AC 2023-2024 Assessment

Master of Education in Special Education (524 A, C, D, and E)

    A – Concentration in Academically Gifted with add on certificate 016
    C – Concentration in Early Intervention with add on certificate 017
    D – Concentration in Elementary Mild/Moderate with add on certificate 013
    E – Concentration Middle/Secondary Mild/Moderate with add on certificates:
        014 – Middle School Mild/Moderate
        015 – Secondary Mild/Moderate
    024 – Educational Diagnostician

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 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: The Master of Education Special Education Programs at NSU follow the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Mission. The Council for Exceptional Children is a professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the success of children with exceptionalities. We accomplish our mission through advocacy, standards, and professional development.

CEC Core Values:
Visionary Thinking: Demonstrated by forward-thinking and courageous decision making dedicated to excellence and influence in an evolving environment.
Integrity: Demonstrated by ethical, responsive behavior, transparency, and accountability.
Inclusiveness: Demonstrated by a commitment to diversity, caring, and respect for the dignity and worth of all individuals.
Ratified December 8, 2014, by the Council for Exceptional Children Board of Directors

Methodology:
For the Master of Education in Special Education and add-on programs, the assessment process is as follows:
Step 1: Content in each course is aligned with the CEC Initial Preparation Standards as well as the Louisiana Teacher Preparation Competencies.
Step 2: Key assessments within courses are aligned to the CEC Initial Preparation Standards and the Louisiana Teacher Preparation Competencies.
Step 3: Key assessments are evaluated by instructors.
Step 4: Evaluation and feedback are uploaded into the Learning Management System.
Step 5: Faculty analyze data to address impact on candidate learning.
Step 6: Faculty use the data analysis for feedback and program improvement.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

SLO 1: Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge.

Course Map: Students in 524A (add-on 016) are not required to take a Praxis Exam. SLO 1 is assessed in this program through a series of essay responses embedded in the following courses: SPED 5830, SPED 5840, SPED 5860, SPED 5870 and SPED 5890.

The PRAXIS exam is not a requirement of the special education graduate and add-on programs since all students are already certified teachers when they enter the

programs. SLO 1 is assessed in this program through a series of standards-aligned artifacts completed throughout the courses and formally evaluated during EDUC 5850 in the form of a portfolio assessment.

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 related to curriculum and assessments for special populations

Measure 1.1 (Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

In Gifted Education (524A or 016), SLO 1 is assessed using a content assessment from courses. The content assessment is collected from SPED 5830, SPED 5840, SPED 5860, SPED 5870, and SPED 5890. A scope and sequence were developed in the five courses listed to ensure that content knowledge in gifted education is appropriately introduced, analyzed, synthesized, evaluated, and applied. These reports all require an essay response to one or more open-ended, content specific questions and must be based on readings from textbooks, articles, and/or other online documents. A summative assessment of essay responses constitutes the Content Assessment. Using the Content Assessment Rubric, candidates are assessed for comprehension, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, transformation, and application of content knowledge in their essay responses.

The benchmark performance is a score of 94% or higher for at least 70% of students. Candidates are assessed for content knowledge proficiency aligned to NAGC/CEC Teacher Preparation Standards in Gifted Education 1-7.

For 524C, 524D & 524E programs SLO 1 is assessed in this program through a series of standards-aligned artifacts completed throughout the courses and formally evaluated during EDUC 5850 in the form of a portfolio assessment.

The assessment is a portfolio, which consists of artifacts completed in a subset of the courses that are required for certification in mild/moderate special education, early intervention, and educational diagnostician. These artifacts require the creation of products that demonstrate competence in the topics covered in each course. For those candidates who complete a degree program (524C, 524D, and 524E), these artifacts are collected and evaluated as a portfolio assessment in EDUC 5850. Each assignment is aligned with one or more of the Special Education Preparation Standards of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Students choose which assignment or artifact they think will demonstrate their competence in each of the seven CEC standards. The artifact is submitted along with a reflection on how the artifact demonstrates the student's competence. This portfolio is evaluated using a rubric aligned with the CEC

standards. For students completing all or a portion of an Add-On program (013, 014, 015, 017, 024), artifacts are completed as a requirement of the individual courses and are evaluated using a rubric aligned with a subset of the CEC standard as appropriate. Artifact requirements and rubrics were developed and refined over the course of the 2022-2023 academic year. The initial target for this new assessment is for 100% of candidates to score 75% or higher on the rubric.

