![Northampton Community College logo]

Special Education Program
Associate in Applied Science Degree
Specialized Diploma

PROGRAM AUDIT

2012-2017

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Education & Academic Success Division

Program Purpose

Northampton Community College is committed to providing an excellent foundation for students interested in becoming assistant teachers by offering the Special Education Paraeducator A.A.S. and the Special Education Paraeducator Specialized Diploma. Each credential prepares students to work under the supervision of a certified teacher as paraeducators or teacher assistants in a variety of educational settings. The specialized diploma provides a quick on-ramp to a career, and fully articulates into the associate degree. Coursework and field experiences integrate federal and state special education professional standards and evidence-based practices.

Curriculum for the Special Education Paraeducator A.A.S.

The A.A.S. in Special Education is a 61 credit program. The degree introduces students to the field of education and although not designed as a transfer program, includes similar field experience hours and competencies for Stage 1 & 2 as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The structure of the curriculum includes general education core courses and transfer electives. Program outcomes for the degree provide the guideposts for the curriculum and are stated below.

From September 2010 through June 2012, NCC was a recipient of a Pennsylvania Department of Education State Personnel Grant (Improving Student results: A Focus on Highly Qualified Special Education Personnel: Paraprofessional Development). During the time frame of this grant, NCC redesigned its Special Education Paraeducator program, including new learning outcomes, revised course outlines, and revised special education program options. The new program took effect beginning in fall, 2012.

Program Outcomes:

Graduates of the program will:

- Explain the philosophy, foundation, requirements, and current trends relevant to special education programs and practices.
- Describe universally-designed and inclusive environments.
- Apply appropriate instructional responses using multiple and varied assessments, technologies, strategies, and supports within a universally-designed and inclusive framework.
- Discuss the role and nature of collaborative relationships between schools and families.
- Define and use special education vocabulary, professionalism, and ethical practices, to support thinking and communicating in educational environments.
- Act as a paraeducator in diverse learning environments.

There are three components to the curriculum of the Special Education program: general education courses, education courses, and elective courses. The catalogue entry for the program is Appendix A Curriculum.

Students are required to take 31 general education credits as follows:

- English I – 3 credits
- English II – 3 credits
- Speech Communication – 3 credits
- Introduction to Psychology – 3 credits
- Principles of Sociology - 3 credits
- Introduction to Computers – 3 credits
- Foundations of Mathematics I – 3 credits
- Lab Science Elective (Contemporary Biology is recommended) – 4 credits
- Arts and Humanities (Art and Visual Thinking is recommended) – 3 credits
- Social Science Elective: Societies and Institutions Over Time – 3 credits

Required courses for the major comprise 21 credits:

- Introduction to Special Education – 3 credits
- Introduction to the Special Education Paraeducator – 3 credits
- Instructional Strategies in Inclusive Environments – 3 credits
- Behavior Support – 3 credits
- Special Education Paraeducator Internship – 3 credits
- Early Childhood Development and Learning – 3 credits
- Child Psychology – 3 credits

Free Electives:

- 9 credits (recommended courses are EARL 217 Child, Family and Community; EDUC115 Education for All Students, MDLA103 Elementary Spanish I, MDLA113 Elementary Spanish II)

Field Experiences

The Special Education paraeducator program also includes several courses with field experiences. The first course SPED 160 Introduction to Special Education embeds Stage 1 Observation Field Experience hours per PDE guidelines.

SPED160 Introduction to Special Education (Includes PDE Stage 1 Field Experience)

Requires 10 hours of observation in both special education and inclusive classrooms across the span from early childhood through secondary education. Assignments connected to the field experience requires students to complete an observation portfolio that documents the various physical and academic environments observed as well as summarize and reflect on the observations and observation experience. Students explore universal design for learning and inclusive practices, as well as cultural, linguistic, and ability diversity, and family perspectives. Assignments are linked to course learning outcomes.

SPED164 The Special Education Paraeducator

Requires 30 hours of interactive classroom experience. Students are placed in classrooms where there are children receiving special education services and at least one paraeducator is assigned. Students observe the role and responsibilities of the paraeducator and provided opportunities to interact directly with children in the classroom as assigned by the certified teacher in the classroom. Course assignments are linked to the field experience.

SPED170 Instructional Strategies in Inclusive Environments

Requires 30 hours of interactive classroom experience with children receiving special education services. Students observe the instructional role of any paraeducators in the class and directly interact with children in the classroom as assigned by the certified teacher in the classroom. Course assignments are linked to the field experience.

SPED205G The Special Education Paraeducator Internship

Requires 150 hours of interactive classroom experience where there are children receiving special education services. Student intern is supervised by a Cooperating Teacher (certified teacher) and additionally, the student is observed a minimum of three times by an NCC instructor. Students are given multiple opportunities as assigned by the Cooperating Teacher to practice the knowledge and skills required of a special education paraeducator. Students provide instructional support, including working directly with individual students and in small or large groups. Some students are given opportunities to develop and implement lessons in collaboration with and approval of the Cooperating Teacher and participate in IEP and/or other education related meetings. Students submit an Internship Portfolio, which includes components linked to the standards of a qualified paraeducator. Students also self-evaluate using an internship evaluation rubric which is also used by the Cooperating Teacher in assessing the student's competencies and progress throughout the course of the semester.

Curriculum for the Special Education Paraeducator Specialized Diploma

The curriculum for the 9 credit specialized diploma in Special Education Paraeducator allow students to gain a micro-credential quickly, and all three courses slide into the associate degree program.

