SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

Five Key Assessments are used to evaluate candidates’ mastery of CEC and Unit Standards: Data Driven Project, Curriculum Development Project, Paraeducator Job Description and Evaluation Tool, Speech and Language Related Services Professional Development Project and the Action Research Project.

DATA DRIVEN INSTRUCTION PROJECT
(SPED 523, SPED 526, SPED 536, SPED 546, SPED 552, SPED 553)

Data Driven Instruction Project: In this assignment the student will select two instructional strategies presented in the course or textbook to implement to a group of students. 523 students will have the option of a single subject, multiple baseline model to be developed in consultation with the instructor. The project must include pre-assessment data, implementation phase, and post-assessment data for each strategy implemented, AND an evaluative comparison of the strategies based on outcomes as well as interpretations as to differences in student outcomes. Each implementation phase must extend for a minimum period of ten school days/treatment sessions. Students in 523 will be expected to develop a data driven instruction project on a topic that aligns with current curricular priorities in either the Iowa or Illinois Alternate Assessment standards and benchmarks.

Written Papers and Presentations must contain the following information:
1. Description of both strategies selected and the student’s rationale for both.
2. Description of the steps involved in each implementation phase-how was each strategy implemented?
3. Presentation and discussion of pre-and post-assessment data.
4. Discussion of the student’s evaluative comparison of the effectiveness of each strategy.


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Rubric

3. Individual Learning Differences. Special educators understand the effects that an exceptional condition\(^2\) can have on an individual’s learning in school and throughout life. Special educators understand that the beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures can affect relationships among and between students, their families, and the school community. Moreover, special educators are active and resourceful in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the individual’s exceptional condition to impact the individual’s academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career options. The understanding of these learning differences and their possible interactions provides the foundation upon which special educators individualize instruction to provide meaningful and challenging learning for individuals with ELN.

Proficient (4): The completed project demonstrates that instructional strategies were chosen that responded positively to the effects that exceptional conditions have on student learning and are also very responsive to the beliefs, traditions, language usage patterns, and familial backgrounds of those same students. The analysis of the two treatment strategies demonstrates that the student has a deep level...
of understanding about how to individualize instruction to facilitate meaningful and challenging learning.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** The completed project demonstrates that instructional strategies were chosen that considered the effects that exceptional conditions have on student learning and were appropriate when considering the beliefs, traditions, language usage patterns, and familial backgrounds of those same students. The analysis of the two treatment strategies demonstrates that the student understood how to individualize instruction to facilitate meaningful and challenging learning.

**Novice (2):** The completed project demonstrates that while varying instructional strategies were chosen, there was only a basic level of awareness of the effects that exceptional conditions have on student learning. There was not a large degree of consideration given to the beliefs, traditions, language usage patterns, and familial backgrounds of those same students. The analysis of the two treatment strategies demonstrates that the student made an attempt to individualize instruction to facilitate meaningful and challenging learning.

**Not Proficient (1):** The completed project demonstrates that while varying instructional strategies were chosen, the differences between them were minimal. There was little awareness of the effects that exceptional conditions have on student learning. There was scant consideration given to the beliefs, traditions, language usage patterns, and familial backgrounds of those same students. The analysis of the two treatment strategies demonstrates that the student did not understand or appreciate the importance of how to individualize instruction to facilitate meaningful and challenging learning.

4. **Instructional Strategies.** Special educators possess a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to individualize instruction for individuals with ELN. Special educators select, adapt, and use these instructional strategies to promote positive learning results in general and special curricula and to appropriately modify learning environments for individuals with ELN. They enhance the learning of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills of individuals with ELN, and increase their self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem. Moreover, special educators emphasize the development, maintenance, and generalization of knowledge and skills across environments, settings, and the lifespan.

**Proficient (4):** The completed project demonstrates systematic application of evidence based instructional strategies to individualize instruction within the group of subjects of the project as well as individual students. The outcomes of the strategies clearly result in enhanced learning, increased self-reliance as active learners, and evidence that skills have been developed to a level where the maintenance and generalization of skills is evident across both approaches, although one approach may demonstrate greater treatment effects than does the other.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** The completed project demonstrates application of evidence based instructional strategies to individualize instruction within the group of subjects of the project as well as individual students. The outcomes of the strategies point to enhanced learning, increased self-reliance as active learners, and evidence that skills have been developed across both approaches to a level where the maintenance and generalization of skills can be inferred.

**Novice (2):** The completed project demonstrates application of instructional strategies to individualize instruction mentioned in the research literature within the majority of the group of subjects of the project. The outcomes of the strategies result in enhanced learning. Hopefully, the skills have been developed to a level where the maintenance and generalization of skills are attainable at a future date. The qualitative differences between the two approaches are not readily apparent.

**Not Proficient (1):** There is little corroborative evidence that he completed project demonstrates systematic application of evidence based instructional strategies to individualize instruction within the
group of subjects of the project as well as individual students. There are no clearly identifiable outcomes, when using either intervention approach, of the strategies resulting in enhanced learning, increased self-reliance as active learners, or evidence that skills have been developed to a level where the maintenance and generalization of skills is evident.

