
4A

Action

Education Preparation Committee

Options for Integrated Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Program Candidates to Meet the Subject Matter Competence Requirement by Degree Major

Executive Summary: This item presents for Commission discussion and approval two options to adjust the requirement for meeting the subject matter competence requirement for candidates in integrated undergraduate teacher preparation programs so that they can take advantage of the degree major option for demonstrating subject matter competence [Education Code section 44259(b)].

Recommended Action: Staff recommends that the Commission approve one of the options presented to allow eligible integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program candidates to meet the subject matter competence requirement by degree major.

Presenters: Jake Shuler, Consultant, and Cheryl Hickey, Administrator, Professional Services Division

Options for Integrated Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Program Candidates to Meet the Subject Matter Competence Requirement by Degree Major

Introduction

This item presents two options for Commission consideration of adjustments that could be made to the subject matter competence requirement in order to allow eligible integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program candidates to meet the subject matter competence requirement by degree major, which is one of the new options authorized under Assembly Bill (AB) 130 (Chap. 44, Stats. 2021). Both of these options would expand the ability for all candidates in integrated undergraduate teacher preparation programs to meet subject matter by degree major bringing this option into alignment with the provisions of AB 130.

Background

Candidates for a teaching credential must demonstrate competency in the subject matter area of their intended credential.

[Education Code section 44259\(b\)](#) requires the demonstration of subject matter competence before a teacher candidate can be recommended for their preliminary credential. Many years ago, the Commission adopted policy requiring that candidates demonstrate subject matter competence before advancing to “daily whole class instructional responsibilities in a TK-12 school” ([MS/SS Precondition 6](#) and [Education Specialist Precondition 3](#)). This period of “daily whole class instruction” can vary from program to program depending on how the program is designed, but typically starts in the candidate’s final term of student teaching or in the required minimum four weeks of solo or co-teaching portion of student teaching ([MS/SS Program Standard 3](#)).

In addition to the timelines set by Education Code and Commission policy, teacher preparation programs have the discretion to require candidates to meet the subject matter competence requirement earlier in their program, with some programs requiring candidates to meet the requirement before admission or before the first term of student teaching. This requirement may also be largely determined by the program’s design and when candidates begin their student teaching.

It is important to note that none of the options above apply to intern credential candidates, as intern candidates are required to meet subject matter competence before they are recommended for the intern credential, since they will serve as teacher of record in a public-school classroom and need to show subject matter competence before that time.

The chart below provides information about when candidates must meet the subject matter competence requirement.

have completed all degree major courses and demonstrate subject matter competence through transcript analysis before they are allowed to start whole class instruction. This situation seems to go against the intent of AB 130.

It is also antithetical to the intent and purpose of integrated undergraduate teacher credentialing programs. [Education Code section 44259.1\(a\)\(1\)](#) states that “[a]n integrated program of professional preparation shall enable candidates for teaching credentials to engage in professional preparation, concurrently with subject matter preparation, while completing baccalaureate degrees at regionally accredited institutions of higher education. This section does not specify that the concurrent “subject matter preparation” be completed within a SMPP, and therefore could be integrated with a relevant bachelor’s degree that will lead to subject matter competence being met for the intended credential.

This issue is particularly poignant given that in recent years the expansion of integrated undergraduate programs has been a statewide priority in helping address California’s teacher shortages. Over the past decade the Commission has been tasked with promoting the creation and expansion of integrated undergraduate teacher credentialing programs through grants and technical assistance and many institutions have added this pathway.

The options for proposed adjustment to the subject matter competence requirement in this agenda item would allow all eligible undergraduate candidates enrolled in integrated preparation programs to take advantage of the degree major option. One option would be to extend the 4/5 (or 80%) exception to non-SMPP-linked integrated programs. A second option would be to remove the requirement to meet subject matter competence prior to daily whole class instruction for all integrated undergraduate programs, and instead allow the program to set the timeline and a process for verifying that candidates are subject matter competent prior to being recommended for their preliminary teaching credential. Both of these options would only apply to programs in which the bachelor’s degree aspect of the “integrated program” leads to a candidate meeting the subject matter competence requirement for the intended credential (e.g. Liberal Studies for Multiple Subject, Math for Single Subject Math). **It is important to note that regardless of which of the two options below is chosen, or if the Commission decides to leave policy unchanged, all candidates recommended for a credential will have demonstrated subject matter competence in accordance with California state statute.**

Staff Recommendation

The Commission consider adopting one of the two options below, as well as adopt the proposed clean up edits to clarify the relevant precondition language:

Option 1 – Extend the 4/5 (or 80%) rule to apply to candidates enrolled in any relevant integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program that will, once completed, meet their subject matter competence requirement.

