teaching - 14 weeks in Prek-5 OR SPED

TABLE 4: ELEM/SPED Dual Certification Programs of Study Overview - Small College A

Integrated classes (SPED/ELEM)	SPED Only	ELEM Only	Field Experience
Classroom Management Assessment	Nature and Needs-Labels & IEPs Methods (UDL, co-teaching)	Curriculum-Standards & Lesson planning 2. Methods: ELEM Language Arts Methods ELEM Math Methods ELEM Science Methods ELEM Social Studies Methods	4 weeks each grade strand (2 half days per week)- K-1, 2-3, 4-5- 100 hours Semester long (2 half days per week)- Special Education- 100 hours Chosen grade level 2 full days/week for 1 semester- 150 hours Year-long residency- 600 hours

TABLE 5: ELEM/SPED Dual Certification Programs of Study Overview - Small College B

Integrated classes (SPED/ELEM)	SPED Only	ELEM Only	Field Experience
N/A	Characteristics of Students with Disabilities Education Interventions/ Mild Disabilities Assessment in Special Education	Integrated & Applied Arts Classroom Management Instructional Technology & Media Assessment in Early Childhood (EC) Education Classroom data analysis EC Methods and Materials Integrated Social Studies Science in EC	100 hours in K-1 (inclusion classroom) 100 hours in 2-3 (inclusion classroom) 100 hours in 4-5 (inclusion classroom) Student Teaching-600 hours student teaching in choice of grade level

study began its dual certification program in 2009 (see table 4). The college is an "access" institution which accepts all students with a high school diploma. This has always been a dual certification program with no option for separate special education or elementary education certification. There is one campus 1.5 hours from urban centers which attracts mostly rural students for this traditional, on campus program. Faculty added specific content methods courses in 2016 and a special education practicum placement in 2022.

The second small college is also an access institution within the university system (see table 5) which accepts students into the core curriculum who do not meet traditional entrance criteria and offers academic assistance through learning support and coaching. There is one campus in a small town situated between two large urban areas which attracts students from rural and suburban areas. This has been a traditional, on-campus dual certification program since its inception in 2006. In fall 2021, faculty added the Paraprofessional to Teacher program in addition to the traditional program. Students who choose this option must be working as a paraprofessional in a public school system anywhere in the state, and the principal must agree to allow the teacher candidate to meet practicum and student teaching requirements within the school system during working hours.

This option requires online courses and remote supervision of field placement hours.

Each of the programs of study include similar coursework, with a heavy emphasis on reading and math. Special education courses include characteristics of learners with disabilities, methods, and assessments. Three of the programs have integrated classroom management and other similar courses while one of the small programs keeps its courses separate. The elementary courses for each program can all be divided into education courses, methods, and content. There are large disparities in the implementation of field experiences, however each program has some type of inclusive special education placement within the required hours.

Discussion of Faculty Experiences

Dual certification programs require that certain compromises be made. Perhaps one of the most significant areas of compromise noted in these four case studies is in the area of field work. Most of the field credits and field experiences that are provided to teacher candidates are in elementary education, with very little in special education. While one of the programs requires one of four semesters in a special education placement, two of the others do not have any semesters dedicated solely to a special education placement. However, even in the single college that had a special education placement, the supervisors often do not have special education backgrounds. This lack of expertise led to a level of concern about the feedback the college supervisors could provide with regards to interventions for specific disabilities, classroom accommodations, and modifications to the general curriculum.

Similar to the lack of supervisors with special education backgrounds, another area of compromise was in the area of instruction. Almost all the faculty teaching content methods classes had backgrounds in elementary education or were content area specialists. Most of the faculty teaching these courses felt that they had adequate knowledge of struggling learners and rarely consulted with their special education faculty colleagues about strategies to include students with disabilities in content area instruction. Often, special education faculty members would offer suggestions or provide resources on an ad hoc basis, but the pre-existing relationships between the special education faculty members and the elementary faculty members drove this support. Special education faculty members and content area specialists felt a lack of connection in all settings, particularly in math content courses. Math faculty, who often have little to no background in education, taught these courses. With this lack of pedagogy, there is an absence of modeling of teaching strategies and best practices in the elementary setting, as math faculty often teach content in a lecture style and use few hands-on approaches. This disconnect mirrors the lack of collaboration which teachers sometimes see in the elementary setting, perpetuating the lack of collaboration between elementary and special education.

Although the dual certification programs are designed to develop candidates who can teach all children in general education settings, including students with disabilities, the course delivery is often highly siloed, and must be navigated carefully. One institution had two courses that were integrated, but across all the other institutions, special education courses were separate from the elementary courses. These integrated courses consist of content from two previously separate elementary and special education courses condensed into one course. All the institutions had a strong emphasis in reading in their dual certification programs, and those courses were often taught by reading or literacy professors, who did not collaborate either with special education or their elementary colleagues.

While three institutions provided dual certification as the only option for their elementary majors, one institution had other programs in special education and elementary education as separate certification areas. Faculty in this institution noted that the dual-certification program was often ignored by both elementary- and special education-only faculty. Despite the goal of integrating content knowledge with special education and elementary pedagogy, dual certification programs overwhelmingly teach each area separately.

Faculty who already had a positive working relationship with colleagues and a desire for collaboration were responsible for creating any integration of course work or content. Several special education faculty mentioned using IRIS modules as materials that they would share with elementary and reading faculty. In some cases, faculty taught courses back-to-back with elements of co-teaching present. Because faculty could not adjust course loads for co-teaching demands, these collaborative co-teaching activities were often on an ad hoc basis as faculty had time to fit in the additional demands. All faculty involved felt that they had not systematized the program yet and were all deeply involved in ongoing program improvement, even in dual certification programs that were more than 10 years old. Several faculty noted that frequent changes in state requirements often drive program improvement strategies.

Although faculty teach courses separately, they integrate numerous structural elements such as the use of a common lesson plan and the specific use of differentiation and Universal Design for Learning elements within all coursework. Several institutions noted that faculty collaborated to create specific assignments taught across courses, such as a reading project that also included an assessment component. Perhaps because of the nature of small programs, administration included special education faculty in program work where they supported advocacy and inclusive approaches in all design work.

Despite some of the issues of isolation and informal collaboration that can be found within a dual certification

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program, both special education and elementary education faculty mentioned numerous benefits to the programs. They felt that teacher candidates were better able to describe how they might teach diverse learners and that beginning teachers often did not feel significant anxiety when faced with teaching students with disabilities—information that was evident in the interviews of recent graduates. Many of the teacher candidates sought out teaching positions after graduation where they were “the” inclusion teacher. Faculty also mentioned the value of collaboration across areas of specialty where elementary education, special education, and reading faculty all noted how much they learned from their colleagues. Faculty members noted that their doctoral programs had not prepared them for the level of collaboration needed across fields of study, and while they all noted the amount of work involved, they all felt that they were part of something special.

Tips and Recommendations for Small ELEM/SPED Dual Education Programs

After a thorough exploration of the four case study programs, several tips and recommendations surfaced for faculty considering, or working in, dual certification programs.

Develop Relationships with Teacher Candidates

Crownover & Jones (2018) defined relational pedagogy as “construction and maintenance of positive teacher-student relationships” (p.19). Nowhere is this more attainable than in a small education program. With a cohort-based program and classes of less than 25 students, building relationships with students is not only easier, but can happen organically. Scheduling individual conferences with students throughout the semester is one approach to building these relationships between faculty and teacher candidates. These conferences provide an avenue for discussing course content as well as any issues the student may have with accessing or understanding information. Conferences can also be used as a form of assessment. If these meetings are simply characterized as conversations, then an element of safety is imbedded which alleviates a level of stress for the students.

