AC 2022-2023 Assessment

Master of Arts in Teaching, Secondary Education (508)

Division: Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Department:

School of Education

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Approved by: Dr. Greg Handel   **Date: July 2, 2024**

Northwestern State University 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 best practice. Further, all graduates learn to value and work with diverse populations and to incorporate technologies that enrich learning and professional endeavors.

Program Mission Statement: To prepare teacher candidates to become certified secondary teachers for grades 6-12. The mission underlying the initial certification of candidates in the MAT Secondary Program is to provide the knowledge and skills necessary to implement literacy- and standards based instructional strategies for increasing student content learning in each candidate's discipline of study.

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Methodology: The assessment process for this program is as follows:

1. Data from assessments tools are collected and returned to the department chair and program coordinator.

2. The program coordinator will analyze data to determine student learning and whether students have met the measurable outcomes.

3. Results from the assessment will be shared and discussed with program faculty.

4. The program coordinator, in consultation with program faculty, will review data and based on the analysis, faculty collaborate to make any necessary changes to course instruction and/or assessments for program improvement purposes.

Student Learning Objectives:
SLO 1
Course Map:
Candidates take the Praxis PLT in their second year of coursework, prior to their residency/internship (EDUC 5430 Secondary Internship in Teaching).

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge	Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices relating to secondary education.

Measure 1.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

SLO 1 is assessed through the PRAXIS Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT): Grades 7-12 exam, which is nationally normed. The assessment is a standardized test published by ETS, and the target performance is the successful passing of the PLT according to the minimum qualifying score set forth by the State of Louisiana for certification as a secondary teacher.

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 qualifying score that is at least as high as the State minimum requirement of 157. The target is for 100% of candidates to achieve the minimum requirement of 157.

Findings: Target was met, 100% of candidates met the target.

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- AC 2022-2023: 100% of candidates met target.

Analysis:

Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results, in 2023-2024 the following changes were implemented. To drive continuous improvement, maximize student learning, and continue to improve the program, the faculty offered PRAXIS seminars, advised students to use 240 Tutoring, and partnered with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation to supporting candidate learning and their ability. Students were offered a discount on the software Tutoring 240, an online program that guarantees success with lesson completion, or students receive their money back.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2023-24,100% of candidates met the target. The qualifying score for the PLT Grades 7-12 is 157. Candidates' scores ranged from 157 to 183, with a mean score of 170. As a cohort, the target was met.

These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to demonstrate developmentally appropriate pedagogical knowledge.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

In AC 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, faculty implemented the aforementioned changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2024-2025, the faculty will offer additional support through a newly added educational lab, online resources to help prepare students for the PLT exam in conjunction with PRAXIS seminars, the use of 240 Tutoring, and opportunities with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation to supporting candidate learning and their ability.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practices relating to elementary education, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 2
Course Map:

Completion of SLO 2 occurs during the internship courses **EDUC 5430 and EDUC 5431.**

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice (NIET TAP Evaluation Instrument)	Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices relating to secondary curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

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Measure 2.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)
NIET/TAP Evaluation Instrument

The evaluation instrument used in prior years was aligned with the Danielson and Compass rubrics. To improve program 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. These domains are based on effective teaching behaviors listed on the Danielson Framework for Teaching instrument and aligned to the InTASC standards.

University field supervisors and cooperating principals evaluate each criterion using a five-point rating scale with the following options: Unsatisfactory = 1, Approaching Proficiency = 2, Proficient = 3, Mastery = 4, and Exemplary = 5. Items on the instrument are evaluated multiple times during the two internship semesters.

The target for this assessment is for 80% of candidates to attain a minimum 3.0 (proficiency) score on the evaluation instrument.

Finding: Target was met, 90% of students met the goal.

Analysis:

In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on analysis results from AC 2022-2023, faculty further studied the observation results and the instrument used. Candidates were using this newly adopted pilot instrument to measure candidate performance. Candidate scores provided evidence for meeting state-identified standards aligned with artifacts tied to InTASC and content standards; however, faculty recognized the need to change the instrument to maximize program alignment and better our ability to identify strengths and weaknesses for each domain.

