



FINAL REPORT

**PROJECT CREATE
CENTERS FOR THE RE-EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF
TEACHERS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION IN
SOUTH CAROLINA, 2004-2005
YEAR 2**

Personnel Preparation Project
for Non-Certified Special Education Teachers in
South Carolina Public Schools

Funded by the
SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT CREATE—YEAR 2

Project CREATE (Centers for the Re-Education and advancement of TEachers in Special Education) was jointly funded in 2004-2005 by the SC Office of Exceptional Children and the SC Division of Educator Quality and Leadership. The primary mission of the project was to reduce the number of non-certified special education teachers currently employed in South Carolina public schools. By July 1, 2006, all states must comply with the federal mandate under *No Child Left Behind* to employ properly credentialed and highly qualified teachers in special education. Through a partnership with four university centers based at Clemson University (CU), SC State University (SCSU), University of South Carolina (USC), and Winthrop University (WU), Project CREATE provided course scholarships (free tuition and textbooks) to assist teachers in completing their add-on certification in special education.

The final report that follows presents evaluation data for Year 2 of the project. This Executive Summary highlights the principal findings for (a) teacher participants; (b) appropriateness of courses; (c) adequacy of course content; (d) progress of teachers toward add-on certification; (e) teacher perceptions of the project; (f) enrollment in project courses; (g) teacher completers; (h) recruitment, selection, and advising; and (i) employment of teacher completers.

Teacher Participants. The project enrolled 246 non-certified special education teachers during 2004-2005, who were employed at 59 of the 89 (66%) school districts in the state. The teacher cohort was largely female and overwhelmingly new to the project. Of the various add-on areas of special education certification, two out of every three participating teachers were pursuing learning disabilities certification.

Appropriateness of Courses: After a thorough review of teachers' add-on course worksheets, issued by the SC Office of Teacher Certification, project personnel identified the courses needed by the greater number of qualified teachers. In order to utilize grant funds more efficiently, we varied the format delivery of course selections. SCSU offered three courses via satellite-distance (each enrolling up to 100 teachers): Assessment for Exceptional Learners, Behavior Management, and Introduction to Exceptional Learners. CU and USC offered three campus contract courses (each enrolling up to 25 teachers): Behavior Management, Characteristics of Learning Disabilities, and Methods/ Procedures for Learning Disabilities. WU offered individual tuition waivers for a variety of certification courses.

Adequacy of Course Content. Mean ratings from on-line course evaluations revealed that teachers tended to strongly agree that, when compared with previous special education courses taken elsewhere, project course work (a) provided more knowledge and skills about instruction in special education, (b) made more relevant applications to the "real-world" of the classroom, (c) broadened their perspective more in how to teach students with disabilities, and (d) significantly contributed to their overall preparation.

Progress Toward Certification. An analysis of teachers' *needed* add-on courses and *completed* courses taken through the project indicated a collective average progress of 63% during Year 2. Approximately half (46%) of the participating teachers completed two or more project courses in the area of learning disabilities. Ninety-five percent of the enrolled teachers earned final grades of A or B in their courses.

Teacher Perceptions. Results from on-line course evaluations were overwhelmingly positive; 92% of teachers' mean ratings were tending toward *strongly agree* that there was a high quality of instruction in the areas of teaching skills of the instructor, interaction skills of the instructor, course requirements, evaluation of learning, and course syllabus.

Enrollment in Courses: Teachers enrolled in 411 courses, which represented 65% of the available funded scholarships for Year 2. The number of course scholarships awarded per teacher ranged from 1 to 4, with a mean of 1.67 courses per teacher. Across the four university centers, the number of course scholarships awarded per semester was 118 (Fall 2004), 149 (Spring 2005), and 144 (Summer 2005).

Teachers Completing Certification. A two-year total of 78 teachers, 74 in Year 2 alone, have completed course work for add-on certification in special education, almost 86% in the area of learning disabilities. Of the nine completers to date who have submitted their scores from the required Praxis II exams, 100% earned the minimum passing score stipulated by the SC Office of Teacher Certification.


Recruitment, Selection, and Advising: Mailings from the SC Office of Exceptional Children, combined with aggressive phone and email recruiting by project personnel, resulted in an increase of 146 enrolled teachers over Year 1, and an increase of 290 awarded course scholarships, when compared to Year 1. Aside from a handful of teachers who reported false information about their employment, virtually all of the enrolled teachers were qualified, non-certified special education teachers currently employed in state public schools.

Employment of Teacher Completers. Project personnel have received no reports that any of the 78 completers have discontinued employment with their respective school districts; however, we acknowledge that we need to develop a more reliable and accurate mechanism by which the project can track the employment status of teacher completers.

In sum, we evaluated the results of Year 2 of Project CREATE as highly successful. Data based evidence that supports this assessment includes the following noteworthy figures:

- ▶ Available course scholarships totaled 637 (versus 180 for Year 1)—a 254% increase.
- ▶ Enrollment reached 246 teachers (versus 100 for Year 1)—a 146% increase.
- ▶ Awarded course scholarships totaled 411 (versus 121 for Year 1)—a 240% increase.
- ▶ Participating districts numbered 59 (versus 33 for Year 1)—a 79% increase.
- ▶ Teachers taking two or more courses totaled 113 (versus 63 for Year 1)—a 79% increase.
- ▶ Completers numbered 74 (versus 4 for Year 1)—a 1,750% increase.
- ▶ Percent of teachers earning passing grades was 99.8% (versus 97% for Year 1)—a 2.8% increase.
- ▶ Average progress toward certification was 63% (versus 37% for Year 1)—a 26% increase.

We identified one primary limitation that may have prevented even greater success—*low motivation* on the part of some teachers who qualified for course scholarships, yet failed to participate, despite rigorous contacts to enlist them. This limitation may likely be our greatest challenge to overcome as we approach Year 3 of the project.