Model Collaboration with other Faculty

The success of the program depends on the relationships that are formed with the other faculty members in elementary education content areas and their willingness to work collaboratively. Relationships impact not only how program course sequences and course content are developed, but how teacher candidates experience the program. Understand that your general education colleagues do not know what they do not know. They are not clear on the differences between struggling learners in their content areas and students with disabilities. A great deal of time can be spent advocating for the specialized knowledge of special education. Teacher candidates may experience these same issues in their own classrooms in the future, therefore exacerbating the need to demonstrate how faculty can support one another. Faculty can collaborate on pedagogy, teach in each other’s courses, and provide guest lectures in numerous other content areas. This partnership allows faculty to model flexibility and co-teaching strategies which will benefit students in all education programs.

Model Nontraditional Pedagogy

Due to small class sizes, small programs are conducive to encouraging

creativity and outside-the-box thinking when it comes to course content and pedagogy. Faculty should model alternative practices through their own teaching. Faculty can develop opportunities for candidates to engage with integrated assignments, embedded concepts, and collaboration across courses. The more the teacher candidates see how special education practices can be embedded into general education, the greater the opportunities they have to include students with disabilities in their instruction. Endorse an (un)grading approach to assessment (Blum, 2020). Ungrading involves providing students with ongoing feedback and encouraging self-reflection and self-assessment of predetermined goals to gauge student understanding. Principles of Universal Design for Learning are imbedded in (un)grading as students are given choices and ownership of their learning without reliance on traditional grades. Conduct socratic seminars, which prepare future teachers to advocate for students in a group setting, share ideas and best practices, and support their ideas with research. Utilize discussion-based lectures wherein the faculty and students share thoughts on interventions and differentiation and troubleshoot issues that occur in practicum placements. This allows teacher candidates to make connections between their course content in both elementary and special education.

Think Creatively about Field Experiences

Try to expose teacher candidates to students with disabilities as soon as possible. It is helpful to work closely with elementary school partners to find the ideal placement where teacher candidates can observe a variety of special education models (e.g., inclusive classrooms, resource rooms, push-ins, co-teaching, etc.). In doing so, teacher candidates will early-on in their program begin seeing the importance of inclusive practices and how students with, and without, disabilities experience educational settings.

Conclusion

Ultimately, teacher candidates benefit from an ELEM/SPED Dual Certification Program of study. Although these programs, even within the same state, can vary greatly, they prepare future teachers to work with all learners. Dual Certification programs depend on individual faculty knowledge, relationships, and political structures of the individual colleges and/or universities. Elementary classrooms are more inclusive than ever, and teacher candidates must be prepared to teach all students. Failing to provide teacher candidates with knowledge of both general education and special education students is setting them up to be underprepared for the realities of today's classroom. TPPs must prepared candidates at these universities/colleges to be confident in their breadth of knowledge and preparedness for the inclusive elementary classroom.

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Community partnerships: Leveraging service learning in small teacher preparation programs

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ABSTRACT

During semester-long courses in inclusive methods and beginning reading instruction, pre-service teacher candidates participate in weekly tutoring sessions with elementary students in grades K-5. We outline principles identified for effective service-learning and describe how to embed them to integrate community service. We discuss service-learning with academic skills and content in mind, as well as reflection related to the experience, while ensuring the service-learning partnership includes the voice of the community partner. Lastly, a phase-by-phase guide for teacher educators is presented that we used in our small teacher preparation program through literacy instruction.

KEYWORDS

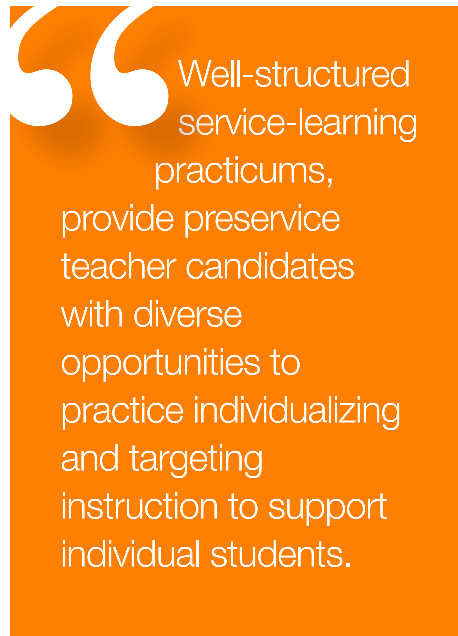
Practice-based learning, pre-service teachers, , reflection, service-learning, tutoring

It is a sunny March afternoon as Lucy Rivers packs up her "teacher bag." She has tripled checked her assessment materials, student interest inventory, and activity materials. This afternoon, she will meet two students that she will tutor through a partnership between her university and a local elementary school. Lucy is nervous and excited to have this opportunity to practice administering the assessments and use the information from them to plan individualized lessons for her students. She practiced administering the assessment with a classmate last week during class and with her roommate last night. Now it is showtime. She has all the tips her professors have given running through her mind.

Watching a practiced teacher orchestrate a literacy lesson makes the task look easy, but teaching is complex. Classroom observation during early coursework is common in teacher education programs. But is this practice effective? These placements, even with reflective notetaking, lack the practice-based learning opportunities that Pre-service Teacher Candidates (PTCs) need to be prepared to teach students with diverse needs and understand the complexities of lesson delivery (Kent & Giles, 2016). Placed in unstructured observation experiences, preconceived, and often stereotypical, assumptions of diverse students including those with exceptionalities can become cemented in the PTCs' view of the classroom (Hilton & McCleary, 2019; Milner & Laughter, 2015; Mundy & Leko, 2015). Additionally, novice special education teachers struggle to communicate effectively and lack practice in communicating the academic and social progress of students with disabilities to families (Santamaria Graff et al., 2021). Instead, practicum experiences should be enriched to expand PTCs' perceptions of, and experiences with, diverse students (Nagro & deBettencourt, 2017). Additionally, practicum experiences should promote thoughtful planning and implementation of evidence-based practices through practice-based learning opportunities (Nagro & deBettencourts, 2017). With the critical shortage of teachers and the knowledge that special

education teachers leave the field twice as often as general education teachers (Santamaria Graff et al., 2021), teacher preparation programs should provide service-learning experiences beginning early in their programs. Well-structured service-learning practicums provide PTCs with diverse opportunities to practice individualizing and targeting instruction to support individual students and effectively prepare PTCs for the challenges they will face in practice.

Service-learning is a long-standing teaching and learning strategy that uses a reciprocal relationship of field experience and community service by providing opportunities for PTCs to link academics to service benefiting both the PTCs and the local community (Shapiro, 2021). The intent of service-learning in teacher education programs is to provide PTCs with opportunities to engage with K-12 students who have life experiences culturally different from their own (Anderson et al., 2022), and opportunities to cultivate the dispositions of culturally relevant education identified by Kelly and Barrio (2021). In this way, small programs have the potential to provide PTCs with authentic field-based experiences prior to the student teaching semester or year. Service-learning experiences are typically course-based and require students to complete some sort of organized project to benefit the local community. Shapiro (2021) expanded previous definitions to include a teaching and learning strategy where instruction is integrated into community engagement. This way, PTCs connect and apply what they are learning in coursework to the world outside the higher education classroom while supporting the local diverse school population. The purpose of this article is to provide teacher education programs with a blueprint for integrating service-learning into early teacher education coursework in a way that benefits practice-based small teacher education programs and the local community.



Embedding Principles of Effective Service Learning into Teacher Preparation

Teacher education programs must recognize that PTCs' knowledge of students, schools, and teaching is an ongoing exchange between new experiences (in this case, a tutoring practicum setting), their own past school experiences, personal backgrounds, and personal dispositions and beliefs. Service-learning practicums are a means to supplement small teacher education programs by providing practice-based learning experiences to assist PTCs as they plan for and implement evidence-based teaching practices with diverse students.

