

Assessment Cycle 2018-2019

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M.Ed. 524A 524C, 524D, 524E

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.

School of Education Mission. The School of Education 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.

Program Mission Statement: The Master of Education Special Education Programs at NSU follow the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Mission. The Council for Exceptional Children is a professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the success of children with exceptionalities. We accomplish our mission through advocacy, standards, and professional development.

CEC Core Values:

Visionary Thinking:

Demonstrated by forward-thinking and courageous decision making dedicated to excellence and influence in an evolving environment

Integrity:

Demonstrated by ethical, responsive behavior, transparency, and accountability

Inclusiveness:

Demonstrated by a commitment to diversity, caring, and respect for the dignity and worth of all individuals

Ratified December 8, 2014, by the Council for Exceptional Children Board of Directors.

Methodology:

For the Master of Education in Special Education (**M.Ed. 524**) Programs, the assessment process follows the guidelines of the CEC Initial Preparation Standards. Step 1: The seven CEC Initial Preparation Standards are embedded in each of the Special Education courses required for special education certification and are as follows: Standard 1: Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences; Standard 2: Learning Environments; Standard 3: Curricular Content Knowledge; Standard 4: Assessment; Standard 5: Instructional Planning & Strategies;

Standard 6: Professional Learning & Ethical Practice; Standard 7: Collaboration

Step 2: When a student enrolls in a special education course, the key assessment is identified for the student, so at the end of the class, he/she will have the knowledge and skills that all special educators should have for each key assessment.

Step 3: At the end of the class, the key assessment is completed and evaluated by the course instructor.

Step 4: Once the key assessment has been evaluated and feedback given to the candidate, then it is uploaded on their personal electronic portfolio repository.

Step 5: Data from each key assessment is compiled, analyzed, and organized into a database of information, so faculty can address impact on candidate learning.

Step 6: Faculty use the data analysis for feedback and program improvement.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

SLO 1

Course Map: PRAXIS exams for 524C, 524D, 524E

- *SLO 1 is assessed through the PRAXIS exam, a Louisiana requirement for certification/licensure for **524C** Early Intervention the PRAXIS exam is 5691 Special Education Early Childhood, and for **524D & 524E** Elementary, Middle School, and Secondary Mild/Moderate Special Education, the exam is 5543 Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Application.*

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
<p>Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge (SPA #1, Praxis II)</p>	<p>524A: No PRAXIS exam required for certification or licensure. Candidates Demonstrate Content Knowledge in Gifted Education courses SPED 5830 Teaching Creative Thinking, SPED 5840 Psychology of the Gifted, SPED 5860 Trends and Issues in Curriculum Development for the Academically Gifted, SPED 5870 Counseling the Gifted, and SPED 5890 Curriculum and Methods for the Academically Gifted.</p> <p>524C: PRAXIS exam: Special Education Early Childhood (5691) exam required for Louisiana Early Intervention Special Education certification/licensure. Course Map: SPED 5310 Identification and Assessment in Early Intervention, SPED 5320 Foundations of Early Childhood Education for Young Children with Disabilities, SPED 5350 Families of Individuals with Exceptional Needs, SPED 5370 Curriculum and Methods for Non-Categorical Early Childhood Special Education, SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management, RDG 5020 Early Childhood Primary Reading Instruction.</p> <p>524D & 524E: PRAXIS exam: Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (5543) exam required for Louisiana Mild/Moderate Special Education certification/licensure. Course Map: SPED 5380 Curriculum-based Assessment, SPED 5600 Research-Validated Instructional Practices in Special Education, EPSY 5370 Behavioral Management and Modification, RDG 5710 Advanced Diagnosis and Correction of Reading Difficulties, SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management, ETEC 5710 Professional Development for K-12 Technology Integration (for 524E only SPED 5640 Vocational and Transition Services for Students with Disabilities.</p>

Measure 1.1. (Direct-Knowledge)

For 524A, Louisiana does not require a PRAXIS exam for Gifted Education certification or licensure. SLO 1 is assessed using a direct *Content Assessment*. The assessment is evaluated using a Rubric developed by faculty in Gifted Education. Data are collected in courses SPED 5830, SPED 5840, SPED 5860, SPED 5870, and SPED 5890. A scope and sequence were developed in the five courses listed to ensure that content knowledge in gifted education is appropriately introduced, then analyzed, synthesized, evaluated, applied, and transformed by candidates through the *Content Assessment*. Candidates in the Gifted Education program courses complete course assignments with corresponding online post reports. These reports all require an essay response to one or more open-ended, content specific questions and must be based on readings from

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textbooks, articles, and/or other online documents. A summative assessment of online post reports constitutes the *Content Assessment*. For each assignment, the candidates are required to post an online report; then, candidates respond to a minimum number of others' posts. Using the *Content Assessment* Rubric, candidates are assessed for comprehension, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, transformation, and application of content knowledge in their online posts and responses. The *Content Assessment* provides individual tracking of content knowledge. The online post reports provide richer descriptions that communicate mastery of knowledge learned in a more comprehensive way than a traditional test. Each online post report is assessed using the Rubric for *Content Assessment* for each online post report, then points are assigned that correspond with the grade range percentages. The benchmark performance is a score in the 94.0% to 100.0% range. Candidates are assessed for content knowledge proficiency aligned to NAGC/CEC Teacher Preparation Standards in Gifted Education 1-7. The catalog descriptions of the courses included in the *Content Assessment* are as follows: SPED 5840 *Psychology of the Gifted* - Philosophies, theories, models, and research in gifted education. Definitions and methods of identification, characteristics, personality development and adjustment regarding the nature and needs of the gifted; SPED 5890 *Curriculum and Methods for the Academically Gifted* - Philosophy, aims, theories, organization and development of curricula and individual education programs for academically gifted students. Review and critical evaluation of materials, techniques, strategies, and curricula, and programs used for educating the gifted; SPED 5870 *Counseling the Gifted* - Designed to provide teachers and counselors with techniques for enhancing interpersonal relationships with gifted students. Emphasis on communication skills, counseling interventions, and specific strategies for facilitating emotional wellness and coping ability in gifted students; SPED 5830 *Teaching Creative Thinking* - Study and application of theories, models, assessment, and development of creativity in education; and SPED 5860 *Trends and Issues in Curriculum Development for the Academically Gifted* - Research and developments in educating the academically gifted, culminating with a research paper.

For 524C, 524D, & 524E Programs: Students will learn the content knowledge required for passing the SPED PRAXIS exam for their specific certification. The target is 100% pass rate on the exam.

For 524C, the artifact used to provide evidence is the Special Education Early Childhood (5691). ***For 524D & 524E***, the artifact used to provide evidence is the Special Education Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications PRAXIS exam (5543). Development of the SPED PRAXIS exams are national-standardized exams based on valid and reliable data. These two tests are a requirement for special education certification/licensure in Louisiana. Evidence for meeting the state standards are as follows: Louisiana Special Education standards are aligned with the National Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Initial Standards and required for special education certification. The Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications test is designed for examinees who plan to teach students with mild/moderate disabilities at any grade level from preschool through grade 12. The focus is on five major content areas: Development and Characteristics of the Learners, Planning and Learning Environment, Instruction, Assessment, and Foundations and Professional Responsibilities. ETS refers to current practices as specified by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)), the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and teacher education universities. In developing assessment materials for these tests, ETS works in collaboration with teacher educators, higher education content

specialists, and accomplished practicing teachers to keep the test updated and representative of current standards. The 90 selected response questions assess the knowledge and understanding of principles and practices related to special education and mild to moderate applications. The three constructed response questions are integrated ones that assess an examinee's knowledge of students with mild to moderate disabilities as related to instruction and assessment, learning environment and classroom management, and collaboration. The quality of the assessment is assured by the following: In order to take the SPED PRAXIS exam(s), a teacher must pay for and schedule the testing site and date. PRAXIS test monitors assure the quality of the testing site and testing criteria. The criteria for success includes: The SPED PRAXIS exam includes a score report which indicates the score and whether it was passed, the range of possible scores, the raw points available in each content category, the range of the middle 50% of scores on the test. The State of Louisiana recognizes 153 as a passing score for this exam.

Finding:

The findings for 524A are as follows:

AY 2016-2017: Target met. 72.5% of candidates scored 94% or higher.

AY 2017-2018: Target met. 79.7% of candidates scored 94% or higher.

