

CEC Assessment #1: Content Based Assessment Comprehensive Examination in Severe Disabilities

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.

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.

Candidates enrolled in the M.Ed. in Severe Disabilities demonstrate the culmination of learning in their last semester of coursework through their comprehensive examination. The examination consists of five questions that focus on different aspects of professional practice in educating students with severe disabilities. Candidates are provided four hours to complete the assessment.

The Comprehensive Examination in Severe Disabilities addresses the following CEC standards:

CEC STANDARD 1: FOUNDATIONS

CEC STANDARD 2: DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNERS

How assessment aligns with CEC Standards #1 and 2:

Teacher candidates describe the term “severe disabilities” (ICC1K5, ICC2K2). This description includes broad analysis including impact of severe disabilities on families and family values/cultures (ICC2K3 ICC2K4, IIC2K2), and the complexity /intensity of service delivery needed to support students with severe disabilities (ICC2K2). Teacher candidates describe the educational legislation (ICC1K2) that ensures the rights of students with disabilities and their families (ICC1K4, ICC1K7, IIC1K4, IIC1K5). Teacher candidates infuse a link to educational legislation and research supporting evidence based practice in their definition (ICC1K1).

Teacher candidates describe the functional and learning style characteristics they would expect to be demonstrated by a student with severe disabilities, and additional challenges (each semester the student-specifics change and include any combination of intellectual disabilities, hearing, loss, vision loss, medical needs, and/or physical disabilities). Teacher candidates are provided a brief synopsis of family characteristics (age, culture, ethnicity, home language, and other key descriptors) (CEC 2: ICC2K4, IIC2K2; CEC 3: Individual Learning Differences) (CEC Standards 1 and 2 are assessed in Question 1: Definition of Severe Disabilities).

Teacher candidates demonstrate knowledge of the process of assessment for students with severe disabilities and complex challenges (ICC8S1-ICC8S5) and convey the ways that language, culture, and disability are considered in assessment (ICC1K5, ICC1K6) (This is assessed in Question 2: Evaluation)

Teacher candidates demonstrate knowledge of the organization of school and the collaboration between a wide range of school/ community agencies to successfully include students with severe/profound disabilities in schools, classrooms, and the larger community (ICC1K3). A rationale for including students with severe disabilities in regular education settings and using the general curriculum as a basis for education is presented. Rationale should cover a personal philosophy that addresses value of learning for all students (ICC1S1), the rights of all students to access the general curriculum, and the least restrictive school environment alongside their peers without disabilities (IIC1K4, IIC1K6), the benefits to all learners (ICC1K4), and the support of diversity including severe disabilities. Candidates provide practical strategies for implementing the plan for including students with severe/profound disabilities and evaluate their own effectiveness in supporting their inclusion.

(This is assessed in Question 5: Inclusion).

c. A brief analysis of the data findings;

Fall 2007-Fall 2010

The past four years of teacher candidate performance indicate teacher candidate’s performance was acceptable on all areas of analysis. No clear areas of strength were identified.

Areas for improvement to consider in future semesters:

Over that past year, teacher candidates demonstrated performance at the Acceptable level on the following content:

Question 3: Concepts or principles that are the essential foundations for designing an effective educational program for students with severe disabilities in the general education setting

Question 4: Developing effective communication systems for students with complex challenges

These concepts are introduced early in the M.Ed. in Severe Disabilities plan of study. These concepts will be reinforced in later classes to ensure teacher candidates have stronger understanding at the point of program exit.

