

Indexing and Describing AR Programs
For the Preparation of Special Educators

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Background

Traditional university degree programs are unable to meet the growing demand for teachers, especially high-demand special educators.

Therefore, alternative routes to certification emerged and grew.

However, we know little about the nature and extent of programs that offer alternative routes to certification (Rosenberg & Sindelar, 2001).

Purpose of Study

To index and describe the breadth and depth of alternative routes to certification (AR) programs currently being offered for the preparation of special education teachers in all 50 states.

Method

- Survey Development
 - Factor I: Program Development
 - Factor II: Program Length and Intensity
 - Factor III: Program Characteristics
 - Factor IV: Participant Characteristics
 - Factor V: Program Capacity

Method

- Data Collection Procedures
- Development of Program Lists (n=206)
- Final Sample (n=84)
- Reasons for Non-Responses
 - 13 no program (or redundancy)
 - 8 refused
 - 52 Contact attempts and no response
 - 46 No Contact Established

Program Development

Current Funding Sources of Programs (n=81)	
	% Of Programs
Institution of Higher Education (IHE)	46.9
Local Education Agency (LEA)	39.5
State Education Agency (SEA)	61.7
Tuition	12.4
Not for profit	37.0
Federal grant	32.1
	7.4

Percent of Programs In the Survey By State	
State	Percent of Programs Surveyed
Texas	17.9
California	16.7
Georgia	9.5
Louisiana	9.5
Kentucky	8.3

Federal Funding Assistance in Program Start-up (n=73)	
	% Of Programs
Yes	30.1
No	69.9

Does Funding Target a Particular Group? (Racial, Ethnic, Professional, Other) (n=83)	
	% Of Programs
Yes	31.3
No	68.7

Groups Targeted (n=26)	
	% Of Programs
Native American	42.3
African-American	50.0
Asian/Pacific Islands	42.3
Hispanic	50.0
Recent bachelor's degree	46.2
Retired	65.4
Military service	34.6
General educators	42.3
Mid-career changers	46.2
Paraeducators	30.8

Groups Targeted

- ❖ Of ethnic groups targeted, African-Americans and Hispanics were checked by 50% of respondents, closely followed by Native Americans and Asian/Pacific Islanders.
- ❖ Of careers, retired persons were checked by 65.4% of respondents, nearly two-thirds; general educators, career changers, military service personnel and paraeducators were checked by approximately one-third of respondents.

Agency (or Agencies) Primarily Responsible
For Design of Program
(n=82)

	% Of Programs
Institution of Higher Education (IHE)	70.7
Local Education Agency (LEA)	47.6
State Education Agency (SEA)	75.6
Community College	6.1
For Profit Organization	1.2

Agency (or Agencies) Primarily Responsible
for Design of Program

- ❖ The SEA was mentioned as the primary program designer by just over three-quarters of respondents.
- ❖ The IHE was mentioned as the primary program designer by over two-thirds of respondents.
- ❖ The LEA was mentioned as the primary program designer by almost half of all respondents.

Agency that Recommends License Be
Issued
(n= 83)

	% Of Programs
Institution of Higher Education	59.0
Local Education Agency	16.9
State Education Agency	16.9
Community college	2.4
Not for profit organization	2.4
Other	1.2
Don't Know	2.4

Were Nationally Recognized Professional
Teaching Standards Used To Develop Program?
(n=81)

% Of Programs	
Yes	88.9
No	11.1

Professional Teaching Standards Used
(n=69)

	% Of Programs
Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)	84.1
Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)	42.0
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards	40.6
Other	42.0

Professional Teaching Standards Used

- ❖ 84.1% of respondents said that the CEC professional standards were used.
- ❖ INTASC and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards were mentioned by a little under one-third (3 out of 10) of respondents as the source of professional standards.
- ❖ In the Other category, 20 of 29 of the respondents mentioned a state agency as the one establishing professional standards.

CEC/NCATE Approved?
(n=70)

	% Of Programs
Yes	51.4
No	48.6

Program Length and Density

How long are participants in the program,
in months, before they receive the FULL
professional teaching license for which
they are being prepared?
(n=77)

Months	% Of Programs
12	11.7
13-18	19.5
19-24	39.0
25-36	20.8
37+	9.1

Does this program require full-time teaching
in a school?
(n=84)

	% Of Programs
Yes	83.3
No	16.7

Does Program Include University Credits?
(n=74)

	% Of Programs
Yes, Full-Time (9 Or More Credits Per Semester)	40.5
Yes, Part-time (9 Or Less Credits Per Semester)	37.8
No	16.2
Both (Full-Time and Part-Time)	12.2

Program Characteristics

What are the Requirements For Admission?
(n=83)

	% Of Programs
Standardized Test	75.0
GPA (Minimum)	86.9
Bachelor's Degree	85.7
Letters of Recommendation	76.2
Interview	65.5
Other	38.1

How Selective Believe Program to Be?
(n=84)

	% Of Programs
Very selective	28.6
Selective	64.3
Not selective	7.1

Percent of Applicants Program Accepts
(n=64)

Accepted	% Of Programs
0-50%	1.6
51-69%	7.8
70-79%	17.2
80-89%	23.4
90-100%	34.4

Is a Bachelor's Degree Required to Enter Program?
(n=83)

	% Of Programs
Yes	84.3
No	15.7

Degree Granted after Completing Program?
(n=84)

	% Of Programs
Yes	33.3
No	46.4
Optional	20.2

Type of Degree Granted
(n=26)

