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# 5E

## Information

### *Professional Services Committee*

### *Guidance on Granting Equivalency Document*

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**Executive Summary:** This agenda item presents a revised document, based on Commission discussion in January 2010, which provides guidance to all sponsors offering approved educator preparation programs regarding the granting of equivalency. The document addresses the determination of comparability of coursework, field experience, and a candidate's knowledge and skills, and using that determination for granting equivalence. The revised document is presented for the Commission's information.

**Recommended Action:** For information only

**Presenter:** Teri Clark, Administrator,  
Professional Services Division

**Strategic Plan Goal: 1**

**Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators**

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs

August 2010



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## ***Guidance on Granting Equivalency Document***

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### **Introduction**

This agenda item presents the ***Guidance on Granting Equivalency*** document. The information in this document is based on the report to the Governor, Legislature, and Secretary of Education entitled “*Comparability of Coursework for Sponsors of Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs as required by AB 2226 (Chap. 233, Stats. 2008).*” The ***Guidance on Granting Equivalency*** document contains recommended guidelines for the sponsors of all types of educator preparation programs to use in determining the comparability of coursework and/or field experience completed in other Commission-accredited programs or other professional experiences to coursework and/or field experience required in California educator preparation programs.

### **Background**

AB 2226 (Chap. 233, Stats. 2008) required the Commission to convene a work group to develop guidelines for sponsors of special education teacher preparation programs to use in determining the comparability of coursework and/or field experience completed in other Commission-accredited programs to coursework and/or field experience required in special education preparation programs. The intent was to help program sponsors as they advise candidates for Special Education teacher certification and to help program sponsors develop formal, structured, and consistent processes for reviewing the comparability of coursework and previous experience that candidates might have previously completed elsewhere.

The Commission work group completed its task and the Commission discussed and adopted the report at its January 28, 2010 meeting. The report was subsequently transmitted to the Governor, Legislature, and Secretary of Education. In their discussion, several members of the Commission noted that this document could provide a model for other California educator preparation programs in considering equivalency in coursework and previous experience, and directed Commission staff to discuss this possibility with the Committee on Accreditation (COA).

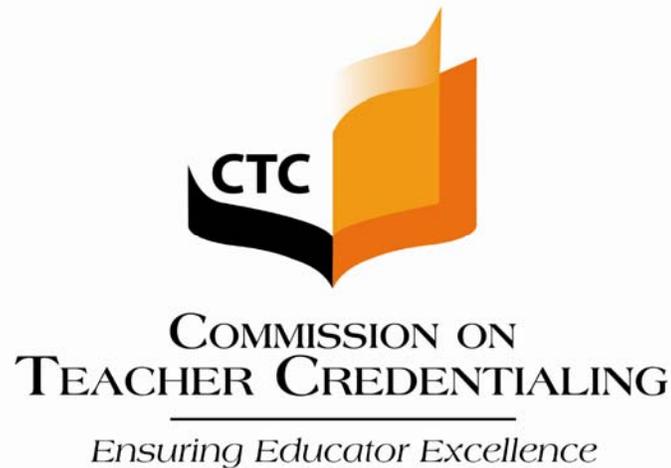
Staff presented an agenda item at the COA’s April 2010 meeting where the Commission-adopted *Comparability of Coursework for Sponsors of Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs as required by AB 2226* report was discussed and suggestions were made on how to broaden the guidance in the report so that it would apply to all types of educator preparation programs. One of the suggestions was to include additional scenarios that apply the guidance to preparation programs in areas other than special education. Staff worked to modify the report, now called the “*Guidance on Granting Equivalency*,” and presented the revised draft to the COA at its May 2010 meeting.

At the May 2010 COA meeting, the draft *Guidance on Granting Equivalency* document was discussed again and a few additional suggestions were made by the COA. At the June 2010

COA meeting, the updated *Guidance on Granting Equivalency* was reviewed a final time. Following this review, the COA took action in June 2010 to forward the document to the Commission for information and for dissemination to all California educator preparation programs.

**Next Steps**

This item is for information only. Staff will develop a Program Sponsor Alert notifying the field about the Equivalency guidance, post a copy of the document on the Commission's web page, and provide technical assistance to program sponsors to support programs in appropriately evaluating prior work and determining equivalencies.



# **Guidance on Granting Equivalency for Sponsors of Educator Preparation Programs**

(Based on the previously adopted report “*Comparability of Coursework for Sponsors of Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs*”)

June 2010

# Guidance on Granting Equivalency for Sponsors of Educator Preparation Programs

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## Preamble

In response to AB 2226 (Chap. 233, Stats. 2008), the Commission convened a work group for the purpose of providing guidance to programs in determining the comparability of coursework and/or field experience completed in other Commission-accredited programs to the requirements of special education preparation programs. The statute specifies that the findings of the work group are to be reported to the Legislature, the Governor, and the Secretary of Education.

