



November 4, 2010

It is my pleasure to inform you that the Department of Special Education and the Dean's Office have approved your application for admission into the Special Education/Elementary Teacher Education Program within the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development. Based on your skills, past performance, and personal qualities, you are entitled to enter the Special Education Department's professional education sequence.

This is the next step on your journey to becoming a special influence on the personal growth and educational success of your future students. Please remember that your continued strong performance at the College and in your major courses is important. In order to maintain your program status, the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development requires a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.50 as well as successful performance in your teacher preparation programs. You must earn a grade of at least B- in all special education courses past SPED 300. Please consult with your special education advisor, Dr. Ying Hui, to plan your course of study and to identify deadlines for portfolio assessments and standardized tests.

Before student teaching you must take and pass the Praxis II Elementary Education Content Area Exercises (0012) test. Passing this test is prerequisite to student teaching. Passing it is also required for teacher certification in Rhode Island. Please consult the Educational Testing Service website ([www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)) for specific test administration information.

The Feinstein School of Education and Human Development will provide you with important information (using your RIC email address) while you pursue your education degree. Please use your RIC email for all correspondence at Rhode Island College. It will also be important for you to check your RIC email often.

I wish you continued success in your teacher preparation program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen S. Castagno".

Karen S. Castagno, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean for Teacher Education

KSC/mdg

c: Special Education Department Files

Rhode Island College  
Feinstein School of Education and Human Development  
Department of Special Education

RECEIVED  
OCT 14 2010  
BY: \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Form**

Type or print this form and return:

Department of Special Education  
Rhode Island College HM049  
600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue  
Providence, RI 02908

Date 10/13/10

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Emp II \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Rhode Island College E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION

American Indian/Alaskan Native     Asian/Pacific Islander     Black/African American  
 Hispanic/Latino     White     2 or More

Education Curriculum Elementary Education

Special Education Teaching Concentration School (  all that apply )

- Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Kindergarten through Middle
- Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Middle through Secondary Level
- Severe/Profound Disabilities Children and Young Adults 3-21

When submitting this application include the following in the Special Education Application Binder:

1. a completed special education application form;
2. a copy of current transcripts from Rhode Island College and other institutions of higher education attended during the last ten years documenting a minimum overall course grade point average of 2.50 in all college course work and including the Special Education 300 or equivalent (department chair approval required) indicating a grade of B- or better;
3. one reference letter from a professional documenting the extent and quality of the candidate's experience with individuals with disabilities;
4. a personal statement describing the candidate's interest in a career teaching students with disabilities; this statement must address all content areas listed under the Content/Purpose section of the Career Commitment Essay rubric which is included in these guidelines;
5. a copy of a letter of acceptance to an elementary or a secondary education teacher preparation program.

# Report Results

Return

**Rhode Island College**

Rhode Island College

Identifying Information

Name

Student ID

SSN

Address

07-2039

Print Date

- - - - - **Academic Program History** - - - - -

Program : Ugrad Degree General College  
 2009-03-25 : Active in Program  
           2009-03-25 : E1 Ed Undecided-IM Major  
 Program : Ugrad Deg Education & Humn Dev  
 2010-07-06 : Active in Program  
           2010-07-06 : ELED, Special Education-BS Major  
 Program : Non-Degree Undergraduate  
 2008-08-28 : Active in Program  
           2008-08-28 : Visiting High School Student Major

- - - - - **Beginning of Undergraduate Record** - - - - -

**Fall 2008**

ENGL	113E	Approaches to Drama	3.00	3.00	A	12.000
TERM GPA :	4.000	TERM TOTALS :	3.00	3.00		12.000
CUM GPA :	4.000	CUM TOTALS :	3.00	3.00		12.000

**Spring 2009**

ENGL	117E	Contemporary Approach to Lit	3.00	3.00	A	12.000
TERM GPA :	4.000	TERM TOTALS :	3.00	3.00		12.000
CUM GPA :	4.000	CUM TOTALS :	6.00	6.00		24.000

**Fall 2009**

HONR	161	Seminar in Western Literature	4.00	4.00	B+	13.320
MATH	143	Math For Elem Sch Teachers I	3.00	3.00	A	12.000
POL	201	Development of Amer Democracy	3.00	3.00	A	12.000
WRTG	100H	Writing and Rhetoric	4.00	4.00	A-	14.680
TERM GPA :	3.714	TERM TOTALS :	14.00	14.00		52.000
CUM GPA :	3.800	CUM TOTALS :	20.00	20.00		76.000

