



# FINAL REPORT

## CENTERS FOR THE RE-EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHERS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 2007–2008 YEAR 5

Personnel Preparation Project for  
Growing a Highly Qualified Special Education  
Teacher Force in South Carolina

Joe Sutton, PhD  
Project Director  
*Bob Jones University*

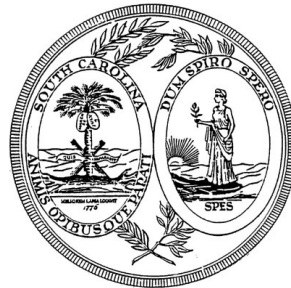
Shirley Bausmith, PhD  
Center Director  
*Francis Marion University*

Leonard McIntyre, EdD  
Center Director  
*SC State University*

Ansley Boggs, EdD  
Center Director  
*Converse College*

Dava O'Connor, PhD  
Center Director  
*Lander University*

Judy Engelhard, EdD  
Center Director  
*Coastal Carolina University*



Holly Pae, EdD  
Center Director  
*USC Upstate*

Janie Hodge, PhD  
Center Director  
*Clemson University*

Michael Skinner, PhD  
Center Director  
*College of Charleston*

Kathleen Marshall, PhD  
Center Director  
*USC Columbia*

Tracy West, PhD  
Center Director  
*Columbia College*

Bradley Witzel, PhD  
Center Director  
*Winthrop University*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### PROJECT CREATE—YEAR 5

The twofold mission of CREATE has remained consistent over its five years of operation, which is to reduce the number of non-certified special education teachers, while simultaneously growing a highly qualified special education teacher force in the State's public schools. With joint funding from the South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Exceptional Children and Division of Educator Quality and Leadership, qualified participants have received course scholarships for both tuition and textbook costs to pursue add-on, alternative, or initial certification in special education. For 2007–2008, the project operated centers at Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, College of Charleston, Columbia College, Converse College, Francis Marion University, Lander University, SC State University, University of South Carolina Columbia, University of South Carolina Upstate, and Winthrop University.

This Executive Summary highlights principal findings from the Year 5 final report that follows, specifically, (a) participants; (b) appropriateness of courses; (c) adequacy of course content; (d) progress of participants; (e) perceptions of participants; (f) enrollment in courses; (g) program completers; (h) recruitment, selection, and advising; and (i) employment of participants.

Participants. The project enrolled 198 participants employed at 65 of the State's 85 (76%) school districts. The participant cohort was largely female (89%) and new (72%) to the project. Fully one-third (33%) were African-American. Of the declared areas of special education certification that participants were pursuing, the majority were Learning Disabilities (37%) or Emotional Disabilities (30%).

Appropriateness of Courses. In order to reach a greater number of qualifying participants, particularly, those in remote areas of the State, we varied the format delivery of courses to include on-campus courses, distance/ETV courses, and online courses. Course content, as outlined in course syllabi, was evaluated in light of Council for Exceptional Children standards, and determined to be appropriate. For the year, the 11 CREATE centers collectively offered 19 certification courses a total of 118 times.

Adequacy of Course Content. An overall mean rating of 3.43 (1=Strongly Disagree to 4=Strongly Agree) on course evaluations indicated that participants agreed 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. The Introduction to Exceptional Learners and Characteristics courses received the highest ratings from participants.

Progress of Participants. Progress was calculated by dividing the number of courses that the participants completed through CREATE by the number of courses prescribed in their respective certification programs. The average progress of participants seeking alternative certification in the PACE program (n=36) was 81% (range of one to three courses). The average progress of participants pursuing add-on certification (n=102) was 70% (range of one to nine courses). The average progress of participants enrolled in initial certification programs at the bachelor's or MAT level (n=60) was considerably less at 28%; however, the range of needed course work was 11 to 21 courses. Academically, the add-on/alternative participant cohort earned A or B grades in 92.4% of their completed course work, while the initial certification cohort earned A or B grades in 87.5% of their completed courses.

Perceptions of Participants. Mean ratings on the 30-item online course evaluation ranged from 3.25 to 3.60 (1=Strongly Disagree to 4=Strongly Agree). Items reflecting Interaction Skills of the Instructor trended toward Strongly Agree (3.55). Mean ratings for the remaining categories of items (i.e., Teaching Skills of Professor; Course Requirements; Evaluation of Learning; Course Syllabus; Course Content, and Impact of Course) fell in the Agree range (3.44 to 3.48), with a total course evaluation mean rating of 3.49 (Agree). No mean item ratings fell below the Agree rating; therefore, we judged the teacher perceptions of courses sponsored by CREATE as generally positive.

Enrollment in Courses. Participants enrolled in 484 courses, which represented 81.3% of the 595 available course scholarships for the year. The number of course scholarships awarded per participant ranged from one to ten. Across the CREATE centers, the number of course scholarships awarded per semester was 75 (Fall 2007), 146 (Spring 2008), and 263 (Summer 2008).

Program Completers. Data show that 145 participants completed all course work for their respective certification programs, which included current participants and participants enrolled in prior years of the project who had completed remaining certification requirements on their own. The completers were overwhelmingly female (90%), and 27% were African-American, Asian-American, or Hispanic. Forty-five percent finished course work in Learning Disabilities certification, followed by Emotional Disabilities (33%), Mental Disabilities (13%), and Multi-categorical Special Education, Severe Disabilities, and Visual Impairment each with 2%. The majority (77%) were currently employed as special education teachers with a restricted alternative certificate or special education teachers in the PACE program. The Francis Marion University Center contributed the greatest percentage (20%) of the course work toward the completers' certification programs.

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 (b) phone and email campaigns. Advising qualified participants on which certification courses would meet their needs was accomplished via phone and email. All 198 qualified participants for Year 5 were verified to be non-certified in special education and employed full-time in a SC public school district.

Employment of Participants. We verified the 2008–2009 employment of the 145 program completers who finished their course work in 2007–2008, and determined that 100% of the completers (excluding the three who completed initial certification programs) were still employed in the State's public school system. Only 20 (13.8%) had relocated to a different school district than the one in which they were employed when they were initially enrolled in CREATE. That 86.2% of the completers have remained employed in their respective sending districts is a positive sign that districts are "growing their own" special educators.

In sum, project personnel have evaluated the success of Year 5 of CREATE as outstanding. Data collected and discussed in this report that support this conclusion follow:

- ▶ Available course scholarships: 595
- ▶ Awarded course scholarships: 484
- ▶ Participants enrolled: 198
- ▶ School districts represented: 65
- ▶ Participants completing course work: 145

The five-year total of 422 program completers is compelling, empirical evidence that CREATE continues to accomplish its mission of reducing the number of non-certified special education participants in South Carolina, while simultaneously growing a more highly qualified special education teacher force.

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## TABLES AND FIGURES

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## FINAL REPORT

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### PROJECT CREATE—YEAR 5

#### HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

For years, South Carolina public schools have been unable to adequately and consistently employ highly qualified special education teachers for its more than 100,000 students with disabilities. By 2002–2003, the number of special educators who were not appropriately certified to teach special education exceeded 400. Looming at the time was the federal mandate of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) that all states were to employ properly credentialed and highly qualified teachers by July 1, 2006. In an effort to curtail the burgeoning population of non-credentialed special educators, the South Carolina Department of Education's (SCDE) Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) funded Year 1 of Project CREATE in 2003–2004. Continuation funds from both OEC and the SCDE's Division of Educator Quality and Leadership were provided in 2004–2005 (Year 2), and again in 2005–2006 (Year 3) and 2006–2007 (Year 4). From the outset, the chief mission of CREATE has been to reduce the number of non-certified special education teachers, while simultaneously growing a highly qualified special education teacher force in the State's public schools. By underwriting both tuition and textbook costs, qualified participants have been able to complete needed course work in order to obtain add-on or alternative certification in special education, thereby better preparing them to teach students with disabilities more effectively. A brief summary of the project's success for Years 1, 2, 3, and 4 follows:

Year 1 (2003–2004). CREATE operated centers at three colleges, and enrolled 100 teachers from 33 of the State's 85 (39%) school districts, who collectively completed a total of 121 certification courses. Progress toward completion of add-on certification averaged 37%, based on the number of courses completed out of the number of needed courses prescribed in their programs of study. Of the participants, four completed all required content course work for certification.

