Annual Program Report
2024-2025

(For programs not using Planning & Self Study software for the annual report)

The report(s) should be inclusive of all levels, degrees (i.e. certificates, bachelor's and master's), modalities and locations.

Department: **Education**

Department Chair: **Denise Sargent**

Department Assessment Committee Contact: **Denise Sargent**

This document is to be kept in the department and an electronic file is due to the AVP of Institutional Research and Planning by June 1, 2024.

Section I: Program Assessment (please complete this section for each program in your department)

Program: **Early Childhood Education Prek-2, Elementary Education 1-6, Moderate Disabilities Prek-8, and Severe Disabilities All Levels.**

A. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (Educational Objectives)

   I.   **List of PLOs and the timeline for assessment**

PLO #	PLO – Stated in assessable terms	Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	Timing of assessment (annual, semester, bi-annual, etc.)	When was the last assessment of the PLO completed?
1.	**Standard I: Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment**	ECE Prek-2:	Data are collected	Data are analyzed each

			each semester and analyzed annually.	semester at Unit Meetings. Faculty committees were responsible for working collaboratively to identify areas of strength and focus areas.
	Promotes the learning and growth of all students by providing high-quality and coherent instruction, designing and administering authentic and meaningful student assessments, analyzing student performance and growth data, using this data to improve instruction, providing students with constructive feedback on an on-going basis, and continuously refining learning objectives.	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/early-childhood-education-prek-2-bse Elementary Ed 1-6: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/elementary-education-1-6-bse Moderate Disabilities Prek-8 https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/teacher-students-moderate-disabilities-prek-8-special-education-bse Severe Disabilities, All Levels: ttps://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/teacher-students-severe-disabilities-all-levels-special-education-bse		
2.	**Standard II: Teaching All Students** Promotes the learning and growth of all students through instructional practices that establish high expectations, create a safe and effective classroom environment, and demonstrate cultural proficiency.			
3.	**Standard III: Family and Community Engagement** Promotes the learning and growth of all students through effective partnerships with families, caregivers, community members, and organizations.			
4.	**Standard IV: Professional Culture** Promotes the learning and growth of all students through ethical, culturally proficient, skilled, and collaborative practice.			

Section I: Program Assessment (please complete this section for each program in your department)

Program: **Educational Studies**

B. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (Educational Objectives)

II.   List of PLOs and the timeline for assessment

PLO #	PLO – Stated in assessable terms	Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	Timing of assessment (annual, semester, bi-annual, etc.)	When was the last assessment of the PLO completed?
1.	**Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:** Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/educational-studies-bs	annual	This program will have a self study AY 25-26. Faculty informally review the assessments in this program. Changes to the Internship Portfolio Rubric and Internship Evaluation were made in spring 2025.
2.	**Oral/Written Communications:** Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit documents needed to communicate to others.			
3.	**Teamwork/Collaboration:** Build collaborative relationships with colleagues, stakeholders, and others			

	representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict in the broader community.			
4.	**Digital Literacy:** The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies. The individual uses technology to expand their knowledge and skills.			
5.	**Leadership:** Uses interpersonal strengths to set common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach, teach and/or develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.			
6.	**Professionalism/Work Ethic:** Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, accepts and utilizes constructive criticism well, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.			

7.	**Career Management:** Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals. Identify areas necessary for professional growth and set goals and plans to achieve them, and participate in professional career activities. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.			
8.	**Global/Intercultural Fluency:** Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, abilities, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.			
9.	**Learning and Development:** Develop knowledge of social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development in children through adulthood. Demonstrate knowledge of teaching practices and learning theories.			

III. **PLO Assessment** (Please report on the PLOs assessed and/or reviewed this year. Programs should be assessing at least one each year.)

Using the table below, list and briefly describe the **direct method(s)** used to collect information assessing whether students are learning the core sets of knowledge (K), skills (S) and attitudes (A) identified as essential.

Program: **Early Childhood Education Prek-2, Elementary Education 1-6, Moderate Disabilities Prek-8, and Severe Disabilities All Levels.**

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4th year, 1st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the "loop closed"?
1-4 (Licensure Programs)	Practicum lesson plan rubric	Practicum, 4th year	All students in licensure programs	90% with ratings of 3 or 4	Data are reviewed and disseminated to chairs and faculty annually. Faculty meet in small groups to analyze the data and identify areas that need improvement. Actionable next steps are identified.
1-4 (Licensure Programs)	Candidate Disposition Assessment	Multiple points throughout 4 years	All students in licensure programs	90% with ratings of 3 or 4	
1-4 (Licensure Programs)	Teacher Work Sample	Practicum, 4th year	All students in licensure programs	90% with ratings of 3 or 4	
1-4 (Licensure Programs)	Exit Survey	Practicum, 4th year	All students in licensure programs	90% with ratings of 3 or 4	
1-4 (Licensure Programs)	Gateway l Task	3rd Year, First Semester	All students in licensure programs	Successful passage of the Gateway Task	Gateway committee evaluates tasks and if students do not

