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INTRODUCTION

The Special Education Concentration Program (SPED) undergraduate certification program is a 39-credit academic program with an additional 2 courses that are general University requirements focused on the study of evidence-based teaching practices, supporting students with learning disabilities and their families, and learning to become an effective and impactful educator through an integration of theory and practice. This undergraduate program is aimed at those who are passionate about supporting the needs of diverse learners.

This handbook describes program requirements and other information to assist you during your time in the program. If you have additional questions about the program, contact Dr. Michelle Hosp, Advisor for undergraduates in Special Education, at michellehosp@umass.edu. For questions about licensure you can contact Kimberly Drake, Licensure Officer & Chief Undergraduate Advisor at slee@educ.umass.edu. Information is also available on the Special Education Concentration Website.

ACCREDITATION

The Special Education Concentration Program was developed in alignment with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Special Education licensure requirements, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) standards which guide the licensing component of the special education teacher training program.

ADVISING

We want to make your experience in the Special Education program as useful and engaging as possible. Our students come from different educational and professional backgrounds and have different reasons for participating in the Special Education program. If you have questions about the program or want to brainstorm how your learning experience can best fit your learning goals, you can seek advising from Kimberly Drake (slee@educ.umass.edu, or at (413) 545-2701) to set up a meeting. Your instructors may also be useful resources.
ADMISSIONS

There are four courses required prior to admission to the Special Education Concentration Program. You can take up to four prerequisite Special Education classes prior to formally applying to the program. Materials required for consideration include:

- Completion of the prerequisites: MATH 113, MATH 114, HUMDEV 270, and EDUC 325
- Completed online application
- Personal statement (based on the prompt in online application)
- Transcripts from undergraduate institutions attended
- At least one letter of recommendation
- Communication and Literacy Skills MTEL Score Reports
- Minimum 3.0 GPA

Submit all your materials to the online application form.

NetID

Your NetID and password allow you to access many resources, including SPIRE (the campus student information system), research in a variety of disciplines, and the library. It is sometimes also referred to as your SPIRE ID.

UMASS EMAIL (UMAIL)

You will also receive an UMass email address (UMail), which will be your “official” email contact for the University. You can access your email through the UMail on the Web, and can also set it to forward to a different address that you use by using the UMail Post Office.

SPIRE

SPIRE is the student information system used at UMass Amherst. SPIRE is used to enroll in courses, and is also where you check your grades. You can also request unofficial transcripts through SPIRE, as well as updated to-do’s each semester.
LIBRARY

Your NetID gives you access to the Libraries at UMass Amherst, and more specifically to online databases you can use to find journal articles about topics in which you are interested.

WRITING CENTER CONSULTING

Each of your courses will include writing components, from reflective papers to lesson and curriculum plans. If you need help with your writing, The UMass Amherst Writing Center offers consulting, and appointments can be carried out online so you can take advantage of their services even if you are at a distance!

DISABILITY SERVICES

Disability Services provides services for students who require accommodations due to a disability. There are three main areas these services cover: (1) collecting diagnostic documentation in order to identify individuals with qualifying disabilities, (2) determining eligibility for reasonable accommodations and modifications to campus programs and services, (3) notifying faculty/instructors/program coordinators of a student’s accommodation eligibility while participating in their course/program.

In order to be eligible for accommodations, you must first register with Disability Services. The registration process involves completing an intake form and submitting supporting diagnostic documentation. Intake forms are available on the Disability Services website.
SELF-CARE RESOURCES

Throughout this program, as well as the duration of your undergraduate experience, it is crucial that you take care of yourself. See the following resources if you’re experiencing personal problems or situational crises:

- **Center for Counseling and Psychological Health**, 127 Hills North
  [https://www.umass.edu/counseling/](https://www.umass.edu/counseling/)
  - Phone: (413) 545-2337, *After hours*: (413) 577-5000* Ask for CCPH clinician on-call

- **Office of Religious and Spiritual Life**, 416 Student Union
  [https://www.umass.edu/orsl/](https://www.umass.edu/orsl/)
  - Phone: (413) 545-9642
  - Email: orsl@umass.edu

- **Dean of Students Office**, 227 Whitmore –
  [https://www.umass.edu/dean_students/](https://www.umass.edu/dean_students/)
  - Phone: (413) 545-2684

- **Center for Women & Community**, 180 Infirmary Way
  [https://www.umass.edu/cwc/wocln](https://www.umass.edu/cwc/wocln)
  - Phone: (413) 545-0883, 24 Hour Hotline: (413) 545-0800

