



The following Motion and Documents was considered by the Board Learning and Discovery Committee at its Monday, February 27, 2017 meeting:

Agenda Title: **Proposal for a (new) Freestanding For-Credit University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs, Faculty of Education**

APPROVED MOTION: THAT the Board Learning and Discovery Committee, acting with delegated authority of the Board of Governors and on the recommendation of the GFC Academic Planning Committee, approve a (new) Freestanding For-Credit University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs, as submitted by the Faculty of Education, and as set forth in Attachment 1, for implementation in September 2017.

Final item: 6.

OUTLINE OF ISSUE
Action Item

Agenda Title: **Proposal for a (new) Freestanding For-Credit University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs, Faculty of Education**

Motion: THAT the Board Learning and Discovery Committee, acting with delegated authority of the Board of Governors and on the recommendation of the GFC Academic Planning Committee, approve a (new) Freestanding For-Credit University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs, as submitted by the Faculty of Education, and as set forth in Attachment 1, for implementation in September 2017.

Item

Action Requested	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation
Proposed by	Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Randy Wimmer, Dean (Interim), Faculty of Education
Presenters	Steven Dew; Lynn McGarvey, Vice Dean, Faculty of Education

Details

Responsibility	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
The Purpose of the Proposal is (please be specific)	The proposed 15-credit free-standing University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs (TSCCN) is a certificate program aimed at practicing teachers, learning coaches, and related professionals with a Bachelor's degree who work on multi-disciplinary teams to support the participation and learning of students with complex communication needs (CCN). TSCCN provides educators with the knowledge and skills required to effectively support students' ongoing growth in communication, language, literacy, and numeracy.
The Impact of the Proposal is	Students with CCN require specialized supports to promote successful participation and learning as they work to access the general education curriculum and to achieve general education standards and their individualized learning goals. Most educators currently teaching students with CCN lack the necessary training and experience to use specialized supports effectively and to successfully teach students with CCN. TSCCN provides then with the necessary training.
Replaces/Revises	N/A
Timeline/Implementation Date	September 2017
Estimated Cost and funding source	\$70,000 (Alberta Education \$62,500; JP Das Centre \$7,500) – see proposed budget for estimated cost.
Next Steps (ie.: Communications Plan, Implementation plans)	Advanced Education for approval. The proposal is already shared with Alberta Education, Alberta Teachers Association, School Superintendents, and Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSA) centres who are responsible for services. All are waiting for a go ahead to advertise it as the need for these specialists is urgent.
Supplementary Notes / context	N/A

Engagement and Routing (Include meeting dates)

Participation: (parties who have seen the	<u><i>Those who have been informed:</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alberta Education, Alberta Teachers' Association, College of Alberta Superintendents (see letters of support)
--	---

Item No. 6

<p>proposal and in what capacity)</p> <p><For further information see the link posted on the Governance Toolkit section Student Participation Protocol></p>	<p><u><i>Those who have been consulted:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This proposal was developed during 2015-2016 in consultation with Randy Wimmer, Interim Dean of the Faculty of Education, Yvonne Norton, Assistant Dean, Lynn McGarvey, Vice Dean, and Jacqueline Leighton, (former) Department Chair of Educational Psychology. • Nat Kav, Vice-Provost (Programs) and Kate Peters (Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) have been consulted. • GFC ASC Subcommittee on Standards – November 3, 2016 <p><u><i>Those who are actively participating:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rauno Parrila, Professor and Director of JP Das Centre on Developmental and Learning Disabilities, and Karen Erickson, the Director of the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, a Professor in the Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences, and the Yoder Distinguished Professor in the Department of Allied Health Sciences, School of Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
<p>Approval Route (Governance) (including meeting dates)</p>	<p>The proposal was accepted by the Department of Educational Psychology Department Council in January 2016.</p> <p>Faculty of Education accepted the proposal in June 2016 through the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council.</p> <p>GFC Academic Standards Committee – November 17, 2016</p> <p>GFC Academic Planning Cttee – Dec 14, 2016 (for recommendation)</p> <p>Board Learning and Discovery Committee – Feb 27, 2017 (for approval)</p>
<p>Final Approver</p>	<p>Board Learning and Discovery Committee</p>

Alignment/Compliance

<p>Alignment with Guiding Documents</p>	<p><i>For the Public Good</i></p> <p>GOAL: EXPERIENCE diverse and rewarding learning opportunities that inspire us, nurture our talents, expand our knowledge and skills, and enable our success.</p> <p>Objective 10: Expand access to and engagement in the University of Alberta for learners engaging in continuing and professional education programs, experiences, and lifelong learning activities.</p> <p>Strategy i: Develop continuing and professional education programs that connect the knowledge-mobilization activities of the university’s faculty members to the needs of diverse learner communities.</p> <p>Strategy ii: Create a wide range of opportunities, both in person and virtual, for broad, learning-centred programs for alumni and other communities of learners engaging in continuing and professional education.</p> <p>GOAL: EXCEL as individuals, and together, sustain a culture that fosters and champions distinction and distinctiveness in teaching, learning, research, and service.</p> <p>Objective 14: Inspire, model, and support excellence in teaching and learning.</p> <p>Strategy i: Foster, encourage, and support innovation and experimentation in curriculum development, teaching, and learning at the individual, unit, and institutional levels.</p>
---	---

	<p><i>The 2016 Comprehensive Institution Plan</i> “TEACHING AND LEARNING This is the core activity of the university—supporting undergraduate and graduate students, researchers, and scholars, as well as accomplished members of professions who need to refresh their educations to advance their positions in industry or to advance industry itself.”</p>
<p>Compliance with Legislation, Policy and/or Procedure Relevant to the Proposal (please <u>quote</u> legislation and include identifying section numbers)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA): The PSLA gives GFC responsibility, subject to the authority of the Board of Governors, over academic affairs. Further, the PSLA gives the Board of Governors authority over certain admission requirements and rules respecting enrolment. The Board has delegated its authority over admissions requirements and rules respecting enrolment to GFC and the GFC ASC. (Sections 26(1), 60(1)(c) and (d)). 2. UAPPOL Admissions Policy: “Admission to the University of Alberta is based on documented academic criteria established by individual Faculties and approved by GFC. This criteria may be defined in areas such as subject requirements, minimum entrance averages, and language proficiency requirements. In addition to academic requirements for admission, GFC authorizes each Faculty to establish such other reasonable criteria for admission of applicants as the Faculty may consider appropriate to its programs of study, subject to the approval of GFC (e.g. interview, audition, portfolio, etc.) The admission requirements for any Faculty will be those approved by GFC as set forth in the current edition of the University Calendar. In addition to the admission requirements, selection criteria for quota programs, where they exist, will also be published in the current edition of the University Calendar. The responsibility for admission decisions will be vested in the Faculty Admission Committees or in the Deans of the respective Faculties, as the councils of such Faculties will determine.” 3. UAPPOL Admissions Procedure: “PROCEDURE 1. EFFECTIVE DATE OF CHANGES TO ADMISSION REGULATIONS Following approval by GFC: a. Where changes to admission regulations may disadvantage students in the current admission cycle, normally implementation will be effective after the change has been published in the University Calendar for one full year (i.e., effective the second year that the information is published in the University Calendar).” 4. UAPPOL Academic Standing Policy: “All current academic standing regulations, including academic standing categories, University graduating standards and requirements for all individual programs will be those prescribed by Faculty Councils and GFC as set forth in the University Calendar.” 5. UAPPOL Academic Standing Regulations Procedures: “All proposed new academic standing regulations and changes to existing academic standing regulations will be submitted by the Faculties or the Administration to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic). Faculties will also submit to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) any proposed changes to the use and/or computation of averages relating to academic standing, including promotion and graduation. If the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) determines the proposal to be in good order, the proposal will be introduced to the appropriate University governance process(es). In considering these proposals, governance