According to the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, students' mean observation score was 3.05. Candidate scores on the NIET/TAP instrument in AC 2023- 2024 provide evidence for meeting state-identified standards aligned with artifacts tied to InTASC and content standards. Teacher candidate scores exhibited proficiency in lesson planning (mean 3.5) and standards and objectives (mean 3.0). In comparison, teacher candidates have more strength in lesson plan than standards and objectives.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

In AC 2023-2024, the target was met.

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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, faculty will provide targeted instruction to candidates in the area of assessments in relation to standards and objectives to ensure that content mastery is being accurately measured.

These changes will allow teacher candidates to better use data to drive instruction, ultimately improving their ability to ensure mastery of the content by their students, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 3
Course Map:
Completion of SLO 3 occurs during the internship courses **EDUC 5430 and 5431.**

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Model professional behaviors and characteristics. (Dispositional Evaluation)	Candidates pass a dispositions evaluation: Secondary teacher candidates demonstrate the professional dispositions and characteristics of effective educators in their interactions with students, administrators, co-workers, parents, and university faculty throughout the program.

The evaluation instrument used in prior years was aligned with the Danielson and Compass rubrics. To improve program 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. These domains are based on effective teaching behaviors listed on the Danielson Framework for Teaching instrument and aligned to the InTASC standards.

University field supervisors and cooperating principals evaluate each criterion using a five-point rating scale with the following options: Unsatisfactory = 1, Approaching Proficiency = 2, Proficient = 3, Mastery = 4, and Exemplary = 5. Items on the instrument are evaluated multiple times during the two internship semesters.

The target for this assessment is for 85% of candidates to attain a minimum 3.0 (proficiency) score on the evaluation instrument.

Finding: Target was met,100% of students met the goal.

AC 2022-2023 Assessment

Analysis:
In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, the areas that needed improvement were managing time effectively, analyzes problems critically and attempts to resolve them independently (as appropriate), and responds to unforeseen circumstances in an appropriate manner and modifies actions or plans when necessary.

As a result, in AC 2023-2024, faculty assessed candidates' professionalism and motivation for teaching with the use of the newly adopted evaluation tool which better identifies areas of weakness in professional dispositions. This tool better enabled on- site mentor teachers to effectively coach candidates by targeting specific areas of need to ensure candidates' ability to develop dispositions needed to ensure effective teaching and learning. Data indicated an area of strength to be "accepts feedback" (2.95). The weakness indicated was "connects and aligns assessment with content" (mean 2.7).

Action - Decision or Recommendation:
In AC 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 data, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2024-2025, faculty will drive improvement by implementing added resources relating and additional instruction focused on aligning assessment to content to better improve student outcomes. However, based on feedback from mentor teachers and school administrators, the current instrument is not relevant to attributes that are observable in the field. Therefore, faculty has determined to adopt the newly created Disposition instrument which has been developed by the Louisiana CAEP Consortium, pending current validity and reliability testing.

These changes will allow for critical dispositions to be accurately measured and improve the candidates' ability to model behaviors and characteristics that are professional and ethical, thereby enabling them to communicate effectively with all stakeholders continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Measure 3.1. (Direct – Dispositions)
Professional Disposition Evaluation

SLO 3 is assessed through the Professional Disposition Evaluation tool. In previous years, the faculty-created professional dispositional scale (PDS) was used to evaluate candidate dispositions. Upon analyzing trend data from previous years, it was determined that many responses given on the disposition evaluation scale 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.

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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 Advisory Council for pilot use during AY 2022- 2023 and will undergo reliability and validity testing in Fall 2023.

The target for this assessment is for 85% of candidates to score a minimum mean score of 2.5 out of 3.

Finding: Target was Met, 100% students met the target.

Analysis:
In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, the areas that needed improvement were managing time effectively, analyzes problems critically and attempts to resolve them independently (as appropriate), and responds to unforeseen circumstances in an appropriate manner and modifies actions or plans when necessary.

As a result, in AC 2023-2024, faculty assessed candidates' professionalism and motivation for teaching with the use of the newly adopted evaluation tool which better identifies areas of weakness in professional dispositions. This tool better enabled on- site mentor teachers to effectively coach candidates by targeting specific areas of need to ensure candidates' ability to develop dispositions needed to ensure effective teaching and learning. Data indicated an area of strength to be "accepts feedback" (2.95). The weakness indicated was "connects and aligns assessment with content" (mean 2.7).

