Standard 2. Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on the applicant qualifications, the candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

2.1 Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

How does the unit use its assessment system to improve candidate performance, program quality and unit operations?

The Unit's assessment system was developed in 2004 with input from the professional community served by the University and external reviewers. The assessment system incorporates the Conceptual Framework of the Unit that emphasizes the interaction of theory, practice, and research evident in all programs designed to equip candidates for their professional roles in school settings. These professional roles refer to the tasks and responsibilities educators are required to demonstrate in order to advance student learning and school improvement. Three sets of roles, one for each key school career are included in the framework. (I.5.c). The roles for educational leaders are aligned with the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) and roles for counselor educators are aligned with the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The roles for effective teachers were revised in the summer of 2014 in order to incorporate revisions of Specialized Professional Associations (SPAs), State Standards (COMPASS), Common Core State Standards, and the Danielson Framework. As a result of these changes, teacher education faculty revised the Unit assessments for the teacher education program.

The Unit has a comprehensive and integrated assessment system that utilizes PeopleSoft, WEAVE, Webstar, and LiveText Education Solutions. PeopleSoft serves to maintain institutional data including demographic information and grades. Data are entered by central administration personnel, is password protected, and can be accessed by faculty. WEAVE is an electronic reporting system that includes planning for and the evaluation of assessment outcomes for all departments university wide. Webstar is the repository to verify course enrollment, enter grades, and record
assessment data on advanced programs as candidates progress through specific transition points in the M.Ed. and Ph.D. programs. LiveText houses rubrics and data for all Unit assessments for initial-level programs (Teacher Education and School Leadership) as well as Counseling. Since the implementation of LiveText in the fall of 2007, the Unit has seen significant growth and reliance on this system for data collection and dissemination of data to stakeholders (e.g., faculty, teachers, current students and graduates).

The current assessment system is designed to monitor candidates' performance related to knowledge, skills, and dispositions using a variety of assessments (1.4.c1, 1.4.c2, 1.4.c3, 1.4.c4, 1.4.c5, 1.4.c6, 1.4.c7, 1.4.c8, 1.4.c9, 1.4.e) at admission into the program, advancing to the next stage, and again at program completion (2.4.a1, 2.4.a2, 2.4.a3). The Unit offers advanced programs of study in Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Leadership, and Counseling. Counseling recently received CACREP Accreditation and data will not be included in this report (1.5.d). The Advanced Masters program in curriculum and instruction includes admission to program, mid-program assessment, and a final assessment (2.4.a1). The Advanced Educational Leadership Program includes admission to program, Comprehensive Portfolio at beginning and end of the program, and Program Assessments assigned to various courses. The doctoral program in Educational Administration has the following assessments: 1) Qualifying Exam, 2) Dissertation Prospectus, 3) General Examination, 4) defense of dissertation proposal, and 5) dissertation defense.

The Unit assessment system is able to monitor each candidate's performance. The academic counselor and the assistant dean review the data for each student at various transition points, classify each student according to his/her level of accomplishment in each program, and inform each student of his/her progression to the next stage.

Prior to 2012 the Unit employed an assessment coordinator. The position was cut due to budget restraints. In June of 2013, funds were allocated to revive the position to improve data collection on student assessments. The assessment coordinator position is now a permanent position. Various teacher education faculties assist colleagues with developing and scoring rubrics, monitoring compliance with data entry, and running
reports to determine needed improvements to programs. At the end of each semester, reports for each Unit assessment are created and available for faculty review at the beginning of the following semester. Faculties meet as a group to reflect on the results, identify discrepancies or missing data, and recommend action plans for areas of improvement. The assessment coordinator documents changes and reports this information to the dean and the assistant dean for articulated plans of action.

The assessment committee consists of representatives from each department who meet throughout the year to discuss assessments. In the past year, a subcommittee of the Teacher Education program has met almost twice a month. They review the Unit assessments and share with the dean for approval. The assessment coordinator then disseminates the assessment data to faculty and uploads the assessments to LiveText.

**External Measures**

The Unit uses information available from outside sources such as PRAXIS (1.4.d1). Data for PRAXIS is reported publicly on the Unit's home page in the Title II report link. Data for the University regarding retention rates, graduation rates, and accountability is available to the public on the University of New Orleans Institutional Research website. In 2014, Louisiana engaged in Teacher Preparation Transformation 2.0 that calls for increased/improved collaboration between schools/districts and teacher preparation programs. This program seeks to provide high quality clinical experiences, improved teacher preparation curriculum to help novice teachers to more adequately prepare students for the rigors of high standards and the development of reports that are more transparent to the public. The state now disseminates "the Teacher Preparation Data Dashboard" (1.4.k2, 1.4.k3) that provides a summary of specific data for the Unit. The Board of Regents is also piloting a program evaluation survey for alumni of all teacher preparation programs in the State. Data from this survey will be used for program improvement.