	<p>bodies will consult as necessary with the Faculties and with other individuals and offices. Normally, changes become effective once they are approved by GFC or its delegate and are published in the University Calendar.”</p> <p>6. GFC Academic Standards Committee Terms of Reference (Mandate): “G. Certificates (All Faculties): Approval Route GFC delegated to ASC the authority to approve proposals for the establishment of and termination of credit and non-credit certificates, regardless of the proposing academic unit. Where additional funding and/or space is required to support the offering of the proposed certificate and/or if, in the opinion of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) (or delegate), the certificate requires Government approval, ASC would provide a recommendation on the (proposed) initiative to the GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC).”</p> <p>7. GFC Academic Planning Committee Terms of Reference (Mandate): “8. Establishment/Termination of Academic Programs [...] d. Where additional funding and/or space is required to support the offering of a proposed certificate and/or if, in the opinion of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) the certificate required Government approval, ASC would provide a recommendation on the (proposed) initiative to APC. APC, in turn, would have the GFC delegated authority to give final approval for the proposal in those cases where Government approval of the certificate is not required; in cases where Government approval is required, APC would provide recommendation on the proposal to the Board of Governors (or delegate body).”</p> <p>8. Board Learning and Discovery Committee Terms of Reference: “[...] 3. MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE Except as provided in paragraph 4 hereof and in the Board’s General Committee Terms of Reference, the Committee shall, in accordance with the Committee’s responsibilities with powers granted under the Post-Secondary Learning Act, monitor, evaluate, advise and make decisions on behalf of the Board with respect to matters concerning the teaching and research affairs of the University, including proposals coming from the administration and from General Faculties Council (the “GFC”), and shall consider future educational expectations and challenges to be faced by the University. The Committee shall also include any other matter delegated to the Committee by the Board. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing the Committee shall: [...] c. review and approve recommendations of GFC for major changes in instructional and research programs and other academic matters ”</p>
--	--

Attachments:

1. TSCCN Certificate proposal; 14 pages
2. Letters of Support; 18 pages
3. Calendar Changes; 3 pages

Prepared by: Dr. Rauno Parrila, Professor and Director of JP Das Centre on Developmental and Learning Disabilities; rauno.parrila@ualberta.ca

Proposal Template Diploma, Certificate and Non-credential Programs

The following template outlines the information required by Enterprise and Advanced Education to support its comprehensive review of proposals for new certificate, diploma and non-credential programs and new specializations in existing certificate, diploma and non-credential programs.

The guiding premise of the review is to ensure that the program adds value to Campus Alberta. The review will focus on the institution’s assessment of student and employer demand; the situation of the program in the context of Campus Alberta; the financial viability of the program, including implications for students and taxpayers; and dimensions of program quality.

Basic Information

Institution	University of Alberta
Program/specialization title	Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs
Credential awarded	University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs
Proposed Implementation Date	September , 2017

SECTION 1: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1 Type of Initiative

New freestanding for credit University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs. (Admission: Bachelor's Degree)

1.2 Program Description

Provide a brief (1-2 paragraphs) description of the program, summarizing its intended purpose, curriculum design, and methods of delivery and highlighting distinctive attributes. Attach as an Appendix a complete list of courses, including credit values, instructional hours and brief (calendar style) course descriptions. For elective options, specify course selection parameters. Identify new courses to be developed for this program.

Students with complex communication needs (CCN) are unable to communicate effectively using speech or signed language alone and benefit from augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) strategies and tools to support communication and learning. They may also have vision impairment, hearing loss, physical challenges, cognitive disabilities or some combination of any number of impairments that impact their learning (Iacono, 2014; Perry, Reilly, Cotton, Bloomberg, & Johnson, 2004). Students with CCN require specialized supports to promote successful participation and learning as they work to access the general education curriculum and to achieve general education standards and their individualized learning goals. Most educators currently teaching students with CCN lack the necessary training and experience to use specialized supports effectively and to successfully teach students with CCN (Costigan & Light, 2010). AAC is a foundational component of instruction for students with CCN, and at present there are no university programs in Canada that focus on teaching students with severe disabilities, such as those typically experienced by this population. The proposed free-standing University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs (TSCCN) is a certificate program aimed at practicing teachers, learning coaches, and related professionals with a Bachelor's degree who work on multi-disciplinary teams to support the participation and learning of students with CCN. TSCCN builds upon existing courses at the University of Alberta and the professional development courses available at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. TSCCN's goal is to make this critical content available to all Alberta educators and to educators and related professionals across the globe via online delivery.

TSCCN provides educators with the knowledge and skills required to effectively support students' ongoing growth in communication, language, literacy, and numeracy. TSCCN includes five courses (see Appendix A) that explore the foundational knowledge and research-validated practices in comprehensive language, literacy and numeracy education. The courses will be offered online one at a time in eight to twelve week blocks to allow full-time educators to participate. Educators completing TSCCN will be able to: (1) support development of and teach language skills to students with CCN through the use of AAC strategies and systems; (2) implement comprehensive research-validated literacy instruction to students with CCN; (3) provide research-validated instruction in numeracy to students with CCN; (4) provide instructional leadership in addressing the needs of students with CCN in their respective schools and school districts.

TSCCN is unique in the world in its scope and focus. TSCCN is designed and delivered by a team of experts that includes AAC specialists, literacy specialists, numeracy specialists, special educators, and university researchers committed to promoting quality evidence-based approaches to teaching students with CCN. TSCCN is designed to meet the diverse needs of educators across Alberta and beyond.

1.3 Enrolment Plan

Include assumptions and explanatory notes (e.g., attrition, part-time enrolment).

To be financially viable and sustainable in terms of instructor resources over a longer period of time, the University Certificate in *Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs (TSCCN)* will accept new students every two years and will be offered to a cohort of 25 students over two years. The Department of Educational Psychology has offered cohort programs for over 20 years, and recognizes the strengths of the cohort model for completion rate, student experience (Seifert and Mandzuk, 2006), and for building professional learning communities (Lei, Gorelick, Short, Smallwood, and Wright-Porter, 2011) that continue collaborating after completion of the program. For example, the Department of Educational Psychology have experienced high graduation rates for those students who have enrolled in School Counselling and Special Education cohort Master's programs.

TSCCN is designed for part-time online study and all students will be part-time students. The maximum allowable time to complete the program is four years from the date of registration, but most students are expected to complete the program in two years with their respective cohort. Based on our experience with cohort programs, we expect that there will be about 10% attrition due to changing work circumstances and other significant commitments. Students who will not be able to continue with their cohort will be offered an opportunity to complete their program with the next cohort.

- *If program implementation will occur over a number of years, provide data for each year to full implementation.*

Ideally, TSCCN will start in January 2017 with one cohort of 25 students, 23 of whom are expected to complete the program in year 2. The second cohort will start in year 3 (2019), and so on. We expect to graduate 23 to 25 students every second year.

- *If internal reallocation of existing resources is proposed, describe any anticipated decrease in enrolment in other programs that would result.*

No reallocation of resources is required and as TSCCN does not overlap with existing undergraduate or certificate programs, we don't anticipate it to affect enrolment in other programs. It may increase interest in special education graduate programs across Campus Alberta institutions. It may also increase interest in graduate studies in Rehabilitation Medicine at the University of Alberta.

Proposed Enrolment	Year 1 2017	Year 2 2018	Year 3 2019	Year 4 2020	Year 5 2021	Biennial Ongoing
Total head count	0	0	0	0	0	0
• Part-Time Year 1	25	0	25	0	25	25 EVERY SECOND YEAR
• Part-Time Year 2	0	23	0	23	0	23 EVERY SECOND YEAR
Anticipated No. of Graduates	0	23	0	23	0	23 EVERY SECOND YEAR

SECTION 2: DEMAND

2.1 Student Demand Analysis

Analysis should be supported by relevant data for the region and for Campus Alberta, as might be derived from: systematic questionnaire surveys of target audiences; application and enrolment summaries and trends for similar programs currently offered by other institutions; tabulations of unsolicited student inquiries and/or expressions of interest obtained at student recruitment events; demographic projections for relevant sub-populations.

The TSCCN certificate proposal has been developed in response to demand from educators across Alberta and North America for formalized instruction in supporting the communication, literacy, and numeracy development of children and youth with CCN. The certificate builds on the professional development work at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and on current research, teaching, and professional development initiatives of scholars at the University of Alberta.

