

PREPARING SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION TEACHERS IN INDONESIA

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Historical Background

The first teacher training institution for special needs education in Indonesia, the Teachers College for Special Education (SGPLB), was established in Bandung in 1952. The training was designed for the duration of two years after high school. When this INSTITUTION was liquidated in 1994, there were six SGPLBs throughout Indonesia. The liquidation was meant to increase the qualification of special needs education teachers to be at least with S1 (bachelor's) degree.

The first S1 programme in special education was established in 1964 at IKIP Bandung (the now UPI). A few years later a number of other universities also opened the special education department. Currently at least nine universities in Indonesia have the special education department.

In 1996 UPI opened the sub-programme of Guidance for Special Children as part of the master programme in guidance and counselling as an effort to pioneer the establishment of the master programme in inclusion and special needs education.

In 2001, the Project of Quality Improvement of the Education of Children with Special Needs, the Indonesian Ministry of National Education, funded by the Norwegian government, offered a cooperation between UPI and the University of

Oslo to establish the master programme in inclusion and special needs education at the Graduate School of UPI. To prepare for this, four UPI lecturers were sent to Norway for three months (January through March 2003) for a comparative study and to work out the curriculum of the perspective master programme. Under the guidance of Prof. Miriam Sjerten of the University of Oslo (the education manager of the project), this team was received as guest researchers at the University of Oslo.

In general, the responsibility of the team was to study how the international Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education Programme at the University of Oslo is organized and how special educational service for children with special needs in Norway is delivered.

Specifically, the team studied the followings:

- 1) Students enrolment in the Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education Programme at the University of Oslo;
- 2) The contents and structure of the curriculum of the master's programme;
- 3) Teaching and learning activities;
- 4) Thesis writing;
- 5) Evaluation and examinations;
- 6) Schooling of children with special needs.

To collect information, the team did the followings:

- a) Discussion with faculty members and students of the Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education Programme;
- b) Attending lectures, both those that were specially designed for the team and regular lectures for the master students;
- c) Visits to schools (Oppsal Twin School and primary schools in Nes and Neskoln, outside Oslo);
- d) Visits to Huseby Resource Centre; and
- e) Independent reading.

The outcome of the visit has been used as the bases for developing the master programme in inclusion and special needs education at UPI, which in turn, will influence how special educational service for children with special needs in Indonesia is delivered.

The Curriculum

The master programme is designed for four semesters of study period. The courses consist of two big areas, namely 10 credit units of scientific and Educational Foundations, and up to 40 credit units of subjects on inclusion and special needs education (including thesis). The scientific and educational foundations consist of courses that are common and compulsory for all master students at UPI, namely:

- 1) Philosophy of science
- 2) Applied statistics in educational research
- 3) Methods of educational research
- 4) Theories, process, and social cultural context of education.

The subjects on inclusion and special needs education are described in the following table.

No.	Subject	Objective	Description
1.	Introduction to Special Needs Education in Inclusive Settings	Students have a common understanding of special needs education and know how it should be practiced in inclusive settings	This subject discusses historical back inclusion, important concepts related inclusion, differences and similarities research and the process towards inc
2.	Child Development	Students understand developmental theories and are able to identify the needs of a child in each of his/her developmental stage from a holistic point of view.	This subject discusses various aspect including the development of interacti emotional, social, and physical develo motor skills and perceptions, languag competence; psychological, physical the importance of play in the child's d different aspects influence each other
3.	Learning	Students understand learning	This subject discusses learning proce

		theories and are able to relate them to the learning process of children, including those with special needs.	approaches including structuralism (Piaget), behaviourism (Skinner), social learning theory (Bandura), and the constructivist approach (Montessori), and mediated these theories to learning and teaching.
4.	Barriers to Learning and Development I	Students understand impairments and disabilities and environmental factors as barriers to learning and development, and are able to plan teaching strategies to overcome or minimize the barriers.	This subject discusses barriers to learning including sensory impairments (visual and hearing), health-related difficulties, the psychosocial factors caused by impairments/difficulties, and environmental factors causing barriers to learning.
5.	Barriers to Learning and Development II	Students understand impairments and disabilities and environmental factors as barriers to learning and development, and are able to plan teaching strategies to overcome or minimize the barriers.	This subject discusses barriers to learning including developmental disabilities, autism, social communication learning difficulties (in language, reading, and writing), hearing impairments, and environmental factors.
6.	Educational Assessment	Students understand assessment methods and procedures and know how to apply the findings when planning the education of children, including those with special needs.	This subject discusses formal and informal assessment, an assessment tool, educational test, standardized assessment, and dynamic assessment, assessment and diagnosis.
7.	Early Intervention	Students know how to detect difficulties in a young child and are able to plan intervention with the child and his/her family.	This subject discusses how a young child with special needs develops and develops concepts, how to detect and prevent the child from developing additional difficulties, and the child-adult interaction.
8.	Teaching Approaches and Methods	Students master approaches and methods of teaching with children, including those with special needs.	This subject discusses study techniques, differentiated and individualized education, student-centred teaching, individualized education, and teaching, motivation, teaching approaches, classroom management, teaching methods, mathematics, topic relevance and subject matter, materials, use of functional aids for special needs, physical activities and cultural activities.
9.	Compensatory Skills	Students have the working knowledge of a number of compensatory skills for persons with special needs.	This subject discusses Braille, orientation and mobility, augmentative and alternative communication, and assistive technology.
10.	Guidance and	Students understand and are able to	This subject discusses self-acceptance and self-esteem, social skills, and social interaction.

