

Unit Assessment System
Newberry College
Prepared by Cindy Johnson-Taylor, Chair of the Department of Education and
Donald Johnson-Taylor, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment.
June 18, 2008

This report will provide an update to the South Carolina State Department of Education on the Unit Assessment System at Newberry College. Since the Unit will be evaluated using the new NCATE standards in September 2010, this report will address the new standards.

Standard Two: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

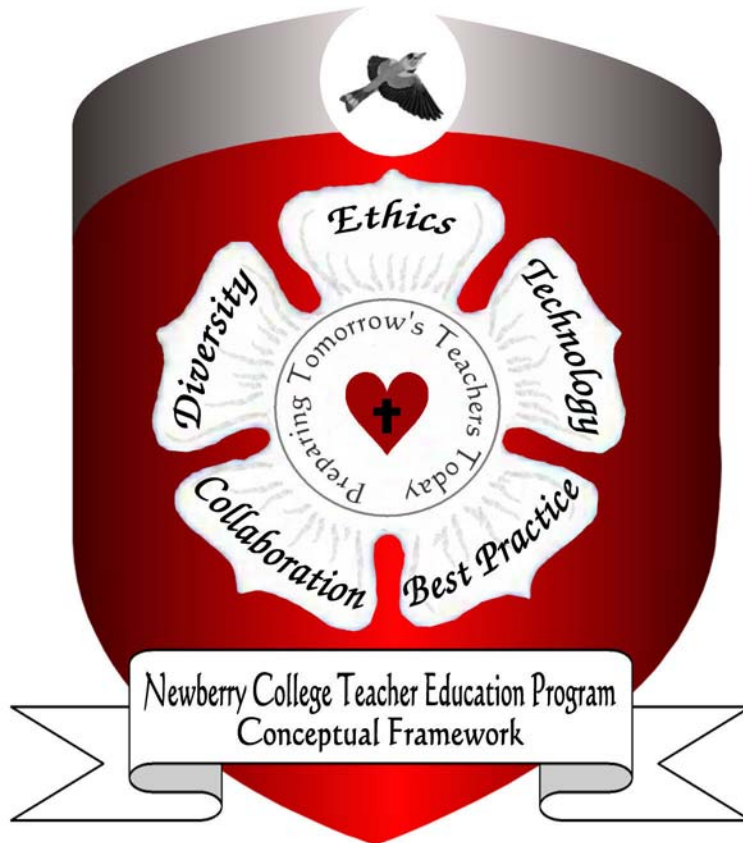
Newberry College has a comprehensive assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations. The College uses this information to evaluate and improve the Unit and its programs.

2a. Assessment System

***Assessment of the Conceptual Framework
and Professional and State Standards***

Assessment of the Conceptual Framework Knowledge, skills, and dispositions that form the foundation for the Unit Assessment System are derived from the conceptual framework and state and professional standards. All unit assessments from program admission to post-graduation are aligned with the appropriate standards that facilitate the acquisition, application, and implementation of appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the teacher education program. The Unit recognizes the importance of candidate performance on students' learning and incorporates the assessment of these results into the system.

The Newberry College Conceptual Framework is multi-dimensional and contains outcomes that represent the evolution of the teacher candidate at four stages of progress: Emerging, Developing, Practicing and Becoming a Professional and across five Guiding Themes: Technology, Diversity, Collaboration, Ethics and Best Practice and within four learning domains: Planning, Instruction, Classroom Environment and Professionalism. Key performance assessments have been identified to assess mastery of all teacher education candidates on critical outcomes at each stage across guiding themes. The Conceptual Framework was revised during 2006-2007 and adopted by the teacher education faculty on August 1, 2007. Below is graphic representation of the Newberry College Conceptual Framework that accurately portrays the goals of this faculty in preparing tomorrow's teachers today.



Assessment of state standards. The state standard for initial preparation, Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT), is measured for undergraduate candidates across the curriculum at various points throughout the program. The Domains of Learning in ADEPT are a key part of the Conceptual Framework.

Assessment of professional standards. The conceptual framework is aligned with professional standards. Each program has aligned its coursework and assessments with SPA standards.

