

AC 2022 – 2023 Assessment

M.A.T. Early Childhood Education (548A)

Division: Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development

Department: School of Education

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Northwestern Mission: Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Mission. The Gallaspy Family College of Education and Human Development is committed to working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge to Northwestern students through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. Through the School of Education and Departments of Health and Human Performance, Military Science, Psychology, and Social Work, the College produces knowledgeable, inspired, and innovative graduates ready for lifelong learning who contribute to the communities in which they reside and professions they serve. Additionally, the GCEHD is dedicated to the communities served by the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center, NSU Elementary Laboratory School, NSU Middle Laboratory School, and the NSU Child and Family Network to assist children and their families related to learning and development.

School of Education Mission. The School of Education Mission offers exemplary programs that prepare candidates for career success in a variety of professional roles and settings. As caring, competent, reflective practitioners, our graduates become positive models in their communities and organizations. This mission is fulfilled through academic programs based on theory, research, and best practice. Further, all graduates learn to value and work with diverse populations and to incorporate technologies that enrich learning and professional endeavors.

MAT Early Childhood Education Mission Statement: The mission of the Northwestern State University alternative certification (MAT) Early Childhood Education Program is to prepare educators with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be effective in the Early Childhood classroom. The program prepares educators to meet young children's diverse needs in a variety of settings while documenting and assessing their

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growth over time in relation to state standards. Upon completion of the program, which meets the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s accreditation standards, candidates are equipped to meet the many demands of the teaching profession.

Methodology: The assessment process for the MAT in Early Childhood Education is as follows:

- Data from assessment tools are collected and returned to the program coordinator.
- The program coordinator analyzes the data to determine student learning and whether students have met measurable outcomes.
- Results are shared with program faculty; and
- The program coordinator works with program faculty analyze results; based on this analysis, faculty collaborate to make any necessary changes to course instruction and/or assessments for program improvement purposes.

Student Learning Outcomes.

SLO 1

Course Map: second year of coursework

- Candidates take the PRAXIS PLT in their second year of coursework, prior to their residency (EDUC 5450 *Early Childhood Internship in Teaching I*).

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge (SPA #1, Praxis II)	Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practices relating to early childhood.

Measure 1.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

SLO 1 is assessed with the PRAXIS PLT Early Childhood exam, which is nationally normed. To meet State mandates, candidates must achieve a score of at least 157.

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Quality of the assessment/evidence is assured because (1) the State of Louisiana requires this test, and (2) the test is nationally normed. For candidates to be successful, they must achieve a score that is at least as high as the State required score of 157.

Finding. Target was not met, as no students took the PLT.

Analysis. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

In AC 2021-2022, 100% of candidates met target, as candidates must pass the PRAXIS PLT exam to enter Early Childhood *Internship in Teaching I* (EDUC 5950). Candidates' scores ranged from 173 to 182 with a mean score of 176.7 (n = 3). The cutoff score for the PLT is 157.

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2022-2023, faculty offered PRAXIS workshops and encouraged students to take practice tests to support candidate learning and their ability to meet SLO 1.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-23, the target was not met, as no candidates took the test.

In AC 2022-2023, no candidates took the test.

Decision.

In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2023-2024, faculty will encourage students to take praxis tests while enrolled in ECED courses in addition to offering workshops and partnering with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer Learning Express and resources from Longsdale Publishing.

These changes will improve the students' ability to demonstrate knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practices relating to early childhood, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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SLO 2

Course Map: EDUC 5451 *Early Childhood Internship in Teaching II*.

- Candidates are assessed via a Teacher Candidate Observation Form in EDUC 5451 *Early Childhood Internship in Teaching II*, which candidates take in their last semester.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice (SPA #4, Teacher Candidate Observation Form)	Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practices relating to Early Childhood development, curriculum, and assessment.

Measure 2.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

SLO 2 is assessed via a Teacher Candidate Observation Form in EDUC 5451 *Internship in Early Childhood Education II*, which candidates take in their semester.