Action - Decision or Recommendation:
In AC 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 data, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2024-2025, faculty will drive improvement by implementing added resources relating and additional instruction focused on aligning assessment to content to better improve student outcomes. However, based on feedback from mentor teachers and school administrators, the current instrument is not relevant to attributes that are observable in the field. Therefore, faculty has determined to adopt the newly created Disposition instrument which has been developed by the Louisiana CAEP Consortium, pending current validity and reliability testing.

These changes will allow for critical dispositions to be accurately measured and improve the candidates' ability to model behaviors and characteristics that are professional and ethical, thereby enabling them to communicate effectively with all stakeholders continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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SLO 4
Course Map:

Completion of SLO 4 occurs during the internship year while candidates
are enrolled in EDUC 5430.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline (Lesson Plan execution)	Secondary teacher candidates demonstrate the ability to select/create appropriate formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

Measure 4.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

The ***Assessment for Lesson Plan Implementation*** addresses the Louisiana
State Standards and interns' ability to execute best teaching practices as
reflected on the lesson plan. This assessment requires interns to successfully
execute the planned elements of the lesson on which their performance
evaluations are based as measured by the Standards and Objectives domain of
the NIET Evaluation Rubric. Interns demonstrate competency of written lesson
plan design in EDUC 5600 through course assignments prior to the internship.
However, this lesson plan assessment measures the intern's ability to
effectively execute the components as planned.

Target for this assessment is that 85% of the candidates score a 3.0 on the Standards
and Objectives Domain of the NIET Evaluation Rubric.

Finding: Target was met, 100% met the target.

Analysis:

As a result of the AC 2022-2023 data, Faculty added additional instructional materials
and resources in AC 2023-2024 to support contextual factors and student learning
adaptations and higher order thinking. Additionally, interns/candidates were given
additional instruction in the areas of executing the lesson plan and measuring the
implementation and effectiveness of planning through student outcomes of the lesson.
These changes resulted in more in-depth and targeted instruction in this area of need.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on information gathered from analysis of
the AC 2023-2024 data, faculty will implement the following in AC 2024 – 2025.
Faculty will increase instruction in the areas of Performance-based Lesson Planning.

Candidates/Interns will be scored on lesson planning with the use of the performance evaluation rubric.

These changes will allow faculty to better identify and improve the candidates' ability to effectively plan and execute lessons to ensure student mastery of standards and objectives, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 5
Course Map: Paper-in-lieu-of-thesis assessed in EDUC 5840: Using Research to Improve Instructional Practice

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. (Indirect – Applied Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

The Graduate School requires each master's level candidate to complete a paper-in-lieu-of-thesis prior to graduation. Guidelines are specified by the Graduate Council and follow 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 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. The target was met.

Analysis.

For the 2022-2023 assessment cycle, the target was met.

For the 2022-2023 assessment cycle, 87% (27 out of 31) candidates passed the paper-in-lieu-of-thesis. Two candidates received an In Progress (IP) grade to indicate that they were still working on their paper and a score had not been assigned to their paper. Two candidates earned a failing grade on the paper.

Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 assessment cycle results, the following changes were made for the current assessment cycle to improve the paper-in-lieu-of-thesis assignment. Referrals were made to the Graduate Student Success Coach, using a link provided by the School of Education. Additionally, contact information was posted for NSU's Reference Librarian, who helped candidates find empirical research for their papers. Contact information was posted for NSU's Academic Success Center, which provided free paper editing for candidates. Finally, point values were added to each level on the rating scale to help remove subjectivity from the evaluation process. Point ranges were provided for the following rating levels: 0-Missing, 1-Unsatisfactory, 2-Significant Development Needed, 3-More Editing Needed, 4-Minor Polishing Needed, 5-Target, and 6-Beyond Expectations.

As a result of these changes, in the 2023-2024 assessment cycle, the target was met with 88% (14 out of 16) candidates passing the paper-in-lieu-of-thesis. The teacher education candidates enrolled in the MAT programs met the student learning outcome (SLO) because they successfully applied the educational

research process through a review of literature, analysis of data, and plans to improve instructional practice with empirically supported decisions. The SLO was met at 88%, which is an improvement from the previous assessment cycle. The following table summarizes data for the assessment cycle organized by Master of Arts in Teaching programs for elementary, middle level, and secondary education. The table shows 14 out of 16 passing the paper-in-lieu-of-thesis. The table also shows that one candidate received an In Progress (IP) grade to indicate that they are still working on their paper and a score has not been assigned to their paper. One candidate earned a failing grade on the paper.