Year 2 (2004–2005). CREATE expanded its consortium to four colleges, and matriculated 246 teachers from 59 school districts (69%) who collectively completed a total of 411 certification courses. Progress toward completion of add-on certification programs averaged 63%. Of the participants, both new and returning to the project, 74 completed all required content course work for certification, for a two-year total of 78 program completers.

Year 3 (2005–2006). CREATE increased its college centers to six, and enrolled 197 teachers from 63 school districts (74%), who collectively completed a total of 288 certification courses. Progress toward completion of add-on and alternative certification programs averaged 79%. Of the participants, both new and returning to the project, 147 completed all required content course work, for a three-year total of 225 program completers.

Year 4 (2006–2007). CREATE expanded its consortium once more to 11 college centers, and enrolled 152 participants from 53 school districts (62%), who collectively completed 279 certification courses. Progress toward completion of alternative (i.e., add-on and PACE) and initial certification programs averaged 56.5%. Of the participants, both new and returning to the project, 52 completed all required content course work, for a four-year total of 277 program completers.

#### YEAR 5 OPERATION

With the goal of preserving the mission of CREATE, the project broadened participant eligibility for the 2007–2008 year to include all full-time SC public school employees in both instructional and non-instructional positions, whose desire was to become a highly qualified special education teacher. Primary targeted groups included currently employed special education teachers who did not hold full certification in special education, specifically, [a] those holding a restricted alternative certificate (RAC) in various disability specialties, and

[b] those enrolled in the State's *Program of Alternative Certification for Educators* (PACE) program in Emotional Disabilities. For purposes of growing the potential pool of highly qualified special educators across the State, the project targeted a number of other groups, including general education (GEN) teachers who expressed interest in making a career change into special education; teacher assistants (TA) wanting to upgrade to full certification, long-term substitute (SUB) teachers, and various other (OTH) public school staff. All qualified participants pursued special education certification through one of two approaches: (a) add-on/alternative certification; or (b) initial certification via a bachelor's or master of arts in teaching (MAT) degree program in special education.

As in previous years of the project, qualified participants were awarded course scholarships on a first-come, first-served basis, which provided financial assistance to pay for tuition and textbook costs. Courses were delivered in various formats and reflected add-on/alternative and initial certification needs of participants. Courses were scheduled and delivered during the Fall 2007, Spring 2008, and Summer 2008 semesters at CREATE centers established at the following 11 colleges/universities in the State, all with NCATE/State-approved programs in special education teacher preparation (Note: Center directors' names are provided in parenthesis): Clemson University (Dr. Janie Hodge); Coastal Carolina University (Dr. Judy Engelhard); College of Charleston (Dr. Michael Skinner); Columbia College (Dr. Tracy West); Converse College (Dr. Ansley Boggs); Francis Marion University (Dr. Shirley Bausmith), Lander University (Dr. Dava O'Connor); SC State University (Dr. Leonard McIntyre); USC Columbia (Dr. Kathleen Marshall); USC Upstate (Dr. Holly Pae); and Winthrop University (Dr. Brad Witzel). Dr. Joe Sutton, Bob Jones University, continued his post as project director and principal investigator for Year 5.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

The project received and processed 376 applications for the year, from which 230 (61%) were qualified to receive course scholarships. Representing 65 of the 85 (76%) school districts in the State (see Table 1, p. 15), 198 of the 230 (86%) qualified applicants enrolled in one or more courses during the three semesters. Enrollees were predominantly female (89%; see Figure 1, p. 16) and, as first-year participants, were overwhelmingly new (72%) to the project (see Figure 2, p. 16). The majority of participants were seeking either Learning Disabilities (37%) or Emotional Disabilities (30%) certification (see Figure 3, p. 16), followed by Multi-categorical (15%), Mental Disabilities (10%), Visual Impairments (5%), and Severe Disabilities (3%). Representation by race/ethnicity included Caucasians (66%), African-Americans (33%), Asian-Americans (1%), and Hispanics (1%; see Figure 4, p. 17). Participants held a variety of full-time positions including special education teacher assistants (23%), special educators seeking another area of special education certification and long-term substitutes (22%), special education teachers of emotional disabilities enrolled in the State's *Program of Alternative Certification for Educators* (PACE) program (18%), general education teachers (14%), special education teachers with restricted alternative certificates (12%), and other non-instructional staff (11%; see Figure 5, p. 17). Most of the participants were enrolled in add-on/alternative certification programs in special education (70%), with a smaller percentage (30%) enrolled in initial certification programs in special education, including bachelor of arts/science (BA/BS) degree, or master of arts in teaching (MAT) degree programs (see Figure 6, p. 17).

## **EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT**

The evaluation design described in the initial 2003–2003 proposal required preparation of a final report after each year of operation. Like previous years, the final report for Year 5 addressed the following questions (data for each evaluation question is provided and discussed in subsequent sections):



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

## APPROPRIATENESS OF COURSES

Access to Courses. With participants residing in virtually all geographic regions of the State, appropriateness of courses from one perspective was evaluated by determining the extent to which the project provided participants with access to courses, whether they resided within driving proximity of a nearby CREATE college center or whether they lived in rural, more remote areas of the State. We believe the project maximized the opportunity for basically all participants to avail themselves of needed course work by offering three course formats, including (a) regular campus courses, (b) distance/ETV courses, and (c) online courses. Through use of tuition vouchers, participants were able to join other teachers-in-preparation in *regular campus courses* offered as part of a university's late afternoon/evening semester schedule. Some of the CREATE centers also offered regular courses on a contract basis at their main or extension campuses by enrolling up to 25 participants. *Distance/ETV courses*, which had the capacity to serve a State-wide audience, broadcasted live instruction from a campus studio class to numerous extension public school or public library sites. *Online courses* enrolled a State-wide audience of 18 or more participants which would allow participants to learn at-home or other site via Internet.

Range of Courses. Appropriateness of courses also was evaluated by determining the extent to which the project offered a range of needed add-on certification courses to participants, who represented 70% of the participant group. Course contributions for each CREATE center and corresponding formats for each of the three semesters for Year 5 are provided in Tables 2, 3, and 4 (see pp. 18-19). For the year, CREATE centers collectively offered 19 certification courses a total of 118 times, 31 (26%) of which were either online or distance/ETV.

Content of Courses. Finally, course appropriateness was determined by evaluating course content, as outlined in course syllabi, and determining the extent to which it corresponded with the professional standards of preparation for special educators espoused by the Council for Exceptional Children, as adopted by the South Carolina Department of Education. Center directors and the project director reviewed course syllabi and concluded that content was satisfactorily appropriate. Overall, we judged the access, range, and content of available courses as appropriate to meet the course needs of participants.