Dean's List

**Spring 2010**

BIOL	109	Fund Concepts Of Biology	4.00	4.00	A	16.000
FNED	346	Schooling in a Democratic Soc	4.00	4.00	A	16.000

INST	100	FSEHD Tech Competency Test		0.00	S	
MATH	144	Math For Elem Sch Teachers II	3.00	3.00	A	12.000
PSYC	110	Introduction to Psychology	3.00	3.00	A	12.000
	TERM GPA :	4.000	TERM TOTALS :	14.00	14.00	56.000
	CUM GPA :	3.882	CUM TOTALS :	34.00	34.00	132.000
		Dean's List				

Summer 2010

SPED	300	Intro Ed of Exceptional Chld	4.00	4.00	A	16.000
	TERM GPA :	4.000	TERM TOTALS :	4.00	4.00	16.000
	CUM GPA :	3.895	CUM TOTALS :	38.00	38.00	148.000

Fall 2010

ANTH	162	Non-Western Worlds:	4.00			
		Course Topic(s): North America				
		North America				
CEP	315	Educational Psychology	4.00			
ELED	300	Concepts of Teaching	3.00			
HIST	161	Western History	4.00			
	TERM GPA :	0.000	TERM TOTALS :	0.00	0.00	0.000
	CUM GPA :	3.895	CUM TOTALS :	38.00	38.00	148.000

**Undergraduate Career Totals**

	CUM GPA :	3.895	CUM TOTALS :	38.00	38.00	148.000
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- - - - - **Non-Course Milestones** - - - - -

2008-12-18 College Mathematics Requirement  
 Milestone Status: Completed  
 2008-12-18 SAT Test Taken - Completed  
 2009-12-22 College Writing Requirement  
 Milestone Status: Completed  
 2009-12-22 Course Taken - Completed

## Letter of Recommendation

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for [REDACTED], who is applying for admissions into the special education program at Rhode Island College. This spring [REDACTED] worked with children from diverse backgrounds in a first grade inclusion classroom. She demonstrated superb interpersonal and organizational skills. She was always prompt, dressed professionally, and very inquisitive in nature. [REDACTED] is a good listener, and has the ability to convey information clearly. She possesses the caring nature, listening skills and intellectual capacity to become an exceptional special educator.

In conclusion, [REDACTED] loves working with children with special needs, and it shows! I highly recommend her for your special education program. If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact me at 792-9420 or by email at [mcoppa@narragansett.k12.ri.us](mailto:mcoppa@narragansett.k12.ri.us).

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Special Educator,

ol

## Personal Statement: Career Commitment Essay

### Admission into the Special Education Program

“We all need someone who inspires us to do better than we know how.” –Anonymous

Before writing this essay, I sat down and asked myself why I wanted to become a special educator. I always knew that I wanted to become a teacher, but *why*? Is it my love for children or my wanting to make a difference in a student's life? Is it the chance to educate all students equally or the chance to implement significant learning? As I struggled with this answer, I knew that there had to be one specific reason why I want to be a special educator. And then one night, it hit me. I sat down to watch a new show on MTV called, “The World of Jenks.” The show is about a twenty-year old film maker who wants to know what it is like to live in someone else's shoes. For this particular episode, Jenks wanted to know what it is like to live with Autism. After following the life of a twenty year old boy with Autism, Jenks realized the complexity and sensitivity of living life with a disability. He watched as every day things set the boy off emotionally; like the beeping of horns or the smell of cologne. After watching this, I realized that this is exactly why I want to be a special educator. Children with special needs notice the little things, the small beauties of life that the everyday buzz can cause someone to miss. These children experience these things every day, and I want to have the patience and tolerance to take notice and enjoy the little things in life. This can only be done through becoming a special education teacher. Every day we walk by the world without noticing things like the color of flowers, or what is growing outside. Special needs students have a way of pointing out the beautiful things in life, and this quality inspires me. These students inspire me to become a better

person, when I cannot find the inspiration elsewhere. That is why I want to become a special educator.