- **The Stonewall Center, an LGBTQIA+ Resource**, Crampton Hall, 265 Sunset Ave. (in Southwest) [https://www.umass.edu/stonewall/](https://www.umass.edu/stonewall/)
  - Phone: (413) 545-4824

- **Graduate Employee Organization** *(your union)*, 201 Student Union-
  - Know your rights handbook: [http://www.geouaw.org/?page_id=2886](http://www.geouaw.org/?page_id=2886)
  - Phone: (413) 545-0705

**Other helpful resources may include:**

- **Center for Multicultural Advancement & Student Success (CMASS)** 101 Wilder Hall [https://www.umass.edu/cmass/](https://www.umass.edu/cmass/)
  - Phone: (413) 545-2517

- **Campus Recreation**, 112 Recreation Center & 161 Commonwealth Avenue [http://www.umass.edu/campusrec/](http://www.umass.edu/campusrec/)
  - Phone: (413) 545-0022

- **Student Life Organizations Directory**, [https://umassamherst.collegiatelink.net/Organizations](https://umassamherst.collegiatelink.net/Organizations)
ENROLLING IN COURSES

Returning Students - Enrolling in Courses through SPIRE
As of Fall 2015, students in the Special Education program use SPIRE (the student information system for the University of Massachusetts Amherst) to enroll in classes.

1. **Enroll in classes.** Login to your SPIRE account, Go to Main Menu > Enrollment > Add Classes/Shopping Cart.

New Students – Enrolling in Courses through SPIRE
For new students or students who haven’t been enrolled in a class recently, you will need to create a student record (or reactivate it) prior to being able to enroll in classes

1. **Create a student record.** Go to SPIRE. From the menu options on the right hand side, under the heading Apply/References click on Non-Degree Enrollment Application. Fill out the form there. You will receive an email with your NetID and password (this may take up several days.)

   2. Once you have received your NetID and password, follow the instructions for creating an enrollment appointment listed above under “Returning Students.”

Dropping a Class Before the End of Add/Drop
Before the Add/Drop Deadline for the term, you can drop classes using SPIRE. The course will not appear on your transcript and all the course fees will be removed from your account.

Dropping a Class After Add/Drop
Between the end of Add/Drop and the end of the withdrawal period, you can still drop a class using SPIRE. The course will appear on your transcript as “W” and you will receive a 50% refund on the course tuition (but not the registration fee.)

Late Drops
Permission is seldom granted for withdrawal from a course after the mid-semester deadline. However, information about how to begin this process can be found [here](#). You should also seek advising from Kimberly Drake at slee@educ.umass.edu about this process and the required steps you must take.
Paying Your Tuition Bill

Bills are generated by the Bursar’s Office around the 15th of the month after you have registered for a class, and are due by the 10th of the following month. You will receive an email to your UMail account when your invoice becomes available.

You may view and pay your bill in QuikPAY. To access QuikPAY, log in to SPIRE. Go to Main Menu > Finances > View/Pay Bill.

International Payments
Information about international payments can be found here.

Financial Aid
Enrolling in the Special Education concentration program will not affect the financial aid you receive from UMass. If you have additional questions about Financial Aid, please visit the attached website, or contact their offices at 413-545-0801 or finaid@finaid.umass.edu.

University Withdrawal

At UMass, there are five different types of withdrawals from the University: personal, health, financial, academic, and military/active duty withdrawal.

1. **Personal Withdrawal:** Personal withdrawals can happen for a variety of reasons. You can begin a personal withdrawal by either visiting the Dean of Students Office (227 Whitmore) or by visiting your Academic Dean.

2. **Health Withdrawal:** Health withdrawals can happen for physical and/or mental health situations. You must initiate the withdrawal by contacting the University Health Services' administrative offices at (413) 577-5271. For more information visit:
   
   http://www.umass.edu/uhs/accesstocare/withdrawals
   
   - Further questions about health withdrawals can be directed to Brianna Mathieu at (413) 577-5271 or email bmathieu@umass.edu.
3. **Financial Withdrawal:** Financial withdrawals are often utilized when a student needs to take some time away from campus to save on costs, pay overdue university bills, or research and secure options for additional financial aid/scholarships. Please make sure you are familiar with the refund schedule so you can prevent additional financial costs. If you are withdrawing for financial reasons, please visit the Dean of Students Office (227 Whitmore) or contact your Academic Dean.

