Annual Departmental Report

2022-2023

Program Information

Program/Department: Education: Early Childhood Education Prek-2, Elementary Education 1-6, Educational Studies, Moderate Disabilities Prek-8, and Severe Disabilities All Levels.
Department Chair: Lyndsey A. Benharris, Ph.D.
Department Assessment Committee Contact: Lyndsey Benharris

This document is to be kept in the department and an electronic file is due to the AVP of Institutional Research & Planning by June 1, 2023.

A. Departmental Special Section for AY 22-23

Department Lessons Learned and Accomplishments

During the 2022-2023 Academic Year, the Education Department completed the report and annual goals for accreditation through (Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation) AAQEP. On February 1, 2022 a proposal was submitted that outlined the curricula, assessment data, and alignment of the data in relation to AAQEP. Utilizing the feedback received from the submitted proposal to prepare for the submission of the self-study. Faculty participated in an exercise where departmental teams reviewed the identified curricula, assessment data, and alignment data in relation to State Standards and AAQEP. During the September 16, 2022 Unit Meeting, which is held each month, the following committees were formed: Continuous Improvement/Assessment, Partnership and Field Based Experiences, Candidate Success, and the added committee, AAQEP Trustworthiness and Fairness. This last committee was tasked with creating a process to evaluate the appropriate assessments for trustworthiness and fairness. The committees were asked to set dates for the committee to establish a working timeline so that their data analysis and writing draft could be submitted to the Dean and the Licensure Officer by December 16, 2022.

The Education Department made changes to Field Experience I and II. These changes were the result of informal surveys of both field experience supervisors and teacher candidates. The Field Experience course description changed to reflect a focus on quality observation (over quantity) of Teacher Candidates, realistic expectations during the teacher candidates' time in the setting, and better alignment with the corequisite courses. These changes will go in effect in the Fall 2023 semester.

The Education Department implemented an "Education Partner Meet and Greet." Working within the community with partner schools as far as Worcester, t1he education department invited key stakeholders for a meet and greet with our future educators. This was very well attended and teacher candidates were able to have 2-minute interviews with 11 different districts or schools.

B. 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.	**Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment standard:** 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	ECE Prek-2: 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	Data are collected each semester and analyzed annually.	Data were analyzed in through the accreditation process during the fall semester of 2022 Faculty committees were responsible for working collaboratively to identify areas of strength and focus areas. Results can be found here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/17hLvXW72fzTo7WQqxCHSS4Rf-zuAOFDq43hwH50WUgA/edit?usp=sharing
2.	**Family and Community Engagement standard:** Promotes the learning and growth of all students through effective partnerships with families, caregivers, community members, and organizations.	Moderate Disabilities Prek-8: https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/teacher-students-moderate-disabilities-prek-8-special-education-bse Severe Disabilities, All Levels:		
3.	**Family and Community Engagement standard:** Promotes the learning and growth of all students through effective partnerships with			

	families, caregivers, community members, and organizations.	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/teacher-students-severe-disabilities-all-levels-special-education-bse		
4.	**Professional Culture standard:** Promotes the learning and growth of all students through ethical, culturally proficient, skilled, and collaborative practice.			
5.	Educational Studies (non-licensure): • **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. • **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. • **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	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/educational-studies-bs	semester	Spring 2023

	within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict in the broader community. • **Digital Literacy:** The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies. The individual uses technology to expand their knowledge and skills. • **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. • **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. • **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. • **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. • **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.

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	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 graduate chairs, program coordinators, 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	Candidate Disposition Assessment	Multiple points throughout 4 years	All students in licensure programs	90% with ratings of 3 or 4	
1-4	Contextual Factors Paper	Practicum 4th year	All students in licensure programs	90% with ratings of 2 or 3	
1-4	Analysis of Learning Rubric	Practicum 4th year	All students in licensure programs	90% with	
1-4	Exit Survey		licensure programs	ratings of 2 or 3 4	

1-4	Gateway I Task	4th year, 1st semester	All licensure teacher candidates	Successful passage of the Gateway Task	Gateway I committee evaluates tasks. Teacher candidates who do not pass are given further instruction and support and can attempt the task again. These tasks are aligned with Learning outcomes.
1-4	Gateway II Observation Rubric	During Integrated Partial Practicum (IPP) 4th year, 1st semester	All licensure teacher candidates	Successful passage of the Gateway Task	If students do not pass, they are observed and given support until they pass.
1-4	MTEL exams	Multiple points throughout 4 years	All students in licensure programs	Successful passage: Each exam has identified passing scores	Data on MTEL exams are collected and shared with faculty. This data was used to submit proposals that were accepted by DESE to implement both the MTEL ALT for the Foundations of Reading MTEL and the MTEL ALT for the General Curriculum- Test 2 (Mathematics and Science). This will allow faculty to work with students to pass an alternative exam
1-4	Internship Evaluation	During internship, depending on student schedule	All students in Educational Studies program	90% with ratings of 4 or 5	Evaluations are collected by Chair. Supervisor completes the evaluation in conjunction with site supervisor. If students don't pass, an alert form with action steps would be completed.

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

We began collecting data on our student passage rates of MTEL licensure exams. Several times throughout the semester, the data were reviewed. In addition, the data were analyzed at a department meeting with faculty.

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. • Cumulative 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. • Cumulative GPA of at least 2.75 & 3.0 in Major. • Current degree evaluation reviewed with candidate, including petitions **Educational Studies programs are expected to have successfully passed the internship evaluation.**
Who interprets the evidence? **What is the process?**	The Director of Licensure collects and compiles the data. Data are reviewed annually at the Education Unit Meeting. Each program reviews and analyzes the data and reports out on findings as well recommended programmatic changes/adjustments.

