

Last updated 06/12/08. The information in this guide is subject to change. Please review a current catalog of the campus of your choice and consult with a counselor. See <http://www.assist.org/> for articulation information.

**Q: What do you need to do to become a teacher?**

**A:** You need to earn a teaching credential. A California teaching credential is a license to teach in California public schools. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/> issues credentials upon the recommendation of authorized colleges and universities. Many universities have helpful information on their web pages. One example is Sonoma State University at <http://www.sonoma.edu/education>.

**Q: What are the types of teaching credentials?**

- A:** The basic credentials are the Multiple Subject, the Single Subject, and the Special Education Credential.
- **The Multiple Subject Credential** is primarily for those who intend to teach all subjects in a self-contained classroom, usually in elementary schools (grades K - 6).
  - **The Single Subject Credential** is for those who plan to teach a particular subject in a departmentalized class, usually in middle school and high school (grades 7 - 12).
  - **The Education Specialist Instruction Credential** is for those who intend to teach students with moderate and severe disabilities.

**Note:** If you are proficient at the intermediate level or higher in a language other than English that is in demand in the geographic area where you earn your credential, you can obtain an additional BCLAD – Bilingual, Cross Cultural, Language and Academic Development – Certificate.

**Q: What are the requirements to become a credentialed teacher in California?**

- A:** To obtain a **preliminary** credential, which is valid for 5 years, you must satisfy all the following requirements:
- Complete a baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
  - Satisfy the basic skills requirement by **one** of the following methods:
    1. Passage of a basic skills examination from another state **or**
    2. Passage of the Writing Exam of the CSET – California Subject Examination for Teachers **or**
    3. Passage of CBEST – California Basic Educational Skills Test
  - Complete a multiple subject or single subject teacher preparation program including student teaching, and obtain a formal recommendation for the credential by the California college or university where the program was completed.
  - Verify subject matter competence by **one** of the following methods:
    1. Achieve a passing score on the appropriate CSET subject-matter examination(s). Information, including passing scores and registration, can be found in Commission leaflet CL-674M or CL-674S.
    2. *Single Subject* candidates can complete a Commission-approved subject-matter program or its equivalent and obtain verification of completion from the authorized person in the education department of a California college or university with an approved program. This option is only available for *Multiple Subject* candidates who enrolled in a teacher preparation program **prior to July 1, 2004**. Federal regulations require a passing score on a subject matter exam to teach in federally-funded schools. Almost all public schools receive some federal funding, so plan to take the test.
  - Multiple Subject Teaching students must pass the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA).
  - All students must satisfy the Developing English Language Skills, including Reading requirement by completing a comprehensive reading instruction course.
  - Pass a college-level course or exam on the U.S. Constitution (POL S 1 at SRJC).
  - Complete foundational computer technology course work that includes general and specialized skills in the use of computers in educational settings.

**Q: What is a teacher preparation program?**

**A:** Teacher preparation is a program of professional coursework (including student teaching) which develops the skills needed for serving in the classroom. This includes coursework in areas such as teaching methodologies, curriculum development, and classroom management. Approved teaching preparation programs are programs that have been approved by the CCTC. To find the nearest program log on to <http://www.calteach.com/>.

**Q: What is subject matter competence and how does it differ from a teacher preparation program?**

**A:** *Whereas teacher preparation is knowledge of HOW to teach, subject matter competence is knowledge of WHAT is taught.* Subject matter competence is a requirement for all multiple subject and single subject credentials which assesses the prospective teacher's knowledge in the academic subject area that she or he will be teaching. This requirement is met by either completing specific examinations or by taking courses (in addition to the teacher preparation courses) in the academic subject area through a California college or university which has a Commission-approved program for that subject matter. Since each institution has developed their own program based upon Commission standards, you must speak to the credentialing office at the college or university to find out which specific courses you must complete in order to be recommended by that institution for a credential.

**TEACHING --- continued**

**Q: Is there a recommended undergraduate major for admission to the Multiple Subj Credential Program?**

**A:** There is no specific undergraduate major that leads directly to a teacher preparation program. However, most universities offer subject matter preparation programs for the multiple subject credential. (Examples at Sonoma State University are American Multicultural Studies, Chicano and Latino Studies, Environmental Studies and Planning, and the Hutchins School of Liberal Studies.) Each university requires very specific courses for their diversified Liberal Studies major, and many of these courses can be completed as lower division at SRJC prior to transfer. The Liberal Studies coursework sequence is aligned with California's new student Academic Content Standards (SACS) and the CSET.

**Q: Are there other requirements to enter a teacher prep program that I can meet at a community college?**

**A:** Most credential programs require or, for admissions decisions, rely heavily on two other factors:

- Documentation of at least 45 hours of classroom experience, evaluated by the teacher of that class.
- A portfolio containing evidence of having met all academic, testing, and experience requirements. It should include syllabi for all subject-matter courses, college transcripts, test results, classroom evaluations, etc. This portfolio is also valuable in the teacher hiring process.

Look for courses that assist you with placement in a classroom, evaluation of classroom experience, and/or instruction on the creation of a portfolio.

**Q: What schools in California offer Teacher Credential Programs?**

**A:** Most CSU, UC, and private universities in California offer credential programs.

**Teaching Information**

To Teach:	Preparation	Required Tests	Credential needed
<b>Elementary School (K-6)</b>	BA degree, completion of approved program, including student teaching	CBEST, RICA, & CSET	Multiple Subject Credential
<b>Middle School (7-8)</b>	BA degree, completion of approved program, including student teaching	CBEST, RICA, & CSET	Multiple Subject or Single Subject (with a Supplementary Authorization) <b>may vary per school system</b>
<b>High School or Secondary School (9-12)</b>	BA degree, completion of approved program, including student teaching	CBEST & CSET	Single Subject Credential
<b>Special Education</b> Specializations: Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Visual Impairments, Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing, Physical & Health Impairments, and Early Childhood Special Education	BA degree, completion of approved program, including student teaching	CBEST, RICA, & CSET	Educational Specialist Instruction Credential in area of specialization
<b>Bilingual (ESL - K-12)</b>	BA degree, completion of approved program, including student teaching	CBEST, RICA, & CSET	BCLAD Certificate - Multiple Subject or Single Subject

For information on obtaining a Child Development Permit go to <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl797.html>

To teach at the community college, a master's degree in the subject you wish to teach is usually required.

To teach at the university level, a PhD or equivalent in the subject you wish to teach is usually required.

**Examination Information**

**CBEST** is the California Basic Educational Skills Test that assesses reading, writing, and mathematics skills. This examination is required before applying for most California teaching and services credentials. The identification policy for CBEST has been updated. As part of the identity verification process, your thumbprint will be taken at the site. Thumbprints will be used only for the purpose of identity verification. If you do not provide a thumbprint, you will not be allowed to test and you will not receive a refund or credit of any kind. See ["What to Bring to the Test Site"](#) for more information about the identification policy.

**RICA** (the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment) is an examination designed to ensure that prospective teachers have acquired the knowledge and skills needed to provide effective reading instruction for K-8 students. Passage of RICA is required of all applicants for a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential.

**CSET** is the California Subject Examination for Teachers required for all teachers "new to the profession" who receive a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential or for those secondary teachers who have not completed a Certified Subject Matter Preparation Program. For more information, see <http://www.cset.nesinc.com/>.