Findings:

For 524A: Target was met.
For 524C, 524D, 524E: Target was met.

Analysis:

For 524A: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. Based on analysis of the lowest scores of previous assessments, specific readings and essays in SPED 5890, SPED 5840, and SPED 5870 were revised for improvement in content knowledge in acceleration, ability grouping, and content assessment. The revision of specific readings and essays in content knowledge in acceleration, ability grouping, and content assessment led to improvement.

As a result of these changes, in the 2023-2024, the target was met. In 2023-2024, 80.5% of candidates met the target for SLO-1 of 94% or higher.

For 524C, 524D, 524E: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. The instructions for portfolio completion were revised to guide the students to describe not only their rationale for selecting a particular artifact for their portfolio but to discuss the current and future challenges faced in relation to the specific standard. These changes improved the students' ability to consider possible challenges and solutions in the field of special education, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2023-2024, the target was met. The implementation of a portfolio with a focus on current and future challenges faced in the Special education classroom allowed students to demonstrate their knowledge of the seven CEC initial preparation standards, and also to provide an explanation of how the artifacts submitted aligned with each standard. Rubric scores ranged from an average of 79% to 89.7%. The most common mistake was a failure to identify, implement, and discuss instructional planning and strategies.to address diverse learners. Average scores for each of the seven standards are as follows:

CEC Standard 1: 89.3%

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CEC Standard 2: 100%   CEC Standard 5: 88.7%
CEC Standard 3: 92.1%   CEC Standard 6: 91.2%
CEC Standard 4: 100%   CEC Standard 7: 91.2

Decision, Action, or Recommendation:

For 524A: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Based on analysis of the lowest scores, revisions in the essays related to specific content in the areas of content, process, product, and press differentiation will be made across all courses. These changes will improve the student's content knowledge, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

For 524C, 524D, 524E: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024- 2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Additional opportunities for students to develop a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies through virtual field experiences and classroom discussion will be added to identified courses. These changes will improve the student's ability to select and apply instructional strategies in relation to IEP development as well as Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) and Behavior Improvement Plans (BIP), thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 2: Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice

Course Map:
For 524A, SLO 2 is measured by completing a differentiated instructional strategies project in SPED 5890.
For 524C, SLO 2 is measured by completing a Family Literacy Parent Pack project in RDG 5020 Early Childhood Primary Reading Instruction.
For 524D & 524E, SLO 2 is measured by completing a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) project in EPSY 5370.

Departmental SLO	Program Student Learning Outcome
Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice	**524A:** Candidates plan and develop specific differentiated instructional strategies that enhance the cognitive and affective development of individuals with gifts and talents (NAGC/CEC Standard 5) Candidates demonstrate ability to plan, implement, and assess curricula for students with gifts and talents. **524C:** Candidates plan and develop and analyze the outcomes of specific differentiated literacy activities that enhance the cognitive development of young children with special needs. **524D & 524E:** Candidates will identify, observe, collect, analyze, and apply assessment data to evaluate student progress and plan targeted instruction.

Measure 2.1 (Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

For 524A, SLO 2 is measured in SPED 5890 Curriculum and Methods for the Academically Gifted. SLO 2 is assessed as the candidates engage in teaching two lessons. The candidates in SPED 5890 are required to provide two lessons indicating content and process differentiation for the gifted. Every learner develops content and process differentiation as aligned with curricular content knowledge and instructional planning and strategies standards as meet his or her individual needs for professional growth as an educator for students with gifts and talents. A rubric developed by the faculty that uses the concepts for differentiation delineated in the textbook for SPED 5890 assesses the lessons presented by the candidates. The concepts for differentiating content include Abstractness, Complexity, Variety, Organization for Learning Value, The Study of People, and the Study of Methods. The concepts for differentiating process include Higher Levels of Thinking, Open-Endedness, The Importance of Discovery, Evidence of Reasoning, Freedom of Choice, Group Interaction, Pacing, and Variety.

The candidates select some aspect of content differentiation, then plan and teach a lesson with their gifted students. Then the candidates select some aspect of process differentiation and likewise, plan and teach a lesson with their gifted students. The two lessons may be separate content areas or topics, or they may be the same content areas or topics, the candidates are given Freedom of Choice. The candidates post their lessons to a template that requires that they report number and demographic and diversity descriptions of their students, describe the lesson, provide evidence of student learning, and provide a journal reflection of the experience. Candidates were required to use two to three concepts for differentiating content and the same number for differentiating process. The primary objective is to discover the candidates' ability to plan differentiated lessons and articulate those lessons based on the concepts that they have read about and discussed in class.