(e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)	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.
What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (close the loop)	The Assessment Committee has updated the program completer survey to align with our AAQEP standards, PLOs, and DESE requirements. Specific Changes to course content and unit-wide trainings were made to provide more scaffolding of knowledge/skills to ensure that our teacher candidate and supervisors have the necessary skills to meet the state's expectation. In addition, the education department recently updated the MTEL Prep courses to include the following requirement: Candidates must attempt the test prior to receiving a grade for these preparation courses. Candidates will be required to show proof of signing up for the MTEL or Alternative Exam.

C. Assessment Plan for Program/Department

I.   Insert the program or department Assessment Plan

A Department assessment plan for all students would not be appropriate due to the requirements of each program. Each program has a required gateway or portfolio that assess students according to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Requirements.

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? ☐ Yes

D. Program Review Action   Plan or External Accreditation 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: March 2022

    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.

The findings below were discovered from the writing of the AAQEP Self-Study. (NOTE: the onsite visit will be October 16-18, 2023)

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.
Ensuring pre-practicum and practicum experiences for candidates within diverse settings	MA Department of ESE Licensure	Working with our coordinator of field placement, partnerships, and recruitment, and the department of education, we have structured our Integrated Partial Practicum to ensure that students are meeting the diversity policy.
Revisit the Education Unit Mission statement to make sure that it is reflective of our focus on creating reflective leaders in our schools and communities with an emphasis on equity and social justice.	MA Department of ESE Licensure	We completed this goal and rewrote our mission statement to have an emphasis on equity and social justice. Below is our revised mission statement: The Education Unit at Fitchburg State University is committed to preparing knowledgeable, skillful, and culturally responsive educators that have a focus on inclusivity. We strive to prepare compassionate candidates that become reflective, ethical, professional, and socially responsible teachers, administrators, and counselors. Our programs focus on anti-racist pedagogy, and employ innovative technology

		to cultivate higher-level thinking and metacognitive skills, while acknowledging the value and benefit of divergent thinking. We support the community by offering both licensure and non-licensure programming that is inclusive of all students, including those with varying abilities and cultural backgrounds.
Update our assessment system to gather data so that we can self-evaluate the level of impact our courses, field experiences, and practicum have on our preparing anti-racist teachers.	MA Department of ESE Licensure	**Progress:** In order to address this goal, we adjusted our exit surveys to include the following questions along with the current questions addressing diversity. 1. My program of study, including the General Education curriculum, provided me opportunities to reflect on best practices regarding diverse/global perspectives and multicultural proficiency. 2. The program supported my development and growth in anti-racist, anti-biased, and social justice pedagogy.

I. Programs that fall under Program Review:
i. Date of most recent Review: March 2022
   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.

Findings from our State Program Review- March

Domain	Criteria	Time line	Action Steps taken since March 2022
The Candidate	CAN 1: Systems to recruit and admit candidates result in the increased racial and ethnic diversity of completers in the workforce.		The implementation of both the Future Falcon Academy and the Future Educator Academy. Report on completer numbers of under-represented populations. Share numbers at Unit Meeting in the fall Retention!

| Field-Based Experiences | FBE 6: Candidates participate in field-based experiences that cover the full academic year | March 2023 (allows for at least 2+ years of evidence collection prior to next review) | Conversations with both our Department of Education Advisory Board as well with the Education Unit have occurred to discuss ways to increase teacher candidates start time for their field-based experiences.
1.   Have students begin their field experiences at the start of the semester, shifting the observations focus if needed. This may mean having students gather anecdotal notes and reflect on their observations prior to specific content being covered within the course. Once content is covered, candidates would revisit their reflections and possibly adjust their thinking as the accommodate new information.
2.   Be sure to have additional conversations with teacher candidates on the time line of their field- experiences and work with the placement officer to assure early placement. |

Specific area where improvement is needed	Evidence to support the recommend change	Person(s) responsible for implementing the change	Timeline for implementation	Resources needed	Assessment Plan	Progress Made this Year
CAN 1: Systems to recruit and admit candidates result in the increased racial and ethnic diversity of completers in the workforce.		Dean of Education				The Dean worked collaboratively with Fitchburg Public Schools to create pathway that Encourages high school students to enroll in FSU to become educators.
FBE 6: Candidates participate in field-based experiences for the full academic year.		Licensure Office and Education Faculty				Teacher candidates now enroll in the partial practicum in the first semester of their Senior year and begin their full practicum in the second semester.

E. Departmental Strategic Initiatives

Accomplished Initiatives AY 22-23 Add more rows as needed	Corresponding Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal

High Impact Practices: Refined pre-practicum experiences and assessments: Field I/II courses and Gateway I'll Tasks/Assessment	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning	▭

	Strategy 4: Leverage existing curricular strengths to develop new programs that meet demand and forge deeper connections between our curriculum and community needs.	
Continued partnership with the Future Falcon Academy. Inviting students to campus to explore different opportunities with a higher education degree.	GOAL THREE: Be an engine of social, economic, civic, and cultural development in our city and region Strategy 4: Pursue a purposeful, University-wide approach to community relations, and increase the number of faculty, staff and students who embrace civic responsibility and actively engage with community beyond campus.	▮

	provides every undergraduate student a relevant and challenging liberal arts foundation.	

Planned Initiatives for AY 23-24 Add more rows as needed	**Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy** Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	**Indicate if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal**
Continue to create opportunities to engage with community partners through educator meet and greets with diverse school partnerships.	GOAL ONE: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning	■

	prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives.	
Encourage faculty led DEI activities with students.	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.	■

F. **Departmental Reflection:**

Take this section to reflect on--

   1)   *Initiatives that you may be considering for 22-23 academic year that you did not already capture above.*

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