

**PROJECT
CREATE** **FINAL REPORT**
of SC

PROJECT CREATE
CENTERS FOR THE RE-EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF
TEACHERS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION OF
SOUTH CAROLINA, 2005-06
YEAR 3

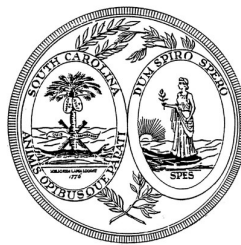
Personnel Preparation Project for
Non-certified Special Education Teachers in
South Carolina Public Schools

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT CREATE—YEAR 3

Project CREATE of South Carolina was jointly funded for Year 3 operation in 2005-2006 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, for the twofold purpose of (1) improving the quality of instruction for students with disabilities, and (2) addressing the federal mandate under *No Child Left Behind* to employ properly credentialed and highly qualified teachers in special education. Through a partnership with six university centers based at Clemson University, Francis Marion University, SC State University, University of South Carolina—Columbia, University of South Carolina—Upstate, and Winthrop University, the project provided cost-free courses (free tuition and textbooks) to assist teachers in completing add-on certification in special education.

This Executive Summary highlights principal findings from the Year 3 final report specifically, (a) teacher participants; (b) appropriateness of courses; (c) adequacy of courses; (d) progress of teachers; (e) teacher perceptions of the project; (f) enrollment in courses; (g) teachers completing course work; (h) recruitment, selection, and advising; and (i) employment of teachers.

Teacher Participants. The project enrolled 197 non-certified special education teachers employed at 63 of the 89 (71%) school districts in the State. The teacher cohort was largely female (89%) and overwhelmingly new (61%) to the project. Of the various add-on areas of special education certification, more than half (54%) of the participating teachers were pursuing learning disabilities certification.

Appropriateness of Courses. In order to reach a greater number of qualifying teachers, particularly, those in remote areas of the State, we varied the format delivery of courses to include on-campus courses (using individual tuition vouchers), contract courses (on-campus and at extension sites), satellite/distance courses (statewide), and online courses (statewide). Selection of courses sufficiently met course needs of teachers. Course content, as outlined in course syllabi, was evaluated in light of Council for Exceptional Children standards, and determined to be appropriate.

Adequacy of Courses. Mean ratings from online course evaluations revealed that teachers tended to agree or strongly agree that courses taken through the project, when compared with previous special education courses taken elsewhere, (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. Procedures/methods courses received the highest ratings from teachers.

Progress of Teachers. An analysis of teachers' *needed* versus *completed* certification courses taken through the project revealed a collective average progress of 79% during Year 3. Ninety percent of the participating teachers completed one or two courses toward certification requirements, and 90% of the enrolled teachers earned final grades of A or B in their courses.

Teacher Perceptions. Results from online course evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. Virtually all of the mean ratings tended toward strongly agree or agree indicating 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 syllabi.

Enrollment in Courses. Teachers enrolled in 288 courses, which represented 43% of the available funded scholarships for Year 3. The number of course scholarships awarded per teacher ranged from 1 to 4, with a mean of 1.46 courses per teacher. Across the university centers, the number of course scholarships awarded per semester was 86 (Fall 2005), 155 (Spring 2006), and 47 (Summer 2006).

Teachers Completing Course Work. Previous annual reports for CREATE documented 4 completers for Year 1, and 74 completers for Year 2. Year 3 of the project produced an additional 147 completers, for a three-year total of 225 teachers completing course work toward required certification in special education. About three-fourths of the completers were teachers in learning disabilities classrooms. Approximately two-thirds completed two or more courses through the project. The completers were overwhelmingly female (87%). About one-fourth (24%) were African-American.

Recruitment, Selection, and Advising. Recruitment and selection of participants for the project was accomplished by (a) a statewide mailing each semester from the SC Office of Exceptional Children to district special education directors, directors of personnel, and school principals and (a) phone and email campaigns. Advising qualified participants on which certification courses would meet their needs was accomplished via phone and email. All of the 197 teachers approved for enrollment in the project for Year 3 were verified to be non-certified special education teachers currently employed in state public schools.

Employment of Teachers. We have received no reports that any of the 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, project personnel have evaluated the success of Year 3 of CREATE as satisfactory. Data collected in the project's evaluation plan that support this conclusion follows:

- ▶ Available course scholarships totaled 676.
- ▶ Awarded course scholarships totaled 288.
- ▶ Teacher enrollment reached 197 teachers.
- ▶ Participating districts numbered 63.
- ▶ Teachers completing course work numbered 147.
- ▶ Percentage of teachers earning passing grades was 99%.
- ▶ Average progress toward certification was 79%.

The three-year total of 225 completers is the most compelling, empirical evidence that CREATE is accomplishing its mission to reduce the number non-certified special education teachers in South Carolina, while simultaneously growing a more highly qualified special education teacher force.

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FINAL REPORT

PROJECT CREATE—YEAR 3

HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

More than 400 special education teachers employed in South Carolina public schools in 2002-2003 were not appropriately certified to teach students with disabilities. The federal law, *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), however mandated that states must employ properly credentialed and highly qualified teachers by July 1, 2006. In an effort to respond to NCLB, the SC Office of Exceptional Children (OEC, Susan D. DuRant, Director) funded Year 1 of Project CREATE in 2003-2004. Continuation funds from both OEC and the SC Division of Educator Quality and Leadership (Dr. Janice Poda, Deputy Superintendent) were provided in 2004-2005 (Year 2), and again in 2005-2006 (Year 3). The chief mission of CREATE has been to reduce the number of non-certified special education teachers in the State's public schools by providing teachers with quality, cost-free course work to complete add-on certification in special education, thereby better preparing them to teach students with disabilities more effectively. A brief summary of the success of the first two years of the project follows:

Year 1 (2003-2004). The project enrolled 100 teachers from 33 of the State's 89 (37%) school districts, who collectively completed a total of 121 certification courses with 97% earning passing grades. Progress toward completion of licensure averaged 37%, based on the number completed courses compared with the number of needed courses for add-on certification. Of the participants, 4 teachers completed all required content course work for certification.