From my sudden premonition while watching “The World of Jenks,” I soon came up with many reasons why I am choosing the special education program. First, I want to be an educator because of my love for children. I love to see how children grow and mature intellectually because of the actions of a teacher. This love for children will motivate me to come into the classroom every day and aspire to change the lives of my students. My second reason for choosing the special education program is because of a personal experience that touches my heart at home. I have a ten-year old brother who receives special education, and I have watched him struggle with school throughout my life. Without the support that he receives from his special education services, he would be nowhere close to the academic level that he is currently at. Seeing this, I realize that I want to become a special educator in order to help students like my brother, and use my teaching to help these students grow and achieve at a higher academic level. Another reason why I chose the special education program is because I want to help special needs students to live their life to the fullest. Learning is a tool of communication, and without communication, a life cannot be fully lived. I want to teach these students how to communicate in order to get what they need to achieve in life.

I have been committed to helping students achieve in life since the time that I could teach my brother how to do things like tie his shoes. This commitment to teaching is everlasting and strong. I am determined and hard working, and I want to affect every child’s life that I have the pleasure of teaching. My commitment to teaching will involve planning and implementing meaningful lessons for my students to result in significant learning. I will also provide a stable learning environment for my students because I will be committed to having effective classroom

management. In addition, I will also be committed to giving my student's feedback and collaborating with other teachers in order to make my student's learning experience more successful. I know that I will always have more learning to do, and with these tools of determination, I will be forever committed to teaching.

My commitment to teaching has developed throughout the many times I have spent in a learning environment. From these experiences, I have developed specific beliefs about teaching and learning. My first belief is that students learn best from varying approaches of teaching. For example, during my college classes, I learn best from hearing the information and having the information reinforced with a visual. Therefore, I know that differentiating instruction is essential for the successful learning of all students. During high school, I taught a lesson to a pre-school class at the Scituate Early Learning Center, on healthy foods versus unhealthy foods. I first presented this information with a story book, and then reinforced the knowledge with a board game and a felt board that showed the sequence of events in the book. The students and I also had a verbal discussion about what makes food healthy and what makes food unhealthy. After the lesson, I was delighted to find that all of my students completed my desired learning objective of knowing the difference between healthy foods and unhealthy foods. This achievement was done through hard work, and presenting the information in a variety of ways for different learners. That is why my belief of differentiating instruction will promote successful learning for all students, because not all students learn the same way.

Another teaching belief that I hold, is the idea that all students should be educated equally and have equal educational opportunities, despite personal judgments. Even if a student misbehaves in class, that student has the right to an education. Additionally, even if a student's social class and economic class affects their school achievement, they also have the right to an



education. I used this belief towards my experience during my FNED 346 class, where I tutored in a fourth grade classroom at Edmund W. Flynn Elementary in South Providence. During my experience, I worked with a child who misbehaved in class and never really seemed to be listening to what I was saying. Despite these challenges, I continuously worked with the child, and helped him accomplish his work. But even on my last day of tutoring, I was still not sure that I had even gotten through to him. But, I was pleasantly surprised when before I left, he gave me a card for my farewell. Inside the card, the child had written that he was thanking me for helping him with writing, and he wanted to know if I would come back and visit. This card touched my heart and changed my life. I realized that because I gave this child an education, despite his superficial poor attitude and misbehaviors, I changed something for him, and he gained knowledge. That is why one of my teaching beliefs is that every child deserves the equal right to an education, despite personal judgments that are made about them.

My last teaching belief specifically has to do with why I am choosing to be a special educator, instead of a science educator or a music educator. This past summer, I was assigned to Narragansett Elementary School for my practicum in SPED 300. During this eye-opening experience, I worked with a child who had a primary learning disability in the areas of math, reading, and writing, and was also comorbid with a speech and language impairment and mild ADHD. As a teacher, you have to learn how to be flexible, and this is especially true for a special educator. I believe that flexibility is key in teaching, because it will essentially provide successful learning. On one of my first days at Narragansett Elementary, I was confronted with a challenge that I wasn't sure how to overcome. On that particular morning, I was helping the student work on her daily journal. Right away, I noticed that every word was spelled wrong and some letters were reversed. My first reaction was to stop the student and have her edit her

mistakes, but then I realized that if I stopped her, she would get off task and never be able to refocus. The most important thing I learned about the way that this child learns is that she just has to get her ideas down on paper, and then if we have time, we can go back and edit. In this situation, I had to be flexible in order to help this student accomplish her work. Although flexibility is a skill that I will need to improve, I truly believe that flexibility is essential in becoming a special educator.

