

Introduction

This guide was developed to help university personnel plan and revise programs of study based on the new professional standards for teachers of students with gifts and talents. All of the 70 initial standards, which are categorized into knowledge and skills under 10 content standards, were developed through consensus over time and are supported by research that emphasizes diversity and differentiated practices and shows the deep connections to issues in general and special education.

Working collaboratively over a four-year period, representatives from the Council for Exceptional Children–The Association for the Gifted (CEC-TAG) and the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) developed the new standards that define the essential knowledge and skills that teachers need to know to be effective in teaching gifted and talented students in the classroom, using the validation procedures outlined by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). The research base that accompanies this guide as a CD-ROM is composed of research, literature, and practice-based research. With over 400 annotated entries included in somewhat equal proportion under each of the 10 standards, the set of standards and its underlying knowledge and skills have strong support in the research of the field.

The guidebook assists university faculty in aligning courses, field experiences, clinical practices, and assessments with each of the 10 content standards. It also provides a way to integrate the standards into the basic National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) framework used by universities, beginning with the conceptual framework, dispositions, and assessment systems and concluding with redesigned course work at undergraduate and graduate levels. Specific examples are included for each of the NCATE components, with special attention given to the six required assessments: (a) a licensure assessment, (b) an assessment of content knowledge, (c) an assessment of the candidate’s ability to plan instruction, (d) an assessment of teaching in a field placement, (e) an assessment of the candidate’s effect on student learning, and (f) an assessment that addresses the NAGC-CEC standards.

The guide provides a method for organizing the standards into a developmental continuum or scope and sequence with discrete courses within programs of studies at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Steps in the alignment process include (a) analyzing each required course in the program using the new NAGC-CEC standards, (b) modifying the course objectives/outcomes and assessment task demands to create greater alignment, (c) organizing a chart according to each standard and underlying indicator to show what courses address each standard and indicator, (d) adding additional courses in the program of studies for candidates that address

the standards, (e) deciding what order is best for the course work and the standards, and (f) aligning the standards with gifted program standards and other professional association standards. Special sections are also provided that describe clinical experiences in gifted education and a variety of contexts for implementing the standards, including an example of online course work delivery.

The guide concludes by sharing a few special challenges the new standards will present for universities to consider. These challenges represent issues associated with a lack of state mandates, limited resources, a fragmented state system of personnel preparation, and internal philosophical conflicts about gifted education.

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