

**Student Outcome Assessment Report/Summary for BA in Elementary Education
Academic Year 2012-13
Submitted to UAF Provost's Office, March 2014**

This summary report references the following documents: 1) BA in Elementary Education Outcomes Assessment Plan; 2) Criteria for Advancement through Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education Degree (BAE): Transition Criteria and Rubrics; 3) BA in Elementary Education Standards-Based Data prepared for two national accreditation groups: ACEI and NCATE/CAEP.

Note: In August 2013, the UAF Department of Elementary Teacher Education submitted a comprehensive report on both the BA in Elementary Education Degree and the Post-Baccalaureate Licensure Program to the national professional group that reviews the quality of teacher education programs in the United States—the Association of Childhood Education International (ACEI). In February 2014, the UAF Department of Elementary Teacher Education received notification that its teacher preparation program met all of the ACEI standards and our programs would continue to be nationally recognized. In this in-depth report, which we are required to complete every five years, we must demonstrate how well our students and our programs meet the sixteen ACEI standards. All of the criteria assessed in our Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan are comprehensively addressed in our 60-page report to ACEI. In addition, the UAF School of Education is currently accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and is required to participate in an in-depth evaluative review by a team of national educators every seven years. The next comprehensive report and campus visit is in 2014-15 by members of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation/CAEP.

Since there will be a changes in several of the data-reporting requirements for national recognition and for national accreditation, the Department of Elementary Teacher Education will have the opportunity to redesign its data aggregation process during 2014 so that our data reporting more closely aligns with the existing UAF Student Outcomes Assessment Plans for both our undergraduate and our post-baccalaureate teacher education programs.

Outcome #1: Preparation for Internship/Student Teaching (Transition I)

Assessments and Data Collected

- Faculty and our elementary academic advisors use our Transition 1 document to provide feedback to freshmen and sophomore level students on an on-going basis during their initial years in the BA in Elementary Education degree. Advisors review the Transition I document with students each time they meet with them, by distance or in person, and a copy is filed in each student's permanent file. This process provides students with straightforward guidelines and on-going data relative to their progress and it allows them to determine whether or not they are on track to meet the requirements for admission to the capstone Internship Year when they are seniors. If students are not meeting the requirements at an acceptable level a meeting with the Department Chair and/or the Coordinator of Fieldwork is arranged and, in some instances, School of Ed faculty members develop a Plan of Improvement for that particular student.

Conclusions Drawn from Assessment Data

- Data compiled from Transition I and Transition II documents provide evidence that the large majority of the courses that students must complete with a grade of C or better in the first years of their program are successfully preparing them for course *and* fieldwork requirements in their junior and senior years.
- The correlation between grades received in their first two required English courses and some of the writing requirements for admission to the Internship year is not as expected and School of Education faculty plan to meet with English Department faculty to explore reasons for this.

Changes Planned Based on Review of Assessment Data

- No curriculum or fieldwork changes are planned based on the data from the assessments.

Outcome #2: Admission to the Internship/Student Teaching Year (Transition II)

Assessments and Data Collected

- Data collected to determine students' admission to the Internship Year is extensive. Since the School of Ed requests a classroom placement for an internship for an entire academic year, it is the responsibility of the School of Ed to be able to assure the mentor teacher and the administrator (along with parents and community members) that it has made every effort to determine and document that the intern/student teacher is academically *and* professional qualified to be a member of the classroom and school team for the entire year. Students must: 1) meet all academic requirements (e.g., a 2.75 overall, no grade below a C in all required courses, no content area GPA below a 2.00); 2) achieve Alaska passing scores on Praxis I reading, writing and math tests, and on Praxis II (Elementary Content Knowledge test); and 3) provide evidence of appropriate professional characteristics (determined by multiple individuals using several criteria).
- Our program uses multiple rigorous assessments to determine and monitor applicants' content knowledge in language arts, math, science, social studies, art, PE and health through a review and evaluation of academic coursework and life/work experiences.
- In a required admissions' essay that focused on professional dispositions and characteristics, 71% scored at the Target level.