- SPED160-Introduction to Special Education – 3 Credits
- SPED164-Introduction to the Special Education Paraeducator – 3 Credits
- SPED170-Instructional Strategies in Inclusive Environments – 3 Credits

Grade Progression Policy

A change that happened after the period of this program review, but important to highlight is the grade progression policy instituted in fall 2017. Students must maintain a grade of "C" grade (75% or better) in all Special Education courses (in both degree and certificate programs). Failure to earn the minimum of a C grade requires students to re-take the course. This policy ensures that students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to perform adequately in the field upon graduation.

PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

During the years this document covers there were some organizational changes within the Division of Education & Academic Success. For many years NCC had three separate departments under the Dean of Education and Academic Success. Faculty members in education and special education reported directly to the Dean while faculty members in early childhood education reported to the Director of Early Childhood Education. Now all faculty members and students in the four education majors are in one department housed under the Director of Education. The restructuring became effective in spring 2016 and rolled the middle, secondary, and special education programs into the span of responsibilities of the Director with the appointment of Ms. Christina Lincoln to the position. The purpose of the change is to bring all four associate degree programs and many shorter term certificates and diplomas under one roof to create a unified department and capitalize on cross-collaborative efforts.

Robin Cunconan-Lahr has served in the capacity of Coordinator of Special Education since 1993 working in various capacities including initially as an independent consultant for NCC's Americans with Disabilities Act Self-Evaluation and as adjunct faculty in Early Childhood and Special Education. She developed NCC's first special education program, the Specialized Diploma in Early Childhood Education for Children with Disabilities. Robin was instrumental in the further development and expansion of special education at NCC.

Coordinator responsibilities include in part:

- making recommendations and implementing curriculum changes to reflect current evidence-based practices in the field of special education as indicated by state and federal laws, standards, and certifications;
- developing forms and related documents for use by students and faculty within the special education program;
- coordinating special education curriculum and textbook support; coordination and analysis of special education program assessment;
- participation in state and local committees that are active in higher education matters;
- participation in regular meetings with the Director of Education, frequent communications with the Assistant Director of Education, monthly Cluster meetings, and other activities associated with the Division of Education and Academic Success, and other appropriate Department, administrative and college activities;
- provide linkages with early childhood and education faculty, programs, and students; coordination with Disability Services, coordination with NCC's Monroe campus; and oversight of special education resources.

PROGRAM FACULTY

The courses in the special education paraeducator training program are primarily taught by the Coordinator of the Special Education Program and adjunct instructors. One full-time middle/secondary level faculty member teaches sections of the Introduction to Special Education course. Northampton hires faculty members who are well-credentialed, and, who understand and embrace the open access mission of the community college.

The strength of the faculty is demonstrated by the varied educational and professional experiences, as well as stability. Presently there are six (6) adjunct faculty teaching across the special education curriculum. At least one faculty member is a parent of a child with disabilities. This enriches the program by providing students with a genuine family perspective. Four of the faculty are qualified to teach both online and on ground courses. Additionally, three of the faculty have PQAS (Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System) certification allowing them to provide professional development to practitioners in the field of early childhood education.

The special education program has been fortunate to have faculty who show a strong commitment to both their students and the NCC community. Faculty get to know their students well, develop positive repertoire, and provide individualized attention and support, due in part to the fact that the program is small in size.

Special Education Program Faculty

Robin Cunconan-Lahr
- B.S.   Elementary and Special Education, University of Iowa
- M.S.   Early Childhood Special Education, Iowa State
- J.D.   Drake University Law School

Annette Bruno, Ed.D.
- B.S.   Elementary Education, Bloomsburg University
- M.Ed. Reading Specialist, Kutztown University
- D.Ed. Reading/Language Arts, Widener University
          ELL endorsement

Trieste Kennedy
- B.S.   Secondary Education, Bloomsburg University
- M.Ed. Special Education, Cedar Crest College

Susan Stifel
- B.A.   Drama, Queen's University, Ontario
- B.Ed.   Primary/ Junior with additional qualifications in Special Education
           Behavior Exceptionalities, Queen's University, Ontario
- M.Ed. Special Education, University of N. Carolina

Laurie Wallace-Thiesen
- B.S.   Special Education, Bloomsburg University
- M.S.   School Administration, Western Maryland College
           Certification: Supervisory I, Supervisor of Special Education

Roberta Yeager, Ph.D.
      B.S.   Special Education, Mansfield University
      M.Ed. Special Education, Mansfield University
      Ph.D. Education- Teaching & Curriculum, Northcentral University, San Diego, CA

Kimberly Young
      B.S.   Special Education, East Stroudsburg
      M.S.   Special Education, East Stroudsburg
      M.Ed. Elementary Education, East Stroudsburg

ENROLLMENT

The Special Education degree can be completed fully both on the Bethlehem Campus and through online learning. Currently SPED 160 Introduction to Special Education is offered on the Monroe Campus each semester, mainly in service to students in the early childhood, middle, and secondary associate degree programs.

Both the A.A.S. degree and the specialized diploma are small enrollment programs. The enrollment statistics on the following pages provide a snapshot by academic year and semester, and by full-time and part-time status of students. The majority of students typically enroll part-time, which reflects the overall trend at NCC. Enrollment is sometimes larger in the spring than fall semesters which is attributable to the nature of community college students who often "stop-out" for a semester or two and then return.

It should be noted that some students declare the special education paraeducator major when they initially enroll at NCC due to their interest in special education. However, they subsequently change their major to early childhood, middle, or secondary education when either they become aware that to gain certification in special education they are better served by changing majors at NCC, or they decide they would prefer becoming a teacher rather than a special education paraeducator.