The Unit has taken effective steps to establish fairness, accuracy and consistency of its assessment procedures and Unit operations (2.4.c). Regarding fairness: All candidates have access to electronic handbooks when they enter their programs of study
The handbooks outline the progression of the program and assessment requirements. Candidates also receive detailed instructions and a scoring tool for each assessment from the instructor of the course. Multiple people score assessments in the Teacher Education Program: Conceptual Framework Assessment (Instructor of Record and EDUC faculty), Dispositions Review 2 (all Teacher Education faculty), Dispositions Review 3, and Final Semester Evaluation (college coordinator and Mentor/Cooperating Teacher); primarily committees of faculty members score assessments in the advanced programs.

**Candidate Complaints and Documentation**

A Review and Retention Committee is in place to review the circumstances of whether a teacher candidate’s actions/dispositions warrant removal from or corrective action in order to continue in the program. This committee is chaired by the assistant dean and has representatives from each department. Teacher Candidates (TCs) are invited to participate in the meeting and have the opportunity to discuss their points of view. The committee makes recommendations to the dean, who makes the final decision about the issue/concern.

Procedures are in place within the University and the Unit to address candidate concerns. The University Grade Appeal Policy provides TCs with a safeguard against receiving an unfair final grade. Thus, if TCs believe a final grade is unfair, they can request a review by the chair of the department and the departmental grade appeal committee. A grade appeal committee exists within each of three departments in the college. Grade appeal procedures are found on the University's website under administrative policies.

Students may have complaints concerning their academic or non-academic experiences in the Unit. The following steps are in place to assist the student: The student is encouraged to resolve the concern by speaking with the instructor or the person with whom he/ she has the concern; if the problem is not resolved, the student meets with the chair of the department; if the student does not feel the problem is resolved, s/he
schedules an appointment with the dean or the assistant dean of the Unit; the student meets with the dean or assistant dean, to discuss the complaint; the resolution is documented on the "Student Complaint form" (2.4.e2).

**Summary**

Though the Unit has a strong assessment system, the system can best be described as an evolving or recursive process mindful of changes that include: federal and state mandates, professional and state standards, revisions in conceptual framework, programs, courses and needs of students and the community. The Unit is constantly revising the assessment tools, data collection techniques, and the procedures used to identify the need for and implementation of improvements. The Unit works to make sure faculty and staff systematically assess students, collect data, and use data to make informed decisions for program improvement. The system also ensures the assessments are fair, accurate, and consistent as a result of articulating the purpose of assessments in program progression. The Unit has clearly written expectations for each assessment, accompanying rubrics, and external reviewers.

**2.2.b Continuous Improvement**

- Summarize activities and changes based on data that have led to continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.
- Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in this standard.

In 2010, the MAT program was instituted. Faculty, in collaboration with the department and program chairs, determined where each of the Unit assessments would be administered. The EDUC coordinator and the chair of Curriculum and Instruction developed an assessment for the Conceptual Framework that was approved by faculty.

In 2010 Louisiana adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS). As a result, all assessments involving lesson or Unit plans require TCs to incorporate CCSS.

In 2010, faculty reviewed the dispositions process. Cooperating/mentor teachers, principals, college coordinators, faculty, and TCs voiced concerns regarding the existing
procedures and forms (e.g., wording and length of the form, difficulty of capturing the area of concern based on the categories listed on the forms, appropriateness of the evaluator). As a result, a committee was formed and recommendations were developed and later approved by faculty and administration. In the fall of 2012 semester, new procedures and forms were implemented. However, once the procedure was implemented, faculty and school personnel voiced additional concerns and the dispositions process went back to committee. Subsequently, the current process evolved and now includes the following: Dispositions Review 1 is a self-study administered to undergraduates in EDUC 2204 or EDUC 1010 and for MAT students in EDUC 6210 and EDCI 6500. Dispositions Review 2 is conducted by teacher education faculty who collectively discuss the dispositions of each candidate. Scores are recorded by the program coordinators who meet with students when issues appear. Dispositions Review 3 involves a review by the cooperating/mentor teacher and the college coordinator. Faculties are fully aware that this process is fluid and may need to be revised again.

In 2011, faculty participated in numerous sessions on LiveText. As a result LiveText became the vehicle for a) scoring all Unit assessments, b) collecting data for field experiences using the "Forms" feature of LiveText, c) disseminating and collecting data on the quality of the Teacher Education Program from TCs prior to graduation. Some faculty have used LiveText for course assignments and have benefitted from being able to generate assessment reports and reflect on the possible implications for their teaching and students' learning. Faculty have seen the advantages of using LiveText as a repository for all course assignments and the benefits of having easy access to TCs' completed assignments. The reports generated via LiveText have been and will continue to be the topic of regular faculty meetings and the impetus for Unit, program, and course improvements.

