

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Senate Committee on University Priorities
Memorandum



TO: Senate

FROM: Bill Krane
Acting Chair, SCUP
Acting Vice-President, Academic

RE: Post Baccalaureate Diploma in
Special Education for Educators and
Healthcare Professionals – SCUP 05-015

DATE: February 16, 2005

At its February 9, 2005 meeting the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP) recommended the following motion:

Motion

That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the proposal for a Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Special Education for Educators and Healthcare Professionals.

encl.

c: P. Shaker
L. LeMare
G. Nicholls

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate Committee on University Priorities

From: R. Blackman, Chair
Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies *R. Blackman*

Subject: Faculty of Education
Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Special Education for Educators and Healthcare Professionals
and
Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Environmental Education
(SCUS Reference: SCUS 04-25)

Date: December 15, 2004

At the SCUS meeting held on December 14, 2004, SCUS approved in principle and recommended approval by SCUP of new Post Baccalaureate Diploma:

- a) Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Special Education for Educators and Healthcare Professionals *SCUP 05-015*

The relevant documentation is attached for review by SCUP.

Proposal for a Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Special Education for Educators and Healthcare Professionals

Rationale:

Children and adults who struggle emotionally when presented with the demands of government mandated academic curriculums and/or with the complexities of interacting with peers and adults in a school and community culture are the concern not solely of educators, but of parents, school district administrators, policy makers, service providers and health professionals in the community. Along with each group there comes a specialized set of beliefs and a unique discourse to communicate about the nature and outcomes of learning strengths and weaknesses. For children to benefit from solutions offered by these diverse groups, educators and healthcare professionals must value and be willing to consider the views of parents, professionals and researchers who adhere to theoretical orientations that may be at odds with the ones they currently hold. Educators and healthcare professionals in the field of special education are faced with the challenge of integrating ideas from academic disciplines that have their origins in diverse schools of thought.

What courses available to students at SFU prepare future educators and/or healthcare consultants for this complex, collaborative role? What courses at the undergraduate level effectively prepare educators and healthcare professionals to communicate effectively across disciplines? A Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Special Education offers educators and healthcare professionals who work with children and adults with disabilities the opportunity to consolidate coursework in the area of lifespan development and special education in a way that facilitates a common ground for discussion. Conceptually, the coursework considered important for educators and healthcare professionals is divided into three categories: first, core knowledge and skills about lifespan development, second, reflective sensitivity to individual differences and third, context-related skills and abilities related to assessment and support. An emphasis is placed on understanding how the challenges presented to families of children with disabilities change over time as children mature and as they make transitions across home, school and community contexts. This understanding helps to ensure recognition of diversity and rights of children/adults with disabilities within school, local and national communities.

Admission to the PBD in Special Education:

Students admitted to this program will have an undergraduate degree at a recognized university, with a minimum GPA of 2.5 and will have completed either EDUC 220: Introduction to Educational Psychology or PSYC 250: Introduction to Developmental Psychology.

Requirements of the PBD in Special Education:

Completion of an approved program comprised of a minimum of 30 credit hours of upper division or graduate course work plus lower division pre-requisite,

where required. Students must maintain a grade point average of 2.5 for all courses used for the diploma. Courses taken during the Education 404 semester may not be used toward the PBD in Special Education.

PBD in Special Education Coursework:

Lifespan development (minimum of 7 credits)

Current policy makers and program specialists in the field of special education have traditionally relied on a 'critical period' argument to justify the emergence of early intervention programs. However, current research in lifespan development suggests that windows that define periods for optimal intervention for children with learning difficulties open much earlier than expected and only partially close as children mature and develop as adults. To fully understand and reflect upon the complexities of constructs such as critical developmental periods, students in the PBD-LDSE will be required to take coursework that facilitates an understanding of child cognitive, language and social development. For students who are interested specifically in adolescent or adult development, additional elective courses may be taken as part of the PBD-LDSE.

Required:

EDUC 315-3: Individual and Developmental Differences in Children's Language Acquisition

EDUC 464-4: Early Childhood Education

Optional:

PSYC 354-3: Development of Children's Thinking

PSYC 355-3: Adolescent Development

GERO 300-3: Introduction to Gerontology

EDUC 315 is a course that provides students with an understanding of children's language development, from different theoretical perspectives: linguistic, cognitive, connectionist and social interactionist. Concurrent with the study of typical language development, students study how children may vary from what is considered a typical developmental trajectory.

EDUC 464 prepares students to understand the current trends, issues and research relating to the education of young children. It is a required course because much of the intervention provided to children with special needs occurs at an early age and it is important for students to understand how this intervention impacts later development and educational growth.

PSYC 354, 355 and GERO 300 are all courses that further develop students' understanding of development over the lifespan.