5. Learning Environments and Social Interactions. Special educators actively create learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. In addition, special educators foster environments in which diversity is valued and individuals are taught to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world. Special educators shape environments to encourage the independence, self-motivation, self-direction, personal empowerment, and self-advocacy of individuals with ELN. Special educators help their general education colleagues integrate individuals with ELN in regular environments and engage them in meaningful learning activities and interactions. Special educators use direct motivational and instructional interventions with individuals with ELN to teach them to respond effectively to current expectations. When necessary, special educators can safely intervene with individuals with ELN in crisis. Special educators coordinate all these efforts and provide guidance and direction to paraeducators and others, such as classroom volunteers and tutors.

Proficient (4): The completed project shows clear evidence that the researcher has created two specific learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. Both intervention outcomes clearly point to direct motivational and instructional interventions that meet the goals of the research project within least restrictive settings whenever possible employing the assistance and coordinated support of general education colleagues, paraeducators, and others. Academic, social, and behavioral interventions are systematically employed during both intervention periods within the research framework as needed to deal with crisis situations.

Proficient with Assistance (3): The completed project shows some evidence that the researcher has created dual learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. Both intervention outcomes show promise to lead to direct motivational and instructional interventions that meet the goals of the research project. Some coordination occurs within least restrictive settings whenever possible employing the assistance and coordinated support of general education colleagues, paraeducators, and others. Academic, social, and behavioral interventions are available within the research framework as needed to deal with crisis situations.

Novice (2): The completed project some attempts by the researcher during both intervention periods to create learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. The project outcomes attempt to indicate some motivational and instructional interventions that address the goals of the research project within least restrictive settings. There is some coordination of effort by general education colleagues, paraeducators, and others. Academic, social, and behavioral interventions are mentioned within the research framework as needed to deal with crisis situations but their quality and effectiveness is not readily apparent.

Not Proficient (1): There is insufficient evidence to indicate that the researcher has seriously attempted to address, during either intervention period: learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN; direct motivational and instructional interventions that meet the goals of the research project within least restrictive settings whenever possible; the assistance and coordinated support of general education colleagues, paraeducators, and others. Academic, social, and behavioral interventions are either not employed or haphazardly employed within the research framework as needed to deal with crisis situations.
7. **Instructional Planning.** Individualized decision-making and instruction is at the center of special education practice. Special educators develop **long-range individualized instructional plans** anchored in both general and special curricula. In addition, special educators systematically translate these individualized plans into carefully selected **shorter-range goals and objectives** taking into consideration an individual’s abilities and needs, the learning environment, and a myriad of cultural and linguistic factors. Individualized instructional plans emphasize **explicit modeling** and **efficient guided practice** to assure acquisition and fluency through maintenance and generalization. Understanding of these factors as well as the implications of an individual’s exceptional condition, guides the special educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials, and the use of powerful instructional variables. Instructional plans are modified based on ongoing analysis of the individual’s learning progress. Moreover, special educators facilitate this instructional planning in a **collaborative context** including the individuals with exceptionailities, families, professional colleagues, and personnel from other agencies as appropriate. Special educators also develop a variety of **individualized transition plans**, such as transitions from preschool to elementary school and from secondary settings to a variety of postsecondary work and learning contexts. Special educators are comfortable using **appropriate technologies** to support instructional planning and individualized instruction.

**Proficient (4):** The completed project shows clear evidence that the **long range individualized instructional plans** subsumed within the two intervention periods have been articulated in the discussion of the methodology via clearly stated **shorter range goals and objectives** addressing the **needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors.** The researcher’s educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of differentiated and powerful instructional variables are well aligned to the needs of the treatment group. As appropriate, **transition plans and appropriate technologies** are employed to meet project objectives during either or both interventions.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** There is some evidence that the **long range individualized instructional plans** subsumed within the two intervention periods have been articulated in the discussion of the methodology. There is evidence of **shorter range goals and objectives** addressing the **needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors.** The researcher’s educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of contrasting instructional variables attempt to address the needs of the treatment group. As appropriate, **transition plans and appropriate technologies** are considered to meet project objectives.

**Novice (2):** **Long range individualized instructional plans** subsumed within two intervention periods have been considered in the methodology via **shorter range goals and objectives.** There is some acknowledgement of the need to address the **needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and/or cultural/linguistic factors.** in at least one of the two intervention periods. The researcher’s educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of instructional variables address the basic requirements of the project. There is little evidence of consideration for either transition plans or appropriate technologies were employed to meet project objectives.

**Not Proficient (1):** There is little or no evidence of the following: **long range individualized instructional plans** subsumed within the two treatment periods; clearly stated **shorter range goals and objectives** addressing the **needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors.** The researcher’s educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables are, in both sets of interventions, poorly aligned to the needs of the treatment group. Neither **transition plans nor appropriate technologies** are employed to meet project objectives.

8. **Assessment.** Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use **multiple types of assessment information** for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress. Special educators understand the **legal policies and ethical principles of**
measurement and assessment related to referral, eligibility, program planning, instruction, and placement for individuals with ELN, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Special educators understand measurement theory and practices for addressing issues of validity, reliability, norms, bias, and interpretation of assessment results. In addition, special educators understand the appropriate use and limitations of various types of assessments. Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to assure non-biased, meaningful assessments and decision-making. Special educators conduct formal and informal assessments of behavior, learning, achievement, and environments to design learning experiences that support the growth and development of individuals with ELN. Special educators use assessment information to identify supports and adaptations required for individuals with ELN to access the general curriculum and to participate in school, system, and statewide assessment programs. Special educators regularly monitor the progress of individuals with ELN in general and special curricula. Special educators use appropriate technologies to support their assessments.