Involvement of the Professional Community

Newberry College is implementing a Unit Assessment System that is aligned with its conceptual framework, and state and national standards. This system collects and analyzes data on candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions and was developed with input from the professional community. The professional community includes members of the Teacher Education Committee, the Teacher Education Advancement Team, and the Education Student Advisory Committee. The Teacher Education Committee (TEC) includes public school partners, teacher education colleagues in Education, Arts and Sciences, Visual and Performing Arts and Physical Education and teacher candidates. This decision-making body helps guide the direction of the assessment system and the

unit overall. TEC minutes capture these discussions as well as the approval of critical documents such as revised conceptual frameworks, revised dispositions criteria, transition points and the common rubric. The Teacher Education Advancement Team is a group that includes all members of the professional education faculty as defined by NCATE. This group met for the first time on May 14, 2007 for a four hour work session. During this session, teacher education faculty reviewed drafts of the following documents and provided feedback: (a) the revised Conceptual Framework, (b) the proposed revised Dispositions and Skills Criteria, and (c) the proposed transition review points. The power point presentation that guided this session provides documentation of what was discussed and debated. The Education Student Advisory Committee was formed in August 2006 and meets 6 times per academic year. The Chair of the Department of Education meets with one representative from each major as a group and discusses all proposed changes with the candidates to gain their input.

Program Improvement Through Use of Data

The Director of Institutional Research and Assessment for Newberry College holds a seat on both the Teacher Education Committee and the Teacher Education Advancement Team. His role is to facilitate the analysis of the collected data and to share it with the groups so that program decisions can be made using evidence. For example, data was shared about the practicum/field experience from the Fall 2006 semester. This data was collected from a survey sent to all public school teachers who worked with a Newberry College practicum/field experience student during the semester. Also, data was shared from the post graduate survey which was sent to all teacher education graduates since 2002. Their responses on the survey provided valuable information for those working to improve the program.

The main purpose of the system going forward is to evaluate and improve the Unit and its programs using information technology (Live Text) to generate databases of assessment information on candidates, programs, and the Unit. The system facilitates data-driven program reviews on an ongoing basis. The description of the assessment system provided in this section represents current implementation of the Unit Assessment System at Newberry College. Through discussions with the Teacher Education Committee, the Chair of the Department of Education and from information gained by attending an NCATE/AACTE conference, the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment suggested and the Unit accepted three goals for the improvement of the Assessment System:

- A more refined process for candidate competency review prior to the internship phase.
- Evidence of candidate impact on P-12 student learning.
- A more systematic process for reviewing existing candidate data and for making program changes.

Multiple Assessments

As the mission statement indicates, *The Newberry College Teacher Education Program provides candidates the opportunity to become highly qualified teachers who are caring, reflective, life-long learners with the education, experiences, and dispositions necessary to instruct future generations of students.* In order to accomplish this mission, the unit has set up 4 transition points (called Stages of Progress) to allow for appropriate and multiple assessment of candidates throughout the program. These Stages of Progress and corresponding gates are provided below:

Stages of Progress

Emerging as a Teacher
Developing as a Teacher
Practicing as a Teacher
Becoming a Professional
Teacher

Gates

Admission to Teacher Education
Admission to the Internship
Exit from the Internship
Program Completion

During the first stage of progress, called Emerging as a Teacher, candidates explore the teaching profession by completing the first 3 education classes, taking core classes and exploring introductory classes in their respective majors. Every candidate in this stage spends a minimum of 36 hours in the field. When a candidate applies for admission to the teacher education program, he is asking to move from the emergent stage to the developing stage. Before allowing a candidate to do so, faculty make thoughtful decisions about whether or not this candidate is ready to proceed.

The second stage of progress is called The Developing Stage. During this stage, candidates who have already been admitted to the Teacher Education Program have the opportunity to participate in methods classes and field experiences designed to prepare them for actual classroom teaching. During this phase, all teacher education candidates experience a minimum of 72 hours in the field prior to entering the next phase.

The third stage, The Practicing Stage, is the internship semester and candidates are placed in two different placements for 7 weeks each. Exiting this stage and progressing to the final stage involves successful completion of the internship. The internship involves multiple assessments. In order to complete the internship semester, the candidate must have received passing scores on the internship final evaluation, the Unit Work Sample and the Culminating Portfolio.

The fourth stage is when a candidate exits the program and becomes a professional teacher. At Newberry College, exiting from the program requires completion of all courses and degree requirements, passing the internship semester, passing required PRAXIS II exams for the major, maintaining positive dispositions and having a 2.5 GPA.