## ADEQUACY OF COURSE CONTENT

We assessed the adequacy of course content in meeting competency needs of participants through the project's course evaluation process, which required issuing online course evaluations at the end of each of the three semesters. When prompted with the statement, "In comparison with other special education courses I have taken, this course...", participants used a four-point Likert scale to rate the following four (of 30) items on the course evaluation survey that specifically addressed course content:

- ▶ 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 5 (see p. 19) provides the mean ratings of these four items from 231 of 484 (48%) returned, valid course evaluations. Results were collapsed into five special education preparation content areas (all special education certification areas combined): Assessment (As), Behavior Management (BM), Characteristics (Char), Introduction to Exceptional Learners (EL), and Procedures/Methods (Proc). We interpreted the individual and overall mean ratings as follows: 3.51–4.00=trending toward Strongly Agree; 2.51–3.50= Agree; 1.51–2.50=Disagree; and 1.50 or less=trending toward Strongly Disagree. The overall mean ratings for all certification courses fell in the Agree range; only the Introduction to Exceptional Learners course received an overall mean rating that trended toward Strongly Agree. Both Bachelor’s and MAT program course ratings also fell in the Agree range. The collective results suggest that participants viewed course content as generally sufficient in meeting their professional preparation needs.

### PROGRESS OF PARTICIPANTS

The project awarded 484 course scholarships to 198 participants in Year 5. We evaluated the extent to which participants progressed at an appropriate rate toward completion of alternative/add-on or initial certification by calculating the following:

- ▶ Percentage of participants who earned satisfactory grades of A, B, or C in their course work for the three semesters (See Table 6, p. 20); this data represents academic progress of participants.
- ▶ Percentage of courses that participants completed out of courses prescribed in their respective certification programs (See Table 7, p. 20); this data describes individual progress of participants.

Table 6 shows that more than two-thirds (69%) of participants seeking add-on/alternative certification earned A grades, and about one-fourth (24%) earned B grades, indicating a high level of competency. Acceptable competency was demonstrated by 3% of participants with C grades. Fewer than 2% of participants earned D/F grades. These data suggest high academic progress of participants. Grades were generally proportionate for participants seeking initial certification in bachelor’s and MAT programs (see Table 7). Collectively, 63% earned A grades, followed by approximately 22% with B grades. A higher percentage of C grades (7%) were earned by initial certification participants, however, as well as D/F grades (4.5%).

Perhaps the best measure of participants’ individual progress toward completion of certification is a mathematical comparison of *completed* courses versus *needed* courses, as prescribed in their programs of course work and study. For example, a teacher seeking add-on certification, and who completed two courses out of four needed courses for LD certification for the year, would demonstrate 50% progress (i.e.,  $2 / 4 = 50\%$ ).

We divided the 198 participants into three groups (PACE-ED, add-on certification, and bachelor’s/MAT), and computed progress measures on each group. The average progress of participants seeking alternative certification in the PACE program (n=36) was 81% (see Table 8, p. 21). PACE participants are required to take three graduate courses for their certification requirement. The average progress of participants pursuing add-on certification (n=102) was 70% (see Table 9, p. 21). The number of courses required for add-on certification range from one to nine. The average progress of participants enrolled in initial certification programs was 28% (see Tables 10 and 11, p. 22). The range of required

courses for those enrolled in initial certification programs ranged from 11 to 21 courses; therefore, it was expected that the progress would be considerably less. Overall, these data suggest that the participants are demonstrating satisfactory progress toward completing certification.

## **PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS**

We assessed the perceptions of participants by gathering their views and opinions through an online course evaluation survey. The course evaluation was voluntary and anonymous, and administered at the end of each semester. The survey included 30 items which participants rated using the following four-point Likert 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.).

A summary of mean item ratings from 231 of the 484 course evaluations (48% response rate) is provided in Table 12 (see p. 23). We interpreted mean ratings as follows: 3.51–4.00= trending toward Strongly Agree; 2.51–3.50=Agree; 1.51–2.50=Disagree; and 1.50 or less=trending toward Strongly Disagree. The mean item ratings ranged between 3.25 and 3.60. The overall mean rating for Interaction Skills of Instructor trended toward Strongly Agree (3.55). Overall mean ratings for the remaining four categories of items fell in the Agree range (3.44–3.48). With no mean item ratings falling below the Agree rating, we judged the teacher perceptions of courses sponsored by CREATE as generally positive.

## **ENROLLMENT IN COURSES**

Of the 595 course scholarships available through the 11 CREATE college centers for Year 5, the project awarded 484 (81.3%). Table 13 (see p. 24) displays the number of course scholarships awarded out of available course scholarships for each of the CREATE centers. Enrollment for individual centers ranged from 40.7% (SC State University) to 100% (Lander University and USC Upstate). Figure 7 (see p. 24) shows the number of course scholarships awarded for each of the three semesters across all CREATE centers, as follows: Fall 07 (n=75); Spring (n=146); Summer (n=263). Table 14 (see p. 25) 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 (n=41), Greenwood 50 (n=33), Florence 01 (n=27), Laurens 55 (n=23), and Newberry 01 (n=23). Explanations for why these districts received more course awards varied. One reason was that these districts had more participants who qualified for the project. Another reason was that participants from these districts simply expressed greater interest. Nonetheless, the project consistently operated under a first-come, first-serve policy for awarding course scholarships. Additionally, given that all of the available course scholarships were not depleted for the year, the project had the ability to award more course scholarships to other districts in the State.

## **PROGRAM COMPLETERS**

The project identified 145 participants who completed all course work for their respective certification programs. Representing 54 of 85 districts (63.5%) and two State-operated programs (Division of Juvenile Justice, SC School for the Deaf and Blind), Greenville 01 District produced the greatest number of completers with 17, followed by Horry 01 District with 9, and Charleston 01 and Richland 01 both with 8. The remaining districts had a range of 1 to 6 completers (see Table 15, p. 26). The completers were overwhelmingly female (90%; see Figure 8, p. 27), and fully one-fourth (26%) were African-American, Asian-American, or Hispanic (see Figure 9, p. 28). Figure 10 (see p. 27) shows that

45% of the completers finished course work in Learning Disabilities certification, followed by Emotional Disabilities with 33%, and Mental Disabilities (13%). Multi-categorical Special Education Severe Disabilities, and Visual Impairment each had 3% of the completers. The greater proportion of completers was employed as special education teachers holding a RAC (49%); however, a sizeable proportion (28%) was PACE-ED teachers (see Figure 11, p. 28). Most took one course (40%) or two courses (30%) to complete their respective certification program requirements (see Figure 12, p. 29). Figure 13 (see p. 29) shows that Francis Marion University Center contributed the greatest percentage (20%) of course work with 66 of the 321 courses (see Table 16) toward the completers' certification programs.

Note: Seventy-two of the 145 completers did not participate during Year 5 of CREATE; however, they all had been enrolled in one/more certification courses sponsored by CREATE in prior years of the project's operation. These completers had apparently completed certification course requirements on their own. Since they were previously enrolled as a CREATE participant, we decided to include them in this year's total count of completers.

## **RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND ADVISING**

Recruitment. The process of recruitment for CREATE was the joint responsibility of the SCDE Office of Exceptional Children, the project director, and all CREATE center directors. Recruitment was initiated prior to the start of each of the three semesters by SCDE, 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, and school principals in the State. Subsequently, more targeted recruitment efforts each semester included direct phone/email campaigns and postcard mailings to individual participants, who either had (a) enrolled in the project the previous year or (b) submitted a new application to CREATE. Having expended more than 80% of the project's available course scholarships for the year, we evaluated the effectiveness of our recruitment efforts as highly successful.

Selection. Appropriate selection of teacher participants hinged on both fairness and viability factors. With regard to *fairness*, we continued Year 5 operation of the project on a first-come, first-served policy for selection of participants 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 participants from 65 of the State's 85 (76%) school districts. More importantly, we rejected no qualifying participants from any district. As for *viability* of participants, the project selected and enrolled only participants who were employed in SC public schools and who were non-certified in special education. We were able to verify that all 198 participants enrolled in the project for Year 5 were, in fact, employed full-time in the State's public schools and were non-certified in the area of special education indicated on their application. 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, phone, and face-to-face meetings, and focused mainly on recommending appropriate course work to applicants as prescribed on their respective certification programs. A perfect concordance between courses that participants eventually enrolled in and successfully completed, and needed course work identified on their program check sheets, allowed us to judge our advising process as highly successful.

