

B.S. Early Childhood Education (3101)

College: Education

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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 Mission 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 2017-2018:** Target Met. 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** Target Met. 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

In AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met target, as candidates must pass the PRAXIS

PLT exam to enter Student Teaching (EDUC 4950). Candidates' scores ranged from 167 to 176 with a mean score of 172.8 (n = 5). The cutoff score for the PLT is 157. Thus, the candidates' mean score surpassed the national average median score, which is 169.

After examining the evidence from last year, in 2018-2019, faculty offered more workshops for candidates, addressing all content areas. To enhance program improvement, faculty also attended PRAXIS themselves to gain content knowledge they could use to support student success. Also, the university partnered with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation. These measures proved successful, as 100% of candidates also met the target in 2018-2019.

In AY 2018-2019, 100% of candidates met target, as candidates must pass the PRAXIS PLT exam to enter Student Teaching (EDUC 4950). Candidates' scores ranged from 159 to 178 with a mean score of 170.5 (n = 4). The cutoff score for the PLT is 157. Thus, the candidates' mean score surpassed the national average median score, which is 169.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

After examining the evidence from 2018-2019, faculty agree on the need to offer workshops for candidates, addressing all content areas, and to attend PRAXIS workshops themselves in 2019-2020. Further, in an effort to engage in program improvement, we will partner with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation, as well as to find innovative, student-centered ways to support candidates in their course to help them be successful on the licensure tests.

SLO 2

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

SLO 2 is 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.

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 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 Ration (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.”

Findings:

- **AY 2017-2018:** Target Met. 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** Target Met. 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

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.

In AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met target and scored “Meets Expectations” or “Target” on the rubric. Although 100% of candidates met target, in 2018-2019, 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 (Manages routines and transitions in a timely manner). This proved to be effective, as 100% of candidates met target in AY 2018-2019.

AY 2018-2019 data show that: 100% of candidates met target and scored at least a “2” on each area of the rubric. Candidates’ mean score was 2.96, with n = 4.

Because the assessment is tied to national standards, including InTASC and NAEYC standards, and content validity has been established, candidates’ artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of those standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019, program faculty have reviewed the evidence to review student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will add videos and resources to the course to support student learning in the following areas: Manages routines and transitions in a timely manner, Manages and/or adjusts allotted time for planned activities, Uses monitoring

techniques continuously to facilitate learning, Adjusts lesson when appropriate, Demonstrates a sense of self-worth and confidence in ability to teach, and Uses correct oral and written English. 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 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

In AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least “Sufficient.” Candidates’ mean score was 4.96 (n = 4). Although 100% of candidates met target, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area, and emphasis on Diversity and Professionalism were strengthened in coursework to provide

learner support. This proved to be effective, as 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018.

In AY 2018-2019, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least “Sufficient.” Candidates’ mean score was 4.745 (n = 9). One score of “3” was recorded in each of the following areas: Self-Confidence, Meets all Tasks in a Timely Manner, Manages Time, Commitment to Diversity, Educational Technology, and Self-Initiative. 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 is tied to national standards, including InTASC and NAEYC standards, and content validity has been established, candidates’ artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of those standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019, program faculty have reviewed the evidence to review student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will add emphasis on the following areas: Self-Confidence, Meets all Tasks in a Timely Manner, Manages Time, Commitment to Diversity, Educational Technology, and Self-Initiative 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 EDUC 4950 *Student Teaching in the Early Childhood Classroom*, which candidates take in their final semester. 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 Ration (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 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

In AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least a “3.” Candidates’ mean score was 3.59 (n = 7). 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 Reflecting on Instruction. Action was taken by increasing course content on Reflecting on Instruction and 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 2018-2019.

In AY 2018-2019, candidates’ mean score was 3.66 (n = 10). Candidates’ lowest scores fell into the Adaptations and Technology categories. Faculty are torn about the Technology scores, as research consistently shows that hands-on learning far surpasses one-dimensional learning experiences in the early years.

Because the assessment is tied to national standards, including InTASC and NAEYC standards, and content validity has been established, candidates’ artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of those standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2018-2019, 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 adapting assignments and utilizing technology. 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: EDUC 4950 *Student Teaching in the Early Childhood Classroom*

SLO 5 is assessed through a student impact assessment (portfolio) in EDUC 4950 *Student Teaching in the Early Childhood Classroom*, which is the candidates' last course.

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 document positive impact on young children's learning and development.

Measure 5.1. (Direct – Knowledge and Skills)

SLO 5 is assessed through a student impact assessment (portfolio) in EDUC 4950 *Student Teaching in the Early Childhood Classroom*, which is the candidates' last course. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the target performance is that at least 80% of candidates will score at least a "3" on the rubric.

A group of faculty and cooperating teachers collaborated to create the student learning impact assessment to align with (at the time) new Louisiana Compass and Common Core State Standards' expectations. The assessment requires candidates to plan for, create, administer, and analyze student learning. Candidates then reflect on and make instructional decisions based on their analyses. A panel of 8 EPP faculty each conducted four independent rubric-based evaluations of anonymous student learning impact 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 = -.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."

Findings:

- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

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.

In AY 2018-2019, candidates' mean score was 3.64 (n = 4). Candidates' lowest scores fell into the Student Learning Targets categories.

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 is tied to national standards, including InTASC standards, and content validity has been established, candidates' artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of those standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019, program faculty have reviewed the evidence, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will add content relating to Student Learning Targets to ECED courses.

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, and faculty attended PRAXIS workshops themselves to better support student achievement. 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.
- Resources related to Designing coherent instruction, designing student assessment, using questioning and discussion techniques, using assessment in instruction, and Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness were added to Early Childhood courses to support candidate learning and their ability to meet SLO 2.
- Emphasis on Professionalism 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 Reflecting on Instruction and added two professional development sessions on Differentiation 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 strengthened service-learning components in 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 strengthened 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 2018-2019 and will take steps to continuously improve student learning:

- Multiple PRAXIS workshops will be offered to candidates, addressing all content areas, and faculty will attend PRAXIS workshops themselves to better support student achievement. Also, the university will 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 addressing Manages routines and transitions in a timely manner, Manages and/or adjusts allotted time for planned activities, Uses monitoring techniques continuously to facilitate learning, Adjusts lesson when appropriate, Demonstrates a sense of self-worth and confidence in ability to teach, and Uses correct oral and written English to support student learning and their ability to meet SLO 2.
- We will add additional resources focusing on Self-Confidence, meeting all Tasks in a Timely Manner, Manages Time, Commitment to Diversity, Educational Technology, and Self-Initiative in Early Childhood courses to positively impact candidates' professional dispositions to help them meet SLO 3.
- Faculty will add professional development related to adapting assignments and utilizing Technology to Early Childhood courses to provide learner support and help them meet SLO 4.
- Faculty will add resources related Student Learning Targets in ECED courses, thus supporting candidate learning and their ability to meet SLO 5.
- Faculty will invite recent completers to speak to ECED 3110 *Early Childhood Methods* candidates about their experiences, thus supporting candidate success.
- Faculty will strengthen service-learning components in each ECED course, improving the overall program.
- Faculty will place greater emphasis on professionalism in all courses.
- Faculty will add professional development sessions on CLASS, the instrument used to evaluate all preschool teachers in LA and some Kindergarten teachers in Louisiana.
- Finally, faculty will strengthen the experiential learning component of our undergraduate program as part of our QEP.