

CLASS for ALL

Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Speech-language Services for All Language Learners

CFDA 84.325K Combined Personnel Preparation: Part C. Related Services

ABSTRACT

The purposes of the project are to recruit, retain, and train 16 highly-qualified bilingual speech-language pathologists to deliver speech-language services to students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with speech and language impairments. As such, the emphasis of this four-year program will be on developing requisite competencies in the areas of appropriate identification and intervention for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as develop competencies in all the areas specified by the American Speech-language Hearing Association (ASHA) for applicants for the Certificate of Clinical Competency (CCC). Every program graduate will be eligible to apply for the ASHA after successful completion of the program, receiving a passing score on the national Praxis examination and completion of the nine month Clinical Fellowship Year. In order to ensure the quality of the training, evaluation of the program will also be a goal, both on-going evaluation from the student participants and the advisory board, and completion evaluation from the graduates, the advisory board and the employers of program graduates.

School districts have an increasingly difficult time recruiting and retaining ASHA-certified speech-language pathologists. As the nation's school children increasingly come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, it becomes imperative that children who are referred for a possible communication disorder be evaluated by a clinician who has specialized knowledge in determining language differences versus language disorders. Ideally, the child will be assessed by a clinician who is not only fluent in both of the child's languages, but who also understands the process of second language acquisition and the issues of first language loss. Thus, this program proposes to train 16 bilingual speech-language pathologists in those areas. Additionally, because it is likely that the speech-language pathologists will be required to assess in languages they don't know, the program also includes training for working with interpreters. Thus, graduates of the program will be prepared to provide quality speech-language services to native speakers of all languages.

New Mexico State University, as the largest Hispanic-serving institution of higher education in the country, is uniquely situated to provide this training. A significant number of undergraduates who attend NMSU speak a language other than English fluently; many are first-generation college students and are familiar with challenges facing families whose first language is not English. This program meets the land-grant university's mission to serve state and regional needs.