

CEC Assessment #1: Content Based Assessment  
Classroom Structure Project

**a. A brief description of the assessment and its use in the program**

Rhode Island does not require a universal assessment specific to content in special education.

The Classroom Structure Project is completed during SPED 310, the second special education course taken by all undergraduate students with a concentration in special education. This project provides teacher candidates a means to demonstrate an understanding of the learning environments within their 30 hour practicum placement. The Classroom Structure project is an analysis of the learning environment, inclusive of school, teacher, classroom and students. Supports all students (with and without special needs) in the classroom are analyzed with considerable attention given to supports that assist in positive behavior and student learning. The skills and knowledge demonstrated in the Classroom Structure Project is extended in subsequent methods courses specific to the education of elementary/middle school level learners with mild/moderate disabilities (i.e. SPED 412).

**b. A description of how this assessment specifically aligns with the standards it is cited for in Section III. Cite SPA standards by number, title, and/or standard wording.**

The classroom structure project relates most directly to the following Council for Exceptional Children Standards: 3 and 5.

**CEC STANDARD 3: INDIVIDUAL LEARNING DIFFERENCES.**

How assessment aligns with CEC Standard #3: The Classroom Structure Project requires an analysis of the individual learning differences (ILD) of the students in the teacher candidate's assigned practicum classroom. Throughout their 30 hour practicum, teacher candidates gather information, develop the Classroom Structure Project, and are assessed using rubric components that evaluate their knowledge of ILD. Teacher candidates research the characteristics of the school, observe and interact with students to *identify the effects of their exceptional conditions on their lives* (ICC3K1, ICC3K2), have discussions with the practicum teacher, read through accessible educational information (IEPs, student work, grade books, team reports). They describe students in terms of their academic functioning, linguistic difference, disability, *auditory/information processing skills* (IGC3K2) personal and social skills, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and *cultural considerations* (ICC3K3), and unique individual characteristics (i.e. *multiple disabilities* (IGC3K3)- if applicable). Teacher candidates develop a Positive Reinforcement System specific to four students and identify the effect on the target behaviors. These aspects of the standard are assessed under rubric sections: Knowledge of School, Settings and Students, Positive Reinforcement. Teacher candidates analyze the cultural diversity of the classroom and school. They describe any impact the cultural diversity has on the group composition of the classroom. (ICC3K2, IGC3K2) This aspect of the standard is assessed primarily in the rubric section: Group Composition Group Process.

**CEC STANDARD 5: LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS**

How assessment aligns with CEC Standard #5: Teacher candidates analyze the school and classroom structure in terms of spatial arrangements (IGC5K2), demands of the environment (ICC5K1) positive behavioral support/*basic classroom management* theories (ICC5K2, K3-*management of teaching and learning*, K4-*teacher attitudes*, K5-*social skills needed*, K6-*strategies for crisis prevention*, K7) for all students. Most practicum classrooms are inclusive classrooms. Teacher candidates identify the *supports provided in the general education classroom* (ICC5S3). Teacher candidates align the existing structure with the learning characteristics of the students (academic performance (ICC5S6) and diversity of the student population (ICC5S13) and identify changes that may better meet student needs (ICC5K8, ICC5K7, IGC5S4). This aspect of the standard is assessed in rubric sections: Spatial Arrangements, Rules, and Knowledge of the School. Teacher candidates identify the supports available (schedule of routines (ICC5S12) and rules (ICC5S2) and other supports (ICC5S-5) to allow student understanding of their behavioral responsibilities and the structure of the school day. Teacher candidates identify changes in the current classroom (IGC5S4) that may better match the learning, culture), linguistic and social needs of the students in the class. (ICC5S1-S7) This aspect of the standard is assessed in rubric sections: Temporal Arrangements and Rules.

**c. A brief analysis of the data findings;**

**Fall 2007 – Fall 2009:** At the onset of the program's data collection system from Fall 2007 to Fall 2009, only data on overall performance on the Classroom Structure Project was collected. Data from this time period (n=203) indicated that over 90 percent of teacher candidates either achieve the minimum standard (during this time period the standard was C+ (77)) or higher. Eleven teacher candidates did not achieve this standard.

