

The Special Education Master's Degree Portfolio

Once a student has completed the required courses, a master's portfolio must be compiled and submitted. This master's portfolio serves as the comprehensive examination for the Special Education program. Students must complete the necessary paperwork through the SEHD Student Services office to partake in the comprehensive examination.

The master's portfolio contains evidence for receiving a special education endorsement as well as earning a Master's Degree. The purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate growth over time as well as serve as summative documentation of a student's development of knowledge base and set of skills linked to the area of special education. The portfolio consists of three major components organized to best highlight ones leadership and teaching abilities. Those components include: a leadership paper; an integrated essay; and a comprehensive set of documents organized as a professional portfolio product. Each of these three components should be submitted using the Live Text system.

Component I: Leadership Paper

Context

As a leader in the field of special education it is essential that you have the capacity to engage in or lead school change and renewal processes grounded in the ethics of inquiry, knowledge, competence, caring, and social justice. Advocating for, leading, and sustaining a unified, inclusive educational system calls for thoughtful planning efforts. The **leadership paper** provides the graduate student in the special education program with the opportunity to explore how inclusive education can support a diverse student body at all grade levels.

In this **leadership paper**, students will select an area targeted for improvement or change, plan for a needs assessment of the current work environment in which you participate, and develop a hypothetical action and evaluation plan for this change that is embedded within a systems-change framework. Your paper should address the critical area of focus, the intended types of change or improvements targeted, specific activities by which this change or improvement could come about as well as a plan for evaluating the change over time. This paper should be between 2,500-3,000 words (8-10 double spaced pages). In an effort to support your learning towards a rating of "distinguished", construct your paper using the following headings: 1) Assessment; 2) Focus area; 3) Plan of action; and 4) Evaluation plan.

A combined score of at least 12 (without a score of a "0") must be achieved to earn a "pass" on the **leadership paper**.

The **leadership paper** will be discussed in detail during *SPED 5400: Advanced Seminar in Special Education*. In that course, a framework for managing complex change will be introduced and practiced. The leadership paper is a required component in the Master's portfolio and will be reviewed by the student's special education advisor at the time of submission.

Performance Assessment

Performance Assessment

	Element Assessed	Emergent = 0	Basic (1 pt)	Proficient (2 pts)	Distinguished (3 pts)
<p>Element : Assessment CEC2002.GC.CC 1K3 CEC2002.GC.CC 1K4 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S11 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S6 CEC2002.GC.CC 4K1 CEC2002.GC.CC 4S1</p>	<p>Demonstrates the ability to plan for a needs assessment of the current work environment.</p>	<p>Candidate shows little or no ability to plan for ways to assess the current status of inclusive school practices in his/her school.</p>	<p>Candidate adequately demonstrates the ability to assess the current status of inclusive school practices in his/her school. Candidate can explain/describe own practices that contribute to the current situation.</p>	<p>Candidate proficiently demonstrates the ability to critically assess the current status of inclusive school practices in his/her school. Candidate can interpret his/her own actions; articulate limitations and need for further development at a school level.</p>	<p>Candidate comprehensively demonstrates the ability to reflect critically on the current status of inclusive school practices in his/her school. Candidate can interpret and analyze the status of the school, articulate limitations and need for further development and articulate a clear strategy for improved growth in the current situation.</p>
<p>Element 2: Assessment CEC2002.GC.CC 8K1 CEC2002.GC.CC 9K4 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S5</p>	<p>Demonstrates the ability to reflect on a compelling set of issues that impact inclusive practices in his/her school setting.</p>	<p>Candidate shows little or no ability to use assessment data to reflect critically on the current status of inclusive school practices in his/her school.</p>	<p>Candidate adequately demonstrates the ability to use assessment data to reflect critically on the current status of inclusive school practices in his/her school. Candidate can explain/describe the current.</p>	<p>Candidate proficiently demonstrates the ability to use assessment data to reflect critically on the current status of inclusive school practices in his/her school. Candidate can interpret staff actions; articulate limitations and strengths and need for further development at the school.</p>	<p>Candidate comprehensively demonstrates the ability to use assessment data to reflect critically on the current status of inclusive school practices in his/her school. Candidate can interpret and analyze the status of the school, articulate limitations, strengths and need for further development by communicating a compelling picture of a desired future</p>