## EMPLOYMENT OF COMPLETERS

Once the project has financially assisted participants in obtaining their special education teaching credential, they are expected to remain employed in the State's public schools for a minimum of three years. In late-December 2008, we verified the 2008–2009 employment of each of the 145 program completers from Year 5 through use of SCDE's Certification Portal. Although the Portal does not specify whether the completer is teaching special education, it does provide proof of continued employment in a SC public school district. Excluding the three completers who finished requirements for initial certification in special education through a bachelor's or MAT degree program and whose teaching certificates were unverifiable at the writing of this report, we determined that 100% of the remaining 142 completers were still employed in one of the State's 85 school districts or a State-operated program (e.g., Department of Juvenile Justice or SC School for the Deaf and Blind). Twenty (13.8%) of the completers had relocated to a different SC school district than the one in which they were employed when they were enrolled in certification course work through CREATE. That 86.2% of the completers have remained employed in their respective sending districts is a positive sign that districts are "growing their own" special educators.

## SUMMARY

Project personnel have evaluated the success of Year 5 of CREATE as outstanding. Data collected and discussed in this report that support this conclusion follow:

- ▶ Available course scholarships: 585
- ▶ Awarded course scholarships: 484
- ▶ Participants enrolled: 198
- ▶ School districts represented: 65
- ▶ Participants completing course work: 145

The five-year total of 422 program completers is compelling, empirical evidence that CREATE is accomplishing its mission of reducing the number of non-certified special education teachers in South Carolina, while simultaneously growing a highly qualified special education teacher force.

Report prepared by: Joe Sutton, PhD  
Project Director

Report reviewed by: Shirley Bausmith, PhD  
FMU Center Director

Ashley Boggs, EdD  
ConvC Center Director

Judy Engelhard, EdD  
CCU Center Director

Janie Hodge, PhD  
CU Center Director

Kathleen Marshall, PhD  
USCC Center Director

Leonard McIntyre, EdD  
SCSU Center Director

Dava O'Connor, PhD  
Lander University

Holly Pae, EdD  
USCU Center Director

Michael Skinner, PhD  
CofC Center Director

Tracy West, PhD  
ColaC Center Director

Brad Witzel, PhD  
WU Center Director

Submitted to SCDE: January 15, 2009

**TABLES AND FIGURES**
**PROJECT CREATE–YEAR 5**

 Table 1. *School District Affiliation of Participants (n=198), Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

District	No.	District	No.
Abbeville 60	1	Hampton 02	1
Aiken 01	3	Horry 01	9
Allendale 01		Jasper 01	1
Anderson 01		Kershaw 01	4
Anderson 02		Lancaster 01	2
Anderson 03		Laurens 55	6
Anderson 04		Laurens 56	
Anderson 05	5	Lee 01	
Bamberg 01	2	Lexington 01	3
Bamberg 02		Lexington 02	1
Barnwell 19		Lexington 03	
Barnwell 29		Lexington 04	
Barnwell 45	1	Lexington 05	4
Beaufort 01	3	Marion 01	1
Berkeley 01	3	Marion 02	1
Calhoun 01	1	Marion 07	
Charleston 01	9	Marlboro 01	1
Cherokee 01	2	McCormick 01	1
Chester 01	2	Newberry 01	9
Chesterfield 01	3	Oconee 01	1
Clarendon 01	2	Orangeburg 03	
Clarendon 02	1	Orangeburg 04	1
Clarendon 03		Orangeburg 05	
Colleton 01	2	Pickens 01	4
Darlington 01	4	Richland 01	11
Dillon 01		Richland 02	6
Dillon 02	2	Saluda 01	3
Dillon 03	1	Spartanburg 01	2
Dorchester 02	1	Spartanburg 02	1
Dorchester 04	1	Spartanburg 03	
Edgefield 01	1	Spartanburg 04	1
Fairfield 01	2	Spartanburg 05	1
Florence 01	10	Spartanburg 06	2
Florence 02	1	Spartanburg 07	7
Florence 03	2	Sumter 02	2
Florence 04	1	Sumter 17	3
Florence 05		Union 01	4
Georgetown 01	1	Williamsburg 01	3
Greenville 01	15	York 01	2
Greenwood 50	6	York 02	1
Greenwood 51	2	York 03	2
Greenwood 52		York 04	
Hampton 01	1	SCSDB	5
		TOTAL	198

Figure 1. Gender of Participants (n=198), Project CREATE, 2007–2008

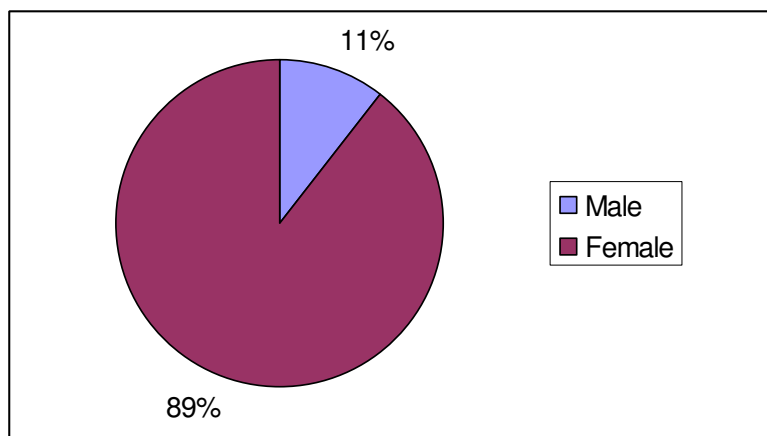


Figure 2. New or Returning Status of Participants (n=198), Project CREATE, 2007–2008

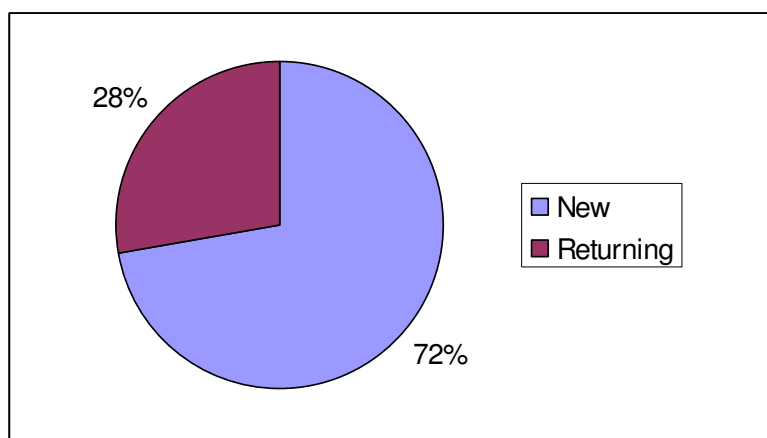
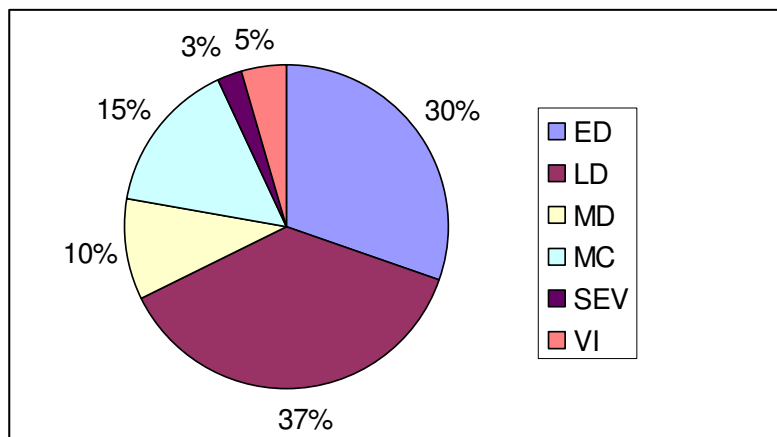