As an indication of demand for this type of coursework, in the summer of 2015, 60 teachers, speech language pathologists and occupational therapists attended a 5-day summer course on Communication and Literacy for Students with Significant Disabilities taught by Dr. Karen Erickson, Director Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, David E. & Dolores (Dee) Yoder Distinguished Professor of Literacy and Disability Studies, Director, Center for Literacy & Disability Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Dr. David Koppenhaver, Reading Program Director and Professor of Reading Education, Appalachian State University. The course was initially capped at 50 participants, but due to the larger demand for this course 10 seats were added. Even with these additional seats, many interested educators were turned away. In October 2015, 260 educators attended a preconference session with Dr. Erickson held as part of the Alberta Teachers' Association Council for Inclusive Education conference held in Edmonton. Further, CCN Community of Practice supported by Alberta Education and Regional Collaborative Service Delivery agencies has over 200 participants that have attended the limited available professional development opportunities across the province over the past two years.

In addition to the demand for information on teaching students with CCN across Alberta, Drs. Erickson and Koppenhaver do an average of 6 summer courses each year and are booked for trainings two years out. They have done the 5-day courses in Portugal, Australia, and many Canadian provinces.

At present there are no university credit courses that specifically focus on teaching this population of students. This partnership between the JP Das Centre of Developmental and Learning Disabilities at the University of Alberta and the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina will create the first of its kind certificate in the area of CCN where the emphasis is on literacy and numeracy as well as on developing communication skills. Due to the international reputation and reach of the contributors and online delivery, we expect to draw students from around the world.

2.2 Labour Market Analysis

Analysis should be supported by relevant data and placed in the context of the target occupational/regional labour market(s). Relevant data sources include systematic surveys of prospective employers; occupational supply/demand projections from government or industry sources; tabulations of job postings/"help wanted" advertising; surveys of recruitment and graduate employment rates of similar programs; and demographic projections (i.e. for relevant regions and sub-populations.) Describe anticipated employment outcomes.

Students with CCN are identified as a "low-incidence" population. Prevalence data related to the number of students with complex communication needs vary by country, age and type of disability (Beukelman & Mirenda, 2013). Recent estimates of the prevalence of complex communication needs among students receiving special education services in different countries vary from a low of 3% of students receiving special education services

in 54 districts in Connecticut (Worah, 2011) to a high of 40% of students served in a variety of special education programs in Israel (Weiss, Seligman-Wine, Lebel, Arzi, & Yalon-Chamovitz, 2005). Among preschoolers receiving special education services in sites in Pennsylvania the reported prevalence was 12% (Binger & Light, 2006), while 39% of students with severe intellectual disability were reported to have complex communication needs in 19 schools in South Africa (Alant, 1999). Similar studies have not been completed in Alberta but Central Alberta RCSD (see the attached letter of support) currently serves 98 children and assesses about 35 more each year in their limited geographical area, and Calgary and Area RCSD serves over 400 learners with CCN (see the attached letter of support); on the basis of these numbers, we estimate that the overall frequency varies between one and three students per school in typical inclusive education settings.

Despite the apparent low incidence of this population, speech-language pathologists, special education teachers, and occupational therapists are all likely to encounter individuals with complex communication needs who require augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) in clinical and educational practice (Costigan & Light, 2010). Up to 48% of speech-language pathologists working in the U.S. report that they work with students who are non-verbal or use augmentative/alternative communication systems (ASHA, 2014). Similarly, up to 80% of special education teachers reported that they provided services to individuals with CCN (ASHA, 2002; Locke & Mirenda, 1992). The need for educators, particularly special educators, to have knowledge and skills in teaching children with CCN is great. There is also an increasing need for specialized professionals to support general education teachers who have students with CCN in their classrooms. A recent study commissioned by the Alberta Teachers Association to understand the state of inclusion in Alberta classrooms indicates that teachers are dissatisfied with availability of specialized professional supports (ATA, 2015) and this dissatisfaction is expressed with an increase in demand for professional development in the area (see above).

The Government of Alberta recently established the Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) model. This model was created to support collaboration across the ministries of Education, Health and Human Services. Children and youth with CCN have been identified as one of the groups specifically targeted through this effort. Extra funding resources are available to regions to provide appropriate supports and services for these students, but there are insufficient numbers of professionals available to provide the supports and services. In a recent survey of the Leadership teams, the need for professional expertise in the area of CCN was strongly indicated. As a result, Alberta Education provided a grant for the development of this certificate and a letter of support (see attached).

2.3 Support

Provide evidence of consultation with and approval/support from relevant professional organizations, regulatory bodies, advisory committees, employers, and/or industry.

Letters of support from Alberta Education, the College of Alberta School Superintendents, Alberta Teachers' Association, Center for Literacy & Disability Studies in University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, nine different Regional Collaborative Service Delivery agencies, and Universities of Athabasca, Calgary and Lethbridge are attached.

2.4 Clinical or Work Experience

If clinical or work experience is an essential part of program delivery:

2.4.1 Provide evidence that the placements will be available when needed.

2.4.2 Describe the student's role in securing placements.

2.4.3 Explain how the institution will supervise/monitor the learning experience of students in off-site settings?

2.4.4 Identify potential employer/employee liability related to this aspect of the program, and how the institution intends to manage this liability.

SECTION 3: INSTITUTIONAL AND SYSTEM CONTEXT

3.1 Institutional Strategy

How does the proposed program align with the institution's strategic priorities and the Comprehensive Institutional Plan?

The proposed program is in line with the University of Alberta's new Institutional Strategic Plan "For the Public Good" whose mission statement includes benefitting society through teaching and learning, community involvement, and partnerships. Further, TSCCN aligns closely with four of the seven value statements by promoting (1) the equality and dignity of all persons, (2) excellence in teaching that enriches experiences, advances knowledge, and promotes public good, (3) the provision of intellectually rewarding educational experiences to learners at all stages of life, and (4) the diversity, inclusivity and equity among some of the most vulnerable student populations.

More specifically, TSCCN directly serves to materialize Objective 9 of the Plan: Expand access to and engagement in continuing and professional education programs, experiences, and lifelong learning activities. TSCCN provides engaging and critical learning opportunities to professionals by offering them pathways for pursuit of specialized interests, cross-disciplinary learning, and professional and academic development. The certificate is offered as credit courses to allow participating teachers to use university credits for salary increment purposes. Further, TSCCN is designed and delivered by a team of experts that includes AAC specialists, literacy specialists, special educators, and university researchers committed to knowledge-mobilization of research-validated approaches to teaching students with CCN. TSCCN will promote dialogue between university researchers and practicing teachers, and between teachers at different parts of the province and the world. It will help create learning communities focused on the best practices with students with CCN. TSCCN aims to provide exceptional and life-changing experiences to the participants by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to facilitate the research-validated practices in the schools they serve that will promote successful participation and learning of their students with CCN.

3.2 Institutional Programs

Explain how the proposed program fits with existing programs at the institution, and the anticipated positive or negative impacts on other programs.

TSCCN is unique and has no overlap with existing certificate, undergraduate or graduate programs, and thus it is not expected to impact these in any manner. Due to its focus on providing quality instruction to a very specific group of learners, TSCCN will provide teachers who complete it an excellent entry-point for graduate studies in psychology, special education, rehabilitation medicine, speech language pathology, and language and literacy studies. Such graduate programs are currently offered in multiple faculties at the University of Alberta (Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Psychology and the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine) as well as in other Campus Alberta institutions.

3.3 Internal Review and Approval

Provide a brief description of the internal review and approval process followed in developing the proposal.

This proposal was developed in consultation with Dr. Randy Wimmer, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Education, Yvonne Norton, Assistant Dean, Dr. Lynn McGarvey, Vice Dean, Dr. Jacqueline Leighton, Department Chair of Educational Psychology, Dr. Rauno Parrila, Professor and Director of JP Das Centre on Developmental and Learning Disabilities, and Dr. Karen Erickson, the Director of the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, a Professor in the Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences, and the Yoder Distinguished Professor in the Department of Allied Health Sciences, School of Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The proposal was presented for review and accepted by the Department of Educational Psychology Department

Council in January 2016. Faculty of Education accepted the proposal in June 2016 through the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council.

3.4 Campus Alberta Programs/Initiatives

Discuss the relationships (similarity, complementarity, transfer, competition) of the proposed program to other programs or initiatives in Campus Alberta and explain what the proposed program would add to the system. If the proposed program would duplicate existing programs, explain why that duplication is warranted.