Special Education Paraeducator
Students Enrolled
AAS Degree

Special Education Paraeducator AAS TOTAL ENROLLMENT
SPDD

	ACAD YR	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17
FALL						
FULL-TIME		13	13	11	18	16
PART-TIME		17	30	18	27	13
TOTAL FALL		30	43	29	45	29
SPRING						
FULL-TIME		14	10	6	18	15
PART-TIME		27	19	24	21	14
TOTAL SPRING		41	29	30	39	29
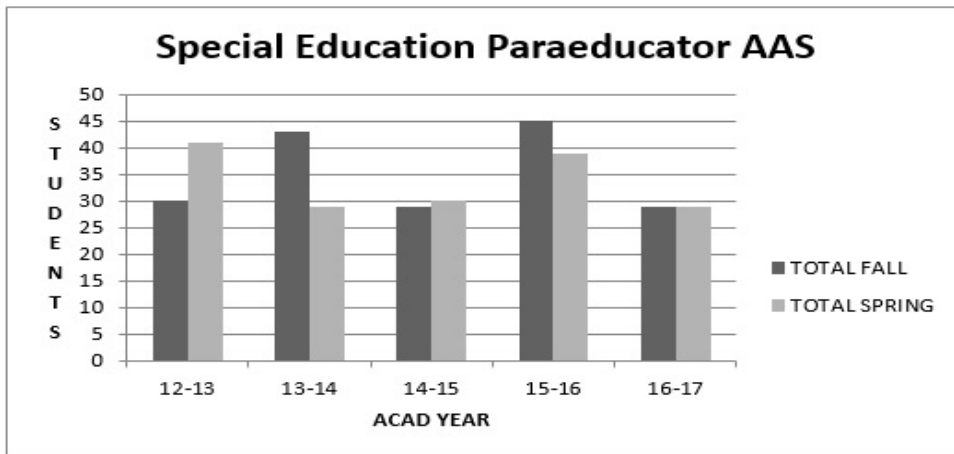
Special Education Paraeducator
Students Enrolled
Specialized Diploma

Special Education Paraeducator SD   TOTAL ENROLLMENT
SPDS

	ACAD YR	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17
FALL						
FULL-TIME		1	1	0	2	0
PART-TIME		3	3	4	3	2
TOTAL FALL		**4**	**4**	**4**	**5**	**2**
SPRING						
FULL-TIME		0	1	0	0	0
PART-TIME		3	6	7	3	3
TOTAL SPRING		**3**	**7**	**7**	**3**	**3**
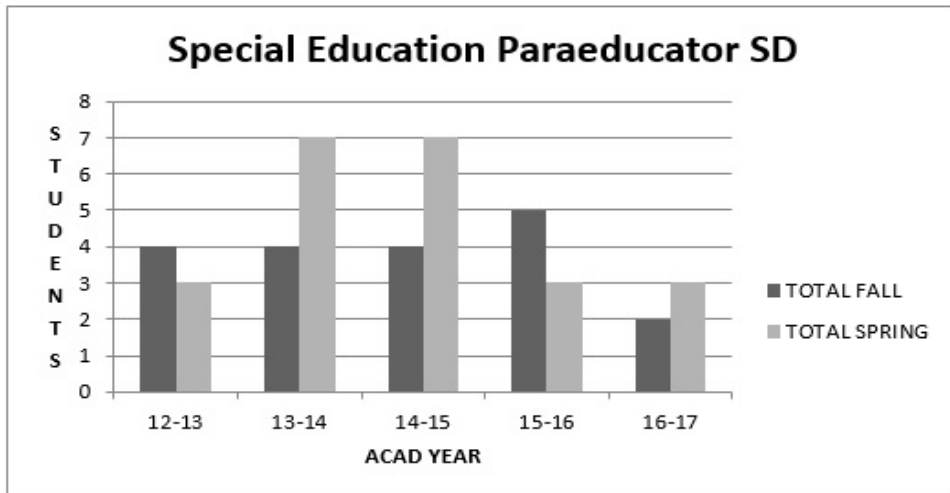
ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

The program's learning outcomes reflect the intent of the curriculum to prepare students with the skills and knowledge required to educate and support children with disabilities.

Program Outcomes:

- Explain the philosophy, foundation, requirements, and current trends relevant to special education programs and practices.
- Describe universally-designed and inclusive environments.
- Apply appropriate instructional responses using multiple and varied assessments, technologies, strategies, and supports within a universally-designed and inclusive framework.
- Discuss the role and nature of collaborative relationships between schools and families.
- Define and use special education vocabulary, professionalism, and ethical practices, to support thinking and communicating in educational environments.
- Act as a paraeducator in diverse learning environments.

Context and History of Assessment

In 2015, a common assessment for the course SPED 160 Introduction to Special Education was developed collaboratively by the special education faculty led by the Special Education Coordinator. The common assessment consists of 20 questions strategically selected due to their importance as key concepts of knowledge in the course. Each question targets knowledge acquisition and is linked to one or more course Learning Outcomes. The questions vary, however most focus on recall while others focus on application. Each semester all students enrolled in a section of Introduction to Special Education are given this assessment as one part of their final exam.

Cycle of Data and Results

Data was collected in spring 2015, fall 2015, spring 2016 and fall 2016 and then it was analyzed. For purposes of this assessment, a cumulative student percentage below 80% on individual questions was determined to indicate *less than proficient* student performance requiring a closer analysis and recommendations for changes. Pursuant to this process, student performance for each individual semester was analyzed. Specifically, questions were identified where cumulatively students scored below 80% regarding the accuracy (correct answer vs. incorrect) of their answers. The data below reflects the findings.

Spring, 2015
Questions Scored Below 80% Accuracy
2, 3, 6, 15, 16

Fall, 2015
Questions Scored Below 80% Accuracy
3, 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 17

Spring, 2016
Questions Scored Below 80% Accuracy
3, 6, 7, 15

Fall, 2016
Questions Scored Below 80% Accuracy
#3, 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 18

From the 20 common assessment questions, the following 10 questions were scored cumulatively below 80% at least one time during the four semesters that data was collected:

Questions # 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18

Three of these questions scored at below 80% for ALL four semesters and two of these questions scored at below 80% for three semesters. These five questions were # 3, 6, 7, 15, & 16. The faculty decided to closely analyze and make changes to these five questions where students overall were not proficient for three or four of the semesters where data was collected.