This option would extend the 4/5 (or 80%) completion rule to candidates enrolled in an integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program who are pursuing a relevant bachelor’s

degree major that meets the requirements under [Education Code section 44259\(b\)\(5\)\(iv\)](#), rather than only candidates completing an SMPP. For example, the rule would apply to a candidate who is enrolled in an integrated bachelor's degree in Math that is combined with a Single Subject Math credential program, or a candidate who is enrolled in an integrated program that combines a bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies and a multiple subject credential. It would **not** apply to a candidate seeking a credential while completing a non-integrated degree major, such as a candidate seeking a multiple subject credential who is completing a degree major in Biology, or other non-integrated major.

This option would apply to all specified degree majors (see the [subject matter chart of options](#), and the [Credential Information Guide appropriate degrees webpage](#)), as well as the "other degree major" option for multiple subject candidate who complete courses covering the nine content areas in [Education Code section 44282\(b\)](#) while completing their bachelor's degree.

This option would not apply to candidates in non-integrated teacher credentialing programs. This includes those in intern programs, post-baccalaureate programs, or those pursuing the coursework transcript review or the combination of coursework and examination subtest options. These candidates would still be required to meet subject matter competence prior to becoming teacher of record or beginning the daily whole class instruction portion of their student teaching experience.

[Appendix A](#) includes proposed revisions to the language of MS/SS precondition 6 and Education Specialist precondition 3 reflecting this option.

Pros and Cons for Option 1

Pros – This option would allow all eligible integrated undergraduate teacher credentialing candidates who complete 4/5 of the bachelor's degree portion of their integrated program to begin daily whole class instruction without having to take the CSET.

Cons – Calculating the 4/5 (or 80%) point in a degree major may be somewhat onerous given that not all majors are organized to partner with a credential program the same way that SMPPs are. Additionally, programs would still have to calculate for each candidate when they have met the 4/5 (or 80 %) of coursework taken, even though it is known that at the end of the program the candidate will meet the subject matter requirement.

Option 2 – Remove the requirement to fully demonstrate subject matter competence prior to daily whole class instruction for all candidates enrolled in an integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program.

This option would remove the requirement to meet subject matter competence prior to daily whole class instruction for candidates in all integrated undergraduate teacher preparation programs, and thereby move the Commission deadline to meet subject matter competence to align with Education Code section 44259(b), which is prior to the credential recommendation.

The teacher preparation program would still have the discretion to establish an earlier program deadline for when candidates must meet the subject matter competence requirement.

[Appendix B](#) includes a new version of MS/SS precondition 6 and Education Specialist precondition 3 reflecting this option.

Like option 1, option 2 would apply to all specified degree majors (see the [subject matter chart of options](#), and the [Credential Information Guide appropriate degrees webpage](#)), as well as the “other degree major” option for multiple subject candidates who complete courses covering the nine content areas in [Education Code section 44282\(b\)](#) while completing their bachelor’s degree.

Pros and Cons for Option 2

Pros – This option would give programs the most flexibility in determining the best timeline for candidates to meet the subject matter competency requirement. It would eliminate the need for potentially time consuming administrative calculations by preparation programs. Most importantly, it recognizes that candidates who stay on track for their bachelor’s degree will meet subject matter competence prior to being recommended, consistent with statute.

Cons – This option may result in some candidates leading a classroom of students without yet being fully subject matter competent. It is important to note, however, that candidates will continue to be supervised by mentor teachers as they are not yet teachers of record. This option may also leave some candidates stuck at the very end of the program if they have degree major courses that they struggle to complete. It would be important to note that candidates will not be recommended for a credential until their bachelor’s degree and subject matter competence requirements are complete and that programs will need to continue to support these candidates to completion.

Other Clean Up Fixes to MS/SS Precondition 6 and Education Specialist Precondition 3

If option 1 is chosen above, Commission staff recommend adopting the following additional changes to MS/SS Precondition 6 and Education Specialist Precondition 3 to better align terminology used in the preconditions and standards:

Clean Up Change 1 – Add the term “(or 80%)” in MS/SS Precondition 6 and Education Specialist Precondition 3 to clarify the required portion that must be completed. The phrase would now read “completed four-fifths (or 80%) of the Commission-approved subject matter preparation program or relevant degree major”. The recommended new precondition language is included in [Appendix A](#).