There is no numerical score for this assignment in the traditional sense as it is a pass or a re-submit until passed. Candidates must obtain a pass, or re-submit until passed, on their lesson plan before they can complete their field experiences. The pass is a score of 4 on the rubric before given approval to do the field experiences. The rubric assessment helps the candidates learn the process of developing differentiation and implementing the differentiation in actual lessons in the classroom.

For 524C, SLO2 is measured in RDG 5020 Early Childhood Primary Reading Instruction by completing a Family Literacy Parent Pack. Candidates facilitate family literacy by designing parent packs that include a quality children's literature text and developmentally appropriate, hands-on literacy activities that align with the State Standards. Candidates send the packs home with children to engage in the activities with their parents, the parents document the children's work, and the parent pack is returned for teacher assessment. Family Literacy Parent Packs will be scored on a rubric aligned with the National Association for the Education of Young Children with a

criterion of 100% of candidates scoring at least 80% on the rubric.

For 524D and 524E, SLO 2 is measured by completing a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) project and an analysis of data in EPSY 5370 Behavioral Management and Modification. Candidates must complete a functional behavioral assessment for one student with mild/moderate exceptional needs in Grades 1-12 with challenging behavior. By completing the assignments and/or tasks of this course, each candidate will: identify antecedents that may evoke behavior and consequences that may maintain behavior through functional analysis methodology, describe appropriate interventions that are linked to functional assessment outcomes, write a systematic plan for changing behavior that includes the following components: target behavior, environment(s) where intervention will occur, intervention strategy, measurement and schedule for data collection, and graph for visual analysis, design and implement environmental adaptations to assist in the support of appropriate behaviors, and accurately measure student performance to verify the effectiveness of behavioral support programs and/or determine the need for program revision.

Candidates are provided with a rubric that is used to evaluate their work. The rubric is being updated to better align with CEC standards. Program faculty will continue to review the rubric for validity and reliability, ensuring that the assessment measures what it is intended to measure and that it is reliable over time. The rubric includes the following subsections: completeness, consistency, behavior assessment summary, final graph, and narrative description, discussion of results, and intervention decisions and explanation. To score "Proficient" on the rubric, candidates must earn at least 85% on the total rubric. The goal is for 100% of candidates to score at least 85% or better.

Findings:

For 524A: The target was met.
For 524C: The target was met.
For 524D & 524E: The target was not met.

Analysis:

For 524A: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. Candidates needed to improve in delineating the vocabulary of content differentiation and variances between content and process differentiation. Podcasts and virtual discussions were added to aid in candidate improvement in gaining skill in using the vocabulary of content differentiation and comprehending the variances between content and process differentiation in order to plan and implement content and process differentiation. As a result of these changes, in the AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Candidates were capable to develop content and process differentiation as aligned with curricular content knowledge and instructional planning and strategies standards as met his or her individual needs for professional growth as an educator for students with gifts and talents.

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For 524C: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results, the following changes were implemented in 2023- 2024. The most common area needing revisions related to designing and implementing assessments for young children. The program courses were reviewed to align with the CEC Early Intervention Standards released in 2020. This resulted in changes to multiple courses in the sequence with an emphasis placed on designing and implementing assessments for young children with special needs. As a result of these changes in alignment in the AC 2023-2024, the target was met. All candidates scored 80% or better on the rubric for the Family Literacy Parent Pack. Eight candidates completed the Family Literacy Parent Pack during AC 2023-2024. On their first attempt, candidates scored between 94% and 98%, which increased to between 98% and100% on the second attempt. There were no patterns in errors across candidate performance.

For 524D & 524E: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024. In accordance with the newest CEC standards, the emphasis on functional behavior assessment was decreased and focus shifted toward alignment of behavioral assessment data with intervention procedures. A new textbook was selected that supports this change in focus on intervention design and alignment. These changes improved the student's ability to identify common behavior problems and their possible causes and to select or design interventions with a high probability of success, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward. Although changes were made in AC 2023-2024, students completed the elements of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) with focus on developing interventions the target was met. Candidates scored between 80% and 100% on the functional behavior assessment project with an average of 99.3%. The lowest scores were in consistency and revisions. This means that candidates had the most difficulty in aligning the behavior function with the intervention and then choosing next steps that were consistent with the function. They also had difficulty resolving initial problems in the functional behavioral assessment prior to moving forward with the intervention. Mean scores for the sections of the rubric are as follows:

Completeness: 100%
Consistency: 85.3%
Revisions: 81.9%
Final Graph and Narrative: 96.8%
Discussion of Results: 98.2%
Decision and Explanations: 98.5%

Decision, Action, or Recommendation:

For 524A: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Additional podcasts and video casts will be implemented to

aid in candidate improvement in gaining skill in comprehending the variances between content and process differentiation in order to plan and implement content and process differentiation lesson plans; thereby, continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

For 524C: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes (as proposed in 2023) in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty will change the assessment tool to specifically focus on the application of special education practices to the design of early intervention instruction. This assessment will be the learning center planning assignment that is already in use in SPED 5370. These changes will improve the candidate's ability to apply knowledge and skills related to specific supports for developmental delays in the design of early intervention instructional practices, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

For 524D and 524E: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. Additional opportunities for students to develop a repertoire of evidence-based intervention strategies through virtual field experiences, and classroom discussion will be added to identified courses. These changes will improve the student's ability to select and apply interventions in relation to IEP development as well as Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) and Behavior Improvement Plans (BIP), thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 3: Candidates will model ethical and professional behaviors

Course Map:
For 524A, SLO 3 is measured by the Practicum Reflection Journal Assessment in SPED 5900 Practicum.
For 524C, 524D, and 524E, SLO 3 is measured by completing the Disposition Assessment in SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Model professional behaviors and characteristics. (Dispositional Evaluation)	524A: Candidates demonstrate professional learning and ethical practice in working with students with gifts and talents. 524C, 524D and 524E: Candidates will model the Council for Exceptional Children Professional and Ethical Standards

Measure 3.1 (Dispositions)

For 524A, SLO 3 is assessed through the candidates' successful completion of the practicum experience and Practicum Reflective Journal Assessment that specifically provides evidence of candidates' application of knowledge and skills and ability to reflect and improve practice. The Practicum Reflective Journal Assessment is a summative report of the weekly reflective journals. At the end of the practicum semester, the scores for the weekly journals are summed and percentages for each category and criteria are determined. A rubric developed by the faculty is used to assess the practicum reflective journal posts. Weekly postings are explanations about WHAT candidates are teaching and reflections about HOW they are teaching. The candidates share activities, list methods of instruction and resources, tell how they are planning, implementing, and assessing differentiated curriculum for gifted instruction, provide positive learning environments, and describe what students are learning. Then the candidates share their critiques, insights, and plans for improvement. All candidates enrolled in practicum read each other's Reflective Journals and provide encouragement, empathy, and feedback. Journals show the entire process of modeling professional behaviors from gaining knowledge and skills, to teaching from the knowledge and skills, to assessing learning, to making changes while collaborating, providing feedback, and engaging in professional learning and ethical practice whereas the observations do not show that entire loop, only a snapshot of modeling professional behaviors. The goal is that 100% of students score exemplary.

For 524C, 524D, and 524E, SLO 3 is evaluated using the NSU Disposition Form in SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management. The Disposition Form is the artifact used for evidence of student dispositions. The faculty created the dispositional evaluation based on agreed-upon best practices and constructs outlined in the InTASC Standards and the CAEP Standards. 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 a 5-point Likert scale. The goal is that at least 80% of candidates score an average of 4 or higher on the 5-point scale.

Findings:

For 524A: The target was met.
For 524C, 524D & 524E: The target was met

Analysis:

For 524A: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024. Competency in ethical and professional behavior was enhanced through improvement in self-assessment and providing feedback by increasing virtual meetings. As a result of these changes, in the

AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Findings for 2023-2024 show that 100% of candidates were exemplary in measures of advocacy and equity indicating competency in providing interactions attending to the cognitive, affective, and diverse needs of the gifted.

For 524C, 524D & 524E: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024. Since the two lowest areas of the dispositions indicated lack of confidence in time management and conflict resolution, modules addressing these topics were added to SPED 5960. Less emphasis was placed on textbook content and more emphasis placed on the completion of interactive modules offered through organizations or created within the learning management system. These changes improved students' ability to manage time effectively and to employ strategies to resolve conflicts when they arise within the educational setting, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

As a result of these changes, in the AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Out of 23 candidates, 22 (95.6%) scored an average of 4 or higher on the disposition's rubric. When examining individual items on the dispositions rubric average scores from 3.9 to 4.9. The item rated the highest was "Makes decisions and acts with honesty and integrity" and the item rated the lowest was concerned with the ability to resolve conflicts (4.1 out of 5).

