

STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM SUMMARY FORM

Program Name: Special Education – MS in Ed
 Dept: Special Education
 College: College of Education
 Submitted by: Dr. Kathryn Havercroft, Chair
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Part 1:

<p>CGS Learning Goal #1 A depth of content knowledge</p>	<p>Program Learning Goal(s): Graduating majors have a comprehensive knowledge base of the issues, research, and practices of Special Education.</p>
<p>How are learners assessed?</p>	<p>The Graduate Outcome “Depth of Content Knowledge” includes in its description “application of theory into practice.” While all graduate candidate assignments/ assessments require application of knowledge, it is in the field experiences that candidates’ ability to relate theory to practice is authentically assessed. Graduate candidates complete a practicum course, SPE 5770. A required component of the field experience is the expectation that candidate’s experience is outside their classroom and diverse from their current role.</p> <p>Each candidate to graduate must complete a written comprehensive exam or write a thesis. During this assessment period, no candidates have completed a thesis. The comprehensive exam requires that the candidate successfully demonstrate a depth of content knowledge specific to the topic of the exam.</p> <p>The required comprehensive exam is a combination of an Issues (5120) and Research (SPE 5900) exam. Comprehensive Exams are scored by faculty with expertise using a Departmental Rubric.</p>

	<p>If the candidate is seeking an MS with a Learning Behavior Specialist II (LBS II) or SPE Director (DIR) advanced credential, the candidate is expected to pass the appropriate advanced licensure test demonstrating content knowledge.</p> <p>Candidates completing their M.S. FA 21-SU 22 were rated by faculty on a dispositional survey relative to demonstration of content knowledge.</p>
<p>What are the expectations for the students?</p>	<p>Candidates successfully complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPE 5770 (3), the field experience/practicum course • The 5120/5900 Comprehensive Exam • The advanced licensure exam (LBS II BIS, LBS II CAS, or SPED Director exam) if applicable to their chosen program option
<p>What are the expectations for the program?</p>	<p>It is expected that candidates meet or exceed standards as defined by the elements of the rubric used to assess the fieldwork or field experience activities in SPE 5770. A 3.0 or above on a 5.0 scale reflects standards are met (or exceeded).</p> <p>On the written comprehensive exams, candidates will demonstrate “depth of content knowledge” meeting or exceeding the standards by earning a rating of 3 or above.</p> <p>Related to advanced licensure for those candidates seeking an additional credential (e.g. LBS II or SPE DIR), a score of 240 indicates “Passing”</p> <p>The Dispositional Survey will reflect that all candidates “Meet” or “Exceed” the standard related to the Depth of Content Knowledge learning goal</p>
<p>What were the results?</p>	<p>The SPE 5770 project requires the completion of a field experience project that relates research to practice; 13 candidates completed this project Fall 2021-Summer 2022.</p> <p>Ratings are as follows: Consistently Exceeds n=4 Exceeds Some Standards n=4 Meets Standards n=5</p>

	<p>The SPE 5120/5900 Issues/Research Comprehensive Exam question requires the ability to analyze and synthesize research, utilizing a candidate's depth of knowledge to apply the findings to his or her own practice. All candidates who completed the SPE 5120/5900 Issues/Research comprehensive exam between Fall 2021 and end of Summer semester 2022 passed the exam. In terms of outcomes on the Depth of Knowledge indicator, ratings are as follows: Consistently Exceeds n=2 Inconsistently Exceeds the Standard n=4 Meets the Standard n=9</p> <p>Across the time frame from Fall 2021-Summer 2022, all candidates (n=5) who took an advanced licensure test (LBS II) or (DIR) through the state earned a passing score demonstrating their depth of content knowledge.</p> <p>The candidates completing their degree Fall 2021-Summer 2022 were rated by faculty at the end of their programs on their Depth of Content Knowledge. Aggregate ratings are as follows: Exceeds n=12 Meets n=4 Does Not Meet n=0</p>
<p>How are the results shared? How will these results be used?</p>	<p>Results are shared through rubrics used to grade products, final course grades, evaluation of written comprehensive exams, passing of required licensure exams for program options with licensure. Performance data is analyzed by the Department Curriculum Committee (DCC) to determine any changes or areas of concern based on data.</p>
<p>CGS Learning Goal #2: Critical thinking and problem-solving skills</p>	<p>Program Learning Goal(s): All candidates will develop knowledge and understanding of the issues in Special Education as well as the ability to think critically and solve problems of practice.</p>

How are learners assessed?