Year 2 (2004-2005). The project enrolled 246 teachers from 59 of the State's 89 (66%) school districts, who collectively completed a total of 411 certification courses with 99.8% earning passing grades. Progress toward completion of licensure averaged 63%. Of the participants, both new and returning to the project, 74 teachers completed all required content course work required for certification, for a two-year total of 78 course completers.

YEAR 3 OPERATION

For 2005-2006, the project targeted three groups of special education teachers: (a) out-of-field permit [OFFP] teachers in special education; (b) special education teachers of emotional disabilities in the PACE (Program of Alternative Certification for Educators); and (c) other public school special education teachers who, although not holding OFFPs, nonetheless were employed as teachers in special education classrooms and were being required by their school districts to complete add-on certification in special education. Course scholarships covered tuition and textbook costs. Courses in various formats and reflecting add-on certification needs of participating teachers were offered during the Fall 2005, Spring 2006, and Summer 2006 semesters at CREATE centers established at the following six leading universities in the State, all with state-approved programs in special education teacher preparation: Clemson University (Dr. Janie Hodge, director); Francis Marion University (Dr. Shirley Bausmith, director), SC State University (Dr. Barbara O'Neal, director); USC-Columbia (Dr. Kathleen Marshall, director); USC-Upstate (Dr. Holly Pae, director); and Winthrop University (Dr. Brad Witzel, director). At the direction of Ms. DuRant and Dr. Poda, The University of Phoenix was awarded a contract in January, 2006 for the purpose of offering several online courses to qualifying CREATE teachers who (a) lived in remote areas of the State with limited access to in-state CREATE university centers; and/or (b) needed only one or two courses to complete add-on certification that were not being offered at any of the in-state centers. Dr. Joe Sutton, of the Division of Special Education, Bob Jones University, continued his post as project director for Year 3.

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The evaluation design of the project requires preparation of a final report after each year of operation. As with Years 1 and 2, the final report for Year 3 addressed 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 data for each of the eight evaluation questions enumerated above.

PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

Year 3 of the project matriculated 197 non-certified special education teachers representing 63 of the State's 89 (71%) school districts (see Table 1). Participants enrolled in one or more courses over the three semesters. The teacher cohort was largely female (89%; see Figure 1) and overwhelmingly new to the project (61%; see Figure 2), as opposed to returning teachers who participated in the previous two years of the project. Of the various add-on certification areas in special education, more than half (54%; see Figure 3) of the teacher participants were pursuing learning disabilities certification.

APPROPRIATENESS OF COURSES

Access to Courses. Teachers who qualified for the project resided in a wide range of districts and geographic locations in the State. Appropriateness of courses from one perspective, then, was evaluated by determining the extent to which the project provided qualifying teachers with access to courses, whether they resided within driving proximity of a nearby university center or whether they lived in rural, more remote areas of the State. We believe the project maximized the opportunity for virtually all qualifying teachers to avail themselves of needed course work by offering four different course formats, including (a) on-campus courses, (b) contract courses, (b) satellite/distance courses, and (d) online courses. Teachers were able to join other teachers-in-preparation in on-campus courses that were part of a university's regular graduate schedule through use of individual tuition vouchers. Contract courses, provided at a university's main campus or extension site, enrolled up to 25 teachers. Satellite/distance courses enrolled up to 100 teachers statewide and were broadcast from a university studio class to five extension public school sites strategically selected across the State where larger pockets of qualifying teachers resided. Online courses enrolled 18 or more teachers across the State.

Selection of Courses. Appropriateness of courses also was evaluated by determining the extent to which the project made the full range of needed add-on certification courses available. Course contributions for each university center and corresponding course formats are provided in Table 2. A total of 676 course scholarships were available at the six CREATE university centers for Year 3.

Table 1. *School District Affiliation of Participating Teachers, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

District	Number of Teachers	District	Number of Teachers
Abbeville 60	1	Hampton 02	
Aiken 01	4	Horry 01	12
Allendale 01		Jasper 01	1
Anderson 01	1	Kershaw 01	
Anderson 02	3	Lancaster 01	4
Anderson 03		Laurens 55	1
Anderson 04	1	Laurens 56	1
Anderson 05	5	Lee 01	1
Bamberg 01		Lexington 01	2
Bamberg 02	3	Lexington 02	
Barnwell 19	1	Lexington 03	2
Barnwell 29	1	Lexington 04	2
Barnwell 45	2	Lexington 05	3
Beaufort 01	1	Marion 01	
Berkeley 01	6	Marion 02	4
Calhoun 01	1	Marion 07	
Charleston 01	10	Marlboro 01	1
Cherokee 01	1	McCormick 01	
Chester 01		Newberry 01	3
Chesterfield 01	2	Oconee 01	3
Clarendon 01	1	Orangeburg 03	2
Clarendon 02	4	Orangeburg 04	1
Clarendon 03		Orangeburg 05	4
Colleton 01	3	Pickens 01	5
Darlington 01	6	Richland 01	7
Dillon 01		Richland 02	9
Dillon 02	1	Saluda 01	2
Dillon 03	1	Spartanburg 01	
Dorchester 02	1	Spartanburg 02	1
Dorchester 03		Spartanburg 03	
Dorchester 04	1	Spartanburg 04	
Edgefield 01		Spartanburg 05	2
Fairfield 01	1	Spartanburg 07	
Florence 01	8	Sumter 02	9
Florence 02		Sumter 17	5
Florence 03		Union 01	
Florence 04	1	Williamsburg 01	3
Florence 05		York 01	2
Georgetown 01	1	York 02	1
Greenville 01	23	York 03	1
Greenwood 50	3	Rock Hill 03	
Greenwood 51	1	York 4	
Greenwood 52		DJJ/SCSDB	2
Hampton 01	2	TOTAL	197