Clean Up Change 2 – Delete the first sentence of paragraph B of MS/SS Precondition 6 and Education Specialist Precondition 3 related to monitoring candidate standing in relation to subject matter competence. This monitoring and advising requirement is already covered in MS/SS Precondition 5 and Education Specialist Precondition 2, as updated in 2022.

These recommended precondition language changes are included in [Appendix A](#). Note that programs will still have the discretion to require that candidates meet the subject matter competence requirement earlier in their credential program.

Next Steps

If the Commission votes to adopt one of the two options presented, staff will issue a Program Sponsor Alert to notify programs of the change, update precondition documents, and provide information and answer questions from programs during scheduled office hours.

Appendix A

Option 1: Extending the 4/5 (or 80%) rule to integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program candidates pursuing “relevant degree majors”. Note: Clean up Change 1 and Change 2 edits are included below as well.

MS/SS Precondition 6

(6) Demonstration of Subject Matter Competence. The approved preliminary teacher preparation program sponsor determines that each candidate meets the subject matter requirement prior to being given daily whole class instructional responsibilities in a TK-12 school.

- A. For Multiple Subject and Single Subject programs, the candidate provides evidence of having demonstrated subject matter competence through one of the following methods:
1. Completion of a subject matter program approved by the Commission on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(i).*
 2. Passage of a Commission-approved subject matter examination. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(ii).*
 3. Successful completion of coursework at one or more regionally accredited institution of higher education that addresses each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the Commission in the content area of the credential pursuant to Section 44282, as verified by a Commission-approved program of professional preparation. Coursework completed at a community or junior college that is regionally accredited by an accrediting agency listed in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (g) of Section 44203 or by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may count for purposes of this clause. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(iii).*
 4. Successful completion of a baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with the following, as applicable.
 - i. For Single Subject credentials, a major in one of the subject areas in which the Commission credentials candidates, as indicated in Education Code Sections 44259(b)(5)(A)(iv)(I) and 44282 (b).
 - ii. For Multiple Subject credentials, a liberal studies major or other degree that includes coursework in the content areas as indicated in Education Code 44259(b)(5)(A)(iv)(II) and 44282 (b).

5. A combination of the methods described in 1, 2, or 3 above that together demonstrate that the candidate has met or exceeded the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the Commission. Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(v), and 44282 (b).

- B. ~~For integrated undergraduate programs only, the candidate must be monitored by the program for subject matter competence prior to beginning early field experiences and throughout the program until such time as it has been determined that the candidate has satisfied subject matter competence.~~ Each candidate in an integrated undergraduate program must have satisfied subject matter competence, or at a minimum completed four-fifths **(or 80%)** of the Commission-approved subject matter preparation program **or relevant degree major**, prior to beginning daily whole class instruction.

*The relevant degree major is the major which aligns with the credential that the candidate is seeking. For a full list of acceptable majors by credential type, please refer to [the following CTC webpage](#).

Education Specialist Precondition 3

(3) Demonstration of Subject Matter Competence. The approved preliminary teacher preparation program sponsor determines that each candidate meets the subject matter requirement prior to being given daily whole class instructional responsibilities in a TK-12 school.

- A. For Education Specialist programs, the candidate provides evidence of having demonstrated subject matter competence through one of the following methods:
1. Completion of a subject matter program approved by the Commission on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(i).*
 2. Passage of a Commission-approved subject matter examination. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(ii).*
 3. Successful completion of coursework at one or more regionally accredited institution of higher education that addresses each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the Commission in the content area of the credential pursuant to Section 44282, as verified by a Commission-approved program of professional preparation. Coursework completed at a community or junior college that is regionally accredited by an accrediting agency listed in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (g) of Section 44203 or by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may count for purposes of this clause. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(iii).*

4. Successful completion of a baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with either a major in one of the subject areas in which the Commission credentials candidates or a liberal studies or other major that includes coursework in the content areas pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 44282.
 5. A combination of the methods described in 1, 2, or 3 above that together demonstrate that the candidate has met or exceeded the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the Commission. Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(v), and 44282 (b)
- B. ~~For integrated undergraduate programs only, the candidate must be monitored by the program for subject matter competence prior to beginning early field experiences and throughout the program until such time as it has been determined that the candidate has satisfied subject matter competence.~~ Each candidate in an integrated undergraduate program must have satisfied subject matter competence, or at a minimum completed four-fifths **(or 80%)** of the Commission-approved subject matter preparation program or relevant degree major, prior to beginning daily whole class instruction.