Proficient (4): The completed project demonstrates clear evidence that treatment effects have been well triangulated by multiple types of assessment information to measure desired project outcomes for both interventions. All data collected was done so following the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment. Assessment tools were chosen and employed in such a way that there was clear evidence of the researcher’s ability to employ good measurement theory and practices, an understanding of the use and limitations of the assessments chosen, and that both formal and informal assessments were employed in a nonbiased, meaningful fashion to guide decision making. Supports, adaptations, and technologies were employed during assessments as needed and as dictated by the specific requirements of each intervention chosen.

Proficient with Assistance (3): There is some evidence that treatment effects have been triangulated by multiple types of assessment information to measure desired project outcomes during both treatment sessions. Most data collected was done so following the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment. Assessment tools were chosen and employed in such a way that there was some evidence of the researcher’s ability to employ good measurement theory and practices, an understanding of the use and limitations of the assessments chosen, and that both formal and informal assessments were employed in a nonbiased, meaningful fashion to guide decision making. Supports, adaptations, and technologies were employed during assessments as needed.

Novice (2): There was a limited level of awareness demonstrated regarding the necessity for multiple types of assessment information to measure desired project outcomes during both treatment sessions. Data was collected but needed more evidence of the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment. The researcher’s discussion of the results when comparing interventions indicated an incomplete understanding of measurement theory and practices, an understanding of the use and limitations of the assessments chosen, and that both formal and informal assessments must be employed in a nonbiased, meaningful fashion to guide decision making. There was incomplete evidence of supports, adaptations, and technologies were employed during assessments as needed.

Not Proficient (1): The completed project demonstrates scant evidence that treatment effects have been well triangulated by multiple types of assessment information to measure desired project outcomes at the conclusion of either intervention. Insufficient efforts were in place to ensure that legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment were used. Assessment tools were chosen and employed in such a way that there was little or no evidence of the researcher’s ability to employ good measurement theory and practices in either setting. There was no real understanding of the use and limitations of the assessments chosen, or that both formal and informal assessments were employed in a nonbiased, meaningful fashion to guide decision making. Supports, adaptations, and technologies were not employed or poorly employed during assessments as needed.

9. Professional and Ethical Practice. Special educators are guided by the profession’s ethical and professional practice standards. Special educators practice in multiple roles and complex situations across...
wide age and developmental ranges. Their practice requires ongoing attention to legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations. Special educators engage in professional activities and participate in learning communities that benefit individuals with ELN, their families, colleagues, and their own professional growth. Special educators view themselves as lifelong learners and regularly reflect on and adjust their practice. Special educators are aware of how their own and others attitudes, behaviors, and ways of communicating can influence their practice. Special educators understand that culture and language can interact with exceptionalities, and are sensitive to the many aspects of diversity of individuals with ELN and their families. Special educators actively plan and engage in activities that foster their professional growth and keep them current with evidence-based best practices. Special educators know their own limits of practice and practice within them.

Proficient (4): Project outcomes give clear indication that the student employed interventions that were appropriate insofar as meeting their legal and ethical obligations. The interventions chosen obviously reflected an integration of previously successful professional activities indicative of a commitment towards life-long learning that includes reflective practice. Both interventions give clear indications of the sensitivity towards diversity issues while still providing interventions that were current with evidence based best practices.

Proficient with Assistance (3): Project outcomes give an acceptable indication that the student employed interventions that met legal and ethical obligations. The interventions were appropriate for the project and were reflective of professional activities that were indicative of being amenable to efforts at reflective practice to improve outcomes as a life-long learner. The interventions chosen were appropriate in the areas of sensitivity to diversity issues as well as being indicative of evidence based best practices.

Novice (2): Project outcomes give an overall impression that interventions were chosen that were appropriate and than met basic legal and ethical obligations. The interventions met basic assignment requirements that were somewhat indicative of a history of professional activities and reflective practice commensurate with being a life-long learner. The interventions chosen were fairly appropriate in terms of being both sensitive to diversity issues as well as being research-based.

Not Proficient (1): Neither intervention gave appropriate indications that the student employed interventions that were appropriate insofar as meeting their legal and ethical obligations. The interventions chosen gave little indication of any interest in professional activities indicative of a commitment towards life-long learning that includes reflective practice. Neither intervention gave indications of the sensitivity towards diversity issues nor providing interventions that were current with evidence based best practices.

10. Collaboration. Special educators routinely and effectively collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways. This collaboration assures that the needs of individuals with ELN are addressed throughout schooling. Moreover, special educators embrace their special role as advocate for individuals with ELN. Special educators promote and advocate the learning and well being of individuals with ELN across a wide range of settings and a range of different learning experiences. Special educators are viewed as specialists by a myriad of people who actively seek their collaboration to effectively include and teach individuals with ELN. Special educators are a resource to their colleagues in understanding the laws and policies relevant to Individuals with ELN. Special educators use collaboration to facilitate the successful transitions of individuals with ELN across settings and services.