Specifically, PTCs administer and interpret academic assessments then develop and carry-out instructional plans to address academic needs for diverse students. PTCs then log and journal through a structured model of reflection, adjust instruction, monitor progress, and complete structured parent communications. It is essential that the service happens with guidance of the school partners identifying the needs. The partnering school must identify and articulate the specific needs of their students (Bortolin, 2011; Shapiro, 2021). Dewey's (1938) principle of active learning or "learning by doing" forms the conceptual foundation for this type of service-learning (Salam et al., 2019). For the practice to be successful, professors must first ensure that academic credit is for learning, not service. Benefits of this type of learning are that PTCs engage in higher order critical thinking skills, solve real-time problems, communicate effectively, and differentiate teaching (Chan et al., 2019; Salam et al., 2019).

Anderson and her colleagues (2022) noted service-learning in their small program connected the program to community partners and supplemented their teacher education program. The transformation of service-learning from the notion of simple volunteerism and community service into a practice-based structured learning opportunity ensures the academic rigor of the teacher education program and assists PTCs to use evidence-based but new to them teaching practices (Anderson et al., 2022; Shapiro, 2021).

By meeting first with the elementary school principal and instructional partner, teacher education faculty establish the criteria for the selection of tutoring activities that fit the needs of the community as well as the teacher preparation program. Once the community needs are established, faculty target in-class instruction and evidence-based teaching and learning strategies that are likely to produce the greatest outcome for the community. The outlined program here identifies how one small program worked with the community to meet literacy needs in the local elementary school.

TABLE 1: Phase-by-Phase Timeline for Implementation

Phase	When	What	Who	Where
Phase 1	Prior to the semester or early in the semester	System Development Identify local need	LEA and University Faculty	LEA
Phase 2	Early semester	PTC instruction in and faculty modeling of evidence-based practices and assessment	Faculty and PTCs	University classroom
Phase 3	Mid semester	Weekly tutoring sessions and continued course instruction	PTCs, Coperating teachers, University Faculty	LEA University classroom
Phase 4	Late Semester	Data analysis/critical reflection Family communication	PTCs, Faculty	University classroom

PHASE-BY-PHASE GUIDE FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

To implement a service-learning practicum into a small teacher education program like this one, we provide a phase-by-phase process that can be adapted to the structure of, and community needs in small programs. These phases are outlined in Table 1.

Phase 1: Prior to, or Early in Semester

Identify the Local Need

During this initial phase, it is important for faculty to build a trusting relationship with the Local Education Agency (LEA). Faculty schedule an initial meeting with the instructional partner(s) (reading/math coach) and administrator of the LEA. During this meeting, the group discusses the university's service-learning efforts, the need for PTCs to have structured practicum experiences, and the academic needs of the elementary school.

At our initial meeting, I introduced the idea of an after-school tutoring program where PTCs in my Inclusive Methods course could practice individualizing and differentiating instruction in a structured small group setting of two to three students. The principal introduced me to the schools' Instructional Partner (reading/math coach), Tonya, who presented school data included as part of the school's continuous improvement program. Tonya explained how teachers were able to assist students in math to reach grade level proficiency at a higher rate than they could in literacy. She explained that the high number of students whose primary language was something other than English contributed to this lag and recommended we focus weekly tutoring sessions to the English/Language Arts area. We discussed grade level participation, student recruitment techniques, location for tutoring sessions, start and end dates, and cooperating teacher support. I left the meeting understanding the needs of the LEA and with several ideas of the practices that my PTCs would need exposure to before we started tutoring.

Phase 2: Before Tutoring

Establish the Connection Between Teaching & Learning Strategies and Coursework

Once the semester starts and PTCs are enrolled in coursework, faculty begin teaching and modeling (a) instructional methods, (b) assessment methods, (c) literacy strategies, (d) behavior management, and (e) technology use. A timeline for tutoring lessons is then set based on the LEA's schedule and the need for PTC's university classroom instruction in assessment, differentiation, and evidence-based literacy strategies. Throughout this phase, PTCs meet with their university professors for class during the week.

Meanwhile, classroom teachers and the LEA's instructional partner invite students to participate in an after-school tutoring program. The university's faculty provide a list of tutors who are partnered with a group of two to four students from the LEA as they enroll in the tutoring program. Keep in mind that students from the LEA should be paired with PTCs based on age/grade level, not ability level. This provides PTCs the opportunity to support students of the same age/grade with very different

abilities. The stage is then set for structured tutoring in reading and language arts.

Phase 3: During Tutoring

PTC Planning, Student Interactions/ Tutoring, and Reflection

Once the tutoring sessions begin, one weekly university class session each week is abbreviated to include a short instructional session in an area of need or concern identified by PTCs or the university faculty. Tutoring at the LEA makes up the rest of the class time. Cooperating teachers from the LEA volunteer to serve as mentors and support for the PTCs while they carry-out tutoring sessions one day a week for eight-ten weeks beginning five weeks into the semester. This timeline varies with the university and LEA fall and spring semesters.

During the first tutoring session, PTCs administer a fluency and comprehension assessment to determine each student's present level of performance prior to instruction. PTCs also administer student interest inventories and spend time meeting and learning about the preferences of their individual students. In the program we are using as a model, PTCs administer the National Center on Intensive Intervention Phonics Inventory (available at: https://intensiveintervention.org/tools-charts/example-diagnostic-tools) an inventory of regular invented words that fall into 10 phonetic patterns during the first tutoring session. Additionally, an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) provides individual comprehension and accuracy/fluency levels for students in grades 1-5. (McGraw-Hill, n.d. available at: https://intensiveintervention.org/tools-charts/example-diagnostic-tools).

The baseline information provides a starting point so that PTCs can plan to meet the students at their current levels of performance and identify learning activities to assist the students to progress in word identification, fluency, and/or comprehension skills based on their individual needs. Additionally, this provides practice with students rather than peers in the administration of these assessments early in the program and while the PTCs are learning through their university coursework how teachers use assessment to plan instruction.

As I moved through the room monitoring my teacher candidates administer the phonics inventory, I noticed that Lucy was asking the student to name a word that rhymed with the phonetic nonsense word. I asked Lucy if I could work with the student for a moment and then sat down to model the correct way to administer the assessment. When we were walking to the parking lot after the session, Lucy caught up to me and thanked me for showing her the correct way to give the assessment. She said that she had practiced with her roommate the previous night, but just was nervous and forgot what to do when he sat down with a second-grade student for the first time. I told Lucy that she did a great job with giving the assessment after my feedback and reinforced the idea that she was learning new skills and my role was to support her learning and make sure she had those skills before she had her own classroom.

The PTCs then develop individualized weekly one-hour tutoring lessons focused on the areas of need for their students. As part of the tutoring process, PTCs design weekly, progress monitoring, formative assessments to guide planning for the following week. The PTCs monitor individual student's progress using these formative assessments and learn to adjust activities for and between students within their tutoring group as they became more fluent and relaxed with their own teaching practices. After each session, PTCs complete structured self-reflections where they identify strengths and areas for growth in teaching and identify areas of adjustment in instructional strategies for the following session. The professor attends all tutoring sessions to (a) monitor, (b) provide coaching, (c) gain insight into adjustments of instruction provided to the PTCs, (d) model fidelity to instructional strategies, and (e) familiarize PTCs with the relationship of assessment and progress monitoring and how they drive instruction.

At the final tutoring session, the PTCs repeat the assessments administered at the first meeting to collect post-tutoring data. This strategy is used to illustrate the difference between formative (often grain-sized progress) and summative (grade-level progress) for the PTCs. It helps PTCs understand that progress toward a goal may take small steps and students who are making progress daily may not be reaching grade-level proficiency after only this short time.