The proposed program is unique in North America and the world. No other program in Canada focuses on the unique skills and knowledge necessary for teaching students with complex communication needs. The Special Education Master's program at the University of Alberta focuses on Reading, Writing, and Oral Language Disabilities, but particularly considers higher functioning populations. University of Calgary offers a Master's program in Language and Literacy that focuses on cultural and linguistic diversity. University of Lethbridge offers a Master's program in Teaching, Learning and Neuroscience that focuses on brain-based education. Athabasca University offers an Inclusive Education Minor that includes a course in assistive technology; assistive technology courses have also been offered periodically at University of Alberta and University of Calgary and they are the only ones that have some overlapping content with the current certificate.

3.5 Consultation

Summarize the type and outcomes of consultations with other institutions offering related programs. Attach copies of relevant documents (e.g. letters, meeting summaries). Discuss the potential for inter-institutional collaboration.

No other institutions offer related programs. However, the courses for TSCCN have been developed in collaboration with experts from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Consultation with outside experts will continue with regards to assessment of the program's impact and its further development, as well as in identifying the best instructors for each course. Letters of support for TSCCN from University of Calgary, University of Lethbridge, and Athabasca University are attached.

3.6 Learner Pathways

3.6.1 Identify potential pathways from work to school (where applicable).

TSCCN participants will be practicing teachers and other professionals (e.g., Speech Language Pathologists) studying part time. We expect that upon completion of the certificate, some will be interested in pursuing further studies at the graduate level either full- or part-time.

3.6.2 Identify potential opportunities for transfer/laddering into the proposed program from other institutions or other programs within the institution; and for transfer/laddering from the proposed program to other programs within the institution or at other institutions. List any formal agreements for internal or inter-institutional transfer/laddering that have been negotiated to this point.

As TSCCN is a free-standing university certificate that requires a Bachelor's Degree for entry, students will not transfer or ladder into TSCCN from other programs. Further, since the admission criteria for university certificates and graduate level degree programs differ, and because the courses taken as part of this certificate may be taken at the undergraduate level, there is no automatic laddering from this certificate to other programs, such as a graduate-level Master's program.

3.6.3 Estimate the portion of graduates who can be expected to proceed to further education directly. At a later stage in their careers. What types of programs/credentials would they be most likely to pursue?

We expect that about a third of the graduates will consider graduate studies immediately upon completion and about ten percent will pursue graduate studies one to three years subsequent to the completion of the certificate.

SECTION 4: FINANCIAL VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.1 Annual Budget and Funding Sources

Identify annual and one-time expenditures and annual revenue for the program in the budget tables below. If program implementation will take place over more than one year, provide estimates for each year until full implementation. Provide explanatory notes for all budget assumptions, such as inflation and per student tuition.

(For proposals without significant impacts on institutional costs, revenues or enrolment, a detailed budget presentation will not normally be required (please confirm with the department). Such proposals will satisfy all of the following tests:

1. The proposal is for a new specialization in an existing program, consisting of an innovative combination of existing curricula.
2. Overall enrolment capacity in the program is maintained.
3. Excepting incidental administrative and promotional costs, no start-up or incremental operations costs are incurred.)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Annual Ongoing
Revenue						
Tuition and Related Fees ¹	\$120,000	\$73,600	\$122,400	\$75,100	\$124,850	
Re-allocation from Existing Programs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other Internal Sources	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
External (Third Party) Sources	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
GOA (Identify source)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other (specify)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Revenue	\$120,000	\$73,600	\$122,400	\$75,100	\$124,850	
Operational Costs						
Salaries, Wages and Benefits ²	\$82,354	\$62,223	\$85,682	\$64,736	\$89,140	
Materials and Contracted Services ³	\$1,650	\$1,650	\$1,650	\$1,650	\$1,650	
Other Direct Costs (marketing)	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	
Indirect Costs ⁴	\$18,000	\$11,040	\$18,360	\$11,261	\$18,727	
Total Operational Costs	\$104,004	\$76,913	\$107,692	\$79,647	\$111,517	

Notes: Tuition increase is expected to be 2% every second year; it will be adjusted to consumer-price index.

1. Tuition is calculated at 25X3X\$1600 for first year; then, to account for attrition 23x2x\$1600 for the second year. It also includes 2% increase every second year as a rough estimate of CPI indexed increases.
2. Salaries include instructor fees at \$10,000 per course plus benefits, 1/4 time program administrator at an initial yearly salary of \$60,000 plus benefits, and one full time PhD GTA per course at an initial cost of \$8,740 plus benefits. Subsequent salaries include 2% yearly increase.
3. Supplies and materials, computer software, telephones
4. 15% of total revenue

One-time expenditures	Amount	Revenue Source	Details
Facilities	\$		
Equipment and IT	\$2,000	JP Das Centre	Administrator's computer and software
Curriculum Development	\$20,000	JP Das Centre	
Course Development	\$50,000	Alberta Education	
Marketing and Promotion	\$200	JP Das Centre	
Faculty Recruitment and Establishment	\$		
Library Enhancements	\$		
Other	\$		

4.2 Impact

4.2.1 Compare the proposed tuition rate with that of similar programs in Campus Alberta.

There are no comparable programs in Campus Alberta. The tuition is estimated based on delivery costs for online programs being higher than face-to-face programs because of the need for further material development and IT support and maintenance. The proposed tuition is in line with other Education certificate programs under consideration at the University of Alberta. At \$1600 per student/per course (plus future CPI indexed increases), the program is calculated to recover the instructional, administrative, and support costs associated with running it after the first year even if enrolment in a cohort falls to 20 students.

4.2.2 Discuss the financial impact on students and the learner funding system, taking into account the costs of education and the potential debt burden relative to post-graduation earning capacity.

The cost for students will be \$1,600 per course (plus future CPI indexed increases), or \$8,000 for the program over the course of two years. We assume that school boards will allow their teachers to use existing professional development funds to support the tuition fees and make tuition supplements available.

4.2.3 If program funding includes internal reallocation, evaluate the impact of this reallocation on the institution's operations and overall financial position.

Not applicable

SECTION 5: QUALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 Institutional Capacity

5.1.1 List instructional positions that would support the proposed program, specifying position title, credential and experience requirements, and areas of expertise. Distinguish between new and existing positions; and regular and sessional appointments. Describe mechanisms (existing and planned) to develop and ensure currency of teaching skills and disciplinary expertise.

The TSCCN content has been developed jointly by the JP Das Centre on Developmental and Learning Disabilities at the University of Alberta and the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The course development is funded by a grant from Alberta Education.

The developers of specific TSCCN courses will be offered an opportunity to teach those courses. When they are not available, they will be asked to identify other experts who can be asked to contribute. Postdoctoral and PhD research fellows at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, the JP Das Centre, and the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta will provide additional sources of expertise to support this certificate.

As topics covered by TSCCN overlap significantly with research interests of the professors involved, currency of the disciplinary expertise will be maintained. Similarly, as all instructors are active instructors in Education or related professions in university settings, currency of teaching skills should not be an issue.

5.1.2 List instructional support positions (e.g. lab technicians, tutors) related to the proposed program.

TSCCN will be supported by graduate teaching assistants (GTAs at the PhD level) and one part-time administrative assistant who is responsible for the technology maintenance and program administration. Costs for these positions are included in the salary and benefits line of the budget above.

5.1.3 Describe facilities, equipment and information resources (existing and planned) that would house and support delivery of the proposed program.

All necessary facilities and equipment exist in the JP Das Centre and the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies; no new facilities are required besides a computer and necessary software for the administrative assistant. The University of Alberta library currently provides all the information resources needed, and the university provides a platform for delivering online instruction (eClass).

5.1.4 Discuss the anticipated impacts of the proposed program on student support services.

No impact is anticipated due to all students being part-time students who take their courses online. All courses include a full-time GTA who will provide the students with technical support.

5.2 Curriculum

The curriculum for the proposed TSCCN program was developed based on the work of the Centre for Literacy and Disability Studies, in particular the professional development series that was created to support the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternative Assessment and the research done at the Center in the area of effective communication and literacy practices for students with CCN.

The curriculum development was further supported by the identification of educators' professional learning needs during the Communication and Literacy Summer Courses and the demand for ongoing professional development by the Alberta Professional Development Consortia and the ATA Inclusive Education Specialist Council.

5.3 Academic Standards

List the requirements for admission and any alternate routes to admission; for residency; for academic progression; and for graduation. Compare these requirements to those for similar programs.