4. **Academic Withdrawal:** If you are withdrawing for academic reasons, please visit your Academic Dean to discuss your personal situation and the available options. You should discuss a plan regarding when you want to return and make an appointment to discuss classes you will take upon your return.

5. **Military/Active Duty Withdrawal:** If you have documentation of military orders that demonstrate you cannot complete the semester, please contact Associate Dean Kelly Gray in the Dean of Students Office. Contact Dean Kelly Gray at (413) 545-2684 or by visiting the Dean of Students Office at 227 Whitmore Administration Building.

## POLICY & PROCEDURES

### GRADING POLICY

As of 2004, UMass has implemented the following grading system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF</td>
<td>0.000 (incomplete failure calculates as an F for students without graduate standing until final grade is received)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>0.000 (incomplete calculates as an F for students without graduate standing until final grade is received)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td>0.000 (blank grade calculates as an F for students without graduate standing)</td>
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TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY
As an undergraduate, there are three types of credit transfers: test credit, military credit, and college course credit. *Up to 75 transfer or test credits* may be applied to UMass Amherst graduation requirements. However, students are required to earn at least 45 semester credits in residence at UMass Amherst.

Transfer credit may be applied towards the following components of an UMass Amherst degree.
- General Education Requirements
- College requirements
- Major requirements
- Elective credits

DECLARING A PRIMARY & SECONDARY MAJOR
Students must declare a primary major (one that leads to degree completion) no later than the registration period during their third full-time term, after two graded full-time fall or spring semesters, at UMass Amherst. Their Academic Dean may approve an exception for extenuating circumstances, to allow additional time to declare the major.

For the Special Education department, when accepted, “Special Education” will become your primary major, with your current major becoming secondary. After acceptance into the program, the department will change the Special Education major to your primary major. This does not require notifying the original (primary) department. Please note that you are still accountable for completing the requirements of both majors.
**SPECIAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

The Special Education program consists of 39 credits. The courses are intended to develop expertise in evidence-based practices, supporting students’ diverse needs, and integrating theory and practice. There are also 2 additional courses that are University requirements (6 credits). **EDUC 370: Writing for Education and Human Development Majors** (3 credits) fulfills the *university writing course requirement* that all undergraduates must complete; however, instead of taking this course within your former primary major, the requirement will now be fulfilled by the Special Education program. **EDUC 494RI: Educational Issues in Real World Contexts** (3 credits) will fulfill your university *Integrative Learning Experience requirement*, and will be taken as part of the Special Education program.

**Required Courses by Semester**

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<thead>
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<th>Spring Semester Year 1 (Junior Year)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EDUC 326</strong> Assessment for Instructional Decision Making, 3 credits</td>
<td><strong>EDUC 329</strong> Reading Instruction for Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities I, 3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EDUC 390E</strong> Collaboration, 3 credits</td>
<td><strong>EDUC 431</strong> Explicit Instruction Math Methods, 3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUC 327</strong> Research Methods and Evidence-Based Practices, 3 credits</td>
<td><strong>EDUC 430</strong> Evidence-Based Behavior Management in a Multi-Tiered System of Support, 3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUC 370</strong> Writing for Education and Human Development Majors, 3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<th>Fall Semester Year 2 (Senior Year)</th>
<th>Spring Semester Year 2 (Senior Year)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EDUC 328</strong> Writing Instruction for Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities, 3 credits</td>
<td><strong>EDUC 429</strong> Universal Design for Learning in Special Education, 3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUC 330</strong> Reading Instruction for Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities II, 3 credits</td>
<td><strong>EDUC 500</strong> Student Teaching, 6 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EDUC 503</strong> Sheltered English Immersion, 3 credits</td>
<td><strong>EDUC 494RI</strong> Educational Issues in Real World Contexts (Integrative Learning Experience), 3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EDUC 398</strong> Practicum, 3 credits</td>
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MTEL Requirements

For both this program and eligibility for educator licensure, you must complete the following Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL):

- **Communication and Literacy Skills Reading and Writing Subtests:** Taken prior to admission into the program, and recommended to be taken Beginning of December of your Sophomore year.
- **Foundations of Reading (90):** Taken after EDUC329 (Spring of Junior Year), and the test must be taken summer after your Junior Year.
- **General Curriculum (Multi-Subject & Mathematics Subtests):** Taken after Math 113 & 114, recommended to be taken the summer after your Junior year, or earlier (summer after your Sophomore year).

