



# Academic Review Committee Request Form: Program Revision

ARC Use Only:

ARC #: \_\_\_\_\_

Program ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Status: Status

(A=Approved, I=Info item only, R=Returned)

Date rec'd by ARC: \_\_\_\_\_

All ARC program proposals must be submitted electronically. Please work with your unit ARC representative to be sure your proposal is complete. After your proposal has received the required approvals, e-mail this completed form along with all supporting materials to [ARC@ramapo.edu](mailto:ARC@ramapo.edu). Please use digital signatures for approvals.

## SECTION A: Program Information

Program Title<sup>1</sup>: Elementary Education BS and Special Education MA 4+1 with a TA to Teacher Concentration

School(s): SSHA Convening Group(s): Teacher Education

Proposal Date: Fall 2025 Effective Date: ☒ Fall 2023<sup>2</sup> ☐ Fall 2024

Please attach a description of the proposed changes and all supporting documentation.

## SECTION B: Approvals

Reviewed and Approved by:

Title	Type Name	Signature	Date
Convener	Adam D. Fried	Dr. Adam D. Fried <small>Digitally signed by Dr. Adam D. Fried Date: 2025.01.08 07:57:54 -05'00'</small>	
Graduate Council Chair			
Dean	Aaron Lorenz	alorenz <small>Digitally signed by alorenz Date: 2025.01.08 08:04:57 -05'00'</small>	
Other			

### ARC Disposition:

- ☒ Information item only - no ARC approval necessary
- ☐ Faculty Assembly approval not needed; ARC approves
- ☐ Faculty Assembly approval not needed; ARC does not approve
- ☐ ARC recommends approval by the Faculty Assembly
- ☐ ARC does NOT recommend approval by the Faculty Assembly

ARC Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ARC recommends the following:

Office of the Provost Use Only:

☐ Approved ☐ Not Approved Provost Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> If the request is to change the program title, enter the *current* title here

<sup>2</sup> Proposal must be received by ARC by November 1<sup>st</sup> 2022

# **Ramapo College of New Jersey**

## **Proposal for New Concentration: Elementary Education BS and Special Education MA 4+1 with a TA to Teacher Concentration**

**Revision January 2025**

### **Feasibility Phase**

## **Program Proposal**

### **Program Summary**

The TA to Teacher concentration is tailored for teacher assistants who aspire to transition into teaching roles. This comprehensive program equips students with the necessary coursework, practical experiences, and qualifications to become professional educators in the State of New Jersey. The program strongly emphasizes input from educators to ensure its relevance and alignment with the evolving needs of the teaching profession.

This revised Teacher Education Program, originally grounded in the Ramapo College Social Science contract major in Educational Studies, is undergoing a significant evolution. The program will now be housed within the Teacher Education program, offering a new and specialized concentration for teacher assistants looking to gain their teaching certification. This concentration will prepare graduates through a comprehensive curriculum that imparts the specialized knowledge and skills essential for becoming effective and compassionate educators in today's diverse and dynamic learning environments.

Approved by Dean Aaron Lorenz, this newly structured program will exempt participants from the Social Science (SOSC) core requirements, specifically SOSC 110 and SOSC 235. This waiver applies exclusively to students enrolled in the TA to Teacher concentration program. The restructuring aims to increase access to teacher education for a wider range of qualified candidates, addressing the critical demand for highly skilled educators in New Jersey and integrating the program within the Teacher Education Department.

By recognizing the diverse needs of aspiring educators in New Jersey, this program seeks to offer an accessible pathway for students who may encounter obstacles in completing a traditional degree. Such challenges can include financial constraints, family responsibilities, scheduling conflicts, and other personal or professional commitments that may impede their pursuit of an education degree.

The proposed TA to Teacher concentration will enable these students to "Learn while they Earn." Through this initiative, they will have the chance to complete additional courses necessary for participation in the program. This will ultimately lead to the attainment of a bachelor's degree and teaching certification as required by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), all while working as instructional aides within a school district.

The TA to Teacher concentration will transition two courses, EDUC 3XX and EDUC 4XX, from topics courses to fully approved program courses. These courses are structured to offer a comprehensive pedagogical experience, enabling students to develop essential practical skills throughout their academic journey.

The program places a strong emphasis on hands-on learning and entails a considerable workload resulting from both classroom instruction and extensive field experience. Consequently, we assert that a 4-credit structure for each course (EDUC 3XX and EDUC 4XX) is necessary, as it effectively represents the significant commitment required from students.

Each 4-credit course will include 50 hours of instructional time, distributed over 15 weeks, with classes convening once a week for 3.5 hours. The existing syllabi for EDUC 390 and EDUC 490 will remain unchanged, thereby maintaining the original goals and objectives of those courses.

