

College of Southern Idaho - Non Traditional Route to Teaching

Mission

CSI's primary educational mission is to serve the needs of Region 4, however, we are authorized to serve other regions as long as there is a need and the district/school is supportive. We are currently serving candidates in Regions 3,4,5, and 6. Our aim is to address Idaho's current teacher shortage and support districts with hard –to-fill positions by expanding our non-traditional preparation program that utilizes nationally recognized best practices through the development of nationally recognized assessments that align with State Standards, and the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching Clusters*.

Balancing Rigor and Flexibility

Our program is hands-on and competency-based. Each of the five program modules lasts a semester, and embedded within the modules are performance tasks based on the Idaho Core Teaching Standards, aligned with the Danielson Framework. In order to put theory and knowledge gained through modules into immediate practice, our candidates must either be on a content specialist alternative authorization or have regular access to a classroom setting.

We work with each candidate to assess their needs and strengths to individualize the program as much as possible. Once a month classes are delivered face-to-face, online, and are also recorded to allow candidates the most flexibility possible. We focus on online collaboration and mentoring support for success in the classroom.

The modules are completely self-contained and do not need to be taken in any particular order. Completion of the five modules will typically take a candidate four semesters plus one summer session. However, we are currently working to make all modules and performance assessments available on-demand, as a self-guided option for highly motivated candidates who have strong mentoring support through their district. Candidates with previous teaching experience may also opt to forego the modules and begin collecting evidence of their practice to take advantage of the Assessment Only option. Depending upon a candidate's level of skill and experience, the program could be accomplished within a single year.

Our program is not grade level nor content specific. Our hands-on, competency based modules cover best practices in pedagogy; the method and practice of teaching. Candidates prove content competency through the appropriate Praxis test. We encourage candidates to take the Praxis as early as possible so we can assist them in identifying additional coursework as necessary to pass the test. While most modules focus on the core teaching standards and are not content specific, each assignment and assessment completed by the candidate is grounded in their specific content area, and one module is devoted entirely to application of content in which candidates explore and apply best practices in their specific content pedagogy. Student-centered classroom management is

a focus of the program, and candidates continuously reflect upon and modify classroom management strategies throughout all five modules.

Support for Districts

In addition to providing ongoing support for our candidates, our goal is also to lighten the burden for districts. We assist with reviewing transcripts to fill out the Content Rubric needed to place a teacher-of record, and make sure that each candidate has a strong mentor that meets with him/her at least three hours every other week. We recognize that many small, rural districts often do not have the resources or bandwidth to provide an experienced instructional coach, though district support and partnership is key to participation in this program.

The program was also just approved by the State Board as a non-traditional route to teaching, permitting us to fulfill our vision to partner with districts to create and fill local teacher pipelines. We envision proactively working with district leaders to identify career changers within the community, and paraprofessionals that we can guide toward the attainment of a bachelor's degree. We envision bringing them together in a residency-type program, allowing them to get certified prior to taking on the responsibilities of teacher-of –record.

Each module (including the cost of the mentor) is \$1,000. To challenge a module and do the Performance assessment only is \$500 per module.

Three Options: Content Specialist, Teacher to New Endorsement, and Grow Your Own

- **Content Specialist-Alternative Authorization (CS-AA) Option**

To qualify for the CS-AA program, candidates must hold a Bachelor's degree and be employed by a district or charter in a K-12 school. We work with candidates, their districts/charters, and the State Department of Education to secure an Alternative Authorization-Content Specialist Interim Certificate. This certificate is valid for one year at a time and is renewable for up to three years as long as the candidate is making adequate progress toward full certification in our program. To receive recommendation for certification each candidate must pass the appropriate Praxis (or hold a Bachelor's degree in the exact content area), complete performance assessments in all five modules, and be rated as proficient on the Idaho Common Summative Assessment (based upon a formal evaluation using the Danielson Framework for Teaching).

- **Teacher to New Endorsement (TtN) Option**

Candidates who are already fully certified may add one or more endorsements through CSI's program. To qualify for the TtN, a candidate must hold a current Idaho certificate and be teaching in the content area(s) in which they are seeking additional endorsement. To receive recommendation for certification each candidate must pass the appropriate Praxis (or hold a Bachelor's degree in the exact content area), complete the performance assessment in the *Application of Content and Intellectual Engagement* module, and be rated as

proficient on the Idaho Common Summative Assessment (based upon a formal evaluation using the Danielson Framework for Teaching).

- **Grow Your Own – Paraprofessional to Teacher**

As part of CSI's mission to address the dire teacher shortages in rural districts, and hard-to-fill positions found across the state, we are interested in working with districts to identify potential teachers, assist them in attaining the necessary coursework to complete a Bachelor's degree, and provide them with a residency experience while completing all certification requirements. We intend to work closely with districts to address unique challenges and implement flexible but rigorous preparation to help districts create and fill local teacher pipelines.

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Apply for admission to CSI: <https://www.csi.edu/apply/default.aspx>

Idaho's Praxis test requirements: <https://www.ets.org/praxis/idaho/requirements>