



# PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

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**DATE:**

February 23, 2024

**NUMBER:**

PSA 24-04

**SUBJECT: PRECONDITION CHANGES RELATED TO THE SUBJECT MATTER COMPETENCE REQUIREMENT FOR INTEGRATED UNDERGRADUATE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

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**Summary:**

At its [February 2024 meeting](#), the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) approved revisions to certain preconditions for Preliminary Multiple Subject, Single Subject, and Education Specialist programs related to the subject matter competence requirement for candidates in integrated undergraduate teacher preparation programs. This Program Sponsor Alert provides information about these revised preconditions.

**Key Provisions:**

At the Commission meeting on February 8th, 2024, the Commission took action to amend Multiple Subject and Single Subject Precondition 6 and Education Specialist Precondition 3 to allow eligible candidates in integrated undergraduate teacher preparation programs to begin daily whole class instruction before meeting the subject matter competence requirement. Candidates must meet the subject matter competence requirement before being recommended for their preliminary credential.

The purpose of this change is to give equal access to the degree major option provided in Education Code 44259(b)(5)(A)(iv) for candidates in all teacher preparation program pathways. Because candidates in integrated undergraduate credential programs have not yet completed their degree major, they were required to either take the CSET exam or extend the time it would take to complete their program even though the degree they were earning would eventually count as meeting subject matter.

The amended preconditions language is included in [Appendix A](#).

This new policy will apply only to candidates who are:

1. Enrolled in an integrated undergraduate teacher preparation program where the candidate is completing their bachelor's degree and their teacher preparation program concurrently, and
2. Completing a degree major that meets the subject matter competence requirement in the content area for the credential they seek or completing a Commission-approved subject matter preparation program in the content area for the credential they seek.

This new policy does NOT apply to candidates who are:

1. Completing a post baccalaureate teacher credentialing program.
2. Enrolled in a teacher intern program.
3. Completing a degree major that does not meet the subject matter competence requirement for the credential they seek.
4. Seeking to meet subject matter competence via transcript review of coursework aligned to the Subject Matter Requirements (SMRs).

Relevant degree majors that will qualify a candidate to take advantage of this new option are those majors that meet the subject matter competence requirement under Ed Code Section [44259\(b\)\(5\)\(A\)\(iv\)](#). The following [CTC chart](#) includes a list of acceptable majors for each credential area. This list of majors includes the "other degree major" for Multiple Subject and Education Specialist candidates in which candidates are completing a degree major that includes coursework in the content areas pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 44282: language studies, literature, mathematics, science, social studies, history, arts, physical education, and human development.

While this new option will now be available to eligible candidates in all integrated undergraduate teacher preparation programs, teacher preparation programs still have the discretion to require that candidates meet the subject matter competence requirement earlier in their program, such as before the first term of student teaching.

The revised preconditions are now in effect, and programs should continue to refine their processes to align with all precondition requirements. However, to avoid confusion, the updated preconditions will not be posted on the Commission's website until April 2024. Programs submitting preconditions in March 2024 (yellow and violet cohorts) do not need to submit anything addressing the change in the preconditions language in Appendix A for their integrated undergraduate pathways.

**Important Dates:**

[February 8, 2024, Commission Meeting, Agenda Item 4A](#)

**Background:**

In July 2021, [Assembly Bill 130](#) (Chap. 44, Stats. 2021) created additional options in California Education Code for candidates to demonstrate subject matter competence through (a) degree majors in the subject area of the credential being sought, (b) coursework that covers the

domains of the applicable Subject Matter Requirements for the credential sought, or (c) a combination of coursework and examination subtests required for the subject area of the credential sought by the candidate. These new provisions were added to the existing options of successful completion of a Commission-approved subject matter program or passage of the appropriate subject matter exam, currently the California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET).

The law under [Education Code Section 44259\(b\)\(5\)](#) requires that subject matter competence be complete before a candidate is recommended for their preliminary credential. However, Commission policy set an earlier timeline in the program to require that subject matter be met prior to daily whole class instruction. Daily whole class instruction is typically defined as the final portion of student teaching or the culminating four weeks of solo or co-teaching.

Because integrated undergraduate credential candidates are completing their credential program and bachelor's degree simultaneously, they have not completed their degree major before the deadline to meet subject matter competence – prior to beginning the daily whole class instruction portion of their student teaching experience.

Many years ago, the Commission adopted a policy that allows candidates in a Commission-approved integrated program comprised of a Commission-approved subject matter preparation program and a credential program to start daily whole class instruction once they have completed 4/5 of their subject matter preparation program – but this option did not exist for other integrated candidates. This new policy will allow candidates in all integrated undergraduate teacher credentialing programs to take advantage of the degree major option for satisfying subject matter competence.

**Sources:**

[February 2024 Agenda Item 4A](#)

[Education Code Section 44259](#)

[Assembly Bill 130 \(2021\)](#)

**Contact Information:**

For program questions about this PSA please contact: [PSDInfo@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:PSDInfo@ctc.ca.gov).

For information about the credential recommendation process, please contact [credentials@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:credentials@ctc.ca.gov)

## Appendix A

### 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.**~~