This concentration will continue to mandate that students complete a total of 240 hours of field experience in a public school setting in accordance with state requirements.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

The TA to Teacher concentration aims to:

- Build upon existing educational pathways: Leverage the foundation established by the Teacher Education program is to provide a seamless transition into a certification program.
- Offer a flexible and efficient program: Employ a primarily virtual format to accommodate working teacher aides, minimize disruptions to their professional and personal lives, and broaden the geographical reach of students who can attend classes and coursework virtually.
- Support student financial stability: Enable teacher aides to continue "Learn while they Earn" while pursuing their teaching degrees, ensuring a sustainable income stream.
- Provide a comprehensive pathway to certification: Allow students to obtain Elementary or Content Area Certification.
- Foster practical skills and knowledge: Equip students with the necessary tools and understanding to excel in classroom settings through hands-on experiences.
- Address workforce development needs: Contribute to a robust pool of

qualified teachers in New Jersey by providing a targeted educational pathway.

- Create accessible opportunities: Offer individuals without bachelor's degrees or those with lower GPAs an opportunity to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Social Science with a concentration in education.
- Incorporate Clinical Practice: The internship requirement is a core component, providing students with invaluable practical experience in real-world educational settings. This allows the students to fully embrace and understand the role of the teacher in their current settings while completing the certification requirements.

## **Program's impact on Ramapo College's other programs, including the undergraduate curriculum, if the proposed program is a graduate program**

The TA to Teacher Program functions as a complementary extension of our well-regarded undergraduate Teacher Education Program. Together, these programs offer a profound immersion in the field of education, aligning seamlessly with Ramapo College's commitment to experiential learning and community engagement.

In order to fulfill the certification requirements established by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), the TA to Teacher concentration adheres to specific standards and guidelines, which include the following:

- **Curriculum Alignment:** The program's curriculum is meticulously designed to align with the NJDOE's educational standards and frameworks, ensuring that students receive a high-quality and relevant education culminating in certification with the State of New Jersey.
- **The curricular requirements for the concentration is satisfied by successful completion of the graduate courses EDSP 610, 615, and 620, which have been developed to replace the undergraduate courses EDUC 301, 350, and 360, thereby making the MASE program an optional pathway for students who wish to further their education in this field.**
- **Field Experience:** Students must be current Teacher Assistants to complete the 300 hours of field experience in K-12 Classrooms, including their 240 hours in Clinical Practice 1 & 2.
- **Assessment:** The program is committed to student learning and progress, employing rigorous assessment methods to ensure that students are meeting the necessary standards and competencies.
- **Teacher Preparation:** The program prepares students to meet the professional standards and competencies outlined by the NJDOE.
- **Ramapo College's Teacher Education program is designed to prepare students for success on the New Jersey Praxis Educators exam. Through rigorous coursework and comprehensive exam preparation, students are equipped with the knowledge and strategies needed to confidently approach and pass the Praxis exam, fulfilling a critical requirement for teacher certification in New Jersey.**

## **Program's Relevance**

The TA to Teacher concentration addresses New Jersey's demand for qualified teachers, thereby contributing to a brighter future for students statewide. This program targets instructional aides in public schools who are seeking accreditation in education. Our accelerated program facilitates the transition of educators from teaching assistants to certified teachers. Through this program, students will acquire the essential skills and knowledge necessary to become successful educators.

Given the College's funding challenges, it is imperative to explore avenues to provide valuable services while proactively generating revenue. One promising approach is to develop and expand this program, integrating experiential and traditional learning. This program caters to the needs of adult learners, providing opportunities for professional growth without compromising their current employment.

During the initial pilot program, 39 students completed their coursework to obtain their teaching certification within one year. Over 87% of them are now pursuing their Master of Arts in Special Education. Many have secured positions in school districts, and we anticipate observing their impact as new educators in classrooms.

Ramapo College is dedicated to addressing the teacher shortage crisis in New Jersey and is proud to be part of the solution. We are confident that the program will help prepare the next generation of educators and create a brighter future for students across the state.

## **Labor Market**

There is currently a teacher shortage in the United States, specifically in New Jersey. The demand for quality, trained, dedicated, passionate, and driven teachers is higher than ever before. The Teacher Education program is committed to preparing teachers to meet this public challenge and need by preparing and educating individuals to become successful educators.