We want TSSCN certificate be accessible to all teachers who need it. For this reason, the program is offered as a university certificate rather than as a post-baccalaureate certificate that would require the applicants to meet the general admission requirements of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research. The admission requirements are as follows:

To be eligible for admission to University Certificate programs applicants must:

- (1) present a three- or four-year degree from an accredited postsecondary institution
- (2) meet the English Language proficiency requirements as specified in §13.3.

Supporting Documents

- (1) Official post-secondary degree transcripts demonstrating that the degree has been awarded.
- (2) Most recent post-secondary transcripts, if they are from a different institution than (1). (Optional)
- (3) Letter of intent.

Graduation: Certificates will be awarded for the successful completion of the designated courses within the Certificate and with a final GPA of 2.0 or above. Certificates must be completed within four years.

Application and Document Deadline: Applications will be submitted directly to the Faculty of Education and are due one month before the next intake. Completed applications will be reviewed by TSSCN Admission Committee.

5.4 Learning Outcomes

5.4.1 Summarize the learning outcomes of the proposed program (e.g. career-specific knowledge and skills, employability skills).

TSSCN will provide special education teachers and other professionals with advanced knowledge and skills on how to:

- Implement Augmentative and Alternative Communication methods in the context of educational experiences;
- Design and deliver comprehensive literacy instruction for students with CCN;
- Implement research-validated literacy and numeracy instruction and interventions to students with CCN in a variety of educational contexts;
- Work as a part of a multidisciplinary team in planning and delivering instruction to students with CCN; and
- Provide effective leadership in their respective schools.

TSSCN consists of five courses that focus on instructional design and methods, augmentative and alternative communication, emergent literacy, conventional literacy, and numeracy.

The key learning outcomes of each course are explained below.

1. Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Instructional Design and Methods

This course will provide an overview of instructional practices that guide teaching and learning for students with complex communication needs. Upon completion of the course, the participants will be able to:

- Describe principles of Universal Design for Learning and explain how they relate to pedagogy, goal writing, accommodations, and modifications for students with complex communication needs.
- Identify specific collaborative teaching and team teaching approaches that support inclusive education for students with complex communication needs.
- Identify assessment practices and tools that are appropriate for students with complex communication needs.
- Identify evidence-based approaches to instruction for students with complex communication needs and describe their application across different instructional contexts.
- Use Programs of Study/Standards to guide goal setting and instruction.

2. Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Augmentative and Alternative Communication

This course will introduce classroom teachers and educational professionals to the practices, issues and importance of providing augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) strategies and supports to students with complex communication needs. Upon completion of this course, the participants will be able to:

- Understand approaches to assessment of communication abilities in non-verbal students.
- Understand the importance of language and literacy for students with complex communication needs.
- Explore evidence-based practices that can support AAC in the classroom.
- Explore best practices in implementation of AAC in the classroom.
- Understand the issues around providing appropriate AAC for students and youth, including vocabulary selection, access, roles of communication partners, and creating an environment to support communication.
- Explore technological devices that are used to provide voice output for children and youth with complex communication needs.
- Explore and discuss how the tablet technologies and apps have impacted the world of AAC.
- Explore common AAC practices such as Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS), Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD), Aided Language Stimulation, Communication and Language Board Displays, and others based on student interests.

3. Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Emergent Literacy

This course will focus on high quality, comprehensive emergent literacy instruction for students with complex communication needs. The course will emphasize the use of symbol supported communication systems and intentionally designed instruction that includes daily opportunities for developing communication and interaction skills, oral language understandings, alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness, understandings of concepts about print, and a positive disposition toward literacy. Upon completion of this course educators will be able to:

- Identify the principles of effective instruction that apply to emergent literacy
- Identify learners who are emerging in their understandings of literacy regardless of age or other individual characteristics
- Describe the concurrent and interrelated relationship in the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing
- Create a comprehensive instructional plan that fosters communication and literacy development for emergent readers and writers with complex communication needs.
- Identify and implement technologies, media, and materials that can positively impact emergent literacy development and demonstrations.

4. Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Conventional Literacy

This course will focus on high quality, comprehensive literacy instruction for students with complex communication needs. The course will emphasize the use of symbol and text based communication systems and systematically designed instruction that includes daily opportunities for developing conventional skills in word reading (decoding and automatic word identification), text comprehension, silent reading fluency, and writing. Upon completion of this course, the participants will be able to:

- Understand the principles of effective, comprehensive, conventional reading and writing instruction.

- Identify learners who are most likely to benefit from comprehensive, conventional reading and writing instruction.
- Describe how to support learning and use of AAC systems throughout conventional literacy instruction.
- Design specific lessons that address word reading, comprehension, silent reading fluency, and writing for students with complex communication needs.
- Determine appropriate tools for individual students with complex motor impairments to use when generating text during instruction in the cognitive acts of writing.
- Create a comprehensive instructional plan that fosters communication and conventional literacy development for students with complex communication needs.
- Use technologies, media, and materials that can positively impact conventional literacy development and demonstrations.
- Identify assessment approaches that are accessible and effective for students with complex communication needs.

5. Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Numeracy

This course focuses on quality instruction in mathematics (including numeracy) and how it can be made accessible to students with complex communication needs. The course will emphasize the use of symbol and text based augmentative and alternative communication systems, accessible instructional materials, and systematically designed instruction to support understandings of number sense; spatial reasoning; principles of geometry, measurement, data, and analytic procedures; and mathematical problem solving including algebra. Upon completion of this course, the participants will be able to:

- Create an instructional environment that supports the learning of mathematics for students with CCN in order to foster conceptual mathematics understanding, application, and enjoyment.
- Select and design mathematics tasks and tools that promote inquiry and problem solving, yet are accessible to students with CCN who often have co-occurring physical impairments.
- Describe the importance of multiple means of representation in teaching mathematical thinking and problem solving.
- With specific attention to the needs of students with complex communication needs describe processes for:
 - developing number sense.
 - teaching counting and cardinality
 - teaching calculation (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division).
 - teaching measurement
 - developing an understanding of basic geometric shapes and their attributes.
- Create a comprehensive instructional plan that fosters communication and the development of mathematics skills and understandings.

5.4.2 Describe the consultative process with employers, industry/professional bodies or advisory groups that helped formulate these learning outcomes.

The outcomes for the TSCCN program were developed in consultation with experts in the field of special education, augmentative and alternative communication, and literacy. In specific, the program was developed in collaboration with the Center for Literacy & Disability Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (see the attached letter of support).

5.4.3 Provide evidence of alignment/compliance with regulatory, industry, program accreditation and professional accreditation standards relevant to the program.

Not applicable

5.5 Institutional Quality Assurance

5.5.1 Describe the criteria and methods for evaluating the success of the program and achieving continuous quality improvement. Include expected outcomes, key performance indicators and performance targets for the program.

1. Upon entry to the program, all students will be asked to complete a series of questionnaires assessing their (a) orientation to special education, (b) knowledge of universal design for learning and AAC, (c) knowledge of literacy and numeracy constructs, and (d) self-efficacy as special education teachers.
2. After every course, the students will complete the regular university online USRI evaluation forms.
3. After every course, the students will complete a customized feedback form inquiring what aspects of the course were most useful in improving their instructional practice, what aspects were less useful, and additional content they would like to see included in the course.
4. At the end of the program, all students will be asked to complete the same questionnaires as in the beginning of the program.
5. Once a year, a program advisory committee (described in greater detail in 5.5.2) will examine the impact of the program, student feedback, evaluation results, and recommend changes when and where needed.

5.5.2 Indicate whether a program advisory committee is planned or in place and, if so, comment on the role of the committee in program quality assurance.

Program advisory committee will consist of the Director of the JP Das Centre, the Director of Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, the Chair (or designate) of the Department of Educational Psychology, the Dean (or designate) of the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta, and one representative of course instructors. The committee task is to examine the impact of the program, student feedback, student evaluation results, and recommend changes when and where needed.

RECOMMENDATION (FOR DEPARTMENT USE)

Do Any Issues or Information Gaps Remain?

Recommendation(s)

Reviewer(s)

Date Completed

AR92205

APR 26 2016

Dr. Rauno Parrila
c/o J.P. Das Centre on Developmental and Learning Disabilities
6 - 123C Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton AB T6G 2G5

Dear Dr. Parrila:

On behalf of Alberta Education, I am writing in support of your proposed university Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs.

The Ministry of Education believes this educational opportunity has the potential to enhance the pedagogy and practice of educators and educational professionals across Alberta.