Critical thinking and knowledge of issues is addressed in SPE 5120 "Current Issues in Special Education". These skills are also assessed by the departmental Issues/Research comprehensive exam which all candidates must successfully complete.

In the Issues course (5120) candidates choose an issue and are required to engage in critical thinking through thorough examination of the issue, drawing implications and then supporting through research one side of the issue. The major paper (Issue Paper) and accompanying presentation requiring critical thinking, problem-solving and demonstration of research skills, constitute 75% of the SPE 5120 course grade. Departmental rubric is completed by course instructor.

In the Research course (5900), candidates learn how to be a good consumer of research and how to devise and conduct their own research study. Various methods and analyses are learned and applied in constructing a research proposal which constitutes 75% of the course grade. Departmental rubric is completed by course instructor.

Every candidate, to earn the M.S. degree in Special Education, must pass a written comprehensive exam specific to content and concepts covered across the core courses (SPE 5120 and SPE 5900). The exam requires candidates to read a provided article and identify various elements of the research study (i.e. problem examined in the study, hypotheses, sample, research design, procedures used in the study, dependent and independent variables, the statistical analyses employed, the results and conclusions) and discuss the value or lack of value of the results for a special educator and/or the broader field of special education. Each candidate must then synthesize the research surrounding the issue on which the article was focused and reflect on his/her own position, providing research supporting it. Problem solving and application of research are required to determine and support the candidate's position as does the application of the findings to one's own setting. Comprehensive Exams are scored by faculty with expertise using a Departmental Rubric.

	Candidates completing the M.S. in Special Education were rated by faculty on a dispositional survey in terms of their ability to think critically and apply problem solving skills
What are the expectations for the students?	<p>Candidates successfully complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPE 5120 Course • SPE 5900 Course • The 5120/5900 Comprehensive Exam
What are the expectations for the program?	<p>All candidates enrolled will meet knowledge base expectations (“B”) or exceed expectations (“A”) in SPE 5120 and SPE 5900.</p> <p>Candidates completing the Issue paper will demonstrate “critical thinking and problem-solving skills” at a minimum overall rating of 3.0 (meets standards). Candidates on the “Issue Paper” will meet or exceed standards as defined by elements of the rubric.</p> <p>On the Issues and Research written exams, the candidate will demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Candidates must earn a “3” or above which indicates “meeting” or “exceeding” standards.</p> <p>The Dispositional survey will reflect that all candidates “Meet” or “Exceed” the standard related to the Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking learning goal</p>
What were the results?	<p>Grades earned in "Core Courses" –</p> <p>SPE 5120 Fall 2021 A n=8 B n=6</p> <p>SPE 5900 Summer 2022</p>

A n=11

B n=1

NF=1* this candidate has applied for a medical withdrawal from the course

The final overall ratings for candidates completing an "Issue paper" follow:

Fall 2021

Consistently Exceeds n=6

Exceeds Some Standards n=3

Meets n=2

Inconsistently Meets n=3*

Does Not Meet=0

*for those who inconsistently met this standard, scaffolded support was provided by faculty to aid candidates in clarifying and/or strengthening their performance related to this standard. As can be seen in the comprehensive exam ratings for this standard below, candidates were able to meet the Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving Learning Goal by the conclusion of their program.

