

Professional Development Requirement for Special Education Majors

Successful special education teachers engage in professional activities that benefit their colleagues, and the students/families that they are serving. The professional development requirement in our department is designed to help you begin the professional development process. This focus is related to the standards for special education teacher preparation that guide our program. These standards include:

Professional and Ethical Practice – CEC Initial Preparation Standard 6

- 6.4 Beginning special education professionals understand the significance of lifelong learning and participate in professional activities and learning communities.
- 6.5 Beginning special education professionals advance the profession by engaging in activities such as advocacy and mentoring.

Before you can register for fall 2021 classes, you will need to determine how you will meet this requirement during the 2021-2022 school year. You will upload a copy of your receipt or your approval from the Special Education Undergraduate Committee by April 30 at the [Professional Development Confirmation site](#).

The Professional Development Requirement must be completed before your student teaching placement is made. You will decide on how you will meet this requirement now, but the requirement is completed during the special education year. You will need to submit proof of fulfilling this requirement as part of your student teaching application.

You can meet this requirement by membership in an on campus Special Education Professional Organization or by long-term participation in a service organization for people with disabilities. Most students join the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) because of the journals they receive and because the time commitment during an already busy year is much less.

I. Membership in a Special Education Professional Organization

- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
(<http://www.cec.sped.org/>)
 - a. Professional journals and newsletters
 - b. Journals used in Special Education Coursework
 - c. USU's student group meets once a month

II. Long Term Participation in a Service Organization for People with Disabilities

Documentation of 40 hours of service during the special education year (this does not include URCO hours or paid positions).

- A. Special Olympics
- B. Common Ground Outdoor Adventures

- C. Options for Independence
- D. Best Buddies
- E. Project Peer

You may also participate in other organizations to fulfill the professional development requirement (Examples: ACRES - The American Council on Rural Special Education - <http://www.acres-sped.org> or TASH – The Association for the Severely Handicapped - <http://www.tash.org/> or ABA – The Association for Behavior Analysis - <http://www.abainternational.org/>).

NOTE: If you prefer the long-term participation option, write a letter to the Undergraduate Committee indicating what professional special education organization you are active in and what you do in that organization related to special education. The Undergraduate Committee will evaluate whether this activity will fulfill the professional development requirements of the Special Education program. Email this letter to Laura Parrish.

TO REGISTER FOR CEC: Membership dues are \$40 per year for students. You will receive two professional journals (Teaching Exceptional Children; Exceptional Children) and be part of an active student organization in Utah. You can sign up for CEC at <http://www.cec.sped.org/Membership> Our Chapter number is 0837.