AC 2019-2020 Assessment

Program: Master of Arts in Adult Learning and Development (545)

Division: Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development

Department: School of Education

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Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Mission. 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 mission of the Adult Learning and Development program at Northwestern State University is to prepare adult educator-leaders for careers in the many different venues where adults learn, including corporate training centers, online education, community colleges, the workforce, and adult education programs. The online program emphasizes practice-based learning and research and

provides graduate and undergraduate learning experiences to adult learning practitioners who come from, or wish to pursue, advanced practice and leadership roles in the variety of contexts in which adult learning occurs.

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

(1)   Data from assessments provide results on candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions as appropriate for professional education programs.

(2)   In June of each year, program faculty and stakeholders review data to make data-driven, curricular decisions.

To determine specific areas of weakness in student performance against the student- learning outcome, an item analysis of each assessment was conducted, and the following descriptive statistics for each assessment were calculated: cumulative mean of the overall project score, standard deviation of the scores based on percentage score, the percentage of student above and below the benchmark score, and the mean deviation from benchmark for students not achieving the benchmark.

The student projects and papers used in this assessment fall into three categories: research papers, presentations, and reflections. Each of these assessment instrument types was developed from the following resources and best practices:

- Research paper assessments and rubrics or scoring guides were developed using recommendations from the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th Edition and Sarah Efron and Ruth Ravid's work in *Action Research in Education*.

- Presentation assessments and scoring guides were developed from Robert Garmston and Bruce Wellman's work in *How to Make Presentations that Teach and Transform*.

- Reflection assessments and scoring guides were developed based on the work of David Boud on reflective practice and self-assessment.

Course content was developed using input from program stakeholders, community, industry, and from content-area experts. To ensure assessment content validity and alignment with course learning objectives as provided in the syllabus, specific course

objectives are explicitly aligned with each course module and assessment.

Student Learning Outcomes

(SLO) 1:

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge (SPA #1)	Demonstrate an understanding of the formal and informal organizational systems of adult learning.

Measure 1.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills)

SLO 1 is assessed through a research paper in EDAL 5000. The 2019-2020 assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the benchmark performance is a cumulative mean score of 80%.

Finding: Target was Not Met

2018-19 Administration	2019-20 Administration
EDAL 5000 Final Research Paper Cumulative Mean: 84.2% Standard Deviation: 11.6% Above/Equal Benchmark: 56% Below: 44%	*EDAL 5000 Final Research Paper* Cumulative Mean: 75.02% Standard Deviation: 18.05% Above/Equal Benchmark: 56% Below: 44%

Analysis:

In AC 2018-2019, the target was met.

Analysis of the AC 2018-19 results showed that, while the target was met with the cumulative mean of scores on the EDAL 5000 Final Research Paper being above benchmark (μ = 84.2%), students made errors in properly using APA style for citations and references, losing an average of 8.4% in this category.

Based on analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. In accordance with the plan of action from AC 2018-2019, in AC 2019-2020 additional APA content/emphasis was incorporated in the course.

These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge.

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As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was not met, though result approached benchmark.

In AC 2019-2020, the cumulative mean decreased by 9.2% from the AC 2018-19 administration of the assessment with a cumulative mean of 75.02%. Scores from the AC 2019-2020 administration were less consistent than AC 2018-19 with an 18.05% standard deviation versus 11.6%, but the percentage of students who scored above benchmark remained the same and showed that most students (56%) scored above benchmark. The is explained by the much larger standard deviation in the scores in AC 2019-2020, with one outlier overall score of 38%. The drop in the overall mean of the scores can be partially attributed to the one very low outlier score of 38%. Without this score the remainder of the class averaged 79%, which is very close to benchmark. Also, the instructor last year did not use the rubric for grading and the assessment was based on instructor comments. AC 2019-2020 administration was scored using a detailed rubric.

Decision, action or recommendation.

In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2020-2021, faculty will develop and provide an APA WebEx workshop in Fall 2020 with additional emphasis on carefully following APA guidelines since APA errors remained a problem with the assessment in AC 2019-2020.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 2:

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice (SPA #2)	Apply principals of development through adulthood to the adult learning process, learning how to learn, and self-directed learning

Measure: 2.1. **(Direct – Knowledge, Skills)**

SLO 2 is assessed through a Self-Directed Learning Presentation and a Three Generations Study Research Paper in EDAL 5010. The assessments are evaluated using a rubric and a scoring guide for the presentation, and the benchmark performance for both is a cumulative mean score of 80%.