The Teacher Candidate Observation Form that has been used in previous years was comprised of items extracted from the Danielson Framework for Teaching instrument. The rating scale was adjusted to reflect course grading requirements, but the criteria and indicators were not adjusted from the Framework. The assessment provided evidence for meeting the state identified standards because it was aligned with InTASC standards, and content validity was established for the instrument. Steps were taken to assure Quality of the assessment/evidence. A panel of 11 P-12 clinicians viewed two 20-minute teaching vignettes and conducted independent evaluations of the teaching performance using this tool. Analyses were conducted using the Lawshe Content Validity Ration (CVR) statistic (validity) and the Fisher Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) for reliability. The goal has been for at least 80% of candidates to score a “2” on the rubric. To determine criteria for success,

- CVR mean = -.03 with CVR(Critical, 11) = .59 and no single item meeting critical value of .59.
- ICC = .59. ICC of .4 - .59 reflects "fair" inter-rater agreement, and .6 is considered “good.”

Although, this evaluation instrument used in prior years was aligned with the Danielson and Compass rubrics, it was replaced with a different instrument to improve program

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alignment, it was determined that this instrument, which was content specific, needed to be a universal instrument measuring teaching pedagogy across programs. Partner districts had recently adopted the NIET/TAP evaluation instrument, and as a result, offered full-time faculty training on the NIET evaluation process. The NIET/TAP instrument is widely known throughout the state and aligns closely with the foundational Danielson model; however, the School of Education Advisory Council chose to adopt the abbreviated USPREP version of the instrument which focuses on the six core domains. This tool was adopted for pilot use during AY 2022-2023 and will undergo reliability and validity testing in Fall 2023.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

In AC 2021-2022, 100% of candidates met target and scored “Meets Expectations” or “Target” on the previously used rubric. Areas where candidates missed points included: *Designing student assessment, Engaging students in learning, Uses a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families, Uses own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, and challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.*

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2022-2023, faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement. In 2022-2023, faculty modified instructional design to support candidates by adding additional resources addressing:

- Designing student assessment
- Engaging students in learning
- Uses a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families
- Uses own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-23, the target was met.

In AC 2022-2023, 100% of candidates (n = 1) met target and scored “Meets Expectations” or “Target” on the rubric. The candidate’s lowest scores fell in the following categories:

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- Instructional Plans
- Standards and Observations
- Presenting Instructional Content
- Academic Feedback
- Managing Student Behavior

In accordance with the plan of action from 2021-2022, in 2022-2023, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area, and resources were added to the course to provide learner support in areas where candidates missed points. These changes had a direct impact on the students' ability to demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices related to early childhood development, curriculum, and assessment.

Decision.

In AC 2022-2023, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2023-2024, faculty will add resources addressing these areas to ECED courses:

- Instructional Plans
- Standards and Observations
- Presenting Instructional Content
- Academic Feedback
- Managing Student Behavior

These changes will improve the students' ability to demonstrate knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practices relating to Early Childhood development, curriculum, and assessment, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 3

Course Map: ECED 5010 *Advanced Child Development*

- SLO 3 is assessed through a dispositions form in ECED 5010 *Advanced Child Development*, which is one of candidates' first courses.

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Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Model professional behaviors and Characteristics. (Dispositional Evaluation)	Candidates will model behaviors and characteristics that are professional and ethical.

Measure 3.1. (Direct – Dispositions)

SLO 3 is assessed through a dispositions form in ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods*, which candidates take in the second semester of their third year. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the target performance is that 80% of candidates will score at least “Sufficient” on the rubric. Mentors evaluate candidates’ dispositions at midterm and discuss the evaluation with candidates so that they are aware of strengths and weaknesses. Mentors again use the assessment at the end of the semester (end of semester data is reported below). Faculty created the dispositional evaluation based on agreed-upon best practices and constructs outlined in InTASC standards. The assessment provided evidence for meeting the state identified standards because it was aligned with InTASC standards, and face validity was established for the instrument.