1-4 (Licensure Programs)	Gateway ll Observation Rubric	During Integrated Partial Practicum (IPP) 4th Year, 1st semester	All students in licensure programs	Successful passage of the Gateway Task	pass, they are returned for the student to re-do until they pass.
1-4 (Licensure Programs)	MTEL Exams	Multiple Points through 4 year Plan	All students in licensure programs	Successful passage: Each exam has identified passing scores	
1-9 (Non-licensure Program)	Portfolio Rubric	4th year, during Internship	All Students in the Ed Studies major	Successful Passage of the Rubric, score of proficient or higher.	Changes to these two assessments were discussed and approved in the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in spring 2025.
1-9 (Non-licensure Program)	Internship Evaluation	4th year, during Internship	All Students in the Ed Studies major	Scores of 3 or higher on the Evaluation Rating Scale	

You may use this comment box to provide any additional information, if applicable:

The Educational Studies major had a Program Coordinator initially; however, it was cut in 2021. We are hoping that this position is reinstated so that additional improvements in the program could be made. I set up a data collection process with my Administrative Assistant, which began in the Fall 2024 semester. I have requested that this data will be reviewed in the same manner as the licensure data in the Unit Meetings with the Dean. That way there will be an equitable process of analyzing data in all our programs.

Summary of Findings: Briefly summarize the results of the PLO assessments reported in Section II above combined with other relevant evidence gathered and show how these are being reviewed/discussed. How are you "closing the loop"?

Reflection Prompt	Narrative Response
Other than GPA, what data/ evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	**Licensure Programs:** Teacher candidates must complete a Stage I and Stage II Review and successfully complete the practicum for their license sought **STAGE 1** • Completion of CORE courses • (2) two minimum candidate dispositions that are positive ratings 2 and above. • Cummulative GPA of at least a 2.5 • Satisfy the FSU Mathematics and Reading readiness • Successfully passed on the Communication & Literacy MTELS. **STAGE 2** • Completions of all professional coursework (1st semester senior year) required for practicums • Additional (2) two positive candidate dispositions. • Cummulative GPA of at least 2.75 & 3.0 in Major. • Current degree evaluation reviewed with candidate, including petitions **Non-Licensure Program**: Students in the Educational Studies program are expected to have successfully passed the Internship Evaluation. In addition, students must achieve scores of proficient or higher on the Internship Portfolio Rubric.

Who interprets the evidence? **What is the process?** **(e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)**	**Licensure Programs:** he Director of Licensure collects and compiles the data. Data are reviewed annually at the Education Unit Meeting by Faculty. After the faculty in each licensure program reviews and analyze the data, they reports out on findings as well as any recommended programmatic changes/adjustments. In addition, the School of Education has committees that review assessment processes, policies, and tools used to assess candidates to include forms, rubrics, and surveys. **Non-licensure Program:** The Internship rubrics and evaluations are sent to the chair each semester for review.
What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (close the loop)	**Licensure Programs:** Faculty serving on the Education Unit committees made changes to the Candidate Disposition Assessment, the Lesson Plan Rubric, and the CAP process. These new updated assessments will be implemented in AY 2025-2026. **Non-licensure Program:** The rubric for the internship has been modified based on the implementation and usage. As a result of data reviewed, the following changes were made in our programs: • Advising changes: We created an Advisor Reference Sheet that includes specific information to assist faculty with advising. • A new policy was approved by the Department and through AUC requiring a minimum grade requirement. Starting in 2025-2026 AY all students in the licensure programs must earn a 2.0 or higher in all EDUC and SPED courses that are required in the program. • Changes to the programs were made based on survey data and the most recent NECHE report. Courses were removed from programs to allow for free electives. • Due to updates with DESE, I worked with Licensure officer to refine CAP training for supervisors. I worked with the Field Placement Coordinator to ensure quality placements. • Additional policies were created and implemented regarding MTEL Prep completion and student requests for time off during spring break.

B.   Assessment Plan for Program/Department

I.   Insert the program or department Assessment Plan (This is an independent plan from what is reported in this document).

II.   Explain any changes in the assessment plan including new or revised PLOs, new assessments that the program/department plans to implement and new targets or goals set for student success.

III.   If you do not have a plan, would you like help in developing one?   _X__Yes An assessment plan will be created for the Non-licensure program, Educational Studies.

C.   Program Review Action Plan or External action Letter/Report

Annual Reflection/Follow-up on Action Plan from last Program Review or external accreditation (only complete the table that is appropriate for your program

I.   **Programs that fall under Program Review:**

i. Date of most recent Review: The Educational Studies program will be reviewed in the AY 2025-2026
ii. Insert the Action Plan table from your last Program Review and give any progress towards completing the tasks or achieving targets set forth in the plan.