Figure 3. Certification Area of Pursuit for Participants (n=198), Project CREATE, 2007–2008



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



Figure 4. *Race of Participants (n=198), Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

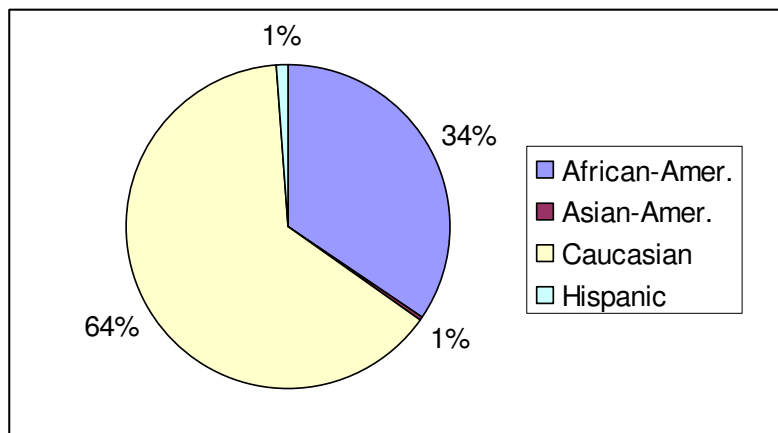
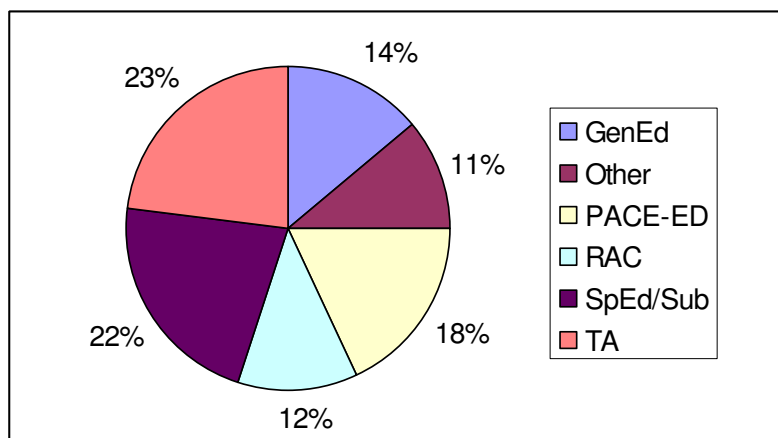


Figure 5. *Employment Status of Participants (n=198), Project CREATE, 2007–2008*



GenEd=General education teachers; Other=includes non-instructional staff; PACE-ED=Program of Alternative Certification for Educators–Emotional Disabilities; RAC=Restricted Alternative Certificate in special Education; SpEd/Sub=Special education teachers not of RAC or PACE-ED status or long-term substitutes; TA=Teacher assistants.

Figure 6. *Certification Program of Participants (n=198), Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

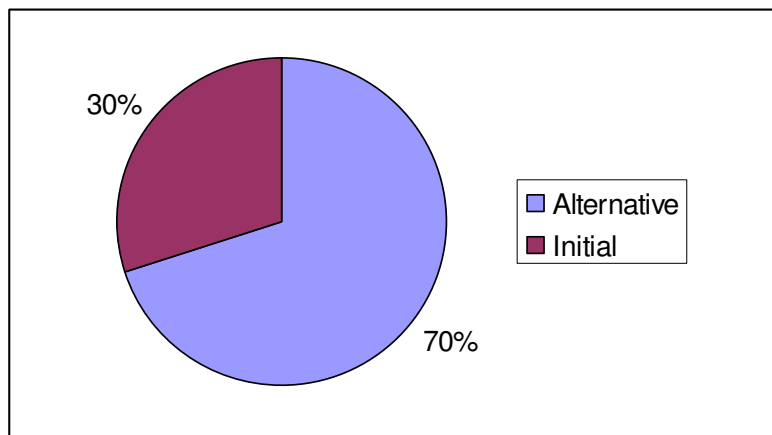


Table 2. *Certification Courses and Course Formats, Fall 2007 Semester, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

COLLEGE ►	CU	CCU	CofC	ColaC	ConVC	FMU	LU	SCSU	USCC	USCU	WU
▼ COURSE	CU	CCU	CofC	ColaC	ConVC	FMU	LU	SCSU	USCC	USCU	WU
Introduction to Exceptional Learners	R	R	O		R	R	R	R	O		
Characteristics: Emotional Disabilities	R								D		
Characteristics: Learning Disabilities	R	R					R		R		R
Characteristics: Mental Disabilities	R						R		R		
Methods/Procedures: Emotional Disabilities			R								
Methods/Procedures: Learning Disabilities			R								R
Methods/Procedures: Mental Disabilities			R								R
Behavior Management			R		R	O			D		R
Teaching Reading in General/Special Education					R	R			R	R	R
Assessment for Exceptional Learners	R				R	R	R	R	R		
Braille–Reading & Writing										O	
Principles of Orientation & Mobility								R			
Methods of Communication for the Blind								R			

CU=Clemson University; CCU=Coastal Carolina University; CofC=College of Charleston; ColaC=Columbia College; FMU=Francis Marion University; LU=Lander University; SCSU=South Carolina State University; USCC=USC Columbia; USCU=USC Upstate; WU=Winthrop University; D=Distance/ETV course; O=Online course; R=regular on-campus course.

Table 3. *Certification Courses and Course Formats, Spring 2008 Semester, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

COLLEGE ►	CU	CCU	CofC	ColaC	ConVC	FMU	LU	SCSU	USCC	USCU	WU
▼ COURSE	CU	CCU	CofC	ColaC	ConVC	FMU	LU	SCSU	USCC	USCU	WU
Introduction to Exceptional Learners	R			R	R	R	R		O		
Characteristics: Emotional Disabilities			O					D			R
Characteristics: Learning Disabilities			R	R						R	
Characteristics: Mental Disabilities			O	R							R
Methods/Procedures: Emotional Disabilities	R				R						R
Methods/Procedures: Learning Disabilities	R	R			R	R			R		R
Methods/Procedures: Mental Disabilities	R				R				R		
Methods/Procedures: Severe Disabilities									R		
Behavior Management	R	R				O					R
Teaching Reading in General/Special Education		R	R		R	R				R	R
Language/Communication for Excep. Learners											
Assessment for Exceptional Learners			R		R	R					
Orientation & Mobility for the Class. Teacher								O			
Educational Procedures for Visually Impaired										O	
Anatomy, Physiology, Function of the Eye								R			

Table 4. *Certification Courses and Course Formats, Summer 2008 Semester, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

COLLEGE ►	CU	CCU	CofC	ColaC	ConVC	FMU	LU	SCSU	USCC	USCU	WU
▼ COURSE	CU	CCU	CofC	ColaC	ConVC	FMU	LU	SCSU	USCC	USCU	WU
Introduction to Exceptional Learners	O	R			R		O		O		
Characteristics: Emotional Disabilities		R			R		O				
Characteristics: Learning Disabilities	O				R	R	O				
Characteristics: Mental Disabilities							O				
Methods/Procedures: Emotional Disabilities								D			
Methods/Procedures: Learning Disabilities					R					O	
Methods/Procedures: Mental Disabilities						O					
Methods/Procedures: Severe Disabilities			O								
Behavior Management			R	O		O	O		O		
Teaching Reading in General/Special Education					R						
Assessment for Exceptional Learners						R	O		D		
Nature of the Visually Impaired								O		R	
Orientation/Mobility for Classroom Teacher										R	
Methods for Teaching Speech Reading					R						
Teaching Language to Ss. w/ Hearing Impairment					R						

CU=Clemson University; CCU=Coastal Carolina University; CofC=College of Charleston; ColaC=Columbia College; FMU=Francis Marion University; LU=Lander University; SCSU=South Carolina State University; USCC=USC Columbia; USCU=USC Upstate; WU=Winthrop University; D=Distance/ETV course; O=Online course; R=regular on-campus course.