Joe P. Sutton
Project Administrator

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FINAL REPORT

PROJECT CREATE—YEAR 2

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires states to employ properly credentialed and highly qualified teachers by July 1, 2006. In an effort to respond to this federal mandate, the SC Office of Exceptional Children (OEC, Susan D. DuRant, Director) funded Year 1 of Project CREATE (Centers for the Re-Education and Advancement of TEachers in special education) in 2003-2004, and continued funding for a second year in 2004-2005. Additional grant money was provided for Year 2 operation by the SC Division of Educator Quality and Leadership (Dr. Janice Poda, Deputy Superintendent). Project CREATE continued with its mission to reduce the number of non-certified special education teachers in the state by providing cost-free course work needed for teachers to complete add-on certification in special education, thereby better preparing them to teach students with disabilities in South Carolina public schools.

The project served three target groups of special education teachers: (a) out-of-field permit [OFP] teachers in special education; (b) special education teachers in the PACE (Program of Alternative Certification for Educators); and (c) other public school special education teachers who, although not holding OFPs, were nonetheless being required by their school districts to complete special education certification. Qualified teachers received course scholarships that covered tuition and textbook costs. Courses reflecting add-on certification course needs were offered during the Fall 2004, Spring 2005, and Summer 2005 sessions at approved university centers.

The project established and operated centers at universities in South Carolina with state-approved graduate teacher education programs in special education. Two CREATE centers from Year 1 continued operation in 2004-2005: Clemson University (Dr. Janie Hodge, director) and University of South Carolina (Dr. Kathleen Marshall, director). These were joined in Year 2 by two additional university centers: South Carolina State University (Dr. Barbara O'Neal, director) and Winthrop University (Dr. Wendy Dover, director). Dr. Joe Sutton, chair of the Division of Special Education, Bob Jones University, served as project administrator for Year 1 of the project, and continued his post for Year 2.

University centers contributed to the project in various ways. Originating from one of its campus studio classes, South Carolina State University (SCSU) offered one satellite distance course (for up to 100 teachers) during the Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 semesters that were broadcast via educational television (ETV) to three (3) local public schools strategically selected across the Coastal area of the state, including Charleston, Darlington, and Horry Counties, where heavy concentrations of non-certified special education teachers were located. SCSU expanded its outreach to five (5) satellite sites for its two distance courses in the Summer 2005 session, by adding class locations in Greenville and Sumter Counties. For each of three semesters, Clemson University (CU) and University of South Carolina (USC) provided contract courses (for up to 25 teachers) at the University Center in Greenville and at the Columbia main campus, respectively. Winthrop University (WU) awarded tuition waivers to individual qualifying teachers, who joined regularly enrolled students in course work offered at the WU campus in Rock Hill, SC. For the Fall 2004, Spring 2005, and Summer 2005 semesters, project funds were available to underwrite a total of 179 course scholarships each semester. With supplemental money provided by the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership, the project was able to fund an additional 100 course scholarships for the Summer 2005 semester, for a grand total of 637 available course scholarships for 2004-2005 year.

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The evaluation design for the project required preparation of a final report after Year 2 of operation. As with Year 1 (2003-2004), the final report addresses the following questions:

1. How appropriate were the selection of courses in relation to add-on certification course needs of the qualifying teacher participants?
2. Has the content of the coursework been adequate in providing instruction for needed skills and competencies?
3. Are teacher participants progressing at an appropriate rate toward completion of add-on certification?
4. What are the teacher participants' perceptions of the project?
5. Has anticipated enrollment been maintained throughout the project period?
6. What percentage of the initial qualifying group completed add-on certification?
7. How effective is the recruitment, selection, and advising process? and
8. Have the teacher participants been employed in positions appropriate to their new add-on certification areas?

After a description of the participating teachers in the project, we provide supporting data, presented in tables, charts, and figures, for each of the eight evaluation questions enumerated above.

PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

The project enrolled 246 non-certified special education teachers during 2005-2006, representing 59 of the 89 (66%) school districts in the state (see Table 1). The teacher cohort was largely female (see Figure 1) and overwhelmingly new to the project (see Figure 2), as opposed to returning teachers who participated in Year 1. Of the various add-on certification areas in special education, two out of every three participating teachers were pursuing learning disabilities certification (see Figure 3). The 246 teachers who enrolled in Year 2 of the project reflects a staggering 146% increase over the enrollment count for Year 1 (n=100).

1. APPROPRIATENESS OF COURSES

The intent of the project was to offer courses that would advance non-certified special education teachers toward completion of add-on certification. Course appropriateness was evaluated in part by the extent to which course work offered during the project year met the add-on certification course needed by greatest number of teachers who qualified for the project. This was determined by analyzing the add-on course worksheets supplied by the teacher or the SC Office of Teacher Certification. Each teacher's worksheet specified the number (range of 1 to 6) and the type (e.g., Characteristics of LD, Procedures for Teaching LD, Behavior Management, etc.) of courses that the teacher must take. Using information from the worksheet analysis, the project administrator and the center directors jointly decided which add-on certification courses would meet the greater need of returning and new teachers in the project. Table 2 lists the courses offered and the format of delivery for the Fall 2005, Spring 2006, and Summer 2006 semesters of the project at each of the four university centers. We judged the course selections and delivery format to be appropriate for the add-on course needs of the greater number of teachers.

Course appropriateness was also evaluated with regard to course content, as outlined in the course syllabi, and the extent to which it corresponded to the professional standards of preparation for special educators (i.e., the Council for Exceptional Children standards), as adopted by the South Carolina

Department of Education. Reviews of each course syllabus were made by the center directors and the project administrator and determined to be content appropriate.