Decision, Action, or Recommendation:

For 524A: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Emphasis on peer feedback will be enhanced through increasing virtual meetings. These changes will increase collaboration among candidates and improve candidate's ability to advocate for their students and provide authentic classroom experiences, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

For 524C, 524D & 524E: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Interactive modules designed to help with peer/peer, teacher/student, and administration/teacher conflict resolution will be added to coursework. This information will be a valuable addition to candidates' toolboxes and will thereby continue to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 4: Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences for the discipline

Course Map:
For 524A, SLO 4 is measured by the Oral Portfolio Defense in SPED 5850.For 524C,

524D and 524E, SLO 4 is measured by a Grant Proposal in SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management

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)	524A: Candidates demonstrate creativity, ideas, processes, and experiences in gifted education. 524C, 524D and 524E: Candidates will exhibit creative thinking in special education by identifying a specific classroom/student need and writing a grant to meet the need.

Measure 4.1 (Knowledge and Skills)

For 524A, SLO 4 is assessed through an Oral Portfolio Defense. The assessment benchmark performance is 80% of candidates scoring at the Acceptable level or higher in all categories. The candidates complete a Portfolio of the knowledge, experiences, and growth they gained through the Gifted Education program. Each candidate is assigned a committee of three faculty members. The committee reviews the Portfolio and ensures that the portfolio is complete, containing artifacts from all courses in the program. The Portfolio assessment is both a structured and dynamic comprehensive compilation of the candidate's experience and performance in the program. Candidates submit artifacts to an Electronic Portfolio System to develop their Portfolio, then submit their Portfolio on a DVD. Throughout the Gifted Education program, specific artifacts are stored in the Electronic Portfolio System as key assessments assigned from each course. However, individual differences are supported such that each portfolio is unique as candidates are allowed and encouraged to include other items that they believe have indicated learning and growth in Gifted Education, including examples of their students' work. Once the committee has ensured that the Portfolio contains the required artifacts, the committee reviews the Portfolio using a faculty developed rubric. The categories on the rubric are Target, Acceptable, and Not Acceptable with a consensus rating by the committee. A score of Target indicates candidates were highly effective in making connections with the artifacts in their Portfolios which led to an increased effectiveness in instructional planning and professionalism. Candidates were responsible, made excellent decisions, were very creative, and purposely engaged in critical thinking and problem solving. A score of Acceptable indicates candidates could be responsible, make good decisions, and reveal creative/critical thinking but not as effectively as the Target category. Not Acceptable would indicate lack of responsibility, decision-making, creative/critical thinking through incomplete or inaccurate descriptions. A Written and Oral Defense of the Portfolio is presented and scored by the committee. Committee members may also ask clarifying questions. Each committee member rates each candidate, then a consensus is decided to determine if the candidate was satisfactory or unsatisfactory overall. Very rarely is a candidate rated unsatisfactory such that they

must redo the Oral Defense completely. However, candidates may be rated Not Acceptable in specific categories and then the candidate will need to prepare a specific written report for that category or categories as directed by the committee and/or another oral defense of that category or categories. Candidates were responsible for indicating the alignment of their Portfolio with the NAGC/CEC Standards through their written report and oral defense. Candidates refer to the NAGC/CEC standards both written and orally to express their perceived competency level as beginning professionals in gifted education and to describe how and where they would continue their growth as professionals once they have completed the M.Ed. degree. The goal is that 100% of students score "target" on the assessment.

For 524C, 524D and 524E, SLO 4 is assessed through a mock grant writing project in the course SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management. The Grant Proposal was changed to an Innovation Proposal. This assignment allowed students to propose an innovative program at their school by setting goals, selecting materials and budgets, creating procedures, and designing a method of evaluation. The Innovation Proposal focuses on creative thinking that is relevant to their individual classroom and school environments. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric with four categories: Unacceptable, Needs Improvement, Acceptable, and Exemplary. The and the target performance is that 100% of candidates will score "Acceptable" (75%) or above.

Findings:

For 524A: The target was met.
For 524C, 524D & 524E: The target was met

Analysis:

For 524A: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024 according to the plan of action from 2022-2023. Actions were taken to support the improvement in candidates making connections with the artifacts in their portfolios. Specific instructions related to the written report were revised to assure improvement in creative/critical thinking and decision-making in gifted education.