In 2012, Louisiana developed COMPASS as the new state standards for teachers. These standards are assessed during student teacher/intern observations by college coordinators as well as in the Mid-Semester and End of Semester evaluations. Interns placed in public and charter schools also receive an observation for COMPASS by
school administrators. These assessments are reviewed by the college coordinator and
added to the interns' portfolio. These COMPASS evaluations provide information on the
quality of our program. Plans to use this data more deliberately are in progress.

In 2012, the state changed from Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching (LACET)
to COMPASS. One of our Unit Assessments, the Evidence Sets, was based on LACET.
In 2014, faculty chose to redesign the End of Semester evaluation to include
COMPASS standards, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the revised
Conceptual Framework and use this evaluation as a Unit assessment. The End of
Semester evaluation offered more detailed data on the performance of the student
teacher/intern as it was scored by the cooperating/mentor teacher. The revised End of
Semester evaluation is also now scored by the college coordinator.

In Fall of 2014, the revisions of the Conceptual Framework and the Conceptual
Framework Assessment were finalized.

In 2014, the Unit made the decision to require TCs to take and pass all PRAXIS exams
prior to student teaching. This change began with the Spring 2015 semester. Formerly
some students were unable to graduate because they had not taken and/or passed
PRAXIS by the time they completed student teaching or internship. Data from PRAXIS
is discussed by all faculty including program coordinators and used for program
improvement.

In the semester prior to student teaching or internship, TCs enroll in a 0-
credit course where an instructor assists them in the development of their program or professional
(SPA) portfolio/assessment. Faculty of record benefit from exposure to students'
portfolios/assignments required in courses across programs. This has led to increased
collaboration with other instructors on ways to improve course assignments. In addition,
data from this program assessment and from the final SPA report are used to improve
assessments.

A number of candidates indicated the need for additional knowledge and skills in
technology. As a result, faculties are in the process of revising EDUC 3000 to
accommodate additional technology skills and applications.
The Director of Clinical Experiences (DCE) meets with TCs prior to their clinical experiences to outline the expectations for assessments. She also meets with all college coordinators to ensure that each is familiar with and will reinforce these same expectations. College coordinators meet with cooperating/mentor teachers, TCs, and principals to convey this same information. This ensures fairness, accuracy, and reliability of the assessments during the clinical period.

All candidates have access to electronic handbooks when they enter their programs of study. The handbooks outline the progression of the program and requirements including assessments at each transition point. To ensure fairness, accuracy, and consistency in the candidate assessment system, the Teacher Education Program has established provisions for student status reviews, prescriptive plans, and an appeal process. The Student Status review occurs during various transition points throughout the program. The academic counselor conducts a review of all required components (academic, performance, dispositions) using the Student Status Information sheet as a guide. A Prescriptive Plan is written if after completing the requirements of a particular transition point of the teacher preparation program, the performance and/or dispositions review of a TC is unsatisfactory. Faculty members may develop a prescriptive plan to focus on individualized coursework and/or additional performance reviews. The appeal process occurs if the TC is dissatisfied with the results of the review at a transition point, and can schedule an appointment with the assistant dean. The assistant dean will work to resolve the issue with the TC. The TC can request that the concern be brought to the Review and Retention committee if the TC is not satisfied. The committee is advisory to the dean, who makes the final decision about the issue/concern.

A grade appeal and student complaint process is in place.

The State plans to continue the dissemination of the Data Dashboard and eventually the Alumni survey. Data from both will be valuable for faculty to analyze and plan for program and Unit improvement. Faculty reviewed the latest Data Dashboard and generated suggestions for implementing a quality induction program, marketing, and developing additional relationships with schools. Faculty also viewed the data as a way
of recognizing how we have improved: quality placements for student teachers, use of data to drive decisions, modeling of responsive teaching methods.

Over the last 2 years, the Unit conducted a major review of the data from all programs. The University Faculty Governance Committee and the University president used this information to determine the viability of programs. As a result, the Early Childhood Education Program, the Middle School MAT Program and the M.Ed. and Ph.D. programs in special education and curriculum and instruction were eliminated. The Unit has recently restructured a M.Ed. program to accommodate candidates in both special education and curriculum and instruction.

Title II data are available on the Unit’s web page under Resources.

2.3 Areas for Improvement Cited in the Action Report from the Previous Accreditation Review.

Summarize activities, processes, and outcomes in addressing each of the AFIs cited for the initial and/or advanced program levels under this standard.