Figure 1. Gender of Participating Teachers, Project CREATE, 2005-2006

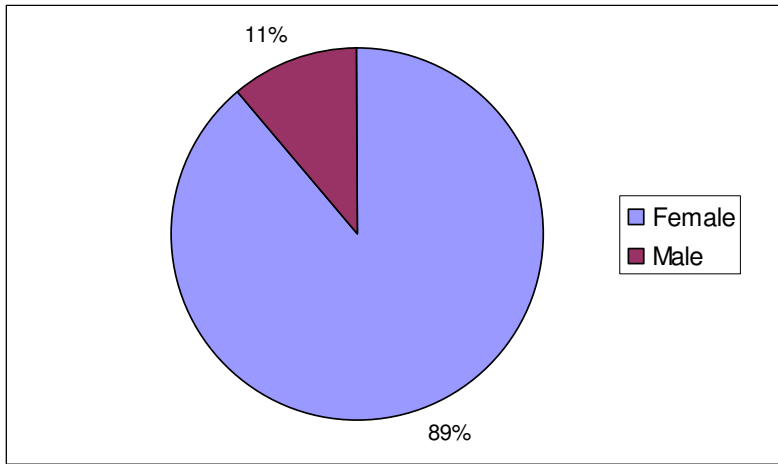


Figure 2. New/Participating Status of Participating Teachers, Project CREATE, 2005-2006

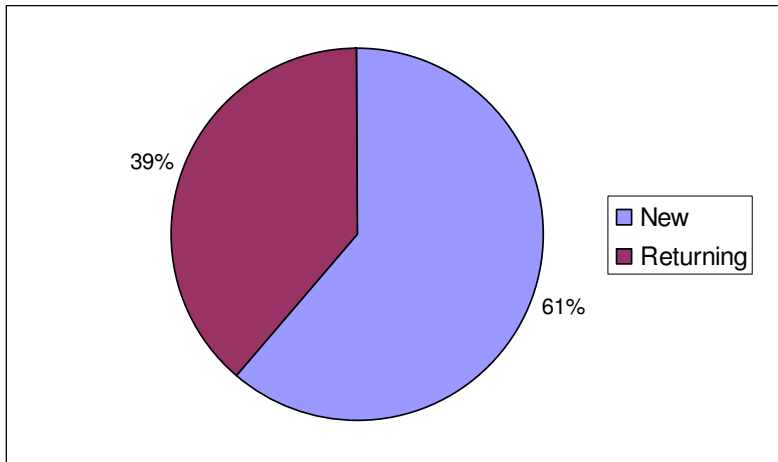
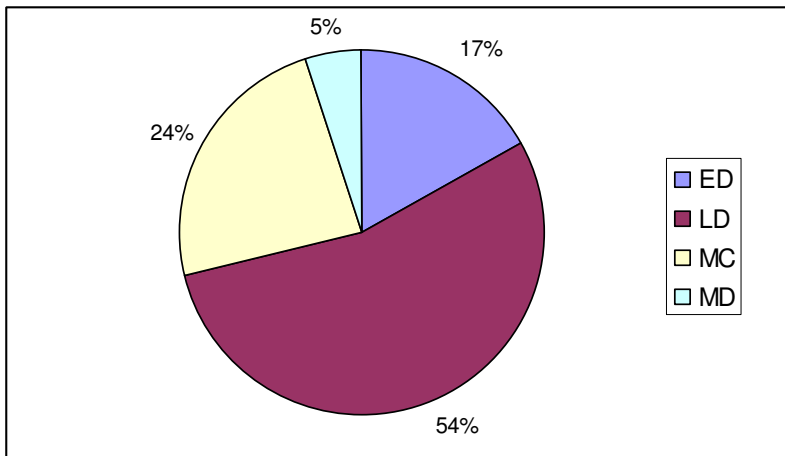


Figure 3. Certification Area of Pursuit of Participating Teachers, Project CREATE, 2005-2006



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

Table 2. *Certification Courses and Course Formats Offered at University Centers, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

Certification Course	Clemson Univ.			Francis Marion Univ.			SC State Univ.			USC Columbia			USC Upstate			Winthrop Univ.			Univ. Phoenix		
	F	Sp	Sm	F	Sp	Sm	F	Sp	Sm	F	Sp	Sm	F	Sp	Sm	F	Sp	Sm	F	Sp	Sm
Intro. to Excep Learners	V	V	V	V			V				V	V								O	O
Characteristics of ED										V							V			O	O
Characteristics of LD	V			V	V					V			D			V	V	O		O	O
Characteristics of MD				C						V							V			O	O
Procedures for ED		V									V					V					
Procedures for LD		V		V	V	C					V			D		V					
Procedures for MD					C						C										
Teaching Reading				V	V													V			
Behavior Management		C		V	V	V				V				D			V	V			
Assessment for Excep Ls.		C		V	V		D													O	O

F=Fall 2005; Sp=Spring 2006; Sm=Summer 2006; C=contract course; D=distance course (statewide); O=online course (statewide); V=individual tuition voucher (regularly scheduled courses on-campus/extension site).

