

Academic Year: 2017-2018**Program: B.S. Early Childhood Education (3101) College: Education****Prepared by: Michelle Brunson****Date: 5-15-18****Approved by: Kim McAlister****Date: 6-14-18**

Northwestern Mission: Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Mission. The Gallaspy Family College of Education and Human Development is a committed and diverse community of scholars, educators, students, and future leaders working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College produces graduates with the capabilities and confidence to be productive members of society equipped with the skill sets necessary to promote economic and social development thereby improving the overall quality of life in the region. The College offers a wide variety of exemplary undergraduate and graduate programs that prepare candidates for career success across the spectrum of professional roles and settings. These programs include teacher education, leadership, and counseling; health and human performance; psychology and addiction studies; social work; and military science. Candidates are taught to become adaptive critical thinkers and problem solvers in diverse scenarios capable of leveraging new technologies to enrich lifelong learning. As caring, competent, reflective practitioners, our graduates become positive role models in their communities and leaders in the nation's military.

Department of Teaching, Leadership, and Counseling Mission. The Department of Teaching, Leadership, and Counseling offers exemplary programs that prepare candidates for career success in a variety of professional roles and settings. As caring, competent, reflective practitioners, our graduates become positive models in their communities and organizations. This mission is fulfilled through academic programs based on theory, research, and best practice. Further, all graduates learn to value and work with diverse populations and to incorporate technologies that enrich learning and professional endeavors.

B.S. Early Childhood Education Mission Statement: The mission of the Northwestern State University undergraduate Early Childhood Education Program is to prepare educators with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be effective in the Early Childhood classroom. The program prepares educators to meet young children's diverse needs in a variety of settings while documenting and assessing their growth over time in relation to state standards. Upon completion of the program, which meets the National Association for the Education of Young Children's accreditation standards, candidates are equipped to meet the many demands of the teaching profession.

Methodology: The assessment process for the B.S. in Early Childhood Education is as follows:

- Data from assessment tools are collected and returned to the program coordinator;
- The program coordinator analyzes the data to determine student learning and whether students have met measurable outcomes;
- Results are shared with program faculty; and
- The program coordinator works with program faculty analyze results; based on this analysis, faculty collaborate to make any necessary changes to course instruction and/or assessments for program improvement purposes.

Student Learning Outcomes.

SLO 1

Course Map: Third or fourth year of coursework.

- Candidates take the PRAXIS PLT in their third or fourth year of coursework.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge (SPA #1, Praxis II)	Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practices relating to early childhood.

Measure 1.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

SLO 1 is assessed with the PRAXIS PLT Early Childhood exam, which is nationally normed. To meet State mandates, candidates must achieve a score of at least 157.

Quality of the assessment/evidence is assured because (1) the State of Louisiana requires this test, and (2) the test is nationally normed.

For candidates to be successful, they must achieve a score that is at least as high as the State required score of 157.

Findings:

- **AY 2016-2017:** Target Met. 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** Target Met. 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

In AY 2016-2017, 100% of candidates met target, as candidates must pass the PRAXIS PLT exam to enter Student Teaching (EDUC 4950). Candidates' scores range from 161 to 172 with a mean score of 166.75 (n = 4). The cutoff score for the PLT is 157. Thus, the candidates' mean score surpassed the national average median score, which is

169. Again, in AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met the target. Candidates' scores ranged from 167 to 176, with a mean score of 172.8 (n = 5). This also surpasses the national median score of 169.

After examining the evidence from last year, faculty proposed offering more workshops for candidates, addressing all content areas. To enhance program improvement, multiple PRAXIS workshops were, indeed, offered to candidates, addressing all content areas. Also, the university partnered with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

As previously stated, 100% of candidates met the target for PRAXIS in AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018. However, faculty increased the number of PRAXIS workshops offered and were able to provide candidates access to PRAXIS preparation resources in collaboration with the local library. To maximize student learning and to continue to improve the program, faculty will continue to offer PRAXIS workshops in all content areas, partner with the library to offer access to Learning Express, and find innovative, student-centered ways to support candidates in their course to help them be successful on the licensure tests.

SLO 2

Course Map: ECED 3070 *Appropriate Practices for Infants and Toddlers*

SLO 2 is assessed in ECED 3070 *Appropriate Practices for Infants and Toddlers*, which students take in their third year of coursework.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice (SPA #4, Teacher Candidate Observation Form)	Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practices relating to Early Childhood development, curriculum, and assessment.