*Note: If you need to re-take an MTEL, there is a 45-day wait period from the initial day you first took the test.*

UMass also offers a variety of workshops to help prepare you to take your MTELs by providing strategies, practice, and test information.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

Throughout your time in the Special Education Concentration program, you will work alongside a variety of peers, school personnel, and students. As you progress through the program, you will participate in courses, student teaching, and practicum experience that fosters the development of nine core competencies:

**I. RESEARCH**

You will demonstrate an integration of research and practice. Trainees will demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate and use research to inform practice.

*Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:*
- Aware of need for evidence to support assertions
- Questions assumption of knowledge
- Evaluates study methodology
II. ETHICAL AND LEGAL STANDARDS
You will recognize ethical dilemmas, and conduct yourself in an ethical manner in all professional activities. Confidentiality and Mandated Reporting are two of many important ethical and legal considerations for your practice.

_Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:_
- Demonstrates basic understanding of Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct
- Demonstrates basic knowledge of legal issues
- Recognizes potential conflicts between personal beliefs, ethics codes, and legal issues in practice

III. INDIVIDUAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY
You demonstrate awareness, sensitivity, and skills in working professionally with diverse individuals, groups, and communities.

_Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:_
- Demonstrates self-knowledge, awareness, and understanding of how culture and context shape interactions
- Basic knowledge of individual differences as defined by SPED guidelines

IV. PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND ATTITUDES
You are expected to respond professionally in increasingly complex situations with a greater degree of independence across levels of training. You will engage in continuous self-reflection, will seek and respond to supervision, reflect integrity, deportment, professional identity, accountability, lifelong learning, and concern for others.

_Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:_
- Demonstrates honesty
- Takes responsibility for actions
- Turns in assignments on time
- Plans and organizes workload
- Demonstrates personal organization skills
- Follows policies of institution
- Displays initiative and compassion
- Had membership with professional organizations
- Recognizes impact of self on others
- Attends to self-care

V. COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
You are expected to develop and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of individuals. You will produce and understand oral, nonverbal, and written communications that demonstrates a thorough grasp of professional language and concepts. You will demonstrate effective interpersonal skills and the ability to manage difficult communication well.

**Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:**
- Distinguishes between appropriate and inappropriate language and demeanor in professional contexts
- Receives feedback
- Listens to and acknowledges feedback from others
- Appropriately communicates ideas, feelings and information verbally and in written communication

VI. ASSESSMENT
You will demonstrate competence in conducting evidence-based assessment consistent with the scope of Special Education. This includes developing an understanding of classification systems, human behavior in context, functional and dysfunctional behaviors. You will select, apply, interpret, and communicate assessment data effectively.

**Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:**
- Demonstrates knowledge of constructs being assessed
- Evidence of understanding of basic psychometric constructs and standardized assessment
- Demonstrates novice skills (administration and scoring) in academic and functional assessment
- Demonstrates an understanding of IDEA

VII. INTERVENTION
You demonstrate competence in evidence-based interventions consistent with the field of Special Education with a range of populations. You will develop and implement evidence-based interventions, demonstrate an ability to apply research to your decision-making, modify and evaluate interventions.
Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:
- Articulates the relationship of EBP to educational practice and the field of Special Education in general
- Identifies strengths and weakness of intervention approaches
- Articulates a basic understanding of how intervention choices are informed by assessment and how to progress monitor intervention effectiveness

VIII. SUPERVISION
You demonstrate knowledge of supervision models and practices.

Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:
- Scheduling to meet with your advisor/supervisor

IX. CONSULTATION & INTERPROFESSIONAL/INTERDISCIPLINARY SKILLS
You demonstrate knowledge and respect for the roles and perspectives of other professions. You also demonstrate this same respect to your colleagues and students.

Demonstration of Positive Behaviors:
- Articulates the role of the Special Education teacher within the broader school system
**Professional Conflict & Conflict Resolution**

As you work through your student teaching and practicum experiences, these professional competencies will guide much of your work. Another consideration to keep in mind as you enter schools, is *professional conflict*. A key principle to remember if/when you encounter conflict, is that the primary responsibility of school personnel is to maintain the well-being of the child.

For reference, here are some example of Professional Disagreements:

- A professional is concerned about the action / inaction of another professional in relation to a child or family member.
- Disagreement about decision making and a course of action to be taken for example whether there should be a Child Protection Case Conference or whether a case should be closed.
- Disagreement over information sharing.
- Disagreement over an assessment and differences around professional analysis and joint decision making.
- Disagreement over the provision of services.
- Disagreement arising over one or more professionals colluding with the parents / care-givers and over identification with parental issues rather than focusing on the child’s welfare.

