



Advanced Alternative Route to Certification for Special Education
A Cross Endorsement Course of Study
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do I have to be certified to participate in this AARC?

Yes. An advanced ARC is one in which the applicant holds a valid current teaching certificate in the state of CT. An example would be elementary education certification, or certification in a content area. If you have questions regarding the qualification of your certification, please contact us.

What certification would I be eligible for as an AARC candidate?

Special education K-12 endorsement number 165. It will be added on to your current certificate as a cross endorsement.

My certification has expired. Can I participate?

Unfortunately, no. Your certification must be current and valid in the state of CT.

What if I am certified K-8, but want to teach as a special education teacher at the high school level, would I be able to do that with this cross endorsement?

Yes.

Do I have to take the Praxis I or II?

You will have to take and pass the Praxis II in special education (#0543) in order to apply for this cross endorsement. The Praxis II can be taken at any time while you are enrolled in the program.

What qualifications do I need to apply to the AARC?

A Master's degree is encouraged, but not required. You will also need at least 3 years professional teaching experience in the last 8 years.

Would substitute teaching count for the experience needed to be accepted into the program?

Yes, we would consider applicants with substitute teaching and tutoring experience.

What is the time commitment?

The program is held in three phases:

- **Phase I** will start June 26, 2012. Classes will run every day for two weeks beginning, Tuesday, June 26, 2012 through July 6, 2012, in the Hartford area. There will be no class July 4, 2012. The first day of class 6/26/12 and 7/2/12 will run from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. All other classes will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Additionally, candidates will complete 25 hours of clinical/field work experiences, 9 assignments, and attend a mentor and a cohort meeting.
- **Phase II** classes will be held from September 2012 until May 2013. Class will meet for 8 hours on the 1st or 2nd Saturday of each month. Additionally quarterly evening sessions and some on-line class work sessions are required. Participants will need to complete 120 hours of clinical experiences (which can be flexible) throughout this phase and 30 portfolio assignments.
- **Phase III** will be held June 2013 - July 2013. This will be comprised of 50 hours of clinical work along with 12 hours of classroom seminar.

Are there parameters for the clinical experiences?

Yes, you must complete some experiences at both the elementary and the secondary levels. Additionally, you must have opportunities to work in both inclusive and self-contained environments. Experiences must also include a total of 195 hours working with and exposure to students with a variety of disabilities.

How will a participant's success be measured?

Participants will complete a series of assignments that will be collected and organized as a portfolio. Each assignment is aligned with a CT and NCATE competency for special education teachers. By the end of the coursework, participants will demonstrate competency in each standard through portfolio evaluation.

Additionally, participants will be measured on their clinical and field work experiences as evaluated by their mentor. Other requirements include: participating in classes; completing assignments; and passing Praxis II.

Who are these mentors?

All of the program instructors are current practitioners. Every participant is assigned to a cohort and a mentor. The mentor will meet with participants regularly during Phase II and the classroom portion of the program, as well as supervise field work and clinical placements. Additionally, the mentors will evaluate all portfolio submissions.

What is a cohort?

A cohort is a group of candidates assigned to work with a mentor in a 6:1 or smaller ratio. Outside of classroom time, candidates work with their mentors and cohort members to complete assignments. Groups may meet in person or virtually. Blackboard© is also used as an on-line repository for classroom and cohort information exchange.

Where will the classes be held?

Classes are generally held in the Hartford area. Cohort meetings are held in locations arranged for by your cohort mentor and may be held anywhere in the state based on logistics and feasibility of meeting locations.

Where do I do my clinical and field work experiences?

You can complete your practicum at any number of sites across the state, including the school in which you currently work or in your district. Arrangements will be made with the AARC program director and your mentor. CREC and the other Regional Education Service Centers have a number of sites available for you to complete your experiences. You will have experiences working with students at the elementary and secondary levels. You will also work with a variety of disabilities and a continuum of service options.

Are there any scholarships or grant money available?

There are limited scholarships available for AARC program through the Minority Teacher Recruitment (MTR). Contact the AARC director if you need more information. Also check your district to see if reimbursement is offered for coursework that enhances a teacher's ability to perform in the classroom.

What about credits towards a degree?

CREC does not award college credits or a degree for this program. However, some universities have indicated that participants may apply some of their work towards a credited program. Discuss this with your university advisor.

Can you help me find a job once I complete the program of studies?

CREC has many venues to help you locate job opportunities. You can visit our employment opportunities at www.crec.org; or work with your mentor to locate local and state-wide openings.

How do I apply?

Applications are available online at <http://www.crec.org/tabs/index.php> Please view Highlighted Programs - Advanced Alternate Route to Special Education Certification. Applications can also be requested by contacting Jeannette Estrada 860-524-4038 or jeestrada@crec.org.