Across the 16 Issues/Research comprehensive written exams taken in FA21-SU22, 16 of 16 received a rating of 3 (Meets) or above on the rubric element related to Critical Thinking/Problem Solving. The number of candidates receiving each rating level follows:

Consistently Exceeds n=2

Sometimes Exceeds n=5

Meets n=9

Inconsistently Meets=0

Does Not Meet=0

The candidates completing their degree FA 21-SU 22 were rated by faculty at the end of their programs on their Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving Skills. Aggregate ratings are as follows:

	<p>Exceeds n=9 Meets n=7 Does Not Meet n=0</p>
How are the results shared? How will these results be used?	<p>Results are shared through rubrics used to grade products, final course grades, evaluation of written comprehensive exams, passing of required licensure exams for program options with licensure. Performance data is analyzed by the Department Curriculum Committee (DCC) to determine any changes or areas of concern based on data.</p>
CGS Learning Goal #3: Effective oral and written communication skills	<p>Program Learning Goal(s): Candidates for a Master’s degree with a major in Special Education will demonstrate written competence.</p> <p>Candidates for a master’s degree with a major in Special Education will demonstrate oral language competence.</p>
How are learners assessed?	<p>Writing Competence is assessed in all courses; however, to standardize outcomes, results from the two required core courses: SPE 5120 (Issues) and SPE 5900 (Research) will be analyzed. Candidate written competence is also assessed on all completed departmental comprehensive exams. Comprehensive Exams are scored by faculty with expertise using a Departmental Rubric.</p> <p>Oral Language Competence is assessed in many courses; however, to standardize outcomes, results from an oral presentation in SPE 5120 (Issues) will be analyzed - Departmental Rubric completed by the course instructor is applied.</p> <p>Major papers: SPE 5120 (Issues) and SPE 5900 (Research)—Departmental Rubric completed by the course instructor is applied in each course</p> <p>Candidates completing their M.S. FA 21-SU 22 were rated by faculty on a dispositional survey relative to demonstration of written and oral communication</p>
What are the expectations for the students?	<p>Candidates successfully complete:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPE 5120 Course • SPE 5900 Course • The 5120/5900 Comprehensive Exam
<p>What are the expectations for the program?</p>	<p>It is expected all candidates will meet or exceed standards specific to written communication skills (rating of 3 or above) as defined in the departmental rubrics for assignments and exams</p> <p>Candidates will demonstrate writing competence in two major papers (an Issues paper and a Research proposal) in addition to their Comprehensive Exam earning a rating of 3 or above on the assignment rubrics</p> <p>Oral language skills will be demonstrated appropriate to an advanced professional. An advanced professional can communicate effectively, sharing synthesized information, clearly communicate concepts and opinions, and demonstrate appropriate semantics and grammatical skills. All candidates will earn a rating of 3 or above on the assignment rubric.</p> <p>The Dispositional Survey will reflect that all candidates “Meet” or “Exceed” the standard related to both the Written and Oral Communication Learning Goals</p>
<p>What were the results?</p>	<p>Results from Major Papers in SPE 5120 and SPE 5900 Fall 2021-SU 2022. Across the aggregate of both papers, the following summarizes candidates’ Writing Competence ratings:</p> <p>Consistently Exceeds n=4 Exceeds Some Standards n=15 Meets n=1 Inconsistently Meets=6* Does Not Meet=0</p> <p>*for those who inconsistently met this standard, scaffolded support was provided by faculty to aid candidates in clarifying and/or strengthening their performance related to this standard. As can be seen in the comprehensive exam ratings for this standard below,</p>

candidates were able to meet the Written Communication Learning Goal by the conclusion of their program.

Results on the SPE 5120/5900 Written Comprehensive Exam: candidates completed the written comprehensive exam for SPE 5120/SPE 5900 Fall 2021 through Summer 2022. The rubric used in scoring the written exam includes “Written Communication Skills” as an area of evaluation. On this area, candidates received the following ratings:

Consistently Exceeds n=2
Exceeds Some Standards n=3
Meets n=11
Inconsistently Meets n=0
Does Not Meet=0

Oral language skills are formally assessed through an “Issue” presentation which is given by the candidate in SPE 5120. Ratings on candidates’ oral communication follow:

Consistently Exceeds n=2
Exceeds Some Standards n=10
Meets n=0
Inconsistently Meets=0
Does Not Meet=0

Candidates completing their program between FA 21-SU 22 were rated by faculty in their last semester of coursework on both their Written and Oral Communication. Aggregate ratings are as follows:

