

2019-2020
Unit Assessment Report
Division: Academic Affairs
Unit: Education

Amended to reflect changes and disruptions due to the pandemic

*There are amended instructions throughout this document to reflect the special circumstances of this academic year (AY19-20). You will find these in **red**. As an institution and as departments we have learned that we can use our creativity to deliver services and learning even in the most difficult of circumstances. This year's annual report should also serve as a memorialization of the lessons learned.*

I Mission and Goal/Outcomes Statement:

The mission of the Education Unit

The Education Unit at Fitchburg State University is committed to preparing knowledgeable, skillful, caring, and ethical educators who are socially responsible personnel (teachers, administrators, counselors), who are ready for a global society, who recognize the value of diversity, who strive for excellence, who employ innovative technology, and who will serve as reflective leaders in their schools and communities. This mission of the Education Unit supports and complements the overall mission of Fitchburg State University.

- Have a commitment to creating educational environments that promote equity and the idea of inclusive excellence.
- Have in-depth knowledge of the content they teach or utilize
- Skillfully employ research-based practices to ensure that students learn
- Care genuinely about their profession and the students, families, and community with whom they interact
- Practice their craft within the boundaries and guidelines of ethical behavior at all times

(Submitted by Bruno Hicks)

II Personnel:

Administrative Staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
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Support Staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
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Debra Turner	One year hire replacing the retirement of Ruth Joseph
Jescah Appano-Gannon	Tenure position replacing the retirement of Anne Howard

III Facilities/Equipment:

None

IV Budget Expenditure Analysis:

The Budget was primarily used as planned and no significant additional changes were made due to the pandemic.

V Action Plan for 2019-20:

1. Implementation of our recruitment plan
2. Implement the new education curriculum for elementary, early childhood, special education
3. Bring all PA-MS proposals through AUC – includes a common curriculum program for middle/ secondary and the elimination of a standalone middle school program
4. Implement DESE's new pre-practicum and SMK guidelines
5. Continue to review and revamp graduate programs with the GCE

Submitted by Bruno Hicks

VI Programs/Activities:

1. Unit meetings were held where groups of faculty worked on preparing for our planned May visit from the State.
 - a. Finished up Domain Worksheets to be submitted.
 - b. Designed Focus groups
 - c. Examined areas to be assessed
2. Observed for AAQEP at Westfield State
3. Sent numerous emails to Superintendents, Principals, Supervising Practitioners, Program Supervisors, and Students to communicate current status and actions steps associated with COVID-19.
4. Numerous meetings with Chairs and Program Coordinators to create and complete changes to programs.

VII Accomplishments 2019-2020:

1. New curriculum for the Program Areas for Secondary and Middle School (PA-SM) were passed by the AUC
2. Documents were created and submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education required for our State Program Review.
3. 4 plus 1 programs were created for all licensure areas at the undergraduate level, creating pathways for students to add another license in their 5th year.
4. An Articulation Agreement between Fitchburg State University and Monty Tech was created and approved by all parties. This agreement allows students at Monty Tech to receive college level credits.
5. The Young Falcons Academy was ready to be implemented for the April Vacation until interrupted by the State Emergency (COVID-19).
6. Aspects of The Future Educators Academy are being implemented in the fall 2020. Working with Early College, the Education Department is offering the first class to High School Students attending Fitchburg and Leominster High School.

The second class is ready to run in the spring of 2021 and we have outlined the “Badges” that will be offered to Freshman, Sophomores and Juniors.

7. All Prepracticum Guideline requirements put out by the State have been created and embedded into our programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels along with the rubrics/observation forms necessary for documentation. These include the following:
 - a. Two prepracticum formal observations with targeted feedback.
 - b. A task oriented gateway to assess teacher candidates’ ability to apply Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK) and skills.
 - c. An observational gateway to assess teacher candidates’ ability to implement SMK and teaching techniques in the classroom.
8. Worked with faculty to create online/hybrid MTEL prep courses connected to specific undergraduate courses to ensure candidate participation and to increase first time passage rates for which the DESE is examining.
9. Researched other graduate EDLM programs and sent out survey to determine additional EDLM pathways.
10. Outlined Alumni Resources to create a site to support our alumni.
11. Additional trainings were provided to assist faculty in teaching remotely. (due to the pandemic)

VIII Assessment Report:

1. Implementation of our recruitment plan: (**Completed the Young Falcons Academy and it was ready to implement for April Vacation**)
2. Implement the new education curriculum for elementary, early childhood, special education (**This was successfully completed**)
3. Bring all PA-MS proposals through AUC – includes a common curriculum program for middle/ secondary and the elimination of a standalone middle school program. (**This was completed in May**)
4. Implement DESE’s new pre-practicum and SMK guidelines (**This was completed in May, forms were created and the logistics for fall implementation have been worked out for both the undergraduate and graduate programs**)
5. Continue to review and revamp graduate programs with the GCE (**ECE, Elem, and Sped graduate programs were adjusted to meet the needs of the new DESE requirements and we have begun to redesign the EDLM program offering additional pathways**)

Action Plan submitted by Bruno Hicks

IX Future Directions:

1. Have unit ready for the state review process – including partnership work and necessary changes for the adjustments made to the review process. Due to COVID-19 our review has been moved to February of 2021.
2. Implement the Prepracticum Guidelines and gather data on the forms in order to make appropriate adjustments.

3. Provide training for all faculty on the use of the new prepracticum forms, gateways, and 4 + 1 programs.
4. Record and provide training for all graduate adjunct faculty to implement the new Prepracticum Guideline forms (Prepracticum Observation forms and Gateways)
5. Implement the new MTEL prep courses connected to specific undergraduate courses and gather data on the passage rates for candidates taking the specific MTEL.
6. Pass the changes made to the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Education Programs through DHE.
7. Implement the Future Educators Academy and the Young Falcons Academy outlined to increase recruitment of the underrepresented student population.
8. Incorporate an integrated technology within courses to better prepare teacher candidates for the “new” classroom by using google classroom and other platforms.
9. Re-examine the EDLM programs and create pathways for Administrators in Special Education, Higher Education, Online Supervisors, and a non-licensure program.
10. Create a web site to support our alumni around current issues, inclusive excellence, equity, social justice, and additional topics that come in from our alumni survey. vetted and directed to the correct individual/department to provide support.

X Reflection:

Having started in the position as Interim Dean for the School of Education in January, I found myself quickly diving into the many facets associated with our state of emergency (COVID-19). I feel that faculty within the Education Department managed the expedient transition to an online platform with an ease and commitment that surpassed my expectations. Our biggest concern during this unprecedented time revolved around meeting the state requirements for prepracticum hours, field experiences and the many demands associated with the practicum. In order to facilitate the necessary adjustments, Jason Miles and I attended and continue to attend weekly meeting with DESE’s Education Prep team.

Recordings assuring our candidates and partner schools accompanied by emails were sent to students, principals, faculty , supervising practitioners, and program supervisors to ease their concerns and to assure them that we were available to provide support. We had two meetings with our Division of Education Advisory Board to gain insights to how K-12 schools and other organizations were handling the situation as we navigated through these unknown territories.

As I continue to reflect on the various ways in which we have reached out to students, partners, etc. I have discovered that the key to maintaining a calm in

the storm atmosphere is to listen and maintain solid and frequent lines of communication.

*Report on how the department adapted to the mid-semester disruption caused by the pandemic.
Reflect on actions that surprised you and on lessons learned that will help in the future.*