For information, flowcharts, and helpful resources for resolving these conflicts please visit: [NSCB Resolving Professional Disagreements](#). Should you encounter a professional conflict during your practicum or student teaching, you are encouraged to seek advisement from your university supervisor. (See flowchart in [Appendix A](#))

**SAFIS**

The SAFIS (fingerprinting) is a requirement for all students planning to enter a practicum, student teaching, internship, pre-practicum, or any other field experience where you will be working with students. These forms must be sent to both UMass and the districts.
Important Notes:
- List districts: It is better to list more districts rather than less, especially if your placement is not confirmed. Please get the codes before going to register (see DESE organizational codes, attached, or website). Note: Always list Amherst as they are willing to share results in the future.
- Plan on the SAFIS costing $35 or $55: The cost for most students is $35. If you are a current teacher, it is $55.
- Fill out forms and send to multiple districts and UMass:

Minimally, you must send a "_SAFIS RECEIPT FORM_" to:

- The district(s) in which you plan to do your field experience,
- The UMass Ed Prep office (stephany@umass.edu) and to
- Amherst, so they can keep your results on file.

In addition, districts should be sent your SAFIS form in separate emails so you can explain who you are. This could mean 3-4 forms are sent for each student.

For those who have done the SAFIS before: If you have done the SAFIS within the past year but did not send results to the district you plan to be in next year, you must do the footwork to request that a “SUITABILITY DETERMINATION” is sent from a district you did send your scores to previously to the new district that you plan to work in (or student teach in, etc.). Not all districts will do this or accept these. If they do, it is your job to facilitate that information sharing.

For additional information about this process and/or field experiences, please contact Ann Stephany at stephany@umass.edu or 413-545-4325.

PRACTICUM
Whether you are looking to try a different field or gain breadth of experience in your current field, a practicum can be a valuable experience. The practicum provides an opportunity for you to obtain more experiential learning related to special education. Your university advisers will work with you in identifying your student teaching and practicum sites, as well as the setting and the requirements for completion.
Goals

- To reinforce the value and importance of the linkage between academic and experiential learning in special education.
- To help students develop skills in applying classroom learning to special education practice.
- To help students learn about and develop skills and strategies for meeting the needs of diverse learners.
- To use targeted feedback as a way to improve practice.

What is a Practicum?

The practicum gives candidates the opportunity to apply their knowledge of behavioral, reading/writing, or mathematics interventions in an applied setting with ongoing support and feedback from supervising faculty. You will gain valuable experience and be exposed to new ideas, teaching practices, and innovative ways to support students in their learning.

The pre-practicum in the fall of your Senior year is 150 hours, and will require you to spend approximately 2 days per week in a school. The practicum (student teaching) in the spring of your Senior year is 300 hours, and will require you to be at a school five days per week. Responsibilities in these practicum experiences are meant to build your readiness for full responsibility in a licensure role.

Practicum Reflections: You will work with your Special Education supervisor to determine additional assignments beyond the practicum hours. These assignments may take the form of reflections from your practicum experience, but will ultimately be decided by your Special Education adviser. You will also be asked to meet with your Special Education adviser to discuss your progress in your practicum placement.

Setting Up a Practicum: The Special Education department faculty will work with you to find a site for your practicum. The process of finding a practicum site is focused around a placement that best suits you and will provide a meaningful learning experience. The Special Education department faculty will be the ones to contact the schools on your behalf.
What Supervisors Want from You: Here are things that supervisors are looking for from students doing practica in their organizations. These standards can be used as a basis for evaluating the performance of practicum students.

Primary Standards

- Basic understanding of department, including: operations, function, philosophy, issues, programs, and relationships
- Degree of involvement and participation
- Open and regular communication and dialogue with supervisor
- Satisfactory completion of activities outlined in objectives, including practicum requirements
- Professional commitment and seriousness of purpose
- Professional judgment
- Sensitive and effective interpersonal relationships

Secondary Standards

- Ability to take initiative and assume responsibility, including leading or co-leading projects
- Ability to objectively evaluate experiences
- Organizational ability
- Knowledge and understanding of Special Education and organizational behavior
- Sensitivity to ethical considerations
- Dependability
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to express ideas verbally and in writing

What Practicum Students Want From Their Supervisors:
Practicum students have identified what they would ideally like to see from their supervisors.