Phase 4: After Tutoring

Data Analysis, Critical Reflection, & Communication

Once tutoring sessions are complete, PTCs build individual progress reports to practice effective communication of student growth, areas of continued need, and behavioral feedback to families. This activity provides PTCs the opportunity to practice communication with families in appropriate voice and format. The emphasis here is appropriate communication. PTCs use complete sentences and language that an adult family member would understand. In this way, faculty can provide critical feedback that impacts positive communication with families to PTCs before they enter classrooms. PTCs also report student's progress to the university professor in a professional manner. This communication includes

TABLE 2: Weekly Structure of the Tutoring Sessions

Tutoring Component	Description
Homework assistance	Homework assistance for students in upper elementary grades when identified as a need for individual students
Review	Review of skills from previous instructional week and tutoring session
Introduction of specific skills	For each skill students completed the following noting instructional strategies for use (i.e., direct instruction, scaffolding, task analysis, etc.) Teacher modeling with examples Guided practice with examples Independent practice with examples
Closing activity	A closing activity to include a review of skills taught during the tutoring session
Assessment	Weekly assessment of skills (formal or informal) included with each lesson plan
Accommodations	Accommodations when necessary (consider assistive technologies, communication, behavioral, cultural, intellectual, sensory and physical needs). If no accommodations are needed, state the rationale for not including accommodations.
Materials	A list of all materials and supplies needed for each tutoring session
Reflection	Reflection of the tutoring session including a complete description of student's strengths and areas for needed improvement

a professional narrative and a graphic representation of pre and post assessment results with suggested next steps in instruction for each student. The written report includes an analysis of the student's baseline data, goals, progress monitoring toward identified goals, and post assessment results. A complete analysis includes gains or lack thereof, anecdotal observations of strengths and needs of the student which supports the quantitative data collected as informal weekly progress monitoring and reflections. In their reflective analysis, PTCs provide information not only related to next steps for instruction but how the service-learning experience impacts their personal growth and development as a future educator.

Lucy reflected on her time with Alice and how it impacted her thoughts when working with diverse students. "Tutoring Alice has increased my patience and empathy when working with students who deal with anxiety. I have learned how to meet students where they are rather than setting expectations, they feel incapable of meeting. Alice thrived when she felt like the situation was not threatening. She is not a child who excels under pressure; rather, she shuts down. To accommodate for these struggles, I had to utilize explicit instruction more often than I anticipated. I also modeled the new skill at every lesson. I had to pay close attention to Alice's non-verbal cues. When she became quiet and withdrawn, I realized I could not wait very long before assisting her with the answer."

Tools for Implementation

As this is an early field experience for PTCs, we created a structured field-based assignment that included several components. PTCs are assigned to a small group (2-4) of students that they tutor throughout the semester. Dispositions assessments include arriving on time to the tutoring sessions; maintaining confidentiality when discussing individual student information; and conducting oneself professionally at all times-including sharing materials, refraining from cell phone use, and dressing appropriately. All assignments identified below reside in an electronic tutoring notebook that faculty check weekly throughout the semester and PTCs submit for final review at the end of the semester.

Tutoring plans and daily reflections

TABLE 3: Key practices and strategies to improve word recognition skills

Objectives	Activities and Strategies
Sequencing	Break down the task (e.g., start by having the child break an unknown word into separate sounds or parts they can sound out) Provide prompts or cues as needed Model sequencing activities for students with short and intentional activities (e.g., breaking a whole group lesson into parts, I do, we do, you do) Provide students with step-by-step prompts
Segmenting	Break down the targeted skill (e.g., identifying a speech or letter sound) into smaller units or component parts (e.g., sounding out each speech or letter sound in that word) Segment or synthesize component parts (e.g., sounds out each phoneme in a word, then blends the sounds together)
Organizers	Direct children to look over material prior to instruction Direct children to focus on specific information Provide students with prior information about tasks Tell students the objectives of instruction upfront

During each tutoring session, PTCs review and reinforce skills the students are taught during regular classroom instruction each week. PTCs then re-teach any pre-requisite skills the students have not mastered. PTCs (a) print weekly tutoring plans, (b) gather resources, and (c) organize all materials needed for each tutoring session. The practice in materials management helps PTCs understand that they will be responsible for supplying all materials when the classroom belongs to them. The sequence of instruction and tutoring components followed a structured format identified in Table 2.

Comprehensive Tutoring Reflection

At the completion of all tutoring sessions, PTCs write a reflective paper summarizing the overall tutoring experience. The paper includes the following sections: identification of what each PTCs learned personally and professionally from tutoring, the types of learning difficulties individual students experienced, how PTCs addressed individual students' difficulties including how they met the needs of English Language learners, how analysis of the students' errors guided instruction, interpretation of the results of pre/post assessments, and how this experience will impact the PTCs as a teacher in the future. The overall tutoring reflection is evaluated based on the depth of reflections and the ability of the PTC to articulate each point.

Pre and Post Assessment Results

On the first and last day of tutoring, PTCs administer, evaluate, and score assessments identifying the students' academic ability, considering the needs of English language learners as they administer the assessments. The pre-assessment will enable the PTCs to determine students' academic strengths and deficits and assist in preparing individualized lessons. The post assessment will enable the PTCs to evaluate the students' progress. At the end of tutoring, PTCs submit the scored pre and post assessments administered as well as a graph or chart documenting the results.

Student Progress Reports

Using reflections and daily student work as a reference, PTCs summarize the growth of each student on individual progress reports. Reports include recommendations for addressing any continued areas of student difficulty. The reports are provided to teachers to distribute to parents after approval by the professor and the site-based tutoring supervisor.

Tutoring Notebook

PTCs submit an electronic tutoring log at the end of the semester with all the above information. Below is the table of contents required for each PTC to follow.

Table of Contents:

TABLE 4: Key practices and strategies to improve reading comprehension

Objectives	Activities and Strategies
Directed response/questioning	Use open-ended questioning Provide opportunities for student-led questioning Incorporate dialogue activities (both independent and collaborative)
Control difficulty of processing demands of task	Provide assistance Use explicit and molded instruction Sequence task based on reading/ability level Present easy steps or concepts first and move on to progressively more difficult steps or concepts (task analysis) Allow student to control level of difficulty Keep activities short and intentional
Elaboration	Provide students with additional information or explanation about concepts, steps, or procedures Use redundant text or repetition within text
Modeling	Teacher explicitly demonstrates the processes or steps
Group instruction	Small group instruction composed with teacher-student engagement
Strategy cues	Teacher prompts the student to use strategies or multiple steps Teacher explains steps or procedures for solving problems Use of “think aloud” and other critical thinking models Explicitly list the benefits of a strategy or procedures

- Tutoring Notebook rubric
- Background information about student(s): grade, age, interests, academic strengths and areas of difficulty, behavioral strengths/ concerns.
- Pre/post tutoring assessment with graph
- Lessons with student work, formative assessments, notes about errors, and personal notes
- Final tutoring reflection
- Progress reports

Identifying

Instructional Supports

Within the field of education, there is a need to provide supports for identifying and improving literacy instruction. Explicit and systemic instruction for literacy development and supporting students with developmental reading delays has gained attention and provided results for students and educators alike (Moats, 2019). These practices come down to continuous and intentional instructional strategies that include providing daily reviews of content, embedded instructional objectives, teachers’ intentional presentation of new material, opportunities for guided practice, independent practice, and formative evaluations (i.e., assessment materials and practices). Implemented properly, these practices have supported intervention programs and are reflected in several of the new educational policies and legislation around literacy instruction in the elementary school settings (Moats, 2019).

When discussing literacy development, and as referenced within this service-learning experience, there are typically three key areas of literacy development that are identified as areas of

growth for students and teachers both which include word recognition skills (i.e., decoding, phonics, phonemic awareness, encoding), comprehension skills, and evaluation of instructional practices (Moats, 2019).