**Spring 2010 – Fall 2010:** During this time period, teacher candidate performance was generally at the Acceptable or Target level on the Classroom Structure project (Spring 2010 three teacher candidates' performance was below acceptable, and in

Fall 2010, only one was below acceptable). Teacher candidates demonstrated the greatest strength in the following area: **Knowledge of School** (CEC 3,5: ICC3K5, ICC3K1-3, ICC5K1-2, ICC5S3, ICC5S6). To proceed in the program, all students must achieve an overall meets standard to demonstrate achievement of the standards. Area to further review for additional teacher candidate support and consistency in faculty evaluation: Group Composition (CEC 3,5) with 19% evaluations at the developing level during one semester and Temporal Arrangements (CEC 5) with 29% of students at the developing level during one semester.

**d. An interpretation of how that data provides evidence for meeting standards:**

Prior to Spring 2010, five students at the undergraduate level of special education achieved at an unacceptable level on the Classroom Structure Project. Further analysis of the data in past semesters (Spring 2010 and Fall 2010) indicates that although most students over this time period met standard on CEC #3 and CEC #5, the breakdown of performance within the standards can be summarized as:

Rubric Indicator/CEC Standards	Performance at Acceptable or Target
<b>Knowledge of School</b> (CEC 3,5)ICC5K1-2, ICC5S3, ICC5S6, ICC3K5, ICC3K1-3	98%
<b>Setting &amp; Students</b> (CEC 3) ICC3K1-2, IGC3K2-3,	95%
<b>Spatial Arrangements</b> (CEC5) IGC5K2-3, ICC5S5	75%
<b>Temporal Arrangements</b> (CEC 5) ICC5S12	90%
<b>Rules</b> (CEC 5) ICC5S1-S5	92%
<b>Group Composition</b> (CEC 3,5)IGC5S4-5, ICC3K2, ICC3K5	87%
<b>Summary of PBIS</b> (CEC 5) IGC5S4-5, ICC5S1-S5, ICC5S12, IGC5K2-3, ICC5S5, ICC5S10	95%

**Assessment used to make changes: Beginning in January 2010**, the Department began to use a new assessment system, *Chalk and Wire*, to manage student work, assist faculty with assessment, and to store and analyze data. This change will allow rubric based data to be sorted by student program. As of January 2010, general courses taken by all teacher candidates in special education are reported together. Only the overall evaluation is available by program. Although Chalk and Wire is used, full implementation is expected in the next few semesters.

**Additional changes: Fall 2007 – Fall 2008:** As a result of an analysis of data (three students achieving “developing”), department policy changed (Spring 2008) to require all students to meet standard on their artifact to proceed in the program. **Spring 2008:** As a result of an analysis of data, department policy changed (Spring 2008) to require all students to meet standard on their artifact to proceed in the program. **Spring 2009:** Analysis of the overall data indicated that a limited number of students achieved below the Acceptable level but did not provide information to identify the specific areas of weakness. As a result, additional data was collected on the Classroom Structure Project at the rubric component level to allow greater analysis of teacher candidate skills and areas in need of further candidate support. An additional departmental change occurred during Spring 2009. An additional review of rubrics showed a number of teacher candidates provided multiple submissions. As of Spring 2009, all teacher candidates must achieve overall “Acceptable” on the Classroom Structure Project with a maximum of two submissions within a given semester. Students who achieve less than Acceptable (Unacceptable/Developing) must re-take SPED 310 and achieve Acceptable on the Classroom Structure Project submitted during the second enrollment in SPED 310. Teacher candidates are not allowed to proceed in the program unless they have demonstrated competence of the CEC standards with a maximum of two submissions. **Fall 2009:** A complete review of SPED 310 course and Classroom Structure Project data was used to decide the criterion for “Acceptable”. A careful analysis of all course artifact data found that some students received the “Acceptable” rating at the level of C+ in a number of courses and faculty determined this as less than the desired level of “meets standard”. As a result, faculty implemented a change to identify “Acceptable” from a C+ (77) to a “B-“ (80). This change was consistent with other key departments (Elementary Education, Secondary Education). **Spring 2010:** The department began implementation of an electronic portfolio system (Chalk and Wire) for student submission of work, and for on-line evaluation/feedback by course professors. The systematic adoption of the process focused on full-time faculty first, and will expand to encompass all faculty. This explains differences in reported data. As users become more proficient, further analysis of data by individual programs will be possible.

CEC Assessment #1: Content Based Assessment  
Guidelines for the Classroom Structure Project

**Purpose**

Behavior that signifies students' social and academic learning is the focus of this project. Prospective special educators learn about, describe, and come to understand factors in the social context of the special and general education settings that influence student behavior and consequently their social and academic learning. They identify situational factors that adversely affect students' learning. Prospective special educators propose an alternative design of classroom factors and develop an evaluation process for determining the effectiveness of their redesign.