AY 2018-2019: Target met. 77.5% of candidates scored 94% or higher.

*The SPED PRAXIS exams are required for teacher certification/licensure for **524C** Early Intervention and **524D & 524E** Mild/Moderate Special Education certification in Louisiana. However, they are not required for university M.Ed. graduation of Special Education Programs.*

The findings for 524C, 524D, 524E are as follows:

- **AY 2016-2017:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

For the M.Ed. 524A, Gifted Education candidates, in AY 2016-2017 the Target of 70% was met as 72.5% of candidates scored 94% or higher and in AY 2017-2018 the Target of 70% was met as 79.7% of candidates scored 94% or higher. The competency rates of the *Content Assessment* indicated that candidates in the Gifted Education program are acquiring comprehension of content; analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of content; and transformation and application of content that is aligned with the NAGC/CEC standards 1-7. The interpretation of the *Content Assessment* indicates that candidates have gained exemplary content knowledge to support their skill development and practical application. Candidates were able to articulate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, transform, and apply content knowledge regarding Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences in Gifted Education (NAGC/CEC Standard 1). Candidates were able to describe how language, culture, economic status, family background, and/or area of disability can influence the learning of individuals with gifts and talents (1.1) and use this understanding of development and individual differences to respond to the needs of individuals with gifts and talents (1.2).

Candidates can articulate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, transform, and apply content knowledge regarding Learning Environments in Gifted Education (NAGC/CEC Standard

2). Candidates are able to create safe, inclusive, culturally responsive learning environments that engage individuals with gifts and talents in meaningful and rigorous learning activities and social interactions (2.1), use communication and motivational and instructional strategies to facilitate understanding of subject matter and to teach individuals with gifts and talents how to adapt to different environments and develop ethical leadership skills (2.2), adjust their communication to an individual's language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences (2.3), and demonstrate understanding of the multiple environments that are part of a continuum of services for individuals with gifts and talents, including the advantages and disadvantages of various settings and teach students to adapt to these environments (2.4).

Candidates can articulate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, transform, and apply content knowledge regarding Curricular Content Knowledge in Gifted Education (NAGC/CEC Standard 3). Candidates are able to understand the role of central concepts, structures of the discipline, and tools of inquiry of the content areas they teach, and use their understanding to organize knowledge, integrate cross-disciplinary skills, and develop meaningful learning progressions with and across grade levels (3.1), design appropriate learning and performance modifications for individuals with gifts and talents that enhance creativity, acceleration, depth and complexity in academic subject matter and specialized domains (3.2), use assessments to select, adapt, and create materials to differentiate instructional strategies and general and specialized curricula to challenge individuals with gifts and talents (3.3), and understand that individuals with gifts and talents demonstrate a wide range of advanced knowledge and performance levels and modify the general or specialized curriculum appropriately (3.4).

Candidates can articulate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, transform, and apply content knowledge regarding Assessment in Gifted Education (NAGC/CEC Standard 4). Candidates are able to understand that some groups of individuals with gifts and talents have been underrepresented in gifted education programs and select and use technically sound formal and informal assessments that minimize bias in identifying students for gifted education programs and services (4.1), use knowledge of measurement principles and practices to differentiate assessments and interpret results to guide educational decisions for individuals with gifts and talents (4.2), collaborate with colleagues and families in using multiple types of assessment information to make identification and learning progress decisions and to minimize bias in assessment and decision-making (4.3), use assessment results to develop long- and short-range goals and objectives that take into consideration an individual's abilities and needs, the learning environment, and other factors related to diversity (4.4), and engage individuals with gifts and talents in assessing the quality of their own learning and performance and in setting future goals and objectives (4.5).

Candidates can articulate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, transform, and apply content knowledge regarding Instructional Planning and Strategies in Gifted Education (NAGC/CEC Standard 5). Candidates are able to know principles of evidence-based, differentiated, and accelerated practices and possess a repertoire of instructional strategies to enhance the critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and performance skills of individuals with gifts and talents (5.1), apply appropriate technologies to support instructional assessment, planning, and delivery for individuals with gifts and talents (5.2), collaborate with families, professional colleagues, and other educators to select, adapt, and use evidence-based strategies that promote challenging learning opportunities in general and specialized curricula (5.3), emphasize the development, practice, and transfer of advanced knowledge and skills across environments throughout the lifespan leading to creative, productive careers in a multicultural society for individuals with gifts and talents (5.4), and use instructional

strategies that enhance the affective development of individuals with gifts and talents (5.5).

Candidates can articulate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, transform, and apply content knowledge regarding Professional Learning and Ethical Practice in Gifted Education (NAGC/CEC Standard 6). Candidates are able to use professional ethical principles and specialized program standards to guide their practice (6.1), understand how foundational knowledge, perspectives, and historical and current issues influence professional practice and the education and treatment of individuals with gifts and talents both in school and society (6.2), model respect for diversity, understanding that it is an integral part of society's institutions and impacts learning of individuals with gifts and talents in the delivery of gifted education services (6.3), are aware of their own professional learning needs, understand the significance of lifelong learning, and participate in professional activities and learning communities (6.4), and advance the profession by engaging in activities such as advocacy and mentoring (6.5).

Candidates can articulate, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, transform, and apply content knowledge regarding Collaboration in Gifted Education (NAGC/CEC Standard 7).

Candidates can apply elements of effective collaboration (7.1), serve as a collaborative resource to colleagues (7.2), and use collaboration to promote the well-being of individuals with gifts and talents across a wide range of settings, experiences, and collaborators (7.3).

The analysis of AY 2016-2017 achievement of the 72.5% and AY 2017-2018 achievement of the 79.7% of candidates' scoring 94%-100% indicates that learning of content is evident. Candidates have gained exemplary content knowledge to support their skill development and practical application. The plan of action for 2018-2019 was to further implement revisions to the assessment to ensure demonstration of discipline specific knowledge. Specifically, several essay prompts for the online posts were revised in SPED 5840, SPED 5870, and SPED 5890 in AY 2017-2018 to improve learning of content knowledge that aligns with the NAGC/CEC standards. In AY 2018-2019 complementary revisions were completed in SPED 5830 and SPED 5860 to improve learning of content knowledge that aligns with the NAGC/CEC standards.

In comparison, having implemented the plan of action from AY 2017-2018 of assessment revisions, this year's (AY 2018-2019) target of 70 % was met as 77.5% of candidates scored 94% or higher. The analysis reflects that the continuous improvement in candidate learning of content from the base-line data is a result of revisions to the *Content Assessment*. There were 2-3 candidates in each course from the AY 2018-2019 that neglected to complete some assignments which would account for a slight percentage drop between AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019. The candidates are gaining content knowledge related to students with gifts and talents. Aside from the assessment of their content-based knowledge, the candidates indicate that the knowledge gained through the *Content Assessment* of online post reports of content in gifted education is vastly more comprehensive than expected, improves their teaching of students with gifts and talents, and builds a network of collaborative partners through the online community. Content knowledge as aligned to the NAGC/CEC standards indicates that through the process of the *Content Assessment*, candidates are prepared to understand the variations in learning and development in cognitive and affective areas between and among students with gifts and talents apply this understanding to provide meaningful and challenging learning experiences for individuals with exceptionalities; to create safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning environments so that students with gifts and talents become effective learners and develop social and emotional well-being; to use knowledge of general and specialized curricula to advance learning for students with gifts and talents; to use multiple methods of assessment and data sources in making

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educational decisions about identification of students with gifts and talents and student learning; to select, adapt, and use a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to advance learning of students with gifts and talents; to use foundational knowledge of the field and professional ethical principles and programming standards to inform gifted education practice, engage in lifelong learning, and advance the profession; and to collaborate with families, other educators, related-service providers, individuals with gifts and talents, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways to address the needs of students with gifts and talents across a range of learning experiences.

For the M.Ed. **524C** Early Intervention candidates, the target was 100% pass rate. This was achieved.

For the M.Ed. **524D & 524E**, Mild/Moderate candidates, the target was 100% pass rate. This was achieved.