2. ADEQUACY OF COURSE CONTENT

We used data from four items on the project course evaluation form (entire form provided in the Appendix of this report) to assess adequacy of course content in meeting competency needs of teachers. The course evaluation was administered on-line each semester to all enrolled teachers at all university

Table 1. *Participating Teachers (n=246) by School District (n=59), Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

District	Number (Percent)	District	Number (Percent)
Abbeville 60.....	2 (0.8)	Greenwood 50.....	6 (2.4)
Aiken 01.....	5 (2.0)	Greenwood 51.....	2 (0.8)
Allendale 01.....	1 (0.4)	Hampton 01.....	1 (0.4)
Anderson 01.....	1 (0.4)	Horry 01.....	24 (9.8)
Anderson 02.....	1 (0.4)	Jasper 01.....	1 (0.4)
Anderson 05.....	6 (2.4)	Kershaw 01.....	4 (1.6)
Bamberg 01.....	1 (0.4)	Lancaster 01.....	6 (2.4)
Bamberg 02.....	6 (2.4)	Laurens 55.....	1 (0.4)
Barnwell 19.....	2 (0.8)	Lexington 01.....	6 (2.4)
Barnwell 29.....	1 (0.4)	Lexington 02.....	1 (0.4)
Beaufort 01.....	1 (0.4)	Lexington 03.....	1 (0.4)
Berkeley 01.....	8 (3.3)	Lexington 04.....	1 (0.4)
Calhoun 01.....	1 (0.4)	Lexington 05.....	2 (0.8)
Charleston 01.....	7 (2.8)	Marion 02.....	1 (0.4)
Chester 01.....	3 (1.2)	Marlboro 01.....	1 (0.4)
Chesterfield 01.....	5 (2.0)	Newberry 01.....	5 (2.0)
Clarendon 01.....	1 (0.4)	Oconee 01.....	1 (0.4)
Clarendon 02.....	2 (0.8)	Orangeburg 03.....	3 (1.2)
Colleton 01.....	7 (2.8)	Orangeburg 04.....	1 (0.4)
Darlington 01.....	7 (2.8)	Orangeburg 05.....	6 (2.4)
Dorchester 02.....	6 (2.4)	Pickens 01.....	3 (1.2)
Dorchester 04.....	2 (0.8)	Richland 01.....	4 (1.6)
Edgefield 01.....	2 (0.8)	Richland 02.....	3 (1.2)
Fairfield 01.....	1 (0.4)	Saluda 01.....	4 (1.6)
Florence 01.....	4 (1.6)	Spartanburg 05.....	3 (1.2)
Florence 03.....	2 (0.8)	Sumter 01.....	10 (4.1)
Florence 04.....	4 (1.6)	Sumter 17.....	10 (4.1)
Georgetown 01.....	1 (0.4)	Union 01.....	1 (0.4)
Greenville 01.....	32 (13.0)	Williamsburg 01.....	9 (3.7)
		York 01.....	1 (0.4)

Note: District unverified = 2 (0.8)

Figure 1. *Participating Teachers (n=246), by Gender, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

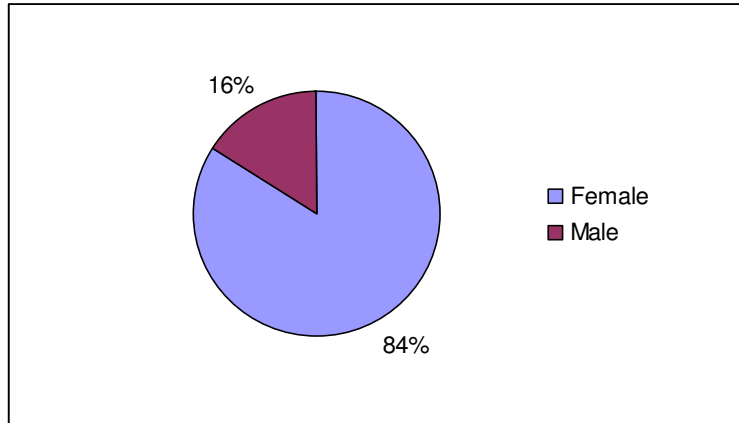


Figure 2. *Participating Teachers (n=246), by Enrollment Status, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

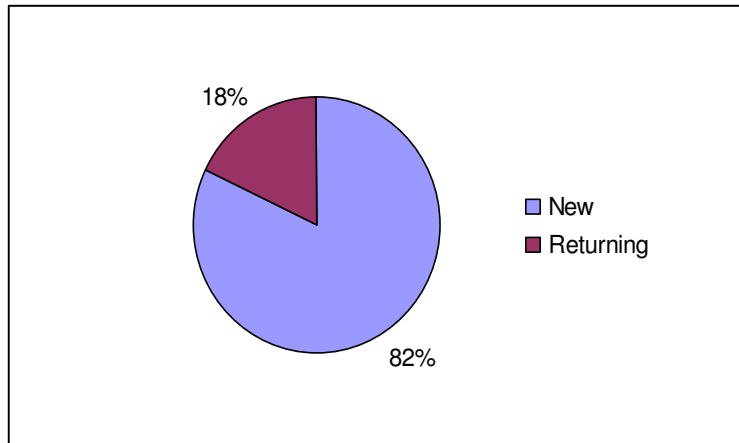
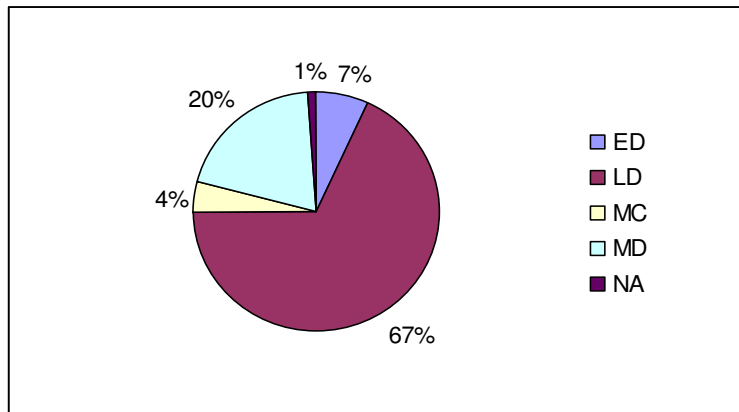


Figure 3. *Participating Teachers (n=246), by Area of Add-on Certification, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*



ED=Emotional Disabilities; LD=Learning Disabilities; MC=Multi-categorical; MD=Mental Disabilities; NA=Not Available.

