

Applying for and Earning Practicum/Student Teaching Credits in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

UNL offers two teaching endorsements approved by the Nebraska Department of Education for work with young children with disabilities. Most UNL students are pursuing a degree and/or an endorsement in Early Childhood Special Education (birth to gr. 3) (Rule 24 (006.54). Some of you are pursuing your first teaching credential in Preschool Disabilities (birth to K) (Rule 24 006.45). For any endorsement program, SpEd 897Q credits are required. The total number of credits and the application/registration process will vary by endorsement.

Add-on Endorsements

1. Early Childhood Special Education (Birth thru Grade 3) (006.54)

For the candidate with a valid teaching certificate and endorsement in either Elementary (K-6) or Early Childhood Education (Pre-3) or Unified Early Childhood Education (birth thru gr. 3).

Three credits of SpEd 897Q are required including practicum with infants and preschoolers and kindergarten transitions.

Register for: 1 cr./term for total of 3 credits of SpEd 897Q. Suggest each credit be taken in concert with SpEd 860 (Fall), SpEd 960 or SpEd 861 (Spring) and then a Summer session following these courses; or student can begin later in the program of study.

See 897Q *Practicum Checklist*

2. Preschool Disabilities (Birth thru Kindergarten) (006.45):

For the candidate with a valid teaching certificate and endorsement in Special Education, Speech Pathology or Middle/Secondary-Education.

Five credits of SpEd 897Q and 1 cr of SpEd 497Z are required. Includes practicum with infants, preschoolers and kindergarten transitions.

Complete 3 credits of SpEd 897Q and the *Practicum Checklist*.

Register for 2 cr. SpEd 897Q and 1 cr. SpEd 497Z in final term after all courses are done and the *Practicum Checklist* is complete.

Post-Bac Initial Certification

1. Preschool Disabilities - Initial Teaching Certificate (Birth thru Kindergarten) (006.45):

For the candidate with a Bachelors Degree but no teaching credential. Candidates who had undergraduate majors in Speech Pathology, Child Development, Psychology, etc. may find this initial teaching credential program attractive. The candidate must be accepted into the UNL Graduate College and the Masters Degree program in Special Education in order to pursue this credential.

Five credits of SpEd 897Q and 1 cr of SpEd 497Z are required. Includes practicum with infants, preschoolers and kindergarten transitions.

Complete 3 credits of SpEd 897Q and the *Practicum Checklist* **in your first year of study**

Register for 2 cr. SpEd 897Q and 1 cr. SpEd 497Z **in your final term, once the *Practicum Checklist* is completed.**

What and How to Register

We are now able to offer a flexible way for students to complete 3 credits of SpEd 897Q...**without** traditional student-teaching placement with a certified ECSE teacher or a Substitution Project on-the-job. This may be attractive for many of you who are not employed yet as an ECSE-teacher and want to complete your requirements without leaving your current job.

SpEd 897Q Practicum Checklist (3 credits)

1. **No application required** for the 3 credits of SpEd 897Q *Practicum Checklist*. ECSE/Preschool Disability endorsement majors will need Call #s for the SpEd 897Q credits. These Call #s can be obtained from the ECSE advisor about the time registration is open to students; October for Spring term, March for Summer

and Fall terms.

2. The SpEd 897Q 3 credit *Practicum Checklist* can be completed at a pace comfortable to the student.

It is suggested that you register for 1 credit at a time and complete one or two sections of *Practicum Checklist* per term. However, a student could opt to register for 3 credits of SpEd 897Q in one term and make that a full-time commitment in lieu of a course that term. This should not be the route however until the student has completed at least SpEd 860 or 960. The student cannot apply for the endorsement until this and all other required credits are complete. .

3. Download the SpEd 897Q *Practicum Checklist* from ECSE website/Due Dates.

4. **Once registered for SpEd 897Q**, students can access an annotated description of requirements for each *Practicum Checklist* item on the course Blackboard at <http://my.unl.edu> website. Students will also find here a syllabus and annotated description of SpEd 897Q practicum assignments.

5. If you only need 3 credits of SpEd 897Q, the experiences outlined on the *Practicum Checklist* will complete your requirements (infants, preschoolers, field work). You will receive a grade for each credit. **Once you receive a letter grade of B or better for 3 credits of SpEd 897Q you can apply for your endorsement.**

Needing 6 credits *Practicum/Student Teaching*?

If your program requires 5 credits of SpEd 897Q and 1 credit of SpEd 497Z (total 6 credits), you must have the 3 credits *Practicum Checklist* (infants, preschoolers, field work) completed BEFORE you can apply for the additional 3 credits and have a supervised student teaching experience arranged.

Application for this final student-teaching experience must be done the semester before you plan to complete the experience.

Download the Student Teaching Application Form from the ECSE website. (see Due Dates)

These final 3 credits (includes 2 cr SpEd 897Q and 1 cr. 897Z for Initial Certification students) will require traditional supervised experiences in home-visiting with parents, coaching classroom teachers in the community and/or direct teaching in a preschool classroom with children with disabilities. These experiences will be outlined and approved by your advisor and supervised by a UNL employee who will provide on-site visits for direct observation of your skills.

Grading: B or better

All practicum/student-teaching credits (SpEd 897) must be supervised by a UNL SpEd instructor and receive a passing grade of at least B to be used for degree and endorsement applications. Students who receive less than a letter grade of B (B- does not suffice) will be asked to either retake the experience in a subsequent term or withdraw from the endorsement program of study.

Applying for Endorsement or Initial Teaching Certificate

Once a student receives a *Final Student-Teaching Recommendation/Evaluation* from the UNL Advisor or Supervisor, and a letter grade of B or better for all SpEd 897 credits, they can contact 105 Henszlik Hall on City Campus UNL and apply for the endorsement/certificate. No student should apply directly to the Nebraska Department of Education.

If you have any questions about this set of Practicum and Student-teaching requirements, contact your advisor.