Content of Courses. Finally, course appropriateness was evaluated by assessing course content, as outlined in the course syllabi, and determining the extent to which it corresponded with 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. Center directors and the project director reviewed course syllabi and concluded that content was appropriate. Overall, we judged the access to courses, selection of courses, and course content as appropriate to meet the course needs of qualifying teachers.

ADEQUACY OF COURSE CONTENT

We used data from four items on the online course evaluation form developed by project in Year 1 (entire form provided in the Appendix of this report) to assess adequacy of course content in meeting competency needs of teachers. The online course evaluation was voluntary and anonymous. The goal was to administer the course evaluation to all enrolled teachers at all university centers at the end of the semester, 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 for the four items related to adequacy of course content 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 these four items from 147 available course evaluations (of the 288 courses awarded for the year; 51% response rate). Results of the course evaluations were collapsed into five special education content areas: Assessment (As), Behavior Management (BM), Characteristics (Char), Introduction to Exceptional Learners (EL), and Procedures/Methods (Proc). 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, Behavior Management, Characteristics, and Introduction course evaluations all tended toward the ‘Agree’ rating. The Procedures/Methods course evaluations, however, tended toward the ‘Strongly Agree’ rating. These results suggest that participating teachers viewed course content as sufficient to meet their professional preparation needs.

PROGRESS OF TEACHERS

A total of 288 course scholarships were awarded to the participating 197 teachers during Year 3. We determined the extent to which teacher participants progressed at an appropriate rate toward completion of add-on certification by calculating the following:

- ▶ Percentage of teacher participants who successfully completed one or more courses during the three semesters of the project for 2005-2006 (See Figure 4).
- ▶ Percentage of teacher participants who earned a passing grade of A, B, C, or D in their course work for the three semesters (See Table 4).
- ▶ Percentage of progress of teacher participants based on a comparison of their *completed* courses versus *needed* courses stipulated on their add-on certification course worksheets (See Table 5).

Table 3. *Mean Ratings of Participating Teachers from Course Evaluation Items Reflecting Adequacy of Course Content, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

Course Evaluation Item	As n=21	BM n=30	Char n=54	EL n=4	Proc n=38	All n=147
Provided more knowledge/skills about instruction in special education.	3.38	3.23	3.33	3.50	3.53	3.37
Made more relevant applications to the real world of the classroom.	3.33	3.23	3.43	3.25	3.61	3.41
Broadened my perspective more in how to teach learners with disabilities.	3.29	3.27	3.35	3.25	3.63	3.39
Significantly contributed to my overall preparation in special education.	3.33	3.23	3.35	3.25	3.68	3.41

As=Assessment for Exceptional Learners; BM=Behavior Management; Char=Characteristics of Emotional/Learning/Mental Disabilities; EL=Introduction to Exceptional Learners; Proc=Procedures for Emotional/Learning/Mental Disabilities, and Teaching Reading. Course evaluation data available on 147 of 288 courses.

Of the 197 teachers who enrolled in course work, 195 successfully completed one or more courses with a passing grade. Figure 4 shows that fully two-thirds of the teachers (67%) completed one course, while almost one-fourth (23%) completed two courses, leaving one-tenth of the teachers completing three courses (7%) or four courses (3%).

Final grades were available for 280 of the 288 completed courses. Table 4 shows that approximately two-thirds (66%) of teachers earned A grades, and about one-fourth (24%) earned B grades, with both grades indicating a high level of competency. Less satisfactory competency was demonstrated by 8% of teachers with C grades and 1% of teachers with D grades. Only 1% of the final grades were F.

Perhaps the best measure of teachers' progress toward completion of add-on certification is a comparison of *completed* courses versus *needed* courses (range of 1 to 6), as stipulated on teachers' add-on course worksheets (see Table 5). For example, a teacher who completed two courses out of four needed courses for LD certification would demonstrate 50% progress (i.e., $2 / 4 = 50\%$). An analysis of the collective progress of 160 of 197 participating teachers whose worksheets could be verified produced an overall weighted average progress of 79%. These data suggest that the participating teachers are demonstrating very satisfactory progress toward completing certification.

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF PROJECT

We assessed the perceptions of participating teachers by gathering their views and opinions through an online course evaluation survey (provided in the Appendix). The course evaluation was voluntary and anonymous, and administered at the end of 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 categories: Teaching Skills of Professor; Interaction Skills of Professor; Course Requirements; Evaluation of Learning; Course Syllabus; Course Content, and Impact of Course (Note: Results of the category of survey items, Impact of Course, was presented and discussed earlier in this report under the section, "Adequacy of Course Content," see p. 12).