Table 2. *Certification Courses Offered at University Centers, by Delivery Format, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

Certification Course	Clemson U.			SC State U.			USC			Winthrop U.		
	F4	S5	Sm5	F4	S5	Sm5	F4	S5	Sm5	F4	S5	Sm5
Intro. to Excep. Learners						D						
Characteristics of ED												
Characteristics of LD	C		C				C			T	T	
Characteristics of MD											T	
Procedures for ED											T	
Procedures for LD		C							C	T		
Procedures for MD										T		
Behavior Management		C	C	D		D					T	T
Teaching Reading												T
Assess. for Excep Learners	C				D			C				T

F4=Fall 2004; S5=Spring 2005; Sm5=Summer 2005; C=contract course; D=distance course; T=tuition waiver.

centers prior to the final exam. Teachers rated each item on a four-point scale of 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, or 4=Strongly Agree. The stem that preceded the four items read, “In comparison with other special education courses I have taken, this course...,” to which the teachers offered ratings for the following items:

- ▶ Provided more knowledge/skills about instruction in special education.
- ▶ Made more relevant applications to the “real-world” of the classroom.
- ▶ Broadened my perspective more in how to teach disabled learners.
- ▶ Significantly contributed to my overall preparation in special education.

Table 3 provides the mean ratings of items assessing adequacy of course content from 246 available course evaluations of five courses offered during 2004-2005, including Assessment for Exceptional Learners, Behavior Management, Characteristics of Learning Disabilities, Introduction to Exceptional Learners, and Procedures for Learning Disabilities. We interpreted the mean ratings as follows: 3.51–4.00=tending toward Strongly Agree; 3.10–3.50=Agree; 2.51–3.0=tending toward Agree. The Assessment, Characteristics of Learning Disabilities, and Introduction to Exceptional Learners courses received mean ratings that all were tending toward Strongly Agree on all four adequacy of course content items. The Behavior Management and Procedures for Learning Disabilities Courses received mean ratings that were tending toward Strongly Agree on three of the four adequacy of course content items, with one item for each of the courses receiving an Agree rating. These mean ratings provide solid evidence that participating teachers viewed course content as sufficient to meet their professional preparation needs.

Enrolled teachers were also given an opportunity to provide open comments on their course evaluations. Their responses also speak in part to their perception of course content in adequately meeting their skill and competency needs. A sampling of teacher responses follows:

- ▶ *The Assessment course has been beneficial to me already. I have begun to utilize the knowledge gained in this class with my current students...*
- ▶ *The Project CREATE courses have truly enlightened me on laws and specifications related to teaching disabled learners...*

Table 3. *Teachers' (n=246) Mean Ratings of Items Reflecting Adequacy of Course Content from Course Evaluations, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

Course Evaluation Item	As n=113	BM n=66	CLD n=27	EL n=30	PLD n=27
Provided more knowledge/skills...	3.57	3.50	3.66	3.57	3.44
Made more relevant applications...	3.60	3.57	3.74	3.60	3.31
Broadened my perspective more...	3.56	3.61	3.74	3.73	3.56
Significantly contributed to my...	3.58	3.58	3.74	3.70	3.50

As=Assessment for Exceptional Learners; BM=Behavior Management; CLD=Characteristics of Learning Disabilities; EL=Introduction to Exceptional Learners; PLD=Procedures for Learning Disabilities.

3. PROGRESS OF TEACHERS

Evaluating the extent to which teacher participants progressed at an appropriate rate toward completion of add-on certification was determined by analyzing the following data:

- ▶ The percent of teacher participants who enrolled in a course during one of the three semesters of the project (i.e., Fall 2004, Spring 2005, Summer 2005), then re-enrolled in a second or third course in a subsequent semester within the 2004-2005 year (See Figure 4; Table 4).
- ▶ The percent of teacher participants who earned a passing grade (i.e., A, B, C, or D) in their coursework for the three semesters during 2004-2005 (See Table 5).
- ▶ The percent of progress of teacher participants based on a comparison of their *completed* courses versus *needed* courses, per their add-on course worksheets (See Table 6).

Figure 4. *Participating Teachers Completing One or More Certification Courses, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

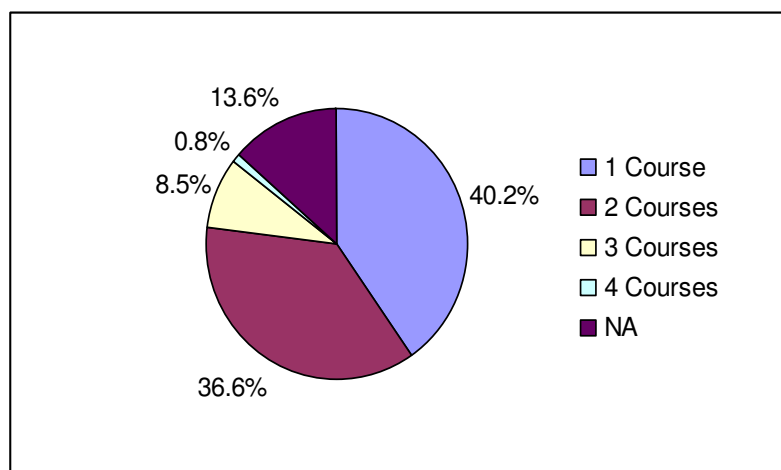


Table 4. *Participating Teachers who Completed Two or More Certification Courses, by Add-on Certification Area, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

Categorical Area	No. Enrolled	Completed 2/more Courses	Percent
Emotional Disabilities	18	7	38.9
Learning Disabilities	163	79	48.5
Multi-categorical	9	2	22.2
Mental Disabilities	49	22	44.9
Severe Disabilities	4	3	75.0
Unverified	3	0	0.00
Total	246	113	45.9

Approximately half (46%) of the participating teachers completed two or more courses in the project (Figure 4), the majority of whom were pursuing LD certification (Table 4). Of the available 405 final grades, 95% of the teachers earned final grades of A or B (Table 5), with only a small percentage of teachers earning C grades, and only one teacher earning a final grade of F in one course for the entire project year. Perhaps the best measure of teachers' progress toward completing add-on certification is demonstrated when comparing teachers' *completed* courses with their respective *needed* courses (range of 1 to 6), as stipulated on their add-on course worksheet (Table 6). For example, a teacher who completed two courses out of four add-on courses needed for LD certification would show 50% progress (i.e., $2 / 4 = 50\%$). An analysis of the collective progress of 212 of the 246 participating teachers whose worksheets could be verified produced an overall weighted progress of 63%. These data suggest that the participating teachers are demonstrating appropriate progress toward completing add-on certification.