Steps were taken to assure Quality of the assessment/evidence. Face validity was established by 1) aligning items to constructs, 2) avoiding bias and ambiguous language, and 3) stating items in actionable terms. Analysis was conducted using the CAEP Evaluation Framework for EPP-Created Assessments, resulting in “below sufficient,” “sufficient,” or “above sufficient” ratings. The goal on this previously used instrument was for at least 80% of candidates to score “Sufficient”.

However, upon analyzing trend data from previous years, it was determined that many responses given on the disposition evaluation tool were reported as “not applicable” or “not observed”. After gaining feedback from those being asked to complete the evaluations, it was determined that the evaluation tool included statements that could not be observed by the observer. As a result, the evaluation tool was streamlined to better reflect data needed regarding candidate dispositions. Additionally, the new form is electronic and allows for more efficiency to monitor ongoing candidate performance. This tool was adopted by the School of Education Undergraduate Advisory Council for pilot use during AY 2022-2023 and will undergo reliability and validity testing in Fall 2023.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

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In AC 2021-2022, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least “Sufficient.” Candidates’ mean score was 4.97 (n = 2). Student achievement was lowest in the *Educational Technology* category.

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2022-2023, faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement. In 2022-2023, faculty modified instructional design by adding resources relating to Educational Technology to Early Childhood courses to support candidates’ performance.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-23, the target was met.

In AC 2022-2023, the form was updated. 100% of candidates met target and scored at least “Acceptable.” Candidates’ mean score was 3.53 (n = 4). Points were missed in these categories: *Plan, Maximize Learning, Evaluate, and Model Professionalism*. In accordance with the plan of action from 2021-2022, in 2022-2023, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area, and resources were added to the course to provide learner support in areas where candidates missed points. These changes had a direct impact on the students’ ability to model behaviors and characteristics that are professional and ethical.

Decision.

In AC 2022-2023, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2023-2024, faculty will help candidates explore strategies for *Planning, Maximizing Learning, Evaluating, and Modeling Professionalism* in developmentally appropriate ways for young children.

These changes will improve the students’ ability to model behaviors and characteristics that are professional and ethical, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 4

Course Map: EDUC 5451 *Internship in Early Childhood Education II*

- SLO 4 is assessed through a lesson plan assignment in EDUC 5451 *Early Childhood Internship in Teaching II*, which is candidates’ last course.

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Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline (SPA #3, Lesson Plan)	Candidates will design and implement developmentally appropriate lesson plans that reflect research on best practices in Early Childhood Education.

Measure 4.4. (Direct – Knowledge and Skills)

SLO 4 is assessed through a lesson plan assignment in EDUC 5451 *Early Childhood Internship in Teaching II*, which is candidates' last course. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the target performance was that 80% of candidates would score at least a "2" on the rubric, which was aligned with the state teacher assessment. A group of faculty and cooperating teachers collaborated to create the lesson planning template to align with (at the time) new Louisiana Compass and Common Core State Standards' expectations. The template required candidates to plan for and explain elements of lessons on which in-service teacher evaluations were based. The assessment provided evidence for meeting the state identified standards because it is aligned with InTASC standards, and content validity was established for the instrument. Steps were taken to assure Quality of the assessment/evidence. A panel of 8 EPP faculty each conducted four independent rubric-based evaluations of anonymous lesson plan work samples submitted by candidates in four different initial teacher preparation programs. Analyses were conducted using the Lawshe Content Validity Ratio (CVR) statistic (validity) and the Fisher Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) for reliability. To determine criteria for success:

- CVR mean = .58 with CVR(Critical, 8) = .75 and 13 items (62%) meeting critical value of .75
- ICC = .573. ICC of .4 - .59 reflects "fair" inter-rater agreement, and .6 is considered "good."

Upon data analysis in AY 2021-2022, the education advisory committee recognized the need to improve the Lesson Plan Template to provide students more resources and guidance when planning. As a result, the lesson plan rubric changed as well. This new template allows students to better demonstrate their abilities when planning an effective lesson. The template and rubric have been utilized throughout AY 2022-2023 in a pilot phase and will undergo reliability and validity testing in Fall 2023.