Written Communication
Exceeds n=7
Meets n=9

	<p>Does Not Meet n=0</p> <p>Oral Communication</p> <p>Exceeds n=8</p> <p>Meets n=8</p> <p>Does Not Meet n=0</p>
How are the results shared? How will these results be used?	Results are shared through rubrics used to grade products, final course grades, and evaluation of written comprehensive exams. Performance data is analyzed by the Department Curriculum Committee (DCC) to determine any changes or areas of concern based on data.
CGS Learning Goal #4: Evidence of advanced scholarship through research and/or creative activity.	<p>Program Learning Goal(s):</p> <p>Candidates for a Master’s degree in Special Education will demonstrate the ability to critically review and synthesize existing research and to relate research to practice.</p>
How are learners assessed?	<p>Candidates must pass a written comprehensive exam specific to Issues/Research. Candidate demonstration of advanced scholarship is assessed in this exam. Comprehensive Exams are scored by faculty with expertise using a Departmental Rubric.</p> <p>Across coursework, graduate candidates complete projects that are designed to assess candidate performance. Each graduate assessment assesses evidence of “advanced scholarship” and “ability to relate research to practice”. The two core courses (SPE 5120 and SPE 5900) taken by all MS candidates have major assignments which evaluate candidates’ ability to do so. Departmental rubrics are used by the respective instructors of each course to evaluate candidate performance.</p> <p>Candidates completing the M.S. in Special Education are rated by faculty on a dispositional survey in terms of their ability to engage in research/scholarship.</p>
What are the expectations for the students?	<p>Candidates successfully complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPE 5120 Course

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPE 5900 Course • The 5120/5900 Comprehensive Exam
<p>What are the expectations for the program?</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to meet or exceed standards of demonstration of advanced scholarship on the written comprehensive exam for SPE 5120 (Issues) /SPE 5900 (Research)</p> <p>Candidates will demonstrate advanced scholarship and ability to relate research to practice in completion of graduate programmatic assessments earning a rating of 3 (Meets Standard) or above on each related rubric element from the SPE 5120 Issues Paper and SPE 5900 Research Proposal</p> <p>The Dispositional survey will reflect that all candidates “Meet” or “Exceed” the standard related to the Research/ Scholarship Learning Goal</p>
<p>What were the results?</p>	<p>Candidates completing the Research Proposal (5900) earned the following ratings on the Required Components section of that assignment:</p> <p>Summer 2022 Consistently Exceeds n=7 Exceeds Some Standards n=4 Meets n=1 Inconsistently Meets n=0 Does Not Meet n=0</p> <p>Candidates completing the Issues Paper (5120) earned the following ratings on the rubric element “Candidate Demonstration of Analysis & Synthesis of Research”</p> <p>Fall 2021 Consistently Exceeds n=3 Exceeds Some Standards n=7 Meets n=3 Inconsistently Meets n=1*</p>

	<p>Does Not Meet n=0 *for the candidate who inconsistently met this standard, scaffolded support was provided by faculty to aid candidate in clarifying and/or strengthening his/her performance related to this standard. As can be seen in the comprehensive exam ratings for this standard below, candidate was able to meet the Research/Advanced Scholarship Learning Goal by the conclusion of their program.</p> <p>Across FA 21-SU 22, 16 Issues/Research written comprehensive exams were completed. Related to Advanced Scholarship/Research, candidate ratings were as follows: Consistently Exceeds n=1 Exceeds Some Standards n=4 Meets n=11 Inconsistently Meets n=0 Does Not Meet n=0</p> <p>The candidates completing their degree FA 21-SU 22 were rated by faculty at the end of their programs on their skills in Research/Scholarship. Aggregate ratings are as follows: Exceeds n=9 Meets n=7 Does Not Meet n=0</p>
<p>How are the results shared? How will these results be used?</p>	<p>Results are shared through rubrics used to grade products, final course grades, and evaluation of written comprehensive exams. Performance data is analyzed by the Department Curriculum Committee (DCC) to determine any changes or areas of concern based on data.</p>
<p>CGS Learning Goal #5: Ethics and Professional Responsibility</p>	<p>Program Learning Goal(s): The graduate candidate demonstrates an understanding and respect for professional ethics in special education.</p>