Table 5. *Final Grades of Participating Teachers by Course and by Center, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

Course	Clemson U.			SC State U.			USC			Winthrop U.			Total
	A	B	≤C	A	B	≤C	A	B	≤C	A	B	≤C	
EL				13	24	4							41
CLD	27	0	0				11	0	1	2	0	0	41
CMD										1	1	0	2
PLD	12	5	0				7	4	3				31
PMD										2	0	1	3
BM	31	3	1	104	26	1							166
As	6	8	6	43	40	1	14	3	0				121
Total	73	16	7	160	90	6	32	7	4	5	1	1	405
Percent	77	16	7	63	35	2	74	16	9	71	14	14	

EL=Introduction to Exceptional Learners; CLD=Characteristics of LD; CMD=Characteristics of MD; PLD=Procedures for LD; PMD=Procedures for MD; BM=Behavior Management; As=Assessment for Exceptional Learners; Data unavailable for n=6 teachers completing tuition waivers at Winthrop University.

Table 6. *Progress of Participating Teachers, Based on Completed Courses Compared to Needed Courses, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

Courses Needed for Add-on Certification	Courses Completed During 2004-2005*							
	One		Two		Three		Four	
	% Progress	No. Ts.	% Progress	No. Ts.	% Progress	No. Ts.	% Progress	No. Ts.
1 Course	100%	26						
2 Courses	50%	32	100%	30				
3 Courses	33%	14	67%	25	100%	7		
4 Courses	25%	15	50%	23	75%	7		
5 Courses	20%	12	40%	12	60%	5	80%	2
6 Courses					50%	2		
Total		99		90		21		2

*Data available for n=212 participating teachers with verifiable add-on course worksheets.

4. TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF PROJECT

Assessing the perceptions of participating teachers was accomplished by gathering their views and opinions through an on-line course evaluation survey (provided in the Appendix), which was administered to all participating teachers each semester. The survey included 30 items which teachers rated using the following scale: 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Agree; and 4=Strongly Agree. Survey items were subsumed under the following domains: teaching skills of professor; interaction skills of professor; course requirements; evaluation of learning; course syllabus; course content, and impact of course (Note: Data results of the last domain, impact of course, was presented and discussed earlier in this report under the section, “Adequacy of Course Content,” see p. 8).

A summary of teachers’ item and domain mean ratings from course evaluations is provided in Table 7. We interpreted the mean ratings as follows: 3.51–4.00=tending toward Strongly Agree; 3.10–3.50=Agree; 2.51–3.0=tending toward Agree. The majority of the 26 mean item ratings (92%) tended toward Strongly Agree. The two sole exceptions were “Integrated media, guest speakers, and/or other resources with lecture,” (mean=3.34) and “Provided meaningful, constructive feedback on tests and other work” (mean=3.50). The domain that received the highest mean rating was “Interaction skills of instructor,” (mean=3.73). Based on these ratings, we judged the teacher perceptions of the project as overwhelmingly positive.

5. ENROLLMENT IN PROJECT COURSES

The project matriculated 246 teachers who enrolled in 411 courses, which represents 65% of the available funded scholarships for Year 2. The number of course scholarships awarded per teacher ranged from 1 to 4, with a mean of 1.67 courses per teacher. Table 8 provides the number of course scholarships awarded to teachers by course, center and semester. Across the four university centers, the number of course scholarships awarded per semester was as follows: Fall 2004=118, Spring 2005=149; and Summer 2005=144 (see Figure 5). These numbers suggest that enrollment was reasonably maintained for each of the three semesters for the duration of the project year, with a significant increase (+26.3%) from Fall 2004 to Spring 2005, and a non-significant decrease (-3.4%) from Spring 2005 to Summer 2005.

Table 7. *Teachers' (n=263) Mean Ratings of Course Evaluation Items and Domains, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

Course Evaluation Items and Domains	Mean
<i>Domain A: Teaching Skills of Instructor</i>	3.61
Communicated subject matter clearly.	3.64
Caused me to think critically.	3.64
Showed enthusiasm and made classes interesting and engaging.	3.72
Used examples, illustrations, and/or demonstrations to explain ideas.	3.72
Embellished/expanded on textbook material, rather than just repeated it.	3.65
Used allocated class time for critical, more important material.	3.55
Presented information in an organized, logical, and sequential manner.	3.63
Integrated media, guest speakers, and/or other resources with lecture.	3.34
Inspired, motivated, and stimulated a desire to want to learn more.	3.61
<i>Domain B: Interaction Skills of Instructor</i>	3.73
Showed genuine interest in students' success.	3.74
Was available during office hours (or by phone/e-mail) for consultation.	3.64
Showed respect towards the opinions of students.	3.75
Encouraged student participation in class.	3.78
Responded to student questions in a clear, supportive manner.	3.74
<i>Domain C: Course Requirements</i>	3.62
Readings (textbook, etc.) that improved my understanding of the subject.	3.60
Assignments that were well developed and related to course content.	3.65
Assignments that were creative, hands-on (e.g., case studies, research).	3.67
Assignments that were paced and timed appropriately for the semester.	3.56
<i>Domain D: Evaluation of Learning</i>	3.59
Provided meaningful, constructive feedback on tests and other work.	3.50
Graded tests/projects according to criteria published in the syllabus.	3.64
Prepared me for tests (e.g., gave overviews of test content/format).	3.64
Assessed knowledge and conceptual understanding on tests/projects.	3.61
Returned graded tests and projects on, or by, the promised date.	3.55
<i>Domain E: Course Syllabus</i>	3.70
Stated goals/objectives and included a schedule of course content.	3.75
Gave instructions for successful completion of course assignments.	3.70
Provided clear criteria for grading projects and assignments.	3.66
Overall Mean	3.64