Word Recognition

Explicit instruction is a beneficial approach for supporting word recognition skills and development in students with learning disabilities (Moats, 2019). Explicit instruction, often called direct instruction, refers to teaching skills in an explicit, direct fashion. It involves drill/repetition/practice and can be delivered to one child or to a small group of students at the same time (Kuhn, 2020). When assessing teaching practices that provided measurable improvements in word recognition skills for students with identified learning disabilities, we identified three key practices that support student growth. These three practices include a focus on sequencing, segmenting, and the use of advance organizers to model skills for students. Table 3 lists activities and strategies identified for each key practice.

Reading Comprehension

Identified supports for improving reading comprehension skills in students with learning disabilities include a paired approach consisting of explicit instruction and strategy instruction. Strategy instruction, much like explicit instruction and word recognition skills, includes supporting students' understanding and establishment of a plan to pick out patterns in words and to identify key information and the main idea in each. Once a student understands specific strategies, they are then able to generalize and implement them in combination with other comprehension skills (Kurniaman, 2018). Instructional practices known to improve comprehension skills include (a) directed response/questions (i.e., open-ended questioning), (b) controlled difficulty or processing task demands, (c) elaboration, (d) teacher modeling, (e) group instruction (i.e., shared reading and shared writing), and (f) strategy cues (Kuhn, 2020; Kurniaman, 2018). Table 4 lists activities and strategies for each of these instructional practices.

Evaluation and Reflective Practice

Continuous evaluation of instructional practices is a critical component of continuous improvement for teachers and supports the ability for teachers to identify opportunities for intervention and prevention (Yaman, 2016). Practice-based intervention and prevention service-learning practicum provide PTCs a means to assess the effectiveness of their instruction while also being able to better identify specific areas or skills where a student may be struggling (Kuhn, 2020; Moats, 2019; Yaman, 2016). For students with an identified learning disability, these practices include using student assessments to pinpoint specific skill deficits and instructional strategies to support these deficits. These practices focus on evaluating the success of both the improvement of the student and the instructional practices.

Another strategy that teachers can use to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of instructional practices is professional reflection. Much like within this service-learning experience, having the opportunity to reflect critically about lived experiences provides the opportunity for continued self-evaluation and improvement. Taking the time to reflect on (a) student learning (highlights and challenges); (b) moments that went as planned and others that didn't; (c) what was used to evaluate what students learned; and (d) what skills were used and the success of those skills, provides opportunities for PTCs to think critically about their role and practices in relation to student performance which strengthens instructional practices and student learning as a whole (Yaman, 2016). When implemented properly and routinely, these identified practices for instruction, reflection, and student support offer PTCs the knowledge and skill set needed to assess their literacy instruction and student development, especially for those teachers serving struggling readers.

Conclusion

The focus of this article was to provide insight as to how a small teacher education program can integrate a tutoring service-learning project into early teacher education coursework to benefit the local community. Through service-learning opportunities, PTCs are given the chance to apply content taught in the university setting and make connections with students, therefore preparing them to be stronger future teachers. While this model uses literacy instruction, tutoring interventions could be implemented using any content area based on the need of the local community. It is important for the university to choose the model that works best with the group of students and partnering community LEA.

PTCs need practice-based structured early field experiences prior to internships rather than unstructured practicum attempts. Through these types of low-risk practical, real world teaching experiences PTCs gain greater confidence and connect theory taught in university classrooms with the students in today's elementary environments. Artifacts that provide evidence of PTCs as well as K-5 student learning are expressed in statements provided in PTCs reflections such as Lucy's. By integrating these experiences through service-learning opportunities, PTCs can apply their passion for teaching in

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a real-world setting while promoting change in the community.

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Special Education in South Korea: Policies and Issues

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ABSTRACT
Although South Korea has a relatively short history of special education, the country has made remarkable improvements following the Special Education Act (1974) and Act on Special Education for Persons with Disabilities (2008) mandates. The meaningful social inclusion of individuals with disabilities is a fundamental goal documented through the law and five-year development plans for special education in South Korea. However, multiple areas require more intensive attention, such as preparing general and special education teachers, promoting the public's disability awareness, and designing quality special education curricula. The present article provides an overview of the overall special education system in South Korea and discusses contemporary issues.

KEYWORDS
Inclusion, South Korea, special education, teacher preparation

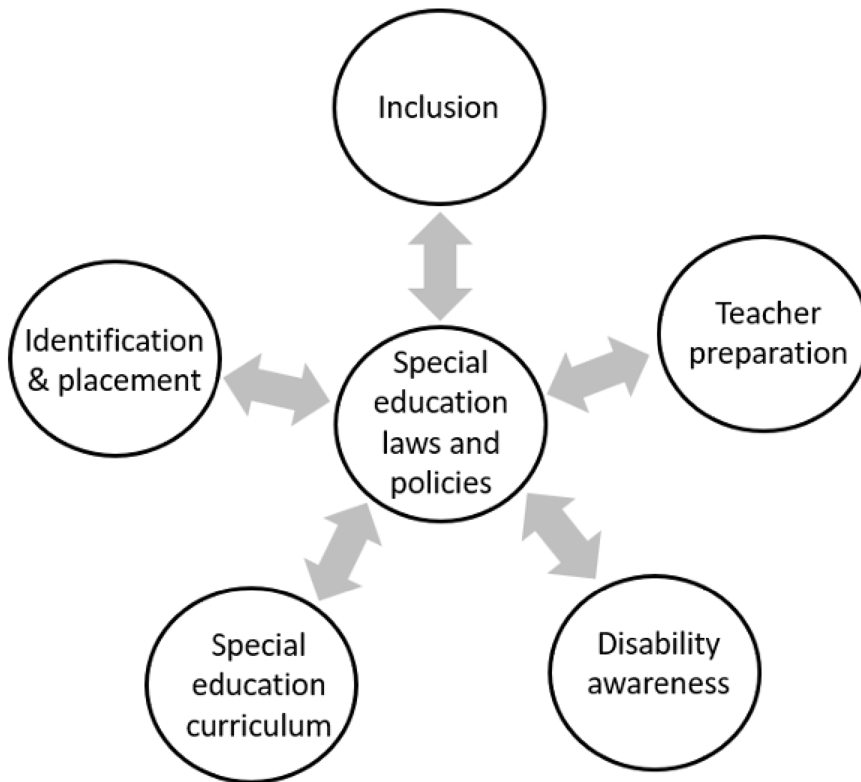
The Republic of Korea (referred to here as South Korea) is in East Asia, and its reported population is approximately 51.6 million (Korea Statistical Office, 2021). Its total area is 100,363 km^2, which is about one-sixth of the size of Texas in the United States. South Korea has received a strong cultural philosophical influence by Confucianism, which placed substantial value on education. Education in South Korea has become a tool to advance one's social and economic status and since its recovery from the Korean War in the 1950s, South Korea's education fever has become a driving force for remarkable changes in its economic and educational development over a short period (Hyun et al., 2003).

Educational Performance and Literacy Rate

Regarding education, in particular, average scores in reading, mathematics, and science from the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that 15-year-old students in South Korea performed better than their counterparts in other Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (OECD, 2018). In 2018, South Korea had high rates of high school and college graduation, and literacy. In the 25–34-year-old age range, 98% of the population was found to have graduated from high school, while 70% had received postsecondary education—the highest rate among OECD countries. While only 22% of people in South Korea older than 15 could read and write in 1945, South Korea's current literacy rate of 99.7% demonstrates excellent educational strides.

While South Korea is currently ranked as one of the highest-performing countries in terms of academic performance (OECD, 2018), excellence in education and equity has been a highly debated topic (Lee et al., 2018). Although Lee and colleagues argued that educational excellence must include efforts to provide additional resources for diverse students, in practice, excellence is often interpreted as earning higher grades through competitions. As a result, in the highly competitive educational atmosphere of South Korea, teachers and

FIGURE 1: A Concept Map for Current Policies and Issues in South Korea



parents tend to prioritize high-performing students, which results in them not giving equal public attention to diverse students' learning, hindering the effective implementation of inclusion.

