

## Annual Program Report Narrative

Academic year: 2007-08

Department/Program: **Special Education**

Degree program(s): **MA Special Education**

Person(s) preparing report: Liz Keefe

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1. List the student learning outcomes (SLOs) that were assessed during the academic year, including those for which data were gathered as well as those for which developmental work was done, such as the creation or piloting of assessment measures.

*See attached assessment grid.*

2. For each learning outcome, describe a) the measures used (at least one-half of the measures used are to be direct measures, and at least one direct measure must be used for each SLO), b) the sample of students from whom data were collected, c) the timetable for the collection, and d) the setting in which the measures were administered.

*See attached assessment grid.*

3. Describe the results of the assessment. (What do they tell you about student learning? What did you learn about strengths and weaknesses of your program?) If specific results are not available, describe the progress that has been made on the initiatives included in the approved assessment plan.

*Students had demonstrated difficulty aligning assessment with their lesson planning during 2006-07. We implemented a new Assessment to Instruction Assessment on 2007-08. Students scored an average of 2/3 and 2.1/3 over the Fall and Spring semesters. We would like to see this average increase. The score on lesson planning was consistently high in Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 – 8.9/10 in both semesters. This is an improvement over 2006-07 indicating that the increase emphasis on assessment and its relationship to lesson planning is improving student performance in this area. Faculty were concerned about performance of students in practicum. Faculty felt this assessment should be restructured so that it starts earlier in the program and lasts for two semesters. In the first year of this restructuring we saw an improvement from 2.9/5 to 3.1/5 over the Fall and Spring semesters. Students complete a comprehensive exam to exit the MA Program. Scores on this exam were 3.6/4 for Fall 2007 and 3.3/4 for Spring 2008. Prior to Spring 2008, faculty did not use a consistent rubric for evaluating comprehensive exam questions. We now are implementing a rubric that ensures higher standards some degree of consistency over comprehensive examination grading across faculty.*

4. Describe the departmental process by which faculty reviewed the assessment procedures and results and decided on the actions and/or revisions that were indicated by them.

*The CARC develops systems to document assessment to ensure consistency in reporting across the COE. Assessment data are entered into the COEAS by program coordinators. This system generates reports by semester and type of assessment. Program coordinators share these data with their program faculty. Program faculty discuss the results of the assessments and what they tell faculty about their students. Faculty also examine what the results indicate about the effectiveness of the program. Finally the faculty consider whether the assessment method does accurately and effectively evaluate SLOs and program goals. Changes in program procedures, instruction, and assessment may result from a discussion of results. Programs report results of their assessments at Department Meetings. Department Chairs then share the results of assessment at the College level. The CARC meets regularly with program coordinators and other faculty to examine college-wide assessment procedures. The chair of CARC and the Associate Dean in charge of assessment meet with Departments and programs to help evaluate and develop assessment systems that are manageable, effective, and meaningful.*

5. Describe the actions and/or revisions that were implemented in response to the assessment processes and results.

*The first example I would like to share involves our assessment of comprehensive examinations at the Masters level. Students are required to have a minimum of three faculty on their comprehensive exam committee. Our procedures manual clearly states the scoring range for comprehensive exams and requirements for passing and distinction. We had plenty of data showing the individual and aggregate scores for our graduating students however these scores told us nothing about the actual performance of the students in any specific areas. This prompted the faculty to engage in prolonged discussions about how we scored student answers, what we used as criteria, how we distinguished between passing, failing, and distinction. Some faculty had designed their own rubric to score answers, some faculty just knew what they were looking for and gave written feedback to the students. Though faculty criteria overall had general agreement, criteria varied widely within those areas. For example, although having knowledge of the research literature was valued by all faculty, the number of actual citations required varied from 0-10 among faculty. We realized that this was an unacceptable situation for students. The student had to go meet individually with each faculty member to find out what the criteria were for that faculty member. This resulted in some committee member “shopping” for the professor who was perceived to be the least demanding! Faculty decided the best solution was to work together to create a qualitative trait rubric that all faculty would use and that would be given to students prior to the exam.*