AY 2016-2017	AY 2017-2018
524A No PRAXIS test required for Louisiana certification and licensure in Gifted Education Course content was met as 72.5% of the candidates scored 94% or higher.	524A No PRAXIS test required for Louisiana certification and licensure in Gifted Education, Course content was met as 79.7% of the candidates scored 94% or higher.
524C PRAXIS 5691 100% Pass & Met Target	524C PRAXIS 5691 100% Pass & Met Target
524D & 524E PRAXIS 5543 100% Pass & Met Target	524D & 524E PRAXIS 5543 100% Pass & Met Target

AY 2018-2019
524A No PRAXIS test required for Louisiana certification and licensure in Gifted Education, Course content was met as 79.7% of the candidates scored 94% or higher.
524C PRAXIS 5691 100% Pass & Met Target
524D & 524E PRAXIS 5543 100% Pass & Met Target

Candidate learning show that the national CEC Standards of the Knowledge and Skills that all Special Educators should have are being met in the course content for each degree program. Special Education faculty decided to examine the lowest passing scores for each content area of the SPED PRAXIS exams for all **524C** and **524D & 524E** candidates who completed the 2018-2019 SPED PRAXIS exam. The consensus was that IEP Development or Planning and the Learning Environment were two areas that would need content enhancement. This was implemented in the 2018-2019 semesters. The “why” behind the results was to improve each candidate’s knowledge and skills in the areas of IEP Development and the Learning Environment. Evidence of improvement show that content test scores continue to improve overall for all **524C**, **524D**, and **524E** candidates.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: For 524C, 524D, 524E, continue to improve Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development and the Learning Environment knowledge.

For 524A, based on the analysis of the results in 2018-2019, in 2019-2020 the following action of identifying the lowest content scores and enhancing learning opportunities in specific content in SPED courses for gifted education will be taken to continue to maintain a pattern of continuous improvement. Evidence of improvement for 524A show that implementing the plan of action from AY 2017-2018 based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results of 77.5% of candidates scoring 94% or higher. The analysis reflects that the improvement in candidate learning of content is a result of revisions to the assessment. Specifically, several essay prompts for the online posts were revised in SPED 5840, SPED 5870, and SPED 5890 in AY 2017-2018 to improve learning of content knowledge that aligns with the NAGC/CEC standards. In AY 2018-2019 complementary revisions were completed in SPED 5830 and SPED 5860 to improve learning of content knowledge that aligns with the NAGC/CEC standards. The candidates in the Gifted Education program enrolled in the courses are primarily certified teachers who have knowledge and skills in teaching but are now gaining content knowledge related to students with gifts and talents. Aside from the assessment of their content-based knowledge, from the new teachers to the most experienced teachers, the candidates continually indicate through their online post reports that the knowledge gained through these courses regarding students with gifts and talents, and how to best teach them, is vastly more comprehensive than expected. Through the online post reports the candidates indicate their desire to achieve an appropriate understanding of gifted education so that they will be able to be consummate teachers of students with gifts and talents. Additionally, the development of the online community through the online interaction of assignments continues to be the most powerful outgrowth of the online post reports. As stated, the essay prompts for the online posts were revised in SPED 5840, SPED 5870, SPED 5890, SPED 5830, and SPED 5860 to improve learning of content knowledge that aligns with the NAGC/CEC standards. Faculty will proceed to identify the lowest content scores and enhance learning opportunities in specific content in SPED courses for gifted education.

Evidence of improvement show that content test scores improved overall for all **524C, 524D,** and **524E** candidates. Faculty will proceed to identify the lowest content score for each SPED PRAXIS exam and embed or enhance this specific content in SPED course content. Planned use of data for course content improvement and support of candidate learning is an ongoing 12-month process. In two areas, candidate learning, and in the program, both will improve when specific content items from the SPED PRAXIS exam that yielded the lowest passing scores are embedded in course content. Program faculty identified SPED PRAXIS Content Category II Planning and the Learning Environment as one content area that yielded a passing score by all candidates, but only exceeded the national median score by several points.

SLO 2

Course Map:

- **For 524A,** SLO 2 is measured for **524A** by completing a differentiated instructional strategies project in the course SPED 5890 Curriculum Methods for the Academically Gifted.
- **For 524C, 524D, & 524E,** students will analyze assessment data to improve

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student learning and behavior.

- **For 524C**, SLO 2 is measured for **524C** by completing a ***Family Literacy Parent Pack*** project in RDG 5020 Early Childhood Primary Reading Instruction
- **For 524D & 524E**, SLO 2 is measured for **524D & 524E** by completing a ***Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)*** project and an analysis of data in EPSY 5370 Behavioral Management and Modification.

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice	<p>524A SPED 5890 Curriculum and Methods for the Academically Gifted. Candidates plan and develop specific differentiated instructional strategies that enhance the cognitive and affective development of individuals with gifts and talents (NAGC/CEC Standard 5) Candidates demonstrate ability to plan, implement, and assess curricula for students with gifts and talents.</p>
(SPA #4, Teacher Candidate Observation Form)	<p>Candidates plan and develop specific differentiated instructional strategies that enhance the cognitive and affective development of individuals with gifts and talents (NAGC/CEC Standard 5) Candidates demonstrate ability to plan, implement, and assess curricula for students with gifts and abilities.</p> <p>524C Candidates complete a <i>Family Literacy: Parent Pack</i> in RDG.</p> <p>524D & 524E Candidates will identify, observe, collect, analyze, and apply assessment data to evaluate student progress and plan targeted instruction.</p>

Measure 2.1. (Knowledge and Skills)

For **524A**, SLO 2 is measured in SPED 5890 *Curriculum and Methods for the Academically Gifted*. SLO 2 is assessed as the candidates engage in teaching two lessons. The candidates in SPED 5890 are required to provide two lessons indicating content and process differentiation for the gifted. Every learner has the opportunity to develop content and process differentiation as aligned with curricular content knowledge and instructional planning and strategies standards as meet his or her individual needs for professional growth as an educator for students with gifts and talents. A rubric developed by the faculty that uses the concepts for differentiation delineated in the textbook for SPED 5890 assesses the lessons presented by the candidates. The concepts for differentiating content include: *Abstractness, Complexity, Variety,*

Organization for Learning Value, The Study of People, and the Study of Methods. The concepts for differentiating process include: *Higher Levels of Thinking, Open-Endedness, The Importance of Discovery, Evidence of Reasoning, Freedom of Choice, Group Interaction, Pacing, and Variety.* The candidates select some aspect of content differentiation, then plan and teach a lesson with their gifted students. Then the candidates select some aspect of process differentiation and likewise, plan and teach a lesson with their gifted students. The two lessons may be separate content areas or topics, or they may be the same content areas or topics, the candidates are given *Freedom of Choice.* The candidates post their lessons to a template that requires that they report number and demographic and diversity descriptions of their students, describe the lesson, provide evidence of student learning, and provide a journal reflection of the experience. Candidates were required to use two to three concepts for differentiating content and the same number for differentiating process. The primary objective is to discover the candidates' ability to plan differentiated lessons and articulate those lessons based on the concepts that they have read about and discussed in class. Although they are given the choice of which concepts of differentiated content and process that they will use, there is an expectation that *Abstractness* and *Complexity* will exist in most lessons for content differentiation. In the same manner, *Higher Levels of Thinking, Open-Endedness, and Discovery Learning* should be primary in process differentiation. There is no numerical score for this assignment in the traditional sense as it is a pass or a re-submit until passed. The candidates cannot do the field experience of teaching in the classroom until they have completed and passed on their lesson plan. The process begins with a Learning Contract that the candidates develop for themselves that includes a timeline to plan and develop their two field experiences. Then candidates submit two lesson plans: 1) Content Differentiation Lesson Plan; and 2) Process Differentiation Lesson Plan. Candidates must obtain a pass, or re-submit until passed, on their lesson plan before they can complete their field experiences. The pass is a score of 4 on the rubric before given approval to do the field experiences. The rubric assessment helps the candidates learn the process of developing differentiation and implementing the differentiation in actual lessons in the classroom.

For **524C**, SLO2 is measured in RDG 5020 Early Childhood Primary Reading Instruction by completing a Family Literacy Parent Pack. A Parent Pack Rubric is used to measure candidate work. Candidates facilitate family literacy by designing parent packs that include a quality children's literature text and developmentally appropriate, hands-on literacy activities that align with the State Standards. Candidates send the packs home with children to engage in the activities with their parents, the parents document the children's work, and the parent pack is returned for teacher assessment.