Conclusions Drawn from Assessment Data

- The average Praxis I scores of our applicants are very high despite the fact that 15% to 20% of our applicants are bilingual or have challenges with English language proficiency having grown up in dual-language communities. (See Target and Acceptable criteria on the Transition II document.) Challenges with standardized tests among Limited English Proficiency/LEP populations is well documented and we make strong efforts in our program to minimize these challenges by offering additional tutoring and assistance to LEP students prior to them taking the Praxis tests. Praxis Math scores are especially high. The small number of students who are listed as provisional (i.e., they did not have passing scores at the time of admission) includes those who chose to withdraw (typically because of personal reasons or because they were members of military families who received unexpected orders to leave) or to postpone (typically because of personal reasons). 100% of interns who began their internship in August of 2012 had passing Praxis scores. The average score for Praxis II (Content Knowledge) is also very high (i.e., 167 with the Alaska cut score at 143).
- An additional method of ensuring solid content knowledge is through the requirement of a rigorous set of content area courses in all major areas (i.e., English, math, science, social sciences) in the years leading up to the internship year. Data on content area coursework show that our students average between a 3.0 and 4.0 GPA in all major content areas as undergraduates. 45% of BA in Elementary Education students have a GPA at the Target level when they apply for admission to the internship year.
- As part of the admission process applicants are assessed relative to cross-cultural life/work experiences that have not been directly related to fieldwork requirements in their education courses. Only 35% percent of the BAE applicants scored at the Target level. Faculty need to better understand why only 35% percent of the BAE applicants scored at the Target level in response to the information they submitted on their intern year application forms. We do not know if it because our question to them is vague and/or ambiguous or if it is because they truly have had few cross-cultural experiences outside of those required for their education courses.

Changes Planned Based on Review of Assessment Data

- Future students will not have to complete an introduction to psychology (PSY 101) course, as the content was found to be redundant with the required child development (PSY 245) course and we were able to work with the Psychology Department to remove the requirement that PSY101 be completed as a pre-requisite to PSY 245. Students will no longer be required to complete the previously required fifth English course which focused on reading rather than writing. We deleted the Psychology and English courses in an effort to decrease the total number of credits required for the degree. Our decision was based on our review of data

from the time the BA in Elementary Education degree was designed in 1998 and from feedback from Education faculty and faculty in the Psychology and English departments.

- Based on applicants' scores on their Extemporaneous Writing Sample (i.e., 26% at the Target level, 68% at the Acceptable level and 6% at the Provisional level), School of Education faculty plan to meet with English Department faculty to review English course requirements and to review Education course requirements relative to extemporaneous writing skills since teachers are in a profession where they must write extemporaneously on a daily basis.
- We will reword the question that asks applicants about their cross-cultural life and work experiences. We will also compare the responses to this question with information provided in other sections of the application.

Outcome #3: Capstone Senior Year Internship/Student Teaching and Academic Coursework (Transitions III and IV)
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Assessments and Data Collected

- During the internship year our program assesses content knowledge, as well as pedagogical content knowledge, preparation and planning, through the requirements that students prepare, teach, and reflect on major units of instruction in language arts, math, science, social studies, art, PE and health. Interns are assessed on their knowledge and presentation of accurate subject area content in the preparation of week-long instructional units in the four major content areas. These “weeks of fulltime teaching” also provide them with hands-on experiences in preparation, planning, assessment and reflection and allow them to integrate best practices in pedagogical content knowledge associated with each content area. Throughout the internship year, students are assessed at multiple times, and by multiple faculty (mentor teachers and university supervisors) on their ability to demonstrate that they can meet the competencies that are directly aligned with the Alaska Standards for Educators. These standards and the aligned competencies are the basis for the Elementary Standards-Based Summative Assessment Plan (ESSAP). To successfully complete their degree and receive an Institutional Recommendation to the State of Alaska, all students must meet—at the Acceptable Level—all competencies as described in the ESSAP (posted on the UAF School of Education website).
- The Full Time Student Teaching assignment requires that students take over all classroom responsibilities for a minimum of three weeks in the spring semester. As part of this requirement, students must plan for instruction, document student learning gains, collect student work samples, and reflect on successes and challenges both weekly and in summary. At the end of the three-week period, students submit a binder with extensive documentation of their teaching experiences. These binders assess competency in multiple standards and the data provided by the team of faculty reviewers show that all of our students meet these standards at a target or acceptable level.

Conclusions Drawn from Assessment Data

- Data relative to students' content area knowledge shows that all students achieve an acceptable or target rating in the preparation and delivery of their instructional units over the course of the internship year. However, the data on competencies relative to interns' responsibilities during their required three weeks of fulltime student teaching suggested to faculty that the fulltime student teaching guidelines and assessment rubrics were more detailed than necessary and were, in some places, cumbersome, time consuming and, in some cases, redundant for mentors, supervisors and interns.