Measure 2.1. (Direct – Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

SLO 2 is assessed through an Infant Toddler portfolio in ECED 3070 *Appropriate Practices for Infants and Toddlers*, which candidates take in their third year of coursework. To complete this assessment, candidates observe and work with infants and toddlers in the field, focusing on one child to assess and document social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language/literacy skills in relation to early childhood curriculum and research-based assessments. Candidates are provided with a rubric which is used to evaluate their work. The assessment was developed in a collaborative fashion by program faculty, and it provides evidence of student learning and mastery of state standards because the assessment was specifically designed to align with both NAEYC and state standards. The assessment and rubric have been tweaked as necessary with each iteration based on results of student learning and changes in state standards. Program faculty have also reviewed the rubric for validity and reliability, ensuring that the assessment measures what it is intended to measure and that it is reliable over time. The goal is for at least 80% of candidates to score "Meets

Expectations” on the rubric.

Findings:

- **AY 2016-2017:** Target Met. 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** Target Met. 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

In AY 2016-2017, 100% of candidates met target and scored “Meets Expectations” or “Target” on the rubric. Although 100% of candidates met target, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area, and videos were added to the course to provide learner support in areas where candidates missed points (Promoting child development and learning). This proved to be effective, as 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018. Because the assessment and rubric are tied to NAEYC standards and state standards, candidates’ artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of NAEYC and content standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018, program faculty have reviewed the evidence to review student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will continue to add videos and resources to the course to support student learning in *Promoting child development and learning*. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates’ knowledge and skills relating to early childhood curriculum, development, and assessment.

Moving forward, SLO 2 will be assessed via a Teacher Candidate Observation Form in EDUC 4950 *Student Teaching in the Early Childhood Classroom*, which candidates take in their last semester of coursework. This change was made to meet CAEP accreditation demands and align with departmental goals. The Teacher Candidate Observation Form is comprised of items extracted from the Danielson Framework for Teaching instrument. The rating scale was adjusted to reflect course grading requirements, but the criteria and indicators were not adjusted from the Framework. The assessment provides evidence for meeting the state identified standards because it is aligned with InTASC standards, and content validity was established for the instrument. Steps were taken to assure Quality of the assessment/evidence. A panel of 11 P-12 clinicians viewed two 20-minute teaching vignettes and conducted independent evaluations of the teaching performance using this tool. Analyses were conducted using the Lawshe Content Validity Ratio (CVR) statistic (validity) and the Fisher Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) for reliability. The goal is for at least 80% of candidates to score a “2” on the rubric. To determine criteria for success,

- CVR mean = -.03 with CVR (Critical, 11) = .59 and no single item meeting critical value of .59.
- ICC = .59. ICC of .4 - .59 reflects "fair" inter-rater agreement, and .6 is considered “good.”

AY 2016-2017 data show that: 100% of candidates met target and scored at least a “2” on each area of the rubric. Candidates’ mean score was 2.95, with n = 8.

AY 2017-2018 data show that 100% of candidates met target and scored at least a “2” on each area of the rubric. The mean score was 2.94, with n = 7.

Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area, and two professional development sessions on Differentiation were added in Early Childhood courses to provide learner support and prepare candidates for Student Teaching. This proved to be effective, as 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018.

In AY 2017-2018, areas where candidates missed points fell into these categories: Designing coherent instruction, Designing student assessment, Using questioning and discussion techniques, Using assessment in instruction, and Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness.

Because the assessment is tied to national standards, candidates’ artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of those standards.

Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018, program faculty have reviewed the evidence to review student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will continue to add videos, resources, and professional development sessions related to Designing coherent instruction, Designing student assessment, Using questioning and discussion techniques, Using assessment in instruction, and Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness to support student learning in Early Childhood courses. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates’ knowledge and skills relating to early childhood curriculum, development, and assessment.

SLO 3

Course Map: ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods*

SLO 3 is assessed through a dispositions form in ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods*, which candidates take in the second semester of their third year.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Model professional behaviors and Characteristics. (Dispositional Evaluation)	Candidates will model behaviors and characteristics that are professional and ethical.

Measure 3.1. (Direct – Dispositions)

SLO 3 is assessed through a dispositions form in ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods*, which candidates take in the second semester of their third year. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the target performance is that 80% of candidates will score at least “Sufficient” on the rubric. Mentors evaluate candidates’ dispositions at midterm and discuss the evaluation with candidates so that they are aware of strengths and weaknesses. Mentors again use the assessment at the end of the semester (end of

semester data is reported below). Faculty created the dispositional evaluation based on agreed-upon best practices and constructs outlined in InTASC standards. The assessment provides evidence for meeting the state identified standards because it is aligned with InTASC standards, and face validity was established for the instrument. Steps were taken to assure Quality of the assessment/evidence. Face validity was established by 1) aligning items to constructs, 2) avoiding bias and ambiguous language, and 3) stating items in actionable terms. Analysis was conducted using the CAEP Evaluation Framework for EPP-Created Assessments, resulting in “below sufficient,” “sufficient,” or “above sufficient” ratings. The goal is for at least 80% of candidates to score “Sufficient”.