## **Alignment with Ramapo College's Strategic Plan:**

The Teacher Education Programs offered at Ramapo College encompass a diverse array of undergraduate, graduate, and professional certificate programs. These programs are meticulously crafted to address the distinct learning, professional, and personal requirements of aspiring and practicing educators. Each of our degree and certification programs is firmly rooted in the liberal arts and underpinned by the institution's four foundational pillars.

Ramapo College's ranking in the 2025 Best Colleges rankings by U.S. News and World Report reflects a notable achievement: We secured the #17 position in the Public Regional Universities-North for our esteemed Teacher Education program.

### **Goal 1: Academic Excellence & Student Success**

Our objective is to achieve academic excellence and student success by promoting intercultural, global, and interdisciplinary education, experiential learning, and personalized, student-centered resources.

Objectives:

- a. Create interdisciplinary learning opportunities within the classroom environment.
- b. Provide personalized instruction and tailored learning opportunities.
- c. Design hands-on activities, learning environments, and opportunities that encourage the development of educational knowledge leading to engagement.
- e. Explore systems and resources that help students succeed in the educational community.
- f. Develop civic engagement opportunities to explore personal identities and diversity.

### **Goal 2: Inclusive Community**

Our program aims to foster a diverse, empathetic, and vibrant community that inspires a culture of inclusivity, accountability, and collaboration.

Objectives:

- a. Prioritize social-emotional well-being by promoting healthy practices and environments to impact the educational space.
- b. Advance a culture of belonging, equity, inclusion, and trust by embracing diversity.
- c. Promote an educational environment that encourages differentiation.
- d. Cultivate self-awareness activities.
- e. Foster classroom relationships and partnerships, amplify creative collaboration, and enhance community.

### **Goal 3: Agile Stewardship**

Our goal is to drive institutional distinction, sustainability, and pride by uniting our community members and partners, thereby building organizational agility, accountability, and resilience.

Objectives:

- a. Draw on interdisciplinary strengths by working collaboratively with colleagues across campus..
- b. Encourage and serve as role models for students to develop collegial relationships with one another.
- c. Create opportunities and activities for students to develop trust, organizational agility, accountability, and resilience.

This initiative is designed to support current teacher aides in pursuing their college education while concurrently retaining their employment as teacher aides/assistants. A significant portion of these positions are held by individuals from minority groups. Presently, 16 students of Hispanic descent are enrolled in or have been enrolled in the pilot program. This also aligns with the college's commitment to being a recognized Hispanic Institution.

### **Comparison with similar programs in New Jersey:**

Ramapo College holds the distinction of being the inaugural institution in New Jersey and has solidified its position as a leader in teacher education in the state. The College's TA to Teacher program, established in the summer of 2022, represents a groundbreaking initiative aimed at addressing the critical teacher shortage in New Jersey. This program, recognized as a best practice by the 2023 Governor's Task Force, is a testament to Ramapo's commitment to providing innovative solutions to educational challenges.

Ramapo College has implemented the TA to Teacher program, taking a bold approach to teacher education. In recent years, several other New Jersey universities have introduced or are building accelerated programs for teaching assistants, but none have fully implemented their initiatives as of this date. The College has successfully piloted the program with over 160 students currently enrolled. This innovative program offers a unique pathway for aspiring educators to gain valuable classroom experience and develop essential teaching skills before committing to a formal teacher preparation program. By investing in this initiative, we are not only cultivating a new generation of highly qualified teachers but also demonstrating our commitment to providing accessible and effective teacher education.



Ex.

Feature	Ramapo College	TCNJ Paral to Teacher	Rowan ASPIRE to Teach	WPU T-RAP	MSU Apprenticeship Program
Program Type	Hybrid	Virtual	Hybrid	Hybrid	Hybrid
Target	Para-Pro	Para-Pro	Para-Pro	Para-Pro	Para-Pro
Degree Awarded	BS & MASE**	Bachelor's Degree	Alt-Route Program (Certification)	Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Degree
Certification	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Learn while you Earn	YES	Full Time (Alt Route) PT Program offered	NO	TBD-YES	TBD-YES
Duration	1-2 Years Cert+ MASE Degree	2 Years	2 Years	TBD	TBD

The Northern Region of New Jersey, which includes a substantial number of school districts (264 in total), presents significant opportunities for instructional aides as it continues to develop. Currently, Bergen County serves 137,000 students, and together, the seven northern counties account for three-fourths of the state's total student population. This diverse student body, along with a strong commitment to individualized learning, fosters a sustained demand for qualified support staff. Factors such as increasing enrollment, the adoption of inclusive education models, and a heightened focus on social-emotional learning are likely to further enhance this demand for instructional aides. Additionally, the region's thriving economy and competitive salary scales make it an attractive career option for those seeking a rewarding and impactful role in education. These elements combine to create a promising environment for those looking to contribute meaningfully to the educational landscape.