Unique Cultural and Social Contexts

Although the United States has influenced the nation's special education foundation (e.g., laws and regulations), South Korea's special education situation has unique issues due to social and cultural contexts described above. At the same time, while special education in South Korea has undergone multiple changes, its development has not paralleled that of general education. The 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), one of the largest international surveys, found that South Korean general educators rated themselves considerably lower on their own preparedness for working with students with disabilities than the ones in other OECD countries (OECD, 2018). All these issues require more intensive attention to implement inclusive education so that every student can succeed.

This article provides an overview of the history of special education in South Korea, describing current practices, including the country's special education laws and regulations. The article also describes the challenges that special education in South Korea experiences. Figure 1 depicts a concept map showing the current policies and issues in South Korea.

Special Education Laws and Policies

Early special education practice between the 1940s and 1960s was mainly offered in segregated, private residential special schools (e.g., Bo-Gun School for students with physical disabilities, Bo-Myoung School for students with intellectual disabilities, and Young-Hwa School for the deaf and hard of hearing (Kim & Yeo, 1976). Although special education was mentioned in general education laws, the absence of laws and regulations specific to special education did not help the integration of students with disabilities into public schools (Kim et al., 2019). The Korean War paused the continuous development of special education, occurring before special education laws and regulations could be established.

Modern general education in South Korea began immediately after the Korean War in 1950. However, the Special Education Promotion Act (SEPA), the first special education law, was not mandated until 1977, approximately 25 years after the 1949 Korean Education Law was enacted. The law helped establish legal regulations to enforce the educational rights of elementary and secondary students with disabilities to receive special education and related services at public schools for free. The law also mandated that students at-risk for disabilities referred by teachers be assessed through the appropriate special education evaluation process and have individualized education programs (IEPs) designed around them. The second reauthorized SEPA (1994) started using the term integration, and the third reauthorized SEPA (1997) emphasized placing students in the least restrictive environment. As a result of these reauthorizations, more students with mild and moderate disabilities started attending public schools. Although the SEPA contributed to establishing the South Korean special education system, the law was criticized for providing limited legal evidence supporting the entire school-age groups of students and practicing educational accountability. For example, the SEPA mainly focused on elementary and secondary schools

rather than early childhood or postsecondary support. In addition, it included no specific roles of the federal and local governments in providing an integrated educational environment.

A new special education law, the Act on Special Education for Persons with Disabilities (ASEPD, 2008), was mandated, with multiple major changes to the SEPA. First, free public special education was expanded to early childhood and college students with disabilities. Accordingly, students with disabilities aged between 3 and 20 received free public special education—free services that few countries provide to this age range (Kang et al., 2015). This change led to a 58% increase in students receiving special services, from 62,500 in 2006 to 98,154 in 2021 (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2021). Second, the law mandated installing and operating Special Education Support Centers (SESCs, Article 11). The centers are responsible for administering screening, diagnosis, and evaluation processes, providing support for special education-related and itinerant education services and training special education teachers (Article 16). ASEPD (2008) also enforced inclusive educational settings for students with disabilities to support their transition to postsecondary life and promote their quality of life and inclusion in society (Article 1). In 2013, with the social movements for protecting the rights of students with disabilities, the law mandated that general education and special education teachers complete professional development on the human rights of individuals with disabilities.

Trends in Special Education Laws and Policies

Providing special education for students with disabilities is a critical duty for federal and local governments. Special education law in South Korea lists establishing comprehensive special education plans for students with disabilities as a specific duty of governments at both levels. Specifically, since 1997, the MOE has published comprehensive plans every five years supported by legal evidence. These five-year special education development plans have been a driving force in shaping the direction of special education and special education teacher preparation. As a strategic roadmap, each five-year plan includes specific goals and tasks to help the MOE achieve short- and long-term special education goals. Therefore, an overview of the plans demonstrate how special education in South Korea has changed over time.

> "… five-year special education development plans have been a driving force in shaping the direction of special education and special education teacher preparation."

The first and second five-year plans were made under the SEPA. The first plan (1997–2001) focused on establishing comprehensive special education and social welfare to expand the range of recipients of special education services (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development [MEHRD], 1997). The second plan (2003–2007) targeted improving special education accountability and maximizing outcomes for all students with and without disabilities (MEHRD, 2003). To achieve this goal, the government ensured (a) providing special education opportunities across grades and geographic regions, (b) improving the quality of the inclusive education learning environment of regular schools, and (c) establishing and expanding the community-based special education support system.

Along with the special education law, in particular, the ASEPD (2008), the third five-year plan (2008–2012) focused on providing individualized education and related services suitable for various types and characteristics of disabilities to support the inclusion of students with disabilities in society (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology [MEST], 2008). This plan emphasized the accountability of the federal and local governments to provide educational opportunities and access to those learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. It also emphasized providing overall support for the social inclusion of these individuals by, for example, improving the disability awareness of the public and providing more inclusive education opportunities for students with disabilities at public schools.

The fourth five-year plan (2013–2017) focused on ensuring the participation of students with disabilities in student-led activities (MOE, 2013). Specific tasks of the plan involved improving the quality of special education and special education-related services, advocating for the human rights of the students, and helping them participate in student-led and social activities. As a result, there was an increase in special education classrooms for young children, special education curricula and learning materials, and teacher preparation. Adapted curricula for students with moderate and severe disabilities, as well as for deaf and hard-of-hearing students, were implemented. The number of special education classrooms and SESCs (from 3 classrooms in 2012 to 38 classrooms in 2017) increased to provide more special education services. Despite the increase, the United Nations (UN) expressed

concern that students with disabilities in South Korea were not receiving inclusive education of sufficient quality, and more general education and special education teachers needed to engage in professional development. As a result, in 2017, approximately 41,000 special education teachers took special education courses and underwent professional development training, and about 228,272 general and special education teachers took inclusion professional development courses (MOE, 2018). The ASEPD (2008, Clause 25) further specified educators and government personnel must complete disability awareness courses. In 2015, the South Korean Human Rights Committee also recommended creating policies on including students with disabilities. In response, more attention was given to advocating for the human rights of students with disabilities, providing further education, and hiring a support advisory board.

The fifth five-year plan (2018–2022) has now been implemented (MOE, 2018). The specific goal of this plan is to ensure equitable educational opportunities, strengthen a disability empathy culture, and improve the quality of special education, inclusive education, support for postsecondary, and lifelong education support. In response to these specific goals, those in the field of special education have made efforts to increase the number of special education teachers and improve their professionalism, enhance the quality of inclusion support (taking into consideration degrees of disability and reinforcing career, higher education, and lifelong education support), increase public awareness of disability, and create a culture of empathy for people with disabilities.

According to the 2022 Special Education Operation Plans (MOE, 2022), the latest policy and plans consistently emphasize equal and fair educational opportunities, enhanced support for inclusive education and special education, career and lifelong education support, and a shared culture for people with disabilities. In this way, it is vitally important that schools deepen the operationalization of inclusive education in both special and general classes. Educators have also advocated for their rights to learn art, music and sports in light of the growing interest in students with various needs (MOE, 2022). All these changes in law and policies of South Korea have contributed to multiple changes, including changes in multiple special education practices and teacher preparation (Figure 1).

