

Liberal Studies Program

Do you want to work in a field that is in high demand?

Do you want to make a *DIFFERENCE* in the lives of students with special needs?



If yes, consider a career in *Special Education*. To become a Special Education teacher, you can major in Liberal Studies and complete ITEP-Junior Option. Here's why you should consider earning a special education credential through ITEP:



Saves Time

- ITEP-Junior Option combines Liberal Studies and credential coursework
- You will graduate with BOTH your BA and Education Specialist Credential at the same time



Flexible

- You can attend part-time or full-time
- You can choose from the Mild-Moderate, Moderate-Severe, or Deaf and Hard of Hearing credential options



Saves Money

- ITEP-Junior Option is more cost effective than earning your credential after graduation
- Allows you to enter the work force sooner

YOUR CAREER IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Making a Difference in the lives of students with special needs



Who are Special Education students?

Students with disabilities who receive special education instruction and related services vary greatly in their needs. Like all children, they differ from one another in ability, age, learning style, and personality. Students with disabilities come from all cultural backgrounds and may speak languages other than English. They all have unique learning needs based on their disabilities that require a variety of special education and related services, such as specially designed instruction, adapted materials, speech-language therapy, adaptive physical education and school to work transition planning.



What do Special Educators do?

Special educators are highly trained professionals who provide specifically designed instruction and services to children with disabilities. They adapt and develop materials to match the special needs of each student and use a variety of teaching strategies to ensure that students with disabilities reach their learning potential.



Where do Special Educators work?

Special educators work in many different environments. A small percentage work in private schools, residential facilities, hospitals and clinics, or in the students' homes. The majority, however, work in the public schools. Within these schools, special educators work in a variety of settings, including:

Self-contained classrooms: Under this model, students with disabilities spend anywhere from 20 – 100% of their school day in a classroom specifically set aside for children with disabilities. When not in the special day class, students may be integrated into general education classes and/or participate in community based/vocational instruction.

Resource rooms: Some special education teachers work in resource rooms, where they provide specialized instruction to students with disabilities who come in for part of the school day, either individually or in small groups.

General education classrooms: An increasing number of schools are using an inclusion model in which students with disabilities receive most, if not all, of their instruction in a general education classroom. In all of these settings, special educators work closely with general education teachers, parents, and other members of the planning team to meet the needs of the students.

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Why should YOU consider a career in special education?

- ◆ You want a career that allows you to help others. Being a special educator allows you to make a positive difference in the lives of children with disabilities and their families. With the help of special educators, an increasing number of children with disabilities have been succeeding in school and enrolling in college.
- ◆ Being a special educator gives you the opportunity to use many talents and skills creatively and to grow both professionally and personally.
- ◆ The need for special education professionals has never been greater. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the need for qualified special educators and related service personnel will increase "faster than most other professions" in the next 10 years. And the U.S. Department of Education reports "The number of students with disabilities served under IDEA continues to increase at a rate higher than both the general population and school enrollment."
- ◆ The personal rewards of educating children and youth with disabilities is greater than you can ever



How can I find out more about special education as a career choice?

The best way to learn more about careers in special education is to talk to professionals already practicing in the field. Ask professionals in the field questions about what they do, why they chose their professions, and what they find challenging and rewarding about their work. The more you know about careers focused on children and youth with disabilities, the better able you will be to make an informed career choice.

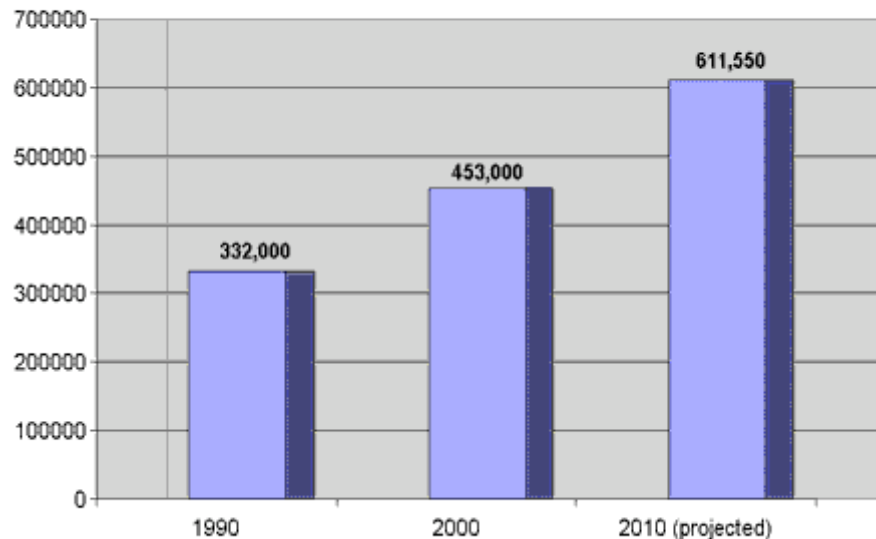
Source: http://www.special-ed-careers.org/career_choices/on_the_job/what.html



What is the employment outlook for Special Educators?

There is an increasing demand for Special Educators across the nation. The employment opportunities in special education teaching are expected to grow 21-35% through 2010, an increase of over 150,000 positions.

Demand for Special Education Teachers 1990-2010



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2002-03 edition.



What is the average salary for Special Educators?

Salaries for public school teachers are set by the local school districts and so will vary from state to state and even within a particular state. In general, teacher salaries are determined by the teacher's education level and length of service, not the subject taught. However, because special education is a critical need area, some local school districts have begun offering stipends or signing bonuses to qualified special educators.

Los Angeles Unified School District 2005/2006 Annual Salary: Starting at approximately \$43,000

Source: <http://www.teachinla.com/research/documents/TTableannual2006-07.pdf>

For more information regarding salaries visit:

http://www.special-ed-careers.org/career_choices/employment.html



What should I major in at CSUN if I want to become a Special Educator?

Although a specific major is not required to become a Special Educator, it is recommended that students major in Liberal Studies. Students may earn a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies AND an Education Specialist Credential at the same time by pursuing the Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP)-Junior Option. Another alternative for students is to earn a BA in Liberal Studies first and pursue an Education Specialist Credential *after* graduation.



How do I find out about financial aid to become a special educator?

For financial aid resources, visit: www.special-ed-careers.org/career_choices/financial_aid/financial_aid.html
These financial aid programs vary by state. For California higher education assistance visit <http://www.csac.ca.gov/>. To find out the details of state grants and loans, including APEL loans, students should contact CSUN's Financial Aid Office located in Bayramian Hall.

Advisement Resources

If interested in pursuing a special education credential, please contact the following faculty in the Department of Special Education at CSUN:

- ◆ **Dr. Sue Sears, Mild-Moderate Disabilities**
(818) 677-2552 or email at sue.sears@csun.edu
- ◆ **Dr. Kathy Peckham-Hardin, Moderate-Severe Disabilities**
(818) 677-4002 or email at kathy.phardin@csun.edu
- ◆ **Dr. Rachel Friedman-Narr, Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
(818) 677-4007 or email at rachel.narr@csun.edu

Other Resources

- ◆ **The National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education**
1110 North Glebe Road, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201-5704
1.800.641.7824
Email: ncpse@cec.sped.org
www.special-ed-careers.org
- ◆ **Council for Exceptional Children**
1110 North Glebe Road, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201-5704

1.800.224.6830
www.cec.sped.org