*The relevant degree major is the major which aligns with the credential that the candidate is seeking. For a full list of acceptable majors by credential type, please refer to [the following CTC webpage](#).

Appendix B

Option 2: Remove the requirement to complete the subject matter competence requirement prior to daily whole class instruction for all integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program candidates. Note: Clean up Change 1 and Change 2 edits are included below as well.

MS/SS Precondition 6

(6) Demonstration of Subject Matter Competence. The approved preliminary teacher preparation program sponsor determines that each candidate meets the subject matter requirement prior to being given daily whole class instructional responsibilities in a TK-12 school.

Candidates enrolled in an integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program may begin the daily whole class instruction portion of their student teaching experience before meeting the subject matter requirement. However, all candidates must meet the subject matter requirement before being recommended for their preliminary teaching credential.

- A. For Multiple Subject and Single Subject programs, the candidate provides evidence of having demonstrated subject matter competence through one of the following methods:
1. Completion of a subject matter program approved by the Commission on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(i).*
 2. Passage of a Commission-approved subject matter examination. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(ii).*
 3. Successful completion of coursework at one or more regionally accredited institution of higher education that addresses each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the Commission in the content area of the credential pursuant to Section 44282, as verified by a Commission-approved program of professional preparation. Coursework completed at a community or junior college that is regionally accredited by an accrediting agency listed in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (g) of Section 44203 or by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may count for purposes of this clause. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(iii).*
 4. Successful completion of a baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with the following, as applicable.
 - i. For Single Subject credentials, a major in one of the subject areas in which the Commission credentials candidates, as indicated in Education Code Sections 44259(b)(5)(A)(iv)(I) and 44282 (b).

- ii. For Multiple Subject credentials, a liberal studies major or other degree that includes coursework in the content areas as indicated in Education Code 44259(b)(5)(A)(iv)(II) and 44282 (b).
5. A combination of the methods described in 1, 2, or 3 above that together demonstrate that the candidate has met or exceeded the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the Commission. Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(v), and 44282 (b).

~~**B. For integrated undergraduate programs only, the candidate must be monitored by the program for subject matter competence prior to beginning early field experiences and throughout the program until such time as it has been determined that the candidate has satisfied subject matter competence. Each candidate in an integrated undergraduate program must have satisfied subject matter competence, or at a minimum completed four-fifths of the Commission-approved subject matter preparation program or relevant degree major, prior to beginning daily whole class instruction.**~~

Education Specialist Precondition 3

(3) Demonstration of Subject Matter Competence. The approved preliminary teacher preparation program sponsor determines that each candidate meets the subject matter requirement prior to being given daily whole class instructional responsibilities in a TK-12 school.

Candidates enrolled in an integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program may begin the daily whole class instruction of their student teaching experience before meeting the subject matter requirement. However, all candidates must meet the subject matter requirement before being recommended for their preliminary teaching credential.

- A. For Education Specialist programs, the candidate provides evidence of having demonstrated subject matter competence through one of the following methods:
 1. Completion of a subject matter program approved by the Commission on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(i).*
 2. Passage of a Commission-approved subject matter examination. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(ii).*
 3. Successful completion of coursework at one or more regionally accredited institution of higher education that addresses each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the Commission in the content area of the credential pursuant to Section 44282, as verified by a Commission-approved program of professional preparation. Coursework completed at a community or junior college that is regionally accredited by an accrediting agency listed in

subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (g) of Section 44203 or by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may count for purposes of this clause. *Reference: Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(iii).*

4. Successful completion of a baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with either a major in one of the subject areas in which the Commission credentials candidates or a liberal studies or other major that includes coursework in the content areas pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 44282.
5. A combination of the methods described in 1, 2, or 3 above that together demonstrate that the candidate has met or exceeded the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the Commission. Education Code 44259 (b)(5)(A)(v), and 44282 (b).

~~**B. For integrated undergraduate programs only, the candidate must be monitored by the program for subject matter competence prior to beginning early field experiences and throughout the program until such time as it has been determined that the candidate has satisfied subject matter competence. Each candidate in an integrated undergraduate program must have satisfied subject matter competence, or at a minimum completed four-fifths of the Commission-approved subject matter preparation program or relevant degree major, prior to beginning daily whole class instruction.**~~