Proficient (4): Project outcomes give clear indication that, within the parameters and requirements of the assignment, the student successfully collaborated with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways. The interventions chosen and the overall project are indicative of the student functioning as an advocate for individuals with ELN across, as much as would be reasonably possible, a wide range of settings. Intervention
outcomes serve as a demonstrable resource to their colleagues and clearly demonstrate that skills have been taught that can transition successfully across settings.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** Project outcomes give an indication that, within the parameters and requirements of the assignment, there was some collaboration with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways. The interventions chosen were done so that they advocated for individuals with ELN by providing positive academic outcomes across a variety of settings. The project demonstrates potential as a resource to colleagues and across settings.

**Novice (2):** The project outcomes meet the basic minimum requirements of the assignment but it is not as evident that there was an effort to provide collaboration with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways. The treatment approaches chosen showed some potential as a vehicle by which the skills taught could serve as a source of advocacy for the academic needs of individuals with ELN or as a resource to colleagues.

**Not Proficient (1):** The finished project gives little or no indication that, within the parameters and requirements of the assignment, that the student made efforts to collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, or personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways. The interventions chosen and the overall project are not indicative of the student functioning as an advocate for individuals with ELN across as much as would be reasonably possible, a wide range of settings. Intervention outcomes have no discernible value as a resource to their colleagues and do not demonstrate that skills have been taught that can transition successfully across settings.

**CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**
(SPED 523, 526, 536, 546, 552, 553)

In this assignment, the student will use the information presented in this course, with additional resources, to develop, expand, strengthen, and/or improve instructional curriculum used in their classroom. Examples include: the development of peer-tutoring or cooperative learning activities; the development of hands-on activities to improve a specific academic achievement area; the development of reading fluency activities; the development of a two-week unit on the use of learning strategies to solve math problems; the inclusion of repeated readings within the current reading instructional program; the incorporation of various graphic organizers within the literature curriculum; the development of a unit to teach students how to use concept maps when studying for exams; the creation of a unit on media’s influence on today’s teenager. Students in 523 will be expected to develop a functional academic oriented curriculum development project on a topic that aligns with current curricular priorities in either the Iowa or Illinois Alternate Assessment standards and benchmarks.

**Written Papers and Presentations must contain the following information.**
1. Description of the curriculum development project as designed by the student and his/her rationale for developing this project: what will you do.
2. Description of the completed curriculum development project.
3. Complete listing of resources and materials used in this project.
4. Description of how this new curriculum will be evaluated to determine its effectiveness.

4. **Proficient** 3. **Proficient with assistance** 2. **Novice proficiency** 1. **No skill proficiency**

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7. Instructional Planning. Individualized decision-making and instruction is at the center of special education practice. Special educators develop **long-range individualized instructional plans** anchored in both general and special curricula. In addition, special educators systematically translate these individualized plans into carefully selected **shorter-range goals and objectives** taking into consideration an individual’s abilities and needs, the learning environment, and a myriad of cultural and linguistic factors. Individualized instructional plans emphasize **explicit modeling and efficient guided practice** to assure acquisition and fluency through maintenance and generalization. Understanding of these factors as well as the implications of an individual’s exceptional condition, guides the special **educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials, and the use of powerful instructional variables**. Instructional plans are **modified based on ongoing analysis of the individual’s learning progress**. Moreover, special educators facilitate this instructional planning in a **collaborative context** including the individuals with exceptionalities, families, professional colleagues, and personnel from other agencies as appropriate. Special educators also develop a variety of **individualized transition plans**, such as transitions from preschool to elementary school and from secondary settings to a variety of postsecondary work and learning contexts. Special educators are comfortable using **appropriate technologies** to support instructional planning and individualized instruction.

Proficient (4): The completed project shows clear evidence that the **long range individualized instructional plans** subsumed within the curriculum development project have been articulated in the discussion of the methodology via clearly stated **shorter range goals and objectives** addressing the **needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors**. The researcher’s **educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables** are well aligned to the needs of the students being taught. As appropriate, **transition plans and appropriate technologies** are employed to meet project objectives.

Proficient with Assistance (3): There is some evidence that the **long range individualized instructional plans** subsumed within the curriculum development project have been articulated in the discussion of the methodology. There is evidence of **shorter range goals and objectives** addressing the **needs of the student population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors**. The researcher’s **educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables** attempt to address the needs of the treatment group. As appropriate, **transition plans and appropriate technologies** are considered to meet project objectives.

Novice (2): **Long range individualized instructional plans** subsumed within the curriculum development project have been considered in the methodology via **shorter range goals and objectives**. There is some acknowledgement of the need to address the **needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors**. The researcher’s **educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables** address the basic requirements of the project. There is little evidence of consideration for either **transition plans or appropriate technologies** were employed to meet project objectives.

Not Proficient (1): There is little or no evidence of the following: **long range individualized instructional plans** subsumed within the curriculum development project; clearly stated **shorter range goals and objectives** addressing the **needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors**. The researcher’s **educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables** are poorly aligned to the needs of the students. Neither **transition plans nor appropriate technologies** are employed to meet project objectives.
Paraeducator Job Description and Evaluation Tool

Assignment: Paraeducator Job Description and Evaluation Tool. The paraeducator job description and job evaluation tool is constructed to sample the appropriate knowledge and skills bases required of a given paraeducator in a specific special education setting. The job description and the individualized tool should thoroughly and appropriately sample and evaluate the desired performance outcomes expected of the paraprofessional with good congruence between rating items and performance expectations. Both tools should empower the teacher and the paraprofessional to anticipate, observe, and evaluate specific performance expectations with an emphasis on professional and ethical practice performed in a collaborative manner by both parties.