For **524D & 524E**, SLO 2 is measured by completing a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) project and an analysis of data in EPSY 5370 Behavioral Management and Modification. This artifact is assessed using a rubric and applies the principles of behavioral assessment and modification techniques to learning, behavior, and emotional challenges in the school setting. Baseline data is collected from the observation of one student with a challenging behavior. The assessment was developed using the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) guidelines for beginning special

educators which aligns with state standards. The assessment meets state and national CEC standards. Also, beginning special educators structure environments to encourage the independence, self-motivation, self-direction, personal empowerment, and self-advocacy of individuals with exceptionalities and directly teach them to adapt to the expectations and demands of differing environments. The key assessment or artifact requires 30 hours of clinical and field-based experiences. The goal of the assignment is to develop an understanding of behavior management assessment and modification techniques for individuals with exceptional learning needs during their life span. Candidates must complete a functional behavioral assessment for one student with mild/moderate exceptional needs in Grades 1-12 with a challenging behavior. By completing the assignments and/or tasks of this course, each candidate will: identify antecedents that may evoke behavior and consequences that may maintain behavior through functional analysis methodology, describe appropriate interventions that are linked to functional assessment outcomes, write a systematic plan for changing behavior that includes the following components: target behavior, environment(s) where intervention will occur, intervention strategy, measurement and schedule for data collection, and graph for visual analysis, design and implement environmental adaptations to assist in the support of appropriate behaviors, and accurately measure student performance to verify the effectiveness of behavioral support programs and/or determine the need for program revision. Candidates are provided with a rubric which is used to evaluate their work. The assessment provides evidence of student learning and mastery of state and national standards because the assessment was specifically designed to align with both state and CEC standards. Program faculty have 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. To score "Proficient" on the rubric, candidates must earn at least 80%. The goal is for 100% of candidates to score at least 85% or better.

Finding:

For 524A:

AY 2016-2017: Target met. 100% of candidates met the requirements for the Content and Process Differentiated Lesson.

AY 2017-2018: Target met. 100% of candidates met the requirements for the Content and Process Differentiated Lesson.

AY 2018-2019: Target met. 100% of candidates met the requirements for the Content and Process Differentiated Lesson.

For 524C:

- **AY 2016-2017:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of candidates met target

The Family Literacy Parent Pack rubric showed 100% of candidates were able to meet target for this assessment.

For 524D & E:

- **AY 2016-2017:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of candidates met target

FBA Baseline data evidence for 524D & 524E showed 100% of candidates were able to identify a challenging behavior, observe and record baseline data, and visually-depict the results on a graph to share with the student, the parents, and the principal.

Analysis:

For the M.Ed. 524A, Gifted Education candidates, in AY 2016-2017, the target was met with 100% of candidates passing. Candidates showed that they can plan and implement a lesson based on differentiation of content and process in teaching the gifted. Candidates were required to use two to three concepts for differentiating content and the same number for differentiating process. From the distribution of choices, there was an even distribution of differentiating content through *Abstractness, Complexity and Variety of Subjects and Themes, Organization for Learning Value, The Study of People, and The Study of Methods. Open-endedness, Group Interaction, Evidence of Reasoning, and Variety* as the most frequently implemented concepts in differentiating process. In AY 2017-2018, the target was met with 100% of candidates passing and candidates again were required to use two to three concepts for differentiating content and the same number for differentiating process. From the distribution of choices, there was an even distribution of differentiating content through *Abstractness, Complexity, Variety, and the Study of Methods. Higher Levels of Thinking, Open-Endedness, Discovery, Evidence of Reasoning, Freedom of Choice, Group Interaction, Pacing, and* as the most frequently implemented concepts in differentiating process. The difference between the two years was, was to ensure alignment to the revised NAGC/CEC standards in AY 2017-2018. Candidates shared their journal reflections about their Content and Process Differentiation Lessons with each other such that candidates could learn from each other and provide feedback. The main theme expressed from the reflections that candidates shared was how exciting it was to see the differentiation work from their plans. Most of the candidates are experienced teachers but are learning a different manner of teaching at they prepare to teach the gifted. Their previous experience was to be very structured in their teaching and through the Content and Process Differentiation Lessons, they became more open in their teaching and provided their students with more open-endedness, variety, freedom of choice, and discovery learning. Their students engaged in more inquiry-based, problem-based, and project-based learning than previously. Candidates were thrilled and amazed at what their students learned. The application of the candidates' discipline-specific content knowledge and skills of differentiation in professional practice was very successful. The plan of action was to revise assessments to ensure alignment to revised NAGC/CEC standards.

In AY 2018-2019, the target was again met with 100% of candidates passing. Candidates showed that they can plan and implement a lesson based on differentiation of content and process in teaching the gifted. In alignment with the standards, the candidates indicated comfort in using content knowledge, open-endedness, and higher-level thinking (NAGC/CEC Standard 3:3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4). Candidates differentiated content and process that was distinguished from the general curriculum that incorporates advanced, conceptually challenging, abstract, in-depth, distinctive, and complex content. Candidates engaged students in inquiry-based, problem-based, and project-based study, study of people and methods, discovery learning, and evidence of reasoning. Candidates provided freedom of choice and varied experiences for their students (NAGC/CEC Standard 5:5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5). Candidates were provided the opportunity to assess their level of knowledge and skills of differentiation by developing a rubric based on NAGC/CEC Standards 3 and 5. The candidates in SPED 5890 are certified teachers who

have knowledge and skills in teaching but are now gaining knowledge and skills related to students with gifts and talents. The candidates continued to share in their reflections about how exciting it was to see the differentiation work from their plans. As happened in the previous years, the candidates learn a different manner of teaching for students with gifts and talents through the Content and Process Differentiation Lessons, they became more open in their teaching and provided their students with more open-endedness, variety, freedom of choice, and discovery learning. Their students engaged in more inquiry-based, problem-based, and project-based learning than previously. Candidates again indicated their excitement related to what their students learned. The application of the candidates' discipline-specific content knowledge and skills of differentiation in professional practice was very successful. The plan of action was to revise assessments to ensure alignment to revised NAGC/CEC standards. As beginning gifted educational professionals, the candidates indicated they felt competent or proficient in teaching students with gifts and talents in the knowledge aligned with NAGC/CEC Standard 3 and the same was true for NAGC/CEC Standard 5 except for collaborating with families and other educators in planning.

For **524C**, in AY 2016-2017, 100% of candidates met target and scored "Proficient" on the rubric. At the end of the semester, program faculty evaluated the candidate results to determine student learning in each area. In AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met target. Because the rubric meets CEC and state standards, candidates' artifacts demonstrated student learning and mastery of CEC and content standards. Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018, program faculty have reviewed the evidence of student learning and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will embed basic communication and reading skills in RDG 5020 Early Childhood Primary Reading Instruction. In AY 2018-2019, 100% of candidates met target and scored "Proficient" on the rubric

For **524D & 524E**, in AY 2016-2017, 100% of candidates met target and scored "Proficient" on the rubric. At the end of the course, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area. In AY 2017-2018, 100% of candidates met target by scoring at least 80% on the rubric. Because the assessment and rubric are tied to CEC standards and state standards, candidates' artifacts demonstrated student learning and mastery of CEC and content standards. Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018, program faculty have evaluated the evidence to review student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will introduce information about and promote research into various replacement behaviors to promote creative behavior management. In AY 2018-2019, 100% of candidates met target and scored at least 80% or better on the rubric.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

For **524A**: Implementing the plan of action from AY 2018-2019 provides evidence of positive learning for the candidates in differentiating content and process of curricula in their teaching based on the analysis of this year's results. The additional assessment aligned with the NAGC/CEC Standards supports the analysis that candidates are showing competency and proficiency in their teaching. Candidates expressed an increase in collaboration within the course in planning differentiated content and process of curricula. Based on the analysis of the results in 2018-2019, in 2019-2020 the continued assessment to specify areas that candidates may need to improve as they grow as competent and proficient teachers will be taken to continue to maintain a pattern

of continuous improvement.

For 524C: Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017, AY 2017- 2018, and AY 2018-2019 program faculty continue to review the evidence to ensure student learning of basic communication and reading skills will continue to be promoted in the early intervention program. A change was made in the course to offer more practice with candidates in mastering basic communication and reading skills.