AC 2019 – 2020 Assessment

Finding: Target was Met

2018-19 Administration	2019-20 Administration
EDAL 5010 Self-Directed Learning Presentation Cumulative Mean: 94.6% SdtDv: 5.2% Above/Equal Benchmark: 100% Below: 0%	*EDAL 5010 Self-Directed Learning Presentation* Cumulative Mean: 95.2% SdtDv: 1.8% Above/Equal Benchmark: 100% Below: 0%
EDAL 5010 Three Generations Study Research Paper Cumulative Mean: 88.7% SdtDv: 8.0% Above/Equal Benchmark: 75% Below: 25%	*EDAL 5010 Three Generations Study Research Paper* Cumulative Mean: 89.5% SdtDv: 7.3% Above/Equal Benchmark: 100% Below: 0%

Analysis.

In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. Analysis of AC 2018-2019 results showed that, while the target was met with the cumulative mean of scores on the EDAL 5010 Self-Directed Learning Presentation and Three Generations Study Research Paper being above benchmark (μ = 94.6% & μ = 88.7%), students made errors in following presentation guidelines and properly using APA style for citations and references.

Based on analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. In accordance with the plan of action from AC 2018-2019, in AC 2019-2020 faculty incorporated additional APA content/emphasis in the course, along with additional emphasis on following presentation assignment guidelines. Faculty augmented course content augmented with the addition of a video conference WebEx on using APA.

These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met.

EDAL 5010 Self-Directed Learning Presentation: Analysis of AC 2019-2020 assessment results indicates that all students (n=9) scored above benchmark. This was equal to the AC 2018-2019 administration. Compared to the AC 2018-2019 administration, the cumulative mean of scores increased from 94.6% to 95.2% in AC 2019-2020, which is an increase of 0.6%. Item analysis of instructor feedback from AC 2019-2020 administration found that most students included the required components in their PowerPoint slide deck, but lost points because they did not follow all assignment guidelines regarding construction of the PowerPoint slides.

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EDAL 5010 Three Generations Study Research Paper: In AC 2019-2020, 100% of students scored above benchmark, which is up from 75% in 2018-2019. The cumulative average increased slightly as well from 88.7% in 2018-2019 to 89.5% in 2019-2020 (n=9).

Analysis of student scores indicated that students generally addressed assignment guidelines. Item analysis of the results AC 2019-2020 results from each rubric category shows that correctly applying APA style was the lowest scoring area. In AC 2018-2019, correct APA format of citations and references was a weakness and remains so in AC 2019-2020.

Decision, action or recommendation.

In AC 2019-2020, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2020-2021, faculty will increase instructional emphasis on following assignment guidelines on the Self- Directed Learning Presentation, as following assignment guidelines remained the greatest achievement weakness in student performance. In AC 2019-2020 *Three Generations Study Research Paper*, correct APA form of citing sources remained a weakness; therefore, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will increase emphasis on following APA guidelines by offering an enhanced APA Webex to all program graduate students in fall of 2020 with increased emphasis on correct usage of the style.

These changes will improve the student's ability to apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 3:

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Model professional behaviors and characteristics	Demonstrate/model knowledge of how adults learn in small group settings with emphasis on personal, interpersonal, and leadership skills.

Measure: 3.1. (Direct – Skills, Dispositions)

SLO 3 is assessed through a group project, presentation, and reflection in EDAL 5110. The assessment is evaluated using a scoring guide for the presentation and instructor comments for the final report. The benchmark performance is a cumulative mean score of 80%.

AC 2019 – 2020 Assessment

Finding: Target was Met.

2018-19 Administration	2019-20 Administration
EDAL 5110 Collaborative Project Presentation Guidelines *EDAL 5110 Final Report -Teamwork and Process* Cumulative Mean: 93.8% Standard Deviation: 4.7% Above/Equal Benchmark: 100% Below: 0%	*EDAL 5110 Collaborative Project Presentation Guidelines* *EDAL 5110 Final Report -Teamwork and Process* Cumulative Mean: 94.8% Standard Deviation: 2.3% Above/Equal Benchmark: 100% Below: 0%

Analysis.

In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. Analysis of AC 2018-19 results showed that, while the target was met with the cumulative mean of scores on the EDAL 5110 Collaborative Project Presentation and Final Report being above benchmark (cumulative combine μ = 94.6%), students made errors in properly using APA style for citations and references in the Final Report-Teamwork and Process.

Based on analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. In accordance with the plan of action from AC 2018-2019, in AC 2019-2020 additional APA and writing content/emphasis was incorporated in the course.

These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to model professional behaviors and characteristics.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met.

As with the AC 2018-19 administration, all students exceeded the benchmark score in the AC 2019-2020 administration of the assessment. However, the very small class size (n=4) makes drawing valid conclusions from the assessment difficult. Due to the small class size, all four students presented as a single group and each completed the Final Report – Teamwork and Process.

