

# Old Dominion UNIVERSITY

## Darden College of Education

### **Commonwealth Special Education Endorsement Program:** *A Distance Learning Approach to Recruiting and Retaining Virginia's Special Educators*

Currently, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, over 2000 special education teachers with conditional licensure are teaching students with mild disabilities. These educators have not completed the necessary coursework for full licensure. The **Commonwealth Special Education Endorsement Program (CSEEP)** is designed to enable teachers to complete the necessary course work for full licensure at locations convenient to their homes or schools and provides tuition assistance and mentor support.

#### **PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

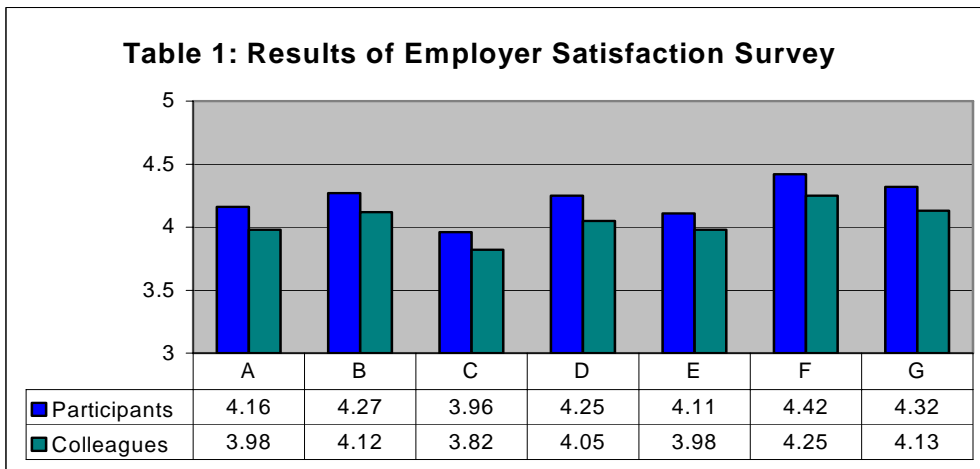
- **663** participants have completed the coursework for full licensure and have become more effective classroom teachers, enhancing the education of children with special needs.
- **78%** of the participants indicate that they plan to remain in special education (Finisher Survey, 2003).
- **41%** (273) have been admitted to the master's program or have completed a Master of Science in Special Education degree at Old Dominion University.

Data indicate that **CSEEP**, funded by the Virginia Department of Education, is a highly successful alternative licensure program that reduces the shortage of special education teachers in VA through the medium of distance learning.

#### **PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

##### **Employer Satisfaction Survey**

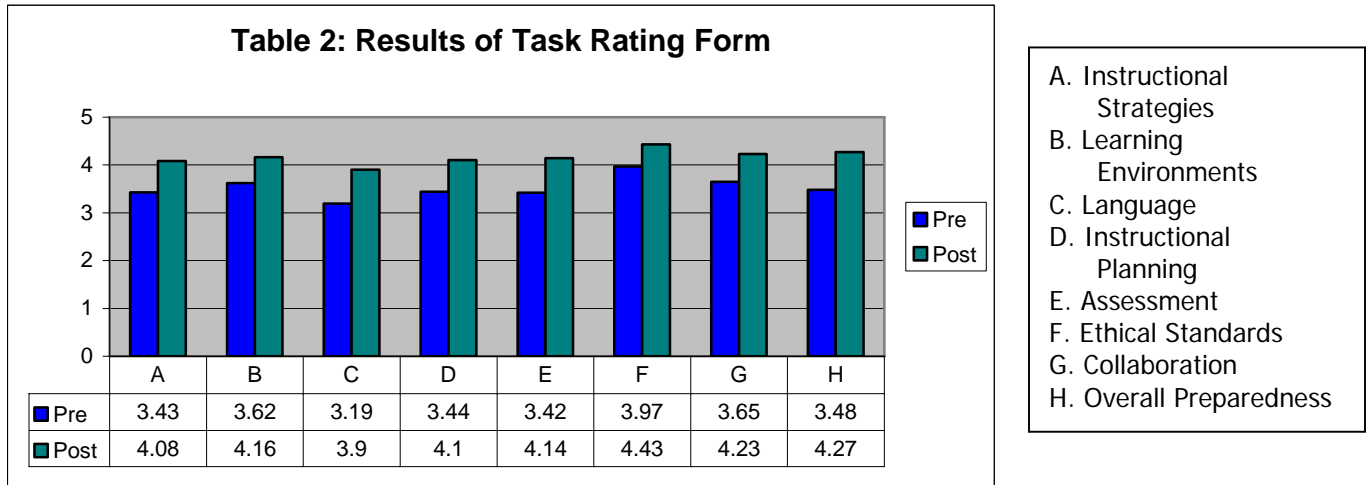
- All principals who employ CSEEP finishers are mailed an *Employer Satisfaction Survey*. Data indicate that principals rated CSEEP participants higher than their colleagues on all seven of the *Council for Exceptional Children's Performance-Based Standards (CEC)*: instructional strategies, learning environments, language, instructional planning, assessment, professional/ethical practice, and collaboration (see Table 1).



- A. Instructional Strategies
- B. Learning Environments
- C. Language
- D. Instructional Planning
- E. Assessment
- F. Ethical Standards
- G. Collaboration

## Task Rating Form

- Each participant completes the task rating form at the start (pre) and at the completion (post) of grant coursework. Participants indicated that they were more prepared in all of the CEC standards once they completed the grant program: instructional strategies, learning environments, language, instructional planning, assessment, professional/ethical practice, collaboration, overall preparedness (see Table 2).



### PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- “CSEEP provided educated, knowledgeable professors and a thorough program – CSEEP provided the opportunity. CSEEP allowed me to obtain licensure in 3 areas – LD, MR, ED!”*
- “The grant has greatly helped me with my goal of obtaining licensure through ODU. Without it, I would not have been able to complete the coursework in the same amount of time. I really appreciate the financial support!”*
- “The CSEEP program has been an enormous help in achieving my goal of becoming endorsed in Special Education in a timely manner. I have worked hard, learned a great deal, and feel that I am more professional in the role of Special Educator with the training and support I received with the grant program and Old Dominion University. It has been a wonderful opportunity and experience for me and I appreciate the encouragement from your staff.”*

### CSEEP Profile 2004 – 2005:

There are 214 active participants in CSEEP. They:

- teach full time in Virginia.
- hold valid Special Education Conditional/Provisional Licenses.
- teach students with emotional disturbance (ED), learning disabilities (LD), and/or mental retardation (MR).
- represent 57 public school divisions, 15 private schools, and 2 regional special education programs.

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