GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY

Unit Assessment System Handbook

Revised Fall 2009

The Unit Assessment System (UAS) was revised in fall 2009 and adopted spring 2010 by the Unit.

Table of Contents

Exhibits

Conceptual Framework

Exhibit B1-8-1   Conceptual Framework Tree Graphic and Strands
Exhibit B1-9-1   Alignment of State, Professional, and Unit Standards
Exhibit B1-9-2   Conceptual Framework KSD Alignment with Signature Assessments

Unit Assessment System

Exhibit 2a-2-1   Table 6 Unit Assessment System Transition Points
Exhibit 2a-5-1   Data Collection Analysis Review Plan
Exhibit 2a-3-2   Table of Program Stakeholder Committee Members
Exhibit 2a-3-1   Table of Current Program Assessments
Exhibit B1.2.17   Annual Faculty Report
Exhibit B1.2.18   Faculty Performance Evaluation Form
Exhibit B1.2.19   Faculty Peer Evaluation
Exhibit B1.2.20   Administrative and Academic Support Units Forms
Exhibit 2a-2-2   Dispositions Inventory Survey
Exhibit 2a-5-2   Follow-Up Survey
Exhibit 2a-5-3   Employer Survey
Exhibit 2a-5-3   CF Survey

Unit Organization

Exhibit 6a.1.2 Unit Organizational Chart
Exhibit 6a.1.4 Unit Decision Flowchart

Unit Assessment System (UAS)

Foundation of UAS

The Unit's conceptual framework (Exhibit B1.8.1 Conceptual Framework Tree Graphic and Strands) is aligned with state and professional standards (Exhibit B.1.9.1 Alignment of State, Professional and Institutional Standards) and serves as the foundation for the Unit Assessment System (UAS). The signature assessments are aligned with conceptual framework outcomes (Exhibit B.1.9.2 Conceptual Framework KSD Alignment with Signature Assessments). This alignment ensures that the assessment system collects information on candidate proficiencies as articulated in the conceptual framework, the state's standards and the professional standards for both initial and advanced programs. The alignment also enables us to be efficient and focused on the data that are collected, which maximizes our ability to grow a culture of data-driven decisions in the Unit. The UAS is a blueprint for fostering a continuous cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation that ultimately documents that the Unit produces knowledgeable, skilled, compassionate educators and other school professionals. The UAS is a centralized system that is comprehensive in the assessment of the Unit's operations, the quality of its initial and advanced programs, the performance of its candidates and the professional competencies of its graduates.

UAS Transition Points

The Unit transition points, or portals, along with the program requirements and key assessments, are depicted in Exhibit 2a.2.1 Table 6 Unit Assessment System Transition Points and are designed to provide a practically comparable structure across programs and levels. Candidate passage through a portal is dependent upon the candidate's presentation of the qualifying data that allows progression to the next level of the program. The assessments used to monitor and make decisions about candidate performances at each portal are outlined in Table 6 including program requirements (e.g., admissions criteria) and signature assessments used as multiple measures of candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Assessments by program for each portal are identified and outlined in Exhibit 2a-2-1 Table 6 Unit Assessment System Transition Points.

Pre-Program Admission	Program Admission	Entry to Clinical Practice	Exit from Clinical Practice	Program Completion	After Program Completion

Portal Program Requirements

As depicted in Exhibit 2a.2.1 Table 6 Unit Assessment System Transitions Points, at each portal and for each program, each candidate submits required documents to the appropriate undergraduate, initial or graduate portal review committee. The committee then reaches a consensus regarding candidate performance and may elect to take an action: 1) candidate passage through the portal, 2) candidate provisional passage to the next level, 3) candidate

additional coursework, counseling, or delay of passage through the portal, or possibly 4) candidate professional growth plan developed collaboratively with the candidate formalizing the recommendations to be tracked by the candidate's advisor during the ensuing semester. Portal requirements are used to determine candidate proficiencies which impact candidate matriculation and to examine Unit and operations quality (Exhibit 2a.5.1 Data Collection, Analysis, Review Plan).