Table 5. *Mean Ratings of Course Evaluation Items Reflecting Adequacy of Course Content, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

Certification Program ►		Alternative/Add-on					Initial		
Evaluation Item ▼	Course ►	As n=13	BM n=40	Char n=37	EL n=6	Meth n=50	Bach n=55	MAT n=30	Total n=231
Provided more knowledge/skills about instruction in special education.		2.92	3.30	3.54	3.67	3.50	3.44	3.40	3.42
Made more relevant applications to the real world of the classroom.		3.15	3.35	3.49	3.50	3.48	3.49	3.53	3.45
Broadened my perspective more in how to teach learners with disabilities.		2.92	3.33	3.54	3.67	3.48	3.49	3.40	3.43
Significantly contributed to my overall preparation in special education.		3.15	3.30	3.43	3.67	3.48	3.49	3.43	3.42
Total Items:		3.04	3.32	3.50	3.63	3.49	3.48	3.44	3.43

As=Assessment for Exceptional Learners; BM=Behavior Management; Char=Characteristics of Emotional/Learning/Mental Disabilities; EL=Introduction to Exceptional Learners; Meth=Methods for Emotional/Learning/Mental Disabilities, and Teaching Reading; Bach=Bachelor's program; MAT=Master of Arts in Teaching program. Means abased on a 4-point rating.

Table 6. *Final Grades for Participants Enrolled in Add-on/Alternative Certification Courses, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

Certification Courses	Final Grades					
	A	B	C	D/F	Other	Total
Introduction to Exceptional Learners	7	2			1	10
Characteristics: Emotional Disabilities	20	8	1			29
Characteristics: Learning Disabilities	5	1				6
Characteristics: Mental Disabilities	2	1	2	2		7
Methods: Emotional Disabilities	16					16
Methods: Learning Disabilities	20	13			2	35
Methods: Mental Disabilities	9	2	1	1		13
Methods: Severe Disabilities	2	1				3
Teaching Reading	4					4
Behavior Management	35	21	4		1	61
Assessment for Exceptional Learners	21	6		1	1	29
Braille–Reading & Writing	5	1				6
Orientation & Mobility for Class. Teacher	7					7
Nature of Visual Impairments	5					5
Educational Procedures for Visually Imp.	6				1	7
Total	164	56	8	4	6	238
Percent	68.9	23.5	3.4	1.7	2.5	100

Table 7. *Final Grades for Participants Enrolled in Initial Certification Courses, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

Program Courses	Final Grades					
	A	B	C	D/F	Other	Total
Bachelor's Degree Program–BA/BS	98	41	13	2	6	156
Master's Degree Program–MAT	57	12	4	9	4	86
Total	155	53	17	11	10	246
Percent	63.0	21.5	6.9	4.5	4.1	100

Table 8. *Progress of Participants (n=36) Enrolled in PACE Certification Programs, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

No. Courses Needed ▼	No. Courses Completed					
	1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses	
	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.
1 Course	100%	17				
2 Courses	50%	3	100%	2		
3 Courses	33%	4	67%	8	100%	2
Total		24		10		2

Table 9. *Progress of Participants (n=102) Enrolled in Add-on Certification Programs, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

No. Courses in Program ▼	No. Courses Completed									
	1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses		4 Courses		5 Courses	
	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.
1 Course	100%	21								
2 Courses	50%	8	100%	13						
3 Courses	33%	7	67%	5	100%	5				
4 Courses	25%	3	50%	4	75%	5	100%	4		
5 Courses	20%	4	40%	6	60%	7			100%	1
6 Courses	17%	2			50%	1	67%	1		
7 Courses					43%	1				
8 Courses	13%	1	25%	2						
9 Courses			22%	1						
Total		46		31		19		5		1

Table 10. *Progress of Participants (n=60) Enrolled in Initial BA/BS or MAT Certification Programs, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

No. Courses in Program ▼	No. Courses Completed									
	1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses		4 Courses		5 Courses	
	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.
6 Courses							67%	1		
9 Courses									56%	1
10 Courses							40%	2	50%	1
11 Courses			18%	1						
13 Courses										
14 Courses	7%	1	14%	1			29%	1	36%	1
15 Courses			13%	1					33%	1
17 Courses	6%	5	12%	13			23%	1	29%	1
18 Courses			11%	1						
19 Courses									26%	1
20 Courses	5%	1	10%	1						
21 Courses	5%	2	9%	1						
22 Courses			9%	1						
Total		9		20				5		6

Table 11. *Progress of Participants (n=60) Enrolled in Initial BA/BS or MAT Certification Programs, Project CREATE, 2007–2008 (cont.)*

No. Courses in Program ▼	No. Courses Completed*									
	6 Courses		7 Courses		8 Courses		9 Courses		10 Courses	
	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.	Progress	No.
6 Courses	100%	1								
9 Courses			78%	1						
10 Courses	60%	1	70%	1	80%	1			100%	1
12 Courses									83%	1
13 Courses									77%	1
14 Courses			50%	1						
17 Courses	35%	2	41%	1			53%	1	59%	1
18 Courses	33%	1	39%	1						
21 Courses			33%	1			43%	1		
Total		5		6		1		2		4

\*Data unavailable on 2 of 60 initial BA/BS candidates.

Table 12. Mean Ratings from Course Evaluations, Project CREATE, 2007–2008

Course Evaluation Items	Mean	Rating
<i>Teaching Skills of Instructor</i>	3.46	A
Communicated subject matter clearly	3.47	A
Caused me to think critically	3.55	SA
Showed enthusiasm and made classes interesting and engaging	3.52	SA
Used examples, illustrations, and/or demonstrations to explain ideas	3.54	SA
Embellished/expanded on textbook material, rather than just repeated it	3.50	A
Used allocated class time for critical, more important material	3.43	A
Presented information in an organized, logical, and sequential manner	3.49	A
Integrated media, guest speakers, and/or other resources with lecture	3.25	A
Inspired, motivated, and stimulated a desire to want to learn more	3.42	A
<i>Interaction Skills of Instructor</i>	3.55	SA
Showed genuine interest in students' success	3.60	SA
Was available during office hours (or by phone/e-mail) for consultation	3.56	SA
Showed respect towards the opinions of students	3.58	SA
Encouraged student participation in class	3.60	SA
Responded to student questions in a clear, supportive manner	3.54	SA
<i>Course Requirements</i>	3.44	A
Readings (textbook, etc.) that improved my understanding of the subject	3.42	A
Assignments that were well developed and related to course content	3.49	A
Assignments that were creative, hands-on (e.g., case studies, research)	3.47	A
Assignments that were paced and timed appropriately for the semester	3.37	A
<i>Evaluation of Learning</i>	3.48	A
Provided meaningful, constructive feedback on tests and other work	3.45	A
Graded tests/projects according to criteria published in the syllabus	3.51	SA
Prepared me for tests (e.g., gave overviews of test content/format)	3.47	A
Assessed knowledge and conceptual understanding on tests/projects	3.46	A
Returned graded tests and projects on, or by, the promised date	3.51	SA
<i>Course Syllabus</i>	3.48	A
Stated goals/objectives and included a schedule of course content	3.52	SA
Gave instructions for successful completion of course assignments	3.47	A
Provided clear criteria for grading projects and assignments	3.45	A
<i>Overall Mean</i>	3.49	A

Data reflect 288 course evaluations submitted voluntarily out of 484 course scholarships awarded. Mean ratings are based on a 4-point Likert rating. SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree.

