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Teaching for Reading

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Teaching for Reading

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The University of Dayton has been recognized as one of just 17 schools nationally that effectively prepares teachers to assist students with dyslexia and other reading difficulties.

The International Dyslexia Association accredited the University of Dayton this month for having met the standards outlined in the IDA's Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading.

The University of Dayton was recognized for its undergraduate programs in early childhood education, middle childhood education, intervention specialist and for its graduate reading endorsement.

"One out of five students have dyslexia so it is absolutely critical that we prepare teachers who can identify those students and know the ways we can help," said Mary-Kate Sableski, clinical faculty in the graduate reading program and dyslexia certificate program director. "This is a significant accomplishment for the program. We went through a process of integrating the knowledge and practice of the IDA into our programs, so now we will be able to provide instruction and systems to candidates based on those standards."

The University of Dayton will also now offer a dyslexia certificate to undergraduate and graduate students in the accredited programs and as a standalone certificate at the graduate level. This certification will help distinguish the program and give students more degree options, Sableski said.

The University of Dayton is one of eight schools that received accreditation this month. The IDA awarded its first round of accreditation to nine schools in 2012.

The IDA Standards provide a framework for course content in university and other teacher preparation programs, offering the most thorough, research-supported documentation of what every teacher ought to know and be able to demonstrate, whether they are teaching dyslexic students, other struggling readers or the general student population.

The IDA Standards emphasize the need for teachers to be more deeply prepared in the structure of language, including the speech sound system, the writing system, the structure of sentences, the meaningful parts of words, meaning relationships among words and their referents, and the organization of spoken and written discourse.

"It is really encouraging to see that more and more schools are interested in building their programs and working towards accreditation with IDA. It takes a lot of effort, but in the end, the results are certainly worth it," said Suzanne Carreker, chair of IDA's professional development committee and secretary of IDA's board. "If teachers are better prepared to teach our students to read, the impact of reading difficulties, including dyslexia, will be lessened. IDA believes that all students deserve appropriate instruction and support so that they can reach their full potential."

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