Table 1. Transition Points/Gates

Admission to Teacher Education Requirements	Admission to the Internship	Exit from the Internship/	Program Completion
<p>2.5</p> <p>Must pass all 3 parts of PRAXIS I</p> <p>45 hours completed</p> <p>C or better in EDU 101, EDU 224 and EDU 230</p> <p>Essay Rubric Score of 3 or higher (scored by faculty) required to proceed</p> <p>Application approved by Education Department Chair and two members of the Teacher Education Committee</p> <p>Dispositions assessed in EDU 224 for all students and when concerns arise. Self assessments and instructor assessments are conducted.</p>	<p>2.5</p> <p>C or better in certain courses determined by major faculty</p> <p>Resume showing growth over time and approved by advisor</p> <p>Application approved by Education Department Chair and two members of the Teacher Education Committee</p> <p>Dispositions assessed in EDU 341/EDU 342 for all candidates except music majors and when concerns arise. Music majors are assessed in MUS 470. Self assessments and instructor assessments are conducted.</p>	<p>2.5</p> <p>C or better in EDU 480 – Internship and EDU 483 - Seminar</p> <p>Rubric score of 3 or higher on Unit Work Sample</p> <p>Rubric score of 3 or higher on Culminating Portfolio</p> <p>Dispositions assessed by mentor teacher</p> <p>Passing final evaluation scored by both mentor teacher and college supervisor</p>	<p>2.5</p> <p>Successful completion of the internship semester</p> <p>Successful completion of all courses and degree requirements</p> <p>Passing scores on all PRAXIS II tests required for South Carolina</p> <p>All requirements for certification in South Carolina have been met.</p> <p>* A candidate can graduate without being a program completer. One is not designated as a program completer until all required PRAXIS II tests are passed.</p>

The unit has taken effective steps to eliminate bias in assessments and is working to establish the fairness, accuracy, and consistency of its assessment procedures and unit operations through conducting inter-rater reliability tests on the rubrics being used.

2b. Data Collection, Analysis and Evaluation

Data Collection and Evaluation of Candidates

The unit maintains an assessment system that provides regular and comprehensive information on application qualifications, candidate proficiencies, competence of graduates, unit operations, and program quality.

Data Collected on Applicant Qualifications

As the program transition points display, multiple assessments are used to make decisions for program admissions. For example, for admission to the Teacher Education Program, the following data are collected on each candidate and supplied to the admission committee at the time admission is considered: GPA; Praxis I score; number of hours completed; grades in EDU 101, 224, and 230; and rubric score on the Admissions Essay. Dispositions forms are kept on all candidates and are shared with faculty at all transition points, including admission to the program.

Data Collected on Candidate Proficiencies

Newberry College uses multiple sources of information on candidates to assess their proficiency as well as to assess unit and program operations and quality. These data sources and their use for decisions regarding candidates, unit operations, and program and unit improvement will be discussed below.

External sources. Multiple external sources of data include standardized tests such as Praxis I and II series tests. Praxis II scores on all candidates are aggregated yearly by the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment and results are shared with faculty in departmental and teacher education meetings. These data provide programs and the Unit with important information on program quality and candidate abilities. Programmatic changes made because of these data will be discussed in Element 2c of this standard.

Additional important external sources are field experience and internship evaluations which are completed by mentor teachers and college supervisors. These evaluations provide key performance evidence that is considered at program transition points for candidate retention and program continuation.

Internal sources. Multiple internal assessments provide important information on candidate mastery of institutional, state, and national standards. Important internal data for candidate retention and progression in the program are (a) GPA, (b) rubric scores on key assignments, (c) scores on course or program level assessments, and (d) assessments of candidate dispositions. For candidate retention and progression in the program, GPA is reviewed by program faculty for each candidate at each transition point. For all programs, candidate data will be available to all faculty advisors on-line through the student information system called Jenzabar. Candidates not maintaining the appropriate GPA are placed on probation.

Internal performance data from course-level assessments provide critical information for candidate retention and progression as well as for unit and program improvement. Beginning in fall 2007, the use of a common rubric was established and all key assignments are now scored using this common rubric. Portfolio and Unit Work Sample scores are critical sources of information in the review for exiting the Internship.

