

Assessment Cycle 2024-2024

Master of Education Curriculum & Instruction (C & I MED) (504)

Reading Specialists add on certification (026)

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 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 effective instructional practices. Further, all graduates learn to value and work with diverse populations and to incorporate technologies that enrich learning and professional endeavors.

Program Mission Statement. The Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction (MED-CI) program provides certified teachers advanced knowledge in research, pedagogy, and content instruction in a chosen emphasis area, including English Education, Reading, School Librarian, Transition to Teaching, or English as a Second Language. Program faculty provide highly effective coursework, electronically, to meet the needs of candidates who wish to grow as teacher leaders in their schools or districts. During the course of their program, candidates become reflective educators

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who understand both the practical and the theoretical roles of education, blending them to create highly effective instruction for students, to act as mentors for other teachers, and to take on leadership roles in their discipline areas in their schools or districts. Master teachers who graduate from this program will have a positive impact on student learning.

Methodology.

1. Candidates upload signature assignments for each course and complete quality field experience hours throughout the program.
2. Field Experiences are monitored by course instructors and school site personnel; video clips provide further evidence of teaching activities. Passing grades are not submitted without the completion of assigned field work.
3. The Program Coordinator and course instructors propose changes to assessments, monitor measurable outcomes of candidate learning, and implement program adjustments, when necessary.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1.

Course Map: Currently - *EDCI 5110 Reflective and Coherent Classroom Practice*. (Beginning Fall 2024, this course will no longer be offered, and this assessment will occur in *EDCI 5050 Differentiated Instruction*.)

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge.	C & I MED graduate candidates demonstrate depth and breadth of discipline-specific content knowledge in the subjects they teach.

Measure 1.1. (Direct – knowledge)

SLO 1 is currently assessed with the **Research and Reflection Essay**, a critical synthesis of current research through which candidates explore highly effective, proven instructional strategies in their areas of emphasis and certification. Thus, the instrument used to measure SLO 1 is the Research and Reflection Essay. It is scored with a criterion-based rubric.

Due to changes in the curriculum map/degree plan that will be implemented beginning Fall 2024, *EDCI 5110* will no longer be offered as a course in this program. Instead, this SLO will be measured in *EDCI 5050 Differentiated Instruction*. Moving forward, beginning Fall 2024 the measure will be the Differentiated Instruction Portfolio, a critical synthesis of current research and practices in which the candidate explores highly

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effective, proven instructional strategies in their areas of emphasis and certification. The instrument used to measure SLO 1 within this assignment will be the National Board Portfolio guidelines, and therefore already has established validity and reliability. On this new measure beginning AC 2024 - 2025, the goal is for 90% of the candidates to meet benchmark of a minimum of 90% on the essay.

Measure 1.1 for AC 2023 – 2024:

Within the Research and Reflection Essay, candidates are asked to identify quality research-based effective teaching strategies in their fields, synthesize two or more content specific teaching strategies, and critically examine the findings and practical relevance in instruction. They are also expected to make connections from the research to their current teaching practices and draw conclusions as to how the studied strategies can improve future practice.

Validity was established by 1) aligning items to state and content standards, 2) avoiding bias and ambiguous language, and 3) stating items in actionable terms on the rubric. Analyses were conducted using the CAEP Evaluation Framework, resulting in Unacceptable, Acceptable, or Target ratings. Since the criteria for this assessment directly correlated to state and content standards, this artifact is a valid measure that indicates candidates' mastery of content-specific pedagogical practice, which, in turn, should translate to increased student content learning. Benchmark for this assessment is Acceptable.

The goal is for at least 90% of the candidates to meet the benchmark of a score of 90% or higher.

Findings:

Assessment Year	Number of students	Percentage meeting target	Target Met/ Not met
AC 2023-2024	5 of 8	63%	Not Met
AC 2022-2023	7 of 7	100%	Met
AC 2021-2022	13 of 13	100%	Met

AC 2023-2024: Target was not met.

Analysis:

In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. 100% of assessed candidates (n=7) met the benchmark target. Based on an analysis of data from AC 2022 – 2023, the following changes were made in AC 2023 – 2024. Faculty required candidates to customize their research within an area that was of specific relevance to the improvement of their content instruction. Candidates submitted a formal proposal in which they provided a rationale for their choice of topics and explained how the research of the topic benefited their content teaching and student learning. More direct instruction as well as additional supports were put in place regarding the essay. Despite these changes, the target was not met.