	Counselling with Emphasis on Special Educational Needs	plan guidance and counselling so as to meet children's special educational needs.	and resource-oriented guidance and regular teachers, education administrators and society in general special educational needs.
11	Management of Special Needs Education	Students have knowledge and skill in the management of special needs education both as an administrator and a teacher.	This subject discusses management related to implementation of inclusion
12.	Adult Education for Community Awareness	Students are able to plan training and upgrading on issues related to special needs education for parents, teachers, and other relevant adult members of the community for their awareness of special needs education. .	This subject discusses issues to be covered in education including: participant's needs, organization and methods, evaluation and involvement.
13.	Research in the Field Of Special Needs Education	Students are able to design research in the field of special needs education using appropriate approaches and methods.	This subject discusses qualitative and quantitative research including case study, classroom action research, and experimental designs.
14.	Field Study and Seminar	Based on the theoretical frameworks they have obtained so far, students are able to have insight into the challenges of special needs education in the field.	This subject gives students the opportunity to apply their knowledge in education in practice, and, based on their own relevant research problems for their thesis.

Programme Implementation

To enrol as a student in this programme, one must, at least, have an undergraduate degree in education and be interested in special needs education, with a priority given to those already in the professions of:

- 1) Teachers of children with special needs
- 2) Lecturers in the department of special needs education
- 3) Education administrators.

To be admitted into the programme, the candidate must:

- a) Show the undergraduate degree certificate with GPA not less than 2.5;
- b) Pass the entrance test consisting of the scholastic aptitude test and English test;
- c) Deliver a paper on a topic related to the special needs education, with the theme decided by the Admission Committee.

The courses for the first group of students of the Master Programme in Inclusion and Special Needs Education at UPI began on September 1, 2003, with 15 students coming from different parts of Indonesia. During the cooperation project period, the team of lecturers came from the University of Oslo with their UPI counterparts as co-lecturers. For efficiency reasons, lecturers from the University of Oslo came in one block time of one to two weeks each and taught every work day from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Then the teaching was continued by their UPI counterparts in accordance with the schedule for the semester. In the later development, the professors from the University of Oslo came mainly to give workshops to UPI faculty members so that the task of conducting the courses becomes fully the responsibility of UPI lecturers.

A number of things are worth noting regarding the conducting of the courses as follows.

A number of subjects are combined. In order that the discussion be more integrated, two closely related subjects are combined into one single subject. This includes (1) Learning and (2) Barriers to Learning and Development to become Learning and Barriers to Learning and Development I and II; and (1) Assessment and (2) Teaching Approaches and Methods to become Assessment and Teaching Approaches and Methods I and II.

Subject integration.

Subjects are presented in such a way so that one subject be more related to other subjects and the different subjects be well-integrated, and this way the students can be expected to have a holistic knowledge of special needs education. This is made possible because the team of lecturers is well coordinated.

Schedule by topics.

Each special needs education subject is so planned that the schedule of courses can be made by topics of discussion.

Students' group work.

Students in this programme are divided into working groups. They are expected to do their assignments in groups and present their group work to the class.

Holistic evaluation procedure.

Evaluation on a student's achievement consist of four components, i.e. (1) the student's activity in class; (2) his/her performance in group work presentation; (3) mid-term examination; and (4) final semester examination. Examination questions demand that the students reveal their holistic knowledge of special needs education with applicative orientation. The questions are presented to the students beforehand for them to do in group work and the results are presented to the class where the whole team of lecturers of special needs education subjects is present. Grading is directed both towards the whole group and individual members of the group in presenting the assignment, in defending opinion or in answering questions, both from classmates and the lecturers.

Thesis Writing.

To finish off their studies, students are required to do research for their thesis. The research proposal is presented in a seminar attended by fellow-students and the lecturers. Two advisors are assigned to guide each student.

The students are to collect data in their home region. The thesis is to be presented and defended before a panel of examiners.

This month (September 2005) the master programme has graduated the first groups of students. The graduates are expected to strengthen the existing “troops” with the new paradigm of special needs education to promote inclusive education in Indonesia.