Data Collected on Competence of Graduates

The Unit collects multiple sources of data on program graduates: (a) ADEPT scores on first year teachers, (b) postgraduate surveys, and (c) employer survey and focus group data. Using the IHE portal, Newberry College can see and analyze graduate performance in the field using the ADEPT system. Beginning in Fall 2006, a postgraduate survey was administered asking candidates whether their preparation at Newberry College had enabled them to have a positive impact on student learning. The responses of teacher education graduates are aggregated by the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment. This information is shared with unit faculty and used for program improvement.

Beginning spring 2008, employers of our graduates from 2006-2007 were sent surveys which asked them to rate graduates' skill levels on key conceptual framework items. This information is used for program and unit improvement.

Data Collected on Unit Operations and Program Quality

Data are collected on the professional community including clinical faculty and program faculty. These data include academic degrees earned, years of experience at various educational levels, teaching loads, courses taught, advising loads, scholarship, and service. In addition, data collected include resource allocations, candidate enrollments in programs, and needs analyses.

Data Collected from Members of the Professional Community

Data are collected from many sources to inform the Unit and improve the quality of programs. Data are collected on the clinical faculty, clinical sites, and program faculty. Each of these will be discussed below.

Data collected on clinical faculty. Multiple data sources are used to monitor the performance of the professional community to improve unit operations. Data are collected on mentor teachers and college supervisors, who work with field experience and internship candidates. Information such as the mentor and supervisor certifications (including National Board status), years teaching in the content area, and degrees held are maintained by the assessment system. Candidates evaluate mentors and college supervisors each semester. In turn, the mentor and the supervisor evaluate each other. This information is used for improvement of field experiences for the candidates and as a basis for training and selecting mentors and supervisors. Mentors that receive negative evaluations for more than one semester are no longer used as mentors. The Department Chair addresses issues involving negative evaluations of supervisors.

Data collected on clinical sites. Field experience sites are assessed in multiple ways. A database is maintained on the diversity of the clinical site. Field sites are rated as diverse vs. non-diverse using an index reflecting the most current state statistics available on the site's poverty index and percentage minority enrollment. Beginning fall 2006, all candidates were required to have at least one diverse setting for the 100-hour field experience or one diverse setting for the internship. Beginning in fall 2007 a diversity formula containing 6 levels of diversity (high poverty, high ethnic diversity, high special needs, high academic diversity, non diverse and out of district) was developed and implemented by the faculty with the commitment that each teacher candidate will have placements in all 6 levels of diversity during their time in the teacher education program.

Data collected on program faculty. An extensive database is being created on all full-time faculty that includes data on highest academic degree, years of experience, P-12 experience, ethnicity, gender, and courses taught. Similar data are kept on part-time and clinical faculty regarding earned degrees, P-12 experiences, and course evaluations. For every course each semester, teacher education faculty members are required to administer a student evaluation of the course and the faculty member. These data are stored in the assessment system and faculty are required to reflect on the data in their annual reports.

Data on Formal Candidate Complaints

Newberry College wants each student to have a positive educational experience. Formal procedures for student grievances are described in the Student Handbook.

Use of Technology for Data Aggregation and Analysis

The data collected from the multiple sources in the Unit Assessment System will necessitate heavy use of technology to store and analyze the data. After much deliberation and research, the college decided that Live Text would be the primary environment for collecting, housing and manipulating assessment data as well as generating reports. The Unit Assessment System will also make extensive use of Jenzabar, the College's student management system, to provide demographic and academic performance data. SharePoint will also be utilized to facilitate faculty/candidate interaction and communication, as well as collaboration between faculty members.

Collectively, the resulting databases contain, but are not be limited to, files on the following:

- teacher candidates' course grades including current GPA
- teacher candidates' basic demographic data including rank in high school class, SAT scores, ethnicity, gender, etc.
- teacher candidates' key assignments scored by the common rubric, PRAXIS scores, scores on assignments to assess SPA standards, etc.
- teacher candidates' field placement evaluations
- teacher candidates' internship evaluations
- schools used for field placement and clinical experiences that include the evaluation of the site, the diversity of the site, etc.
- mentor teachers' basic demographic information, years of experience, certifications, advanced degrees, NBPTS status, and evaluations by past interns
- teacher candidates' scores on assignments assessing SPA standards
- professional community data including full-time faculty that include advanced degrees, P-12 experience, areas of expertise, courses taught, scholarship, candidate evaluations, etc.
- part-time faculty information including advanced degrees, P-12 experience, areas of expertise, courses taught, candidate evaluations.