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

An overall analysis over the three years prior to initial CEC submission and in the past year indicates teacher candidates have met standard as all have achieved an overall evaluation at either the Acceptable or Target level. Analysis of the data at the question level can be summarized as:

Question 1 (CEC Standards 1: Foundation, CEC 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners)

Teacher candidates identify the learning needs of students with severe disabilities consistent with professional practice. (CEC #1) They understand the development and characteristics of learners with severe disabilities (CEC #2) and convey a strong understanding of evidence-based practice to support these students at young ages and as transitioning to adulthood (CEC 3). The performance over the three years prior to initial CEC submission indicates:

73% received Acceptable level 27% received Target level

Over the past year (Spring 2010 and Fall 2010), teacher candidates have performed as follows:

50% received Acceptable level 50% received Target level

Question 2 (CEC Standard 8: Assessment, CEC Standard 1: Foundation)

Teacher candidates met CEC Standard 8 by conveying their knowledge of assessment and the role of assessment in the education of students with severe/profound disabilities. The performance over the three years prior to initial CEC submission indicates:

68% received Acceptable level 32% received Target level

Over the past year (Spring 2010 and Fall 2010), teacher candidates have performed as follows:

50% received Acceptable level 50% received Target level

Question 5 (CEC Standard 1: Foundations)

Teacher candidates demonstrate an understanding of the value of inclusion of all students and convey a strong rationale (personal, learning, and legislative) to support including students with severe/profound disabilities with peers without disabilities. The performance over the three years prior to initial CEC submission indicates the following:

63% received Acceptable level 37% received Target level

Over the past year (Spring 2010 and Fall 2010), teacher candidates have performed as follows:

50% received Acceptable level 50% received Target level

CEC Assessment #1: Content Based Assessment Sample Comprehensive Examination in Severe Disabilities

Answer each question in detail, providing examples to support each response. When appropriate, link answers with research-based effective practice.

1.
 - a. Explain the term “severe disabilities”. (CEC 1: Foundations; CEC 2:ICC2K2, ICC2K5, ICC2K6, IIC2K2, IIC2K4)
 - b. Describe the functional and learning style characteristics you would expect to be demonstrated by Canel , a 6 year old girl with severe disabilities. Canel has a profound level of mental retardation, is independently ambulatory, is legally blind, has excellent fine motor abilities, and receives nourishment and medication for seizures) via a g-tube. . Her family has strong ties to the Peruvian community in Rhode Island. The family speaks predominantly Spanish at home, although Canel’s siblings (ages 10 and 14) speak both English and Spanish. (CEC1: ICC1K10; CEC 2: ICC2K2, ICC2K3, ICC2K4, ICC2K7, IIC2K2, IIC2K3, IIC2K4; CEC 3: Individual Learning Differences)
 - c. Assuming that this same student (Canel) has “appropriate education”, describe how you would expect her/her education to change by the time she is 20.
(CEC 2: (ICC2K2, ICC2K3, ICC2K4, ICC2K7, IIC2K2, IIC2K3, IIC2K4)
(CEC 3: Individual Learning Differences)
2. Explain the components of a meaningful evaluation of students with severe disabilities. Describe the procedures you would use to evaluate each component. Provide one or two examples that illustrate each component. (CEC 8: ICC8S1-ICC8S5; CEC 1: ICC1K5, ICC1K6)
3. Describe the concepts or principles that are the essential foundations for designing an effective educational program for students with severe disabilities in the general education setting. Explain why each of these concepts is important. Provide one or two examples that illustrate each concept. (CEC 7: Instructional Planning)
4. Jon is a 12 year old boy who has severe mental retardation, physical challenges, and complex health needs (he receives nourishment via a g-tube and requires suctioning to remove excess mucus). He is able to identify common objects related to preferred activities (e.g. baseball, swing, soccer, and walk). He recently came to the United States from a country that primarily communicates in Portuguese. Jon is non verbal and has many “autistic-like” characteristics. Jon loves everything about balls and baseball. He attends a special education class in his neighborhood middle school and lives with his family. At this time, Jon has a very limited communication system that only very familiar adults understand and utilize.
 - a. Describe the process you would use to select and design a communication system for Jon.
 - b. Describe how you would determine the “content” that should be included in his communication system.
 - c. Describe the instructional procedures you would use to teach Jon to use his communication system.
 - d. Describe what communication competencies you would expect him to achieve in two years.
(CEC 6: Language; CEC 7 Instructional Strategies)
5.
 - a. Provide a rationale for including students with severe disabilities in regular education settings and using the general curriculum as a basis for education. (C EC 1: ICC1S1, ICC1K4, IIC1K4, IIC1K6)
 - b. Discuss some practical strategies for implementing your rationale (CEC 1: ICC1K3)
 - c. Evaluate your own effectiveness including students with severe disabilities. (CEC 1: Foundations)