Performance Assessment

	Element Assessed	Emergent = 0	Basic (1 pt)	Proficient (2 pts)	Distinguished (3 pts)	
					state that induces others' commitment to that future.	
	<p>Element 3: Area of Focus CEC2002.GC.CC 10K1 CEC2002.GC.CC 10K4 CEC2002.GC.CC 1K4 CEC2002.GC.CC 1K5 CEC2002.GC.CC 1K7 CEC2002.GC.CC 1K8 CEC2002.GC.CC 5K1 CEC2002.GC.CC 9K1 CEC2002.GC.CC 9K2 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S10</p>	Demonstrates the ability to meaningfully connect aspects of the special education knowledge base to inclusive practices in his/her school setting.	Candidate shows a superficial understanding of how the special education knowledge base links to inclusive practices in his/her school.	Candidate adequately demonstrates the ability to understand how the special education knowledge base applies to inclusive practices in his/her school.	Candidate can interpret how varied aspects of the special education knowledge base plays out across self and others in multiple school settings.	Candidate critically analyzes how specific features of special education knowledge base are realized across self and others in multiple, complex school settings.
	<p>Element 4: Action Plan CEC2002.GC.CC 10S7 CEC2002.GC.CC 9K3 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S12 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S2 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S3 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S4 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S5 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S8 CEC2002.GC.CC 9K1 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S2</p>	Demonstrates what can be done to create and sustain services consistent with his/her proposed area of focus.	Candidate shows a superficial understanding of clearly identifiable logistical plans.	Candidate adequately considers plans that include logistical actions, timelines, specific activities/interventions to be employed, and participant roles.	Candidate proficiently demonstrates the ability to articulate a comprehensive plan that includes clearly identifiable and logistical actions, timelines, specific activities/interventions to be employed, a realistic-tiered in-service agenda and participant roles.	Candidate proficiently demonstrates the ability to articulate a comprehensive, cogent and cohesive plan that is strategically aligned with the identified problem of practice and includes clearly identifiable and logistical actions, timelines, specific activities/interventions to be employed, a comprehensive - realistic -tiered in-service agenda and participant roles.
	<p>Element 5: Evaluation CEC2002.GC.CC 8K1 CEC2002.GC.CC 9K3</p>	Demonstrates the ability to evaluate proposed	Candidate shows a superficial understanding of how	Candidate adequately considers plans for how the action plan will be	Candidate proficiently demonstrates the ability to articulate a	Candidate proficiently demonstrates the ability to articulate a

Performance Assessment

	Element Assessed	Emergent = 0	Basic (1 pt)	Proficient (2 pts)	Distinguished (3 pts)
CEC2002.GC.CC 9S9	actions.	the outcome(s) of the plan will be monitored and evaluated.	evaluated.	comprehensive plan for how the action plan will be evaluated that includes congruence between the identified area(s) of focus. Methods of evaluation are realistic, doable and designed to provide objective data.	comprehensive, cogent and cohesive evaluation plan that is strategically aligned with the identified problem(s) of practice and yields objective data that will be used to inform practice in meaningful ways.
Element 6: Scholarly Product CEC2002.GC.CC 9S1 CEC2002.GC.CC 9S8	Candidate demonstrates the ability to produce a high quality, scholarly product.	Candidate demonstrates substandard work as evidenced by fragmentation, unsupported accounts and/or errors in the mechanics of written language.	Candidate demonstrates adequate ability to produce a quality product. Candidate demonstrates a complete product that is organized, easy to read, contains no errors of mechanics of written language, and includes sources that are cited and referenced in proper APA style.	Candidate demonstrates competency in creating a fully developed, coordinated, high-quality product. Current, relevant, research-based sources are referenced in proper APA style.	Candidate demonstrates comprehensive ability to produce a high-quality, scholarly product. Product is exceptionally thorough, sophisticated and demonstrates ability to think deeply and critically about the most important problems associated with inclusive school practices. Current literature and prominence of scholars are cited throughout the work.