Program Changes as a result of data:

Further analysis guided informed changes and the development of a revised common assessment. First, each question was reviewed for how it was written. The same was done for each answer. Additionally, there was discussion among faculty regarding how content and concepts were taught with respect to these five targeted questions. Proposed language changes were made, further discussed among special education faculty, and ultimately the questions and answers were revised regarding language change and greater clarity regarding content (Appendix B documents the changes made to the questions).

Below is a sample analysis for Question #3. Analysis for Questions 6, 7, 15, & 16 can be found in Appendix C.

Question #3:

A child who has a disability but does not require special education might have which of the following plans?
A. Section 504 Plan
B. IEP Plan
C. An ADA Accommodation Plan
D. A Curricular Adaptation Plan

Rewrite: Students who have a disability but do not require special education services may qualify for which of the following plans?
A. Section 504 Accommodation Plan
B. IEP Plan
C. IFSP Plan
D. Curricular Adaptation

Reason for changes: Students who seemed not to know what a 504 plan was, often chose B. A number of other students chose C in an apparent confusion perhaps with the word Accommodation. It is commonly understood that a 504 plan is an accommodation plan although in the field of education we hear different references. Choosing a rewrite of answer A by adding the word accommodation and at the same time eliminating ADA accommodation plan, might clear this up for students.

Results of Changes

After the initial semester (spring, 2017) where the revised common assessment was implemented, the data was reviewed and it showed that student performance with respect to these questions had increased (Appendix D). Specifically, the data showed cumulatively, there was only one question (# 15) where students performed below 80%. Cumulative student performance for question # 15 was 79%. Each of the other questions that had been revised demonstrated student performance over 80%. Overall, student performance indicated a cumulative 90% accuracy on the common assessment. These increases suggest that the changes made to the common assessment may have played a positive role in the rise in student performance. The data collected from spring, 2017 through spring, 2018 will be reviewed in the summer of 2018 to inform additional changes going forward.

Future Plans

During this next round of analysis during summer of 2018, the program intends to review not only what the data shows in terms of student proficiency on the questions, and in particular, the five questions that were revised, but also to explore more deeply the instructional aspect of questions where student performance does not meet the standard of proficient (80%).   Although the question, "What can we do to change teaching?" was addressed during the first revision cycle, it is recommended that we do this more formally. Second, it may be valuable to explore whether there are significant differences in student performance between online and on ground sections. In terms of changes, we might consider a "Master" Assessment or Test, rather than just the 20 common assessment questions. We might also consider whether we keep a common assessment in SPED160 and/or add one to another course. Last, and significant to these discussions is that the Department recommends the development and implementation of a program assessment, to be able to determine student outcomes and proficiency upon the completion of the entire program and not just any particular course.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Each year the Career Services Office at NCC produces The Placement Report which tracks where graduates go after completing their credential. The office surveys students and has typically had a very high response rate. The table below provides the data for the number of students who graduated over the period of this program review.

Those that responded to the survey by the Career Services Office report wages of $11.45 and $13.00 an hour, with more students opting for employment rather than transfer. The remainder of the data is presented in Appendix E.

Graduates 2011-2017

	Aug. '11 Dec. '11 May '12*	Aug. '12 Dec. '12 May '13*	Aug. '13 Dec. '13 May '14	Aug. '14 Dec. '14 May '15	Aug. '15 Dec. '15 May '16
Academic Year					
Special Education Paraeducator A.A.S.					
# of Graduates	3	5	5	5	10
Special Education Paraeducator Specialized Diploma					
# of Graduates	0	1	4	10	3

FISCAL OVERVIEW

Program Cost & Income

Both the Special Education A.A.S. degree, and the specialized diploma are fiscally sound and healthy. These programs generate more revenue than expended, and generally the cost per FTE is lower than the institutional average. While the enrollment is small, the costs are contained, because the program is primarily taught by adjunct faculty.

Financial highlights for 2017 include:

- The Special Education A.A.S. Program ranked 77th out 132 in terms of program cost. This reflects an average cost of $6,424 per FTE. This is less than the institutional average of $6,703 per FTE.

- The Special Education Specialized Diploma ranks 65th out of 132 in terms of program cost. This reflects an average cost of $6,665 per FTE. This is less than the institutional average of $6,703 per FTE. (Refer to Appendix F Financial Data for additional details).

SUMMARY

Conclusions

Reconfiguration of the education department has supported a cohesive framework for teacher education in terms of faculty, support and shared resources. The strength of the department includes experienced leadership, and committed faculty who look to the past for insights that can provide inspiration for continued future growth of the program.

The program provides students with comprehensive special education knowledge, skills, and experiences, as they pursue either paraeducator work or teacher certification. The Special Education Paraeducator program is a sound program which prepares students for employment as highly qualified special education paraeducators.

Introduction to Special Education (SPED160) is a requirement for all education majors which includes, early childhood, secondary, middle level, and special education. Including this course as a requirement in all of its education majors underscores the importance of special education knowledge and skills for all students who are pursuing a career in the field of education. Since the last program review, NCC has initiated a new degree program in Applied Psychology. Students enrolled in this program are advised to take SPED 160 Introduction to Special Education and SPED 175 Behavior Support. This compliments both programs by creating opportunities for cross-discipline learning and it benefits NCC students to gain broader perspectives and insights.

The faculty have remained stable, receive supportive services from the Coordinator of Special Education and NCC, and participate in professional development to remain current in policies and practices in the field of special education. From an enrollment and financial perspective the program is fiscally healthy and sound.

