



PROGRAM REPORT SUMMARY

Department: Special Education and Interventions	Report Type: SUMMARY
Program Name: Special Education – MS (OHE 000048)	Program Award Level:
Report Preparer: Dr. Joan Nicoll-Senft	Academic Year: 2018-19
Program Structure (Choose One): Accredited Non-Accredited Combination	Date Report Completed: 9/27/19
Accreditation Agency (If Applicable): Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)	Date Next Self Study Due to Agency: Annual

Program Assessment Question	Response
1) <u>URL</u>: Provide the URL where the learning outcomes (LO) can be viewed.	https://www.ccsu.edu/sped/
2) <u>Assessment Instruments</u>: What data/evidence, other than GPA, are used to assess the stated CCSU General Education Objective/Outcome? e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Praxis II: Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild Moderate Applications (ETS 5543) b) Evidence-based Case Study c) Lesson Plan Sequence Assignment d) Student Teaching Evaluation e) edTPA Tasks 1-3 f) Assessment Project Parts I and II
3) <u>Interpretation</u>: Who interprets the evidence? (e.g., faculty, Admin. assistant, etc.).	Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (ETS 5543). The Praxis II for Special Education licensure in Connecticut is test code 5543: Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications. The 90 multiple-choice 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 questions 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.

Teacher Candidates (TCs) take the Praxis II after they have completed all certification coursework and must submit passing scores prior to student teaching. Candidates must pass Praxis II in order to receive teacher certification from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Evidence-based case study. The Evidence-Based Case Study is an assignment in Level One of our Master's of Science Specialization for Initial Certification or Teachers Seeking Cross Endorsement Program. The requirement is conducted during the course-embedded field experience requirement for SPED 503. This assignment requires the teacher candidates (TCs) to complete a case study of a student with an identified disability who is being educated in a general or special education K-12 classroom. This case study assignment contains the following components: 1) context for learning, 2) identification of appropriate evidence-based intervention(s), and 3) summary of findings.

Lesson Plan Sequence Assignment. The Lesson Plan Sequences requires teacher candidates (TCs) to plan and implement a series of five consecutive lessons to address the learning needs of an identified student. The Lesson Plan Sequence must focus on a specialized reading instruction and the implementation of evidence-based instructional practices. Progress monitoring and data-based decision-making are also central to this assignment, therefore, a curriculum-based pre-test and post-test, as well as ongoing data collection and data-based decision making must be incorporated in the Lesson Plan Sequence. A rubric is used to score the Lesson Plan Sequence.

Student Teaching Evaluation. CCSU's Student Teaching Evaluation was revised in 2018 in collaboration with the Director of CTEN, the Coordinator of Office of School and Community Partnerships, and discipline-specific program faculty to reflect new research in teacher evaluation, to align to the edTPA, and to align more closely to how teachers in Connecticut are being assessed in the field. Our revised Student Teaching Evaluation is aligned with Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT) Rubric for Effective Teaching (2017) which is aligned with the CCT Professional Standards. Comparable to the CCT Professional Standards, our Student Teaching Evaluation contains 6 domains: Domain 1 (Content and Essential Skills which include the Connecticut Core Standards and Connecticut Content Standards), Domain 2 (Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning), Domain 3 (Planning for Active Learning), Domain 4 (Instruction for Active Learning), Domain 5 (Assessment for Learning), and Domain 6 (Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership). Each of these domains is further delineated into 35 Indicators that identify the essential aspects of a teacher's performance and practice, 18 of which have been designated as essential.

The Special Education Department at Central Connecticut State University uses the Student Teaching Evaluation as both a formative and summative assessment. This evaluation is completed at the mid-point and end of each 8-week placement, thereby reflecting the student teacher's level of development and providing a clear picture of his or her progress in relation to the ultimate performance indicators for a beginning special education teacher. The Student Teaching Evaluation is reviewed with all teacher candidates prior to student teaching. The assessment is also provided at the start of the each student teaching placement to all members of the student teaching team (teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor). Additionally, a copy of the Student Teaching Assessment is included in the Student Teaching Handbook provided to teacher candidates at the beginning of their student teaching semester. These procedures are done to ensure that all parties are familiar with the document and the expectations are clear to all involved. Ratings of the teacher candidate's performance using the Student Teaching Evaluation at both the mid-point and end of each student teaching placement are determined with the input of the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor. It provides a summative assessment of the teacher candidate's student teaching performance.

edTPA Tasks 1-3. Developed by subject-specific faculty design teams and staff at The Stanford Center for Assessment (SCALE), EdTPA is a performance-based assessment that measures the skills and knowledge of the beginning special education teacher. The three edTPA tasks represent a cycle of effective teaching (planning, instruction, and assessment). Specifically, Task 1 - 3 focus on the teacher candidate's (TC) ability to plan, implement, and assess the impact of their teaching on student learning as measured by the development and implementation of a 3 -5 edTPA lesson sequence during their first 8-week student teaching placement. edTPA submissions include: lesson plans, instructional materials, work sample (written, audio, or video), completed daily assessment records and baseline data, evidence of feedback (written, audio, or video), and written reflections (commentaries). Task 1- 3 are scored using 15 rubrics.

Effective fall 2017, edTPA was adopted by all of our programs as a locally scored, performance-based assessment for our teacher candidates. Nationally scored edTPA data contained in this report is the result of our program's participation in a two-year state pilot of edTPA in collaboration with several of Connecticut's Educator Preparation Providers and the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE). Beginning fall 2018, the completion of a nationally submitted edTPA portfolio will be required for all initial licensure teacher candidates. In fall 2019 a passing score for the edTPA will be established by the CSBE for all TCs seeking initial teaching licensure.