Northern Region District Numbers:

Bergen 79  
Essex 41  
Hudson 21  
Morris 41  
Passaic 30  
Sussex 27  
Warren 25

**Total number of Northern Districts: 264 Districts**

Our program's distinctive features and unique offerings have resulted in a surge of student interest. Following the completion of their initial certification, students have the opportunity to seamlessly transition into our Master of Arts in Special Education program, culminating in the Teacher of Students with Disabilities Certification.

The program has garnered positive feedback from current and former students, emphasizing its outstanding value. Students consistently express appreciation for the personalized advising and authentic learning experiences that epitomize our program. These testimonials have significantly contributed to the attraction of prospective students through word-of-mouth, leading to a marked increase in inquiries and enrollment.

In recognition of our program's impact, the Special Education Commissioner from the New Jersey Department of Education has recently expressed interest in a meeting to discuss potential collaborations addressing New Jersey's teacher shortage. This acknowledgment of our program's significance further solidifies its position as a leading choice for aspiring special education professionals.

## Program's Anticipated Enrollment from Launch to Optimal Level

	# Started	Semester Started	# Completed UG
<b>MUJC 1</b>	39	Summer 22	38
<b>MUJC 2</b>	29	Summer 23	27
<b>MUJC 1B</b>	22	Sum 23	
<b>MUJC 2B</b>	28	Fall 24	
<b>BCSS 1</b>	23	Spring 24	
<b>BCSS 1B</b>	19	Spring 24	
<b>MUJC 3</b>	36	Spring 25	

	MUJC 1 (SUM1 22 )	MUJC 2 (SUM 1 23)	MUJC 1B (SUM2 23)	MUJC 2B (FALL 24)	BCSS 1 (SPR 24)	BCSS 1B (SPR 24)	MUJC 3 (SPR 25)	TOTAL
21-22	39							39
22-23		29						29
23-24			22		23	19		64
24-25				30				30
24-25							36	36

The program aims to maintain an average enrollment of 40 students annually, ensuring a steady influx of new educators into the workforce. This ongoing enrollment will not only enhance the vitality of the program but also make a significant contribution to fulfilling the persistent demand for qualified teachers in the region.

The anticipated student enrollment for the Fall 2025 semester is projected to be between 30 and 40 students. This projection takes into account various factors such as historical enrollment trends, anticipated student demand, and available resources. While the exact number may fluctuate, this range provides a reasonable estimate for planning and resource allocation purposes.

## Additional Resources Needed for the First Five Years

The program is currently operational as a pilot. As the program continues to expand, it will be essential to allocate additional resources to accommodate the growing staff and their support needs. The TE Convening Group fully supports and endorses the program's development and will be actively involved in further discussions regarding its expansion.

## **Future Program Budget**

### **Focus on the potential financial implications:**

The incorporation of this concentration into the current teacher education budget necessitates a careful analysis of the potential financial implications, including the evaluation of expanding adjunct positions to accommodate any surge in enrollment. This expansion could have significant budgetary implications, requiring a thorough assessment of the costs associated with hiring additional faculty and providing necessary resources.

### **Highlight the need for strategic planning:**

The addition of this concentration to the teacher education program requires strategic planning to ensure adequate resources and staffing. This includes a comprehensive evaluation of the potential need for increased adjunct faculty to accommodate a potential surge in enrollment. By proactively addressing this issue, we can maintain the quality of our program and meet the growing demand for qualified educators.

### **Emphasize the importance of maintaining program quality:**

To ensure the continued success of our Teacher Education Program, it is essential to evaluate the potential need for additional faculty resources to accommodate any increase in enrollment resulting from the new concentration. By strategically expanding adjunct positions, we can maintain the program's high standards and small class size to provide our students with the necessary support to become effective educators.







## TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

505 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, NJ 07430-1680

Phone (201) 684-7638 Fax (201) 684-7983

www.ramapo.edu

### Elementary Education BS and Special Education MA (TA to Teacher Concentration) 4+1 Degree Plan (Proposed Draft)

*The order of these courses are subject to change*

FOUNDATIONAL COURSES:	Credit	Term
LITR 203 METHODS OF LITERARY STUDY	4	FALL 1
MATH 210 MATHEMATICS FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS	4	FALL 1
LITR 308 CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE	4	SPRING 1
SCIN 215 SCIENCE FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS	4	SPRING 1
EDUC 211 STUDENT LITERACY CORPS* (No Program Admission Required)	4	SUMMER 1A
EDUC 222 TEACHING: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES** (Program Admission Required)	4	SUMMER 1A
EDUC 221 SOCIAL CONTEXT OF EDUCATION ( No Program Admission Required)	4	SUMMER 1B
EDUC 241 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY (No Program Admission Required)	4	SUMMER 1B
<b>CLINICAL PRACTICE 1</b>		
EDUC 346 LITERACY THEORY AND PRACTICE***	4	FALL 2
EDUC 3XX CLINICAL PRACTICE 1 SEMINAR: ELEMENTARY ***	4	FALL 2
<b>CLINICAL PRACTICE 2</b>		
EDUC 4XX CLINICAL PRACTICE CAPSTONE: ELEMENTARY (STUDENT TEACHING)****	4	SPRING 2
EDSP 615 LANG LIT & LEARNING IN DIVERSE SETTINGS^	4	SPRING 2
EDUC 370 METHODS OF TEACHING ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS	4	SUMMER 2A
EDUC 375 METHODS OF TEACHING ELEMENTARY SCIENCE	4	SUMMER 2A
EDSP 610 HOME, SCHOOL, AND COMM FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS^	4	SUMMER 2A
EDSP 615 LANGUAGE LITERACY & LEARNING IN DIV SETTINGS^	4	SUMMER 2B
Total	64	

^Optional Program

\*22 hours of clinical experience required in a public school setting.

\*\*20 hours of clinical experience required in a public school setting. Must be admitted into the TE Program by preregistration semester prior.

\*\*\*20 hours of clinical experience required in a public school setting. New TB test and possession of a valid substitute teacher license required at time of preregistration semester prior.

\*\*\*\*60 hours of clinical experience required in a public school setting. New TB test and possession of a valid substitute teacher license required at time of preregistration semester prior.

\*\*\*\*\*180 hours of clinical practice required in a public school setting. Must take and pass appropriate Praxis II by March 1 prior to Clinical Practice.

^ Courses are double counted towards the fulfillment of both the BS in Elem Ed and the optional MASE degree requirements.



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MASTER OF ARTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION		Credit	Term
EDSP 625	SCHOOL-BASED ASSESS AND IMP DATA-DRVN DEC	4	
EDSP 705	THESIS SEMINAR	2	
EDSP 635	INCLUSION	4	
EDSP 720	CPST RSRCH PROJECT 1	3	
EDSP 640	ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY	4	
EDSP 725	CAPSTONE RESEARCH PROJECT 2	3	
Total Credits		20	

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MATH 210 MATHEMATICS FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS	4	FALL 1
LITR 308 CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE	4	SPRING 1
SCIN 215 SCIENCE FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS	4	SPRING 1
EDUC 211 STUDENT LITERACY CORPS* (No Program Admission Required)	4	SUMMER 1A
EDUC 222 TEACHING: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES** (Program Admission Required)	4	SUMMER 1A
EDUC 221 SOCIAL CONTEXT OF EDUCATION ( No Program Admission Required)	4	SUMMER 1B
EDUC 241 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY (No Program Admission Required)	4	SUMMER 1B
<b>CLINICAL PRACTICE 1</b>		
EDUC 346 LITERACY THEORY AND PRACTICE***	4	FALL 2
EDUC 3XX CLINICAL PRACTICE 1 SEMINAR: ELEMENTARY ***	4	FALL 2
<b>CLINICAL PRACTICE 2</b>		
EDUC 4XX CLINICAL PRACTICE CAPSTONE: ELEMENTARY (STUDENT TEACHING)****	4	SPRING 2
EDUC 301 MEETING THE SPEC.ED NEEDS	4	SPRING 2
EDUC 370 METHODS OF TEACHING ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS	4	SUMMER 2A
EDUC 375 METHODS OF TEACHING ELEMENTARY SCIENCE	4	SUMMER 2A
<i>Pathway for students completing the Elem Ed BS Degree::</i>		
EDUC 360 EDUC 360 INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION	4	SUMMER 2A
EDUC 365 LITERACY ACROSS THE ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM	4	SUMMER 2B
Total	64	

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*The order of these courses are subject to change*

MASTER OF ARTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION		Credit	Term
EDSP 620	IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL SKILLS	4	
EDSP 625	SCHOOL-BASED ASSESS AND IMP DATA-DRVN DEC	4	
EDSP 705	THESIS SEMINAR	2	
EDSP 635	INCLUSION	4	
EDSP 720	CPST RSRCH PROJECT 1	3	
EDSP 640	ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY	4	
EDSP 725	CAPSTONE RESEARCH PROJECT 2	3	
Total Credits		24	

\*22 hours of clinical experience required in a public school setting.

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