The Unit has developed a systematic process for collecting, summarizing, analyzing, and evaluating data for program and unit improvement. Evidence includes the following:

A) The assessment coordinator has developed a timeline that outlines time periods for administering assessments as well as collecting, reporting, disseminating, discussing, and evaluating the data for a semester (2.4.d).

B) All students receive electronic handbooks when enrolled in programs at the initial or advanced level.

C) The Candidate Assessment handbook provides TCs with essential information for their progression throughout the program. This handbook is posted on the Unit's homepage and the academic counselor advises TCs to read the handbook.

D) LiveText has become the vehicle for efficient dissemination of Unit assessments and data collection. The assessment coordinator and the Director of Clinical Experiences (DCE) load assessments into designated courses at the beginning of each semester.
TCs submit responses to LiveText, faculties score the assignments using the rubric, and students are notified of scores in a timely fashion. In some cases, data for an assessment may require a "form" to be developed on LiveText. The assessment coordinator and the DCE launch the appropriate form and send notification of and directions needed to complete this form. The assessment coordinator generates and disseminates reports to faculty, program chairs, and the dean on aggregated and disaggregated data from LiveText.

At the end of the semester, the assessment coordinator invites faculty to the computer lab for a half-day to receive assistance with data entry. This has greatly improved data collection on each of the TCs and decreased missing data. Continued discussions for how to improve data collection are ongoing.

In addition to Unit assessments, LiveText has facilitated the collection of data for field experiences for all TCs. Graduating seniors complete a survey via LiveText that provides evaluations of the quality of the program (1.4.i), cooperating/mentor teacher, and college coordinator. All data are aggregated and disaggregated and used for program improvement.

Faculties have been trained and use the skills learned to develop their own reports in the courses they are teaching. In addition, program coordinators and Unit administrators are able to access data entered in LiveText for the entire Unit.

A significant benefit to the discussion of these reports generated from LiveText is the collaboration that occurs during and after these discussions.

E) The University has chosen WEAVE as the repository for evidence of institutional effectiveness. In 2014, President Fos outlined a strategic plan for 2020 intended to provide a direction for every program offered at UNO. Each year, faculties in each program examine program outcome data as a way to measure institutional effectiveness. Departments meet to discuss outcomes for their programs, refine these outcomes, and assess data that has been generated (2.4.g2).
F) Data from course completion, GPAs, and unit assessments are used to determine student progression at the various transition points.

G) Improved transparency of data for the programs and the Unit are shared with the public on the Unit's homepage via Title II reports, the University's Institutional Research website, and our State's Data Dashboard.

H) Since 2011, faculties meet regularly throughout the semester to discuss the results of assessments (e.g., Unit assessments, completer and graduate surveys, WEAVE outcomes) and generate areas for improvement. The assessment coordinator meets with the dean and department chairs to determine a plan of action for each area of improvement (course, program, Unit). Faculty document these improvements to programs on the “Faculty Form: Documentation of Continuous Improvement.”

### 2.4 Exhibits for Standard 2

| 2.4.a Description of the unit's assessment system including the requirements and key assessments used at transition points |
| 2.4.b Admission criteria and data from key assessments used for entry to programs |
| 2.4.c Policies, procedures, and practices for ensuring that key assessments of candidate performance and evaluations of program quality and unit operations are fair, accurate, consistent, and free of bias |
| 2.4.d Policies, procedures, and practices for ensuring that data are regularly collected, compiled, aggregated, summarized, analyzed, and used for continuous improvement |
| 2.4.e Policies, procedures and practices for managing candidate complaints |
| 2.4.f File of candidate complaints and the unit's responses and resolutions (This information should be available during the onsite visit) |
| 2.4.g Examples of significant changes made to courses, programs, and the unit in response to data gathered from the assessment system |

2.4.a1 Description of Unit's Assessment System  
2.4.a2 Handbook Candidate Assessment  
2.4.a3 Handbook M.ED. Curriculum & Instruction
| 2.4.b1 | Initial Admission Criteria |
| 2.4.b2 | Praxis Data by Test and Program |
| 2.4.b3 | Graduate Admission Criteria |
| 2.4.b4 | GRE Data Table |
| 2.4.c  | Assurances that key assessments are fair, accurate, free of bias |
| 2.4.d  | Unit Assessment Matrix |
| 2.4.e1 | Grade Appeal Procedure |
| 2.4.e2 | Candidate Complaint Procedures |
| 2.4.f  | Complaint resolution available during site visit |
| 2.4.g1 | Examples of Changes Made to Unit Program Courses |
| 2.4.g2 | Data Gathered from the Assessment System WEAVE |