

**"A Survey of Alternative and Traditional Special Education Teachers' Perception of Preparedness"**  
**Dr. Lauren Bruno (University of Iowa) & Ms. Cassandra Willis (Virginia Commonwealth University)**  
**International Disability Rights Affirmation Conference 2018**  
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Today's presentation is being transcribed so those without audio or who require text only can participate in real time.

A little explanation about this service.

Voice-to-text transcriptionists provide a translation of the key ideas discussed, NOT a word for word transcription. Voice-to-text services provide an in-the-moment snapshot of ideas and concepts, so that those who are unable to hear or to understand the audio program are able to participate in real-time.

You will see the transcription in local chat.

Transcription is provided by Virtual Ability, Inc. The transcriptionists are:  
Elektra Panthar  
LoriVonne Lustre

(NOTE: The above did not appear in this particular presentation's transcript, but is attached as an explanation about the transcription process)

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[2018/10/05 13:00] Lorin Tone: Hello and welcome to you all! In virtual worlds, I am known as Lorin Tone, and I create environmental and musical soundscapes. Although I have worked on various projects for Virtual Ability for years now, I joined the group when I ended up becoming disabled 2 years ago.

A few words about our presenters:

Dr. Lauren P. Bruno is a recent graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University where she studied Special Education and Disability Policy.

Her research is focused on transition outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, teacher preparation and development, assistive technology, and education policy.

Dr. Bruno is currently a postdoctoral research scholar at the University of Iowa with UI REACH (Realizing Education and Career Hopes).

Prior to entering the world of academia, she was a high-school special educator serving students with severe and multiple disabilities.

She obtained her Master's in Special Education, with an Autism Certificate, from the University of Mary Washington in Virginia, following her Bachelor's in Elementary Education & Special Education from Millersville University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Bruno is obviously a cool person because her first name is pronounced like mine.

Mrs. Cassandra Willis is a 3rd-year doctoral student in the Research to Policy Advocacy Program in the Counseling and Special Education Department at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA.

She is beginning her dissertation in the area of administrative support of early career special education teachers.

Her research agenda includes disproportionality in special education, diversity of teaching workforce, post-secondary school outcomes and special education teacher preparation.

She has spent many years in public education in a variety of roles including special education teacher, math supervisor, and Associate Principal.

Cassandra attended the University of Virginia as an undergraduate and received her Master's and a Post Graduate Certificate in Administration and Supervision from Virginia Commonwealth University.

In her spare time she enjoys traveling and days with no meetings. She is ramping up for graduation in May, 2019!

Their avatar names are LaurenBruno and Alexandraoflcelia.

Dr. Bruno & Mrs Willis will discuss "A Survey of Alternative and Traditional Special Education Teachers' Perception of Preparedness".

They will present findings from a study which evaluated the perception of alternate route and traditional route special education teachers, particularly as it relates to their training received in their teacher preparation programs to meet standards intended to prepare effective special education teachers.

After their presentation, Dr. Bruno and Mrs. Willis will be here to answer questions from the audience.

Please hold all questions and comments until the allocated time. Please, let's not have distractions like animation sounds...be courteous for our guests.

With pleasure, I now give the floor to our presenters.

[2018/10/05 13:06] LV (lorivonne.lustre): <<transcription begins>>

[2018/10/05 13:06] Alexandraoflcelia Resident: "A SURVEY OF ALTERNATIVE AND TRADITIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF PREPAREDNESS"

(Slide 2)

Introducing Cassandra B. Willis, M.I.S, from Virginia Commonwealth University and Lauren P. Bruno, Ph.D., from the University of Iowa.

(slide 3)

Need for Special Educators

A lack of personnel prepared to provide quality inclusive services to students with disabilities and their families is one of the primary barriers to serving students in the least restrictive, most inclusive environments.

Alternate Route Programs (ARPs)

- Created to meet the demands for special education teachers (SETs) in the field
- Generally shorter in duration
- Involves candidates in teaching immediately or shortly after beginning the program
- Have an emphasis on field-based training, and are extended to a more diverse candidate population.

[2018/10/05 13:10] Elektra Panthar: This is the rest of the slide:

A lack of personnel prepared to provide quality inclusive services to students with disabilities and their families is one of the primary barriers to serving students in the least restrictive, most inclusive environments (Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormick, & Scheer, 1999).