Table 13. *Course Scholarships Available and Awarded per CREATE Center, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

CREATE Center	Scholarships Available		Scholarships Awarded	
	Type	Number	Number	Percent
Clemson University	O,R	21	11	52.3
Coastal Carolina University	R	8	6	80.0
College of Charleston	O,R	30	23	76.7
Columbia College	O,R	34	19	55.9
Converse College	R	27	25	92.6
Francis Marion University	O,R	114	97	85.1
Lander University	O,R	130	130	100
SC State University	D,R	54	22	40.7
USC Columbia	D,O,R	88	63	71.6
USC Upstate	O,R	86	86	100
Winthrop University	R	3	2	67.0
Total		595	484	81.3

D=distance/ETV course; O=online course; R=regular campus course.

Figure 7. *Course Scholarships Awarded per Semester, Project CREATE, 2007-2008*

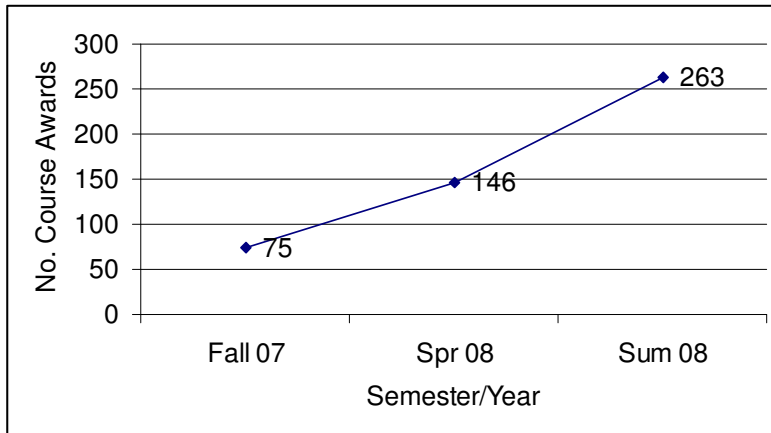




Table 14. *Course Scholarships Awarded per School District (n=484), Project CREATE, 2007-2008*

District	No.	District	No.
Abbeville 60	12	Hampton 02	7
Aiken 01	10	Horry 01	10
Allendale 01		Jasper 01	2
Anderson 01		Kershaw 01	18
Anderson 02		Lancaster 01	5
Anderson 03		Laurens 55	23
Anderson 04		Laurens 56	
Anderson 05	6	Lee 01	
Bamberg 01	3	Lexington 01	8
Bamberg 02		Lexington 02	2
Barnwell 19		Lexington 03	
Barnwell 29		Lexington 04	
Barnwell 45	3	Lexington 05	5
Beaufort 01	6	Marion 01	1
Berkeley 01	7	Marion 02	3
Calhoun 01	1	Marion 07	
Charleston 01	15	Marlboro 01	1
Cherokee 01	5	McCormick 01	3
Chester 01	5	Newberry 01	23
Chesterfield 01	4	Oconee 01	2
Clarendon 01	4	Orangeburg 03	
Clarendon 02	4	Orangeburg 04	1
Clarendon 03		Orangeburg 05	
Colleton 01	3	Pickens 01	7
Darlington 01	8	Richland 01	13
Dillon 01		Richland 02	10
Dillon 02	3	Saluda 01	21
Dillon 03	2	Spartanburg 01	16
Dorchester 02	2	Spartanburg 02	1
Dorchester 04	2	Spartanburg 03	
Edgefield 01	3	Spartanburg 04	1
Fairfield 01	3	Spartanburg 05	1
Florence 01	27	Spartanburg 06	6
Florence 02	2	Spartanburg 07	16
Florence 03	4	Sumter 02	2
Florence 04	2	Sumter 17	9
Florence 05		Union 01	13
Georgetown 01	3	Williamsburg 01	4
Greenville 01	41	York 01	4
Greenwood 50	33	York 02	1
Greenwood 51	3	York 03	4
Greenwood 52		York 04	
Hampton 01	2	SCSDB	13
		TOTAL	484

Table 15. *School District Affiliation of Program Completers (n=145), Project CREATE, 2007-2008*

District	No.	District	No.
Abbeville 60		Horry 01	9
Aiken 01	1	Jasper 01	2
Allendale 01		Kershaw 01	2
Anderson 01		Lancaster 01	2
Anderson 02	1	Laurens 55	1
Anderson 03		Laurens 56	
Anderson 04	1	Lee 01	
Anderson 05	2	Lexington 01	3
Bamberg 01	1	Lexington 02	1
Bamberg 02		Lexington 03	
Barnwell 19	1	Lexington 04	1
Barnwell 29		Lexington 05	4
Barnwell 45		Marion 01	2
Beaufort 01	1	Marion 02	1
Berkeley 01	2	Marion 07	
Calhoun 01	2	Marlboro 01	2
Charleston 01	8	McCormick 01	
Cherokee 01	1	Newberry 01	4
Chester 01	1	Oconee 01	2
Chesterfield 01	1	Orangeburg 03	
Clarendon 01		Orangeburg 04	1
Clarendon 02	3	Orangeburg 05	
Clarendon 03		Pickens 01	2
Colleton 01	1	Richland 01	8
Darlington 01	4	Richland 02	5
Dillon 01		Saluda 01	
Dillon 02		Spartanburg 01	1
Dillon 03	1	Spartanburg 02	
Dorchester 02	2	Spartanburg 03	
Dorchester 04		Spartanburg 04	1
Edgefield 01		Spartanburg 05	3
Fairfield 01	2	Spartanburg 06	
Florence 01	6	Spartanburg 07	4
Florence 02		Sumter 02	1
Florence 03		Sumter 17	2
Florence 04		Union 01	2
Florence 05		Williamsburg 01	2
Georgetown 01	1	York 01	
Greenville 01	17	York 02	1
Greenwood 50	4	York 03	3
Greenwood 51	2	York 04	
Greenwood 52		SCSDB	3
Hampton 01	1	DJJ	1
Hampton 02	1	TOTAL	144*

\*District of 1 completer unknown.