Component II: Integrated Essay

Context

The **integrated essay** is intended to demonstrate the ability to reflect on and synthesize the integration of your philosophy, beliefs, and values with the masters' program goals and the actual work you have done. In this essay, teacher candidates are expected to articulate their philosophical practices, address the basic teaching roles in light of his/her role as a special educator. These roles include: Teacher as Scholar, Instructor, Learner Advocate, Professional, Leader, School & Community

Collaborator, and Case Manager. This discussion should connect to the preview and reflection sections that have been created for each of the three artifacts that have been included in the portfolio.

The **integrated essay** is an integration of both your philosophy of education as well as a description of how you plan to carry out the roles of a special educator in light of that philosophy. This paper should be formal in nature thus support the positions you posit in the research and literature base (include citations and an APA style reference list at the end of the paper). Describe and reflect on how you have grown and developed in relation to the roles, responsibilities and essential questions posed to you during your program. This paper should be between 2,500-3,000 words (8-10 double spaced pages). In an effort to support your learning towards a rating of "distinguished", construct your paper using the following headings: 1) Philosophy of practice; 2) Values, beliefs and assumptions regarding the special education profession; 3) Values, beliefs and assumptions linked to practice; 4) Teaching roles applied to practiced; 5) Major theorist and researchers; 6) Beliefs about practice of special education; and 7) High standards.

A combined score of at least 16 (without a score of "0") must be achieved to earn a "pass" on **the integrated essay**.

Performance Assessment

Performance Assessment

	Element Assessed	Emergent = 0	Basic (1 pt)	Proficient (2 pts)	Distinguished (3 pts)
Element #1 (1, 12%) CEC.CC.1.S1	Candidate demonstrates a willingness to learn, adapt, and grow in awareness, knowledge and abilities pertaining to issues related to philosophy of practice	Candidate demonstrates insufficient or inadequate evidence and argument pertaining to issues related to philosophy of practice.	Candidate demonstrates a limited – but growing ability to learn, adapt, and grow in awareness, knowledge and abilities pertaining to issues related to philosophy of practice	Candidate demonstrates a limited – but growing ability to learn, adapt, and grow in awareness, knowledge and abilities pertaining to issues related to philosophy of practice	Candidate demonstrates a comprehensive, fully supported, and personalized stance regarding willingness to learn, adapt, and grow in awareness, knowledge and abilities pertaining to issues related to philosophy of practice
Element #2 (1, 12%) CEC.CC.6.K3	Demonstrates awareness of own values, beliefs and assumptions regarding the special education profession.	Candidate shows little or no awareness of his/her own values, beliefs and assumptions and how these issues	Candidate can explain his/her own values, beliefs and assumptions and how these issues impact his/her world view and	Candidate can interpret his/her own values, beliefs and assumptions and how these issues impact his/her world	Candidate demonstrates perspective of his/her own values, beliefs and assumptions, is insightful and coherent, and