When the report (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/reports/AB2226-2010.pdf>) prepared by the special education work group was presented to the Commission, the Commission requested that the Committee on Accreditation review the report and consider how similar information could be provided to all of the Commission's educator preparation programs.

In discussing possible guidelines for comparability, the original special education work group established by the Commission identified several key principles to facilitate the work. The key principles presented below are the same principles developed by the special education work group, with the language broadened to be appropriate for all types of educator preparation programs:

- Decisions regarding comparability should be at the discretion of the program sponsor. It is important to note that there are no Commission-approved policies that restrict the authority of program sponsors to make decisions about issues such as equivalence, articulation, and comparability, as these terms are defined below.
- Program sponsors have a broad range of possibilities for data in considering evidence for comparability. For example, program sponsors can consider coursework, professional development, work experience, and life experience. Program sponsors have complete discretion over the range of evidence that may be considered.
- Evaluations of the evidence for comparability do not have to be based on a course-credit model. Evaluations should be evidence-based and reflect the current Commission-approved standards for the type of credential or authorization program. The Commission does not require approved program sponsors to document units completed when recommending a candidate for an earned credential; however, program sponsors must keep a record of the evidence and decisions that address the candidate's competence in relation to the standards.
- For candidates simultaneously pursuing a degree in addition to earning a credential, approved program sponsors use their own institutional processes and procedures for course credit evaluations. However, this does not preclude sponsors from also conducting non-course credit, standards-based evaluations with respect to a candidate for the purpose of earning a credential.
- The evaluation process should be guided by the principles of candidate "friendliness" and candidate responsibility. Each program sponsor should have written directions as to how candidates request an evaluation from the program. The directions should include any

disclaimers that might impact a candidate's decision about ultimately completing a credential or authorization with that program sponsor; for example, requirements to complete a minimum number of course units prior to being recommended for a credential or authorization should be clearly explained.

- The responsibility of retrieving, organizing, and reflecting on the evidence provided for evaluation lies with the candidate.

The comparability evaluation process should be rigorous and labor intensive. Program sponsors may use their established institutional processes to recover appropriate costs to conduct evaluations.

### **Glossary of Terminology Used in This Report**

- *Articulation agreement*: a written agreement between one sponsor/preparer and another to accept the coursework and/or fieldwork of the offering agency. An example of an articulation agreement is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between an educator preparation institution and one or more local community colleges.
- *Comparability*: the determination that a candidate has demonstrated the essence of the set of knowledge, skills and/or abilities required by a particular Commission program standard through other coursework or experiences.
- *Concurrent Enrollment*: enrollment in more than one institution at the same time. Each institution's catalog should provide information concerning concurrent enrollment policies.
- *Equivalence*: the determination that a given set of knowledge, skills, and abilities as reflected in standards have been met through coursework/fieldwork/prior learning experiences, as determined by an evaluation process.
- *Prior Learning Assessment*: a process through which a person develops a portfolio of life experiences and/or training/preparation experiences that establish the basis for meeting the appropriate standard(s). According to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Policy Manual ([http://www.wascenior.org/findit/files/forms/Policy\\_Manual\\_current.pdf](http://www.wascenior.org/findit/files/forms/Policy_Manual_current.pdf)) unit credit for prior experiential learning is allowable at the undergraduate level, but not the graduate level. The WASC policy governs university units but not completion of requirements for credential purposes.
- *Program sponsor*: any university-based or local education agency-based program approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- *Reciprocity*: a mutual agreement among sponsors/preparers/authorities to accept unconditionally each other's coursework/fieldwork/professional learning experiences. An example of reciprocity is the agreement between the different institutions with in the

California State University (CSU) system that have partnered to form the Asian Bilingual Crosscultural Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) program.

- *Waiver*: a document issued by the Commission on request from an employing agency when a candidate lacks a credential requirement (for example, basic skills). **Note:** The term “waiver” is not an appropriate term with reference to evaluating candidates for equivalence/comparability.