As a result of these changes, in the AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Candidates were responsible, able to demonstrate creativity, ideas, processes, and experiences in gifted education. In both the written report and the oral defense, the committee rated 100% of candidates as acceptable or target in all categories.

For 524C, 524D & 524E: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024. To better determine areas of strengths and weaknesses, the rubric for the Innovation Proposal was refined to align with the CEC initial teacher preparation standards. These changes improved the students' ability to focus on specific processes and

ideas that are critical to the development of a proposal for new and innovative educational programs. The Grant Proposal was changed to an Innovation Proposal. This assignment allowed students to propose an innovative program at their school by setting goals, selecting materials and budgets, creating procedures, and designing a method of evaluation.

As a result of these changes, in the AC 2023-2024, the target was met. All 23 candidates scored in the acceptable range (75% or higher) on the Innovation Proposal. All participants scored 100% on their final submissions.

Decision, Action, or Recommendation:

For 524A: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The instructions for the defense will be revised to improve the candidate's ability to articulate differentiation and creativity and make connections with the artifacts in their portfolios, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

For 524C, 524D & 524E: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students performed well on innovative proposals but had difficulty identifying areas of need. Resources and increased focus on state education current events will be introduced across the curriculum. Helping students to identify school- or district-based needs for specialized training, updated technology, and classroom materials tailored to the diverse needs of students with disabilities will help them become advocates for students with exceptionalities and assets to their schools, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 5: Make responsible decisions and problem solving, using data to inform actions when appropriate.

Course Map:
For 524A, SLO 5 is measured by the Identification of Gifted Students Presentation in SPED 5840.
For 524C, SLO 5 is measure by the Early Intervention Assessment in SPED 5310
For 524D and 524E, SLO 5 is measured by Curriculum-Based Assessment (CBA) project in SPED 5380 Curriculum-Based Assessment

Departmental SLO	Program Student Learning Outcome
Make responsible decisions and problem solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate (SPE #5 Student Learning Impact)	**524A:** Candidates demonstrate responsible decision making and problem-solving using data to inform actions when appropriate. **524C:** Candidates will make responsible decisions and problem-solve using data from an early intervention assessment to information actions. **524D & 524E:** Candidates will make responsible decisions and problem-solve using curriculum-based assessment data to inform actions when appropriate.

Measure 5.1 (Knowledge and Skills)

For 524A, SLO 5 is assessed in SPED 5840 where candidates learn about the identification of students with gifts and talents. Candidates gain theoretical knowledge and practical principles related to understanding the process and procedures for identification of students with gifts and talents. They learn about the state policies and procedures, but they also learn assessment and identification processes related to several theoretical models. Candidates gain knowledge regarding the limitations and biases of assessments and comprehend equitable approaches for identifying learners from diverse backgrounds. They learn how to engage school personnel and families in the process of identification and placement. The Identification of Gifted Students PowerPoint Presentation helps them gain skills in collaboration and advocacy for the gifted. Candidates are given specific instructions to choose an audience to share the policies about identification from the State and compare identification and assessment based on a model or theory from your readings in a PowerPoint (or other media) presentation. A rubric developed by faculty is used to assess the message content of the presentation and the effectiveness of message delivery, including audience awareness. The assessment aligns with NAGC/CEC standards for assessment and professional practice and ethics with emphasis related to relevant laws and policies, characteristics of learners, and individual differences. The goal is that 100% of students will score a minimum of proficient.

For 524C SLO 5 is evaluated using an Early Intervention Assessment completed in SPED 5310 Identification and Assessment in Early Intervention. Candidates will construct an assessment portfolio based on a child between birth and 5 years 11 months. The goal for this assignment is 100% of candidates will score 80% or higher on this assessment.

For 524D and 524E, SLO 5 is evaluated using a Curriculum-based Assessment (CBA) project and reflection in SPED 5380 Curriculum-based Assessment. The CBA assessment is evaluated using a rubric based on CEC Standard 4 Assessment: Beginning special education professionals use multiple methods of assessment and data sources in making educational decisions. A CBA rubric was developed, and Louisiana follows the CEC Standards. The quality of the assessment was measured using CEC measurement principles and practices to interpret assessment results. The

criteria for success are the candidates' ability to use multiple types of assessment information in making responsible decisions and problem-solving using CBA data. The goal for this assessment is that 100% of candidates will score 80% or higher on the rubric.