[ARPs] Created to meet the demands for special education teachers (SETs) in the field

Generally shorter in duration

Involves candidates in teaching immediately or shortly after beginning the program

Have an emphasis on field-based training, and are extended to a more diverse candidate population (Connelly, Rosenberg & Larson, 2014; Rosenberg & Sindelar, 2005).

[2018/10/05 13:09] Alexandraoflcelia Resident: (slide 4)

The scant findings between special education teachers in ARPs and traditional programs raise concerns about preparation and whether both groups truly are being trained to effectively meet the knowledge and skills covered in the standards.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to gain information about ARPs and traditionally trained special education teachers' perception of their training on professional preparation standards

targeted at what effective special education teachers should know, and the extent of their training on these skills in their teacher preparation programs.

Three research questions were developed to guide this study.

(slide 5)

Special educators reported their perceptions of CEC standards as being "somewhat important" to important.

Most Important Standards:

- Instruction and professional development required by law of students with disabilities
- Understanding students disabilities based on cognitive, physical, cultural social and emotional conditions

CEC = Council for Exceptional Children

- Collaboration with parents and other professionals in the assessments of students with disabilities
- Preparing appropriate lesson plans
- Behavior management techniques
- Communication with team members
- Establishing a rapport with the learner

Teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they possessed the skills outlined in the CEC's six advanced content standards

Observations conducted using CEC standards and self-assessments of 40 first year special educators (½ traditional, ½ emergency certified)

Teachers who were trained traditionally outperformed the emergency licensed teachers;  
No difference in teachers' self-report of their abilities

(slide 6)

Purpose: Gain information about alternate route programs and traditionally trained special education teachers' perception of their training on professional preparation standards targeted at what effective special education teachers should know, and the extent of their training on these skills in their teacher preparation programs.

(Slide 7)

Research Questions

To what extent do ARP and traditionally prepared special educators feel that their preparation program prepared them with the skills to meet the special education professional standards?

Is there a difference in the level of perceived preparedness between special educators who earned an alternative license versus traditionally prepared teachers?  
To what extent do special education teachers feel satisfied with the training received in their preparation program and, is there a difference in satisfaction of teachers in ARP's and traditional route programs?

(Slide 8)

Methodology

(slide 9)

Development of Measure

Used 3 sets of standards for development

- National standards from The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Initial Specialty Set for Individualized General Curriculum National Standards
  - Virginia Standards for the Professional Practice of Teachers of Special Education
  - Standards for the VA Standards for the Professional Practice for All Teachers
- Matrix was developed to see how CEC and Virginia standards aligned to guide the preparation of special education teachers

55 competencies across 6 competency areas:

Knowledge, Planning, Delivery, Assessment, Environment, and Professionalism.

Survey questions were created from commonalities between national and state standards

(slide 10)

Reviewing the matrix between CEC core concepts and VA Special educator core concepts

(slide 11)

Reviewing two sections of survey, Demographics and preparations standards

(slide 12)

A Closer Look at Subsections

- knowledge
- planning
- delivery

- assessment
- environment
- professionalism

[2018/10/05 13:19] Elektra Panthar: Knowledge - ability of participants to understand curriculum, content, and developmental needs of students with disabilities.

Planning - participants' ability to use state standards, school's curriculum, and using effective strategies, resources and data to make decisions and meet students' needs.

Delivery - instructional strategies to meet students' needs.

Assessment - ability to gather and analyze data to track academic progress, guide instructional content and delivery methods, and provide feedback to teachers and families.

Environment - ability to use provide a safe, productive, and student-centered learning environment.

Professionalism - ability to provide professional practice and collaboration (e.g., ethics, communication, responsibility) to enhance student learning.

[2018/10/05 13:19] Alexandraoflcelia Resident: (slide 13)

Data Collection

[2018/10/05 13:21] Elektra Panthar: Survey sent electronically through two active social media groups on Facebook and data collected through e-mails sent to coordinators of teacher preparation programs who sent it to their students.

Follow up emails sent and posted 14 days after original posting/email sent.

Data collection lasted (approximately) two months.

[2018/10/05 13:20] Alexandraoflcelia Resident: (slide 14)

Data Analysis

(slide 15)

Results

(slide 16)

Demographic Data

(slide 17)

Professional Demographic Data

(slide 18)

Research Question 1: Determine if a relationship existed between preparation routes and perception of training on the standards.