Figure 4. *Participating Teachers Successfully Completing One or More Certification Courses, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

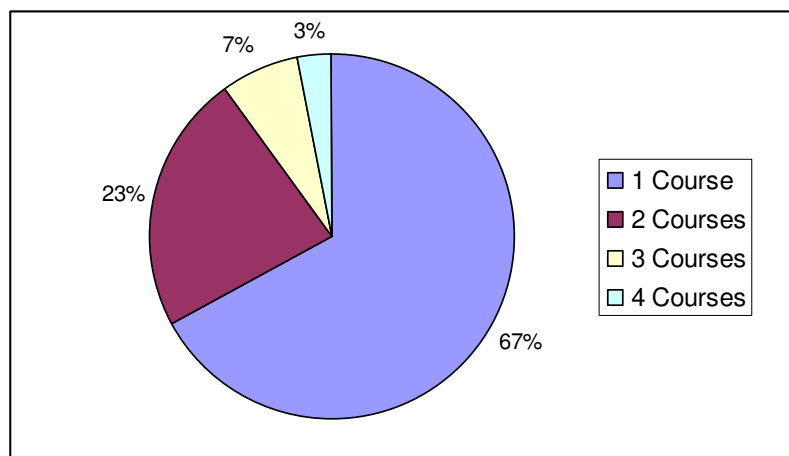


Table 4. *Final Grades of Participating Teachers in Enrolled Courses, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

Certification Course	Final Grades*					
	A	B	C	D	F	Tot.
Introduction to Exceptional Learners	6	3		1		10
Characteristics: Emotional Disabilities	22	6	1			29
Characteristics: Learning Disabilities	20	10	6	1	1	38
Characteristics: Mental Disabilities	9	4	4		1	18
Procedures: Emotional Disabilities	3					3
Procedures: Learning Disabilities	25	20	1			46
Procedures: Mental Disabilities	7	9	2			18
Teaching Reading	1	3	1			5
Behavior Management	39	5		1		45
Assessment for Exceptional Learners	53	7	7		1	68
Total	185	67	22	3	3	280
Percent	66%	24%	8%	1%	1%	

*Data available on 280 of 288 completed courses.

A summary of mean item ratings from 147 of the 288 course evaluations (51% response rate) is provided in Table 6. 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 mean item ratings ranged between 3.32 and 3.59. The mean ratings for Course Syllabus all tended toward ‘Strongly Agree.’ The majority of items for Interaction Skills of Instructor also tended toward ‘Strongly Agree.’ Virtually all remaining mean item ratings tended toward ‘Agree.’ With no mean item ratings falling below the ‘Agree’ rating, we judged the teacher perceptions of the project course work as overwhelmingly positive.

Table 5. *Progress of Participating Teachers Based on Completed Courses Versus Needed Courses, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

Courses Needed	Courses Completed*							
	1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses		4 Courses	
	% Progress	No. Ts.	% Progress	No. Ts.	% Progress	No. Ts.	% Progress	No. Ts.
1 Course	100%	61						
2 Courses	50%	20	100%	25				
3 Courses	33%	8	67%	10	100%	5		
4 Courses	25%	5	50%	8	75%	5	100%	3
5 Courses	20%	2	40%	1	60%	2	80%	2
6 Courses	13%	1	33%		50%	1	67%	1
Total		97		44		13		6

*Data available for 160 of 197 participating teachers with verifiable add-on course worksheets.

ENROLLMENT IN COURSES

Of the 676 course scholarships available for Year 3, the project awarded a total of 288 course scholarships (43%). Table 7 displays the number of course scholarships awarded out of available course scholarships for each of the university centers. Enrollment capacity for individual university centers ranged from 33.9% (SC State University) to 93.3% (University of Phoenix). Figure 5 shows the number of course scholarships awarded for each of the three semesters across all university centers. Spring 2006 drew the greatest participation from qualifying teachers, with 54% of all course scholarships awarded for the year (i.e., 155 of 288). Table 8 provides a distribution of course scholarships awarded per school district. The five school districts that received the greatest number of course scholarships were Greenville 01 (34 course awards), Florence 01 (18 course awards), Horry 01 (17 course awards), Sumter 02 (17 course awards), and Richland 02 (14 course awards). It is important to note that these districts received more course awards simply because there was greater interest among their qualifying teachers. The project operated under a first-come, first-serve policy for awarding course scholarships, and had the ability to award more course scholarships to other districts in the State, had they expressed more interest.

TEACHERS COMPLETING COURSE WORK

Previous annual reports for CREATE documented 4 completers for Year 1, and 74 completers for Year 2. Year 3 of the project produced an additional 147 completers, for a three-year total of 225. A number of the 147 completers identified in Year 3, however, did not take certification courses through the project during 2005-2006. Yet we have verified that these teachers did, in fact, complete one or more courses through the project during Years 1 and/or 2. These teachers apparently completed remaining certification course work on their own, without assistance from the project; therefore, we have included them in the 147 completers for Year 3. As with the prior annual reports, we describe the completers in a cumulative fashion. Therefore, Table 9 shows the South Carolina school district affiliation of the three-year total of 225 course completers. The five districts with highest number of completers include Greenville 01 (n=33), Horry 01 (n=15), Berkeley 01 (n=9), Richland 02 (n=9), and Sumter 02 (n=9).

Table 6. *Mean Ratings of Course Evaluation Items from Participating Teachers, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

Course Evaluation Items	Mean Rating
<i>Teaching Skills of Instructor</i>	<i>3.45</i>
Communicated subject matter clearly.	3.48
Caused me to think critically.	3.50
Showed enthusiasm and made classes interesting and engaging.	3.44
Used examples, illustrations, and/or demonstrations to explain ideas.	3.52
Embellished/expanded on textbook material, rather than just repeated it.	3.46
Used allocated class time for critical, more important material.	3.41
Presented information in an organized, logical, and sequential manner.	3.50
Integrated media, guest speakers, and/or other resources with lecture.	3.32
Inspired, motivated, and stimulated a desire to want to learn more.	3.42
<i>Interaction Skills of Instructor</i>	<i>3.51</i>
Showed genuine interest in students' success.	3.52
Was available during office hours (or by phone/e-mail) for consultation.	3.49
Showed respect towards the opinions of students.	3.52
Encouraged student participation in class.	3.54
Responded to student questions in a clear, supportive manner.	3.49
<i>Course Requirements</i>	<i>3.41</i>
Readings (textbook, etc.) that improved my understanding of the subject.	3.39
Assignments that were well developed and related to course content.	3.48
Assignments that were creative, hands-on (e.g., case studies, research).	3.44
Assignments that were paced and timed appropriately for the semester.	3.33
<i>Evaluation of Learning</i>	<i>3.46</i>
Provided meaningful, constructive feedback on tests and other work.	3.45
Graded tests/projects according to criteria published in the syllabus.	3.50
Prepared me for tests (e.g., gave overviews of test content/format).	3.48
Assessed knowledge and conceptual understanding on tests/projects.	3.46
Returned graded tests and projects on, or by, the promised date.	3.39
<i>Course Syllabus</i>	<i>3.56</i>
Stated goals/objectives and included a schedule of course content.	3.59
Gave instructions for successful completion of course assignments.	3.53
Provided clear criteria for grading projects and assignments.	3.55
Overall Mean	