Figure 8. Gender of Program Completers (n=145), Project CREATE, 2007–2008

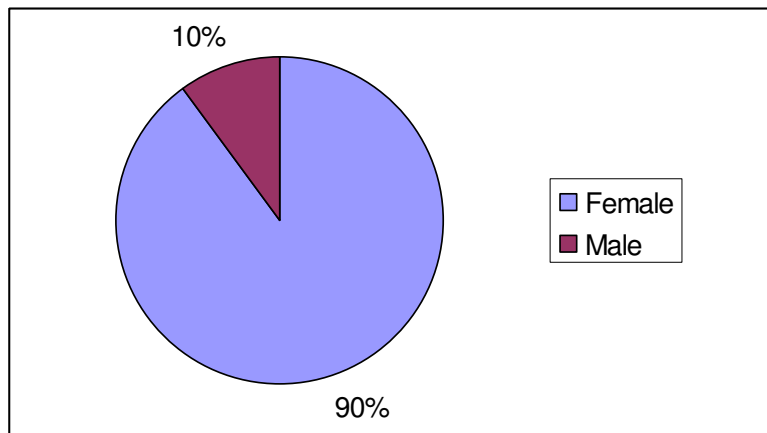


Figure 9. Race of Program Completers (n=145), Project CREATE, 2007–2008

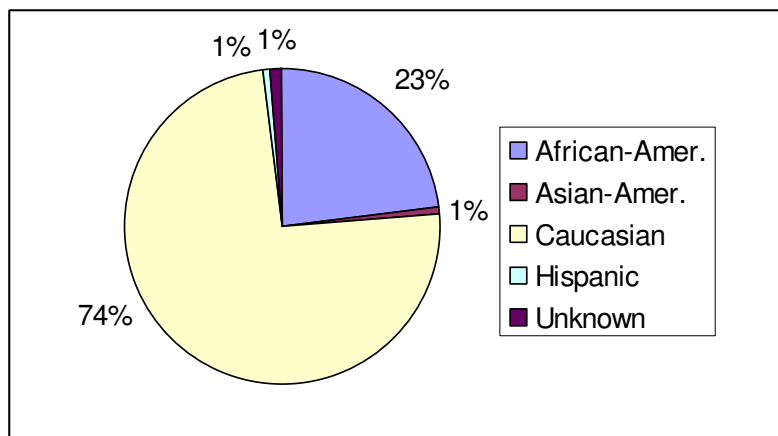
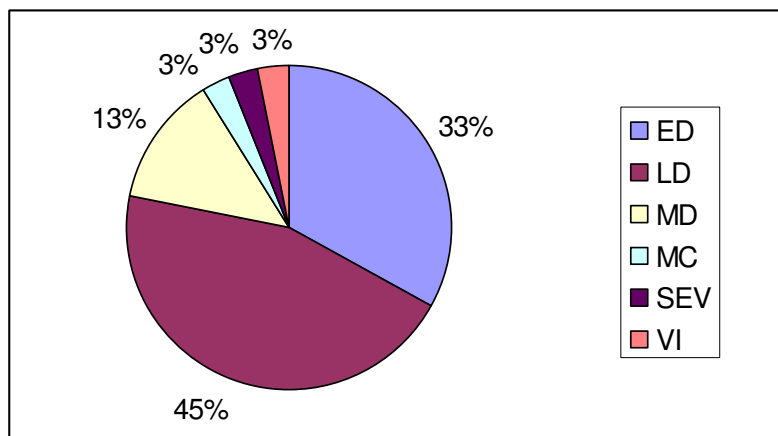
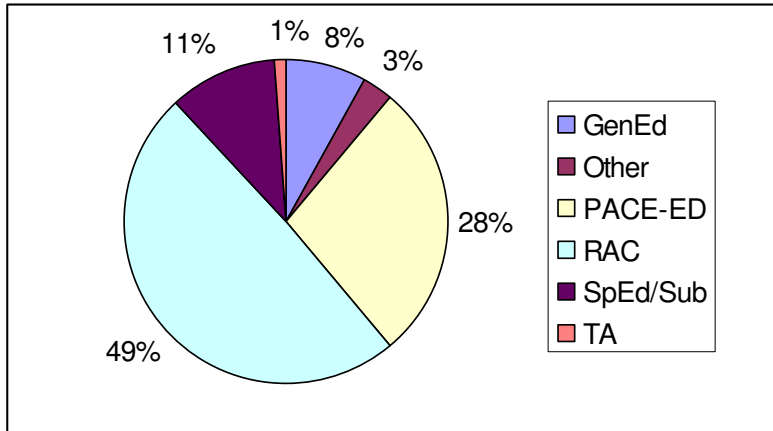


Figure 10. Certification Area of Program Completers (n=145), Project CREATE, 2007–2008



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

Figure 11. *Employment Status of Program Completers (n=145), Project CREATE, 2007–2008*



GenEd=General education teachers; Other=includes non-instructional staff; PACE-ED=Program of Alternative Certification for Educators–Emotional Disabilities; RAC=Restricted Alternative Certificate in special Education; SpEd/Sub=Special education teachers not of RAC or PACE-ED status or long-term substitutes; TA=Teacher assistants.

Figure 12. *CREATE-sponsored Courses Taken by Program Completers (n=145), Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

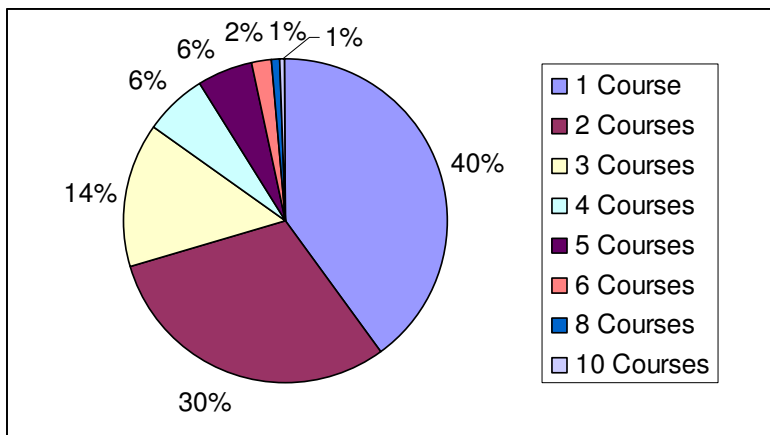
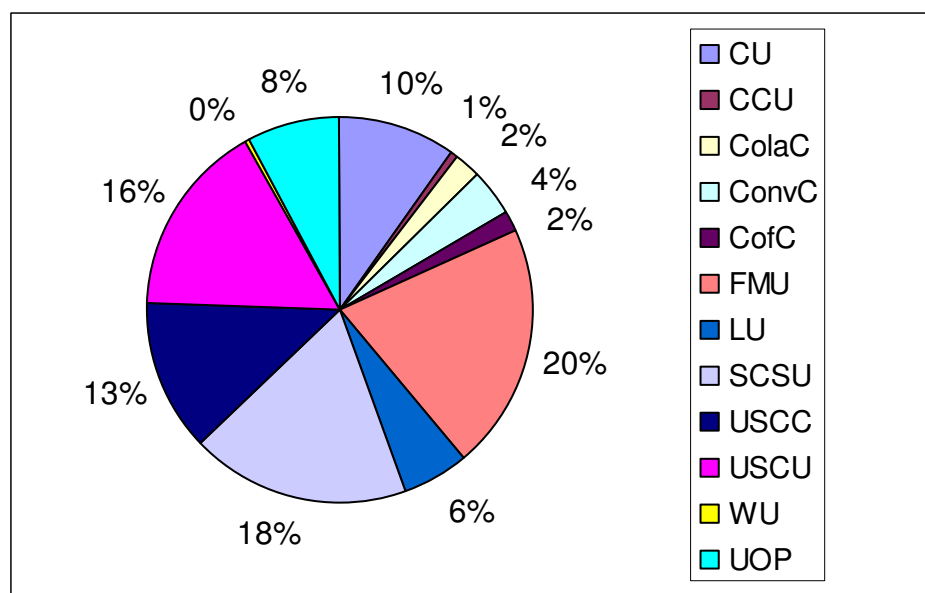


Figure 13. *Course Contribution (Percentage) of CREATE Colleges toward Completers' (n=145) Certification Programs, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*



CU=Clemson University; CCU=Coastal Carolina University; CofC=College of Charleston; ColaC=Columbia College; FMU=Francis Marion University; LU=Lander University; SCSU=South Carolina State University; USCC=USC Columbia; USCUpstate=USC Upstate; WU=Winthrop University; UOP=University of Phoenix.

Table 16. *Course Contribution (Frequency) of CREATE Colleges toward Completers' (n=145) Certification Programs, Project CREATE, 2007–2008*

CREATE College	Number
Clemson University	32
Coastal Carolina University	2
College of Charleston	7
Columbia College	13
Converse College	5
Francis Marion University	66
Lander University	18
SC State University	58
USC Columbia	41
USC Upstate	53
Winthrop University	1
University of Phoenix	25
TOTAL	321

Note. Some of the 145 completers identified in Tables 15 and 16 were not enrolled in Year 5, but rather in prior years of the project. Additionally, the total of number of course scholarships (i.e., n=321) includes courses completed in prior years by these completers. See pp. 11-12 in this report for further explanation.

*Project personnel certify that a total of 30 pages  
comprise the final report for Year 5.*