- Demonstrate perceptiveness, concern, and support for personal and professional development of practicum student
- Set aside sufficient time for discussion, clarification, information, and advising
- Maintain professional trust, sharing of real and significant information, regular, open, honest, and direct communication
- Assist in identifying worthy, relevant, and reasonable objectives
• Provide ongoing encouragement and evaluation of performance in terms of objectives, process, and outcomes
• Discuss underlying philosophical and organizational relationships of the internship and office/institution, including exposure to relevant literature and resource material
• Provide guided freedom and give direction when necessary
• Involve the practicum student actively in as many areas of the organization as possible
• Provide exposure to and explanation of administrative options
• Establish, clarify, and relate expectations for performance
• Serve as a role model
• Provide opportunities for feedback to the supervisor
• Commit to the educational goal of the practicum
• Understand the limitations of the practicum and of the student

Managing Your Supervisor: Taken from Managing Up!, by Michael and Deborah Singer Dobson, these qualities and actions can help you to better manage the ongoing relationship that you develop with your supervisor at your practicum site, as well as your colleagues.

Do Good Work
• Review your role responsibilities as a co-operating teacher and undergraduate student, and try to exceed your performance standards
• Set aside time each day for long-term efforts and projects
• Ask for feedback and use it to experiment with different approaches
• Set and work out a plan to achieve personal and professional development

Be Supportive, Not Competitive
• Be a team player, not a team competitor
• Get involved in the school in order to network and find support among institutional constituents
Choose Your Battles

- Make sure you are attuned to your mentor teachers’ goals and expectations in order to avoid unnecessary conflict
- Learn how to negotiate like a pro by listening carefully and researching the issue
- Keep your word, avoid conflict with those depending on you
- Accept responsibility when you have made a mistake. Find a way to rectify the mistake (if a solution can be found), or a way to avoid repeating it in the future

Develop Strong Communication Skills

- Take your job seriously but yourself lightly
- Learn how to provide clarity in confusing situations, ask open-ended questions, and remain neutral in conflicts
- Prepare and provide constructive feedback for both those you supervise and those who supervise you
- Learn how to say “no”

Buyer Beware!

- Know the politics of the department and the limits of your own position’s power
- Contain your own discriminatory beliefs and attitudes, including: racism, sexism, misanthropy, classism, homophobia and xenophobia
- Recognize cultural and other differences in attitudes, behaviors and communication styles

Common Practicum Problems: It often is difficult to navigate working with one or more supervisors, as well as others in the school/university. Not every experience is ideal and you may run into several issues during the course of your practicum. Here are some common problems:

- Unclear expectations
- Too many assigned responsibilities
- Too few assigned responsibilities
- Little knowledge of departmental or campus culture and/or politics
- Misstep or mistake that seems irreparable
- Multiple supervisors with different styles
- Assigned tasks in which you don’t feel confident or comfortable
All of these problems can be fixed with only one solution – better communication between you and your supervisor. Be assertive, polite, and willing to talk about the issue in a professional way. If a problem does develop, go straight to the person with whom the problem is most directly relevant. If the problem is not with your supervisor, you might want to talk with him/her first about some potential strategies around confrontation and resolution before you proceed. Always, be diplomatic in any situation or approach. If a problem persists and you cannot seem to resolve it on your own, contact your Special Education adviser.

**COMPLETING THE PROGRAM**

Following completion of Special Education program requirements, you will be advised through the process of applying for Initial Licensure as well as forms that must be completed for the University for Graduation.
APPENDIX A

Self Help Pathway
Approach the person with whom you have a concern or conflict and engage in a constructive conversation, using “I” statements, to discuss and address your concern or conflict.

Support & Assistance (Within University)
Approach people who can assist you and advise you to help you address your concern or conflict:
1. Advisor
2. Program Coordinator
3. Department Chair
4. Office of Academic Affairs
5. Dean’s Office

Support & Assistance (School-based Placement)
Approach people who can assist you and advise you to help you address your concern or conflict:
1. Practicum Supervisor/Advisor
2. Co-operating Teacher
3. Refer to Within University conflict

When seeking advisement, these faculty should be approached in the order listed above.

Potential Strategies for Resolution:
One or more of the following options to resolve your concern or conflict can be used:
• Faculty Facilitation
• Mediation
• Mutual Goal-Setting
• Recognition of Conflicting Perspectives
• Brainstorming Solutions & Alternatives

These pathways can be modified, stopped, or switched throughout the process to better address the conflict.

Source: This flowchart has been modified from The University of Newcastle, Australia’s Pathways for Resolving Workplace Concerns and Conflict: Flowchart (2013).