Data available from 147 of 288 course evaluations.

Table 7. *Course Scholarships Awarded Versus Course Scholarships Available at University Centers, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

University Center	Scholarships Available		Scholarships Awarded	
	Type	Number	Number	Percent
Clemson University	C,V	49	23	46.9%
Francis Marion University	C,V	75	62	82.7%
SC State University	D,V	104	34	33.9%
USC Columbia	C,V	49	21	42.9%
USC Upstate	D	300	68	22.7%
Winthrop University	O,V	24	10	41.7%
University of Phoenix	O	75	70	93.3%
Total		676	288	42.6%

C=contract course; D=distance course; O=online course; V=regular course voucher.

Figure 5. *Number of Course Scholarships Awarded, by Semester, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

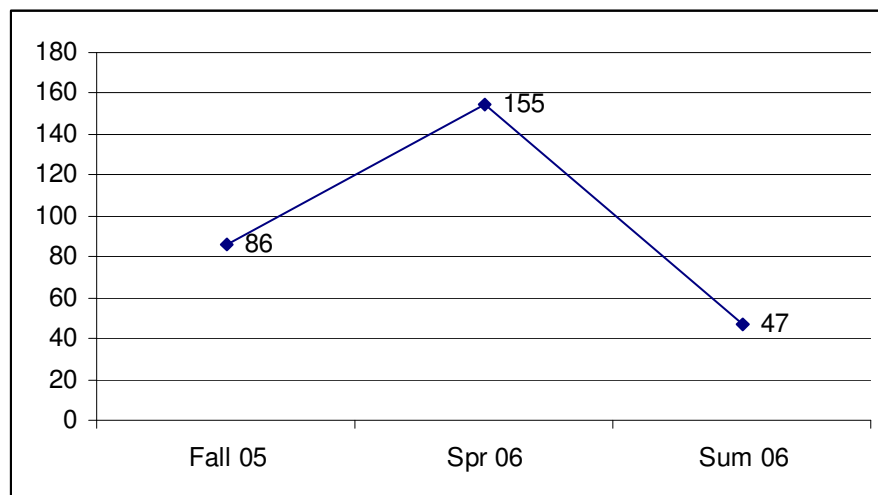


Figure 6 shows the area of special education certification of teachers completing course work for the 225 completers. Approximately three-fourths (73%) of the completers were in learning disabilities, and about one-fifth (18%) were in mental disabilities. Those completing course work in emotional disabilities and multi-categorical special education were fewer than 10% of all completers for the three-year period. The number of courses taken through CREATE by completers is provided in Figure 7. Approximately one-third of the completers (34%) took one course through the project, and another one-third (33%) completed two courses. The final third of the group took either three or four courses. Eighty-seven percent (87%) were female, which mirrors the overwhelming representation of female teachers in the teaching professional nationwide and in South Carolina (see Figure 8). There was observable diversity among the completers. Although 69% of the completers are Caucasian, about one-fourth (24%) are African-American. Other than one Hispanic and one American-Indian, which mathematically did not register as a percentage out of the whole, we were unable to determine the race/ethnicity of the remaining 7% of the group of completers. Not only did they fail to acknowledge their race/ethnicity on the CREATE application (which is not required), these completers have chosen not to disclose their race/ethnicity to the State Office of Teacher Certification.

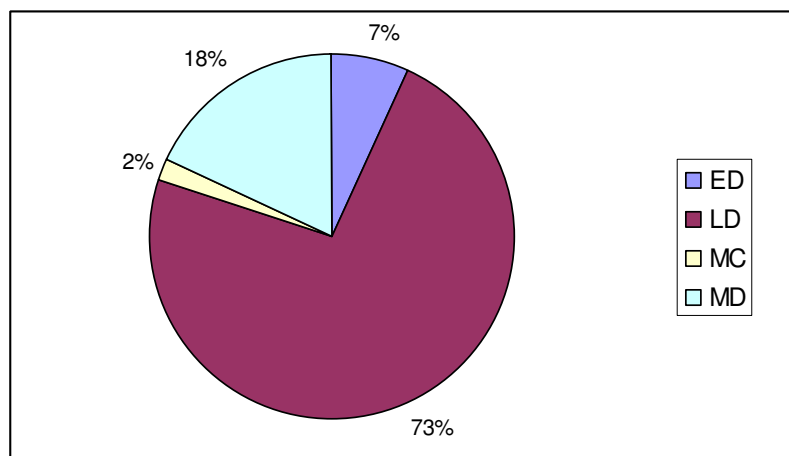
Table 8. *Number of Course Scholarships Awarded Per School District, Project CREATE, 2005-2006*