	<p>Assessment Project Parts I and II. The Educational Assessment Project Parts I and II are an assignment in Level Two of our Master’s of Science Specialization for Initial Certification or Teachers Seeking Cross Endorsement Program. Part I of this assignment requires teacher candidates (TC) to administer and score the Woodcock- Johnson IV Test of Achievement. In addition to administering and scoring this standardized assessment, TCs are required to write an assessment summary, analyze data, and make recommendations. In Part II of this assignment, TCs create curriculum-based measures, an observation form, and develop interview questions for the parent/guardian, teacher, and student. This assignment is graded using a rubric to determine the candidate’s level of performance on the assignment.</p>
<p>4) Results: Since the last submitted report, list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The conclusion(s) drawn, noting strengths and weaknesses. b. The changes that were or will be made as a result of those conclusion(s). 	<p>Faculty from the Special Education & Interventions Department at CCSU meet bi-monthly throughout each Fall and Spring semester to discuss program and candidate issues, as well as state/national developments that will potentially have an impact on our program. During these meetings, faculty regularly analyze results from their assessments and plan changes to improve student learning. At the end of each semester, or early in the next semester, each data point is reviewed with regard to the status of the candidates’ responses, concerns the data might reflect, and changes that might be needed. These on-going meetings ensure the continued assessment and improvement of our program as well as the content knowledge, skills, and dispositions of our teacher candidates. School-wide adoption of assessment management software (Taskstream) coupled with Connecticut’s adoption of edTPA have increased our ability to effectively analyze assessment data for program improvement. Additional departmental faculty meetings are scheduled yearly to address more complex issues, such as program redesign and course sequencing. The department also established a Curriculum Committee that is charged with developing, reviewing and recommending departmental-level curricular revisions.</p> <p>Content Knowledge. Data from our department’s Content Knowledge assessments reflect that our teacher candidates have a strong command of content knowledge related to special education. An average teacher candidate pass rate of 97.5% on the PRAXIS II examination is a strong indicator of their content knowledge.</p> <p>Faculty routinely use student assessment data to improve their teaching and better prepare our teacher candidates. For example, Assessment 2 (Evidence-Based Case Study Assignment) was revised to better align with language used within the edTPA. Writing prompts from the edTPA’s Context for Learning were also integrated into this assignment. These changes have resulted in our candidates’ being better prepared to complete the edTPA during their student teaching semester. Data from this assessment</p>

indicates that 100% of our TCs continue to score at the acceptable level or better on this assessment.

Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions. Overall findings from assessments in this area indicate our teacher candidates possess strong professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills (Assessment 3. Lesson Plan Sequence; Assessment 4. Student Teaching Evaluation; and Assessment 6. Assessment Plan). Student data collected and analyzed from these three assessments indicate that our candidates have acquired the necessary professional and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be successful special education teachers.

Data indicates that our TCs continue to be proficient in designing and implementing evidence-based, specialized instruction for students with exceptionalities as evidenced by 98.4% of our TCs scoring at the acceptable level or better on Assessment 3 (Lesson Plan Sequence). Our EPP's adoption of the edTPA coupled with our department's participation in national pilots over the past three years have enabled faculty to make small but significant program changes to improve our TCs' ability to provide specific feedback to students to improve their learning.

Teacher candidates in our program are also competent in administering and analyzing informal curriculum-based and formal norm-referenced assessments as evidenced by the Assessment Project Parts I and II (Assessment 6). Recent revisions to this assessment were made to scaffold and assess each component of this assignment more thoroughly.

Our student assessment data indicates that 100% of our TCs scored at the target or acceptable levels on our Student Teaching Evaluation (Assessment 4). This is a strong indicator of our teacher candidates' professional and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions within the field of special education.

Faculty have also revised several rubrics pertaining to key assessments within our program to better align with CEC standards and focus more explicitly on candidate performance. Currently, faculty are working to align several courses in our program more directly with universal design for learning (UDL), edTPA, and CCSU's Central Teaching Practices.

Our EPP's recent acquisition of Watermark's Educator Disposition Assessment (EDA) will bring an increased focus on the intentional teaching, monitoring, and assessing our and TC's dispositions as they progress through our program and clinical experiences. This

	<p>assessment is being piloted within two courses within our department during the Spring 2019 semester with EPP-wide adoption in Fall 2019.</p> <p>Overall data analysis demonstrates that our program’s TCs have a positive impact on student learning. Our candidates’ edTPA scores have increased by over eight points over the past three years, from a mean score of 36.3 in Spring 2016 to a mean score of 45 in Spring 2018. Of note are our candidates’ consistently strong scores in Task 3 (Assessing Learning) which is strongly aligned to assessing our candidates’ impact on student learning, with an average rubric score of 3. These results are in large part due to our faculty’s ongoing efforts to align and embed course content focused on edTPA based on systematic and on-going analysis of edTPA data.</p>
<p>5) <u>Strengths:</u> What about your assessment process is working well?</p>	<p>Key assessments are evenly distributed across the program and are aligned with applicable standards. Sound rubrics for all key assessments that are designed to focus on candidates’ knowledge and skill development. Cloud-based data management system (Taskstream) Collaborative, data-driven faculty that routinely use data to inform their teaching.</p>
<p>6) <u>Improvements:</u> List ways in which your assessment process needs to be improved based on student data. (A brief summary of changes to assessment plan can be reported here)</p>	<p>Future planned program changes include the use of a module and accompanying writing template to ensure consistency in maintaining candidates’ skills pertaining to the development of measurable and observable lesson objectives across the entirety of their program, as well as consistently embedding assignments in our methods courses focused on video analysis and providing specific feedback focused on student strengths and needs. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is currently in the process of revising our professional standards. Once these are finalized our faculty will work to realign our course work and key assessments to these new standards.</p>