Finding. Target was met.

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Analysis. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

In AC 2021-2022, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least a “2.” Candidates’ mean score was 2.69 (n = 4). Candidates’ lowest scores fell into the *Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies: The Intern uses a variety of instructional strategies* and *Planning for Instruction* categories.

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2022-2023, faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement. In 2022-2023, faculty modified instructional design by adding resources relating to *Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies: The Intern uses a variety of instructional strategies* and *Planning for Instruction* to Early Childhood courses.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-23, the target was met.

In AC 2022-2023, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least a “3.” The candidate’s mean score was 3.05 (n = 1). At the end of the course, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area and found that candidates’ lowest scores fell into the *Reflection* and *Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies* categories. In accordance with the plan of action from 2021-2022, in 2022-2023, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area, and resources were added to the course to provide learner support in areas where candidates missed points. These changes had a direct impact on the students’ ability to design and implement developmentally appropriate lesson plans that reflect research on best practices in Early Childhood Education.

Decision.

In AC 2022-2023, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2023-2024, faculty will add resources addressing *Reflection* and *Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies* to support candidate learning.

These changes will improve the students’ ability to design and implement developmentally appropriate lesson plans that reflect research on best practices in Early Childhood Education, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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SLO 5

Course Map: EDUC 5451 *Early Childhood Internship in Teaching II*

Course Map: EDUC 5840: *Using Research to Improve Instructional Practice*

Through last year, SLO 5 was assessed through a student impact assessment (portfolio) in EDUC 5451 *Early Childhood Internship in Teaching II*, which is the last course.

SLO 5 is now assessed in *EDUC 5840, Using Research to Improve Instructional Practice*, through a paper-in-lieu-of-thesis.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Make responsible decisions and problem-solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate.	Candidates applied the educational research process through a review of literature, analysis of data, and plans to improve instructional practice with empirically supported decisions

Measure 5.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

Prior to this year, SLO 5 was assessed through a student impact assessment (portfolio) in EDUC 5951 *Early Childhood Internship in Teaching II*, which is the last course. The assessment was evaluated using a rubric, and the target performance was that at least 80% of candidates will score at least a “2” on the rubric.

A group of faculty and cooperating teachers collaborated to create the student learning impact assessment to align with (at the time) new Louisiana Compass and Common Core State Standards’ expectations. The assessment requires candidates to plan for, create, administer, and analyze student learning. Candidates then reflect on and make instructional decisions based on their analyses. A panel of 8 EPP faculty each conducted four independent rubric-based evaluations of anonymous student learning impact work samples submitted by candidates in four different initial teacher preparation programs. Analyses were conducted using the Lawshe Content Validity Ration (CVR) statistic (validity) and the Fisher Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) for reliability. To determine criteria for success:

CVR mean = -.03 with CVR(Critical, 11) = .59 and no single item meeting critical value of .59

ICC = .59. ICC of .4 - .59 reflects "fair" inter-rater agreement, and .6 is considered

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“good.”

Beginning this year, SLO 5 is assessed via a Paper-in-Lieu-of-Thesis.

The Graduate School requires each master’s level candidate to complete a paper-in-lieu-of-thesis prior to graduation. Guidelines were specified by the Graduate Council and followed a traditional format with a paper introduction section, review of related literature subsections for each variable, analyses of data, and plans for improving instructional practices.

Candidates were asked to engage in reflective teaching by evaluating their instructional practices in the areas of 1) assessment, 2) instructional planning, and 3) instructional strategies. These variables aligned with standards 6, 7, and 8 from the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards for Teachers. For each variable, candidates evaluated their essential knowledge, performances (skills), and critical dispositions using itemized lists published for each standard.

The assessment allowed candidates to self-evaluate their knowledge, skills, and dispositions while using data, along with findings from published academic studies, to inform their future instructional practices. Candidates developed specific action plans by problem-solving and making decisions about how to improve their knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the areas of assessment, instructional planning, and instructional strategies.