Procedures for Identifying and Placing Eligible Students for Special Education

The procedure for identifying eligible students for special education begins when caregivers or school principals request diagnosis or evaluation tests from the school district heads or superintendents of the school districts for young children (infants, toddlers, and preschoolers) or students who have or are suspected of having a disability. With the caregiver's consent, the superintendent immediately refers the concerned infants or students to a SESC (ASEPD, 2008, Article 14). SESCs must administer the requested diagnosis or evaluation test within 30 days after the student is referred and provide reports on the test results and recommendations. The head of the school district or superintendent determines whether the student is eligible for special education services based on the SESC report and provides written notice to the caregivers (ASEPD, 2008, Article 14). Currently, ASEPD list 11 disability categories, including visual impairment, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, physical disability, emotional disturbance or behavioral disorder, autism, communication disorder, learning disability, health impairment, developmental delay, and other disabilities prescribed by Presidential decree, such as the presence of two or more disabilities. An individualized education support team is then established, and this team prepares an individualized education plan for the student every semester. The school district head or superintendent places students eligible for special education services into general or special classes at general schools or special schools, based on the recommendation of the special management committee and consideration of the least restrictive environments for the students (ASEPD, 2008, Article 17).

For the last 10 years, the number of students eligible for special education services in South Korea has increased from 85,012 in 2012 to 98,154 in 2021. In 2021, about two-thirds of 98,154 South Korean students with special needs were placed in general schools (70,866 students, 72.2%), including general education classrooms (16,600 students, 16.9%) or special classrooms (54,266, 55.3%). About 27.5% of the students were in special schools, and about 0.3% were served in SESCs. In South Korea, 12,042 special education classrooms or 187 special schools exist. As of 2021, the four largest disability groups in South Korea were intellectual disability (n = 51,788, 52.8%), autism (n = 15,215, 15.5%), physical disability (n = 9,695; 9.9%), and developmental delays (n = 9,367; 9.5%). By contrast, learning disabilities, health impairment, emotional disturbance, and behavioral disorders were identified as relatively smaller groups, comprising only about 1.1%, 1.8%, and 1.9%, respectively (MOE, 2021).

Teacher Preparation for Special Education in South Korea

In 1956, the first official teacher preparation program in South Korea

started at Daegu University (Kim et al., 2009). In South Korea, special education teacher preparation consists of two steps: (a) the license process and (b) selection and the hiring process. In this section, we describe both processes in detail.

License Processes

To become a licensed special education teacher in South Korea, the first step is to undergo special education teacher preparation, with the most typical route being to complete an undergraduate special education program, separately from the general education licensure program. Another route is to complete a graduate-level special education teacher preparation program if the person has already obtained teaching licenses in other content areas (e.g., elementary education, social studies, math). As of 2021, 1,507 teacher candidates were enrolled in the undergraduate special education teacher preparation programs at 37 universities (seven national and 30 private; MOE, 2021). In addition, 18 universities (six national and 16 private) prepare special education preservice teachers through 26 preparation programs.

Program Requirements

During teacher preparation, preservice special education teachers must complete courses in the following three areas: special education, license or endorsement, and the teaching profession. First, special education-related courses help preservice teachers better understand special education and disabilities. Undergraduate-level preservice teachers are required to take 42 credit hours in this area, while graduate-level preservice teachers are required to take 30 credit hours. Second, preservice teachers take 29 credit hours in license- or endorsement-related courses, with 21 of the credit hours in courses for the school level they plan to teach (e.g., early childhood, elementary, secondary) and eight credit hours in method courses focusing on content areas for endorsements. Third, the teaching profession courses are intended to enhance preservice teachers' overall understanding of the teaching profession. Examples of professional teaching courses include teaching profession theory, teaching profession knowledge, and teaching practice. Undergraduate-level preservice teachers must take a minimum of 22 credit hours of these courses, while those at graduate level are exempted from this requirement. The MOE (2013) announced that courses on teaching profession knowledge should include an introduction to special education along with training on gifted education, teaching profession practice, and school violence prevention and countermeasures. In addition to course requirements, preservice teachers need to complete student teaching and teaching services. Preservice teachers must complete a four-week student teaching period and gain field experience, such as by volunteering at special education- or multicultural family-related institutions, for more than 30 hours.

Teaching License

After completing all teacher preparation program requirements, including courses and field experience, and passing the aptitude test, preservice SETs obtain their initial special education teaching license (MEST, 2008) without additional content tests. As the special education teaching license enables teachers to work for students with disabilities in either special schools or special classrooms in general schools, it is one of the most critical milestones for preservice teachers in stepping into special education. The special education teaching license is categorized into three school levels: early childhood, elementary, and secondary. Specifically, the number of school-level and endorsement-related courses determines the license types. Early childhood and elementary-level licenses do not show endorsement areas. However, secondary-level licenses typically mark endorsement areas next to the school level, such as secondary special physical education or secondary vocational education.

Selection/Hiring Process

Obtaining the initial special school teaching license means that teachers are now qualified to take the annual National Teacher Employment Examination (NTEE), which is administered by the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation. The MOE hires teachers selected through the NTEE, and once hired, they become tenured for lifetime service in public schools. In addition, the MOE assigns special education teachers uniformly, offering children with equal access to quality teachers to provide equal quality of learning opportunities (Luschei et al., 2013). To work at private agencies for persons with disabilities (e.g., special schools, inclusive preschools, clinics, and welfare centers), candidates need to go through agency-wide hiring procedures, such as an interview with agency administrators (Kim et al., 2015). After three years of service as a special education teacher, teachers can participate in a five-week or 180-hour professional development program to obtain an advanced certificate (Kang & Hong, 2008).

Current Issues and Solutions for Special Education in South Korea

Despite the improvements in special education laws and policies and teacher preparation in South Korea, its inclusion practices have experienced challenges for several reasons. In this section, we describe current issues of South Korea special education and share solutions that South Korea has tried to improve those issues.

Inclusion

While integration creates new spaces for students with disabilities (e.g., special education classrooms, pull-out services), inclusion enables all participants to interact by removing barriers (Rodriguez & Garro-Gil, 2015). In South Korea, however, "integration" and "inclusion" are used interchangeably. The ASEPD (2008) states that "integrated education means education provided for persons eligible for special education in a regular school with other persons of the same age which is suitable for the educational needs of each individual without any discrimination according to the type and level of disability" (Article 2, Clause 6). In other words, inclusion in South Korea refers to including children in either special classrooms or inclusive classrooms in general schools. Given this definition, the number of students included into such settings has slightly increased over the years. In 2012, about 70.7% of students eligible for special education services (60,080 students) attended general schools. In 2021, about 72.1% of students with disabilities (70,866 students) eligible for special education in South Korea (98,154 students) attended general schools. In general schools, the percentage of students in special education classrooms was 52.3% in 2012 and increased to 55.3% in 2021. By contrast, the percentage of students in inclusion classrooms decreased from 18.4% in 2012 to 16.8% in 2021 (MOE, 2021). Given that meaningful social inclusion of individuals with disabilities is the goal of the MOE, documented through the law and five-year plans, more discussions are needed on how to facilitate authentic interaction among students with and without disabilities.

Although there are movements to pursue more inclusion rather than integration, the lack of teacher knowledge for including students with disabilities is known as one of the main barriers

to implementing inclusion. General education teachers, responsible for facilitating learning opportunities for students in the class, play a critical role in making the classroom inclusive. Therefore, their knowledge and pedagogical practice about inclusion and views toward students with disabilities are essential for successful inclusion (Kim & Kim, 2015). However, in the highly competitive educational atmosphere of South Korea, teachers tend to prioritize high-performing students, which interrupts the effective implementation of inclusion. The referral process for at-risk students is often delayed (Kwon, 2015), and teachers frequently have negative attitudes toward and low expectations of students with disabilities. Therefore, it is challenging to build inclusive educational environments without first improving educators' views toward students with disabilities (Seo, 2021).