Signature Assessments

As depicted in Exhibit 2a.2.1 Table 6 Unit Assessment System Transitions Points, each program has signature assessments. Each program has identified six to eight signature assessments (Exhibit 2a.3.3 Table of Current Program Assessments). Signature assessment data are used internally to determine candidate proficiencies which impact candidate matriculation, to measure program quality and to improve Unit operations and programs (Exhibit 2a.5.1 Data Collection, Analysis, Review Plan). At each portal and for each program, each candidate submits on TaskStream signature assessments to the faculty designated course instructor of record. Faculty evaluate and grade candidate work before submission of the candidate's final grade. Each candidate can see his/her scores and faculty/supervisor comments as soon as the evaluation is released after grading. At each decision point, each candidate is informed of the decision relative to matriculation through the program.

Common Rubric. To maintain continuity of interpretation of assessment data across the unit and across programs, the unit adopted four-point rubric as the common rubric for interpreting the designated signature assessments and reporting the conceptual framework knowledge, skills, and dispositions. This decision was implemented in fall 2008 and has served to clarify performance levels across the unit and to facilitate interpretation of data. The rubric, which describes and differentiates four levels of observed performances, was chosen because research supports the "use of even number of levels, 4 or 6; an odd number levels tend to move scores toward middle" (slide 23, presentation by Barbara Chesler Buckner at Fall 2007 NCATE/AACTE Conference).

Data Collection, Analysis and Review

The Unit maintains a data collection, analysis, review plan (Exhibit 2a.5.1 Data Collection, Analysis, Review Plan) that details when assessments are administered, the frequency of data collection, the responsibility for data collection, the frequency of data analysis and summary, the responsibility for data analysis and summary, who evaluates and monitors use of data, and how data are used.

Assessment data are collected at multiple points, and multiple assessments are used including both internal and external data. Data are regularly compiled, summarized, analyzed and used. For example, candidate data are used by programs to make decisions regarding candidate admission, matriculation, and program completion. Program assessments are used internally to measure program quality and manage and improve Unit operations and programs. SPA program reports are external evaluations used to strengthen the overall performance of the Unit and ensure that graduates have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to meet

program standards. SPA program approval reflects on Unit and operations quality. Employer surveys are used to ascertain candidate proficiencies in the workplace as well as Unit and operations quality. Follow-up surveys also provide data for improvement of Unit operations (Exhibit 2a.5-2 Follow-up Survey; Exhibit 2a.5-3 Employer Survey, and Exhibit 2a.5-4 Conceptual Framework Survey).

Exhibit B1.2.16 GSU Course and Instructor Evaluations are completed by candidates. Results of these evaluations are shared with faculty members to improve the teaching and learning environment and are used by departmental chairs during annual faculty evaluations as well as an indicator of Unit and program operations quality.

Faculty submit the Annual Faculty Report (Exhibit B1.2.17 Annual Faculty Report). Faculty evaluations by department chairs are conducted annually (Exhibit B1.2.18 Faculty Performance Evaluation Form) and feedback is used to improve faculty productivity and to assist faculty in meeting tenure and promotion goals. Data also provide evidence of Unit and program operations quality. Tenure-track faculty are evaluated for tenure and promotion on criteria following procedures established in the Exhibit B1.2.11 GSU Faculty Handbook. Faculty are also evaluated by peers using the Exhibit B1.2.19 Faculty Peer Evaluation.

GSU supervisors and cooperating teachers are evaluated and data are used to make future assignments and used as an indicator of Unit and program operations quality (Exhibit B1-2-4 OPLE Student Teaching Handbook). These evaluations are completed at the end of each semester: 1) student teaching candidate evaluation of GSU supervisor and cooperating teacher, 2) cooperating teacher evaluation of GSU supervisor, and 3) GSU supervisor evaluation of cooperating teacher.