District	Scholarships Awarded	District	Scholarships Awarded
Abbeville 60	1	Hampton 02	
Aiken 01	6	Horry 01	17
Allendale 01		Jasper 01	2
Anderson 01	2	Kershaw 01	
Anderson 02	5	Lancaster 01	4
Anderson 03		Laurens 55	2
Anderson 04	2	Laurens 56	2
Anderson 05	7	Lee 01	1
Bamberg 01		Lexington 01	3
Bamberg 02	4	Lexington 02	
Barnwell 19	1	Lexington 03	3
Barnwell 29	1	Lexington 04	2
Barnwell 45	4	Lexington 05	7
Beaufort 01	1	Marion 01	
Berkeley 01	9	Marion 02	9
Calhoun 01	1	Marion 07	
Charleston 01	11	Marlboro 01	3
Cherokee 01	1	McCormick 01	
Chester 01		Newberry 01	3
Chesterfield 01	3	Oconee 01	3
Clarendon 01	1	Orangeburg 03	5
Clarendon 02	5	Orangeburg 04	1
Clarendon 03		Orangeburg 05	7
Colleton 01	3	Pickens 01	4
Darlington 01	9	Richland 01	9
Dillon 01		Richland 02	14
Dillon 02	1	Saluda 01	2
Dillon 03	1	Spartanburg 01	
Dorchester 02	1	Spartanburg 02	1
Dorchester 03		Spartanburg 03	
Dorchester 04	1	Spartanburg 04	
Edgefield 01		Spartanburg 05	2
Fairfield 01	1	Spartanburg 07	
Florence 01	18	Sumter 02	17
Florence 02		Sumter 17	5
Florence 03		Union 01	
Florence 04	1	Williamsburg 01	10
Florence 05		York 01	2
Georgetown 01	1	York 02	2
Greenville 01	34	York 3	1
Greenwood 50	4	Rock Hill 03	
Greenwood 51	1	York 4	
Greenwood 52		DJJ/SCSDB	2
Hampton 01	2	TOTAL	288

Table 9. *School District Affiliation of Teachers Completing Certification Course Work, Project CREATE, 2003-2006 (Three-Year Period)*

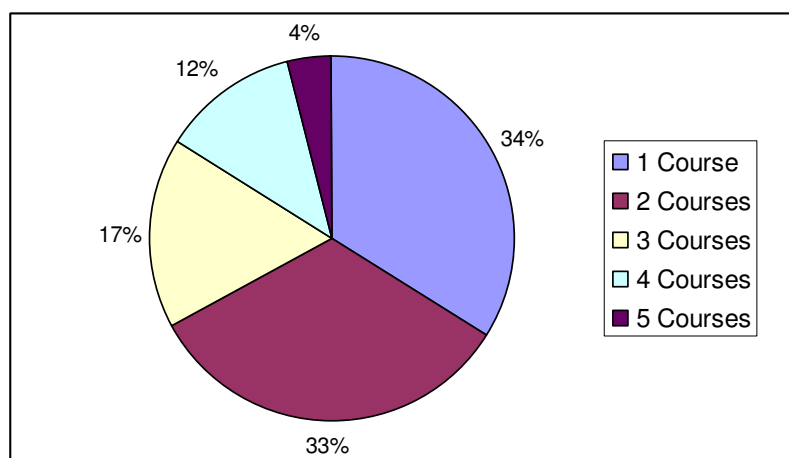
District	Scholarships Awarded	District	Scholarships Awarded
Abbeville 60	2	Hampton 02	
Aiken 01	6	Horry 01	15
Allendale 01		Jasper 01	1
Anderson 01	1	Kershaw 01	4
Anderson 02	2	Lancaster 01	5
Anderson 03		Laurens 55	1
Anderson 04		Laurens 56	
Anderson 05	7	Lee 01	1
Bamberg 01		Lexington 01	5
Bamberg 02	2	Lexington 02	2
Barnwell 19	2	Lexington 03	1
Barnwell 29	2	Lexington 04	1
Barnwell 45	1	Lexington 05	2
Beaufort 01		Marion 01	
Berkeley 01	9	Marion 02	3
Calhoun 01		Marion 07	
Charleston 01	5	Marlboro 01	1
Cherokee 01		McCormick 01	
Chester 01	3	Newberry 01	3
Chesterfield 01	3	Oconee 01	3
Clarendon 01		Orangeburg 03	2
Clarendon 02	1	Orangeburg 04	1
Clarendon 03		Orangeburg 05	5
Colleton 01	2	Pickens 01	5
Darlington 01	7	Richland 01	2
Dillon 01		Richland 02	9
Dillon 02		Saluda 01	4
Dillon 03		Spartanburg 01	
Dorchester 02	6	Spartanburg 02	1
Dorchester 03		Spartanburg 03	
Dorchester 04	2	Spartanburg 04	
Edgefield 01		Spartanburg 05	4
Fairfield 01	1	Spartanburg 07	
Florence 01	5	Sumter 02	9
Florence 02		Sumter 17	8
Florence 03	2	Union 01	
Florence 04	2	Williamsburg 01	5
Florence 05		York 01	1
Georgetown 01	4	York 02	1
Greenville 01	33	York 3	1
Greenwood 50	4	Rock Hill 03	
Greenwood 51	1	York 4	
Greenwood 52		DJJ/SCSDB	
Hampton 01	4	TOTAL	225

Figure 6. *Area of Special Education Certification of Teachers Completing Certification Course Work, Project CREATE, 2003-2006 (Three-Year Period)*



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

Figure 7. *Number of Courses Taken Through CREATE by Teachers Completing Certification Course Work, 2003-2006 (Three-Year Period)*



RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND ADVISING

Recruitment. The process of recruitment for CREATE was the joint responsibility of the SC Office of Exceptional Children (SCOEC), the project director, and all 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

Figure 8. *Gender of Teachers Completing Certification Course Work, Project CREATE, 2003-2006 (Three-Year Period)*

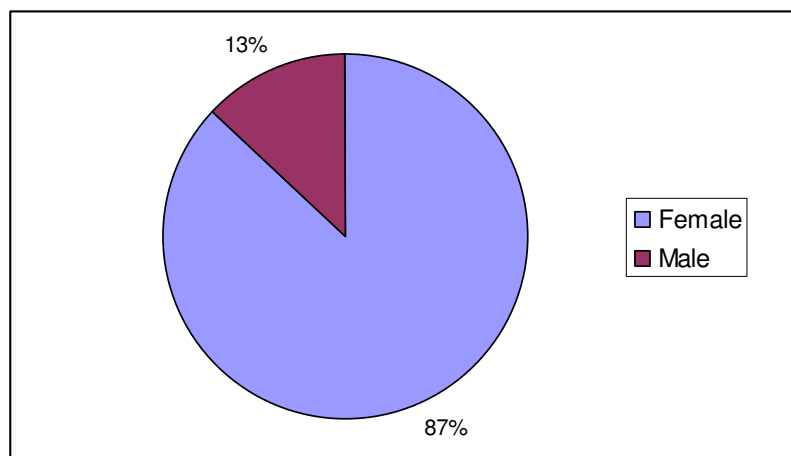
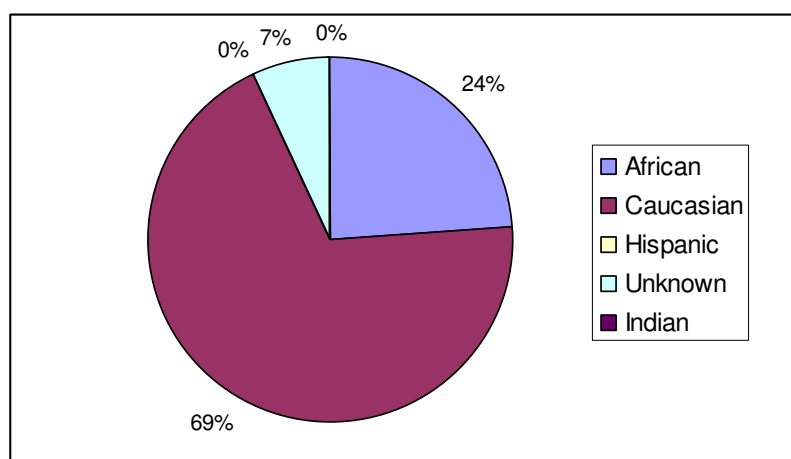


Figure 9. *Race of Teachers Completing Certification Course Work, Project CREATE, 2003-2006 (Three-Year Period)*



education, all directors of personnel, and all school principals in the State. The second and final phase of recruitment each semester included a direct phone and email campaign to individual 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. With regard to *fairness*, we continued Year 3 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 guaranteeing broad participation. A review of Table 1 reveals that we enrolled one or more teachers from 63 of the 89 (71%) State’s school districts. 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. We were able to verify that all of the 197 teachers enrolled in the project for Year 2 were non-certified in special education. This was achieved largely because of unparalleled cooperation from the SC Office of Teacher Certification (Mr. Jim Turner, director) and his expert staff. Therefore, we evaluated the effectiveness of our selection process as highly successful.

Advising. Advising teacher applicants was the responsibility of the project director and the center directors. Advising was accomplished through email and phone, and focused mainly on recommending appropriate course work to applicants. That participating teachers enrolled in, and successfully completed, course work that corresponded with their needed courses allowed us to judge our advising process as effective.

EMPLOYMENT OF TEACHERS

Assisting non-certified special education teachers in obtaining State certification was the primary goal of the project; however, ensuring that as many of our completers as possible remain employed in South Carolina public schools was also equally important. Our efforts in helping teachers achieve certification in special education, keeping the project's databases current, etc. left little time to determine the employment status of the participating teachers who completed certification course work this year. We found that regular phone and email contact with district directors of special education throughout the last two years of the project allowed for an informal process of verifying employment of teachers. We have received no reports that any of the Year 3 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 course completers.

SUMMARY

Project personnel have evaluated the success of Year 3 of CREATE as satisfactory. Data collected in the project's evaluation plan that support this conclusion follows:

- ▶ Available course scholarships totaled 676.
- ▶ Awarded course scholarships totaled 288.
- ▶ Teacher enrollment reached 197 teachers.
- ▶ Participating districts numbered 63.
- ▶ Teachers completing certification courses numbered 147.
- ▶ Percent of teachers earning passing grades was 99%.
- ▶ Average progress toward certification was 79%.

The three-year total of 225 completers is the most compelling, empirical evidence that CREATE is accomplishing its mission to reduce the number non-certified special education teachers in South Carolina, while simultaneously growing a more highly qualified special education teacher force.

Report prepared by: Joe Sutton, Ph.D.
Project Director

Report reviewed by: Shirley Bausmith, Ph.D.
FMU Center Director

Janie Hodge, Ph.D.
CU Center Director

Kathleen Marshall, Ph.D.
USCC Center Director

Holly Pae, Ed.D.
USCU Center Director

Brad Witzel, Ph.D.
WU Center Director

Submitted to SDE: December 15, 2006

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 26 pages
comprise the final report for Year 3.*