As a result, for future solutions, policymakers and educators should extend their efforts to improve teachers' knowledge about inclusion in general education preparation. To support in-service general education teachers, the recent special education policies enforced more training for general education teachers to help their understanding of inclusion (e.g., MOE, 2022). The MOE started using the Jungdaun School model to facilitate co-teaching between special and general education teachers to facilitate inclusive education for all. In 2018, five schools adopted the school model, and in 2021, 85 schools implemented it (MOE, 2022). Teachers working at the schools indicated that their experience helped them better understand that inclusion is for all students and understand the need for collaboration between general and special education teachers by using their expertise to include all students (Kang et al., 2021). However, preservice general education teachers expressed that their confidence regarding skills needed for handling students with disabilities was not the required level (Lee et al., 2018). Seo (2020) pointed out the scarcity of specific guidelines on training preservice general education teachers to interact with students with disabilities. While MSET (2008) now requires general education teachers to take one special education course (e.g., introduction to special education) as a minimum and to complete a practicum in inclusive education classrooms, this may not be enough to master the knowledge and skills to create inclusive classrooms (Symeonidou, 2017). Given that preparing teachers to implement inclusive education should be prioritized for success for all, continuous discussions on how to provide opportunities to learn and practice inclusive skills for preservice general education teachers is necessary.

Promoting Disability Awareness to the Public

Positive social acceptance is a critical indicator of an inclusive society. However, as in other countries, misunderstandings of, or stigmas associated with, individuals with disabilities have been of concern in South Korea. In some cases, although parents have known that their children with disabilities were experi-

encing unfair educational opportunities, they have accepted the situation rather than advocated for their children because they thought nothing could be done (Kim & Kim, 2015; Kwon, 2015). Shin and Choi (2022) pointed out the limited public disability awareness and a lack of understanding of disabilities.

Considering these ongoing issues regarding public awareness on disability, policymakers and practitioners have suggested solutions. Following the global effort to improve public awareness regarding disability and the social acceptance of individuals with disabilities (UN, 2006), policymakers and educators in South Korea have broadened legal actions emphasizing human rights, including for people with disabilities. National initiatives, such as the 2022 Special Education Operation Plan (MOE, 2022) and the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan for Persons with Disabilities (MOE, 2018), have underscored these movements to promote public awareness of disabilities. Disability awareness involves educating to create a precise understanding of disability and improve attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. Its goal is to promote a view of individuals with disabilities as equal citizens to guarantee their rights as human beings (Disabled World, 2016; Leicester, 2008). An increasing number of school-based intervention projects have sought to improve disability awareness for students without disabilities in South Korea. Researchers have implemented various programs, including the use of informational materials (Lee, 2013), role-playing, direct interaction among peers with disabilities within social groups (Kang et al., 2007), and human rights lessons (Jeong & Chu, 2016). Between 2001 and 2017, 20 peer-reviewed journal articles were published on disability awareness for students without disabilities in kindergarten through high school years (Chae et al., 2018).

Furthermore, to promote disability awareness in public on a larger scale, the MOE expanded initiatives on awareness education. For example, K–12 students without disabilities must now take disability awareness classes twice a year, and federal or local government employees need to participate in the activity once a year (Enforcement Decree of the Welfare Act for the Disabled [EDWAD], 2015, Article 25). In addition, the MOE created publicity campaigns using e-books, websites, video clips, nonprofit commercials, and viral clips. It drew on social network services (SNS), transit advertising, and broadcast streaming to enhance understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each individual, including those with disabilities. As changing people's perceptions and beliefs can take a long time, the upcoming new five-year plan will need to consider intense partnership and collaboration among agencies to maintain these movements.

Special Education Teacher Preparation

Although laws and teacher preparation have contributed to strengthening the professionalism of in-service special education teachers, there has still been relatively limited guidance on how to improve the professionalism of preservice SETs. For example, the targeting tasks listed in the fifth five-year special education development plan (MOE, 2018) are mainly related to in-service teachers. However, following the mandates of the SEPA (1974) and ASEPD (2008), special education teachers should be able to implement increasingly pedagogically effective instruction with professionalism, which has changed special teacher education preparation.

Based on these issues on special education teacher preparation, both university and related laws should collaboratively provide quality education programs. Kim and Park (2016) highlighted the efficacy of preservice special education teachers regarding their teaching preparation and their professionalism. Universities and educators should extend practical collaboration and partnerships to discuss how to increase preservice teachers' experiences in relevant education fields. Engaged with MOE-funded projects promoting individual universities' strengths and specializations (e.g., University for Creative Korea), special education teacher preparation programs can extend practicum opportunities through community-based service-learning activities and project-based learning projects to enhance preservice teacher training. Preservice teachers can experience developing lesson plans and implementing targeted skills in local disability centers and improve their professionalism through practical career opportunities in university programs.

Special Education Curriculum

Special education in South Korea has its own curriculum, separate from the general education curriculum, with the purpose of supporting students' unique needs (MOE, 2015). Developing a high-quality special education curriculum has been an ongoing issue in South Korea, and many teachers and parents of students with disabilities have requested to engage in the inclusive school curriculum (Jeong, 2015). To address this ongoing issue and needs of special education curriculum for students in both elementary and secondary grades, MOE has revised the national-level Special Education Curriculum for students with disabilities in 2015 and provided standards for curriculum goals in all school grades. The Common Curriculum and Basic Curriculum are applied at the elementary and secondary school levels for students in general education classes. The Elective-Centered Curriculum and Basic Curriculum are applied at the high school level. In particular, teachers can

implement the Basic Curriculum for students with disabilities who need a modified curriculum and have difficulty following the Common Curriculum or the Elective-Centered Curriculum (MOE, 2015). Furthermore, to enhance the accountability of government organizations and local schools in guaranteeing students' access to inclusive instruction at their schools, the ASEPD (2008) has also emphasized the provision of textbooks, devices, and teaching equipment.

The lack of teaching and learning materials for students with disabilities has been another consistent issue (Kim & Park, 2016). Thus, aligning with the currently available 2015 national-level Common Curriculum, the National Institute of Special Education (2018a, 2018b, 2019a, 2019b) under the MOE has developed resources for teachers, including adapted textbooks. Lee and Shin (2020) showed that teachers could use teaching materials and adapted texts by incorporating accommodated and modified curricular goals (Lee & Shin, 2020, p. 259). Teachers and students can download the adapted textbooks as PDF files from the publisher's server. Especially since 2020, with the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, MOE started using online digital teaching and learning materials and textbooks for students with and without disabilities as one of the solutions for the lack of accessible learning materials for students with disabilities. For example, in April and May 2020, all students could access academic content sites, such as digital textbooks, e-learning sites, and the Educational Broadcasting System (EBS), with MOE's educational policy of free mobile data and online content support (MOE, 2020). Another web portal, Eduable (www.nise.go.kr), operated by the National Institute of Special Education, was also available free of charge to support learning in subject areas for students with disabilities. Udurang (rang.edunet.net) was used as a web community to share learning materials with students, hold student discussions, and engage students in project activities.

Conclusion

Special education laws and policies have played a critical role in the overall development of special education in South Korea. More students with disabilities have been able to receive free public special education and access to education curriculum. However, inclusion, the public's disability awareness, special education teacher preparation, and special education curricula are still unsolved issues in South Korea. Some topics related to instructional and service delivery in inclusive education have been a concern since the 1990s. Researchers and teacher educators need to pay particular attention to these issues to make special education more inclusive and to prepare quality teachers to enhance the learning of students with disabilities. To support the social inclusion of individuals with disabilities, which is the fundamental goal of special education in South Korea, more effort is needed to promote disability awareness and human rights to the public (MOE, 2018). Furthermore, to ensure the rights of people with disabilities and provide meaningful engagement in the classroom, in either face-to-face or virtual learning, both preservice and in-service teachers need opportunities to co-teach and collaborate across special and general education curricula. Since we know that special education laws and policies have impacted the overall development of special education in South Korea (see Figure 1), establishing systematic policies and related initiatives are critical in overcoming these issues. We still believe that more policymakers, stakeholders, and practitioners need to discuss how to create and implement policies that facilitate authentic interaction among families and students with and without disabilities.

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