## **Methods of Determining Equivalency**

The guidance provided in this document on determining equivalency is focused on equivalency of prior experience and education related to California credential requirements, not to academic units. Please consult the WASC Accreditation Handbook ([http://www.wascsenior.org/findit/files/forms/Handbook\\_of\\_Accreditation\\_2008\\_with\\_hyperlinks.pdf](http://www.wascsenior.org/findit/files/forms/Handbook_of_Accreditation_2008_with_hyperlinks.pdf)) and Policy Manual for guidance related to academic units and degrees [http://www.wascsenior.org/findit/files/forms/Policy\\_Manual\\_current.pdf](http://www.wascsenior.org/findit/files/forms/Policy_Manual_current.pdf).

### **Comparability Options**

The following are non-restrictive examples of options which may be used to verify competency met by the candidate:

- Examination results inclusive of the specialty area that verify the competency of the candidate.
- A portfolio containing specified types of entries that demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities reflective of the specific credential sought by the candidate.
- A Performance Narrative addressing three components to include: Personal background information; Academic background specific to the credential sought; Classroom experience and performance, including evaluative information, documentation of parent interactions, and demonstration of collaborative skills and experiences with teaching peers and administrators.
- A video (submitted with appropriate permissions) which includes representations of classroom methodologies, classroom management, scope and sequencing of curriculum and social interactions with students.
- A transcript that provides sufficient information regarding course content, catalog descriptions, course syllabi, or a matrix identifying variations of course offerings across content areas.
- A Prior Learning Assessment which contains a descriptive narrative of the candidate’s personal involvement in one or more of the following: 1) Life Experiences; 2) Work Experiences; 3) Paraprofessional Experience; 4) Parenting.

- A Review Board Process, which may be used by the Program Sponsor to examine the background of the candidate knowledge presented, along with its application in the specific classroom.

Options for verification may include all or part of the above categories as a written record to verify and monitor the completion of program requirements.

### **Evidence-Based Standards**

If a candidate directly presents evidence to the program sponsor for comparability in meeting specific credential requirements, the following guidelines should prevail:

- The candidate should present information based on current, adopted California credential or authorization standards as appropriate to the specific credential sought.
- As written agreements are formulated between the candidate and the program sponsor, such agreements must be evidence-based as appropriate to the specific credential standard requested for equivalence. Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) should be used as evidence-based criteria in the verification option of fieldwork experiences for teaching credentials.
- Evaluative information presented by the candidate must be in alignment with the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession*.

### **Flexible Enrollment**

Flexible enrollment may be considered for candidates who need minimal work to complete a credential or authorization program. Program sponsors should explore alternatives for candidate enrollment in the program. These alternatives include but are not limited to visitor status, concurrent enrollment, open university, county/district programs or through university extension programs, and professional development activities.

Flexible enrollment may be used to assist individuals who need prerequisite work to enter a credential program, may need one or two classes to complete a program, or may have relocated and need work to complete their program at the recommending program sponsor. In some cases the only option for the candidate may be to use the Commission's CL-666 Form - Institution's Evaluation for Staff Appeal (RGA-16), used by institutions.

### **Program Sponsor Agreements**

Program sponsors may take advantage of their frequent collaborations to formalize broad or limited written agreements concerning comparability of coursework and/or fieldwork. Such agreements may be created to meet the needs of individual programs or individual candidates. In some cases program sponsors may agree to accept work completed at another program as comparable. In this case a formal agreement might not be necessary.

#### *Articulation Agreements*

Articulation agreements indicate that the courses taken at one institution or through a given program sponsor are transferable to another institution or program sponsor as indicated in the agreement. Articulation agreements may include: community college and four year

institutions, or four-year institutions and/or local program sponsors and institutions of higher education. Articulation agreements may involve the components of the preliminary and/or clear credentials. These agreements may be created at the system level or at the local level.

#### *Comparability and Equivalency*

Program sponsors may unilaterally decide to accept coursework and/or fieldwork from other program sponsors. A program sponsor may evaluate the content of a candidate's course of study and fieldwork completed in another program, plus other life experiences of the candidate, and determine the candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities to be comparable or equivalent to those required by the recommending program sponsor. The candidate's program and/or experiences may have been completed within California, in another state, or at an institution outside the country.

### **Prior Learning Assessment**

#### *Overview of the Prior Learning Assessment Process*

Prospective candidates may be able to gain recognition and credit for their life and learning experiences through a process called "Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)." As adult learners, these prospective candidates may have acquired knowledge through "experiential learning" that is equivalent to what is taught in a college classroom. This experiential learning may have been attained from a variety of sources such as a job/career, volunteer work, self-study, or courses taken in a non-traditional college setting. Granting of equivalencies that meet credential or authorization standards and/or fieldwork requirements through PLA involves the candidate's developing a portfolio or other verification options that organize the candidate's learning experiences in a manner that can be evaluated for comparability.