The cumulative mean of scores was 94.8%, which was up by 1.0% from AC 2018-2019. Item analysis from the scoring guide and instructor comments indicated that the presentation portion of the assessments showed no significant weaknesses, but APA formatting errors and writing errors were evident in the Final Report-Teamwork and Process as they were in the AC 2018-2019 administration.

AC 2019 – 2020 Assessment

Decision, action or recommendation.

In AC 2019-2020, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2020-2021, faculty will increase emphasis on the fundamentals of writing skills and APA in the early weeks of the AC 2020-2021 class to improve student writing skills. Faculty will offer additional APA support for students with the addition of an enhanced APA and writing Webex offering in Fall 2020.

These changes will improve the student's ability to model professional behaviors and characteristics, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 4:

Departmental Student Learning	Program Student Learning Outcome
Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline (SPA #3)	Design, develop, conduct, and assess adult learning experiences applying relevant research-based practice and theory.

Measure: 4.1. **(Direct – Knowledge, Skills)**

SLO 4 is assessed through a final learning program project in EDUC 5480 (formerly EDAL 5030). The assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the benchmark performance is a cumulative mean score of 80%.

Finding: Target was Met.

2018-19 Administration	2019-20 Administration
EDUC 5480 Final Project: Learning Program Instructor/Facilitator Guide Cumulative Mean: 91.1% Standard Deviation: 13% Above/Equal Benchmark: 82% Below: 18%	*EDUC 5480 Final Project: Learning Program Instructor/Facilitator Guide* Cumulative Mean: 80% Standard Deviation: 40% Above/Equal Benchmark: 80% Below: 20% N= 10

Analysis.

In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. While analysis of the AC 2018-2019 administration showed that meeting the criteria for the Instructional Plan was the primary error, the cumulative mean and percentage of students meeting benchmark

increased with the AC 2018-2019 assessment. In AC 2018-2019 results, the mean score increased by 5 percentage points from 86.3% to 91.1%, which is not only above benchmark but also represents the third consecutive annual increase in administration (78.8% in AC 2016-17, 86.3% in AC 2017-18, 91.1% in AC 2018-19). Also, analysis of the AC 2018-2019 data showed the percentage of students exceeding benchmark increased by 4 percentage points, which also represents the third consecutive annual increase in administration (60% in AC 2016-17, 78% in AC 2017-18, 82% in AC 2018-19).

Based on analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty emphasized following assignment guidelines for the instructional plan section of the assignment and faculty added explicit exemplars of the project with examples of where most student errors occur to provide additional guidance on project requirements and to improve student performance on this area of the assessment.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met.

These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline.

In AC 2019-2020, the cumulative mean and percentage of students meeting benchmark decreased from AC 2018-2019, primarily due to 2 outliers within the total dataset (n=10). The outliers contributed scores of zero to the dataset (due to non-submission of work), which accounts for the increase in standard deviation overall. Though these outliers represent the 20% below benchmark, the target was met with all other submissions meeting standards and criteria above benchmark. Analysis revealed performance weaknesses in writing objectives.

Decision, action or recommendation.

In AC 2019-2020, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. In AC 2020-2021, faculty will provide exemplars of content-specific instructional objectives written for adult learning and workforce development learning scenarios.

These changes will improve the student's ability to exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

AC 2019 – 2020 Assessment

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 5:

Departmental Student Learning	Program Student Learning Outcome
Make responsible decisions and problem- solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate (SPA #5)	Use research, evidence, and best practices guidelines to critically and creatively use evidence to make educational decisions.

Measure: 5.1. **(Direct – Knowledge, Skills)**

SLO 5 is assessed through a final need-based grant in EDAL 5130, and a final project in EDUC 6050 (formerly EDAL 6000). The assessments are evaluated using a rubric, and the benchmark performance is a cumulative mean score of 80%.

Finding: Target was Met.

2018-19 Administration	2019-20 Administration
EDAL 5130 Final Grant Project Cumulative Mean: 82% StdDv: 10.9.% Above/Equal Benchmark: 67% Below: 33% N=3	*EDAL 5130 Final Grant Project* Cumulative Mean: 79.5% StdDv: 12.3% Above/Equal Benchmark: 50% Below: 50% N=10
EDAL 6000 Final Project: Action Research Proposal Cumulative Mean: 94.7% StdDv: 4.2% Above/Equal Benchmark: 100% Below: 0% N=3	*EDAL 6000 Final Project: Action Research Proposal* Cumulative Mean: 96.4% StdDv: 6.9% Above/Equal Benchmark: 100% Below: 0% N=7

Analysis.
EDAL 5130 Final Grant Project:

In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. Analysis of AC 2018-19 results showed that, while the target was met with the cumulative mean of scores on the EDAL 5000 Final Grant Project being above benchmark (μ = 82%), students made errors in properly using APA style for citations and references, losing an average of 8.4% in this category.