For 524D & 524E: Although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017, AY 2017-2018, and AY 2018-2019 program faculty continue to review the evidence to ensure student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will continue to introduce information about and promote research into various replacement behaviors to promote the development of creative behavior management plans. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates’ knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to growing as responsive professionals.

SLO 3: For 524A, 524C, 524D, 524E, Students will model ethical and professional behaviors

Course Map:

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Model professional behaviors and characteristics. (Dispositional Evaluation)	524A: SPED 5900 Practicum Candidates demonstrate professional learning and ethical practice in working with students with gifts and talents.
	524C, 524D, 524E: <i>SLO 3 is evaluated using a Disposition Form in SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management for 524C, 524D, & 524E programs. Candidates will model the Council for Exceptional Children Professional and Ethical Standards</i>

Measure 3.1. (Dispositions)

For **524A**, SLO 3 is assessed through the candidates’ successful completion of the practicum experience and *Practicum Reflective Journal* Assessment that specifically provides evidence of candidates’ application of knowledge and skills and ability to reflect and improve practice. The *Practicum Reflective Journal* Assessment is a summative report of the weekly reflective journals. At the end of the practicum semester, the scores for the weekly journals are summed and percentages for each category and criteria are determined. A rubric developed by the faculty is used to assess the practicum reflective journal posts. The candidates post weekly reflective journals online during their practicum with a total of thirteen weekly reflective journal posts. These postings are explanations about WHAT candidates are teaching and reflections about HOW they are teaching. The candidates share activities, list methods of instruction and resources, tell how they are planning, implementing, and assessing differentiated curriculum for gifted instruction, provide positive learning environments, and describe what students are learning. They

share authentic classroom experiences and interactions attending to the cognitive, affective, and diverse needs of the gifted and how they are learning from their students. Then the candidates share their critiques, insights, and plans for improvement. Each week different aspects of learning, teaching, and standards of learning are emphasized but by the end of the semester, candidates are confident professionals who can articulate and implement instruction for students with gifts and talents. All candidates enrolled in practicum read each other's Reflective Journals and provide encouragement, empathy, and feedback. The candidates are given instruction related to providing a safe, inclusive environment in the course that should mirror what they are doing in the classroom, especially in providing feedback to each other. Candidates are provided time between the end of the week they are reporting on to the due date for posting and then additional time for reading and writing responses such that they can create thoughtful and thought-provoking posts and responses. Observations of the candidates occur during the semester, but the Reflective Journals provide the best picture of what the candidates are doing in the classroom. Part of the reason for this is because the Reflective Journals show the entire process of modeling professional behaviors from gaining knowledge and skills, to teaching from the knowledge and skills, to assessing learning, to making changes while collaborating, providing feedback, and engaging in professional learning and ethical practice whereas the observations do not show that entire loop, only a snapshot of modeling professional behaviors.

For 524C, 524D, 524E, SLO 3 is evaluated using a Disposition Form in SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management for 524C, 524D, & 524E programs. The Disposition Form is the artifact which is used to provide evidence of each student's disposition. Faculty created the dispositional evaluation based on agreed-upon best practices and constructs outlined in the InTASC Standards and the CAEP 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 that least 80% of candidates score "Sufficient".

Finding:

For 524A:

AY 2016-2017: Target met. Over 70% of candidates scored at Proficient or Exemplary.

AY 2017-2018: Target met. Over 80% of candidates scored at Proficient or Exemplary.

AY 2018-2019: Target met. Over 80% of candidates scored at Proficient or Exemplary.

For 524C, 524D, 524E:

- **AY 2016-2017:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

For the M.Ed. 524A, Gifted Education candidates, in AY 2016-2017, the *Practicum Reflective Journal* summative assessment indicates over 70% candidates scored at

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Proficient or Exemplary and in AY 2017-2018 over 80% of candidates scored at Proficient or Exemplary. Specifically, candidates can plan, assess, reflect on differentiated practices, distinguish between cognitive and affective needs, and initiate recommendations for improvement consistently (Exemplary=89.2%,94.8%; Proficient=10.8%,5.2%). Candidates need to occasionally remember to improve their professional practice by relying on resources beyond their practicum peers (Exemplary=69.2%,75.3%; Proficient=23.1%,24.7%; Acceptable=7.7%,0.0%) and provide textual evidence in their writing (Exemplary=88.5%,92.2%; Proficient=11.5%, 7.8%) Candidates sometimes rush their writing and misstep in structure or providing feedback in writing (Exemplary=80.8%,85.4%; Proficient=19.2%,14.6%) and some candidates need to proofread (Exemplary=88.5%,90.5%; Proficient=11.1%,9.5%). The candidates were proficient in the practicum experience and some were exemplary based on the *Practicum Reflective Journal Assessment* and over the two years an improvement in formal writing and presentation was indicated. The Plan of Action for AY 2017-2018 was that candidates communicate well in modeling professional and ethical practice and in providing formal writing and presenting. In comparison, having implemented the plan of action by implementing strategies to improve formal writing, this year's (AY 2018-2019) findings of over 80% of candidates scoring at Proficient or Exemplary with revisions of the assessment to reflect better alignment with NAGC/CEC standard 6 indicated candidates learned to be more professional in modeling professional and ethical practice in working with students with gifts and talents. The candidates improved in all areas in the practicum experience, but two candidates were inconsistent communicating to peers and providing feedback and all candidates indicated a desire to improve in collaboration.

For **524C, 524D, 524E**, in AY 2016-2017, 100% of candidates met target and scored "Sufficient." Although 100% of candidates met target, program faculty examined the evidence to determine student learning in each area, and emphasis on Diversity and Culturally Responsive Practices was strengthened in coursework to provide learner support. These proficiencies require that candidates: (1) identify and develop culturally responsive strategies for improving learning and candidate effectiveness across the learning community; (2) apply creative instructional and management strategies to meet the needs of a diverse population; (3) assess student learning to adapt and facilitate learning for all students; (4) communicate and collaborate effectively with learning communities in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural differences; (5) establish and maintain positive inclusive educational environments that adapt instruction or services for all students including linguistically or culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities; and (6) model professional and ethical behaviors consistent with the ideas of fairness and equity and the belief that all students can learn. As a program-wide initiative, these proficiencies are introduced/supported across the curriculum but are primarily discussed in SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management. This proved to be effective, as 100% of candidates met target in AY 2017-2018 and in AY 2018-2019. Because the assessment and rubric are tied to national standards, candidates' artifacts demonstrated student learning via mastery of those standards.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

For 524A, the successful completion of the practicum experience and *Practicum Reflective Journal Assessment* provide evidence of candidates' ability to demonstrate professional learning and ethical practice in working with students with gifts and talent

through their application of knowledge and skills and ability to reflect and improve practice. Implementing the plan of action from AY 2017-2018 resulted in improvement of formal writing but also indicated improvement in all areas. Candidates possessed the professional and ethical knowledge and skills to assess, reflect, and inform their educational practice, engage in lifelong learning, and to advance the profession through advocacy and mentoring and they improved their teaching by applying information from organizations and publications from the field of gifted education and formal writing (NAGC/CEC Standard 6:6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5). Based on the analysis of the results in 2018-2019, in 2019-2020 the following action of increasing learning opportunities in collaborative experiences, mentoring, and advocacy may improve candidates' demonstration of professional learning and ethical practice in working with students with gifts and talents will be taken to continue to maintain a pattern of continuous improvement.

For **524C, 524D, 524E**, although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017, AY 2017-2018, and 2018-2019 program faculty have reviewed the evidence to assess student learning, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will continue to add resources relating to Equity, Diversity, and Individual Needs to support student learning along with professional and ethical standards and enthusiasm. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to growing as culturally responsive professionals. In addition, **524C, 524D, & 524E** candidates need content enhancement in two specific areas: Professionalism: Communicates effectively verbally and in written work (CAEP A.1.1., PRO) and Reflective Practice: Evaluates and reflects on own ability to integrate technology and innovation to enhance professional ability (InTASC 9, CAEP A.1.1, T, PRO).

SLO 4: For 524C, 524D, 524E, students will identify a classroom need and write a mini-grant to meet it.

