

## CCRI Supports for TAs Pursuing Associate Degrees

The Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) offers supports for persons who want to pursue Associate Degrees in areas relevant to teacher assistants (TAs). These include the Human Service Program that is the course of study typically chosen by TAs in either the Education/Special Education option or the Child Development/Early Childhood option. Associate Degrees are composed of 60 credit hours, 1/2 in Liberal Arts and 1/2 in courses specific to the type of degree being pursued (Child Growth and Development, Introduction to Education, Characteristics and Needs of Special Populations, etc.) plus 3 Field Placements. Supports are available to students presently enrolled in CCRI or who will enroll in the future.

Field Placements for Persons Working in the Field – 3 Field Placements over 3 semesters are required for these 2 Associate Degrees. For people who have been working in the field for at least 2 years (e.g., employed as a TA or similar role), they may be allowed to complete their internship requirements using the setting in which they are employed. If the person is able to demonstrate required competencies in the first field placement, it may be possible to consolidate all 3 semesters of field placements using the college's course challenge option under the supervision of a Human Services faculty advisor.

Portfolio Assessment to Get Credit for Prior Learning - Most adults have accumulated learning in their work and life experiences that may be similar to content taught in college courses. Portfolio Assessment is a flexible, efficient way to earn CCRI college credits for what has been learned outside the classroom that saves tuition costs and classroom hours. Moreover, CCRI credits are honored by many other colleges and universities. The portfolio prepared by the student and used as the primary tool for Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is also valuable in applying for jobs or to further educational opportunities.

People can prepare a portfolio for CCRI faculty review to document that one already has knowledge covered in identified CCRI classes. Documentation must show: (1) knowledge at a college level, (2) proof of expertise (not just training), and (3) fulfillment of a requirement for a course in the student's program of study. If they are awarded credit for prior learning, they get credit without having to take the CCRI courses that covers that content. For each credit hour CCRI accepts, there is a \$10 fee to add this credit to your transcript. To learn more about CCRI's Prior Learning Assessment, what is involved, whom to contact, or a Portfolio Preparation Seminar people can take, go to <http://www.ccri.edu/priorlearning/portfolioheader.shtml>.

Credit for RI Department of Education (RIDE) Affiliated Training - CCRI's Department of Human Services will give 1 credit hour for each of the following: RIDE Approved TA Training Program that is required for all new hires after January 1, 1999 and that is offered by various districts, collaboratives, CCRI and related agencies in RI; Training for TAs working with students with Speech/Language Impairments (currently offered each year); Training for TAs working with students whose behavior interferes with learning and/or relationships (currently offered each year); Training for TAs working with students who have English as a Second Language (Module on TA website at [www.ritap.org/ta](http://www.ritap.org/ta) in Resources section); and attending all 3 days of the National Paraprofessional Conference (in RI May 20-22, 2004). It is understood that each of these is 15 or more contact hours and that participants receive a certificate of attendance for successful completion. A reflective statement by the student is required explaining the significant learning for each of the workshops attended.

### Flexible Course Offerings

**Varied locations:** Courses are offered on CCRI campuses in Warwick, Lincoln and Providence. Some are offered at "satellites" including Newport Hospital, Quonset Training and Technology Center, CCRI Downcity Campus in the Shepard Building, and Westerly High School. Also, CCRI can offer off campus courses in-district by arrangement.

**Work-Friendly Schedules:** Most classes are offered late afternoon and evenings.

**Facilitated Online Courses:** Take classes for Teaching Professionals such as Solving Classroom Discipline Problems; The Classroom Computer; Using the Internet in the Classroom; Enhancing Language Development in Childhood; Understanding Adolescents as well as Liberal Arts classes, Braille, and more. For information, go to <http://www.ed2go.com/ccri/index.html>.

**Courses over TV:** Some classes are offered over TV or via videotapes that can be borrowed from the CCRI library. Persons taking these courses meet on campus twice – for the mid-term and final. Examples of such courses are Parent-Child Relations and Child Growth and Development.

For more information about CCRI, go to <http://www.ccri.edu/>