Performance Assessment

	Element Assessed	Emergent = 0	Basic (1 pt)	Proficient (2 pts)	Distinguished (3 pts)
		impact his/her world view and professional practice.	professional practice.	view and professional practice.	demonstrates empathy and self-reflection as to how these issues impact his/her world view and professional practice.
Element #3 (1, 12%) CEC.CC.6.K3 CEC.CC.6.K6	Demonstrates awareness of how values, beliefs and assumptions are linked to practice.	Candidate shows little or no awareness of how his/her values, beliefs and assumptions are linked to practice.	Candidate demonstrates adequate awareness of how values, beliefs and assumptions are linked to practice however he/she demonstrates limited ability to critically analyze own perspective and assumptions.	Candidate demonstrates awareness of how values, beliefs and assumptions are linked to practice. Candidate can interpret how his/her values, beliefs and assumptions can create, sustain or impede inclusive schooling practices.	Candidate demonstrates comprehensive awareness and critical analysis of how values, beliefs and assumptions are linked to practice. Candidate clearly articulates empathy and self-reflection as to how he/she can create, sustain or impede inclusive schooling practices.
Element #4 (1, 12%) CEC.CC.1.S2 CEC.CC.4.K1 CEC.CC.4.K2 CEC.CC.4.K3 CEC.CC.4.K4 CEC.CC.4.K5 CEC.CC.4.K6 CEC.CC.7.K3	Demonstrates knowledge of how specific teaching roles (scholar, instructor, student advocate, professional, leader, case manager, school and community collaborator) apply to practice (as evidenced in at least one of the artifacts in the portfolio).	Candidate shows little or no knowledge of how the roles of a special education teacher are realized in practice.	Candidate can explain/describe the roles of a special education teacher, however the description is simplistic and demonstrates superficial understanding of the specific teaching roles and how they are applied to practice.	Candidate demonstrates knowledge of how specific teaching roles apply to practice. and can interpret how the roles of a special education teacher play out across self and others in multiple school settings.	Candidate demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of how specific teaching roles apply to practice and clearly articulates how the roles of a special education teacher play out across self and others in multiple school settings. Candidate also demonstrates empathy and self-reflection as to how those roles impact students, colleagues and

Performance Assessment

	Element Assessed	Emergent = 0	Basic (1 pt)	Proficient (2 pts)	Distinguished (3 pts)
					families.
Element #5 (1, 12%) CEC.CC.1.K1 CEC.CC.5.K2	Demonstrates knowledge of major theorists and researchers that have influenced the beliefs related to professional practice (as evidenced in at least one of the artifacts in the portfolio).	Candidate shows little or no knowledge of key theorists and researchers that have influenced the field of special education	Candidate demonstrates adequate knowledge of major theorists and researchers that have influenced the beliefs related to professional practice. Candidate can explain/describe major theorists and researchers in the field; however the description is simplistic or superficial.	Candidate demonstrates knowledge of major theorists and researchers that have influenced the beliefs related to professional practice. Candidate can interpret how research-based best practices are needed for effective management of teaching and learning.	Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of major theorists and researchers that have influenced the beliefs related to professional practice. Candidate critically analyzes how research-based, inclusive, best practices are needed for effective management of teaching and learning.
Element #6 (1, 12%) CEC.CC.1.K2 CEC.CC.1.K3 CEC.CC.4.K7 CEC.CC.8.K1	Demonstrates the ability to reflect critically on a compelling set of beliefs about his/her practice of special education (as evidenced in at least one of the artifacts in the portfolio).	Candidate shows little or no ability to reflect critically on a set of beliefs about his/her practices in special education.	Candidate adequately demonstrates the ability to reflect critically on a compelling set of beliefs about his/her practice of special education. Candidate can explain/describe own beliefs that guide his/her practice in special education.	Candidate proficiently demonstrates the ability to reflect critically on a compelling set of beliefs about his/her practice of special education. Candidate can interpret own beliefs; articulate limitations and need for further development and growth.	Candidate comprehensively demonstrates the ability to reflect critically on a compelling set of beliefs about his/her practice of special education. Candidate can interpret and analyze own beliefs; articulate limitations and need for further development and articulates a clear strategy for professional growth.
Element #7 (1, 12%) CEC.CC.6.K3 CEC.CC.7.K4 CEC.CC.8.K2	Demonstrates the ability to set high standards for him/herself as a practitioner (as evidenced in at least one of the artifacts in the	Candidate shows little or not ability to respective set high standards for him/herself.	Candidate can respectively explain/describe explicit standards for professional development.	Candidate interprets factors that promote high professional standards including effective communication and	Candidate demonstrates comprehensive ability to set high standards for him/herself as a practitioner. Candidate clearly articulates