6. TEACHERS COMPLETING CERTIFICATION

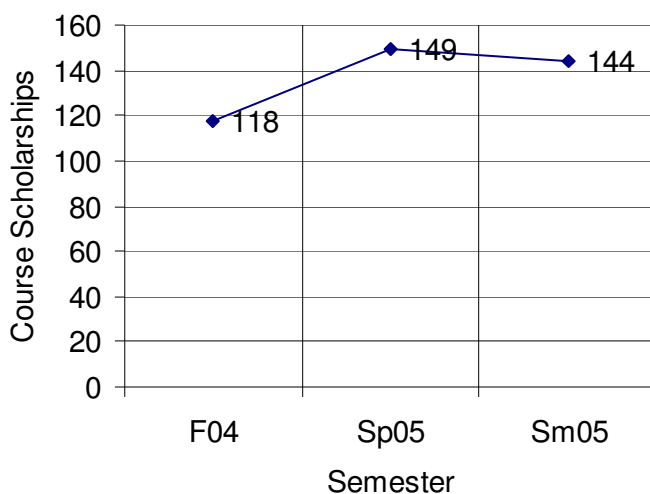
At the writing of this report, a total of 78 teachers have completed required coursework for add-on certification. Table 9 provides the distribution of completers by school district in South Carolina. Because they had the greater numbers of non-certified special education teachers at the onset of the project in Year 1, Greenville 01 and Horry 01 Districts have generated the highest number of teacher completers to date. Most of these teachers (85.8%; n=67) completed their add-on certification in learning disabilities (LD; see Figure 6). The plurality (38%) of teacher completers needed two courses in order to complete their add-on certification, followed by 28% who needed only one course, and 22% who needed

Table 8. *Course Scholarships (n=411) Awarded to Teachers, by Center and by Semester, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*

Certification Course	Clemson U.			SC State U.			USC			Winthrop U.		
	F4	S5	Sm5	F4	S5	Sm5	F4	S5	Sm5	F4	S5	Sm5
Intro. to Excep. Learners						41						
Characteristics of ED												
Characteristics of LD	15		12				12			1	1	
Characteristics of MD											2	
Procedures for ED											0	
Procedures for LD		17							14	0		
Procedures for MD										3		
Behavior Management		28	7	67		64					0	2
Teaching Reading												3
Assess. for Excep Learners	20				84			17				1
Total Per Semester	35	45	19	67	84	105	12	17	14	4	3	6
Total for Year			99			256			43			13

F4=Fall 2004; S5=Spring 2005; Sm5=Summer 2005.

Figure 5. *Course Scholarships Awarded (n=411), by Semester, Project CREATE, 2004-2005.*



three courses (see Figure 7). Further analysis of completed coursework (see Figure 8) revealed that the course of greatest need was Behavior Management (26%), followed by Assessment (25%) and Procedures in ED/LD/MD (24%).

For purposes of this project, we differentiated *teacher completers* (those who have completed all required coursework stipulated on their add-on course worksheets) from *fully certified teachers* (those who have completed all requirements for receiving add-on certification, which includes taking and earning a passing the Praxis II exams in the respective specialty area). Project personnel are still trying to identify a reliable process whereby we can gather data on teacher completers' Praxis II exams scores. Presently, we are simply asking teachers to submit copies of their score reports to us by mail or fax;

however, we do not yet have a consistent system of follow-up to secure these scores; hence, we have fewer than a fifth of the scores on completers on record.

Tables 10 and 11 show the Praxis II core, specialty, and respective domain scores for 13% (n=9) of the teacher completers who have finished coursework for LD add-on certification (n=67). All 9 of these teachers earned the minimum passing score required by the SC Office of Teacher Certification on the both the core (mean=171) and specialty (mean=171) exams. Further, all teachers in this sample met or exceeded the minimum raw points defined for the average performance range on each of the three domain subscores of the core and specialty exams. Although additional analysis (to include correlation statistics on scores of test domains with particular content courses completed by the respective teacher) is pending, the present limited data strongly suggests that project course work is sufficiently preparing non-certified teachers in the professional standards of practice for special educators to the extent that they are able to successfully pass the required Praxis II exams for full state certification.

7. RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND ADVISING

Recruitment: The process of recruitment was the joint responsibility of the SC Office of Exceptional Children (SCOEC), the project administrator, and the university center directors, assisted by their graduate/office assistants. The first phase of recruitment was initiated prior the start of each of the three semesters of the project year by SCOEC, who mailed a letter of information about the project, with accompanying course schedules, flyers, and contact information, to all district directors of special education, directors of personnel, school principals, and available non-certified teachers whose information was on file at the project administrator's office. The second and final phase of recruitment each semester included phoning and emailing teachers, who either (a) had enrolled in the project the previous year or (b) had an application on file. The graduate/office assistants for the project were primarily responsible for phase two of recruitment.

Selection: Appropriate selection of teacher participants hinged on both fairness and viability factors. Regarding *fairness*, we continued Year 2 operation of the project on a "first-come, first-served" policy for selection of teachers for enrollment, while ensuring representation from all school districts in the state. We believe this guideline was successful and equitable in the long run in ensuring broad participation across the state. A review of Table 1 reveals that we enrolled one or more teachers from 59 of the 89 (66%) school districts in the state. More important, no qualifying teachers from any district were rejected. As for *viability* of teachers, the mission of the project was to select and enroll only teachers who were non-certified in special education. Aside from a handful of enrolled teachers who provided untruthful information on their applications, virtually the entire group of 246 enrolled in the project for Year 2 were either OFP or PACE teachers employed as special education teachers in the state's public schools (Note: The handful of nonviable enrollees were eventually identified as either teacher assistants in special education classrooms or permanent substitutes, and have been removed from participation in the project). Our ability to verify the status of applicants was possible this year by the unparalleled cooperation from the state's Office of Teacher Certification (Mr. Jim Turner, director) and his expert staff of analysts. They were able to supply the project administrator with add-on worksheets for all permitted special education teachers in the state by February, 2005 of the project year. We have evaluated the effectiveness of our selection process as highly successful.