**Standards**

The classroom structure project relates most directly to the following Council for Exceptional Children and Rhode Island Professional Teacher Standard and Indicators:

**CEC Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences.**

Special educators understand the effects that an exceptional condition/ 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.

**CEC Standard 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.

**RIPTS Standard 1:** Teachers create learning experience using a broad base of general knowledge that reflects an understanding of the nature of the world in which we live

**RIPTS Standard 3:** Teachers create instructional opportunities that reflect an understanding of how children learn and develop.

**RIPTS Standard 6:** Teachers create a learning environment that encourages appropriate standards of behavior, positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

**Product**

In the classroom structure project, candidates describe the following features of the special education setting in which they are doing their assigned practicum field work:

**Knowledge of the School:** Teacher candidates must describe the make-up of the school and the influences (cultural, linguistic, learning needs, academic performance, the number of teachers that influence student learning.

**Setting and Students:** Teacher candidates identify four students within their assigned practicum classroom. Each student is comprehensively described incorporating a full analysis of the seven areas of that may influence learning and social skills: 1. chronological age, 2. gender, 3. disability condition, 4. level of academic functioning, 5. racial, ethnic, linguistic and socioeconomic status of the students, 6. personal and social skills, and 7. unique individual characteristics.

**Spatial Arrangement:** Teacher candidates describe the arrangement of the physical environment, identifying the factors that can affect student behavior and learning. Areas of strength and changes that may have a positive effect should be identified with a detailed rationale.

**Temporal Arrangement:** Teacher candidates describe the classroom schedule. Thoughtful descriptions of the student learning needs to the system of schedule communication should be addressed (i.e. is the schedule presented in a way that the students in the class use/understand?). Scheduling and time allocations which facilitate student learning should be addressed. Areas of change and Areas of strength in these areas should be noted.

**Rules:** Teacher candidates describe the positive support strategies employed within the classroom. Consistency of implementation, positive approach, use of data to identify effect of strategies, implementation of whole-school positive behavioral support strategies should also be addressed.

**Group Composition/Group Process:** The influences of classroom features on student learning and behavior are indicated. Recommendations for redesigning the special education setting so as to maximize student academic and social learning are presented. A format and evaluation criteria for the structure project are provided by the instructor.

**Summary of Positive Reinforcement System:** Teacher candidates develop a positive reinforcement system inclusive of identified behaviors, procedures, reinforcers, and timing to support student learning. The reinforcement system must align with student learning, behavior, linguistic, and cultural needs. Teacher candidates identify the effect on student learning achieved through this system.

**Teacher candidates must demonstrate performance on the Classroom Structure Project at the level of “Acceptable” to proceed to further coursework.**

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**CEC Standard 3: ILD, CEC Standard 5: Learning Environments and Social Interaction**

## Structure Project Rubric

RIPTS 1, 3, 6; CEC 3, 5

	<b>Target</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Approaches Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>
<b>Knowledge of School</b> (4 points) <b>Areas of Analysis:</b> 1-Number of students, 2-Make up of student population, 3-Number of teachers, 4-Academic performance of school, and 5-Number of students receiving special education services. ICC5K1-2, ICC5S3, ICC5S6 ICC3K5, ICC3K1-3	Describes in detail with full understanding of the school setting each of the areas of analysis.	Describes in detail with adequate understanding of the school setting each of the areas of analysis.	Describes in limited terms the school setting inclusive of minimally three areas of analysis.	Describes in limited terms less than three areas of analysis.
<b>Setting and Students</b> (4 points) <b>Areas of Analysis:</b> 1-Chronological age, 2-Gender, 3-Disability Label, 4-Level of academic functioning, 5-Personal and social skills, and 6-Unique individual characteristics. ICC3K1-2, IGC3K2-3,	The <u>specific setting</u> and four students are comprehensively described.	The <u>specific setting</u> and four students are adequately described.	The <u>specific setting</u> and four students are minimally described.	The <u>specific setting</u> and four or less students are described in broad general terms.
<b>Spatial Arrangements</b> (4 points) <b>Areas of Analysis:</b> 1-Location of desks and student assignment to desks, 2-Learning centers, 3-Recreation centers, 4-Room dividers, 5-Study carrels, 6-Storage areas, 7-Windows, 8-Other distinctive features, 9-Mobility patterns for students, and 10-Task cards and work completed folders if used. IGC5K2-3, ICC5S5	The physical structure of the room is comprehensively described inclusive of each area of analysis.  A detailed floor plan is provided. The physical environment is thoughtfully reviewed in terms of influencing behavior with reference to Chapter nine as appropriate. Aspects of the environment to be maintained and aspects to be changed are noted and a thoughtful rationale for each provided.	The physical structure of the room is adequately area of analysis.  A detailed floor plan is provided. The physical environment is reviewed in terms of influencing behavior with reference to Chapter nine as appropriate. Aspects of the environment to be maintained and aspects to be changed are noted and a rationale for each provided.	The physical structure of the room is minimally described inclusive of eight areas of analysis.  A simple floor plan is provided. The physical environment is reviewed in terms of influencing behavior. Aspects of the environment to be maintained and aspects to be changed are noted and a limited rationale for each provided.	The physical structure of the room is minimally described inclusive of eight or less areas of analysis.  The floor plan and reflection specific to the influence of the environment on behavior and suggested changes are superficial.