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8. Assessment. Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress. Special educators understand the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment related to referral, eligibility, program planning, instruction, and placement for individuals with ELN, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Special educators understand measurement theory and practices for addressing issues of validity, reliability, norms, bias, and interpretation of assessment results. In addition, special educators understand the appropriate use and limitations of various types of assessments. Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to assure non-biased, meaningful assessments and decision-making. Special educators conduct formal and informal assessments of behavior, learning, achievement, and environments to design learning experiences that support the growth and development of individuals with ELN. Special educators use assessment information to identify supports and adaptations required for individuals with ELN to access the general curriculum and to participate in school, system, and statewide assessment programs. Special educators regularly monitor the progress of individuals with ELN in general and special curricula. Special educators use appropriate technologies to support their assessments.

Proficient (4): The completed project demonstrates clear evidence that the job description and evaluation tool resulted in a comprehensive listing of knowledge and skills delineated for the setting. The Likert scale ratings and language were appropriate and there is obvious consistency between the paraprofessional job description and the evaluation tool. Both the teacher and the paraprofessional are clear as to the supports and adaptations needed by individuals with ELN, provisions are clearly in place as to how to regularly monitor the progress of individuals with ELN as well as to use appropriate technologies to support their instructional and assessment activities.

Proficient with Assistance (3): There is some inconsistency in the knowledge and skills expectations the
scale is measuring as compared to the actual job performance expectations as well as some gaps in the content of the scale. It is subsequently less clear how to actualize the provision of supports and adaptations, use of appropriate technologies, and progress monitoring.

**Novice (2):** There are obvious inconsistencies in the knowledge and skills expectations the scale is measuring as compared to the actual job performance expectations as well as obvious gaps in the scale content as well as the job description content. This makes the implementation of supports and adaptations, use of appropriate technologies, and progress monitoring more difficult.

**Not Proficient (1):** The scale and/or job description is clearly inappropriate in terms of what it is measuring as opposed to actual job performance expectations. As such, there will be little or no guidance insofar as how to approach the provision of supports and adaptations, use of appropriate technologies, and progress monitoring.

9. **Professional and Ethical Practice.** Special educators are guided by the profession’s ethical and professional practice standards. Special educators practice in multiple roles and complex situations across wide age and developmental ranges. Their practice requires ongoing attention to legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations. Special educators engage in professional activities and participate in learning communities that benefit individuals with ELN, their families, colleagues, and their own professional growth. Special educators view themselves as lifelong learners and regularly reflect on and adjust their practice. Special educators are aware of how their own and others attitudes, behaviors, and ways of communicating can influence their practice. Special educators understand that culture and language can interact with exceptionalities, and are sensitive to the many aspects of diversity of individuals with ELN and their families. Special educators actively plan and engage in activities that foster their professional growth and keep them current with evidence-based best practices. Special educators know their own limits of practice and practice within them.

**Proficient (4):** The job description and evaluation tool clearly evaluates issues of respecting confidentiality and conveying respect for others. There are at least four items addressing these two issues, ensuring that subsequent practice is congruent with legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** The job description and evaluation tool does address issues of respecting confidentiality and conveying respect for others. There are at least three items addressing these two issues, in hopes that subsequent practice is congruent with legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations.

**Novice (2):** The job description and evaluation tool minimally addresses issues of respecting confidentiality and conveying respect for others. There are one to two items addressing either or both of these two issues. Hopefully, subsequent practice will be congruent with legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations.

**Not Proficient (1):** The job description and evaluation tool does NOT address either issue of respecting confidentiality and conveying respect for others. As designed, there could be serious concerns regarding breaches of legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations.

10. **Collaboration.** Special educators routinely and effectively collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways. This collaboration assures that the needs of individuals with ELN are addressed throughout schooling. Moreover, special educators embrace their special role as advocate for individuals with ELN. Special educators promote and advocate the learning and well being of individuals with ELN across a wide range of settings and a range of different learning experiences. Special educators are viewed as specialists by a myriad of people who actively seek their collaboration to effectively include and teach
individuals with ELN. Special educators are a **resource to their colleagues** in understanding the laws and policies relevant to Individuals with ELN. Special educators use collaboration to **facilitate the successful transitions** of individuals with ELN across settings and services.

**Proficient (4):** The job description and evaluation tool clearly provides the paraeducator with an opportunity to evaluate his/her own communication and teamwork skills as well as empowering that person to be able to openly share the supervisor’s skills in those areas. It is more of a collegial rather than a hierarchical relationship, allowing for the provision of a **resource to their colleagues** in understanding the laws and policies relevant to individuals with ELN. The tools contain items for ratings of communication and teamwork, use specific terminology, and provided opportunities for the paraeducator to evaluate the supervisor.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** The job description and evaluation tool attempts to provide the paraeducator with an opportunity to evaluate his/her own communication and teamwork skills as well as empowering that person to be able to openly share the supervisor’s skills in those areas, allowing for the provision of a **resource to their colleagues** in understanding the laws and policies relevant to individuals with ELN. The tools contain items for ratings of communication and teamwork in general terms, and provide opportunities for the paraeducator to evaluate the supervisor.