Changes Planned Based on Review of Assessment Data

- Faculty recently completed a major revision of the assessment strategies for the summative and very important Fulltime Student Teaching three-week experience in which students are expected to provide evidence that they are able to successfully meet all of the ESSAP competencies in the Alaska Teacher Standards at a beginning teacher level. We believe that the new guidelines and assessment rubrics will more accurately represent what interns are required to know and be able to do during their first year of teaching. These new data will be reported in our next Outcomes Assessment Plan.

- Requirements for preparing and teaching week long units of instruction in the content areas have not changed significantly, although instructors in individual courses have made minor adjustments to rubric criteria and guidelines based on assessment information gathered and through analysis of student work. An example of changes in guidelines is an increased focus on the meaningful integration and assessment of Common Core Standards in instructional units following the adoption of Alaska’s version of the Common Core Standards in 2012. Recognizing that preparation for teaching math, science, art, PE and health are as important as preparation for teaching language arts and social studies, we have reallocated credits during the internship year to make all methods courses three credits (beginning in 2013) instead of two. Prior to 2013 language arts and social studies method were the only three credit methods courses.

<p>Outcome #4: Capstone Senior Year Internship/Student Teaching & Professional Dispositions (Transitions III and IV)</p>

Assessments and Data Collected

- A “Professional Characteristics Feedback Form/PCFF” is a confidential form that is completed by instructors and classrooms teachers from the time students are freshman until the spring semester of their internship year. We therefore have data relative to students’ professional characteristics from approximately 10 different people prior to student’s application for admission to the internship year and from an additional 8 people (instructors, supervisors, mentors) during the internship year. All data is stored securely in a restricted folder on the School of Education Server.
- Data from our Summative Observation and Feedback Form (SOFF) — completed by mentor teachers and university supervisors at the end of fall and spring semesters—show that our students score somewhat lower in the areas of “adaptation to diverse students” and “assessment for instruction” than in some of the other assessed areas. This aligns with data gathered from a larger research investigation, by one of our faculty members, into pre-service teacher preparation programs in Alaska showing that students desire additional pre-service experiences in differentiation and culturally responsive teaching. In response to these data, we have integrated more direct instruction and experiences in differentiation, particularly for different ability levels, into our internship coursework. We continue to emphasize and expand the discussion on strategies for working with diverse student populations in all of our internship courses.
- In addition to the fulltime student teaching documentation, which requires collection of elementary student assessment data and work samples generated over the three week period of full time responsibility, interns must also complete two year-long assignments that allow them to examine and document the impact of their teaching on the student learning of the elementary students in the classroom in which they are an intern. An assignment that requires interns to consider their impact on student learning and also teaches interns the skills necessary to make adjustments to instruction based on assessment evidence occurs in the year-long Looking at Student Work series. In these assignments interns gather student work samples from instructional activities and examine them systematically using a series of steps inspired by the protocols from Harvard’s Project Zero and the National School Reform Faculty. After gathering and examining the work interns consider the learning gains that are visible in the work and identify where further instruction in the subject area could go based on demonstrated student understanding. We will include specific data from these assignments in our next Outcomes Assessment Report. An unofficial review of these assessments shows that students complete this series of tasks (seven total, roughly one per month during the internship year) successfully over the internship year.

Conclusions Drawn from Assessment Data

- Analysis of our PCFF (Professional Characteristics Feedback Form) data show that the 88% of our students are assessed as possessing characteristics aligned with those of a practicing teacher at the target or acceptable level and 12% received scores at the provisional level. Applicants to the internship year who have received consistently low scores on the PCFF—relative to their work in an elementary classroom and/or their work in a university classroom—meet with faculty prior to applying to discuss the lack of congruity between their professional characteristics and those found in practicing teachers. This can lead to the

development of an individual Plan of Improvement and/or, occasionally, it leads to some individuals choosing a different profession.

- Interns need additional experience with developing, collecting, analyzing and making changes to their instructional practices based directly on their review of elementary student work.

