

The Educational Diagnostician Program at the University of North Texas seeks to train high quality assessment specialists through distance education. Throughout the United States, there continues to be a shortage of Special Education Teachers. Even more difficult to find are Special Educators with high levels of training in areas such as assessment. To fully implement recent legislation such as Reading First, No Child Left Behind, and IDEA 2004, expertise in assessment is required. Because most students in special education classes, require individualized assessment, meeting the testing needs of special education students in school districts attempting to comply with new federal regulations has become a critical problem. Most states require intensive training for individuals responsible for the assessment of special needs learners. The Educational Diagnostician Program at UNT provides quality training in a web-based environment. This presentation will cover the difficulties encountered with placing the program on line. Difficulties include: monitoring students at a distance maintaining quality, providing access to secure and expensive assessment instruments, advising students at a distance, providing practicum opportunities at a distance, and maintaining secure testing environments. The program has been completely on-line for one year. An overview of the current program will be shared. First year effectiveness data will be provided and lessons learned will be reviewed.