Through the Prior Learning Assessment process, candidates have an opportunity to demonstrate how their experiences and learning are comparable to what is required by the standards. Two distinct methods are available to demonstrate their learning: submission of a portfolio with essay or submission of a portfolio without an essay. The following provides an overview of the differences between the two and illustrates which PLA process is appropriate for the candidate's knowledge and experience.

#### *Prior Learning Assessment with Essay*

The portfolio is developed based on required standards for the credential. The portfolio will include an essay demonstrating evidence-based learning activities that meet the required Commission standards through the experiential learning. Portfolios are evaluated to determine whether the candidate's experiential learning (knowledge) is equivalent to that required by the standard being addressed via the portfolio.

Note: A determination of meeting the equivalent course requirements for knowledge gained is not given for seat time or for the candidate's having had the experience itself. For example, attending a four-week training program does not guarantee that the candidate has learned what was taught in the program. Instead, the candidate needs to provide evidence that he/she gained the knowledge.

### *Prior Learning Assessment without Essay*

The portfolio is developed based on required standards that the candidate completed outside of a traditional college classroom. The experiential learning activity being submitted should have the following characteristics:

- Required learning outcomes are stated and assessment of performance is provided.
- The experiential learning content is demonstrably equivalent to that required by Commission standards.
- Printed documentation is provided of the learning objectives, delivery method, and information about the instructor or instructional methods.
- Sponsorship is documented to be by a qualified provider.

### **Performance Learning Plan**

Prior to beginning to develop a portfolio, the candidate would meet with a program advisor to discuss ideas for participating in the Prior Learning Assessment process. The advisor would review the candidate's pre-evaluation of experiential learning activities/experiences. Once a candidate is approved for proceeding to the Prior Learning Assessment process, the Program Advisor will document the approval of pre-experiential learning activities.

### **Verification/Monitoring of Work by Program Sponsor**

This section outlines the process for the Program Sponsor to verify and monitor completion of program requirements, including any attempts by the candidate to meet requirements through an articulation agreement, equivalency and comparability.

There should be an overall program completion form to document all requirements and their completion, which will be signed by the candidate, the advisor, the program coordinator (or designee).

Upon evaluating a credential candidate's prior course work and experiences a Candidate Completion Plan (CCP) could be prepared. This plan would delineate the course work and/or fieldwork the candidate must complete in order to be recommended for the credential. The plan would be filed with the Program Sponsor and a copy kept by the candidate. The plan should include a timeline for completion. This information should be transmitted to the Credential Analyst/authorized signatory for inclusion in the candidate's file.

The authorization process is up to the discretion of the program sponsor, but in order to have reliability, the process should be outlined on a CCP that has more than one designated signature. The written record is ultimately submitted to the credential analyst. Program sponsors are responsible for the ongoing reliability and validity of the process.

## **Recency of Work Requirement**

When applying to the Commission for program approval, a program sponsor will describe its process for determining how recency of work will be considered when determining a candidate's "challenge" to meeting a Commission required standard.

The program sponsor needs to have policies and guidelines in place to determine if recency of work is relevant and if the work is sufficiently up to date to verify knowledge of current statutes, research, practices and state standards.

The program sponsor will provide the candidate with a process form for demonstrating how recency of work relates to required standards for credential completion. The record of the process shall become part of the candidate's portfolio.

Program sponsors are encouraged to create a database of comparable coursework and fieldwork to facilitate the completion of credential programs.

## **Extensions by Appeals Process**

Each program sponsor must have an appeals process in place. The appeals policy should address granting equivalencies and be provided in writing within admission forms and in the college catalog or advising materials. Candidates must complete the institutional or program appeal process before submitting an appeal to the Commission.

### **Individual Extensions by Appeals Submitted to the Commission**

Upon request, the Commission may issue a teaching or service credential, teaching authorization, or an extension to a credential to individuals who meet specific criteria. There are two types of appeals:

#### **Staff Appeals**

Commission staff may issue an extension or renew a credential or permit when an applicant verifies good cause for not completing renewal requirements. An extension may be issued only once, except in cases where the extenuating circumstances continue to exist and the applicant has made sufficient progress toward completion of the requirements. All appeal extension applications are reviewed on an individual basis. Extensions are not granted if an applicant cannot show good cause or substantial reasons for the request. Financial hardship cannot be considered a valid reason for extension.

#### *Examples of staff extensions*

- **New Requirement Added by Statute or Regulation:** The candidate was not informed of a new requirement and has completed all other requirements for the renewal of the credential.
- **Medical Extension:** The candidate did not complete renewal requirements due to medical or health reasons affecting the applicant, family, or household member.