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Decision, Action, or Recommendation:

In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met. Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2023-2024 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2024-2025, the measure will be changed and SLO 1 will be measured in EDUC 5050. The measure will be the Differentiated Instruction Portfolio, which is a critical synthesis of current research and practices in which the candidate explores highly effective, proven instructional strategies in their areas of emphasis and certification. This new measure will more accurately allow candidates to demonstrate the depth and breadth of discipline-specific content knowledge in the subjects they teach thereby pushing the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 2.

Course Map: *EDCI 5120 Advanced Instructional Theories and Strategies*

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice	C & I MED graduate candidates demonstrate depth and breadth of discipline-specific content knowledge and pedagogical skills that incorporate literacy support, in the subjects they teach to ensure student learning.

Measure 2.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)

SLO 2 is assessed with a three-part signature assignment, the ***Culminating Project: A Reflective Teaching Model.***

- Candidates demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge and pedagogical expertise while implementing literacy support within their discipline areas. Based on current research trends and literacy support theory to improve content learning in their fields of study, candidates create and teach a lesson in which “best practice” literacy strategies are implemented.
- Candidates write a case study of the experience and self-reflect on their performance and student learning outcomes.
- Candidates also create an oral presentation that is suitable for delivery to a grade level meeting at their schools and to share with peers in a class discussion forum. This Project Based Learning (PBL) assignment/assessment is administered across all emphasis areas in the C & I program.

Benchmark for this assessment is Satisfactory. The goal is for at least 90% of the candidates to meet the benchmark.

Findings: AC 2023-2024: Target was not met.

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Analysis:

In AC 2022-2023, 100% of the students met the target. Based on the AC 2022 – 2023 data analysis results, faculty intended to make the following changes: The faculty would include a variety of pedagogy examples and videos to ensure understanding of effective literacy strategies, support and assist students in developing an effective lesson plan that incorporates literacy strategies. Also, they would provide examples of exemplar presentations for students to review. However, in AC 2023-2024, the course was cancelled due to low enrollment.

Decision, Action, or Recommendation:

In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met due to low enrollment and course cancellation. Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data (because there is no data for 2023-2024), faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty will include optional zoom sessions for support, a variety of pedagogy links, examples and videos to ensure understanding of effective literacy strategies, support and assist students in developing an effective lesson plan that incorporates literacy strategies, provide examples of exemplar presentations for students to review. Due to changes in the course map/degree requirements of the program, this measure will be administered within a newly created course beginning Fall 2024. These changes will enable students to better demonstrate content knowledge and pedagogical skills that incorporate literacy support in the subjects they teach to ensure student learning, thereby pushing the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 3

Course Map: *EDUC 5850 Action Research for School Improvement*

Departmental Student Learning	Program Student Learning Outcome
Model professional behaviors and characteristics	C & I MED graduate candidates demonstrate the professional dispositions and characteristics of effective educators in their interactions with peers and program faculty;

Measure 3.1 (Indirect/Dispositions)

Measure 3.1. (Indirect/Dispositions) SLO 3 is assessed through the ***Professional Dispositions and Characteristics Scale in Advanced Programs (PDC)***. Likert scale. Criteria for this assessment align with state and content standards, avoid bias/ambiguous language, and state items in actionable terms. The measure of professional dispositions and characteristics of program candidates is based on a compilation of each candidate's professional demeanor during coursework, communication interchanges, and field experiences throughout the program. The assessment is completed by instructors in EDUC 5850 at the end of the program. The PDC instrument allows faculty to evaluate attributes recognized as professional dispositions & characteristics of practicing teachers at the graduate level. Faculty created the dispositional evaluation based on agreed-upon best practices and constructs outlined in InTASC

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standards. Benchmark for this assessment is a Sufficient rating.

The goal is for at least 90% of the candidates to meet the benchmark of “Sufficient”.

Findings:

AC 2023-2024: Target not met.

Analysis:

In AC 2022-2023, the target for SLO 3 was not met because data was not collected. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results, the following changes were implemented to drive improvement in AC 2023-2024: Zoom meetings were offered to answer questions both as a group and individually. Despite these changes, the target was not met in AC 2023 – 2024. Data indicated that four of the five students in the course did not meet the sufficient benchmark, averaging 80% of the class.

Decision or Recommendation.