**Novice (2):** The job description and evaluation tool is incomplete. The paraeducator is given some opportunity to evaluate his/her own communication OR teamwork skills. There is no genuine opportunity to evaluate the supervisor. As such, its efficacy as a **resource to their colleagues** in understanding the laws and policies relevant to individuals with ELN is limited.

**Not Proficient (1):** The job description and evaluation tool does not address the issues of either teamwork or communication skills. It is written in a top down manner with no opportunity for the paraeducator to viably communicate with or evaluate the supervisor. As such, its ability to serve as a **resource to their colleagues** is nonexistent.

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**SPEECH AND LANGUAGE RELATED SERVICES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**
**SPED 581**

Professional Development Activity for Regular Education Staff and School Board. Require professional references for each of the following topics and discuss applications/implications at the early childhood, elementary, and secondary levels. Ten separate sources of information total. Could include internet based sites of high quality, journal articles, textbooks, etc. Result in a Powerpoint-based presentation. Will be jigsawed across working teams. Time allowed during class to integrate findings and prepare Powerpoint:

1. Typical and atypical language development and appropriate developmental indicators for each of the three levels. Applying this knowledge to make appropriate determinations for referral/non-referral for speech and language services based on district wide screening practices as well as systematic classroom observation of speech and language development in both regular education and special education classrooms.
2. How to integrate S/L therapy services and classroom activities with both prescriptive pull out and collaborative co-teaching models at all three grade levels.
3. Making systematic determinations of when to consider to use and successfully employ augmentative, alternative, and assistive technologies. This requirement will not be level specific.
4. Making accurate determinations of the need for provisions of services for students who do not speak English as their primary language as well as providing services for experiencing similar language usage challenges. This requirement will not be level specific.
5. Following legal requirements via IDEIA 2004 as to the screening, assessment, and provision of services requirements from Pre-K to 12th grade.


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6. Language. Special educators understand typical and atypical language development and the ways in which exceptional conditions can interact with an individual’s experience with and use of language. Special educators use individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills to individuals with ELN. Special educators are familiar with augmentative, alternative, and assistive technologies to support and enhance communication of individuals with exceptional needs. Special educators match their communication methods to an individual’s language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences. Special educators provide effective language models and they use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for individuals with ELN whose primary language is not English.

**Proficient (4):** Project outcomes clearly indicate that the student has a competent level of understanding regarding both typical and atypical language development and, when necessary, can use individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills. The student understands the complementary functions of augmentative, alternative and assistive technologies in speech and language development and can provide the correct match to the students’ language proficiencies and any cultural/linguistic differences. The student can also demonstrate that he/she understands the importance of providing effective language models and can also adapt strategies for students whose primary language is not English.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** Project outcomes indicate a basic level of understanding regarding both typical and atypical language development and the need to provide individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills. The student has a working knowledge of the complementary functions of augmentative, alternative and assistive technologies in speech and language development. There is some evidence of an instructional match to the students’ language proficiencies and any cultural/linguistic differences. The student discusses effective language models and knows of strategies for students whose primary language is not English.

**Novice (2):** Project outcomes discuss but do not elaborate on typical and atypical language development as well as the individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills. The student has a baseline knowledge level regarding augmentative, alternative and assistive technologies in speech and language development. The instructional match to the students’ language proficiencies and any cultural/linguistic differences needs improvement. The student provides an incomplete discussion of language models as well an incomplete discussion of how to provide service for students whose primary language is not English.

**Not Proficient (1):** Project outcomes provide insufficient evidence or no evidence that the student:
The student does NOT understand the complementary functions of augmentative, alternative and assistive technologies in speech and language development nor can provide the correct match to the students’ language proficiencies and any cultural/linguistic differences. The student cannot demonstrate that he/she understands the importance of providing effective language models or adapt strategies for students whose primary language is not English.

SPED 622/624 Action Research in Education /Action Research Project

The purpose of this document is to outline the process and requirements of SPED 622 and 624, the capstone experience for the WIU special education graduate program. Action research is a valuable but demanding process. In order for you to complete the requirements for a graduate degree in special education at WIU, it will be important for you to be aware of the demands of SPED 622/624 and to be respectful of the timelines and activities described in this document. In addition to the outline of information and activities provided on these pages, students are directed to read the syllabus provided in each course. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with this document and with the syllabus of each of these courses.

SPED 622 Activities:
The following products must be successfully completed by the due date identified in the syllabus in order to register for SPED 624. Please note that each professor may make additional assignments contained in the course syllabus. Due dates
2. Successfully Complete Protecting Human Research Participants training and bring a copy of the certificate to the instructor.
3. After reading at least 10 articles related to your area of interest, summarize what you have learned in an Annotated Resource List in APA format. See syllabus for additional guidance/specifies.
4. Turn in a polished draft of the first chapter of your action research project (Introduction).
5. Turn in a polished draft of the second chapter of the project (Review of Literature).
6. Turn in a polished draft of the third chapter of the project (Methodology) that clearly addresses the research question(s); what you plan to do, i.e. your method(s); the data collection sources/methods, i.e. your assessment measures; the data analysis method(s).
7. Turn in a polished draft of all assessment measures to be used in the project that will later be appendices in your completed manuscript.
8. Present your proposed project to the instructor and class via PowerPoint and per syllabus directives.