The program continues to increase its visibility among students, NCC faculty, and administration throughout the College. Strong support of the Division of Education and Academic Success has contributed to this. For example, the College continues to assign special education classes to a designated classroom to reinforce the presence and value of NCC's special education program. Bulletin boards, pictures, and information is displayed with respect to various aspects of special education, families, and persons with disabilities. An "assistive technology" station is also present in this classroom. This station includes resources, computer equipment, and examples of both high and low-tech assistive technology.

During the period of this audit, the special education program has contributed to and benefitted from its participation in a federal OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) grant known as SCRIPP, Supporting Change and Reform in Inclusive Personnel Preparation. Special education faculty members were consultants for this project and were instrumental in the development and implementation of the following: a CLAD Inventory (Cultural, Linguistic, Ability Diversity) used by practitioners in the field of early childhood; review and revisions of early childhood curriculum for online and on ground courses; professional development training materials and presentations; project website. NCC faculty and students across the education programs have received many benefits as a result of special education faculty participation in the SCRIPP project.

Recommendations

1. Continuation of the A.A.S. and Specialized Diploma in Special Education Paraeducator.

2. Consider further revisions to the Special Education Paraeducator program to respond to the needs and trends in the field of special education paraeducators as well as to NCC students and community and to keep abreast of developments in evidence-based best practices.

3. Monitor changes to teacher education in Pennsylvania, and amend curricula as necessary.

4. Institute ongoing program assessment work through the intentional development of an assessment project that generates data about student proficiency within targeted program level outcomes.

5. Make concerted effort to increase enrollment through focused recruitment using the marketing of the Special Education Paraeducator DVD. Particular focus should be made to market the Specialized Diploma as an equivalency to Pennsylvania's Credential of Competency for Special Education Paraeducators. Explore joint collaborations with other organizations (e.g. IU's, school districts), workforce development, varied approaches for offering the courses, and exploring connections for paraeducator professional development with NCC's program.

6. Build stronger collaborations with the Applied Psychology program to ensure additional enrollments in special education courses and effective advising across programs.

7. Pursue federal, state, local, and/or foundation funding to highlight the unique features and strengths of NCC's special education program, particularly around Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Inclusion (Building Inclusive Child Care). NCC's special education program has developed and distributed several resources (videos, checklists, etc.) that continue to be used nationally, statewide, and locally. These resources need updates.

Appendices

Appendix A: Curriculum

Appendix B: Assessment

Appendix C: Assessment Analysis

Appendix D: Assessment Data from spring 2017

Appendix E: Placement Report

Appendix F: Financial Data

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Appendix A: Curriculum

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Special Education Paraeducator A.A.S.

[Special Education Paraeducator training at NCC video](#)

Program Narrative

Special Education is an important and exciting career for persons interested in the education of children with disabilities! The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and related state laws and standards require personnel working with children with disabilities to be appropriately trained and qualified. Northampton Community College's special education program prepares students with the competencies necessary to meet these requirements. Grounded in a philosophy that emphasizes family and disability perspectives, inclusive practices, and current educational approaches, like Universal Design for Learning (UDL), NCC's special education program provides a valuable program of study.

Program Features

The Special Education Paraeducator (A.A.S.) degree is designed to prepare individuals to work with children with varying abilities in diverse educational classrooms, under the direct supervision of a certified teacher. A Special Education Paraeducator Specialized Diploma is also available. Students who successfully complete either option are considered "highly qualified" and satisfy the requirements for Pennsylvania's Credential of Competency for Special Education Paraeducators. NCC will assist students with the credentialing process.

Graduates are qualified to work as special education paraeducators, sometimes referred to as teaching assistants, in a wide variety of educational settings. Students are prepared to respect and value the unique perspectives of family and children with disabilities as well as the importance of building and maintaining collaborative relationships. To this end, NCC's curriculum offers a combination of special education coursework and field experience opportunities that integrate federal and state special education policy, standards, and professional competencies.

Special Education Courses are offered at the Bethlehem Campus during the day and evenings. SPED160 is also offered at the Monroe Campus. All special education courses are offered online. Additional AAS required coursework can be taken day, evening, or through online options.

Program Outcomes

Graduates of the program will:
- Explain the philosophy, foundation, requirements, and current trends relevant to special education programs and practices.
- Describe universally-designed and inclusive environments.
- Apply appropriate instructional responses using multiple and varied assessments, technologies, strategies, and supports within a universally-designed and inclusive framework.
- Discuss the role and nature of collaborative relationships between schools and families.
- Define and use special education vocabulary, professionalism, and ethical practices, to support thinking and communicating in educational environments.
- Act as a paraeducator in diverse learning environments.

Progression

A student must maintain a grade of "C" or better in all Special Education courses

Special Education Paraeducator

Associate in Applied Science Degree

Course Code	Course Title	Credits
	First Semester	
CISC101	Intro to Computers	3
ENGL101	English I	3
PSYC103	Introduction to Psychology (SSHB)	3
SPED160	Introduction to Special Education	3
---------	Arts & Humanities Elective (AH) *	3
		15
	Second Semester	
CMTH102	Speech Communication	3
ENGL151L	English II (Literature)	3
EARL106	Early Childhood Development & Learning	3
SPED164	Introduction to the Special Education Paraeducator	3
SPED175	Behavior Support	3
		15
	Third Semester	
MATH118	Foundations of Mathematics I	3
SPED170	Instructional Strategies in Inclusive Environments	3
PSYC251	Child Psychology	3
SOCA103	Principles of Sociology	3
-----------	Elective *	3
		15
	Fourth Semester	
SPED205G	Special Education Paraeducator Internship	3
-----------	Science Elective (SCI)	4
-----------	Social Science Elective: Societies and Institutions Over Time(SIT)	3
-----------	Elective *	3
-----------	Elective *	3
		16
	Total Credits	**61**

* Recommended Elective courses:
EARL217 Child, Family & Community, EDUC115 Education for All Students, MDLA103 Elementary Spanish I, MDLA113 Elementary Spanish II.