From my teacher beliefs, I also have a strong disposition towards diversity, the learning of all students, collaboration, and lifelong learning. As mentioned before, my belief is that all students deserve an equal education, despite diversity that may affect their school achievement. However, I also believe that diversity in the classroom should be recognized. For example, most textbooks and curriculums are written for White, upper-class, students – the “typical” classroom. But in reality, no classroom is typical, and most classrooms do not have all White students that are upper-class. As a teacher, I will have to create lessons and assessments that are culturally competent for my students. Diversity in the classroom should also be recognized because this is the only way that a culturally competent classroom environment can be made. A classroom that fosters a safe and comfortable environment for all cultures of students ensures successful learning for all.

Connecting to my disposition on diversity, I also have a strong disposition about the education of *all* students. All education should be multicultural education, promoting equal educational opportunities for all. I believe that students should be educated at all costs, and I have a strong attitude towards how this can be accomplished. I have no problem with varying my approaches of teaching to accommodate all the students in my classroom. I am also positive towards collaboration with other professionals and life-long learning. I believe that no matter

what age you are, or how experienced you may be, there is something new to learn every day. By collaborating with other professionals, I will be opening the door to learning something new about teaching and learning. Whenever I struggle in my classroom, I will always ask the help of those who are more experienced than I am. This will help me gain the knowledge that I need in order to take a path towards life-long learning. After all, experience is key in becoming an accomplished teacher who is willing to spend her life learning, and promoting the learning of others.

Lastly, because I believe that new learning takes place every day, I also know that there is always room for improvement in my teaching. This improvement can be done through becoming a reflective teacher, who plans and implements lessons and then evaluates, reflects, and provides feedback on these lessons in order to improve them. One of the skills I need to improve upon is flexibility. This is because although I like structure, I also know that lessons will not always go as planned. A classroom is unpredictable, and a teacher has to be prepared for everything. As a special educator, I also have to improve my skills of prioritizing. Illustrated in my practicum experience at Narragansett Elementary, I realized that learning is the most important aspect of teaching; it is not correcting the minor details like spelling and incorrectly written letters. I need to improve my skills in order to prioritize the main idea of what needs to be learned, an essential part of teaching students who receive special education. In the end, I know that all of these skills will be improved with the more hands-on experience that I receive. This continual improvement reminds me of a system called “Kaizen” in Japan. In “Kaizen” all workers of a company take time to reflect on how the companies’ standards can be improved. These reflections are used to revise the companies’ standards. It is a system of continual improvement, which is just like the

teaching system. In order to become a successful special educator, I need to be constantly improving myself and my teaching skills.

In conclusion, I should be accepted into the Special Education Program at Rhode Island College because in order to become a successful teacher, I need to improve my skills. This improvement can only take place through experience, which would arise from being a student of the Special Education Program. I truly know that being a special educator is what I want to do, because I think that as a teacher you walk into the classroom everyday expecting to impact your student's lives. But, little do you know that these students have impacted your life instead. The impact and inspiration of these special education students will make you an accomplished teacher, and I want to be accepted into this program in order to attain that experience.