SPED 624 Process:
Note that some activities must be completed prior to registration. Also, the syllabus for this course may include additional activities and expectations. Due dates
1. Register for course when there has been successful completion of SPED 622 and permission granted for such registration.
2. Meet with the Chairperson (SPED 624 professor) to discuss aspects of the project that need attention prior to implementation.
3. Implement planned research.
4. Meet with the Chairperson and/or committee members per SPED 624 syllabus requirements.
5. Present via PowerPoint the project at a Faculty Symposium in May (date and details on course syllabus).
6. Complete the written manuscript of the project, which will then include both a Chapter Four (Results) and a Chapter Five (Discussion) under the supervision and guidance of the Chairperson.
   Examining Committee members are provided the manuscript near the final draft stage for their input. Keep in mind that faculty are not expected to review manuscripts when they are not on contract to the university. therefore, manuscripts ready for Committee review in the weeks following the end of spring semester may not be reviewed until said faculty return for fall semester. If such is the case, completion of the course and perhaps graduation from the program, will be delayed.
7. File the manuscript in electronic format with Malpass Library Archives, at which time the grade for SPED 624 is provided to the WIU Registrar and notification given to the Graduate School that this culminating experience has been completed.


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Rubric

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4. Instructional Strategies. Special educators possess a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to individualize instruction for individuals with ELN. Special educators select, adapt, and use these instructional strategies to promote positive learning results in general and special curricula and to appropriately modify learning environments for individuals with ELN. They enhance the learning of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills of individuals with ELN, and increase their self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem. Moreover, special educators emphasize the development, maintenance, and generalization of knowledge and skills across environments, settings, and the lifespan.

Proficient (4): The completed project demonstrates systematic application of evidence based instructional strategies to individualize instruction within the group of subjects of the project as well as individual students. The outcomes of the strategies clearly result in enhanced learning, increased self reliance as active learners, and evidence that skills have been developed to a level where the maintenance and generalization of skills is evident.

Proficient with Assistance (3): The completed project demonstrates application of evidence based instructional strategies to individualize instruction within the group of subjects of the project as well as individual students. The outcomes of the strategies point to enhanced learning, increased self reliance as active learners, and evidence that skills have been developed to a level where the maintenance and generalization of skills can be inferred.

Novice (2): The completed project demonstrates application of instructional strategies to individualize instruction mentioned in the research literature within the majority of the group of subjects of the project. The outcomes of the strategies result in enhanced learning. Hopefully, the skills have been developed to a level where the maintenance and generalization of skills are attainable at a future date.

Not Proficient (1): There is little corroborative evidence that he completed project demonstrates systematic application of evidence based instructional strategies to individualize instruction within the group of subjects of the project as well as individual students. There are no clearly identifiable outcomes of the strategies resulting in enhanced learning, increased self reliance as active learners, or evidence that skills have been developed to a level where the maintenance and generalization of skills is evident.

5. Learning Environments and Social Interactions. Special educators actively create learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. In addition, special educators foster environments in which diversity is valued and individuals are taught to live...
harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world. Special educators shape environments to encourage the independence, self-motivation, self-direction, personal empowerment, and self-advocacy of individuals with ELN. Special educators help their general education colleagues integrate individuals with ELN in regular environments and engage them in meaningful learning activities and interactions. Special educators use direct motivational and instructional interventions with individuals with ELN to teach them to respond effectively to current expectations. When necessary, special educators can safely intervene with individuals with ELN in crisis. Special educators coordinate all these efforts and provide guidance and direction to paraeducators and others, such as classroom volunteers and tutors.

Proficient (4): The completed project shows clear evidence that the researcher has created learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. The project outcomes clearly point to direct motivational and instructional interventions that meet the goals of the research project within least restrictive settings whenever possible employing the assistance and coordinated support of general education colleagues, paraeducators, and others. Academic, social, and behavioral interventions are systematically employed within the research framework as needed to deal with crisis situations.

Proficient with Assistance (3): The completed project shows some evidence that the researcher has created learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. The project outcomes show promise to lead to direct motivational and instructional interventions that meet the goals of the research project. Some coordination occurs within least restrictive settings whenever possible employing the assistance and coordinated support of general education colleagues, paraeducators, and others. Academic, social, and behavioral interventions are available within the research framework as needed to deal with crisis situations.

Novice (2): The completed project some attempts by the researcher to create learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. The project outcomes attempt to indicate some motivational and instructional interventions that address the goals of the research project within least restrictive settings. There is some coordination of effort by general education colleagues, paraeducators, and others. Academic, social, and behavioral interventions are mentioned within the research framework as needed to deal with crisis situations.

Not Proficient (1): There is insufficient evidence to indicate that the researcher has seriously attempted to address: learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN; direct motivational and instructional interventions that meet the goals of the research project within least restrictive settings whenever possible; the assistance and coordinated support of general education colleagues, paraeducators, and others. Academic, social, and behavioral interventions are haphazardly employed within the research framework as needed to deal with crisis situations.