Special Education Paraeducator

Specialized Diploma

Course Code	Course Title	Credits
SPED160 +	Introduction to Special Education +	3
SPED164	Introduction to the Special Education Paraeducator	3
SPED170	Instructional Strategies in Inclusive Environments	3
	Total Credits	**9**

+SPED160 is a co- or prerequisite for SPED164, and SPED170.
Career Potential: Paraeducator, teacher assistant

NCC students are employed by: Intermediate Units, Early Childhood Centers, and School Districts

Appendix B: Assessment

INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION (SPED160)
"Common Final Assessment"
Questions
(Spring, 2015)
(Revised Spring, 2017)

1. What does the IDEA stand for?   **(LO # 1)**
    A.   Individuals with Disabilities Endorsement Act
    B.   Individuals with Disabilities Endorsement Association
    C.   Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
    D.   Individuals with Disabilities Education Association

2. Zero reject, nondiscriminatory evaluation, appropriate education, least restrictive environment, procedural due process, and parent and student participation are all principles of which of the following? **(LO # 1 & 3)**
    A.   Americans with Disabilities Act
    B.   Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
    C. IDEA
    D. The No Child Left Behind Act

3. Students who have a disability but do not require special education services may qualify for which of the following plans? **(LO # 1)**
    A. Section 504 Accommodation Plan
    B. IEP Plan
    C. IFSP Plan
    D. Curricular Adaptation Plan

4. Which of the following teachers is using people-first language? **(LO # 4)**
    A.   Ms. Green said, "I enjoy working with ADD youth."
    B. Mr. Connors said, "Children with disabilities are often included."
    C. Mr. Gustoff said, "LD children need accommodations."
    D. Ms. Sanchez said, "I teach autistic children."

5. Under the IDEA, what educational environment below is generally considered the most inclusive and least restrictive for students with disabilities? **(LO # 1 & 3)**
    A.   The general education classroom
    B. A separate special school
    C. A resource room
    D. A separate special classroom

6. Under IDEA, the span of special education applies to children in which of the following age groups? **(LO 1 & 3)**
   A. **Ages birth (0) to 21**
   B. Ages three (3) to 18
   C. Ages six (6) to 21
   D. Ages six (6) to 18

7. Which teacher below best demonstrates the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles when presenting content to her social studies class? **(LO # 7 & 8)**
   A. Mrs. McGregor allows Susan to have her social studies test read aloud by the paraeducator due to her reading disability.
   B. Mrs. Griffith enlarges the print on Roberto's worksheets to accommodate his visual impairment.
   C. Miss Fife allows Ryan to receive simplified social studies instruction in the resource room so he can be more successful.
   D. **Mrs. Huntly shows the class a multimedia presentation of volcanoes, which includes sound, pictures, and simulations.**

8. How does Universal Design for Learning (UDL) contribute to progress in the general education curriculum? **(LO # 7 & 8)**
   A. UDL ensures that students with disabilities can access academic content
   B. **UDL ensures that all students can access academic content and provide evidence of their learning.**
   C. UDL only contributes to progress in the special education curriculum
   D. UDL ensures that all children with disabilities can demonstrate what they learn

9. Which of the following is a strategy for becoming a culturally responsive teacher? (**LO#5**)
   A. Teachers should encourage students from cultural, linguistic, and ability diverse backgrounds to identify with the majority culture in their communities
   B. **Teachers should develop their own self-awareness and increase their knowledge of cultures**
   C. Teachers should advocate for English Language Learner programs
   D. Teachers should implement a separate cultural curriculum

10. Which of the following is required to be in an IEP? **(LO# 1 & 3)**
   A. **The student's present levels of academic achievement & measureable annual goals**
   B. The student's IQ.
   C. The textbooks used for the student's educational program
   D. The student's current bus schedule.

11. What is a preferred approach to responding to challenging behaviors in children that is proactive, oriented towards problem-solving, and data-based? **(LO # 2, & # 8)**
   a. Negative-based approach
   b. Discipline
   c. **Positive behavior support**
   d. Punishment

12. Family-professional partnerships are relationships characterized by which of the following: **(LO # 5)**
   A. Collaborations between families and professionals where each capitalize on the other's judgment and expertise to increase mutual benefits.
   B. Collaborations between families and professionals where both work together but professionals make the final decision.
   C. Respectful disagreement between families and professionals.
   D. Relationships where the number of family members and professionals are equal at IEP meetings.

13. Which statement below describes the best rationale for why family-professional partnerships are important? (**LO # 5**)
   A. To resolve disagreements between family and professionals so that due process hearings are avoided.
   B. To maintain high levels of trust, increase student outcomes, and support positive family quality of life.
   C. To ensure schools meet the standards of their state Department of Education.
   D. To ensure students in special education get good grades.

14. What written plan documents the provision of services to infants and toddlers (birth – 2) and their families? **(LO # 1 & # 3)**
   A. IFSP
   B. IEP
   C. Positive Behavior Support Plan
   D. 504 Plan

15. Which IDEA principle seeks to make schools and parents accountable to each other through a system of checks and balances? **(LO # 1 & 3)**
   A. Zero Reject
   B. Nondiscriminatory Evaluation
   C. Procedural Due Process
   D. Appropriate Education

16. Response to Intervention (RTI) is best described by which of the following: **(LO # 8)**
   A. A discrepancy between the student's intellectual ability and the student's achievement
   B. A cognitive and neuropsychological assessment exploring psychological strengths & weaknesses
   C. An intervention approach used with preschool age children only
   D. A problem-solving approach that involves multiple tiers of evidence-based interventions matched to each student's needs.