Grading Rubric for Comprehensive Examination in Severe Disabilities

1. Description of Students with Severe Disabilities	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Target
Definition CEC 1: Foundations ICC1K5, IIC1K4; ICC1K2, ICC1K10 ICC1K4, ICC1K7, ICC1K1 IIC1K2, IIC1K3, IIC1K4, IIC1K6 CEC 2: ICC2K2, IIC2K4, IIC2K2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description is vague & provides information from limited perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description is clearly presented Information is provided from a variety of perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of severe disabilities is clearly presented and detailed Impact on families, service delivery, schools, and the community are included. Information is provided from a variety of perspectives Description supported by legislation and research supporting evidence-based practice in least restrictive environments that support the educational needs of students with complex challenges (behavioral, health, learning, sensory, and/or physical)
Learning Style Characteristics CEC 1: Foundations: ICC1K10 CEC 2: Char. Of Learners ICC2K2, ICC2K3, ICC2K4, ICC2K7, IIC2K2, IIC2K3, IIC2K4 CEC 3: Individual Learning Dif.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few learning style characteristics are described Key aspects of learning style are not found 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description is clearly presented Most aspects of learning style are described 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differences in human development are described including: Slower pace of learning; difficulty with abstract concepts Multiple opportunities needed for learning Difference in learning style Communication/social/behavioral/linguistic difference and the impact on the relationship with others (peers, families, educators)
Changes into Adulthood CEC 2: Char. Of Learners ICC2K2, ICC2K3, ICC2K4, ICC2K7, IIC2K2, IIC2K3, IIC2K4 CEC 3: Individual Learning Dif.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in program/student includes few aspects important for success in adulthood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in program/student includes a clear discussion of most key aspects important for success in adulthood 	Change in program/student includes a clear and detailed discussion of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to promote successful transition into adult life, self determination, and generalization of learning into new environments. Discussion of experiences in work, academics, and social areas/recreation Infusion of experiences in her community Expansion of learning and relationships with peers/adults Focus increasing on experiences important for success in adulthood including family/individual student needs
2. Meaningful Evaluation			
Components of Meaningful Evaluation CEC 1: Foundations ICC1K5, ICC1K6 CEC 8: Assessment ICC8S1-ICC8S5	Description is vague and provides information from limited perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation is clearly described Many aspects of evaluation are included 	Evaluation is clearly described according to the following components <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple types (formal/informal) and purposes (program eval, student progress, eligibility) of assessment Many examples are provided that are consistent with stated purpose and describe value of different evaluation procedures and the rights, and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, and other school professionals. Examples include: ecological inventory, Alternate Assessment/CBA to monitor student progress, and formal assessments

3. Effective Educational Programs

Foundations for Effective Educational Programs for Students with Severe/Profound Disabilities

CEC 7: Instructional Planning

- Description is vague and provides information from limited perspectives

- Description is clearly presented
- Description presents most key principles of effective educational programs

- Principles of effective educational programs include the following decision-making component, modified for individual needs of students:
- curriculum that is based in general education
 - Instruction is based on individual needs/strengths, guided by student progress, and involves the student in the process
 - Predictable system that matches student’s level of understanding and is used on an ongoing basis
 - Environment and behavioral supports match student nature and are implemented pro-actively
 - Incorporates social skill development
 - Families are involved and considered equal partners in decisions.

4. Development of Communication

Unacceptable

Select and Design Communication for Student

CEC 6: Language
CEC 4: Instructional Strategies

Description is vague and provides information from limited perspectives

Acceptable

- Many components of communication system development are included.
- Instructional strategies to introduce and expand the communication system are broad with few specific details provided.

