

1. **Illinois State University**
2. **Department of Special Education**
3. **Post Master's Certificate for Director of Special Education**
4. **N/A**
5. **CIPS Code:**

13.0402 Administration of Special Education. A program that prepares individuals to plan, supervise, and manage programs for exceptional students and their parents. Includes instruction in special education theory and practice, special education program development, evaluation and assessment in special education, state and federal law and regulations, managing individual education plans, problems of low- and high- disability students, mainstreaming, special education curricula, staff management, parent education, communications and community relations, budgeting, and professional standards and ethics.

6. **To be implemented Fall 2005**
7. **Description of Proposed Program:**

Director of Special Education is an administrative position required by law for districts providing special education services to students with disabilities. The Director of Special Education role varies from district to district and may serve many districts through a cooperative arrangement. Typically, Directors of Special Education are responsible for overseeing the program and services provided to students with disabilities and for ensuring legal mandates are met. Additionally, the Director of Special Education is responsible for filing reimbursement forms for districts to receive federal monies.

Requirements for certification as a Director of Special Education can be met through a Post-Master's Certificate program or the doctoral program in Special Education. Students seeking certification as a Director of Special Education must be admitted to the Department of Special Education either as a Post-Master's Certificate student or as a doctoral student. Admission requirements for the Post-Master's Certificate include a Master's in Education or a Master's in a field of related service personnel (School Psychologist, School Social Worker, Speech and Language Pathologist) from an accredited university with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4 point scale. Additionally, all students must submit an admission portfolio including evidence of all of the following: Appropriate certification, teaching experience or related service provision (at least two years), and appropriate disposition for advanced study in the administration of special education. The Graduate Admission-Readmission Application is used for both types of students (Post-Master's, doctoral). All individuals seeking certification as a Director of Special Education must also apply for these certifications with the Illinois State University Office of Clinical Experiences and Certification Processes. Candidates for certification are also required to complete field experiences (internships) within this program prior to recommendation for certification. The minimum number of credit hours required for the Post-Master's Certificate is 24 hours.

Students interested in seeking certification must meet with a Department of Special Education advisor to develop an appropriate plan of study. Students should not assume that course work taken as a Student at Large or at other universities will be applied toward recommendation for certification.

The Post-Master's Certificate program for Director of Special Education will include courses in the Department of Special Education at the master's and doctoral levels as well as courses at the master's level in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations. The Department of Special Education as been working closely with Dr. Patricia Klass, EAF Chair, and the K-12 faculty of EAF in developing this program. The specific series of courses for an individual student will depend on the educational background of the student. Students who have previously taken courses that match the standards addressed in a master's level course at Illinois State University may demonstrate proficiency of the standards through a portfolio artifact. See Table 1 for the Checklist with admission requirements, a graphic of course of study, and a portfolio artifact chart. There are five Special Education doctoral courses

and one master's level course that are mandatory requirement for the certificate program.

8. Rationale for Proposal

There is a growing shortage of school administration both nationally and in the state of Illinois (DiPaola & Walther-Thomas, 2003; Lashley & Boscardin, 2003; NAESP, n.d.). There exists an urgent need to prepare leaders in the area of special education administration. This program is aligned with the University's mission and "*Educating Illinois*" goals to provide excellent graduate programs to meet the needs of Illinois.

In recent years the movement towards standards-based curricula has changed the nature of certification for educators. The Illinois State Board of Education adopted new standards leading to the certification for Director of Special Education in 2003 after revising the standards for special education teachers at both the bachelor's and master's levels. These standards cover many more knowledge and skill indicators than the previous endorsement on the Type 75 general administrative certification for Director of Special Education. Because of the increase in standards and change in certification (from an endorsement to a separate certificate), a new sequence of courses was required. This program proposal includes the ISBE professional standards for Director of Special Education certification and those of the Council for Exceptional Children's professional standards for special education administrators. The courses including in the Post-Master's Certificate were selected to provide the most relevant and research-based training for future special education administrators. The certificate program was also designed to maximize the interaction between future general education administrators and future special education administrators so that common experiences could build a foundation for their future collaborative work in schools.

Additionally, the focus on leadership within this special education administration program aligns with ISU's College of Education conceptual framework, "Realizing the Democratic Ideal". The moral and intellectual ideals delineated in the "Realizing" framework provide a supporting base from which this program is developed. Administration in special education has to incorporate a respect for and ability to work with diversity; a commitment to continuing development; and the skills and knowledge to collaborate with a variety of stakeholders. The standards developed by the Illinois State Board of Education also align with the moral and intellectual virtues in the "Realizing the Democratic Ideal" framework.

9. Impact on Existing Program

It is anticipated that the proposed program will increase collaboration between EAF and SED and attract a number of current students into the field of special education administration. The program will provide a joint experience for administrators, in both general education and special education, from which to draw in their future work. A collateral benefit which will impact the SED doctoral program is the "bridge" that this program provides between a Post-Master's Certificate and doctoral-level training which may increase enrollment in the SED doctoral program.

We do not anticipate a need for an increase in resources in the immediate future as the courses included in the program are currently offered. It is possible that the program may in time attract additional students which could mean the need to offer additional sections or to restrict enrollment. A letter of support is included from the EAF department indicating support.

10. Expected Curricular Changes:

Courses included in this program are part of previous revisions in the doctoral and master's degree programs. No further changes are anticipated.

11. Anticipated Staffing Arrangements:

The Director of Special Education program coordinator will provide over-site of this certification program (either Post-Master's Certificate or Ed.D.). No additional faculty needs have been identified at this time.

12. Anticipated Funding Needs/Source of Funding

This program will require no additional funding.