The key linking field is the teacher candidate student number. The data stored in the database is updated continuously and audited once per semester.

Forms such as field experience evaluations, internship evaluations, candidate, graduate and employer surveys, are now available in a scanable format to facilitate ease and accuracy of data collection. Data generated by these forms is imported to the Unit Assessment database. The Unit Assessment Committee annually conducts an analysis of the data for each of the 8 program areas. The data analysis report is sent to the appropriate administrative officers and to the Teacher Education Committee for review and action. In addition, the committee will be able to produce "reports on demand" as programs review their data. Such reviews can be expected to produce additional program specific questions that could not be anticipated in advance. The technology base of the Unit Assessment System will allow for quick analysis of available data to respond to program area specific needs.

In addition to the reporting capability incorporated into Live Text and other components of the Unit Assessment system as described above, Newberry College has extensive capability to conduct ad hoc statistical analysis under the direction of the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment. The Teacher Education Committee can call upon these resources when the need for more complex analysis is required.

In addition to providing data for program and unit review, the system ultimately will be able to produce a profile on each candidate. Such a performance profile would be available for committee review at each transition point as well as being available for providing feedback to candidates. For example, a performance profile might inform a

methods instructor or a field experience supervisor of a candidate's strengths as well as areas still in need of improvement.

2c: Use of Data for Program Improvement

Newberry College regularly and systematically uses data for program improvement

Data-Driven Model for Improvement of Course, Program and Unit Operations

In order to infuse data analysis and program revision systemically throughout the teacher education program at Newberry College, the Teacher Education Committee requires each program area to report annually the following:

- a comprehensive analysis of the program area's data including an analysis of teacher candidate performance on core data elements.
- analysis of data on teacher candidate performance relative to SPA standards.
- plans to address weaknesses in each program area that are revealed by the data analysis.

Beginning in 2007, using the information gathered from rubric scores and other assessments (Praxis II scores, follow-up survey data, employer interviews), the program area began conducting an annual review each April. This review is based on aggregated data collected during the academic year. This review is submitted by the program area to the department chairperson by May 1. Description of any program improvements in response to assessment data is included. Yearly, the Department Chair will present the annual review to the Teacher Education Committee.

Recent Data Driven Course, Program, and Unit Improvements

Use of Candidate Performance Data

The Unit uses existing program data for program improvement. The analysis of candidate performance on Praxis I and II is a good example of changes driven by data analysis. Faculty and administrators regularly review results of Praxis I and II examinations. Concern over PRAXIS scores led to the hiring of a consultant to come in to conduct workshops for faculty and candidates in February 2007. In this workshop, Dr. Charles Hatch summarized research on Praxis failures, presented sample question formats, and assisted faculty with curriculum alignment. Fourteen faculty from across the college attended this workshop. As a result of this workshop, faculty are now taking the PRAXIS tests so that they can better help their students.

Use of Data Collected from the Professional Community

Data is collected on field mentors and supervisors. In addition to using Praxis data for program improvement, the Unit has also used information from the field experience surveys to improve the experience. While the overall survey results were very positive, it was clear that lack of communication between the college and the field mentors was a problem. To counter this issue, the Chair of the Education Department began emailing all field based mentors regularly, the field experience handbook was revised and a field experience liaison was hired to serve the schools on behalf of the college.

It is anticipated that increased capability in data management will yield even more positive changes in the future of the teacher education program at Newberry College.

Summary

In summary, the Newberry College Unit Assessment System, designed in collaboration with college faculty, P-12 educators and education candidates, is aligned with institutional, state, and professional standards. The unit uses multiple internal and external assessments to monitor candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions at appropriate transition points. Performance assessments are monitored for fairness, accuracy and credibility. Members of the faculty work collaboratively with mentor teachers on assessment summaries, interpretations, and applications. Candidate data are used to make decisions about individuals' progression through the program and aggregated candidate data are used to evaluate the teacher education program. Data are presented to the Teacher Education Advancement Team and the Teacher Education Committee (TEC) for review and recommendations on program changes.