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Research Question 2: Differences in Preparation on the Standards between SET's Prepared through ARPs and those Teachers prepared through Traditional Route Programs.

(slide 20)

Research Question 3: Participants' satisfaction with the training received in their Teacher Preparation Program

A two-sample t-test was conducted for differences between the groups according to overall satisfaction of program and training received on standards, respectively,  $t(1) = 12.71$ ;  $p = 0.66$ .

Therefore, it was determined there was no significant difference in satisfaction ratings between teachers in ARPs and traditional route programs.

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Discussion

(slide 22)

Limitations

(slide 23)

Matches research- This finding is similar to those of Othman et al. (2015): participants felt that they possessed the skills necessary to meet the standards. This study drew from a larger population and included more standards; however, teachers from both types of programs felt they were being adequately prepared. Regardless of preparation toward working with students based on disability categories, SETs in ARPs and traditional route programs both indicated training on standards.

(slide 24)

Reaffirming that SETs perceive that TPPs are preparing them to meet the needs of their students.

We believe that this is a positive finding for ARPs that ratings are the same and even slightly higher than ratings of teachers in TPPs.

That despite the fact that questions about adequacy about preparation exists, ARP teachers perceive that their programs are providing adequate preparation to meet the needs of students

and that overall ARP teachers have a positive rating of the training received in their preparation programs.

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Conclusion

(slide 26)

Future Research

A follow up study that focused more on training goals of ARP and traditional route programs (similarities and differences) would be an important extension of related research,

and may be able to offer solutions to questions about the significance of ARP programs when compared to traditional programs

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[2018/10/05 13:36] LV (lorivonne.lustre): LB & CW: Questions?

[2018/10/05 13:35] Mook Wheeler: QUESTIONS: 1) Why are ARPs extended to a "more diverse candidate population" and why are the Traditional route programs \*not\*? 2) Would the fact that ARP candidates are involved in teaching

immediately/shortly after beginning their program have something to do with why the ARPs are "as good" as the traditional routes, despite being shorter in duration?

[2018/10/05 13:36] LV (lorivonne.lustre): Alex: I can answer the first part

Dr Bruno can answer the 2nd part

[2018/10/05 13:36] Elektra Panthar: CW: Here in Virginia there's more diversity in the alternative route programs

The alternative route programs are more flexible and more accessible, hence the increase in diversity

[2018/10/05 13:37] LV (lorivonne.lustre): LB: the ARP is more flexible

[2018/10/05 13:37] Mook Wheeler: sorry, the phrase "extended to a more diverse candidate population" was taken from your slide

[2018/10/05 13:38] Gentle Heron: The US is known among educators especially those from the Far East as producing students who have a lot of confidence. In fact, that US students tend to overestimate their academic abilities compared to students in other nations. Could the same be said of these educators? That they are more confident about their ability to meet the standards than they actually are in practice? (not meant as a put down, I used to be a special education teacher.)

[2018/10/05 13:39] Elektra Panthar: LB: Many teachers entered the field with a lack of knowledge, so maybe they overestimated the level of preparation their program provided

[2018/10/05 13:40] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW / Alex: Any time you have a self report survey, you do see this inflation in confidence.

[2018/10/05 13:38] Lorin Tone: In my opinion, overconfidence is not uncommon in the US.

[2018/10/05 13:39] Youri Ashton: I think many countries see that Gentle

[2018/10/05 13:39] Dorie Bernstein: I've encountered some who are definitely overconfident in their training. It creates all manner of problems when they rise to control programs.

[2018/10/05 13:40] Gentle Heron: There is a difference between "book learning" and actual practice. So an extension of this study would be to ask the students how well the teachers are meeting those standards.

[2018/10/05 13:40] Dorie Bernstein: and asking parents too  
Just adding that parents should be asked when asking students

[2018/10/05 13:40] Gentle Heron: Yes Dorie!

[2018/10/05 13:40] Lorin Tone: Book learning vs. ability to apply the knowledge, perhaps

[2018/10/05 13:40] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: we do need to compensate for this bias

Good idea for future research Gentle. To look at student perceptions.

The research is saying that those who are traditionally trained are better prepared.

Dorie, we can only interact with students when we have consent from parents.