Program	Number of Candidates Who Took the Course During the Assessment Cycle	*Target Indicator:* Number of Candidates Passing the Paper (A, B, C Grade)	Number of Candidates Failing the Paper (D, F Grade)	Number of Candidates Continuing the Paper (In Progress Grade)
Elementary Education GR 1-5, program 506	3	2	1	0
Middle School Education GR 4-8, program 507	9	8	0	1
Secondary Education GR 6-12, program 508	4	4	0	0

Decision.

In the 2023-2024 assessment cycle, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 assessment cycle results, the following changes will be made for the 2024-2025 assessment cycle to drive the cycle of improvement. The course will be updated to accommodate the inclusion of candidates enrolled in the curriculum and instruction degree. Possible changes include refocusing the topic of the paper-in-lieu-of-thesis and altering the formative assignments for writing the paper. The Graduate Student Success Coach will need to monitor the link supplied by the college to help candidates who are referred for assistance.

These changes will improve candidates' ability to seek out an additional point of contact for assistance. The changes will also improve the School of Education's ability to help candidates in an additional program complete the paper-in-lieu-of-

thesis. These changes will continue to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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

Program faculty made several decisions after examining results of data analysis from AC 2022-2023 which resulted in improved student learning and program improvement in AC 2023-2024.

SLO 1. Faculty offered additional online resources to help prepare students for the PLT exam in conjunction with PRAXIS seminars, the use of 240 Tutoring, and opportunities with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation to supporting candidate learning and their ability.

SLO 2. Faculty and university supervisors engaged in professional development allowing them to provide additional resources and effective coaching to teacher candidates in the area of remediation strategies for reteaching content as mastery of content is measured in the standards and objectives domain (Domain 2, NIET/TAP).

SLO 3. Faculty assessed candidates' professionalism and motivation for teaching with the use of the newly adopted evaluation tool which better identifies areas of weakness in professional dispositions. This tool better enabled on- site mentor teachers to effectively coach candidates by targeting specific areas of need to ensure candidates' ability to develop dispositions needed to ensure effective teaching and learning.

SLO 4. Faculty added additional instructional materials and resources in AC 2023-2024 to support contextual factors and student learning adaptations and higher order thinking. Additionally, interns/candidates were given additional instruction in the areas of executing the lesson plan and measuring the implementation and effectiveness of planning through student outcomes of the lesson. These changes resulted in more in-depth and targeted instruction in this area of need.

SLO 5. Referrals were made to the Graduate Student Success Coach, using a link provided by the School of Education. Additionally, contact information was posted for NSU's Reference Librarian, who helped candidates find empirical research for their papers. Contact information was posted for NSU's Academic Success Center, which provided free paper editing for candidates. Finally, point values were added to each level on the rating scale to help remove subjectivity from the evaluation 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 faculty will offer additional support through a newly added educational lab, online resources to help prepare students for the PLT exam in conjunction with PRAXIS seminars, the use of 240 Tutoring, and opportunities with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation to supporting candidate learning and their ability.

SLO 2. Faculty will provide targeted instruction to candidates in assessments in relation to standards and objectives to ensure that content mastery is being accurately measured.

SLO 3. Faculty will drive improvement by implementing added resources relating and additional instruction focused on aligning assessment to content to better improve student outcomes. However, based on feedback from mentor teachers and school administrators, the current instrument is not relevant to attributes that are observable in the field. Therefore, faculty has determined to adopt the newly created Disposition instrument which has been developed by the Louisiana CAEP Consortium, pending current validity and reliability testing.

SLO 4. Faculty will support students in planning, while ensuring that plans include alignment of assessment and meaningful, research-based strategies that ensure student mastery of the content. This will align with the new measure to be used in AC 2023-2024 (Domain 2) which ensures that students can demonstrate data-driven instruction practices.

SLO 5. The course will be updated to accommodate the inclusion of candidates enrolled in the curriculum and instruction degree. Possible changes include refocusing the topic of the paper-in-lieu-of-thesis and altering the formative assignments for writing the paper. The Graduate Student Success Coach will need to monitor the link supplied by the college to help candidates who are being referred for assistance.