

ABSTRACT

Project CREATE: Collaborative Redesign for Effectiveness Across Teacher Education

The purpose of Project CREATE is to redesign teacher preparation programs for special education teachers serving K-12 students to assure that graduates meet the highly qualified requirements of the NCLB (2001) and the IDEA (2004), and gain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to improve outcomes for students with high incidence disabilities.

Florida International University's (FIU) College of Education (COE) proposes to plan and implement redesigned initial teacher preparation programs in special education -- using an integrated model with elementary and secondary education -- that will result in specific outcomes for the teacher education programs, for the faculty who offer the programs, for the graduates of both special and general education programs, and for the students with high incidence disabilities who benefit from being taught by special and general education teachers who meet specific requirements of NCLB and IDEA.

The first outcome of Project CREATE will be new *integrated* teacher education program tracks in special education and elementary education and in special education and secondary education, with each track preparing highly qualified beginning teachers, including those from typically underrepresented groups (e.g., culturally and linguistically diverse [CLD] individuals) and individuals with disabilities.

The second outcome will be faculty in special and general education who engage in ongoing collaboration to plan, implement, and sustain their redesigned programs. Engaging in ongoing collaboration will require systematic effort because these groups, while sharing components of their programs, have a tradition of offering separate programs.

The third outcome will be better prepared graduates who meet the highly qualified teacher requirements of NCLB and IDEA, as well as who possess the skills and dispositions to work with students with disabilities in general education contexts as required under these same guidelines. Because this project will develop *integrated programs*, teachers exiting either the K-12 Special Education Program or the general education programs in Elementary or Secondary Education will benefit from the program redesign.

The fourth outcome will be the students with high incidence disabilities who will benefit from being taught by both special and general education graduates of teacher education programs that addressed the intersecting requirements and guidelines of NCLB and IDEA. The expectation is that students with high incidence disabilities will show greater academic gains as a result of being taught by teachers grounded in both content knowledge and evidence-based interventions.

The specific *objectives* of Project CREATE are: (1) To develop increased faculty collaboration; (2) To modify curriculum to enhance coherence and depth of knowledge (to include EBP such as RTI, mentoring/induction, skills essential for addressing the specialized needs of students with high incidence disabilities from CLD backgrounds such as CRP); (3) To modify and enhance performance assessments of students and of the program (to include support systems to enhance retention and success in the program); (4) To develop and maintain an effective mentoring and induction program to build stronger school, home, and community partnerships; (5) To evaluate and research program, graduate, and K-12 student-related outcomes and sustainability; and (6) To disseminate effective EBP resulting from CREATE.