<p>How are learners assessed?</p>	<p>While all graduate candidate assignments/ assessments require candidates to act ethically and responsibly, it is in the field experiences assessed during the SPE 5770 Practicum course that candidates are authentically assessed. A required component of the field experience is the expectation that candidates' experience is outside their classroom and diverse from their current role. Candidates are then assessed on numerous criteria, including 'Demonstrating Professional Ethical Behavior', and 'Demonstrating Professional Responsibility'</p> <p>Beginning in SP22, each Comprehensive Exam question/task has been expanded to require that candidates discuss ethical issues/issues of professional responsibility. The rubric also includes a rating for this indicator. Comprehensive Exams are scored by faculty with expertise using a Departmental Rubric.</p>
<p>What are the expectations for the students?</p>	<p>Candidates successfully complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPE 5770, the field experience/practicum course • The 5120/5900 Comprehensive Exam
<p>What are the expectations for the program?</p>	<p>It is expected that candidates meet or exceed standards as defined by the elements of the rubric used to assess the fieldwork or field experience activities in SPE 5770. A 3.0 or above on a 5.0 scale reflects standards are met (or exceeded).</p> <p>On the written comprehensive exams, candidates will demonstrate "ethics/professional responsibility" meeting or exceeding the standards by earning a rating of 3 or above.</p> <p>The Dispositional Survey will reflect that all candidates "Meet" or "Exceed" the standard related to the Ethics/Professional Responsibility learning goal.</p>
<p>What were the results?</p>	<p>Across FA 21-SU 22, 13 candidates completed the SPE 5770 Practicum course. Below are the ratings (on a 5-point scale) for the related indicators of <i>Demonstrating Professional/Ethical Behavior</i> and <i>Demonstrating Professional Responsibility</i></p>

Demonstrating Professional/Ethical Behavior

Consistently Exceeds Standards n= 7

Exceeds Some Standards n=2

Meets Standards n=4

Inconsistently Meets Standards n=0

Does Not Meet Standards n=0

Demonstrating Professional Responsibility

Consistently Exceeds Standards n= 0

Exceeds Some Standards n=5

Meets Standards n= 7

Inconsistently Meets Standards n= 1*

Does Not Meet Standards n=0

*for the candidate who inconsistently met this standard, scaffolded support was provided by faculty to aid candidate in clarifying and/or strengthening his/her performance related to this standard. As can be seen in the comprehensive exam ratings for this standard below, candidate was able to meet the Ethics/Professional Responsibility Learning Goal by the conclusion of their program.

SPE 5120/5900 Comprehensive Exam ratings for the area of Ethical/Professional Responsibility follow:

Consistently Exceeds n=0

Exceeds Some Standards n=2

Meets n=3

Inconsistently Meets n=0

Does Not Meet=0

The candidates completing their degree FA 21-SU 22 were rated by faculty at the end of their programs on their skills in Ethics/Professional Responsibility. Aggregate ratings are as follows:

	Exceeds n=5 Meets n=11 Does Not Meet n=0
How are the results shared? How will these results be used?	Results are shared through rubrics used to grade products, final course grades, and evaluation of written comprehensive exams. Performance data is analyzed by the Department Curriculum Committee (DCC) to determine any changes or areas of concern based on data.

Part 2

Describe what your program’s assessment accomplishments since your last report was submitted. Discuss ways in which you have responded to the Graduate Assessment Summary Response from last year’s report or simply describe what assessment work was initiated, continued, or completed.

Since the last report was submitted, our department and the college have worked diligently to align our programs and assessment practices with CAEP advanced standards. We have added an early writing sample hoping to identify concerns prior to “candidacy”, expanded the dispositional ratings to include an interim rating which will allow intervention if needed, and realigned program rubrics to address CAEP standards. In addition, we have reviewed all assessments to ensure that the newest learning goal is being fully integrated and measured in a meaningful way. Furthermore, thanks to Hamand funding, the Department of SPE in conjunction with a co-hort of transition practitioners, has been exploring the possibility of a new program option (LBS II in Transition) which albeit not directly related to assessment, is affected by and would affect our assessment practices and data.