Target

- Augmentative communication system development is clearly described and includes the following components:
- Analysis of student’s current communication
 - Identification of key partners in communication
 - Team decision-making involving the student, parents, professionals and other key individuals
 - Development of a system that is consistent with student’s preference, strengths, and culture (augmentative com system)
 - Full description of how the communication system will be introduced, taught, expanded
 - Consideration of how the system may grow with the student through time (“next steps”)

5. Effective Inclusion

Unacceptable

Inclusion

CEC 1: Foundations
ICC1S1, ICC1K4, IIC1K4, IIC1K6
ICC1K3

Description is vague and provides information from limited perspectives

Acceptable

- Definition of inclusion is included. Rationale is included but may lack depth or strategies are superficial without detailed strategies.

Target

- Inclusion is defined for students with severe disabilities, consistent with current professional practice and policy
- A rationale/personal philosophy for including students with severe disabilities in regular education settings is described fully with respect to many perspectives (peers, legislation, culture, policy, personal right)
- A rationale for using the general curriculum and least restrictive general education setting as a basis for education is described fully, utilizing AT, and augmentative communication to promote meaningful involvement.
- Practical strategies are described with examples that demonstrate reasonable, functional, and useful ways to implement inclusion.
- Detailed analysis of personal effectiveness in implementing inclusion is provided with clear strategies for “next steps”

DATA TABLE
Comprehensive Examination in Severe Disabilities

	Spring 2007 N=3			Fall 2007 N=7			Spring 2008 N=4			Fall 2008 N=1			Spring 2009 N=3		
	U	A	T	U	A	T	U	A	T	U	A	T	U	A	T
Question 1: Define Severe Disabilities CEC 1 ICC1K1-K2, ICC1K4-5, ICC1K7 ICC1K10, IIC1K2-K4, IIC1K6 CEC 2 ICC2K2-K4, ICC2K7 IIC2K2-K4,		2 (66%)	1 (33%)		5 (71%)	2 (29%)		3 (25%)	1 (25%)		1 (100%)			2 (66%)	1 (33%)
Question 2: What is Meaningful Assessment? CEC 1 ICC1K5, ICC1K6 CEC 8 ICC8S1-ICC8S5	1 33%	1 (33%)	1 (33%)		6 (86%)	1 (14%)		3 (75%)	1 (25%)		1 (100%)			2 (66%)	1 (33%)
Question 3: How to Plan a Program CEC 7		1 (33%)	2 (66%)		5 (71%)	2 (29%)		2 (50%)	2 (50%)		1 (100%)		1 (33%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)
Question 4: Aug. Communication System Development CEC 6; CEC 4		3 100%			4 (57%)	3 (43%)		2 (50%)	2 (50%)			1 (100%)		1 (33%)	2 (66%)
Question 5: The value of inclusion CEC 1 ICC1S1, ICC1K4, IIC1K4, IIC1K6, ICC1K3		2 (66%)	1 (33%)		6 (86%)	1 (14%)		2 (50%)	2 (50%)			1 (100%)		2 (66%)	1 (33%)

U = Unacceptable A=Acceptable T=Target

DATA TABLE
Comprehensive Examination in Severe Disabilities

	Fall 2009 N=1			Spring 2010 N=0			Fall 2010 N=2					
	U	A	U	U	U	T	U	A	T			
Question 1: Define Severe Disabilities CEC 1 ICC1K1-K2, ICC1K4-5, ICC1K7 ICC1K10, IIC1K2-K4, IIC1K6 CEC 2 ICC2K2-K4, ICC2K7 IIC2K2-K4,		1 (100%)						1 50%	1 50%			
Question 2: What is Meaningful Assessment? CEC 1 ICC1K5, ICC1K6 CEC 8 ICC8S1-ICC8S5								1 50%	1 50%			
Question 3: How to Plan a Program CEC 7		1 (100%)						2 100%				
Question 4: Aug. Communication System Development CEC 6; CEC 4								2 100%				
Question 5: The value of inclusion CEC 1 ICC1S1, ICC1K4, IIC1K4, IIC1K6, ICC1K3								2 100%				

U = Unacceptable A=Acceptable T=Target