The annual departmental goals and objectives form (Exhibit B1.2.20 Administrative and Academic Support Units Forms) is used to guide the planning and operations of each department and is used as an indicator of Unit and program operations quality. Each fall, departmental faculty set goals, objectives, strategies, and performance measures for the upcoming fiscal year and evaluate performance measures from the previous year.

Procedures

The organization of the unit is depicted in Exhibit 6a.1.2 Unit Organizational Chart. The assessment coordinator reports directly to the dean of the College of Education. Decisions within the Unit are made as detailed in Exhibit 6a.1.4 Unit Decision Flowchart.

Assessment Coordinator
The assessment coordinator oversees the assessment within the Unit and coordinates assessment practices among programs. The assessment coordinator chairs the Unit Assessment Committee (UAC) and follows the data collection, analysis, review plan (Exhibit 2a.5.1):

- The assessment coordinator gathers data from a variety of sources, These data sources include data from TaskStream (i.e., program requirements, signature assessments, Office of Professional Learning Experiences (OPLE) evaluations, and surveys) as well as data from Educational Testing Service (i.e., PRAXIS scores), the campus computing information system (i.e., GPA, student demographic data, enrollment data), and institutional research (i.e., GSU annual departmental goals and objectives, and course and instructor evaluations).
- The assessment coordinator analyzes and summarizes data in Excel, and posts reports on the TaskStream website thus making data accessible to administrators, faculty, and staff (Adopted spring 2010).
- The assessment coordinator maintains the TaskStream electronic portfolio system, and performs systematic and periodic checkups every semester to ensure candidates submit the required assessment (e.g., signature assessments, surveys, portal reviews) and faculty and supervisors evaluate the assessment on time. The COE dean is notified of any irregularities (Adopted spring 2010).

The Unit Assessment Committee (UAC)

The assessment coordinator is chair of the UAC and serves along with the Associate Vice President/Planning and Institutional Research and with faculty representatives across programs (see Exhibit 2a.3.2 Table of Stakeholder Committee Members). Originally developed in 2006 and revised in 2010, the purpose of the UAC is to provide oversight in the implementation of the UAS; approve amendments to UAS; recommend policy and procedures supporting assessment; and review data, reports, and recommendations. UAC meetings, both formal and informal, may be called by the COE dean and/or by the assessment coordinator (Adopted spring 2010).

Portal Committees and Advisors

Clearly defined procedures are in place to guide candidates through their programs with opportunities for both input and feedback. The undergraduate and graduate portal (transition) committees are charged with the responsibilities of guiding candidates through the portal review process and reviewing program data. Catalogs and handbooks provide both faculty members and candidates with guidelines, resources, timelines, and forms to successfully perform their assigned duties:

Initial and Advanced Programs
GSU General Catalog, Undergraduate and Graduate
GSU Code of Student Conduct Handbook
GSU Academic Advisement Manual
GSU Faculty Handbook
COE Faculty Handbook

Initial Program Handbooks	Advanced Program Handbooks
OPLE Field Experiences Handbook	C & I Graduate Handbook
OPLE Student Teaching Handbook	Louisiana Education Consortium (LEC) Handbook

Policy and Practice Changes

These procedures were proposed by the UAC and adopted spring 2010. Policy and practice changes including changes in program and unit assessments are presented to the dean and administrative council. These changes may be initiated at various levels: 1) by program faculty, 2) by department heads or the dean, and/or 3) by committees such as UAC or PK-16+ Council. The initiating entity must: 1) provide a rationale for the change; 2) collect, analyze and summarize quantitative or qualitative data; 3) provide evidence that the change was approved by program faculty and by the department head; 4) present the change with required documentation to COE Dean (see Exhibit 6a.1.4 Unit Decision Flowchart).

The initiating entity along with program faculty and department heads are notified of the decision on the change. If approved the notification includes the date for change(s) to be implemented. If a change is made, then the change is disseminated by the Dean to department heads who inform faculty and students of the approved change.