- Failure to Complete Renewal Requirement(s): The candidate did not complete renewal requirements and needs a one-year extension of the credential.
- Program Sponsor is Unable to Recommend for a Credential: The candidate has completed all the requirements for a credential or authorization but the program sponsor is unable to recommend for the credential due to specific policies such as recency of coursework or residency coursework not completed.

### **Commission Appeals**

The Commission has the authority to review actual teaching experience for candidates who seek equivalency to the student teaching component. Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations sections 80505 through 80522, allow an applicant to appeal to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing for the purpose of finding “equivalency” of an individual’s teaching experience in lieu of the student teaching component. There are no provisions in Title 5 Regulations allowing the Commission to grant equivalency to coursework. All pertinent coursework such as methods, curriculum, and subject matter must be completed prior to filing for an appeal.

- The program sponsor must state it is unwilling or unable to supervise the candidate in a current paid teaching position. A full explanation from the program sponsor is required.
- If the program sponsor is able to supervise the candidate in a current teaching position, the application will be denied by Commission staff as there shall be no basis for appeal.
- A minimum of three years of satisfactory teaching experience submitted in lieu of the student teaching component must be:
  - a. after completion of a baccalaureate degree;
  - b. concurrent with or after a professional teacher preparation program;
  - c. at the level and scope of the credential being sought; and
  - d. in the subject to be listed on the credential.
- Financial hardship is not a valid reason for an appeal.

### **Resources:**

Extension by Appeal for Teaching Credentials and Permits Information Leaflet:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/al3.pdf>

Options to Expanding Employability Webpage:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/default-current.html>

Commission Appeals for Education Specialist Instruction Credentials:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl760sm.pdf>

### **Contact Information:**

The Commission’s Information Services Section

By email: [credentials@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:credentials@ctc.ca.gov)

By telephone: 1-888-921-2682

## Appendix A

### Samples of Acceptable Documentation for Portfolios

#### Acceptable Types of Documentation

Portfolios must include documentation that supports the activities and learning experiences described in written essays. This would include letters from employers verifying job responsibilities, and certificates of completion of any training or coursework. The following provides more information on acceptable types of documentation.

Type of Activity	Acceptable Documentation
Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job descriptions</li> <li>• Awards</li> <li>• Letters of collaboration from superiors, peers, clients</li> <li>• Performance standards for acquiring certifications</li> <li>• Samples of work produced</li> </ul>
Community Service Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commendations and awards</li> <li>• Newspaper and magazine clippings</li> <li>• Letters of collaboration from co-volunteers, clients served, supervisors</li> </ul>
Non-College Courses and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter attesting student completed the course</li> <li>• Learning outcomes or objectives of course</li> <li>• Evidence of completion</li> <li>• Course description(s) outline(s)</li> <li>• Number of didactic hours</li> <li>• Number of clinical or practicum hours</li> <li>• Diplomas/Certifications</li> </ul>
Special Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books or articles published</li> <li>• Programs designed</li> <li>• Speeches given</li> <li>• Written samples</li> <li>• Audiovisual presentations</li> <li>• Proposals written</li> </ul>

## **Appendix B**

### **Samples of Scenarios for Reference Use**

#### **Introduction**

To help understand how these guidelines might be applied, fictitious scenarios have been prepared to illustrate situations in which the Guidelines could be used.

#### **Scenario 1: School Counselor Becomes an Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities**

James is a school counselor who is interested in becoming an education specialist for mild moderate disabilities. He has contacted the institution where he earned his pupil personnel services school counseling credential and inquired as to the process for making such a career change.

Rather than completing the process via phone and e-mail contacts, it was suggested that he contact the program coordinator for the Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Disabilities credential to schedule an appointment and to determine a course of action.

In preparation for the appointment, James obtains copies of his transcripts and letters of support from his professional colleagues. He also drafts a personal statement and obtains letters verifying activities carried out in his role as a school counselor. He downloads and prints the course sequence for the Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Disabilities Credential as well as the courses he completed for his school counselor credential.

James meets with the Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Disabilities Credential program coordinator, Dr. Julia Duenas. James expresses his interest in changing professions and states that he hopes some of his coursework from his school counseling program as well as his work in the schools may be applied to his credential program.

Julia explains that there are several options open to him to demonstrate competency with respect to meeting the standards for the credential. She also explains that there are some requirements that are set by the state and are not negotiable.