*We have been using the rubric since Spring, 2008 and the results have been very encouraging. Our students report much lower levels of test anxiety and an appreciation for knowing what is expected of them consistently across faculty. Faculty report a greater confidence about their ability to distinguish between answers rated as failing, passing, and distinction and their confidence in justifying these scores to their students. We are also able to track how students are doing relative to specific areas in their answers and this informs us in the design of our program. Finally, we were experiencing an inflation of students receiving distinction such that it did not really indicate distinction any more. This was leading to some tension among faculty as students complained about not receiving distinction and faculty had no way to compare scores across faculty to determine what the issue might be. Data from the COEAS shows us this trend of distinction inflation has been reversed since the adoption of the rubric. This rubric is now being shared with faculty across the college who are experiencing similar assessment challenges.*

*The second example involves deciding when the best time to offer SPCD 504 Practicum in our Special Education Intern Program. Due to a critical shortage of special education teachers, we have a partnership with APS where our MA students are teaching special education in the schools but do not have a license completed. These students receive support in their classrooms and they complete their student teaching practicum in their own classrooms. SPCD 504 was being offered in the second semester of the Intern Program through Spring 2007. Faculty were seeing assessment data for the SPCD 504 that suggested we needed to offer this class in the first and second semester by using a variable credit option. Faculty believed that it was critical to have feedback on the teaching performance of interns in the first semester because this had such an important impact on the students in their classrooms. In Fall 2007 our program started offering SPCD 504 in the first and second semesters. We collected data through the COEAS for Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 and compared them with prior groups of interns. The interns who had SPCD 504 across the two semesters performed at a consistently higher level across all ten practicum assessment criteria than the previous group of interns. We plan to continue to collect data to monitor the impact of this change.*

- 6. Given the assessment activities and results to date, describe your assessment plans for the next year (2008-09). If significant changes have been made to degree program SLOs or to the general assessment strategy, please clearly describe. (Remember that half of all assessment measures must be direct measures of student learning (see link in #2 above).)**

*No significant assessment changes have been made for 2008-09. I would like to note that our faculty has found that our COEAS has prompted us to engage in a dialogue about assessment and teaching that has been very exciting and productive for our faculty and our students. Assessment has become an integral part of the work of our faculty and is addressed at every faculty meeting. We will continue ongoing evaluate our assessment system to improve services to our students.*

### NCA Assessment Grid: MA Special Education

Program Goal	Student Learning Objective	COE/ Univ. Goal	Assessment/PIP/ Course if applicable	Direct/ Indirect	Score Range	Pass Score
Prepare teachers who align curriculum, instruction and assessment to meet needs of diverse exceptional students	Apply evidence based practice in lesson planning	U, P, I K, S	Lesson Plans <i>PIP 2</i> <i>Methods courses</i>	D	0-10	5
	Demonstrate the ability to use assessment to develop instructional goals and strategies	U, P K, S	Assessment to Instruction <i>PIP 2</i> <i>SPCD 517 or 527</i>	D	1-3	1
	Students will design and implement evidence based instructional strategies in diverse classroom settings	U, P, I K, S, R	Practicum Assessment <i>PIP 3</i> <i>SPCD 504</i>	D	1-5	2
Prepare reflective practitioners who are committed to the highest quality of services for individuals with disabilities and their families	Synthesize and apply knowledge of exceptionality	U, P, I K, S, R	Comprehensive Exam <i>PIP 4</i>	D	0-4	2.9

\* COE Conceptual Framework for Student Learning Outcomes: U – Understandings, P – Practices, I – Identities

\* University of New Mexico Student Learning Goals: K – Knowledge, S – Skills, R – Responsibilities

Each element within the COE conceptual framework (U, P, I) aligns with the corresponding UNM student learning goal (K,S,R)

**Three-year Plan** – Program will continue to add (or select) a minimum of one *priority* learning goal and two associated student learning objectives each Fall semester that will be assessed in the corresponding academic year. The SLO’s will be assessed for ALL students in the program and data from the assessments entered into the electronic COE Assessment System for both Fall and Spring semesters. Program coordinators will share these data with their program faculty and faculty will discuss the results of the assessments. Finally, the faculty will consider whether the assessment methods have accurately and effectively evaluated the priority SLOs and program goals. Changes in program procedures, instruction, and assessment may result from a discussion of results. An “Annual Program Report” on the findings and discussions of faculty will be submitted by the program to the Department Chair each year.