Fair, Accurate, Consistent and Free from Bias

The Unit and its programs take multiple steps to ensure procedures are fair, accurate, consistent and free from bias:

- Candidates at both initial and advanced levels are informed of program requirements at the time of program admission and during advisement each semester (Exhibit B1.2.14 GSU Academic Advisement Manual), and these requirements are detailed in Exhibit B1.2.1 GSU General Catalog, available online, and in program handbooks (Exhibit 2a.4.1 Initial and Advanced Program Handbooks).
- Course syllabi were standardized and course performance objectives and rubrics aligned with the conceptual framework and with state and professional standards. Program faculty provide candidates with course syllabi and rubrics at the beginning of each semester. Candidates also have "due process" procedures at GSU, Unit and program level. There is an appeals process for candidates stipulated in GSU catalog. Faculty also provide assessment accommodations for candidates registered with the Student Intervention Resource Center.
- The Unit uses multiple measures at each transition point (See Exhibit 2a.2.1 Table 6 Unit Assessment System Transition Points). Assessments are reviewed by program faculty to ensure assessments are free of racial and ethical stereotypes, poorly conceived language and task situations, and other forms of cultural sensitivity that could unintentionally favor one candidate over another or impact candidate performance. Discussion between supervising faculty and cooperating teachers address issues of fairness, accuracy, consistency and avoidance of bias at the start of each semester during clinical practice. The diversity of the faculty in the Unit also helps to ensure the elimination of bias.
- Standardized tests scores on ACT, SAT, GRE, PRAXIS I and II, and LATAAP provide the Unit with data based upon consistent, reliable, and nationally validated criteria on candidate performance to be used in comparative analyses and assurance of candidate mastery of

content. The signature assessment for student teachers and interns (ED 455 Student Teacher/Intern Evaluation) is the previously validated Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching instrument used by state evaluators.

- When possible, multiple raters are used and data are triangulated to ensure validity and reliability. For example, several assessments at initial level are panel reviewed by members internal and external to GSU (ED 455 Electronic Portfolio, MUS 411 Juried Panel Recital, Art 422 Senior Exhibition). Advanced candidates comprehensive exams use multiple raters.
- Content validity has been a major focus of the redesign process over the past five years. Prior to approval, each course was examined by a team representing different disciplines who scrutinized both objectives and assessment for alignment with professional standards. The evaluators were brought in from outside of Louisiana to provide a broader perspective in the state review process.

Information Technology

When the State terminated its use of Passport, the Unit adopted and implemented TaskStream as the electronic portfolio system used by two degree programs: 1) Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction and 2) Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership. These programs are attached to the Louisiana Education Consortium (LEC); GSU is one of three institutions in this consortium. In fall 2009, an internal review of the Unit's operations was conducted. As a result, the Unit adopted TaskStream for all NCATE reviewed programs with implementation in spring 2010. TaskStream through its portfolio system enables the Unit to collect candidate data, to provide faster feedback to candidates, and to communicate with candidates post-graduation. Systematic and periodic checkups are performed every semester to ensure candidates submit the required assessment (e.g., signature assessments, surveys, portal reviews) and faculty and supervisors evaluate the assessment on time.

TaskStream, augmented by Excel, supports electronic data collection/analysis and the development of candidate electronic professional portfolios. Faculty electronically score signature assessments submitted electronically by candidates, and portal committees electronically evaluate requirements; thus a consistent source of data is produced. The inherent advantages of TaskStream are its ability to facilitate data collection and analysis for Unit and program improvement, and its compatibility with Excel to export data.

Faculty and candidate initial training entails utilization of the TaskStream as well as familiarization with the Conceptual Framework, KSD, portal requirements, and signature assessments. Instructors have both email and direct communication opportunities facilitated by TaskStream's capability to push tasks, surveys, announcements, and provide feedback on candidate submissions upon request. The TaskStream system is Internet based enabling candidates to interact with instructors from off-campus settings. Additional information about TaskStream can be accessed through http://www.TASKSTREAM.org using the "information" and "training" tabs.