Advising: Advising teacher applicants was the responsibility of the project administrator and the center directors. Advising, through email and phone, focused mainly on recommending to teacher applicants the project courses that correctly corresponded with their needed add-on courses. The significant increase in the number of teacher participants and the number of courses completed by teachers for Year 2 allowed us to judge our advising process as effective.

8. EMPLOYMENT OF TEACHERS COMPLETERS

Helping non-certified special education teachers obtain their state certification is the primary goal of the project; however, ensuring that as many of our completers as possible remain employed in South Carolina public schools is also critically important. Our efforts in helping teachers complete their add-on course needs, keeping the project's databases current, etc. has left little time to determine the employment status of the 78 identified teacher completers in the project. We have found that our continuous phone and email with district directors of special education throughout the last two years of the project have allowed for an informal process of verifying employment of teachers. We have received no reports that any of the 78 completers have resigned their employment from respective school districts; however, we acknowledge that we need to develop a more reliable and accurate mechanism by which the project can determine employment status of teacher completers.

CONCLUSION

Project personnel viewed the success of Year 2 of Project CREATE as excellent. Data based evidence that supports this assessment includes the following:

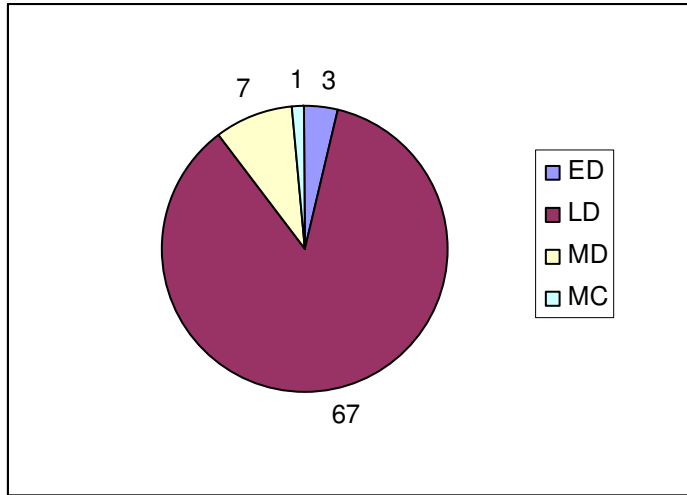
- ▶ Course scholarships available totaled 637 (versus 180 for Year 1), a 254% increase.
- ▶ Teacher enrollment reached 246 teachers (versus 100 teachers for Year 1), a 146% increase.
- ▶ Course scholarships awarded totaled 411 (versus 121 scholarships for Year 1), a 240% increase.
- ▶ Participating districts numbered 59 (versus 33 for Year 1), a 79% increase.
- ▶ Teachers taking two or more courses totaled 113 (versus 63 for Year 1), a 79% increase.
- ▶ Completers numbered 74 (versus 4 for Year 1), a 1,750% increase.
- ▶ Percent of teachers earning passing grades was 99.8% (versus 97% for Year 1), a 2.8% increase.
- ▶ Average progress toward certification was 63% (versus 37% for Year 1), a 26% increase.

These successes notwithstanding, the project might have achieved even greater success had we not been hampered by, what we believe to be, one seemingly insurmountable limitation—*low motivation* on the part of some non-certified special education teachers who qualified for course scholarships, but failed to participate. Enrollment capacity for Year 2 reached a respectable 65% (411 course scholarships awarded out of 637 available); however, this represented a negligible 2% increase over Year 1.

Table 9. *Teachers Completing Add-on Certification in Special Education, by School District, Project CREATE, 2003-2005 (Two-Year Period)*

School District	Number	Percent
Abbeville 60	2	2.56
Aiken 01	2	2.56
Anderson 02	1	1.30
Anderson 05	3	3.85
Barnwell 19	2	2.56
Berkeley 01	2	2.56
Charleston 01	1	1.30
Chester 01	1	1.30
Chesterfield 01	2	2.56
Darlington 01	1	1.30
Dorchester 02	3	3.85
Fairfield 01	1	1.30
Florence 01	2	2.56
Florence 03	1	1.30
Georgetown 01	3	3.85
Greenville 01	18	23.10
Greenwood 50	3	3.85
Greenwood 51	1	1.30
Horry 01	5	6.40
Kershaw 01	2	2.56
Lexington 01	3	3.85
Lexington 02	1	1.30
Lexington 05	2	2.56
Marion 02	1	1.30
Newberry 01	1	1.30
Oconee 01	2	2.56
Orangeburg 04	1	1.30
Richland 01	1	1.30
Richland 02	3	3.85
Saluda 01	1	1.30
Spartanburg 05	2	2.56
Sumter 17	2	2.56
Williamsburg 01	2	2.56
TOTAL	78	100.00

Figure 6. *Teachers (n=78) Completing Add-on Certification, by Area of Special Education, Project CREATE, 2003-2005 (Two-Year Period)*



ED=Emotional Disabilities; LD=Learning Disabilities; MD=Mental Disabilities; MC=Multi-categorical.