Course Map:

- *SLO 4 is assessed through a mini-grant writing project and self-reflection in the course SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management.*

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)	<p>For 524A, EDUC 5850 Oral Portfolio Defense. Portfolio included artifacts from SPED 5830, SPED 5840, SPED 5860, SPED 5870, SPED 5890, ETEC 5710, ETEC 5760, EDCI 5020, EDCI 5030, and EDUC 5010</p> Candidates demonstrate creativity, ideas, processes, and experiences in gifted education. <p><i>For 524C, 524D, 524E: Candidates will exhibit creative thinking in special education by identifying a specific classroom/student need and writing a mini-grant to meet the need.</i></p>

Measure 4.1. (Knowledge and Skills)

For **524A**, SLO 4 is assessed through an *Oral Portfolio Defense*. The assessment benchmark performance is 80% of candidates scoring at the Acceptable level or higher in all categories. The candidates complete a *Portfolio* of the knowledge, experiences, and growth they gained through the Gifted Education program. Each candidate is assigned a committee of three faculty members including the Major Professor. The committee reviews the *Portfolio* and ensures that the portfolio is complete, containing artifacts from all courses in the program. The *Portfolio* assessment is both a structured and dynamic comprehensive compilation of the candidate's experience and performance in the program. Candidates submit artifacts to an Electronic Portfolio System to develop their *Portfolio*, then submit their *Portfolio* on a DVD. Throughout the Gifted Education program, specific artifacts are stored in the Electronic Portfolio System as key assessments assigned from each course. However, individual differences are supported such that each portfolio is unique as candidates are allowed and encouraged to include other items that they believe have indicated learning and growth in Gifted Education, including examples of their students' work. The *Portfolio* is an electronic portfolio for all candidates. Once the committee has ensured that the *Portfolio* contains the required artifacts, the committee reviews the *Portfolio* for quality using a rubric developed by faculty in the Gifted Education program. The categories on the rubric are Target, Acceptable, and Not Acceptable and the committee delivers a consensus rating based on the following criteria. The Target category indicates candidates were highly effective in making connections with the artifacts in their *Portfolios* which led to an increased effectiveness in instructional planning and professionalism. Candidates were responsible, made excellent decisions, were very creative, and purposely engaged in critical thinking and problem solving. The Acceptable category indicates candidates could be responsible, make good decisions, and reveal creative/critical thinking but not as effectively as the Target category. Not Acceptable would indicate lack of responsibility, decision-making, creative/critical thinking through incomplete or inaccurate descriptions. A Written and Oral Defense of the *Portfolio* by the candidate is presented to the committee who rate each candidate in the same manner as rating the portfolio. Committee members also ask questions related to the *Portfolio* and each of the courses. The three committee members rate each candidate, then a consensus is decided to determine if the candidate was satisfactory or unsatisfactory overall in the Oral Defense. Very rarely is a candidate rated unsatisfactory such that they must redo the Oral Defense completely. However, candidates may be rated Not Acceptable by the majority of the committee in specific categories and then the candidate will need to prepare a specific written report for that category or categories as directed by the committee and/or another oral defense of that category or categories. Candidates were responsible for indicating the alignment of their *Portfolio* with the NAGC/CEC Standards through their written report and oral defense. Candidates refer to the NAGC/CEC standards both written and orally to express their perceived competency level as beginning professionals in gifted education and to describe how and where they would continue their growth as professionals once they have completed the M.Ed. degree.

*For **524C**, **524D**, **524E**, SLO 4 is assessed through a mini-grant writing project and self-reflection in the course SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management. The artifact used to provide evidence is the Louisiana Council for Exceptional Children Grant Guidelines. Candidates follow the step-by-step guidelines. The assessment was developed through the Louisiana Council for Exceptional Children Executive Board as criteria for funding teacher proposal for \$500 for the 2016-2017 school year and for \$425 and a national CEC membership for the 2017-2018 school*

year. SLO 4 is assessed through a CEC Grant Writing project in SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the target performance is that 100% of candidates will score "Proficient." Candidates conduct research into one of four areas of funding: (1) Educating Children with Exceptionalities; (2) Improving Relationships between Families and their Children with Exceptionalities, (3) Developing Independent Living Skills or Employment of Students with Exceptionalities, or (4) Using Technology to Enhance the Education of Children and/or Youth with Exceptionalities. Candidates write one section of the grant at a time. Candidates complete the following one section at a time: project description: title of project, duration of the project, statement of need, description of the population to be served, project objectives and activities, project timeline, evaluation procedures, project benefits, project budget, letter of endorsement from an administrator, contact information, resume. Completed mini-grant proposals are submitted to the Louisiana Council for Exceptional Children (LA-CEC) in October for funding consideration every October. The assessment is aligned with CEC standards and for the AY 2016-2017 six candidates received funding for their proposals. For the AY 2017-2018 eight candidates received funding for their proposals. For the AY 2018-2019 six candidates received funding for their proposals.

Finding:

For 524A:

- **AY 2016-2017:** Target met. 100% of candidates scored Acceptable or Target.
- **AY 2017-2018:** Target met. 100% of candidates scored Acceptable or Target.
- **AY 2018-2019:** Target met. 100% of candidates scored Acceptable or Target.

For 524C, 524D, 524E:

- **AY 2016-2017:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of candidates met target

Analysis:

For the M.Ed. 524A, Gifted Education candidates, having implemented the plan of action from AY 2017-2018 to incorporate more written activities, analysis of AY 2018-2019 data indicates improvement in the *Oral Portfolio Defense* as the candidates demonstrated creativity, ideas, processes, and experiences in gifted education. Analysis of the *Portfolio* documents in AY 2016-2017 indicated the committee rated candidates as Target (84.4%) meaning clearly responsible and decisively demonstrating creative/critical thinking and decision making, rated candidates as Acceptable (4.4%) meaning responsible but brief in their descriptions, and rated candidates as Not Acceptable (11.1%) meaning incomplete or inaccurate in description and/or demonstration of creative/critical thinking or decision making. Analysis of written report indicates the committee rated candidates as Target (50.0%) whereas the committee rated candidates as Acceptable (20.8%) and rated candidates as Not Acceptable (29.2%). In the oral defense, the committee ratings of candidates ranged from 58.9% to 86.8% as Target and 7.5% to 41.8% as Acceptable for all categories. There were only 7 categories with committee ratings of Not Acceptable. Candidates with a committee consensus Not Acceptable rating for any category were required to participate in remediation before they would meet the passing score as partial requirement for graduation. All candidates who participated in remediation were rated Target or Acceptable in the categories where they

initially received Not Acceptable ratings. Throughout the process, candidates were able to responsibly indicate the alignment of their *Portfolio* with the NAGC/CEC Standards through their written reports and oral defenses. Clearly the candidates were able to refer to the NAGC/CEC standards both written and orally to express their perceived competency level as beginning professionals in gifted education and described how and where they would continue their growth as professionals once they have completed the M.Ed. degree. The plan of action was to ensure that written defense that accompanies the oral defense was revised as that was the area that candidates had the most difficulty. They were not as able to exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, and experiences appropriate for Gifted Education in the same manner as they did in the oral defense. Having implemented the plan of action from AY 2016-2017 to revise the instructions and assessment of the written reports that accompany the oral defense, improved scores resulted in AY 2017-2018 for the candidates. Analysis of the *Portfolio* documents in AY 2017-2018 indicates the committee rated candidates as Target (77.8%) meaning clearly responsible and decisively demonstrating creative/critical thinking and decision making, rated candidates as Acceptable (22.2%) meaning responsible but brief in their descriptions, and 0 as Not Acceptable. Analysis of written report indicates the committee rated candidates as Target (33.0%) whereas the committee rated candidates as Acceptable (33.3%) and rated candidates as Not Acceptable (33.3%) meaning incomplete or inaccurate in description and/or demonstration of creative/critical thinking or decision making. In the oral defense, the committee ratings of candidates ranged from 66.7% to 85.2% as Target and 3.7% to 22.2% as Acceptable for all categories. There were 0 committee ratings of Not Acceptable except for one student for whom the oral defense was terminated. The candidate was clearly not prepared but at the rescheduled oral defense, the candidate was rated Target in all categories. The Plan of Action focused on improving the written report and although there was not improvement in writing, there was improvement in both the Portfolio and Oral Defense. Having implemented the plan of action from AY 2017-2018 to incorporate more written activities leading to the oral defense, improved scores resulted in AY 2018-2019 for the candidates. Analysis of the *Portfolio* documents in AY 2018-2019 indicates the committee rated candidates as Target (92.9%) meaning clearly responsible and decisively demonstrating creative/critical thinking and decision making, rated candidates as Acceptable (7.1%) meaning responsible but brief in their descriptions, and 0 as Not Acceptable. Analysis of written report indicates the committee rated candidates as Target (26.7%) whereas the committee rated candidates as Acceptable (53.3%) and rated candidates as Not Acceptable (20.0%) meaning incomplete or inaccurate in description and/or demonstration of creative/critical thinking or decision making. In the oral defense, the committee ratings of candidates ranged from 42.7% to 100% as Target and 20.0% to 55.6% as Acceptable for all categories. There was 1 committee rating (6.3%) of Not Acceptable for one student for one category. The Plan of Action focused on improving writing which was clearly indicated in improvement in the presentation of the *Portfolio*, written reports, and *Oral Portfolio Defense*.