Findings:

For 524A: The target was met.
For 524C: The target was met**.**
For 524D & 524E: The target was met.
Analysis:

For 524A: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024 of using assessments for developing goals and objectives. Faculty developed goals and objectives which improved the candidate's ability to develop curriculum based on identifying gifted characteristics

As a result of these changes, in the AC 2023-2024, the target was met with 100% of candidates scoring either Proficient or Exemplary. The AC 2023-2024 results indicated that 100% of candidates scored over 90% overall. Proficient scores included message content related to use of assessments for developing goals and objectives which improved the candidate's ability to develop curriculum based on identifying gifted characteristics, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

For 524C: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023- 2024. While the rubric for the Early Intervention Assessment portfolio had been updated to align to the new CEC standards for early childhood special education and early intervention, the course delivery format was updated to include clear links between content, instructions, and assignments and how they were assessed. Rubrics were incorporated into the learning management system to allow for more detailed analysis to identify areas of strength and weakness. These changes improved the students' ability to focus on areas that needed improvement within the topic of early intervention assessment such as developmental appropriateness, family involvement, administration and analysis of results, and development of appropriate goals and objectives based on assessment results.

As a result of these changes, in the AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Ten candidates completed the Early Intervention Assessment portfolio. All ten candidates received 100% on this assignment.

For 524D & 524E: In 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024. The course content was updated to include a textbook that focuses specifically on the concept of curriculum-based measurement. The new textbook allowed for a more specific understanding of utilizing assessment to make informed decisions. Assignment rubrics were also incorporated into the course learning management system to assist in data

analysis and improve the ability to identify specific areas of strength and weakness. These changes improved the student's ability to focus on areas that need improvement within the topic of problem-solving and decision making such as the selection of appropriate assessment techniques, developmental appropriateness, administration and analysis of results, and development of appropriate goals and objectives based on assessment results The Curriculum-Based Assessment was not changed during this academic year.

As a result of these changes, in the AC 2023-2024, the target was met. In the Fall 2023 semester 11 candidates enrolled in SPED 5380, but only 10 completed the course. Of those 10 who completed the course, 100% scored 90% or higher, therefore exceeding the criterion of 80%. In the Spring 2024 semester 8 candidates enrolled in and finished the course. Of these 8 candidates, 100% scored 90% or better, also exceeding the criterion of 80%.

Decision, Action, or Recommendation:

For 524A: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will add a specific assignment in SPED 5840 related to using critical thinking activities and assessments to enhance curriculum based on specific learning goals and objectives for the gifted, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

For 524C: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Course delivery format will be updated to address the needs of current students. This will include the utilization of personalized learning pathways and advanced data analytics. This targeted support will optimize student engagement, identify specific areas of growth, and promote continuous development in early childhood special education and intervention practices, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

For 524D & 524E: In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Practical examples and case studies will be incorporated into SPED 5380 to enhance understanding. The provision of opportunities for hands-on practice with assessment tools, the utilization of diverse assessment strategies to cater to different learning styles, and the integration of feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement will also be implemented, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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

Program faculty made the following changes examining results of data analysis from AC 2022-2023 which resulted in improved student learning as well as program improvement in AC 2023-2024.

Program 524A (016): Concentration in Academically Gifted

SLO 1: Specific readings and essays in SPED 5890, SPED 5840, and SPED 5870 were revised for improvement in content knowledge in acceleration, ability grouping, and content assessment.

SLO 2: Podcasts and virtual discussions were added to aid in candidate improvement in gaining skill in using the vocabulary of content differentiation and comprehending the variances between content and process differentiation in order to plan and implement content and process differentiation.

SLO 3: Competency in ethical and professional behavior was enhanced through improvement in self-assessment and providing feedback by increasing virtual meetings.

SLO 4: Actions were taken to support the improvement in candidates making connections with the artifacts in their portfolios. Specific instructions related to the written report were revised to assure improvement in creative/critical thinking and decision-making in gifted education.

SLO 5: Faculty developed goals and objectives which improved the candidate's ability to develop curriculum based on identifying gifted characteristics.

Programs 524C, 524D & 524E (013, 014, 015, 017, 024): Early Intervention and Mild/Moderate Elementary and Middle and Secondary Concentrations:

SLO 1: The instructions for portfolio completion were revised to guide the students to describe not only their rationale for selecting a particular artifact for their portfolio but to discuss the current and future challenges faced in relation to the specific standard.