In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met. Based on information gathered in AC 2023-2024 faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2024-2025, faculty will post weekly communication through Moodle and emails, as well as offer at least one Zoom meeting per month discussing dispositions and where to find resources that may assist in any areas of need. These changes will improve the candidates’ abilities to demonstrate the professional dispositions and characteristics of effective educators in their interactions with peers and program faculty, thereby pushing the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 4

Course Map: *EDCI 5140 Clinical Internship in C & I.* Due to changes to the curriculum map/degree plan requirements, this course was not offered in AC 2023 – 2024. Beginning Fall 2024, this measure will occur in *EDCI 5040 Instructional Coaching.*

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline	C & I MED graduate candidates demonstrate their leadership abilities to recognize, analyze, and solve school- wide/district-wide problems and plan strategically for school and instructional improvement in their disciplines with the goal of improving student learning.

Measure 4.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)

SLO 4 is assessed through the 10-part *Intern Portfolio of Leadership Experiences* and scored with a criteria-based rubric. Ratings depend on the quality of rationales for categorizing an experience and the rich description of each experience as it relates to

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student learning in each candidate's chosen area of program emphasis. The work is a collection of a candidate's evidence of school-wide or district-wide strategic planning and various leadership-related opportunities that have occurred during the academic year in which EDCI 5140 is taken. Evidence of the level of participation is required for each entry in the portfolio, including three levels of participation—observer, participant, leader.

Experiences suitable for inclusion enhance candidates' understanding for recognizing, analyzing, solving school-wide/district-wide problems, and planning strategically for school and instructional improvement in their disciplines with the end goal of improving student learning. Activities include attendance and involvement in administrative meetings or trainings regarding strategic planning, school vision, community or school problems/issues, school technology acquisition/funding, literacy program administration, and curriculum improvement.

Because the criteria for this assessment are directly based on state and content standards, this instrument is a valid measure of leadership skills and knowledge acquired by candidates in their end-of-program practicum course. Analysis was conducted using the CAEP Evaluation Framework for levels of quality when rating assessments, resulting in "developing," "sufficient," or "exemplary" ratings.

Benchmark for this assessment was "sufficient" with at least 90% of candidates scoring benchmark.

Findings:

AC 2023 – 2024: Not Met (No data collected)

AC 2022 - 2023: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2022-23, the target was met. 100% of students (9 out of 9) students successfully met the target. After data analysis from AC 2022 – 2023, faculty made the following changes for AC 2023 -2024 to drive improvement. Course revisions were made and implemented in Fall 2023, preventing data collection for this SLO. Faculty worked together to design a new measure which will effectively yield data for improvement in this area of the curriculum. The rubric criteria provide specific expectations for the new measure; however, the course in which the measure will be administered will not be offered until Fall 2024. While these changes prevented this SLO from being assessed temporarily, the new measure provides the necessary components for accurate assessment in AC 2024 – 2025.

Decision or Recommendation.

In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met, as no data was collected. As a result, faculty will implement the following in AC 2024 – 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will utilize a new measure to be administered in *EDCI 5040 Instructional Coaching* which will effectively yield data for improvement. Faculty will utilize the newly created rubric criteria to provide specific expectations for the new measure and take the proper actions

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to begin the process of testing for content validity and reliability.

This newly designed measure will better allow students to demonstrate their abilities and knowledge in the areas of curriculum and instruction, and recognize, recognize, analyze, and solve school- wide/district-wide problems and plan strategically for school and instructional improvement in their disciplines with the goal of improving student learning, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 5

Course Map: *EDUC 5850 Action Research for School Improvement*

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Make responsible decisions and problem- solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate (SPA #5)	C & I MED candidates demonstrate their proficiency in the planning and execution of action research and data analyses, designed to measure curriculum knowledge and instructional approaches that directly affect student learning in their content areas.

Measure 5.1 (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)

The SLO 5 goal is assessed through the ***C & I Portfolio Defense Presentation***, a performance-based evaluation of action research and a direct approach to the measurement of candidates' knowledge and skills in the program. The work for this assessment is accomplished over two semesters toward the end of the program. Initiated in EDUC 5010, the research and presentation components are completed in EDUC 5850 when the work is defended to faculty. The defense also includes a presentation of the work and includes important “takeaways” from EDCI 5020 (curriculum) and EDCI 5030 (instruction) course learnings. Passing this defense is a condition of graduation, and successful results are formally submitted to the Graduate School as program completion. Program faculty collaborated to redesign the end-of-program performance-based assessment in 2010 and have completed multiple revisions to the rubric since then to ensure it reliably measures six areas of classroom-based action research and four areas of program curricular knowledge and instructional design skills. Overall, the work provides evidence that candidates know how to plan and execute research that is relevant to practice in their disciplines and has positive impact on student content learning.