7. Instructional Planning. Individualized decision-making and instruction is at the center of special education practice. Special educators develop long-range individualized instructional plans anchored in both general and special curricula. In addition, special educators systematically translate these individualized plans into carefully selected shorter-range goals and objectives taking into consideration an individual’s abilities and needs, the learning environment, and a myriad of cultural and linguistic factors. Individualized instructional plans emphasize explicit modeling and efficient guided practice to assure acquisition and fluency through maintenance and generalization. Understanding of these factors as well as the implications of an individual’s exceptional condition, guides the special educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials, and the use of powerful instructional variables.
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plans are modified based on ongoing analysis of the individual’s learning progress. Moreover, special educators facilitate this instructional planning in a collaborative context including the individuals with exceptionalities, families, professional colleagues, and personnel from other agencies as appropriate. Special educators also develop a variety of individualized transition plans, such as transitions from preschool to elementary school and from secondary settings to a variety of postsecondary work and learning contexts. Special educators are comfortable using appropriate technologies to support instructional planning and individualized instruction.

**Proficient (4):** The completed project shows clear evidence that the long range individualized instructional plans subsumed within the action research project have been articulated in the discussion of the methodology via clearly stated shorter range goals and objectives addressing the needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors. The researcher’s educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables are well aligned to the needs of the treatment group. As appropriate, transition plans and appropriate technologies are employed to meet project objectives.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** There is some evidence that the long range individualized instructional plans subsumed within the action research project have been articulated in the discussion of the methodology. There is evidence of shorter range goals and objectives addressing the needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and/or cultural/linguistic factors. The researcher’s educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables attempt to address the needs of the treatment group. As appropriate, transition plans and appropriate technologies are considered to meet project objectives.

**Novice (2):** Long range individualized instructional plans subsumed within the action research project have been considered in the methodology via shorter range goals and objectives. There is some acknowledgement of the need to address the needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and/or cultural/linguistic factors. The researcher’s educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables address the basic requirements of the project. There is little evidence of consideration for either transition plans or appropriate technologies were employed to meet project objectives.

**Not Proficient (1):** There is little or no evidence of the following: long range individualized instructional plans subsumed within the action research project; clearly stated shorter range goals and objectives addressing the needs of the treatment population, the learning environment(s), and any cultural/linguistic factors. The researcher’s educator’s selection, adaptation, and creation of materials and the use of powerful instructional variables are poorly aligned to the needs of the treatment group. Neither transition plans nor appropriate technologies are employed to meet project objectives.

8. **Assessment.** Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress. Special educators understand the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment related to referral, eligibility, program planning, instruction, and placement for individuals with ELN, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Special educators understand measurement theory and practices for addressing issues of validity, reliability, norms, bias, and interpretation of assessment results. In addition, special educators understand the appropriate use and limitations of various types of assessments. Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to assure non-biased, meaningful assessments and decision-making. Special educators conduct formal and informal assessments of behavior, learning, achievement, and environments to design learning experiences that support the growth and development of individuals with
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ELN. Special educators use assessment information to identify supports and adaptations required for individuals with ELN to access the general curriculum and to participate in school, system, and statewide assessment programs. Special educators regularly monitor the progress of individuals with ELN in general and special curricula. Special educators use appropriate technologies to support their assessments.

**Proficient (4):** The completed project demonstrates clear evidence that treatment effects have been well triangulated by multiple types of assessment information to measure desired project outcomes. All data collected was done so following the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment. Assessment tools were chosen and employed in such a way that there was clear evidence of the researcher’s ability to employ good measurement theory and practices, an understanding of the use and limitations of the assessments chosen, and that both formal and informal assessments were employed in a nonbiased, meaningful fashion to guide decision making. Supports, adaptations, and technologies were employed during assessments as needed.

**Proficient with Assistance (3):** There is some evidence that treatment effects have been triangulated by multiple types of assessment information to measure desired project outcomes. Most data collected was done so following the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment. Assessment tools were chosen and employed in such a way that there was some evidence of the researcher’s ability to employ good measurement theory and practices, an understanding of the use and limitations of the assessments chosen, and that both formal and informal assessments were employed in a nonbiased, meaningful fashion to guide decision making. Supports, adaptations, and technologies were employed during assessments as needed.

**Novice (2):** There was a limited level of awareness demonstrated regarding the necessity for multiple types of assessment information to measure desired project outcomes. Data was collected but needed more evidence of the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment. The researcher’s discussion of the results indicated an incomplete understanding of measurement theory and practices, an understanding of the use and limitations of the assessments chosen, and that both formal and informal assessments must be employed in a nonbiased, meaningful fashion to guide decision making. There was incomplete evidence of supports, adaptations, and technologies were employed during assessments as needed.

**Not Proficient (1):** The completed project demonstrates scant evidence that treatment effects have been well triangulated by multiple types of assessment information to measure desired project outcomes. Insufficient efforts were in place to ensure that legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment were used. Assessment tools were chosen and employed in such a way that there was little or no evidence of the researcher’s ability to employ good measurement theory and practices. There was no real understanding of the use and limitations of the assessments chosen, or that both formal and informal assessments were employed in a nonbiased, meaningful fashion to guide decision making. Supports, adaptations, and technologies were not employed or poorly employed during assessments as needed.