Performance Assessment

	Element Assessed	Emergent = 0	Basic (1 pt)	Proficient (2 pts)	Distinguished (3 pts)
	portfolio).			collaboration with individuals, parents, and school and community personnel in an inclusive, culturally responsive program.	his/her commitment to the highest standards of ethical practices including confidential communication to others about individuals with exceptional learning needs. Candidate also demonstrates empathy, self-reflection and a commitment to culturally relevant practices.
Element #8 (1, 12%) CEC.CC.4.K7 CEC.CC.7.K1 CEC.CC.7.K4 CEC.CC.8.K2	Demonstrates the ability to produce a high quality, scholarly product.	Candidate demonstrates substandard work as evidenced by fragmentation, unsupported accounts, and/or errors in the mechanics of written language.	Candidate demonstrates adequate ability to produce a quality product. Candidate demonstrates a complete product that is organized, easy to read, and contains no errors in the mechanics of written language. Sources and theorists are cited and referenced in proper APA style.	Candidate demonstrates proficiency in the ability to produce a high quality, scholarly product. Candidate demonstrates competency in creating a fully developed and coordinated product. Sources and theorists are cited and referenced in proper APA style.	Candidate demonstrates comprehensive ability to produce a high quality, scholarly product. Product is exceptionally thorough, sophisticated and demonstrates ability to think deeply and critically. Current literature and prominent scholars are cited throughout the work.

Component III: Portfolio as a Professional Product

The portfolio represents a professional product that highlights the student’s reflective practice, effective communication, organization skills, and attention to detail.

Rating Scale:

0 = redo; does not meet minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts do not support adequate skills and knowledge of a beginning teacher

- 1 = weak pass;** meets minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts warrant attention to minor edits and comments included within document in order to meet expectations for a beginning teacher
- 2 = pass;** material adequately meets criteria for a professional presentation, documentation and artifacts are consistent with expectations for a beginning teacher
- 3 = strong pass;** exemplar material, includes documentation and artifacts that exceed expectations for a beginning teacher

Elements	Rating			
1.) Table of contents. List in order the title of each document contained within the portfolio.	0	1	2	3
2.) Resume. This well organized, synthesized, professional document is limited to two pages and highlights key teaching experiences, education, and other pertinent information (i.e. honors, grants, language proficiency, community service, leadership roles, etc.). Provides enough detail of professional experiences so that the reader can ascertain the nature of the responsibilities which were carried out.	0	1	2	3
3.) Artifacts. Select three artifacts that demonstrate your best quality work and reflect your previously described philosophy and beliefs about the special education teaching roles. It is anticipated that these artifacts will incorporate your learning experiences from the 9 credits you have taken in Cognition and Instruction, Teacher Inquiry or other research courses as approved by your advisor, and Advanced Special Education Seminar. These artifacts should allow you to demonstrate your excellence in the roles of case manager, school and community collaborator, and researcher. Artifacts may include student work samples (maintaining student confidentiality), initiatives undertaken in your school, or data collected on student learning and/or behavior. Each artifact should be introduced through a “Preview Page” and followed by a “Reflection Page”. In the preview, describe the context in which the artifact was developed, how the artifact is illustrative of your philosophy of education, the intended outcome of the work, and the respective audiences that may have been associated with the activity to which the artifact is linked. The reflection should be a personal analysis of the learning that occurred as a result of having been a part of the artifact activity and the manner in which the experience will shape your future professional practice.	0	1	2	3
4.) Evaluation Data: Evaluation materials demonstrate that the candidate has been evaluated and meets professional standards. This section should contain a set of documents illustrating assessment and evaluation of teaching and professional performance. Required evaluation materials: a) Three forms of teaching evaluation data drawn from the following: supervisor coaching forms, self-reflection, peer- coaching, grading rubric; b) Three current (no more than 3 years old) letters of recommendation from across a selection of individuals.	0	1	2	3

These may include site coordinators, site professors, clinical teachers, colleagues, administrators, and supervisors; c) Documentation indicating a passing score from the Special Education Generalist exam.				
5.) Organization. The portfolio is well organized, easy to scan, and contains no spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors.	0	1	2	3
6.) Technology. The portfolio reflects the students' ability to incorporate technology into his/her practice (e.g. work processing, power point, graphics, media)	0	1	2	3
7.) Personal style. The portfolio clearly reflects the candidate's own personal style and sense of practice.	0	1	2	3

Teacher candidate score = _____

Strong pass—Surpasses entry level expectations (18-21 points)

Pass—Meets entry level skills (14-17 points)

No Pass—Below entry level skills (13 or fewer points).