Findings:

- **AY 2016-2017:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

In AY 2016-2017, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least “Sufficient.” Candidates’ mean score was 4.70 (n = 8). Although 100% of candidates met target, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area, and emphasis on Diversity was strengthened in coursework to provide learner support. This proved to be effective, as 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018.

In AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least “Sufficient.” Candidates’ mean score was 4.96 (n = 4). One candidate lost points in the Professionalism category.

As this assessment is used in the Practicum Course, which is one of the last courses candidates take before Student Teaching (EDUC 4950), faculty expect scores to be strong. Because the assessment and rubric are tied to national standards, candidates’ artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of those standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018, program faculty have reviewed the evidence to review student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will continue to add emphasis on Professionalism to support candidates’ performance. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates’ dispositions relating to growing as culturally responsive professionals.

SLO 4

Course Map: EDUC 4950 *Student Teaching in the Early Childhood Classroom*

SLO 4 is assessed through a lesson plan and reflection in EDUC 4950 *Student Teaching in the Early Childhood Classroom*, which candidates take in their final semester.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline (SPA #3, Lesson Plan)	Candidates will design and implement developmentally appropriate lesson plans that reflect research on best practices in Early Childhood Education.

Measure 4.1. (Direct – Knowledge and Skills)

SLO 4 is assessed through a lesson plan and reflection in ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods*, which candidates take in the second semester of their third year. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the target performance is that 80% of candidates will score at least a “3” on the rubric, which is aligned with the state teacher assessment. A group of faculty and cooperating teachers collaborated to create the lesson planning template to align with (at the time) new Louisiana Compass and Common Core State Standards’ expectations. The template requires candidates to plan for and explain elements of lessons on which in-service teacher evaluations were based. The assessment provides evidence for meeting the state identified standards because it is aligned with INTASC standards, and content validity was established for the instrument. Steps were taken to assure Quality of the assessment/evidence. A panel of 8 EPP faculty each conducted four independent rubric-based evaluations of anonymous lesson plan work samples submitted by candidates in four different initial teacher preparation programs. Analyses were conducted using the Lawshe Content Validity Ratio (CVR) statistic (validity) and the Fisher Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) for reliability. To determine criteria for success,

- CVR mean = -.58 with CVR (Critical, 8) = .75 and 13 items (62%) meeting critical value of .75
- ICC = .573. ICC of .4 - .59 reflects “fair” inter-rater agreement, and .6 is considered “good.”

Findings:

- **AY 2016-2017:** 87.5% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

In AY 2016-2017, 87.5% of candidates met target and scored at least a “3.” Candidates’ mean score was 3.34 (n = 8). At the end of the course, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area and determined that more emphasis was needed on Differentiation. Action was taken by increasing course content on Differentiation and adding two professional development sessions provided by outside presenters to enhance learner support. As a result, scores increased in this area, and 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018.

In AY 2017-2018, candidates' mean score was 3.59 (n = 7). Candidates' lowest scores fell into the Reflecting on Instruction category. This aligns with a department-wide need for an emphasis on reflection.

Because the assessment and rubric are tied to NAEYC standards and state standards, candidates' artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of NAEYC and content standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Although 87.5% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017 and 100% met target in AY 2017-2018, program faculty have reviewed the evidence to review student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will include additional professional development relating to Reflecting on Instruction to support student learning. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates' ability to reflect on their practice to improve student outcomes in the classroom.

SLO 5

Course Map: ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods*

SLO 5 is assessed through a project planning journal in ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods*, which candidates take in the second semester of their third year.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Make responsible decisions and problem-solve, using data to inform actions when appropriate (SPA #5, Student Learning Impact)	Candidates will implement a project with young children and document the experience with a project planning journal.

Measure 5.1. (Direct – Knowledge and Skills)

SLO 5 is assessed through a project planning journal in ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods*, which candidates take in the second semester of their third year. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric. To complete this assessment, candidates work with a group of young children in the field, utilizing the Project Approach. Candidates design lessons and assess and document children's social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language/literacy skills in relation to early childhood curriculum and research-based assessments. Candidates are provided with a rubric which is used to evaluate their work. The assessment was developed in a collaborative fashion by program faculty, and it provides evidence of student learning and mastery of state standards because the assessment was specifically designed to align with both NAEYC and state standards. The assessment and rubric have been tweaked as necessary with each iteration based on results of student learning, changes in state standards, and evolving teacher education mandates. Program faculty have also reviewed the rubric for validity and reliability, ensuring that the assessment measures what it is intended to measure and that it is reliable over time. The goal is for at least 80% of candidates to score "Meets Expectations" on the rubric.