Together Julia and James prepare an equivalency chart that represents the program requirements, prior coursework and experiences that may be applied towards meeting the standards for the credential. At the end of the review, they will create a Program Completion Plan for James. Should James choose to attend this institution, he would be responsible for the completion of the requirements as indicated on the plan. The institution will honor the commitments made to James as indicated on the plan.

At the end of the review of transcripts, letters of support, personal statement and response to interview questions, the Personal Completion Plan was drafted. It requires that James supply additional information that further describes how his preparation for being a school counselor and his work as a school counselor enable him to meet the standards for the Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Disabilities Credential. James must also provide an elaborated description of his duties as a school counselor in order to obtain credit for fieldwork in mild/moderate disabilities.

### Sample Program Completion Plan

Requirements	Previously Met	Equivalency	Need to Complete
<i>State</i>			
Subject Matter (CSET)			√
Basic Skills (CBEST)	√		
US Constitution	√		
Certificate of Clearance	√		
Exam to Teach Reading (RICA)			√
<i>Program – Mild/Moderate Disabilities</i>			
Introduction to M/M Disabilities		√ <sup>1</sup>	
Instructional Strategies			√
Assessment			√
Positive Behavior Support		√ <sup>2</sup>	
Collaboration/Consultation		√ <sup>2</sup>	
M/M Field Work (2 experiences)		√ <sup>1,2</sup>	
Law/Student Study Team/ Individual Education Plan Process		√ <sup>1,2</sup>	
<i>General Education</i>			
Curriculum			√
Assessment			√
Reading			√
English Learners			√
Educational Psychology		√ <sup>1</sup>	
Diversity		√ <sup>1,2</sup>	
Fieldwork		√ <sup>2</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> Through previous coursework

<sup>2</sup> Through previous employment

An area of discussion between James and Julia was meeting the standards for knowledge and skills in general education, including English learners. James felt that his five years as a counselor for students at the elementary level should be ‘worth something.’ Julia stated that if James could present sufficient evidence to demonstrate that he had met the specific standards, he

could be able to obtain equivalencies. Julia reiterated that the candidate must demonstrate that he has met the standards on which courses are based.

James and Julia agreed to meet in three weeks. In three weeks James will present his evidence to demonstrate that he had met the content of the standards as indicated in the areas above where equivalencies are granted on the basis of employment. He will also present additional evidence in order to convince Julia that some of the elements in the need to complete column should be moved to equivalencies column.

## **Scenario 2: A Teacher in a Classroom for the Moderate/Severe Disabilities Wants an Education Specialist: Physical and Other Health Impaired (PHI) Authorization**

### Question submitted by candidate:

“I hold a Moderate/Severe Disabilities credential and have been assigned to a classroom of low incidence students for the past 10 years. I am now interested in applying for a PHI credential based on my experience and some professional development provided by my school district. I live more than 150 miles from a program sponsor. Do I apply directly to the Commission for this additional authorization?”

### Response:

Serving in an assignment (possibly a misassignment) for a number of years, does not constitute a verification of the overall understanding of students who have physical disabilities and their educational implications. However, through a comparability process, some background of experience and training may be applicable in meeting some of the requirements for a PHI credential, as is illustrated in the following examples:

1. Specific case studies that have been handled over the years, to demonstrate disability awareness in the PHI area.
  - a. Spina bifida
  - b. Cerebral palsy (ataxic and apraxic)
  - c. Post-polio
  - d. Quadriplegia
  - e. Paraplegia
2. Additional training in the area of fine and gross motor movements, positioning, range of motion, occupational and physical therapy, adaptive communication devices, and modified transportation through professional development activities offered by the school districts and professional organizations.
3. Has skills and knowledge in handling curriculum for students who are below grade level, at grade level and above grade level in all curriculum areas. This includes the adaptations and modifications of content information as well as knowledge of the expressive and receptive areas of communication of the special needs students.

Based on the above information provided, there are areas in the PHI authorization which could be investigated and possibly added as one of the new Added Authorizations in Special Education

(AASE). Future contact and conversation is recommended with a PHI program sponsor. Because of the distance from the program sponsor, it could be possible that some coursework is offered online.

### **Scenario 3: Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Disabilities Needs Added Authorization for Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Mrs. Johnson holds a Mild/Moderate credential and currently has a teaching assignment as a resource specialist in an elementary school. She wants to add an autism authorization to her current credential. After meeting with her county office of education (COE) credential analyst and determining that they can act as her program sponsor, Mrs. Johnson and the program sponsor representative review the standards required to complete the authorization.