For **524C**, **524D**, **524E**, in AY 2016-2017, AY 2017-2018, and 2018-2019, 100% of candidates met target and scored "Proficient" according to the LA-CEC Mini-Grant rubric. CEC standards require mastery in this area and projects that fail to meet these standards are returned with feedback for candidates to correct. Furthermore, the students who received funding for their grants were invited to present at the Louisiana Council for Exceptional Children (LA-CEC) Poster Session at the state conference. This grant provided each student with an opportunity for a professional research and scholarly presentation at a state conference.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

For 524A, implementing the plan of action to revise the instructions and assessment of the written reports that accompany the oral defense reflected overall improvement in the portfolio and oral defense between AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018 with less improvement in written communication. Based on the analysis of results in 2018-2019, in 2019-2020 the following action will be taken to continue to maintain a pattern of continuous improvement of candidates' responsibility and creativity, ideas, processes, and experiences in gifted education. The candidates were highly effective in making connections with the artifacts in their portfolios which led to an increased growth in professionalism. Overall, candidates were responsible, made excellent decisions, were very creative, and purposely engaged in critical thinking and problem solving. Based on the evidence of candidate learning, the faculty will build on the candidates' ability to demonstrate creativity, ideas, processes, and experiences in gifted education and incorporate more written and oral activities to enhance their professional growth and impact on student performance.

SLO 5: The student applies responsibility-taking, decision making, and problem solving to inform assessment actions.

Course Map:

- *SLO 5 is evaluated through a Curriculum-based Assessment (CBA) project and the use data in problem-solving in SPED 5380 Curriculum-based Assessment.*

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)	For 524A , SPED 5840 Identification of students with gifts and talent presentation Candidates demonstrate responsible decision making and problem-solving using data to inform actions when appropriate.
	<i>For 524C, 524D, 524E, candidates will make responsible decisions and problem-solve using curriculum-based assessment data to inform actions when appropriate.</i>

Measure 5.1. (Knowledge and Skills)

For **524A**, SLO 5 is assessed in SPED 5840 where candidates learn about the identification of students with gifts and talents. Candidates gain theoretical knowledge and practical principles related to understanding the process and procedures for identification of students with gifts and talents. They learn about the state policies and procedures, but they also learn assessment and identification processes related to several theoretical models. Candidates gain knowledge regarding the limitations and

biases of assessments and comprehend equitable approaches for identifying learners from diverse backgrounds. They learn how to engage school personnel and families in the process of identification and placement. The Identification of Gifted Students PowerPoint Presentation helps them gain skills in collaboration and advocacy for the gifted. Candidates are given specific instructions to choose an audience to share the policies about identification from the State and compare identification and assessment based on a model or theory from your readings in a PowerPoint (or other media) presentation. A rubric developed by faculty is used to assess the message content of the presentation and the effectiveness of message delivery, including audience awareness. The assessment aligns with NAGC/CEC standards for assessment and professional practice and ethics with emphasis related to relevant laws and policies, characteristics of learners, and individual differences. Specifically, knowledge of state laws and policies regarding identification of the gifted is necessary to develop this presentation as candidates are assessed for comparing state policies with their understanding of learners and learning differences (NAGC/CEC Standard 4:4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4; 6:6.3). Candidates delineate identification procedures with comparisons of non-biased and equitable approaches for identifying learners from diverse backgrounds (NAGC/CEC Standard 4:4.1). One of the primary objectives is to evaluate knowledge of existing procedures as well as uses and limitations of assessments for identification and differentiation of assessments and results (NAGC/CEC Standard 4:4.2). Candidates are assessed on audience awareness as collaboration with families of the gifted and other school personnel regarding assessment and decision-making is an important part of the assessment process (NAGC/CEC Standard 4:4.3). Candidates describe qualitative and quantitative assessment instruments for developing goals and objectives (NAGC/CEC Standard 4:4.4). Candidates are assessed for their professional ethics and modeling of respect for diversity (NAGC/CEC Standard 6:6.3).

For 524C, 524D, 524E, SLO 5 is evaluated using a Curriculum-based Assessment (CBA) project and reflection for 524C in SPED 5310 Identification and Assessment in Early Intervention and in 524D & 524E in SPED 5380 Curriculum-based Assessment. The CBA assessment is evaluated using a rubric based on CEC Standard 4 Assessment: Beginning special education professionals use multiple methods of assessment and data sources in making educational decisions. A CBA rubric was developed, and Louisiana follows the CEC Standards. The quality of the assessment was measured using CEC measurement principles and practices to interpret assessment results. The criteria for success are the candidates' ability to use multiple types of assessment information in making responsible decisions and problem-solving using CBA data.

Finding:

For **524A:**

AY 2016-2017: Target met. 90% of candidates scored at Proficient or Exemplary.

AY 2017-2018: Target met. 90% of candidates scored at Proficient or Exemplary

AY 2017-2018: Target met. 90% of candidates scored at Proficient or Exemplary.

For **524C, 524D, 524E:**

- **AY 2016-2017:** 100% of 524C, 524D, and 524E candidates met target
- **AY 2017-2018:** 100% of 524C, 524D, and 524E candidates met target
- **AY 2018-2019:** 100% of 524C, 524D, and 524E candidates met target

Analysis:

For **524A**, in AY 2016-2017, the target of 90% was met with candidates scoring at In AY 2018-2019 the analysis to be reported when all data is available and completed June 2019.

For the M.Ed. 524A, Gifted Education candidates In AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018, the target of 90% was met with candidates scoring at proficient or exemplary in their PowerPoint Presentations regarding the identification of students with gifts and talents. Assessment data indicate candidates provided message content for differentiation and for use of assessments at a proficient or exemplary level with improvement in description and accuracy of content. The plan of action was to incorporate and/or revise activities in this course and other courses that will improve candidate learning in using their knowledge in identification and the principles of assessment to guide educational decisions for students with gifts and talents. Having implemented the plan of action, the results for AY 2018-2019 indicated candidates provided improved descriptions and accuracy of content with message content for differentiation, for use of assessments, and for using data to inform educational decisions at a proficient or exemplary level. The improvement in candidate learning was directly related to increased activities related to identification of students with gifts and talents using the knowledge of identification and assessment to guide educational decisions for students with gifts and talents.

For **524C, 524D, 524E**, although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017, AY 2017-2018, and AY 2018-2019, and after a thorough review of the data, program faculty agree that multiple types of assessment decisions including strategic adaptations and modifications in response to an individual's exceptional learning needs, and the interpretation of assessment results must be tied to monitoring the learning progress of individuals with exceptional learning needs. Candidates must be able to make instructional adjustment decisions and problem-solve based on these data. Furthermore, they must be able to discuss the results with families in a nonbiased, meaningful way.

The action plan from AY 2016-2017 showed that candidates should be able to discuss and support their CBA decisions for identification and placement of students with exceptional learning needs. For the AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019, program faculty will adjust their teaching to include strategic adaptations and modifications and collaboration with families through the classes of SPED 5310 Identification and Assessment, SPED 5380 Curriculum-based Assessment, and add further support in the course content in SPED 5350 Families of Individuals with Exceptional Needs.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

For **524A**, implementing the plan of action to improve the use of knowledge of identification and assessment to guide educational decisions for students with gifts and talents was indicated in the candidates being able to provide a PowerPoint presentation for an appropriate audience with robust descriptions and accuracy of content. Based on the analysis and evidence of candidate learning reflected in this year's results, the faculty will incorporate and/or revise activities in this course and other courses that will improve candidate learning in using their knowledge in the principles of assessment to guide educational decisions for students with gifts and talents. Candidates need to be able to demonstrate responsible decision making and problem-solving using data to inform educational decision making when appropriate beyond the identification process. The faculty will provide opportunities for candidates to engage in more activities related to

assessment.