Findings:

- **AY 2016-2017:** 88.9% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

In AY 2016-2017, 88.9% of candidates met target and scored “Meets Expectations” or “Target” on the rubric. Candidates’ mean score was 95% (n = 8). At the end of the course, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area. While 8 candidates scored at least “Meets Expectations” on the rubric, one did not. This candidate simply did not complete the assignment and failed to address all the prompts. The prompts which were completed, were correct. Had the candidate completed her assignment, she would have scored “Meets Expectations” as well. With that said, faculty felt that candidates could benefit from having a previous candidate come back as a guest speaker to share her experience, and candidates indicated that they found this helpful.

In AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met target by scoring “Target” on the rubric. Candidates’ mean score was 100% (n = 4). As this assessment is used in the Practicum Course, which is one of the last courses candidates take before Student Teaching (EDUC 4950), faculty expect scores to be strong. Because the assessment and rubric are tied to NAEYC standards and state standards, candidates’ artifacts demonstrated student learning and mastery of NAEYC and content standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Although 88.9% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018, program faculty have reviewed the evidence to review student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will invite more program completers to visit our class as “experts”. We will encourage them to share their celebrations, challenges, and recommendations. We believe this collaboration is beneficial to students, as they can hear first-hand how previous candidates engaged in creative and critical thinking, problem solving, and responsibility taking to successfully implement a project with young children. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates’ knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to modeling Developmentally Appropriate Practices and growing as an Early Childhood professional. However, to align program outcomes and evidence to departmental outcomes and evidence, SLO 5 will be assessed via a PK-12 Student impact assessment. This new assessment will meet CAEP demands and align with departmental goals. AY 2017-2018 data on this assessment showed that 100% of candidates (n =8) met target by scoring at least “3” on the rubric. The mean score was 3.53.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results:

Program faculty made several decisions after examining results of data analysis which resulted in improved student learning and program improvement.

- Multiple PRAXIS workshops were offered to candidates, addressing all content areas. Also, the university partnered with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation to support candidate learning and their ability to meet SLO 1.
- Videos and resources addressing Promoting child development and learning were added to ECED 3070 *Appropriate Practices for Infants and Toddlers*.
- Resources were added to Early Childhood courses to support candidate learning and their ability to meet SLO 2.
- Emphasis on Diversity and Culturally Responsive Practices was strengthened in ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods* coursework to provide learner support and enhance their ability to meet SLO 3.
- Faculty increased course content on Differentiation and added two professional development sessions to provide learner support and help them meet SLO 4.
- Faculty invited a recent completer to speak to her ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods* about her experience implementing the project approach and completing a project planning journal; this supported candidate learning and helped them meet SLO 5.
- Faculty have added service learning components to each ECED course, improving the overall program.
- Faculty have placed greater emphasis on professionalism, based on conversations with principals in the field.
- Faculty have added focus on CLASS, which is the instrument used to evaluate all preschool teachers in LA and some Kindergarten teachers.
- Faculty have added emphasis on current assessments and curricular programs as a result of conversations with principals in the field.
- We added more professional development sessions than we have ever had in our program, strengthening the overall program.
- Finally, faculty have added an experiential learning component to our undergraduate program as part of our QEP.

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

Program faculty have examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AY 2017-2018 and will take steps to continue to improve student learning:

- We will continue to offer PRAXIS workshops and partner with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation to support candidate learning and their ability to meet SLO 1.
- We will add additional resources and videos addressing Designing coherent instruction, Designing student assessment, Using questioning and discussion techniques, Using assessment in instruction, and Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness to support student learning in Early Childhood courses to support candidate learning and their ability to meet SLO 2.
- Moving forward, SLO 2 will be assessed with a Teacher Observation Form in order to meet CAEP requirements and align with departmental goals.
- We will add additional resources focusing on Professionalism in Early Childhood courses to positively impact candidates' professional dispositions to help them meet SLO 3.
- Faculty will add professional development related to Reflecting on Instruction to Early Childhood courses to provide learner support and help them meet SLO 4.
- Faculty will continue to invite recent completers to speak to ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods* candidates about their experiences implementing the project approach and completing a project planning journal, thus supporting candidate learning and their ability to meet SLO 5.
- Moving forward, SLO 5 will be assessed with a PK-12 Student impact assessment to meet CAEP accreditation requirements and align with departmental goals.