During this discussion, Mrs. Johnson states that for the past five years she has been the case manager for several students with autism who are fully included in general education classes at her site. Her assignment requires her to evaluate their academic, social/emotional, motor, and self help skills, determine areas of need, and develop appropriate goals for each of the students. She provides direct services through push-in and pull-out programs and indirect services by offering and providing training to general education teachers and support personnel who work with the identified students. Mrs. Johnson has worked with parents and the school psychologist to develop behavior support plans (BSP) and has developed and implemented a social skills program for a number of her students.

The program sponsor agrees that these responsibilities meet many of the standards needed for the authorization. Mrs. Johnson collects samples of the Individualized Education Programs and BSPs she has developed, sample lesson plans and lesson evaluations from her social skills classes and letters from her principal as well as the school psychologist specifically addressing the standards Mrs. Johnson and the COE representative feel she has met. After reviewing the collected information, they determine that she has completed all but one of the required standards and can meet that final standard by taking one class offered by the COE's Commission-approved Autism Spectrum Disorder program.

### **Scenario 4: General Education Teacher Wants Credit Towards a Special Education Credential**

Jane Doe has been a successful 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher for ten years. Jane has developed a visual impairment that is easily accommodated with large print materials and technology and has no negative impact on her job. This impairment, however, has caused her to become interested in special education, so she makes an appointment with John Buck, a professor at the local university, to discuss getting a special education (SPED) credential. She walks into the meeting with transcripts in hand.

After discussing the program requirements with John, Jane asks if some of the coursework and fieldwork in the SPED program can be "waived," since she has another credential and has so much teaching experience. John explains that the term "waiver" is used by the Commission for a different purpose; but if some equivalencies can be found between what she has done and the

program requirements, and if Jane's prior work or life experience matches some of the program's coursework or fieldwork standards, John may be able to eliminate the requirement from her course of study.

Specifically, Jane felt she did not need to take the literacy, math, science and the health courses. Together, they studied her transcripts and saw that she took courses for literacy, math and science but she took them over ten years ago. John asked her to supply the course syllabi in order to make a competency comparison between her past courses and our courses, but she was unable to do so. She had an undergrad major in health science, but that was over 16 years ago and, again, she was unable to provide any syllabi or coursework.

Consequently, they agreed that Jane could develop a portfolio of her teaching experiences involving literacy, math, science and health. The portfolio would include classroom photos, lesson plans, student work and a letter from her principal verifying its contents. She understood that John and the program coordinator would analyze the portfolio according to the course standards to determine comparability and document the process.

In the end they completed and signed an advising form documenting what courses she would take, what courses she might not have to take if her portfolio supports it and she is given a timeline for completion.

### **Scenario 5: Out-of-State High School Teacher with a Masters in Special Education Wants California Education Specialist Mild/Moderate**

Jack moved to California from another state and wants to resume his teaching career, where he taught math to high school students with learning disabilities for five years. He worries that this is a complicated situation because he knows that, while his current state will allow him to teach in a special education program only requiring a Masters Degree in Special Education, California requires an Education Specialist Credential. He researches colleges on the internet and chooses XYZ University.

At the university, Jack meets with Dr. Jill to determine how to go about obtaining a California credential. During the process of reviewing Jack's transcripts, the first thing Dr. Jill discovers is that, unlike California, his state did not require that he pass assessments in order to demonstrate competence in basic skills, subject-matter, reading, and cultural/linguistic diversity. She also realizes that he began his teaching with no fieldwork experience and did not take several courses that California requires. In addition, although he took a law course, he has no knowledge of the regulations that California has implemented in order to comply with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. Dr. Jill then says to Jack, "Which do you want first—the good news or the bad news?"

The bad news is that the university cannot grant equivalencies for requirements beyond their approved program. In other words, according to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, all California teachers must meet the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR) and reading requirement (such as the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment - RICA). Thus, Jack will need to meet

the BSR before entering into any California program. Jack may pass the RICA examination while in the program.

The good news is that Jack has an undergraduate degree in math, so he can likely meet the subject-matter requirement through coursework or by taking and passing an examination. If he had been an elementary teacher, he would have needed to pass the Multiple Subject CSET examination. Also, since Jack has all of his master's degree course syllabi and a portfolio of his teaching experiences, it will be possible to do a comparability assessment to match Jack's knowledge, skills and abilities related to the required California standards for the credential courses and fieldwork. This assessment will also look for cultural/linguistic diversity competence. If the syllabi and portfolio do not provide enough detail, she will ask Jack to write a narrative to demonstrate in-depth knowledge.

Jack and Dr. Jill will meet again after she reviews his documents in order to develop a program completion plan to determine what courses and experiences he will need to complete. Jack goes home a happy man.