**\*\*PIP (Points in Program)**, – The College of Education, as part of the NCATE accreditation process, developed a “Points in Program - PIP” gateway assessment procedure for tracking students progress through the program. This tracking system has been adopted by all programs across the COE. In this system, student learning objectives are assessed at PIPS 2,3, & 4. The PIP system is described below.

**PIP 1** – Admission requirements

**PIP 2** – Assessments that occur during program coursework

**PIP 3** – Assessments directly related to Field Experiences (student teaching, internships, etc)

**PIP 4** – Program Exit assessments (licensure exams, final projects, comprehensive exams, theses/dissertation defenses, etc)

## Evaluative Rubric for Annual Progress Reports on Assessment of Student Learning MA Special Education

<b>Report Elements</b>	<b>Exemplary 3</b>	<b>Acceptable 2</b>	<b>Unacceptable 1</b>	<b>Score for each Element</b>
<i>Degree program student learning outcomes (SLOs) that were assessed during the year</i>	SLOs were stated in terms of measurable knowledge, behavior, value, or disposition.	Not all of the SLOs were stated in measurable terms.	No SLOs were listed.	3
<i>Assessment method/measure for each SLO</i>	Two or more appropriate measures were used for each SLO.	At least one measure was used or developed for each SLO.	Measures were not used or developed or were inadequate or were not discussed.	3
<i>Direct measures (at least 1/2 of the measures used are to be direct measures, and at least one direct measure is to be applied to each SLO.)</i>	At least 1/2 of assessment measures were direct, and there was at least one direct measure for each SLO.	No direct measures were used during the reporting year, but direct measures are part of the plan for next year.	No direct measures were implemented or planned for the next year.	3
<i>Participants (students or alumni involved for each measure)</i>	Participants were identified for each SLO, and valid sample selection described.	Participants were identified for some SLOs, but there was some lack of clarity.	Participants were not identified.	3
<i>Timeframe in which measures were administered or data collected</i>	The timeframe for administration of measures or collection of data was specified.	The timeframe was specified for some SLOs, but not for others or there was some lack of clarity.	The timeframe was not specified.	3

<i>Setting/forum in which measures were administered or data collected</i>	The setting or forum in which each of the measures were administered or data collected was specified.	The setting or forum was specified for some measures, but not for all, or there was lack of clarity.	The setting or forum was not specified.	3
<i>Results</i>	Results were described for each SLO that was assessed.	Results were described for a sub-set of the SLOs and/or there was some lack of clarity.	Results were not described for the SLOs that were to be assessed.	3
<i>Process for data presentation to and discussion by faculty</i>	The process that was used for the interpretation, review, and discussion of the data by the faculty was described.	The process was described for a sub-set of the SLOs and/or there was some lack of clarity.	The process was not described. It is not clear whether the faculty considered the results of the assessment.	3
<i>Actions or revisions implemented based on assessment results</i>	Specific actions or revisions have been or will be implemented based on assessment results.	Specific actions or revisions were described but the report of or plan for implementation was unclear or incomplete in some aspects.	There were no specific actions or revisions described.	3
<i>Description of plans for the coming year (2008-09), including any significant changes to degree program SLOs or to the general assessment strategy</i>	<i>Plans for the coming year and any significant changes in SLOs or the overall assessment strategy are clearly described.</i>	<i>Plans and any significant changes were described but in some aspects the description was unclear or incomplete.</i>	<i>There was no description of plans for the coming year nor were any significant changes in SLOs or assessment strategy described.</i>	3