The certificate supports the goals of Alberta Education's business plan, particularly Desired Outcome One: Every student is successful. In addition, increasing teacher expertise in teaching children and youth with significant disabilities aligns with several policy initiatives currently underway at Alberta Education, including the Inclusive Education Policy (as stated in the 2015/2016 *Guide to Education*), the Learning and Technology Policy Framework and the High School Completion Strategic Framework.

One of the most powerful factors in supporting success for every student, including those with unique learning needs, is a knowledgeable and skilled teacher in the classroom. The Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs program will play an important role in ensuring that students across the province have access to teachers who are skilled at supporting communication, language, literacy and numeracy.

I appreciate the work you and your colleagues are doing to improve the pedagogy of Alberta teachers, and I look forward to continued collaboration with the J.P. Das Centre to help ensure every student in Alberta is provided with an excellent education.

Sincerely,



Lorna Rosen
Deputy Minister



April 14, 2016

Dr. Randy Wimmer, Interim Dean of Education
University of Alberta
845 Education S
11210 - 87 Ave.
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5
Email – rwimmer@ualberta.ca

Dear Dr. Wimmer:

On behalf of the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS), I am writing in support of your proposed University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs.

The recommendation is based on information and recommendation I have received from Dr. Dianne McConnell, who chairs the CASS Inclusive Education Committee. Dr. McConnell believes the program would be instrumental in developing capacity of Alberta teachers, enabling them to support students that are among the most disadvantaged in our schools.

The certificate program supports Goal 1 of the current CASS Strategic Plan, which states Advocacy for Students is Ongoing and Courageous. The program addresses two objectives within the goal, specifically:

- a) Champion research on educational matters to help inform policy, decision-making, and practice across Alberta's education system; and
- b) Forge strategic alliances to support and enhance the use of research as a tool to improve student engagement, learning, and achievement.

One of the most powerful factors in supporting success for every student, including those with unique learning needs, is a knowledgeable and skilled teacher in the classroom. The Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs will play an important role in ensuring that students across the province have access to teachers who are skilled at supporting communication, language, literacy and numeracy. I appreciate the work you and your colleagues are doing to improve the pedagogy of Alberta teachers.

Sincerely,

Barry Litun
Executive Director

Cc: John Waterhouse, CASS President 2015/16
Dr. Dianne McConnell, Chair CASS Inclusive Education Committee



The Alberta Teachers' Association

11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1

T 780-447-9400 or 1-800-232-7208

F 780-455-6481

www.teachers.ab.ca

H Mark Ramsankar
President

Greg A Jeffery
Vice-President

Robert J Twerdoclib
Vice-President

Carol D Henderson
Past President

Gordon R Thomas PhD
Executive Secretary

Dennis E Theobald
Associate Executive Secretary

Sharon L Vogrinetz
Assistant Executive Secretary

2016 05 09

Dr Lynn McGarvey
Professor and Vice Dean
845 Education South
Faculty of Education
University of Alberta
Edmonton AB T6G 2G5

Dear Dr McGarvey

Re University Certificate (Undergraduate) in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs

Please accept this short correspondence indicating the profession's support for the new University Certificate (Undergraduate) in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs. The focus of the program is an identified need of teachers in Alberta.

Upon review of the program the proposed coursework will be of benefit to teachers who enroll in the program. Additionally, offering programs such as this allows teachers to build their level of expertise in order to use specialized supports effectively and successfully to teach students with complex communication needs, while at the same time fulfilling their professional commitment to continuous lifelong learning. The Association's support for such programs can be found within the Alberta Teachers' Association our Teacher Education and Certification Policy 2.A.42 which states:

2.A.42 Alberta universities should provide expanded opportunities for further education in the following ways:

1. Off-site courses
2. Flexible scheduling
3. Modified residency requirements
4. Portability of course credits
5. Extended time limits
6. Alternate delivery

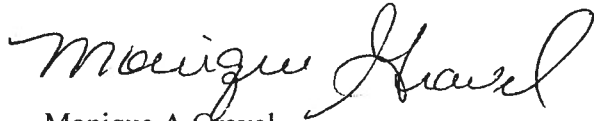
[1991/94/97/2000/07].

... continued

McGarvey, 2016 05 09, p 2

Once again, I am pleased to hear the University of Alberta is offering students an opportunity to focus their studies in this area and wish you success in offering this post-graduate certificate.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Monique A. Gravel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'M'.

Monique A Gravel
Executive Staff Officer
Professional Development

MAG/ak



The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB # 7335, Suite 1100 Bondurant Hall
321 S. Columbia Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7335
(919) 966-8828
(919) 843-3250

September 1, 2016

Dear Dr. Parrila,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter of support for the proposed University Certificate in Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs at the University of Alberta. As the Director of the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I understand the significant need for such a program and look forward to working with you to develop and implement the program.

In the summer of 2015, my colleague, David Koppenhaver and I taught a weeklong intensive seminar in literacy and complex communication needs at the University of Alberta. We extended the capacity for the course two times in order to begin to address the need across the province. Even with an enrollment exceeding 60, we barely scratched the surface of interest and need. The proposed certificate program has the potential to much more effectively address the need as the online format will dramatically increase the number of pre-service and in-service educators who can participate.

As a partner on this project, we are excited to work with faculty and staff at the University of Alberta to create the content for the courses in literacy and numeracy. We have already been actively engaged in conceptualizing the program and developing initial course syllabi. As the program moves forward, we look forward to more work creating the courses themselves and teaching them when the program launches.

All the best as you process the program proposal.

Sincerely,

Karen A. Erickson, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Literacy & Disability Studies
David E. & Dolores J. "Dee" Yoder Distinguished Professor
Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences

September 2, 2016

Kathy Look Howery
Educational Psychology
University of Alberta

Dear Kathy;

As the Regional Managers for Aspen Collaborative, Central Alberta, Eastern Edge, Edmonton, Leduc and Area, Parkland, Evergreen and Area and St. Albert/Sturgeon Regional Collaborative Service Delivery, we are aware of your work with the University of Alberta (Educational Psychology Department), the Das Centre for Developmental and Learning Disabilities and Dr. Karen Erickson at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to develop a 5 course post-graduate certificate focusing on *Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs*. We understand that you are currently at the stage of seeking University approval for this certificate.

We are very supportive of providing this opportunity for teachers and other professionals as we know that we have many children and youth in our regions who require intensive support to have their communication needs met through the use of augmentative and alternative communication. To support the needs of these children and youth, teachers require very specialized training and we understand that this course work will support our teachers in developing those skills.

We were very pleased to hear that this course work is to be delivered online. As a number of our RCSDs are rural, professional will have equal access from across the province to complete this certificate.

In conclusion, we agree that this certification program is need to meet the needs of our children and youth.

Sincerely;

Sandra Zesko
Aspen Collaborative

Cathy Gukert
Central Alberta

Denis Potvin
Eastern Edge

Terry Ramsay
Edmonton

Patti Hill
Leduc and Area
Parkland, Evergreen and Area

Vicki Cooke
St. Albert/Sturgeon



To whom it may concern,

This letter is to express our Northern Lakes Collaborative Services (NLCS) Regional Collaborative Services Delivery (RCSL) regional support for the development of the Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs (CCN) certificate.

As a Northern Alberta RCSL region we see great need for and demand for this certificate now and in the future. While the focus is on teachers, there is no doubt that Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and other members of interdisciplinary teams will also be interested in the certificate. The certificate could also lead to an MEd in Special (Inclusive) Education, which may be of interest to some educators.

With the advent of RCSL regions were asked to build capacity within schools, families and communities and create resources to successfully support children and youth with CCN. Out of all low-incidence needs CCN is the one with the highest population numbers and it is a challenge to provide adequate services to this population.

Although there is great intent in following this request and also a growing recognition of the numbers of children and youth who have complex communication needs (CCN) this is a very challenging, time consuming and at times frustrating task especially for regions that are remote and have minimal resources at their fingertips. A lack of training and support for teachers who have these children and youths in their classrooms and/or for teachers whose work involved supporting classroom teachers (Learning Support Teachers, Special Educators, etc.) is one of many barriers. Having access to online trainings such as this certificate will allow teachers and service providers from across Alberta to obtain this important, yet very difficult to find, training.