Based on analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. In accordance with the plan of action, the course content for AC 2019-2020 faculty augmented the course offering with additional scaffolding activities and resources on following APA guidelines, and an APA workshop was offered in the fall of 2019.

AC 2019 – 2020 Assessment

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.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met.

Analysis of AC 2019-2020 results indicated that following APA guidelines and writing errors continued to be an issue with students and resulted in the greatest loss of point with an average loss of 6.6%. The cumulative mean in AC 2019-2020 dropped 2.5% and the percentage of students who achieved benchmark dropped 17% from 67% in 2018-19 to 50% in 2019-20. Some of this can be attributed to the very low enrollment (n=3) in AC 2018-2019 making it difficult to make valid comparisons to higher enrollment during AC 2019-2020 (n=10).

EDUC 6050 (formerly EDAL 6000) Action Research Proposal:

In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. Analysis of data for the 2018-19 (n=3) assessment indicates that the cumulative mean increased from 80% in 2017-18 to 94.7% in 2018-19. The benchmark score was exceeded by all students. Though it is difficult to draw valid conclusions due to low class enrollment, analysis of the rubric data shows that the following APA guidelines is the area where students lost the most points. Following APA guidelines remained a minor weakness in the final project in AC 2018-2019 course offering.

Based on analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2019-2020 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty increased instructional emphasis on closely following assignment guidelines and APA style in AC 2019-2020 offering of the course. Faculty developed and delivered an APA workshop to all students in Fall 2019 and the Workshop was recorded and made available for on-demand access by students.

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.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met.

Analysis of AC 2019-2020 results indicated that writing appropriate research questions of the research proposal resulted in the greatest loss of points. The cumulative mean in AC 2019-2020 increased over AC 2018-2019 and the percentage of students who achieved benchmark remained steady with AC 2018-19.

AC 2019 – 2020 Assessment

Decision, action or recommendation.

In AC 2019-2020, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2019-2020 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement.

EDAL 5130 Final Grant Project: In response to the weaknesses in writing and following APA guidelines, faculty will offer an enhanced APA WebEx workshop in Fall 2020. The workshop content will be augmented with additional emphasis on the importance of following APA guidelines. To address the writing issues, faculty will offer a writing WebEx Fall 2020 and include writing resources such as *grammarbook.com*.

EDAL 6000 Final Project: Action Research Proposal: In response to the weaknesses in writing research questions, faculty will offer exemplars of appropriate research questions for adult learning and workforce development in AC 2020-2021.

These changes will improve the student's ability to make responsible decisions and problem- solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Assessment Data

- SLO 1: Faculty incorporated additional APA content/emphasis in the course.

- SLO 2: Faculty provided increased instructional emphasis on following assignment guidelines in EDAL 5010 course. faculty incorporated additional APA content/emphasis in the course, along with additional emphasis on following presentation assignment guidelines. Faculty augmented course content augmented with the addition of a video conference WebEx on using APA.

- SLO 3: Faculty incorporated additional APA content/emphasis in the course.

- SLO 4: Faculty emphasized following assignment guidelines for the instructional plan section of the assignment. Faculty added explicit exemplars of the project with examples of where most student errors occur to provide additional guidance on project requirements and to improve student performance on this area of the assessment.

- SLO 5: EDAL 5130: Faculty augmented course content with additional

resources for writing and following APA guidelines. In EDUC 6050/EDAL 6000, faculty added instructional emphasis on the literature review. Faculty provide a literature review template.

Plan of Action for Moving Forward

- SLO 1: Faculty will develop and provide an APA WebEx workshop in Fall 2020 with additional emphasis on carefully following APA guidelines.

- SLO 2: Faculty will increase instructional emphasis on following assignment guidelines on the Self- Directed Learning Presentation, as following assignment guidelines remained the greatest achievement weakness in student performance. Faculty will increase emphasis on following APA guidelines by offering an enhanced APA Webex to all program graduate students in fall of 2020 with increased emphasis on correct usage of the style.

- SLO 3: Faculty will increase emphasis on the fundamentals of writing skills and APA in the early weeks of the AC 2020-2021 class to improve student writing skills. Faculty will offer additional APA support for students with the addition of an enhanced APA and writing Webex offering in Fall 2020.

- SLO 4: Faculty will provide exemplars of content-specific instructional objectives written for adult learning and workforce development learning scenarios.

- SLO 5: For EDAL 5130, faculty will develop and deliver an enhanced APA WebEx workshop in Fall 2020. Faculty will offer a writing WebEx Fall 2020 and include writing resources such as *grammarbook.com*. *EDAL 6000 Final Project: Action Research Proposal:* Faculty will offer exemplars of appropriate research questions for adult learning and workforce development in AC 2020-2021.