Changes Planned Based on Review of Assessment Data

- There are no plans to change the process for collecting and reviewing, on an on-going basis, PCFF forms. We are, however, exploring other options for managing the forms and the data since this is a labor-intensive process now.
- A new course was developed and initiated in Spring 2014. In recognition of the importance of acquiring the skills to adequately monitor and make changes to instruction based on elementary student progress over the entire academic year, a prior assignment related to this requirement has recently been extracted from the language arts methods course and given its own one credit standing as a new course entitled Assessment of Literacy Development/ED 476. In this course, interns are required to continue to monitor the reading and writing progress of a small group of students (5-8) throughout an entire year. Interns must evaluate assessment evidence and generate ideas for improving student learning based on the evidence. They revisit the same students at multiple points throughout the year to monitor learning gains and use assessment information to inform instruction. Data gathered from this assessment shows that all interns completed the assignment at an acceptable or target level.
- We have determined that although the internship year data we currently gather is useful in many regards it would also be beneficial to closely examine the areas or assignments in our program where students frequently require remediation or second chances to meet an acceptable rating. Towards this end, following examination of the data generated for accreditation reports, the elementary program faculty decided to engage in a “remediation analysis” over the course of the upcoming academic year. To facilitate this process one faculty member will meet with all internship year faculty at the end of fall and spring semesters and gather both quantitative and qualitative data documenting areas or assignments in which students required second chances or remediation to achieve an acceptable rating. Data will also be gathered on the approaches used to assist students in achieving an acceptable rating. It is hoped that these data, once organized and presented to the faculty (prior to the start of the 2014/15 year) will allow us, as a program, to better find where our weaknesses lie and allow us to consider program changes or modifications to help our students be successful without a need for additional remediation.

Outcome #5: Hiring and Follow-Up Information

Assessments and Data Collected

- Through a collaborative arrangement with the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, the UAF School of Education maintains an extensive database that provides data showing employments of graduates—if they are hired by a public school in Alaska. This is updated annually and it allows us to track approximately 4,300 students who have completed programs since 1974 in UAF’s School of Education. The AK Department of Education & Early Development provides us, on an annual basis, with the name of the district, the school, and the teaching position for all of our graduates.
- Surveys are sent every two years, electronically, to graduates and to administrators who hire our graduates. The surveys include questions on the preparation of our graduates relative to each of the eight Alaska Teacher Standards. We are able to send these only to graduates who have been hired by an Alaska public school since we have only anecdotal information on program completers who are not working in an Alaska K-12 public school. We do have, however, a significant amount of informal feedback from program completers.

Conclusions Drawn from Assessment Data

- Our Hiring Database provides evidence that students who complete both our undergraduate and our post-bac elementary teacher education programs are quickly hired in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and in districts throughout the State of Alaska. In addition, it is evident that many UAF graduates remain in the state and remain in the teaching profession.
- Our graduates have told us that, although they did successfully complete interviews and did get hired, they felt that they would have benefitted from additional experience with formal interviewing strategies during their internship year.
- The return rate from electronic surveys sent to our graduates and to the administrators who hire them is lower than we would like. However, the survey results provide evidence that graduates and their employers are pleased with the UAF elementary teacher education programs.

Changes Planned Based on Review of Assessment Data

- We will continue to work with the State Department of Education and Early Development to assure that our Hiring Database is updated annually since it provides us with a significant amount of important and completely reliable data relative to our graduates. We will continue to generate multiple types of reports using these data.
- We have developed several strategies to assist our interns in becoming more confident prior to interviewing for teaching positions. In addition to addressing this more directly in our courses, we have designed a Professional Development Fair in which all interns will have the opportunity to meet with, and be questioned by, four different mentor teachers. This will occur for the first time in May of 2014. We will also pay close attention to the new evaluation tools that will be used for practicing teachers in Alaska so that we can assure our graduates that they will be prepared to be successful with new legally-mandated evaluation policies and practices.
- UAF is currently working with the Institute of Social and Economic Research at UAA to collaborate with UA statewide efforts in the distribution and analysis of surveys of graduates of all three UA institutions.

Department of Elementary Teacher Education faculty who were directly involved in reaching the conclusions drawn above and agreeing upon the curricular changes resulting

- Amy Vinlove: Faculty and Assessment Coordinator for the Department of Elementary Teacher Education
- Carol Barnhardt: Faculty and Chair of the Department of Elementary Teacher Education
- Joan Hornig: Faculty and Coordinator of Fieldwork Experiences for the Dept of ElemTeacher Education
- Cindy Fabbri: Faculty of the Department of Elementary Teacher Education
- Diane Kardash: Faculty of the Department of Elementary Teacher Education

*** All other elementary faculty, including adjunct faculty, provided input, feedback and review on a regular basis.*