Teachers and service providers in Alberta and other provinces currently do not get the specialized training needed to provide quality instruction, consultative services and supports to children and youth with CCN in their current university programs. Children and youth with CCN provide unique challenges to educators and service providers as they do not have the oral language abilities that are often taken for granted by educators. Their educational needs are further complicated by their needs for augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices and supports.

While AAC has been understood to be the domain of Speech Language Pathologists (see SAC position paper for more information (<http://www.sac-oac.ca/professional-resources/resource-library/sac-position-paper-role-speech-language-pathologists-respect>) current research suggests the role of the teacher is critical in educational success of students with CCN (Beukelman & Mirenda, 2013; Loncke, 2014; Soto & Zangari, 2009). And although AAC is an area targeted by Speech-language Pathologists, most



graduates would make use and benefit of a CCN certificate. During recent job interviews it was the number one area being identified by graduating students that they would like to learn more about and would like to have access to additional mentoring to best be able to support the children and youth on their caseloads.

In Alberta, speech and language services in schools are primarily consultative in nature, leaving the teacher and educational assistants to implement not only educational supports for students with CCN but also AAC supports. In order to do so, teachers require the specialized training that a certificate such as the one under development by the University of Alberta and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

There has been tremendous uptake by teachers and service providers across the province in in-service training that is being offered at both the provincial and regional level. This uptake suggests a great untapped demand for knowledge and skills in this area.

Best regards,

Katrin Sannig, R.SLP
Regional Manager, NLCS
ksannig@hpsd.ca
780-552-3774



*Donna Balas
Regional Manager,
Southeast Regional Collaborative Service Delivery
58 Saamis Close SW
Medicine Hat, Alberta
403-866-3032
donnabalas@me.com*

VIA EMAIL: rauno.parrila@ualberta.ca

September 9, 2016

Dr. Rauno Parrila
Director, Das Centre
Department of Educational Psychology
6-102 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5

Dear Dr. Parrila

On behalf of the Southeast RCSD Leadership Team, I am writing to express our support for the development of a graduate certificate program focusing on teaching students with complex communication needs (CCN).

This letter received the unanimous support of our Leadership Team at our meeting on September 9, 2016.

Our Southeast region is fortunate to have the support of an AADL Level 3 Service Centre through partnership with the SW RCSD and Alberta Health Services. This service has meant that children and youth have access to assessment services and trial devices locally rather than travelling to Alberta Children's Hospital in Calgary. There have been increases in the use of low-tech (ex. PDD books), mid-tech and high-tech (ex. Nova chat) devices. Over the past two years, we have moved from a caseload of about 10 children to serving over 40 in 2015-16. The numbers continue to grow as we expand our identification and understanding of the needs of children with CCN. The increasing number of identified children and youth using communication devices in classrooms has meant that front-line professionals need to increase their knowledge of alternative communication systems and their implementation in school, home, and community environments.

Our SE RCSD has provided funds for professional development of teachers and SLPs in this area. The 5 day course in Edmonton with Dr. Karen Erickson and David Koppenhaver in July 2015, was funded by RCSD and had great impact in expanding our understanding of CCN, in pockets. We need to continue professional

development and continue to expand our understanding of the communication and educational needs of this population across our region.

For the past two years, the Province-wide Low Incidence Team has offered a summer symposium in Lethbridge with one of the sessions focused on complex communication. In both years, the complex communication session has been well attended by teachers, educational assistants, and health professionals seeking to increase their ability to support students using AAC.

We are very interested in the development of a certificate program that would be available to both education and health professionals, especially given the option for distance/virtual delivery. Not unlike other rural communities in the province, finding a way to release staff to attend courses in Edmonton is challenging. The development of an online certificate program available through the University of Alberta is a tremendous opportunity for our professionals working and living in Southeast Alberta communities.

We look forward to hearing more about the program once approved through the University processes.

Sincerely,



Donna Balas
Regional Manager

cc. Heather Cluett, Human Services, Chair SE RCSD
Linda Krochak, CAPE School, Vice-Chair SE RCSD
Kathy Howery, University of Alberta

September 9, 2016

Kathy Look Howery
Educational Psychology
University of Alberta

Dear Kathy:

This letter is written in support of the proposed post-graduate certificate program focusing on *Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs*. There are, in my opinion, a number of reasons that there is a need for this specialized training for Alberta teachers.

1. With *Action on Inclusion* an increasing number of regular classroom teachers are needing an expanding skill set to support a wide diversity of children's needs- including those with complex communication needs. In our region 98 children have been identified as having complex communication needs and this number is continually growing. Approximately 35 new referrals were made in the 2015-2016 school year.
2. SLPs are clearly the experts in assessing student needs in the areas of complex communication and, in some cases, identifying the appropriate equipment. The SLPs do, of course, support the classroom teacher. However, the level of support that is possible is less than the level of support actually required to assist teachers in helping these children to make the most communication gains. It is estimated that the SLPs in our region typically spend only 2 to 4 hrs in supporting teachers when a teacher who is first encountering this severe need may well need more than double the support. One SLP reports that she typically spends 1 or 2 half day visits to support students with AAC. This often includes addressing OT/PT needs in the same visit and has rarely includes direct time with the classroom teacher.
3. The increasing availability and complexity of AAC devices is making an already complex teaching situation even more demanding for front line staff.
4. There is specialized pedagogy focused on assisting children to transfer the skills used in therapy to more real life situations in the classroom, with friends and with family. This specialized pedagogy is only theory until teachers are trained and implement it.
5. I believe that there is an interest in the field to grow skills in this area. In fall, 2015 CA RCSD offered to sponsor teachers to attend a Caroline Musselwhite workshop "AAC Language Learning: Make it Fun, Make it Interactive." The 40 spots offered were quickly filled.

On behalf of Central Alberta RCSD I wish you success in developing this program. The on-line option is critical to encourage teachers from across the province to become better able to support children and youth with complex needs. In my opinion the need to support a child's "voice" is critical. One child whom I remember had severe behaviour issues- to the extent that his parents couldn't take him out in public. Once he received appropriate support for his communication needs, he became a different child. His first "words" to his mom were "I love you." He became a happy, involved child both at school and at home.

Yours truly,


(Mrs.) Cathy Gukert, Regional Manager, CA RCSD



6220 Lakeview Drive S.W., Calgary, Alberta T3E 5T1
Phone: 403-500-2476 Fax: 403-500-2933

VIA EMAIL: rauno.parrila@ualberta.ca

August 31, 2016

Dr. Rauno Parrila
Director, JP Das Centre on Developmental and Learning Disabilities
Department of Educational Psychology
6-102 Education North, University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5

Dear Dr. Parrila:

On behalf of the Calgary and Area Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD), I am writing to express our support for the development of a post graduate certificate program for teachers and health care professionals which will focus on teaching children and youth with complex communication needs.

Our RCSD represents multiple systems including Education – public, private and charter systems, Health - Alberta Health Services, Human Services – Disability Services and Child and Family Services, parent representatives, and community agencies. We are mandated by the provincial government to work collaboratively across levels and systems and share our collective, limited resources and expertise as we support over 400 children and youth with complex learning and communication needs in the Calgary area.

We work closely with our partners to learn about and adopt consistent communication methods and tools across systems. In April we hosted a professional education day which focused on teaching methods for emergent literacy learners using aided language systems. Our partnership also developed an information prescription on complex communication for families and care providers to access vetted resources and first-hand accounts from children, families and care providers working through complex communication challenges.

While research suggests the role of the teacher is critical in the educational success of students with complex communications needs, we know t collaborative approach is well received by children and youth, families and their 'wrap around team' members. In Alberta, speech and language services in schools are primarily consultative in nature, leaving the teacher and educational assistants to implement not only educational supports for students with complex learning needs, but also augmentative and alternative communication (ACC) devices and supports.

We are continually exploring ways to build system capacity and sharing opportunities with our partners, and are very interested in the development of a distance education certificate program that could be made available to all of our partners. Such an approach supports our collaborative approach in working with our children and youth as they learn to communicate with family, peers, and teachers in class, community and home environments.

Being able to access this specialized curriculum online will be well received by our partners who are often separated by geography, program, system, and schedule. We look forward to being able to access and promote this wonderful opportunity in the near future.

