

SPECIAL EDUCATION



Leander Hamrick has known for a long time that she wants to be a teacher. She chose the College of Charleston because she knew she'd get personal attention from faculty in the Department of Teacher Education. One campus visit and a brief conversation with a professor was all it took to convince her.

"At first, I was thinking about other universities, but when we came here, I absolutely loved the College. I got to speak to a teacher education professor a little bit. He explained some of the advantages of the department, particularly the smaller class sizes."

Leander says that even in the largest class she's had (40), she has gotten to know the professor "and she got to know me. When I went to her for help, she knew who I was and knew my strengths and weaknesses. That was really important to me."

"If you're going to get a good education, you definitely should be with people who care and want to help you do it."

"Extremely passionate about teaching," is the way she describes her professors. "They've really ingrained in me all sorts of information that I know I'm going to use when I teach. Every day, I'm learning tactics that I will rely on. That's because my professors are amazing teachers, and it's clear that they want us to be amazing

teachers, too. They'll tell us stories about experiences that they've had and it really opens your eyes to how it is in a real classroom with exceptional students.

"You can learn all kinds of theories in a college classroom, but they don't mean anything until you go out and apply what you've learned to the real world. That can be extremely scary, because you never know what your day in the classroom will be like until you're actually in it."

Leander says that one of the most important experiences she's had has come through the campus chapter of Best Buddies. "This is a program where students at the College are paired with individuals who have mild disabilities. I've been with the same person now for three years. I knew this experience would really complement my special education major and enhance my education. In the end, it's been a great way to integrate my major with something I love doing."

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

Our program is nationally recognized by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Due to the structure of the program, our majors enjoy a strong sense of community and camaraderie. In addition, our graduates compete successfully for positions with community agencies and for graduate programs, and all of them are eligible for certification by the state of South Carolina.

Facts

Every student completes a 14-week, clinical practice experience, supervised by a trained teacher and a member of our faculty.

Students learn research-based practices and they implement these new skills in supervised settings.

Our majors have won the Special Education College Bowl – a contest among South Carolina colleges and universities – six out of the last seven years.

Opportunities

Get connected with the Council for Exceptional Children.

The chance to experience student teaching and clinical practice in rural, urban and suburban settings.

Special education is a critical needs area in almost every U.S. state, which means a healthy job market for graduates in this field.