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THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND
EVALUATION OF THE DIPLOMA OF SPECIAL
EDUCATION (U G 2) PROGRAM AT THE NEPEAN
COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

by

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A field study report submitted in
partial fulfilment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

This field study report is concerned with the development, implementation and evaluation of a Diploma of Special Education (UC2) teacher training program. In March, 1974, the Advanced Education Board of New South Wales requested that Nepean College of Advanced Education, Westmead, implement a one year training course for Generalist (Resource) Teachers in Special Education to begin in February, 1975.

The lecturers in special education, Mr. Richard Fee and Mr. George Comino, proceeded to design a training program which departed radically from the approach adopted by the other colleges of advanced education in New South Wales (Mitchell, Newcastle, Kuring-gai, Alexander Mackie). Instead of following the non-categorical/ commonality approach used at these colleges, Nepean chose the categorical method. With this method, the education of a number of different handicapped children is studied separately (i.e. mentally retarded, orthopaedically handicapped, etc.) rather than by studying the various disorders collectively (i.e. Exceptional Children in Society, Exceptional Children in School, etc.).

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of Nepean's approach to training special education teachers, on-going and summative evaluation in a variety of forms was carried out during the first semester. This evaluation which included the administration of a pilot Teacher Competency in Special Education Self-Rating Scale clearly demonstrated that the first intake of 29 students made significant increases in their ability to teach exceptional children. The results of the evaluation also assisted the lecturers in determining areas of course weakness which could be alleviated during the second semester.

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