Sincerely,



Janice K. Popp, MSW RSW
Regional Manager, Calgary and Area Regional Collaborative Service Delivery

copy Greg Roberts, Director of Learning, Rocky View Schools
and Co-Chair Calgary and Area Regional Leadership Team

Northern Lights Regional Collaborative Service Delivery
C/O Fort Vermilion School Division
9701-105 Avenue
High Level, AB T0H 1Z0
O: 780-841-5657
E: carried@fvsd.ab.ca

VIA EMAIL: rauno.parrila@ualberta.ca

August 31, 2016

Dr. Rauno Parrila
Director, Das Centre
Department of Educational Psychology
6-102 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5

Dear Dr. Parrila:

On behalf of the Northern Lights Regional Collaborative Service Delivery Leadership Team, I am writing to express our support for the development of a post graduate certificate program focusing on supporting students with complex communication needs.

The Northern Lights region is limited in our capacity to support children and youth with complex communication needs. We have taken advantage of the opportunities made available through the Province-wide Low Incidence Team. We sent an SLP, Inclusive Education Coordinator and Diverse Learning Coordinator to the 2015 Summer Institute with Karen Erickson, and have ongoing SLP participation in the provincially facilitated CCN Community of Practice.

While these opportunities have provided some ongoing development in the area of CCN, they have not resulted in the development of extensive local expertise in this area. Access to an online certificate program would offer our service providers, teachers, and support staff an opportunity they may not otherwise have to expand their knowledge and enhance their practice. This will directly benefit our children and youth with complex communication needs by decreasing communication frustrations and helping them achieve their highest potential.

In summary, we are very interested in the development of a certificate program that would be available to both education and health professionals, especially the option for distance learning. As a relatively remote area of the province, the time and expense required to attend courses in Edmonton or Calgary is prohibitive.

The development of an online certificate program available through the University of Alberta is a tremendous opportunity for our professionals working and living in Northwest Alberta communities.

We look forward to hearing more about the program once approved.

Sincerely,

Carrie Demkiw
Regional Manager
Northern Lights Regional Collaborative Service Delivery

cc. Kathy Howery, University of Alberta

September 16, 2016

Rauno Parrila, Karen Erickson, Kathy Howery

University of Alberta

Re: Certificate Program for Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs to be hosted in the Das Centre in association with the Center for Literacy & Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina

Dear Rauno, Karen, and Kathy

You recently sent me information regarding your proposal for a University Certificate with respect to “Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs” from the University of Alberta to be implemented in September, 2017. This information included a program overview, student demand analysis, institutional and system context, financial viability and funding sources, and quality assessment. In addition, you requested a brief letter of support stating that your proposed program does not duplicate anything the University of Calgary offers.

In regard to the above, I believe that you have proposed an excellent and much needed certificate program within the Province of Alberta and to my knowledge it does not duplicate anything the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary offers.

I wish you success with your program.

Yours sincerely

Jac J.W. Andrews, Professor

Chair, School and Applied Child Psychology Program

Werklund School of Education

University of Calgary

Phone: 403-220-7503

E-mail: jandrews@ucalgary.ca

October 3, 2016

Dr. Rauno Parilla
Professor, Department of Educational Psychology
Director, JP Das Centre on Developmental and Learning Disabilities
Department of Educational Psychology
6-102 Education North
University of Alberta
11210 - 87 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5

Dear Dr. Parilla,

I was most interested to hear about your proposal for a new University Certificate *Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs*, which will be implemented by September, 2017. After reviewing the documentation that was provided, I can confirm that the Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge does not offer a program that would duplicate any of the content to be covered in this Certificate.

I believe that you and your colleagues, Kathy Howery and Karen Erickson, have proposed an excellent program which will provide an opportunity for professional development to many. I fully support your efforts and wish you much success in the future.

Best regards,

Nancy C. Grigg, PhD

Assistant Dean, Student Program Services
Faculty of Education, University of Lethbridge
4401 University Drive
Lethbridge, Alberta T1K 3M4

email: nancy.grigg@uleth.ca

phone: 403 329-2257



Rauno Parrila <rparrila@ualberta.ca>

certificate proposal

Dr. Linda Chmiliar <lindac@athabascau.ca>
To: Rauno Parrila <rauno.parrila@ualberta.ca>

Sat, Sep 17, 2016 at 9:55 AM

Rauno

Your proposed TSCCN Certificate does not duplicate our current Diploma in Inclusive Education. There is some overlap with one of the courses and our course in Assistive Technology although the focus is a little different.

Linda Chmiliar

Chair, Centre for Social Sciences

Coordinator, Diploma in Inclusive Education

Associate Professor

Athabasca University

From: Rauno Parrila <rauno.parrila@ualberta.ca>
Sent: Friday, September 16, 2016 9:58:11 AM
To: Dr. Linda Chmiliar
Subject: certificate proposal

[Quoted text hidden]

--

This communication is intended for the use of the recipient to whom it is addressed, and may contain confidential, personal, and or privileged information. Please contact us immediately if you are not the intended recipient of this communication, and do not copy, distribute, or take action relying on it. Any communications received in error, or subsequent reply, should be deleted or destroyed.

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
COURSE AND PROGRAM CHANGES
PROPOSED CALENDAR CHANGE (2016-2017)
CALENDAR SECTION

CURRENT Calendar Section Number (§) Course Listings	PROPOSED Calendar Section Number (§) Course Listings
New Course	<p>EDPY 481 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Instructional Design and Methods ★3 (fi 6) (either term, 3-0-0). This course builds on the principles of Universal Design for Learning and provides an overview of (1) teaching approaches that support inclusive education for students with complex communication needs, (2) assessment practices and tools that are appropriate for students with complex communication needs, (3) how to use local educational standards documents to guide goal setting and instruction. Restricted to students in the TSCCN Certificate program.</p>
New Course	<p>EDPY 482 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Augmentative and Alternative Communication ★3 (fi 6) (either term, 3-0-0). This course will introduce classroom teachers and educational professionals to the practices, issues and importance of providing augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) strategies and supports to students with complex communication needs. The course will focus on implementation of AAC systems to support students' communication, language development and meaningful participation in all aspects of learning experiences. Restricted to students in the TSCCN Certificate program.</p>
New Course	<p>EDPY 483 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Emergent Literacy ★3 (fi 6) (either term, 3-0-0). This course will focus on quality, comprehensive emergent literacy instruction for students with complex communication needs. The course will emphasize the use of symbol supported communication systems and intentionally designed instruction that includes daily opportunities for developing communication and interaction skills, oral language understandings, alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness, understandings of concepts about print, and a positive disposition toward literacy. Restricted to students in the TSCCN Certificate program.</p>

<p>New Course</p>	<p>EDPY 484 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Conventional Literacy ★3 (fi 6) (either term, 3-0-0). This course will focus on quality, comprehensive literacy instruction for students with complex communication needs. The course will emphasize the use of symbol and text based communication systems and systematically designed instruction that includes daily opportunities for developing conventional skills in word reading (decoding and automatic word identification), text comprehension, silent reading fluency, and writing. Restricted to students in the TSCCN Certificate program.</p>
<p>New Course</p>	<p>EDPY 485 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Numeracy ★3 (fi 6) (either term, 3-0-0). This course focuses on quality instruction in mathematics (including numeracy) for students with complex communication needs. The course will emphasize the use of symbol and text based communication systems and systematically designed instruction to support understandings of number sense; spatial reasoning; principles of geometry, measurement, data, and analytic procedures; and mathematical problem solving, including algebra. Restricted to students in the TSCCN Certificate program.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">CURRENT Online Calendar</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">New PROPOSED</p>
<p>>The Faculties >Faculty of Education >General Information >Certificates</p> <p><i>No changes until...</i></p> <p>New Free Standing University Certificate</p>	<p>>The Faculties >Faculty of Education >General Information >Certificates</p> <p><i>No changes until...</i></p> <p><u>Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs (*15)</u> <u>*3 EDPY 481 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Instructional Design and Methods</u> <u>*3 EDPY 482 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Augmentative and Alternative Communication</u> <u>*3 EDPY 483 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Emergent Literacy</u> <u>*3 EDPY 484 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Conventional Literacy</u> <u>*3 EDPY 485 Teaching Students with Complex Communication Needs: Numeracy</u> <u>For more information contact J.P. Das Centre on Developmental and Learning Disabilities within the Department of Educational Psychology or visit dascentre.educ.ualberta.ca/tscn.</u></p>