17. Which term below refers to a course of action (similar to a regular courtroom trial) that families can request when they disagree with the school about a special education issue concerning their child? **(LO #1 & 3)**
   A. Mediation
   B. Due Process Hearing
   C. IDEA Complaint
   D. State Trial

18. What description below accurately describes the IDEA principle for "appropriate education"? **(LO # 1 & 3)**
   A. The best individualized education program that a school can provide
   B. An individualized education program based on evaluation and includes supplementary aids and services.
   C. An individualized program provided in a special education classroom
   D. A program that is similar to children without disabilities.

19. What description below accurately describes the IDEA principle for "least restrictive environment"? **(LO # 1 & 3)**
   A. Students with disabilities are educated with children without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.
   B. Students with disabilities are educated with children without disabilities at least for ½ of the school day.
   C. Students with disabilities are educated with children without disabilities except during "specials" (e.g. music, gym, art, etc.).
   D. Students with disabilities are educated in special education classrooms until they are ready to be educated with children without disabilities.

20. Children who receive special education services must also have the following: **(LO 1 & 3)**
   A. An Assistive Technology plan
   B. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
   C. A 504 Plan
   D. A Positive Behavior Support Plan

Appendix C: Assessment Analysis

SPED 160 Common Assessment Analysis & Recommendations
Spring, 2017

Question #3:
A child who has a disability but does not required special education might have which one of the following plans?
  A. Section 504 Plan
  B. An IEP Plan
  C. An ADA Accommodation Plan
  D. A Curricular Adaptation Plan

Proposed Rewrite:
Students who have a disability but do not require special education services may qualify for which of the following plans?
  A. Section 504 Accommodation Plan
  B. IEP Plan
  C. IFSP Plan
  D. Curricular Adaptation Plan

Reason for changes: Students who seemed not to know what a 504 plan was, often chose B. A number of other students chose C in an apparent confusion perhaps with the word Accommodation. It is commonly understood that a 504 plan is an accommodation plan although in the field we hear different references. Choosing a rewrite of answer A by adding the word accommodation and at the same time eliminating ADA accommodation plan, might clear this up for students.

Question #6:
What is the current age span for services under the IDEA?
  A. IDEA covers individuals ages three to age 21.
  B. IDEA covers individuals ages 6 to 21.
  C. IDEA covers individuals ages birth to 21.
  D. IDEA covers individuals ages six to 18.

Proposed Rewrite:
The span of special education applies to children in which of the following age groups?
  A. Ages birth (0) to 21.
  B. Ages three (3) to 21
  C. Ages six (6) to 21.
  D. Ages six (6) to 18.

Reason for changes: Analysis of answers to this question point to lack of clarity in the question and/or confusion with textbook information. In chapter 1, the authors break down the different age groups and start off by indicating what the original law covered (ages 3 -18). So it is understandable how students can be confused. Of course it is our job as instructors to provide clarity for accurate

understanding ☺ I also rephrased the question to include the word "span" which is consistent with textbook language on this topic.

Question #7:
Which teacher below best demonstrates the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles when presenting content to her social studies class?

    A. Mrs. McGregor allows Susan to have her social studies test read aloud by the paraeducator due to her reading disability.

    B. Mrs. Griffith enlarges the print on all of the student's worksheets so Roberto, who has a visual impairment, does not feel different.

    C. Miss Fife allows Ryan to receive simplified social studies instruction in the resource room so he can be more successful.

    D. Mrs. Huntly shows a multimedia presentation of volcanoes, which includes sound, pictures, and simulations.

Proposed Rewrite:
Which teacher below best demonstrates the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles when presenting content to her social studies class?

    A. Mrs. McGregor allows Susan to have her social studies test read aloud by the paraeducator due to her reading disability.

    B. Mrs. Griffith enlarges the print on Roberto's worksheets to accommodate his visual impairment.

    C. Miss Fife allows Ryan to receive simplified social studies instruction in the resource room so he can be more successful.

    D. Mrs. Huntly shows the class a multimedia presentation of volcanoes, which includes sound, pictures, and simulations.

Reason for changes: The analysis of this question indicated that students frequently incorrectly answered B. Perhaps what is confusing is that the B answer indicates that "all of the students" receive an enlarged worksheet. Therefore, I deleted that reference and also added the word "accommodate." UDL as we know is not about "accommodating" and therefore students who understand the UDL principles and concepts should see that B is not the appropriate answer. The question refers to the "presentation" of content, which applies to UDL principle #1 so the word presentation in answer D should be a trigger to a student's memory that D is the "best" answer. I also added the words "the class" to answer D to make it clear that everyone is receiving the same "presentation" of content, however it is being presented in multiple/varied approaches.

Question #15:
Which IDEA principle seeks to make schools and parents accountable to each other through a system of checks and balances?

    A. Zero Reject

    B. Nondiscriminatory Evaluation

    C. Procedural Due Process

    D. Parent and Student Participation

Proposed Rewrite: Revise answer D by replacing current answer with Appropriate Education. Correct answer to the question remains C.

Reason for change: Students often incorrectly answered D. Parent and Student Participation. Reasonable arguments can be made for answering C or D to this question. Since the correct answer is C, I replaced D with a different IDEA principle.

Question #16:
Response to Intervention (RTI) is best described by which of the following?
   A. A discrepancy between the student's intellectual ability and the student's achievement
   B. A cognitive and neuropsychological assessment exploring psychological strengths & weakness
   C. A tier approach for students who are eligible for special education
   D. A problem-solving approach that involves multiple tiers of evidence-based interventions matched to each student's needs.