[2018/10/05 13:42] Dorie Bernstein: no, I'm meaning as far as evaluating the teachers

[2018/10/05 13:42] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: Oh I'm sorry, I misunderstood. Yes, you are correct Dorie

[2018/10/05 13:42] Gentle Heron: Several different perspectives.

[2018/10/05 13:41] Youri Ashton: Sorry to ask this, I really have no bad intentions with this. But could it possibly be part of US pride why students are so over confident?

[2018/10/05 13:42] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: sorry Youri, I can't answer your question

[2018/10/05 13:42] Youri Ashton: it may be a topic to look into, not to bash on the US. But it could be asked in multiple countries and see what comes up

[2018/10/05 13:43] Gentle Heron: Are there emergency certifications in other professions?

[2018/10/05 13:43] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: that is a complex question Gentle.

[2018/10/05 13:43] Elektra Panthar: LB: Alternate route programs were created due to shortages in our area and unprofessionalism, especially for special education teachers

[2018/10/05 13:44] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: there is a huge debate about the professionalism of the profession. You don't go to an alternative route trained cardiologist for example.

[2018/10/05 13:45] Elektra Panthar: LB: Big question

[2018/10/05 13:44] Lays (laysfarbonelima): Sendo Brasileira eu poderia participar ?sou deficiente resiliente RL e voluntária RL e SL, minha visão em SL poder ser útil as pessoas com dificuldades, são muitas pessoas deficientes que não sabem o apoio que se tem em SL,principalmente,por uma organização eficiente como a da Virtual Ability.

(Q-Translator g:pt->en): Being Brazilian I could participate? I am a resilient RL and volunteer RL and SL, my vision in SL can be useful to people with difficulties, are very poor people who do not know the support that is in SL mainly by an organization as efficient as that of Virtual Ability

[2018/10/05 13:44] Gentle Heron: How bad is the special education teacher shortage? How does it compare to general education teacher shortage?

[2018/10/05 13:45] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: while we are fighting to protect our profession (teaching), there is a huge shortage of special education teachers Special education teachers leave at 2 x the rate of general education teachers. It is becoming greener - newer teachers -- and whiter. We have fewer teachers who can relate to diverse student populations

There is a critical shortage of special education teachers.

[2018/10/05 13:46] Youri Ashton: shortages like that are in many European countries very similar

[2018/10/05 13:46] Cassandra (alexandraoficelia): Oh wow Youri....I will have to read up on that

[2018/10/05 13:47] Gentle Heron: Why the big drop out rate of special ed teachers? Why don't more college students major in special ed?

[2018/10/05 13:47] Elektra Panthar: LB: Folks trained in science and math typically go into the science for more money

We see difference in shortages as well

[2018/10/05 13:47] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: A lot of it is financial to be honest There are differing pay scales across each state

[2018/10/05 13:48] Dorie Bernstein: starting salary for a manager at a convenience store is higher than the starting salary for a teacher in my city  
It's no wonder we have a shortage here

[2018/10/05 13:48] Cassandra (alexandraoficelia): Oh wow Dorie...absolutely insane

[2018/10/05 13:48] Elektra Panthar: ouch.

[2018/10/05 13:48] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: there are fewer students in education overall, then special education is not promoted as a specialization. It is also a challenging field

[2018/10/05 13:50] Lays (laysfarbonelima): o preconceito creio que é em todos os países, no Brasil não é diferente, eu como psicóloga, por ser deficiente veem de forma diferente

(Q-Translator g:pt->en): the prejudice I believe is in all the countries, in Brazil it is not different, I as a psychologist, for being deficient see differently

[2018/10/05 13:49] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: Questions?

[2018/10/05 13:48] Gentle Heron: What's next for you two?

[2018/10/05 13:49] Elektra Panthar: LB: I just started my position, doing research on assistive technology

At University of Iowa for now and hoping to stay in academia

[2018/10/05 13:50] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: I have not settled on one thing yet. I have not decided if I will stay in higher ed or return to K-12

[2018/10/05 13:51] Gentle Heron: Thank you Cassandra and Lauren. This was interesting and informative.

[2018/10/05 13:51] LV (lorivonne.lustre): CW: thank you so much  
I have class now, so I am going to run off. Bye!

[2018/10/05 13:52] LV (lorivonne.lustre): <<transcription ends>>