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UD SCHOOL OF EDUCATION RECEIVES THREE TEACHER EDUCATION GRANTS

DAYTON, Ohio, March 29, 1989—The University of Dayton's School of Education has received three grants from the Ohio Department of Education to train teachers to teach "employability" skills to youth with disabilities and to encourage the establishment of intervention assistance teams and "child study" groups in schools across the state.

The largest award—a $15,000 grant—will allow UD, Central State University and Wright State University to train approximately 300 special education teachers and supervisors this summer how to teach positive work habits and attitudes to "special needs kids." Roberta Weaver, a UD assistant professor of teacher education and a nationally respected expert in the field of special education, is the project director. Ohio's Employability Skills Project is administered by the Miami Valley Special Education Services Center, 1831 Harshman Road.

"Recent surveys indicate that what employers value most in their workers are attitudes and skills that demonstrate a sense of responsibility and a willingness to learn. Many students learn these skills incidently. Students who have been identified as needing special education often do not," said Frank E. New, director of the Ohio Department of Education's Division of Special Education.

An unrelated $10,000 to UD grant will be used to teach future teachers and administrators how to establish and participate in intervention assistance teams. The teams are designed to help "pre-referred" children—students who
have not been identified as either being gifted or requiring special education—to conquer learning problems. The teams, which consist of teachers, administrators and counselors, diagnose a student's learning problem and identify steps to alleviate it.

"These students are typically described as kids who fall through the cracks," said William Drury, an associate professor of educational administration who is directing the project. "Intervention assistance teams break down that ethos of one teacher, one classroom. Here's a way to expand a classroom's resources. It's the state's goal to set up intervention assistance teams in every school in Ohio—both elementary and secondary."

In a similar education initiative, UD has received a $3,000 grant to encourage schools to establish "child study" groups. These groups typically consist of between seven and 14 professional educators who meet regularly to study a student's performance by examining everything from how he interacts on the playground to what his home life is like to what grades he receives on assignments. Child study groups have been used successfully in several Clark County schools.

"They (educators) begin to see the child in a different light and (realize) what he has to do not only to survive but also to thrive," said James E. Gay, a professor of teacher education and project director. "The biggest payoff for a teacher is not the paycheck but seeing kids succeed."

For information on any of these programs, contact the UD School of Education at 229-3146.

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(Editor's Note: For media interviews, contact Roberta Weaver at 229-4640, William Drury at 229-2619 or James E. Gay at 229-3348.)