Individual Differences (minimum of 7 credits)

A primary assumption of researchers and practitioners in the field of special education is that individual differences intrinsic to the child affect the way that a child is positioned in a familial, school or community context. Inclusion of children with special needs into a school or community environment cannot occur without full understanding of children's strengths and needs and how a social environment operates to either facilitate or constrain inclusion of children with diverse abilities and needs. The following required coursework is aimed at providing students in the PBD in Special Education with an opportunity to reflect upon the interaction among individual differences of children with special needs and inclusive practices in home, school and community environments. Optional elective courses allow the student to focus on more specific areas of interest that relate to both individual differences and inclusive practice.

Required:

EDUC 322-3: Social Lives of School Children
or PSYC 361-3: Social Cognition
or GERO 302-3: Health Promotion and Aging
EDUC 422-4: Learning Disabilities

Optional:

EDUC 428-4: Nature and Nurture of Gifted Students
EDUC 468-4: Cognition and Language in ESL Instruction
EDUC 382-4: Diversity in Education: Theories, Policies, Practices
PSYC 356-3: Developmental Psychopathology

EDUC 322, PSYC 361 and GERO 302 are related courses in that they explore social emotional development of individuals over the lifespan. Students are expected to select the course that most accurately reflects the population that corresponds to their scholarly or professional interests (i.e., whether working with children, young or elderly adults).

EDUC 422 is directly related to the topic.

EDUC 428, 468, 382 and PSYC 356 are included as optional courses because they focus on issues that are critical to understanding diversity among students with special needs: gifted students, students with English as a second language background, multicultural education and children with psychopathology.

Assessment and Support (minimum of 8 credits)

A second assumption of researchers and practitioners within the field of special education is that children and adults with special needs require instruction that is differentiated, based on children's individual abilities and needs. The following coursework provides the students with opportunities to reflect upon alternate approaches to intervention and support for children or adults with disabilities and

their families in school, home and community contexts.

Required:

EDUC 424-4: Learning Disabilities: Laboratory
or EDUC 427-4: Seminar in Teaching Children with High-Incidence
Disabilities
EDUC 426-4: Teaching Children and Youth with Special Needs

Optional:

EDUC 351-3: Teaching the Older Adult
EDUC 323-3: Introduction to Counselling Theories
EDUC 423-4: Helping Relationships
GERO 401-3: Aging and the Built Environment
EDUC 433-4: Philosophical Issues in Education

EDUC 424 is a laboratory course that gives undergraduate students the opportunity to teach children with learning difficulties under supervision. EDUC 427 is a seminar course that has been developed for students who are practicing teachers and who have previous experience teaching children with learning disabilities or special needs.

EDUC 426 is a course that focuses on language and behavioral intervention for children with special needs. This course prepares teachers and healthcare professionals to collaborate in problem solving contexts: in the home and at school.

EDUC 351, 323, 423, 433 and GERO 401 are courses that enhance the student's understanding of ways to promote a healthy lifestyle for children or adults with special needs.

Calendar Entry

Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Special Education

The PBD in Special Education offers educators and healthcare professionals who work with children and adults with disabilities the opportunity to consolidate coursework in the area of lifespan development and special education in a way that facilitates a common ground for discussion. Conceptually, the coursework emphasizes: core knowledge and skills about lifespan development, individual differences, and assessment and support. An emphasis is placed on understanding how challenges presented to families of children with disabilities change over time as children mature and as they make transitions across home, school and community contexts.

Required Coursework (22 credit hours):

EDUC 315-3: Individual and Developmental Differences in Children's Language Acquisition

EDUC 322-3: Social Lives of School Children

or PSYC 361-3: Social Cognition

or GERO 302-3: Health Promotion and Aging

EDUC 422-4: Learning Disabilities

EDUC 424-4: Learning Disabilities Laboratory

or EDUC 427-4: Seminar in Teaching Children with High-Incidence

Disabilities

EDUC 426-4: Teaching Children and Youth with Special Needs

EDUC 464-4: Early Childhood Education

Optional (8 credit hours)

EDUC 323-3: Introduction to Counselling Theories

EDUC 351-3: Teaching the Older Adult

EDUC 423-4: Helping Relationships

EDUC 428-4: Nature and Nurture of Gifted Students

EDUC 433-4: Philosophical Issues in Education

EDUC 382-4: Diversity in Education: Theories, Policies, Practices

EDUC 468-4: Cognition and Language in ESL Instruction

GERO 300-3: Introduction to Gerontology

GERO 401-3: Aging and the Built Environment

PSYC 354-3: Development of Children's Thinking

PSYC 355-3: Adolescent Development

PSYC 356-3: Developmental Psychopathology