
Abstract:
The College of Education and Allied Professions at the University of North Carolina Charlotte (UNCC), in collaboration with three public school systems, developed a model summer student teaching experience called (REACH) Regular Educators Accommodating Children with Handicaps. REACH focused on the effective instructional accommodation of mainstreamed students with mild disabilities. Three school systems provided sites and Model Clinical Teachers to serve as cooperating teachers for the project during the university summer school session. Nineteen regular education undergraduates were enrolled in the program, and both regular and special education university faculty were involved in supervision and evaluation. During the initial portion of summer school, student teachers participated in an information dissemination course that provided an overview of special education and the underlying conceptual and philosophical base for mainstreaming exceptional students. REACH participants also spent time observing in Model Clinical Teachers' regular classrooms. The remainder of the summer session (4-6 weeks) was spent in classrooms doing typical student teaching activities. Each class included at least one student with special needs, and the student teachers were responsible for all teaching during the last 2 weeks of the experience. Program evaluation results revealed that the positive attitudes of teachers-in-training were maintained after student teaching.

Keywords: Mainstreaming, Special education; Teacher educations