Component IV: Overall Evaluation

Pass: Constitutes a passing score on all required components:

- Component I: Leadership paper (earned a score of at least 2 = proficient on all elements)
- Component II: Integrated essay (earned a score of at least 2 = proficient on all elements)
- Component III: Portfolio as a professional product (earned at least 14 points)

Provisional Pass: Minor revisions/additions needed in the following component(s):

- Leadership paper:
- Integrated essay:
- Portfolio as a professional product:

No Pass: Major revision needed

Rubric

Rubric

	Strong Pass (3 pts)	Pass (2 pts)	Weak Pass (1 pt)	Redo (0)
Table of Contents (1, 14%)	Exemplary material,	Material adequately	Meets minimal criteria,	Does not meet minimal criteria,

Rubric

	Strong Pass (3 pts)	Pass (2 pts)	Weak Pass (1 pt)	Redo (0)
	includes documentation and artifacts that exceed expectations for a beginning teacher	meets criteria for a professional presentation, documentation and artifacts are consistent with expectations for a beginning teacher	documentation and artifacts warrant attention to minor edits and comments included within document in order to meet expectations for a beginning teacher	documentation and artifacts do not support adequate skills and knowledge of a beginning teacher
Resume (1, 14%)	Exemplary material, includes documentation and artifacts that exceed expectations for a beginning teacher	Material adequately meets criteria for a professional presentation, documentation and artifacts are consistent with expectations for a beginning teacher	Meets minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts warrant attention to minor edits and comments included within document in order to meet expectations for a beginning teacher	Does not meet minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts do not support adequate skills and knowledge of a beginning teacher
Artifacts (1, 14%)	Exemplary material, includes documentation and artifacts that exceed expectations for a beginning teacher	Material adequately meets criteria for a professional presentation, documentation and artifacts are consistent with expectations for a beginning teacher	Meets minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts warrant attention to minor edits and comments included within document in order to meet expectations for a beginning teacher	Does not meet minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts do not support adequate skills and knowledge of a beginning teacher
Evaluation Data (1, 14%)	Exemplary material, includes documentation and artifacts that exceed expectations for a beginning teacher	Material adequately meets criteria for a professional presentation, documentation and artifacts are consistent with expectations for a beginning teacher	Meets minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts warrant attention to minor edits and comments included within document in order to meet expectations for a beginning teacher	Does not meet minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts do not support adequate skills and knowledge of a beginning teacher
Organization (1, 14%)	Exemplary material,	Material adequately	Meets minimal criteria,	Does not meet minimal criteria,

Rubric

	Strong Pass (3 pts)	Pass (2 pts)	Weak Pass (1 pt)	Redo (0)
	includes documentation and artifacts that exceed expectations for a beginning teacher	meets criteria for a professional presentation, documentation and artifacts are consistent with expectations for a beginning teacher	documentation and artifacts warrant attention to minor edits and comments included within document in order to meet expectations for a beginning teacher	documentation and artifacts do not support adequate skills and knowledge of a beginning teacher
Technology (1, 14%)	Exemplary material, includes documentation and artifacts that exceed expectations for a beginning teacher	Material adequately meets criteria for a professional presentation, documentation and artifacts are consistent with expectations for a beginning teacher	Meets minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts warrant attention to minor edits and comments included within document in order to meet expectations for a beginning teacher	Does not meet minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts do not support adequate skills and knowledge of a beginning teacher
Personal Style (1, 14%)	Exemplary material, includes documentation and artifacts that exceed expectations for a beginning teacher	Material adequately meets criteria for a professional presentation, documentation and artifacts are consistent with expectations for a beginning teacher	Meets minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts warrant attention to minor edits and comments included within document in order to meet expectations for a beginning teacher	Does not meet minimal criteria, documentation and artifacts do not support adequate skills and knowledge of a beginning teacher