SLO 2: The program courses were reviewed to align with the CEC Early Intervention Standards released in 2020. In accordance with the newest CEC standards, the emphasis on functional behavior assessment was decreased and focus shifted toward alignment of behavioral assessment data with intervention procedures. A new textbook was selected that supports this change in focus on intervention design and alignment.

SLO 3: Since the two lowest areas of the dispositions indicated lack of confidence in time management and conflict resolution, modules addressing these topics were added

to SPED 5960. Less emphasis was placed on textbook content and more emphasis placed on the completion of interactive modules offered through organizations or created within the learning management system.

SLO 4: To better determine areas of strengths and weaknesses, the rubric for the Innovation Proposal was refined to align with the CEC initial teacher preparation standards. These changes improved the students' ability to focus on specific processes and ideas that are critical to the development of a proposal for new and innovative educational programs. The Grant Proposal was changed to an Innovation Proposal.

SLO 5: While the rubric for the Early Intervention Assessment portfolio had been updated to align to the new CEC standards for early childhood special education and early intervention, the course delivery format was updated to include clear links between content, instructions, and assignments and how they were assessed. Rubrics were incorporated into the learning management system to allow for more detailed analysis to identify areas of strength and weakness. For 542 D and E, the course content was updated to include a textbook that focuses specifically on the concept of curriculum-based measurement. The new textbook allowed for a more specific understanding of utilizing assessment to make informed decisions. Assignment rubrics were also incorporated into the course learning management system to assist in data analysis and improve the ability to identify specific areas of strength and weakness.

Plan of Action 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

Program 524A (016): Concentration in Academically Gifted

SLO 1: Faculty will make revisions in essays related to specific content in the areas of content, process, product, and press differentiation will be made across all courses.

SLO 2: Faculty will implement additional podcasts and video casts to aid in candidate improvement in gaining skill in comprehending the variances between content and process differentiation in order to plan and implement content and process differentiation lesson plans; thereby

SLO 3: Faculty will implement opportunities for continued emphasis on peer feedback will be enhanced through increasing virtual meetings. These changes will increase collaboration among candidates and improve candidate's ability to advocate for their students and provide authentic classroom experiences.

SLO 4: Faculty will revise the instructions for the defense to improve the candidate's ability to articulate differentiation and creativity and make connections with the artifacts in their portfolios.

SLO 5: Faculty will change assignments and activities across courses but specifically in SPED 5840 related to using critical thinking activities and assessments to enhance curriculum based on specific learning goals and objectives for the gifted.

Programs 524C, 524D & 524E (013, 014, 015, 017, 024): Early Intervention and Mild/Moderate Elementary and Middle and Secondary Concentrations

SLO 1: Additional opportunities for students to develop a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies through virtual field experiences and classroom discussion will be added to identified courses. These changes will improve the student's ability to consider possible challenges and solutions in the field of special education.

SLO 2: For 524C, the program courses will continue to be reviewed to align with the CEC Early Intervention Standards released in 2020. The faculty will consider changing the assessment product to focus more specifically on the application of special education practices to the design of early intervention instruction. For 524D and 524E EPSY 5370, in accordance with the newest CEC standards, the emphasis on functional behavior assessment will be decreased and instead shifted toward alignment of behavioral assessment data with intervention procedures. Additional opportunities for students to develop a repertoire of evidence-based intervention strategies through virtual field experiences and classroom discussion will be added to identified courses These changes will improve the student's ability to identify common behavior problems and their possible causes and to select or design interventions with a high probability of success.

SLO 3: Interactive modules designed to help with peer/peer, teacher/student, and administration/teacher conflict resolution will be added to SPED 5960 coursework. This information will be a valuable addition to candidates' toolboxes.

SLO 4: Resources and increased focus on state education current events will be introduced across the curriculum. Helping students to identify school- or district-based needs for specialized training, updated technology, and classroom materials tailored to the diverse needs of students with disabilities will help them become advocates for students with exceptionalities and assets to their schools

SLO 5: For 524C, course delivery format will be updated to address the needs of current students. This will include the utilization of personalized learning pathways and advanced data analytics. This targeted support will optimize student engagement, identify specific areas of growth, and promote continuous development in early childhood special education and intervention practices, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward. For 524D and 524E, Practical examples and case studies will be incorporated into SPED 5380 to enhance understanding. The provision of opportunities for hands-on practice with assessment tools, the utilization of diverse assessment strategies to cater to different learning styles, and the integration of feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement will also be implemented.