Specific area where improvement is needed	Evidence to support the recommended change	Person(s) responsible for implementing the change	Timeline for implementation	Resources needed	Assessment Plan	Progress Made this Year

iii. If you do not have an action plan, would you like help in developing one based on your last program review and needs of the program?   _____Yes

II.   Programs with external Accreditation:

i. Professional, specialized, State, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the program/department.
ii. Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.
Iii. Date and nature of next review and type of review.

List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action letter or report.	Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.) (If required.)	Update on fulfilling the action letter/report or on meeting the key performance indicators.
AAQEP Accreditation Action Letter : The only note that pertains to the programs in the Education Department is as follows: This notation pertains to Aspect 4b, which addresses efforts to meet workforce needs and to diversify participation in the educator workforce through candidate recruitment and support.		In the Education unit, we have continued the work with partners to address local needs, including its work with Future Educators Academy and Falcon Academy, with a focus on early exposure by prospective candidates to support increasing accessibility and diversity in the teacher pipeline. In addition, we hosted our first cohort of paraprofessionals in the 2024-2025 AY which broadens the accessibility to our programs and adds to the teacher pipeline.
Although not listed in the AAQEP Accreditation Action Letter, a new standard for accreditation was added. We will need to address this standard for our next accreditation in 2030.	AAQEP 1f. Knowledge of technology tools and the ability to select and employ current and emerging educational technology tools and systems to support learning for all	Faculty have had initial discussions on technology. Further discussions and a decision on how it will be implemented in the curriculum are needed.
Although not listed in the AAQEP Accreditation Action Letter, a new standard for accreditation was added. We will need to address this standard for our next accreditation in 2030.	AAQEP 2g. Knowledge of mental well-being needs and the ability to connect students, colleagues, & self to appropriate supports, including those related to trauma	The Dean initiated conversation with faculty and staff in the unit. She proposed some ideas for everyone to consider. This will be addressed next year as well.

Section II - Departmental Outcomes

A. Departmental Strategic Initiatives

Accomplished Initiatives AY24-25 Add more rows as needed	Corresponding Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate (X) if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
NECHE requirement: Eliminated 1-2 courses in licensure programs to allow for electives.	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning 1. Fortify and promote the distinct role of the general education curriculum that provides every undergraduate student a relevant and challenging liberal arts foundation.	
Removed a course in the Educational Studies major and substituted it with a more relevant course.	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning 1. Fortify and promote the distinct role of the general education curriculum that provides every undergraduate student a relevant and challenging liberal arts foundation.	
Integrated DESE's new Professional Standards for Teachers (PST) into our licensure programs.	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning 1. Fortify and promote the distinct role of the general education curriculum that provides every undergraduate student a relevant and challenging liberal arts foundation.	
Integrated DESE's new Early Literacy Standards into our licensure programs.	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning 1. Fortify and promote the distinct role of the general education curriculum that provides every undergraduate	

	student a relevant and challenging liberal arts foundation.	
Created a new Portfolio Rubric for assessment of Ed. Studies internship portfolio assignment.	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning 1. Fortify and promote the distinct role of the general education curriculum that provides every undergraduate student a relevant and challenging liberal arts foundation.	
1st cohort of students in the Paraprofessional-to-Licensure pathway	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning 4. Leverage existing curricular strengths to develop new programs that meet demand and forge deeper connections between our curriculum and community needs. 6. Strengthen adult education in collaboration with regional educational partners and employers. GOAL THREE: Be an engine of social, economic, civic, and cultural development in our city and region. 1. Build innovative, sustainable public-private partnerships that advance the University's mission while maximizing its positive impact on economic prosperity and social mobility in the region.	X

Planned Initiatives for AY 25-26 Add more rows as needed	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate (X) if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
Implement the new PSTs in coursework and make changes as needed.	GOAL TWO: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap 1. Achieve a cultural shift around how we advise, mentor, and teach all students, especially traditionally underrepresented and underserved students, so that we meet them where they are.	
Implement the new literacy standards in SPED 2002, EDUC 2630,EDUC 2640, and EDUC 3015/SPED 3250 and make changes as needed.	GOAL TWO: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap 1. Achieve a cultural shift around how we advise, mentor, and teach all students, especially traditionally underrepresented and underserved students, so that we meet them where they are.	
Implement the new CAP with the added element and new criteria for each element.	GOAL TWO: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap 2. Achieve a cultural shift around how we advise, mentor, and teach all students, especially traditionally underrepresented and underserved students, so that we meet them where they are.	
Complete Ed Studies report through Watermark.	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning 1. Fortify and promote the distinct role of the general education curriculum that provides every undergraduate student a relevant and challenging liberal arts foundation.	
Continue to recruit new students in our Paraprofessional-to-Licensure pathway.	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning	X