# FEINSTEIN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

## CAREER COMMITMENT ESSAY

Student \_\_\_\_\_

90

Reader \_\_\_\_\_

YIN-HUI MICHAEL

Date \_\_\_\_\_

10/22/2010

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

Revision Date \_\_\_\_\_

Score \_\_\_\_\_

	EXEMPLARY 4	ACCEPTABLE 3	REVISE/RESUBMIT 2	UNACCEPTABLE 1	
	EXEMPLARY	ACCEPTABLE	REVISE/RESUBMIT	UNACCEPTABLE	
<b>CONTENT/PURPOSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasons for choosing program</li> <li>Commitment to teaching</li> <li>Specific experiences used to discuss beliefs</li> <li>Dispositions toward diversity, all children, collaboration, lifelong learning</li> <li>Reflection on need to improve</li> </ul>	<p>All content criteria are evident and shows evidence of clear, well-reasoned reflection and understanding and knowledge of the nature of teaching. Essay includes effective use of personal experience to discuss promising dispositions. ✓</p>	<p>Most criteria are evident or some evidence of thoughtful reflection and understanding of teaching. Essay includes some relevant examples based on personal experience to discuss promising dispositions.</p>	<p>Some criteria are evident or shows little thoughtful reflection and understanding of teaching. Essay includes few relevant examples based on personal experience; does not generally use those examples to discuss promising dispositions.</p>	<p>Content is relevant but not comprehensive or well integrated. There is little evidence of thoughtful reflection or understanding of teaching. Essay makes little connection to personal experience and/or dispositions or those made are not relevant.</p>
<b>EXPRESSION/VOICE</b>	<p>Well focused essay with evidence of thought in composition, phrasing and structure. Audience is clear and is effectively addressed. ✓</p>	<p>Essay is focused and shows evidence of skill in writing. Audience is clear throughout.</p>	<p>Essay is not focused and shows minimal evidence of writing skills. Audience is generally clear.</p>	<p>Essay is poorly expressed with little attention to language and sentence structure</p>	
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<p>Logically organized, using an appropriate format and written structure. Effective transitions between ideas ✓</p>	<p>Essay is organized, using appropriate format and structure. Transitions between ideas are weak or inconsistent.</p>	<p>Essay is organized. Format is appropriate, but structure is weak with little evidence of transitions between ideas.</p>	<p>Essay is disorganized; no evidence of a logical outline or transitional attempts.</p>	
<b>CONVENTIONS</b>	<p>Completely free from spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. ✓</p>	<p>Essay is mostly clean (has no more than 3 errors) in spelling, punctuation, and grammar</p>	<p>Essay contains many errors (more than 3) in spelling, punctuation, and grammar which do not detract from reader's understanding.</p>	<p>Essay contains numerous errors in spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar which detract significantly from the reader's understanding.</p>	

**INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS:**

- A score of 4 or 3 is passing, submit with your portfolio.
- A score of 2, the essay should be revised and resubmitted with all original paperwork for the next assessment date (see department for dates). Recommend Writing Center for assistance.
- A score of 1, the essay is unacceptable and should be completely redone. Students should visit the Writing Center for assistance.



**REACH  
INSPIRE  
CONNECT**

June 29, 2010

It is my pleasure to inform you that the Department of Elementary Education and the Dean's office have approved your application for admission into the Teacher Education Program in Elementary Education within the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development. Based on your skills, past performance, and personal qualities, you are entitled to enter the department's professional education sequence. You have identified special education as your teaching concentration on the application. To have special education as your teaching concentration, you must also apply to the Special Education Program upon completion of SPED 300 and be admitted. Admission Portfolio Guidelines are available from the Special Education Department in Horace Mann 046 and on the Department website ([www.ric.edu/sped](http://www.ric.edu/sped)).

Any candidate admitted to FSEHD after August 24, 2009 who majors in Elementary Education or Early Childhood Education **and** a Teaching concentration in Special Education will be required to complete one full semester of student teaching in each certification area.

While enrolled in your first elementary education course (ELED 300) you must take and pass the Praxis II Content Knowledge (0014) test. The passing score is 145. The score is required before taking elementary education methods courses; it is also required for teacher certification in Rhode Island. Only a paper based test administration is available. Please consult the Education Testing Service website ([www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)) for specific test administration information.

This is the first step on your continuing journey to becoming a special influence on the personal growth and educational success of your future students. Please remember that your continued strong performance at the College and in your major courses is important. In order to maintain your program status, the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development requires a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.50 as well as successful performance in your teacher education program. Please consult with your advisor, Dr. MacGregor Kniseley, to plan your course of study and to identify deadlines for portfolio assessments and standardized tests.

The Feinstein School of Education and Human Development will provide you with important information (using your RIC email address) while you pursue your education degree. Please use your RIC email for all correspondence at Rhode Island College. It will also be important for you to check your RIC email often.

Welcome to the process of becoming a teacher.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen S. Castagno".

Karen S. Castagno, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean for Teacher Education

c: Elementary Education Department Files

**PLEASE TAKE THIS TO THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS IN ELED 300**

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE  
Feinstein School of Education  
and Human Development  
Teacher Education