### **Scenario 6: Preliminary Multiple Subject Teacher has Completed One Year of BTSA Induction and Wants to Complete the Requirements for the Multiple Subject Clear Teaching Credential through an Approved Clear Credential Program**

Inez completed one year of the BTSA Induction program offered by her local school district. Due to a reduction in the teaching force in her district, Inez has accepted a job with a different school district. The new employing school district does not offer an approved BTSA Induction Program and therefore the associate superintendent of human resources has signed the CL 855 form stating that induction is not available to Inez.

Inez has taken the signed CL 855 form and her materials from the BTSA Induction program to meet with the coordinator of the approved Clear Credential program at a local university. The program coordinator and Inez reviewed the six Clear Credential program standards and the university's approved Clear Credential program requirements. Inez was able to provide evidence of work completed in her first year of the BTSA Induction program related to the Pedagogy and Universal Access standards. Together Inez and the Clear Credential program coordinator developed a Candidate Completion Plan (CCP) or an individual induction plan for Inez that will allow her to finish the requirements for the Clear Credential by completing two of the five seminars that the university program requires—an equivalency is granted for the other three seminars. Inez makes plans to apply to and enroll in the university's Clear Credential program.

### **Scenario 7: A prospective candidate completed a degree at one university that does not have a Commission-approved subject-matter program and enrolled in a teacher preparation program at a different institution. Edward would like to have his coursework and experience satisfy the subject matter requirement for a Preliminary Single Subject Teaching Credential**

The Title 5 regulations (§80094) require that an evaluation for single subject-matter equivalency involve the candidate completing all or a portion of the coursework for either the degree or the

teacher preparation at the institution evaluating the subject-matter coursework, or that the coursework being evaluated be in the content area in which the bachelor’s degree was earned.

The scenario states that the institution where Edward completed his undergraduate degree does not have an approved subject-matter program in his content area so the institution where Edward completed his degree and undergraduate coursework may not verify that he completed a subject-matter program.

If the institution where Edward plans to complete his teacher preparation has an approved single subject-matter program in the identified content area, then that institution **may** review Edward’s coursework and if appropriate, grant an equivalency.

If the institution where Edward plans to complete his teacher preparation does not have an approved subject-matter program in his content area then Edward could then request a ‘third party’ evaluation from an institution having an approved subject-matter program where he has completed no coursework. In this case Edward’s bachelor’s degree and the content area for which the single subject credential is sought must match. If the bachelor’s degree is in the same subject as the credential Edward is seeking (i.e. a candidate with a B.S. in Biology seeking a Single Subject Biology teaching credential), then a third institution **may** review Edward’s coursework and, if appropriate, grant an equivalency. If the university degree does not match the content area for the teaching credential sought, a ‘third party’ evaluation may NOT be done.

The decision to review an individual’s transcript and coursework and, if appropriate, verify a prospective teacher’s subject-matter knowledge is **an option for an institution**, within the restrictions described above. An institution should only verify subject-matter for a prospective teacher when it is clear that the coursework completed by the individual is equivalent to the coursework required by the approved subject-matter preparation program at that institution. The information is summarized in the table below.

Which institution may grant an equivalency, if any?		Approved Subject-Matter Program				Institution with an <u>Approved Subject-Matter Program</u> MAY Review Coursework and, if Equivalent, Grant an Equivalency
		Undergraduate Institution		Teacher Preparation Institution		
		Yes	No	Yes	No	
Is the <u>bachelor’s degree in the same subject as the subject for which equivalency is sought?</u>	Yes	X				Undergraduate Institution
	Yes		X	X		Teacher Preparation Institution
	Yes		X		X	Third Party Institution
	No	X				Undergraduate Institution
	No		X	X		Teacher Preparation Institution
	No		X		X	No Institution may grant equivalency

**Scenario 8: An individual has a Pupil Personnel Services Credential or School Counseling masters degree. The employing district is encouraging its secondary level counselors to earn Preliminary Administration Services credentials to allow them to engage in administrative responsibilities allowed under that authorization**

Through a review of transcripts and course descriptions, the representative from the approved preliminary administrative services program and the prospective school administrator identified specific courses such as “Laws and Ethics,” “Seminar in Assessment,” “Introduction to Educational Research and Statistics,” and/or “Current Issues in Education” that were completed for the PPS credential or School Counseling MA. Comparable courses are also required for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential and the approved program will grant an equivalency for the courses taken in the school counseling program. The individual will still need to complete the other components of the approved program and satisfy all credential requirements to earn the preliminary administrative services credential.