

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 in order to apply for this cross endorsement. The Praxis II can be taken at any time while you are enrolled in the program.

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

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

What is the time commitment?

The program is held in three phases:

Phase I will start June 29, 2009. Classes will run every day for two weeks beginning June 29, 2009 through July 10, 2009 in the Hartford area. **THERE WILL BE NO CLASS ON JULY 3, 2009.** The first day of class (June 29, 2009) will run from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00pm. 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 regional cohort meeting.

• **Phase II** classes will be held from September until May. Groups will meet for a total of 8 hours a month (sometimes Saturdays, sometimes evenings and sometimes on-line) for monthly class sessions. Additionally, participants will need to complete 120 hours of clinical experiences (which can be flexible) throughout that time as well as 50 hours of job embedded assignments.

• **Phase III** will be held during next summer (June 2009 - July 2010). 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 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 regional 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 regional cohort?

To facilitate state-wide participation in the program, regional cohorts will be formed for Phase II. Participants will meet with their cohort in small mentor-lead groups in their region. Regions will be developed based on participant work and home locations. Remote group meetings may occur through the use of SKYPE and Go-To-Meeting via internet access and the use of Blackboard as a common repository of class work and program information. In other words, sometimes participants will meet in their regions as a small cadre, sometimes the group will meet all together either in person or through electronic means.

Where will the classes be held?

During Phase I, the classes will be held in the Hartford area. During Phase II, classes will be held at the regional group meeting sites and centralized locations in the state. For Phase III, classes will meet again in the Hartford area. Additional meetings with your mentor can be arranged at mutually agreeable times and 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.

Are there any scholarships or grant money available?

At this time, no. However, many union contracts offer reimbursement 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 Jan Waters: 860-509-3619 or jwaters@crec.org.