The paper-in-lieu-of-thesis was graded using a holistic evaluation checklist with seven evaluative criteria and a seven-point, rating scale. The evaluative criteria aligned with the Graduate School’s requirements and included the following parts of the paper: 1) preface, 2) introduction, 3) section on assessment, 4) section on instructional planning, 5) section on instructional strategies, 6) conclusion with implications for future teaching, and 7) references.

The rating scale included the following rating levels: 0-Missing (not present), 1-Unsatisfactory (too underdeveloped to award credit), 2-Significant Development Needed (needed a significant amount of development), 3-More Editing Needed (needed more explanation, details, or correction), 4-Minor Polishing Needed (few errors were present in APA guidelines, mechanics, and/or grammar), 5-Target (achieved what was asked for in the directions), and 6-Beyond Expectations (exceeded expectations asked in the directions in both scope and depth with exemplary writing). The benchmark score of 3 indicated that an evaluative criterion was minimally acceptable with the required elements from the directions present in the subsection of the paper, but more editing was needed in terms of explanation, details, or corrections. Additionally, candidates had

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to earn an overall letter grade of C or higher (175 out of 250 points) on the paper-in-lieu-of-thesis before it was submitted to the Graduate School to meet the graduation requirement.

Finding. Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met.

In AC 2021-2022, 100% of candidates met target and scored “Meets Expectations” or “Target” on the rubric (n = 4). Candidates’ lowest scores fell into the Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies category.

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2022-2023, faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement. In 2022-2023, faculty modified instructional design by adding resources relating to Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies in Early Childhood courses.

In AC 2022-23, the target was not met.

In AC 2022-2023, candidates were assessed with a Paper-in-Lieu of-Thesis. The only candidate who took this course and completed the assignment scored a 64% D (159 out of 250 points) on the rubric (n = 1). At the end of the course, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area and found that the candidate did not apply feedback given to improve her paper.

Decision.

In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2023-2024, faculty will encourage students to apply feedback to improve their papers.

These changes will improve the students’ ability to document positive impact on young children’s learning and development, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results:

Program faculty made several decisions after examining results of 2021-2022 data analysis which resulted in improved student learning and program improvement.

- SLO 1: Faculty offered PRAXIS workshops and encouraged students to take practice tests.
- SLO 2: Faculty modified instructional design to support candidates by adding additional resources addressing:
 - Designing student assessment
 - Engaging students in learning
 - Uses a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families
 - Uses own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.
- SLO 3: Faculty modified instructional design by helping candidates explore strategies for integrating educational technology in developmentally appropriate ways for young children in ECED courses.
- SLO 4: Faculty modified instructional design by adding resources addressing *Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies: The Intern uses a variety of instructional strategies and Planning for Instruction.*
- SLO 5: Faculty modified instructional design by adding instructional resources addressing Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies. Moving forward, SLO 5 will be assessed with a paper-in-lieu-of-thesis.
- Faculty strengthened service-learning components in all ECED courses.

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

Program faculty examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AC 2022-2023 and will take steps to continue to improve student learning in AC 2023-2024:

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- SLO 1: Faculty will offer PRAXIS workshops and encourage students to take practice tests. Faculty will partner partnering with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer Learning Express and resources from Longsdale Publishing.
- SLO 2: Faculty will modify instructional design to support candidates by adding additional resources addressing these topics to ECED courses:
 - Instructional Plans
 - Standards and Observations
 - Presenting Instructional Content
 - Academic Feedback
 - Managing Student Behavior
- SLO 3: Faculty will modify instructional design by helping candidates explore strategies for help candidates explore strategies for these topics in ECED courses:
 - Planning
 - Maximizing Learning
 - Evaluating
 - Modeling Professionalism
- SLO 4: Faculty will modify instructional design by adding resources addressing Reflection and Multiple Teaching/Learning Strategies to ECED courses.
- SLO 5: Faculty will modify instructional design by encouraging students to apply feedback to improve their papers.
- Faculty will strengthen service-learning components in all ECED courses.