Figure 7. *Teaches (n=78) Completing Add-on Certification in Special Education, by Number of Project Courses Taken (n=171), Project CREATE, 2003-2005 (Two-Year Period)*

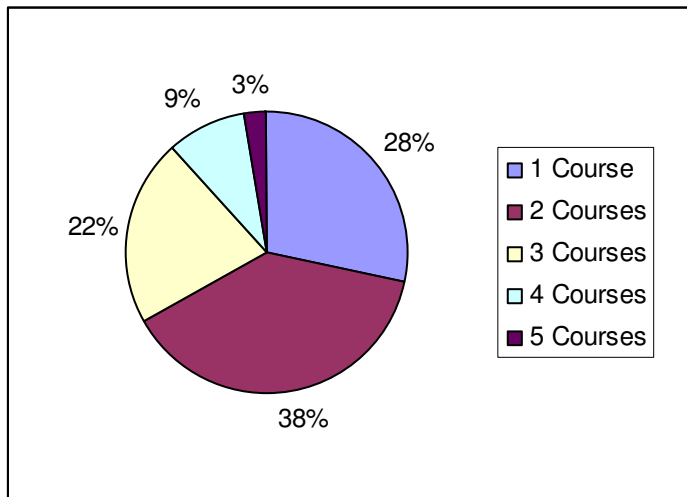
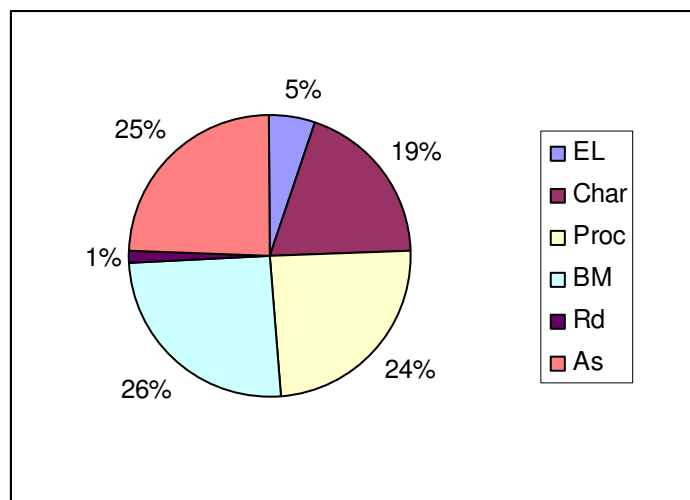


Figure 8. *Project Courses (n=171) Taken by Teacher Completers, by Type of Certification Course, Project CREATE, 2003-2005 (Two-Year Period)*



EL=Introduction to Exceptional Learners; Char=Characteristics of ED/LD/MD;
Proc=Procedures in ED/LD/MD; BM=Behavior Management; Rd=Teaching Reading;
As=Assessment for Exceptional Learners.

Table 10. *Praxis II Scores of a Sample (n=9) of Teacher Completers in Learning Disabilities, Project CREATE, 2003-2005 (Two-Year Period)*

Academic Year	Test 0353 Core Knowledge			Test 0382 Learning Disabilities			Percent Passing All Tests
	No.	Mean Score	Percent Passing	No.	Mean Score	Percent Passing	
2003-04	2	169	100	1	163	100	100
2004-05	6	171	100	8	172	100	100
Overall	8	171	100	9	171	100	100

Note. One teacher had already taking the Core Knowledge prior to enrolling in the project; therefore, data is only available for 8 teachers.

Table 11. *Performance of a Sample (n=9) of Teacher Completers in Learning Disabilities on Praxis II Exams by Test Domain Scores, Project CREATE, 2003-05*

Academic Year	Percent Meeting or Exceeding National Average Performance Ranges on Content Categories							
	Test 0353 Domains* Core Knowledge				Test 0382 Domains* Learning Disabilities			
	No.	I	II	III	No.	I	II	III
2003-04	2	14	9	21	1	12	9	10
2004-05	4	12	7	26	5	12	9	11
Overall	6	12	8	24	6	12	9	11

*Domain scores available on n=6.

COURSE EVALUATION

Project CREATE

► *Circle your Project CREATE Center and the semester/year of your course:*

University Center: CofC CU USC **Semester:** Fall Spring Sum **Year:** 03 04

► *Write the number and title of your course in the blank below:*

► *Use the following scale and circle your rating to the following items:*

4 = Strongly Agree 3 = Agree 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

In presenting and teaching material, this professor:

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Communicated subject matter clearly. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Caused me to think critically. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Showed enthusiasm and made classes interesting and engaging. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Used examples, illustrations, and/or demonstrations to explain ideas. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Embellished/expanded on textbook material, rather than just repeated it. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Used allocated class time for critical, more important material. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Presented information in an organized, logical, and sequential manner. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Integrated media, guest speakers, and/or other resources with lecture. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Inspired, motivated, and stimulated a desire to want to learn more. |

When interacting with students, this professor:

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Showed genuine interest in students' success. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Was available during office hours (or by phone/e-mail) for consultation. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Showed respect towards the opinions of students. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Encouraged student participation in class. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Responded to student questions in a clear, supportive manner. |

Requirements for this course included:

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Readings (textbook, etc.) that improved my understanding of the subject. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Assignments that were well developed and related to course content. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Assignments that were creative, hands-on (e.g., case studies, research). |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Assignments that were paced and timed appropriately for the semester. |

In evaluating my learning, this professor:

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Provided meaningful, constructive feedback on tests and other work. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Graded tests/projects according to criteria published in the syllabus. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Prepared me for tests (e.g., gave overviews of test content/format). |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Assessed knowledge and conceptual understanding on tests/projects. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Returned graded tests and projects on, or by, the promised date. |

The syllabus for this course:

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Stated goals/objectives and included a schedule of course content. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Gave instructions for successful completion of course assignments. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Provided clear criteria for grading projects and assignments. |

In comparison with other special education courses I have taken, this course:

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Provided more knowledge/skills about instruction in special education. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Made more relevant applications to the "real-world" of the classroom. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Broadened my perspective more in how to teach disabled learners. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Significantly contributed to my overall preparation in special education. |

Please provide any additional, constructive comments about Project CREATE and/or the course you have taken in the blanks below:

*Project personnel certify that a total of 24 pages
comprise this final report for Year 2.*