	4. Leverage existing curricular strengths to develop new programs that meet demand and forge deeper connections between our curriculum and community needs. 6. Strengthen adult education in collaboration with regional educational partners and employers. GOAL THREE: Be an engine of social, economic, civic, and cultural development in our city and region. 3. Build innovative, sustainable public-private partnerships that advance the University's mission while maximizing its positive impact on economic prosperity and social mobility in the region.	
Create a Mentor program with faculty, new graduates (first year teachers) and teachers in our partner schools.	GOAL FIVE: Assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely 4. Continue to broaden our value proposition so that students consider Fitchburg State for their lifelong learning needs.	

B. Departmental Accomplishments and Reflection:

Take this section to reflect on--

1. *24-25 Accomplishments not captured above*

2. *Initiatives that you may be considering for 25-26 academic year that you did not already capture above*

3. *Any other thoughts or information that you would like to share*

DESE Initiatives and Requirements:

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released the following major Guidelines:

1. Guidelines for Professional Standards for Teachers (PST) June 2024
2. Guidelines for the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP) June 2024
3. Early Literacy Program Approval Criteria in May 2024

As a result of these major changes, the Education Department worked tirelessly to analyze our programs to make the necessary changes. As part of this work, we aligned our courses in the Early Childhood, Elementary Education, Moderate Disabilities Prek-8, and Severe Disabilities programs to the new PSTs. Each faculty reviewed the new 30 PST elements and indicated which course addressed each of the elements within the standards. They also identified where on the syllabus these new elements were introduced, practiced, and demonstrated. We worked collaboratively over the course of the fall and spring semesters to complete a PST Matrix for each licensure area.

For the Early Literacy Standards, four courses were identified as part of the literacy sequence (SPED 2002 Language Development and Speech for Diverse Learners, EDUC 2630 Literacy in the Prek-8 Classroom, EDUC 2640 Language Arts: Theory to Practice, and EDUC 3015 Advanced Assessment and Instruction in Reading/SPED 3250 Reading Assessment and Instruction for Diverse Learners). The Early Literacy Standards needed to be imbedded into these courses in a systematic way. In addition, the Early Literacy Matrix needed to be completed which indicated where each standard is being introduced, practiced, and demonstrated. Like the PST matrix, the Early Literacy Matrix also requires that we indicate where on the syllabus each of the elements are covered. We were also informed that we will have an Early Literacy Interim Review in 2027 which asses programmatic alignment to the new Early Literacy Program Approval criteria. DESE will bring a team for an onsite review, similar to the 7-year cycle Program Approval visits.

The New CAP Guidelines were released in June 2024. In our Continuous Improvement group, we created our own set of guidelines starting with DESE's minimum expectations. This includes setting established criteria for each stage of the CAP process as well as specific required sources of evidence to be used in the summative assessment. As part of that work, we solicited feedback from our stakeholders which included faculty, adjunct supervisors, candidates, alumni, and classroom teachers (supervising practitioners). These guidelines were presented to the unit for approval.

Assessment Revisions:

In addition, faculty on the Field Placement Committee worked on revising the lesson plan rubric by aligning it with the PSTs and program approval guidelines. This was also approved through the unit. Likewise, faculty on the Candidate Success committee worked to revise the Candidate Disposition assessment which was also aligned with PSTs and approved by unit.

Paraprofessional-to-Licensure pathway:

In the fall 2024, the Education Department welcomed it's first cohort in the new Paraprofessional Pathway that was created by our former Dean, Nancy Murray. The Paraprofessional-to-Licensure pathway is designed to give paraprofessionals working in schools a pathway to take their vast knowledge of the educational field and apply it to a special education (moderate PreK-8) licensure program. The hybrid model classes are delivered by the education faculty and staff to deliver high quality content through both pedagogy and methodology. The 2024 cohort just completed their first year with a total of 17 teacher candidates. The 2025 cohort will begin in the fall of 2025 with a minimum of 15 teacher candidates.

Mentorship Program and Research Opportunities:

I have initiated conversations with junior faculty regarding the development of a structured mentorship program. The primary goals of this initiative are to:

- **Support first-year teachers** by extending guidance and resources to our graduates as they transition into their teaching careers. This continued connection would not only benefit our alumni but also foster ongoing engagement, allowing them to serve as valuable contributors on alumni panels and during state and program reviews.

- **Provide research opportunities** for junior faculty through their active involvement in mentoring and tracking the impact of support on early-career teachers.

- **Strengthen partnerships** with local schools by deepening our engagement with educators in the field and reinforcing our commitment to their professional success.