Proposed Rewrite: Replace C with the following language – An intervention approach used with preschool age children only.

Reason for change: Analysis of the exams showed that many students incorrectly answered C, although A and B were also selected. The word "tier" in C probably created the confusion between answers C and D.

Appendix D: Assessment Data from Spring 2017

Cumulative Totals

SPED 160 Common Final Summary Sheet ~ Semester/Year: Spring 2017

Class: SPED 160 Number of Students: 77	A	B	C	D	Total Students	% of Correct Answers
1. What does the IDEA stand for? (C)	—	—	75	2	77	97%
2. Zero reject, nondiscriminatory evaluation, appropriate education, least restrictive environment, procedural due process, and parent and student participation are all principles of which of the following? (C)	1	2	72	2	77	94%
3. Students who have a disability but do not require special education services may qualify for which of the following plans? (A)	65	9	1	2	77	84%
4. Which of the following teachers is using people-first language? (B)	4	71	1	1	77	92%
5. Under the IDEA, what educational environment below is generally considered the most inclusive and least restrictive for students with disabilities? (A)	77	—	—	—	77	100%
6. Under IDEA, the span of special education applies to children in which of the following age groups? (A)	63	12	2	—	77	82%
7. Which teacher below best demonstrates the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles when presenting content to her social studies class? (D)	2	6	1	68	77	88%
8. How does Universal Design for Learning (UDL) contribute to progress in the general education curriculum? (B)	4	72	—	1	77	94%
9. Which of the following is a strategy for becoming a culturally responsive teacher? (B)	14	62	—	1	77	81%
10. Which of the following is required to be in an IEP? (A)	72	4	1	—	77	94%
11. What is a preferred approach to responding to challenging behaviors in children that is proactive, oriented towards problem-solving, and data-based? (C)	2	1	74	—	77	96%
12. Family-professional partnerships are relationships characterized by which of the following: (A)	64	9	1	3	77	83%

Appendix E: Placement Report

Special Education Paraeducator, A.A.S.

Special Education Paraeducator A.A.S.	Aug. '11 Dec. '11 May '12*	Aug. '12 Dec. '12 May '13*	Aug. '13 Dec. '13 May '14	Aug. '14 Dec. '14 May '15	Aug. '15 Dec. '15 May '16
# of Graduates	3	5	5	5	10
employed	2	3	4	3	5
job hunting	0	0	0	0	1
continuing ed.	0	1	0	1	3
other	1	1	1	1	1
Employed Graduates	2	3	4	3	5
Additional Data Not Avail.	—	—	—	—	—
related	2	3	3	3	3
unrelated	0	0	1	0	0
unrelated by choice	0	0	0	0	2
Median starting salary (if>2 reported)	—	$13.00	—	$11.45	—

   *** Formerly called Special
Education: Paraeducator
Training Degree**

Special Education Paraeducator Specialized Diploma

SD: Special Education Paraeducator	Aug. '11	Aug. '12	Aug. '13	Aug. '14	Aug. '15
	Dec. '11	Dec. '12	Dec. '13	Dec. '14	Dec. '15
	May '12	May '13	May '14	May '15	May '16
# of Graduates	0	1	4	10	3
employed	0	0	2	2	0
job hunting	0	0	0	1	0
continuing ed.	0	0	2	6	2
other	0	1	0	1	1
Employed Graduates	0	0	2	2	0
Additional Data Not Avail.	—	—	—	—	—
related	0	0	2	2	0
unrelated	0	0	0	0	0
unrelated by choice	0	0	0	0	0
Median starting salary (if>2 reported)	—	—	—	—	—

Appendix F: Financial Data
Special Education Specialized Diploma

	FY2017	FY2016	FY2015	FY2014	FY2013
Program Income					
Tuition	5,979	6,820	6,766	10,025	9,957
Local Reimb	981	1,095	1,098	1,615	1,623
Operating Reimb	2,256	1,996	1,902	2,843	3,766
Stipend Reimb	-	-	-	-	-
Total Income	9,216	9,911	9,766	14,483	15,346
Program Costs					
Direct Costs	4,408	4,287	5,102	7,413	8,467
Indirect Costs	4,026	4,484	4,466	6,249	6,304
Total Costs	**8,434**	**8,771**	**9,568**	**13,662**	**14,771**
FTE	1.27	1.46	1.51	2.33	2.53
Income per FTE	7,283	6,775	6,456	6,205	6,060
Cost per FTE	6,665	5,996	6,325	5,853	5,833
Inst Avg Cost per FTE	6,703	6,416	6,144	5,730	5,430
Rank	**65 of 132**	**77 of 129**	**51 of 119**	**53 of 122**	**41 of 120**

Special Education Paraeducator AAS Degree

	FY2017	FY2016	FY2015	FY2014	FY2013
Program Income					
Tuition	114,679	137,843	91,777	103,587	98,636
Local Reimb	18,816	22,136	14,896	16,690	16,080
Operating Reimb	43,275	40,336	25,799	29,379	37,302
Stipend Reimb	-	-	-	19,103	-
Total Income	176,770	200,315	132,472	168,759	152,018
Program Costs					
Direct Costs	78,696	91,069	58,553	68,679	64,532
Indirect Costs	77,226	90,618	60,571	64,572	62,449
Total Costs	**155,922**	**181,687**	**119,124**	**133,251**	**126,981**
FTE	**24.27**	**29.56**	**20.52**	**24.12**	**25.09**
Income per FTE	7,283	6,776	6,456	6,997	6,060
Cost per FTE	6,424	6,146	5,806	5,525	5,062
Inst Avg Cost per FTE	6,703	6,416	6,144	5,730	5,430
Rank	**77 of 132**	**71 of 129**	**72 of 119**	**63 of 122**	**89 of 120**