	% Of Programs
Undergraduate	19.2
Graduate	53.8
Both	26.9

School Levels of License (n=78)	
	% Of Programs
Early Childhood Special Education	1.3
Elementary Special Education	3.9
Secondary Special Education	2.6
Elementary/Secondary Special Education	38.5
Early Childhood Through Secondary Special Education	53.9

Modes of Instructional Delivery Used in the Program (n=83)	
	% Of Programs
University/College-Based Coursework	89.2
District-Based Staff Development	55.4
Classroom-Based Supervised Fieldwork	95.2
Distance Learning	67.5
Other	22.9

Location Instruction Is Primarily Delivered At (n=81)	
	% Of Programs
Institution of Higher Education	44.4
Local Education Agency (School District)	12.4
Combination of Both	30.9
Other	17.3

Length of Preparation Program Participants Receive Prior to Assuming Classroom Responsibilities While Enrolled in Program. (n=81)			
Months	% Of Programs	Months	% Of Programs
0-3	48.2	16-18	1.2
4-6	13.6	19-21	2.5
7-9	3.7	22-24	7.4
10-12	7.4	>25	2.4
13-15	3.7	Other	6.2

Length of Preparation Program Participants Receive Prior To Assuming Classroom Responsibilities While Enrolled In the Program.

- ❖ 12.4%, nearly one in five teachers received 0 months of training before beginning teaching responsibilities.
- ❖ 43.2%, nearly one half, received 3 months or less of training before assuming teaching responsibilities.
- ❖ 59.3%, nearly two thirds, received 9 months or less of training before assuming teaching responsibilities.
- ❖ 66.7%, needed 12 months or less of training before assuming teaching responsibilities.
- ❖ 5 Other respondents said requirements vary.

Types of Financial Support Program Offers (n=79)	
	% Of Programs
Stipend	29.1
Salary	41.8
Tuition assistance	53.2
None	12.7
Undifferentiated Financial Assistance	29.1

Is there a mentorship component to the program?
(n=84)

	% Of Programs
Yes	89.3
No	10.7

Mentorship component includes...
(n=84)

	% Of Programs
University Supervision	58.3
Local School District Supervision	100.0
Various Regional Approaches	7.1

Estimated Number of Individuals who Successfully Complete the Program Each Year
(n=76)

Number of Persons	% Of Programs
0 – 5	5.3
6 – 10	7.9
11 – 20	30.3
21 – 30	18.4
31 +	38.2

Completion Rate for Program This Past Year
(n=78)

	% Of Programs
Less than 75%	10.3
76 - 89%	19.2
90 - 100%	56.4
This is First Year of Program	14.1

Profile of Participants

Percentage of Students Who Are White (Non-Hispanic)?
(n=65)

% White	% Of Programs
0- 69	36.9
70- 79	12.3
80- 89	21.5
90-100	29.2

Percentage of Students Who Are African-American?
(n=67)

% African-American	% Of Programs
0	14.9
1- 5	25.4
6-10	22.4
11-15	4.5
16-20	6.0
21-25	4.5
>25	22.4

What percentage of students is Hispanic?
(n=64)

% Hispanic	% Of Programs
0	34.4
1- 5	26.6
6-10	15.6
11-15	4.7
16-20	4.7
>20	14.1

Percentage of Students Who Are Retired Military Service
(n=58)

% Retired military	% Of Programs
0	53.5
1	3.5
2	12.1
3	1.7
5	10.3
10	13.8
15	1.7
20	1.7
40	1.7

What percentage of students are Retired?
(n=67)

% Retired	% Of Programs
0	62.7
1	4.5
2	1.5
3	1.5
5	11.9
10	10.5
13	1.5
15	6.0

Percentage of Students Who Are Mid-Career Changers
(n=64)

% Mid-Career Changers	% Of Programs
0	12.5
1-10	9.4
11-20	15.6
21-30	12.5
31-40	4.7
>40	45.3

Program Capacity

Is This Program Below, At, Or Above Enrollment Capacity?
(n=81)

	% Of Programs
Below enrollment capacity	39.5
At enrollment capacity	44.4
Above enrollment capacity	16.1

If Not at Full Capacity, What is Primary Reason?
(n=32)

	% Of Programs
Lack of Interest in Program	6.3
Lack of Knowledge	
Lack of Awareness of Program	12.5
Insufficient Funding	15.6
Program Entry Requirements	25.0
Location of Program	15.6
Other	18.8

Relationships Among Variables of Interest

Classroom Teaching and Program Completion Rate

	≤ 75% 100%	76-89%	90-100%
FastTrack			
0-3 Months (n=24)	8.3 %	20.8 %	70.8 %
4-6 Months (n=9)	0	22.2	77.8
7-9 Months (n=3)	0	0	100.0
10-12 Months (n=6)	0	66.6	33.3
> 12 Months (n=12)	8.3		16.7

- Programs with a length of preparation of 0 to 3 months had the following completion rates in past year:
 - 8.4% of programs had a graduation rate of less than 75%.
 - 20.8% of programs had a graduation rate of 76-89%.
 - 70.8% of programs had a graduation rate of 90-100%.

Relationship Between Months Prior to Classroom Teaching and Program Capacity

	Below	At	Above
FastTrack			
0-3 Months (n=29)	31.0	44.8	24.1
4-12 Months (n=19)	57.9	26.3	15.8
>12 Months (n=18)	41.7	31.6	8.3

For Programs Requiring 0 to 3 Months of Preparation:

- 31.0% were below capacity
- 44.8% were at capacity
- 24.1% were above capacity