	<b>Target</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Approaches Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>
<b>Temporal Arrangements</b> (4 points)	A detailed copy of the daily and weekly schedule is provided. A thoughtful reflection is included inclusive of aspects of the schedule, which are appropriate, and aspects, which require change, with reference to Chapter 8 as appropriate.	A copy of the daily and weekly schedule is provided. An adequate reflection is included inclusive of aspects of the schedule, which are appropriate, and aspects, which require change, with reference to Chapter 8 as appropriate.	A copy of the daily and weekly schedule is provided. A limited reflection is included inclusive of aspects of the schedule, which are appropriate, and aspects, which require change.	Daily and weekly schedules lack detail. Reflection section is minimal or not included.
ICC5S12				
<b>Rules</b> (4 points) <b>Areas of Analysis:</b> 1-Are the rules developmentally appropriate? 2-Were the rules collaboratively developed? 3-Are the rules few in number? 4-Are the rules positively stated? 5-Are the rules appropriately posted? 6-Are the rules periodically reviewed? 7-Is rule following behavior positively reinforced? 8-What are the procedures when a rule is violated?	A list of classroom rules is provided and thoughtfully critiqued inclusive of consideration of each of the areas of analysis.  Thoughtful suggestions, demonstrating full understanding of the rule setting process and or the rules is included? Reference to Chapter 8 in the text is included.	A list of classroom rules is provided and adequately critiqued inclusive of consideration of each of the following:  Appropriate suggestions, demonstrating full understanding of the rule setting process and or the rules is included? Reference to Chapter 8 in the text is included.	A list of classroom rules is provided with adequate consideration of at least six areas of analysis.  Suggestions for change are superficial or not provided.	A list of classroom rules is provided with adequate consideration of less than six areas of analysis.  Suggestions for change are superficial or not provided.
ICC5S1-S5				
<b>Group Composition Group Process/PBIS</b> (4 points)	The composition of the group is comprehensively described with reference to the guidelines for group composition as included in Chapter 8. The stage of group development for the group and individual students is specified. Examples demonstrating full understanding of group composition are provided. Group processes described in Chapter 9 are comprehensively described inclusive of classroom examples when available. Uses of group processes within the context of the current setting are thoughtfully discussed indicating usefulness in influencing behavior within the setting.	The composition of the group is adequately described with reference to the guidelines for group composition as included in Chapter 8. The stage of group development for the group and individual students is specified. Examples demonstrating understanding of group composition are provided. Group processes described in Chapter 9 are adequately described inclusive of classroom examples when available. Uses of group processes within the context of the current setting are adequately discussed indicating usefulness in influencing behavior within the setting.	The composition of the group is minimally described. Examples demonstrating understanding of group composition are provided. Group processes are minimally described inclusive of classroom examples when available. Uses of group processes within the context of the current setting are minimally discussed indicating usefulness in influencing behavior within this setting.	Group composition and group process are superficially described. Examples are inappropriate or not provided.
IGC5S4-5 ICC3K2, ICC3K5				