Instrument validity was established by aligning items to state and content standards: avoiding bias and ambiguous language and stating items in actionable terms on the rubric. Analyses of criteria are conducted using the CAEP Evaluation Framework with ratings of Unacceptable, Acceptable, and Target.

Benchmark for this assessment is Acceptable with a 2.5 mean. The goal is for at least 90% of the students to meet the benchmark.

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Findings:

AC 2023-2024: Target was met.

Analysis:

In AC 2022-2023, the target for SLO 5 was met. Based on the analysis of these AC 2022-2023 results the following changes were made to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty completed a Zoom conference early in the semester to discuss the research and expectations of the course; a second Zoom conference followed two weeks prior to the presentation. The personal contact may have alleviated anxiety about the research's culminating assessment, leading to better student understanding of the research process. These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to make responsible decisions and problem- solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate, however, more support is needed for students. As a result of these changes, in AC 2023-2024, 100% of students (9 out of 9) students successfully met the target.

Decision or Recommendation.

In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement: faculty will host Zoom sessions designed to alleviate anxiety about the culminating assessment and host optional question and answer sessions to aid student understanding.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate their proficiency in the planning and execution of action research and data analyses, designed to measure curriculum knowledge and instructional approaches that directly affect student learning in their content areas, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results in AC 2022-2023. The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2023-2024. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the AC 2022-2023 results analysis.

SLO 1: Faculty required candidates to customize their research within an area that was of specific relevance to the improvement of their content instruction.

Candidates submitted a formal proposal in which they provided a rationale for their choice of topics and explained how the research of the topic benefited their content teaching and student learning. The proposal was approved by instructor or feedback was provided to candidate as a guide for revision and resubmission.

SLO 2: The faculty included a variety of pedagogy examples and videos to ensure understanding of effective literacy strategies, support and assist students in developing an effective lesson plan that incorporates literacy strategies, provide examples of exemplar presentations for students to review.

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SLO 3: Faculty used the newly designed virtual process to satisfy the requirement for candidates to self-evaluate their Professional Dispositions and Characteristics at the conclusion of the program. Zoom meetings were offered to answer questions both as a group and individually.

SLO 4: Course revisions were made and implemented in Fall 2023, preventing data collection for this SLO. Faculty worked together to design a new measure which will effectively yield data for improvement in this area of the curriculum. The rubric criteria provide specific expectations for the new measure; however, the course in which the measure will be administered will not be offered until Fall 2024.

SLO 5: Faculty completed a Zoom conference early in the semester to discuss the research and expectations of the course; a second Zoom conference followed two weeks prior to the presentation. The personal contact may have alleviated anxiety about the research's culminating assessment, leading to better student understanding of the research process.

Plan of Action for Moving Forward:

Program faculty examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AC 2023-2024 and will take steps to continue to improve student learning in AC 2024-2025:

SLO 1. The measure will be changed and SLO 1 will be measured in EDUC 5050. The measure will be the Differentiated Instruction Portfolio, which is a critical synthesis of current research and practices in which the candidate explores highly effective, proven instructional strategies in their areas of emphasis and certification.

SLO 2. The faculty will include a variety of pedagogy examples and videos to ensure understanding of effective literacy strategies, support and assist students in developing an effective lesson plan that incorporates literacy strategies, provide examples of exemplar presentations for students to review. Due to changes in the course map/degree requirements of the program, this measure will be administered within a newly created course beginning Fall 2024.

SLO 3. The faculty will post weekly communication through Moodle and emails, as well as offer at least one Zoom meeting per month discussing dispositions and where to find resources that may assist in any areas of need.

SLO 4. The faculty will utilize a new measure to be administered in *EDCI 5040 Instructional Coaching* which will effectively yield data for improvement. Faculty will utilize the newly created rubric criteria to provide specific expectations for the new measure and take the proper actions to begin the process of testing for content validity and reliability.

SLO 5. Faculty will host Zoom sessions designed to alleviate anxiety about the culminating assessment and host optional question and answer sessions to aid student understanding.