In the previous response from the Graduate School, there was only one recommendation to address (i.e. consider how to include the new CGS Learning Goal in your next assessment report). There was also a question related to the data which reflected that not all candidates were meeting or exceeding every standard. All other comments were positive. To respond to the recommendation, the Departmental Curriculum Committee reviewed all syllabi and key assessments from each current graduate course in the program to determine if CGS Learning Goal 5 was already represented or if changes needed to be made to content and/or assessments to ensure this goal is being assessed. Minor revisions to course content have been made and all outlines/syllabi as well as departmental assessments have been aligned to include the new graduate learning goal. Related to the question about candidates who do not “meet” a standard when the departmental expectation is that all do so, we have determined that using the comprehensive exam as the final measure allows for mastery learning to occur. While we do not intend to decrease our expectation, the data gleaned from departmental rubrics during course/assignment completion allow for intervention and support if needed by candidates and has resulted in a 100% pass rate on the comprehensive exams.

Part 3

Summarize changes and improvements in curriculum, instruction, and learning that have resulted from the implementation of your assessment program. How have you used the data? What have you learned? In light of what you have learned through your assessment efforts this year and in past years, what are your plans for the future?

The MS in SPE graduate program is designed to meet each candidate's career goals and objectives. Furthermore, the program is intended for individuals who already hold licensure in Special Education. Candidates may elect to complete the sequence of courses that culminates in an additional entitlement (LBS II) as a “Curriculum Adaptation Specialist” or “Behavior Intervention Specialist”; they may commence work toward the “Director of Special Education” endorsement, or may choose Master’s coursework as it relates to their own professional goals. Beginning in Fall 2021, the core courses for the MS in SPE expanded to include five classes (previous core was only two courses). All candidates are now required to complete SPE 5120 Current Issues in Special Education, SPE 5900 Research in Special Education, SPE 5670 Assessment in Special Education OR for those seeking an administrative path SPE 5675 Assessments, Programs, and Services for Individuals with Exceptional Learning Needs, SPE 5970 Curriculum and Methods for K-12 Special Education, and SPE 5770 Practicum in Special Education (Field Experience). All candidates must also successfully complete comprehensive exams or a thesis; if choosing to seek additional licensure or an additional endorsement, a state exam is required and counts as one of the two required comprehensive assessments of knowledge. Sixteen candidates completed the MS in SPE between FA 21- SU 22; three earned advanced LBS II credentials and two passed the Special Education Director exam yet need additional coursework in EDL to be endorsed by the state. Note: MS candidates in the “general master’s in SPE” do not complete a state exam. Nineteen new candidates enrolled in the MS in SPE program within this timeframe (FA21-SU22).

In addition to data gathered from course rubrics, comprehensive exams, faculty dispositional ratings, and licensure test results, Completer and Employer surveys are sent annually to elicit feedback on the program and the resulting skills of the candidates who complete it. Findings from these indirect measures indicate that all stakeholders regard the MS in SPE as a quality program and are “very” to “extremely” satisfied with the outcomes. Specific areas rated the highest by candidates include: content knowledge, the ability to translate research to practice and their ability to create positive learning environments. Those areas rated the highest by employers (supervisors and administrators) include: content knowledge, ability to manage difficult behavior, and professionalism and ethical practice. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, in a time when a serious shortage of special educators exists across our nation, all completers who responded intend to remain in the field.

This past year, the EIU Department of Special Education was awarded an Exemplary Program award from the American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES) and our ongoing CAEP accreditation (both of which required strong assessment practices and solid evidence of program effectiveness), yet we are always striving for improvement. We know that even good programs must continue to grow and evolve. Following are some of the steps we have taken or intend to implement in the near future:

1. Continue exploring the Transition Specialist option;
2. Devise an Intro to Transition course to gauge candidate interest and to serve the field as this is an area of expertise that is often lacking in K-12 settings;
3. Maintain current levels of enrollment;
4. Implement graduate faculty meetings at least once a semester; and
5. Continue refining assignments and assessments with the plan of seeking CEC Accreditation for our Advanced Programs on our next review cycle.