	<b>Target</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Approaches Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>
<b>Summary of PBIS</b> (4 points)	The summary section provides a comprehensive review of the physical environment, temporal arrangements, rules and group composition/process demonstrating critical thinking skills within the context of the RIPTS #6 and the related indicators; Teachers creates a learning environment that encourages appropriate standards of behavior, positive social interaction, and active engagement in learning and self-motivation.	The summary section provides an adequate review of the physical environment, temporal arrangements, rules and group composition/process demonstrating critical thinking skills within the context of the RIPTS#6 and the related indicators; Teachers creates a learning environment that encourages appropriate standards of behavior, positive social interaction, and active engagement in learning and self-motivation.	The summary section provides a limited review of the physical environment, temporal arrangements, rules and group composition/process within the context of the RIPTS #6 and the related indicators; Teachers creates a learning environment that encourages appropriate standards of behavior, positive social interaction, and active engagement in learning and self-motivation.	The summary section provides a superficial review of the physical environment, temporal arrangements, rules and group composition/process within the context of the RIPTS #6 and the related indicators; Teachers creates a learning environment that encourages appropriate standards of behavior, positive social interaction, and active engagement in learning and self-motivation.
IGC5S4-5, ICC5S1-S5 ICC5S12, IGC5K2-3 ICC5S5, ICC5S10				
<b>Writing Style</b> (4 points)	The student's written communication effectively presents ideas in an organized fashion and free of mechanical errors (spelling, syntax, grammar, and usage).	The student's written communication effectively presents ideas in an organized fashion with a few minor mechanical errors (spelling, syntax, grammar, and usage).	The student's written communication effectively presents ideas in an organized fashion but with many mechanical errors (spelling, syntax, grammar, and usage).	The student's written communication does not present ideas in an organized fashion and demonstrates minimal competence in the proper mechanics of writing (spelling, syntax, grammar, and usage).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Unacceptable \_\_\_\_\_ Developing \_\_\_\_\_ Acceptable \_\_\_\_\_ Target

BS in Special Education Mild/Moderate Disabilities (Elementary/Middle)

Assessment 1: Content Based Assessment

**DATA TABLE**

**Classroom Structure Project**

	Fall 2007 n=48			Spring 2008 n=45			Summer 2008 n=13			Fall 2008 N=52		
	U/D	A	T	U/D	A	T	U/D	A	T	U/D	A	T
<b>Knowledge of School</b> (CEC 3,5) ICC5K1-2, ICC5S3, ICC5S6 ICC3K5, ICC3K1-3												
<b>Setting &amp; Students</b> (CEC 3) ICC3K1-2, IGC3K2-3,												
<b>Spatial Arrangements</b> (CEC5) IGC5K2-3, ICC5S5												
<b>Temporal Arrangements</b> (CEC 5) ICC5S12												
<b>Rules</b> (CEC 5) ICC5S1-S5												
<b>Group Composition</b> (CEC 3,5) IGC5S4-5 ICC3K2, ICC3K5												
<b>Summary of PBIS</b> (CEC 5) IGC5S4-5, ICC5S1-S5 ICC5S12, IGC5K2-3 ICC5S5, ICC5S10												
Writing Style												
Overall Evaluation	0 0%	23 48%	25 52%	2 4%	21 47%	22 49%	1 8%	0 0%	12 92%	3 6%	21 40%	28 54%

U=Unacceptable

D=Developing

A=Acceptable

T=Target



BS in Special Education Mild/Moderate Disabilities (Elementary/Middle)

Assessment 1: Content Based Assessment

**DATA TABLE**

**Classroom Structure Project**

	Spring 2009 n=45			Fall 2009 N=43			Spring 2010 n=32			Fall 2010 n=31		
	U/D	A	T	U/D	A	T	U/D	A	T	U/D	A	T
<b>Knowledge of School</b> (CEC 3,5) ICC5K1-2 ICC3K1, ICC3K5, IIC3K1-3							1 3%	10 31%	21 65%	0	11 35%	20 65%
<b>Setting &amp; Students</b> (CEC 3) ICC3K1-2 IIC3K1-3							2 6%	19 59%	11 34%	1 3%	25 81%	5 16%
<b>Spatial Arrangements</b> (CEC5) IIC5K3-4, ICC5S5							3 9%	15 47%	13 41%	1 3%	27 87%	3 10%
<b>Temporal Arrangements</b> (CEC 5) ICC5S12							5 16%	18 56%	9 28%	1 3%	27 87%	3 10%
<b>Rules</b> (CEC 5) ICC5S1-S5							4 11%	18 56%	10 31%	1 3%	28 90%	2 6%
<b>Group Composition</b> (CEC 3,5) IIC5S4-5, ICC3K5 ICC3K2, ICC3K4,							7 22%	14 44%	11 34%	1 3%	26 84%	4 13%
<b>Summary</b> (CEC 5) ICC5S1-S5 IIC5S4-5, ICC5S12 IIC5K3-4, ICC5S5							3 9%	16 50%	13 41%	0	21 68%	10 32%
Writing Style							4 11%	13 41%	15 47%	0	22 71%	9 29%
Overall Evaluation	3 7%	24 53%	18 40%	2 5%	23 53%	18 42%	3 9%	16 50%	13 41%	1 3%	20 65%	10 32%