For **524C, 524D, 524E**, although 100% of candidates met target in AY 2016-2017, AY 2017-2018, and AY 2018-2019 to improve student learning and program improvement, program faculty have reviewed the evidence, and based on the analysis of the results, faculty will enhance the content of *strategic adaptations and modifications and collaboration with families*. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates' ability to make responsible decisions and problem-solve short and long-term individualized instruction plans for both general and special education curricula using CBA data.

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

For **524A**: Based on student learning for AY 2016-2017, AY 2017-2018, and AY 2018-2019, program faculty made several decisions after examining results of data analysis which resulted in improved student learning and program improvement. The 524A program indicates candidates are gaining knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to teaching students with gifts and talents. Continued changes in assessment to ensure alignment with NAGC/CEC standards and improvement in learning activities and assignments for candidates indicate both program improvement and improvement in candidates learning.

- **SLO 1:** Candidates are demonstrating content knowledge to support their skill development and practical application in teaching students with gifts and talents as assessed by the *Content Assessment* of online posts. The essay prompts for the online posts were revised in all Gifted Education courses over the past two years to improve learning of content knowledge that aligns with the NAGC/CEC standards.
- **SLO 2:** Candidates are demonstrating the ability to plan, implement, and assess curricula for students with gifts and talents. The application of the candidates' discipline-specific content knowledge and skills of providing differentiated educational experiences was very successful. A self-assessment using the skills of building a rubric aligned with the NAGC/CEC Teacher Preparation Standards in Gifted Education 3 and 5 was implemented in SPED 5890 *Curriculum and Methods for the Academically Gifted* to gain specific analysis of candidates' learning knowledge and skills in differentiation, incorporating advanced, conceptually challenging, abstract, in-depth, distinctive, and complex content and engage students with gifts and talents in problem-based, project-based, and discovery learning to further assess candidate ability in providing differentiated educational experiences for students with gifts and talents.
- **SLO 3:** Faculty provided opportunities for candidate improvement of formal writing and communication with peers. As candidates improved in formal writing and communication, the process of feedback was improved which led to improved overall professional behavior. Candidates possessed the professional and ethical knowledge and skills to assess, reflect, and inform their educational practice, engage in lifelong learning, and to advance the profession through advocacy and mentoring and they improved their teaching by applying information from organizations and publications from the field of gifted education. Candidates' improvement in teaching by applying information from organizations and

publications from the field of gifted education were enhanced in other SPED courses instead of just the practicum.

- **SLO 4:** Faculty revised instructions and enhance activities to improve candidates' formal writing. Based on the evidence of candidate learning through the written and oral portfolio defense, the faculty will build on the candidates' ability to demonstrate creativity, ideas, processes, and experiences in gifted education and incorporate more writing activities. The course SPED 5860 will be redesigned to provide opportunities for growth in formal writing.
- **SLO 5:** The improvement in candidate learning in using assessments to identify gifted characteristics was directly related to increased activities related to identification of students with gifts and talents. The redesign of SPED 5860 will enhance candidates improving knowledge and use of assessment to guide educational decisions for students with gifts and talents as well as adding activities to SPED 5840 and SPED 5890.

For **524C, 524D, 524E:** Based on student learning for AY 2016-2017, AY 2017-2018, and 2018-2019 program faculty made several decisions after examining results of data analysis which resulted in improved student learning and program improvement.

- **SLO 1:** Faculty identified the lowest content score for each SPED PRAXIS exam and embed or enhance this specific content in SPED course content. Planned use of data for course content improvement and support of candidate learning is an ongoing 12-month process. Program faculty identified SPED PRAXIS Content Category II Planning and the Learning Environment as one content area that yielded a passing score by all candidates, but only exceeded the national median score by several points.
- **SLO 2:** For **524D & 524E**, introduced information about and promote research into various replacement behaviors to promote creative behavior management and enhance ability to meet SLO 2.
- **SLO 3:** Faculty added resources relating to Equity, Diversity, and Individual Needs to support student learning along with professional and ethical standards and enthusiasm. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to growing as culturally responsive professionals.
- **SLO 4:** Faculty placed greater emphasis on ethics and professional standards. Students are encouraged to join professional teaching organizations, such as the Council for Exceptional Children.
- **SLO 5:** Program faculty enhanced the content of strategic adaptations and modifications and collaboration with families. This effort to engage in program improvement will strengthen candidates' ability to make responsible decisions and problem-solve short and long-term individualized instruction plans for both general and special education curricula using CBA data.

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

For **524A**, Faculty will review and use data and revise or change assessments to gain data specificity, in order to improve candidate learning and provide program improvement.

- **SLO 1:** Faculty will assess specific content knowledge to enhance candidate learning in each SPED course and ensuring alignment with NAGC/CEC standards. The essay prompts for the online posts were revised in SPED 5840, SPED 5870, SPED 5890 in AY 2017-2018 and in SPED 5830 and SPED 5860 in AY 2018-2019 to improve learning of content knowledge that aligns with the NAGC/CEC standards. Faculty will monitor the *Content Assessment* to make revisions as needed to ensure candidates' growth in content knowledge. Specifically, faculty will proceed to identify the lowest content scores and enhance learning opportunities in specific content in SPED courses for gifted education.
- **SLO 2:** Candidates are demonstrating the ability to plan, implement, and assess curricula for students with gifts and talents. Additional assessment to gain specific analysis of candidates' learning knowledge and skills in differentiation will be reviewed and revised. Additionally, revisions in SPED 5890 to improve candidates' ability in using assessment to guide educational decisions for students with gifts and talents.
- **SLO 3:** Faculty will provide opportunities for candidate improvement of formal writing and communication with peers through increased opportunities in providing feedback and collaborating with other teachers and parents of students with gifts and talents. Candidates' improvement in teaching by applying information from organizations and publications from the field of gifted education will enhance learning in other SPED courses instead of just the practicum. Opportunities for collaboration, mentoring, and advocacy will be provided to increase candidates' professional growth in these areas.
- **SLO 4:** Faculty will revise instructions and enhance activities to improve candidates' formal writing. Specifically, redesign of SPED 5860 will provide processes and products designed to improve formal writing.
- **SLO 5:** Faculty will improve candidate learning in using the knowledge of assessment to guide educational decisions for students with gifts and talents by the development of additional assessment activities beyond the Identification PowerPoint.

For **624C**, **524D**, **524E**, the program faculty have examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 and will take steps to enhance student learning for program improvement.

- **SLO 1** Faculty will proceed to identify the lowest content score for each SPED PRAXIS exam and embed or enhance this specific content in SPED course content in Content Category II Planning and the Learning Environment. Faculty will embed learning objectives that are measurable and appropriately challenging in special education coursework.

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- **SLO 2** For **524C**, program faculty will embed basic communication and reading skills in RDG 5020 Early Childhood Primary Reading Instruction. For **524D** & **524E**, program faculty will introduce information about and promote research into various replacement behaviors to promote creative behavior management.
- **SLO 3** For **524C**, **524D**, & **524E** candidates, they need content enhancement in two specific areas: Professionalism: Communicates effectively verbally and in written work (CAEP A.1.1., PRO) and Reflective Practice: Evaluates and reflects on own ability to integrate technology and innovation to enhance professional ability (InTASC 9, CAEP A.1.1, T, PRO). These two constructs will be reinforced in the course SPED 5960 Interactive Teaming and Physical and Medical Management by using a self-reflective rubric for communication and technology.
- **SLO 4** For **524C**, **524D**, **524E** candidates, they will focus on identifying the specific needs of the students in their classroom. They will use basic communication skills to in collaborating with school faculty and principal to enhance the quality of their min-grant document. This construct will be added to the LA-CEC Mini-Grant Rubric.
- **SLO 5** For **524C**, **524D**, **524E** to improve student learning and program improvement, program faculty will enhance the content of *strategic adaptations and modifications and collaboration with families in the course (For 524C SPED 5310 Identification and Assessment of Early Childhood Education and for 524D & 524E SPED 5380 Curriculum-based Assessment.)*