SUNY Potsdam

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan

Department/Program Name: Literacy Education/ Literacy Specialist Program

Date Submitted: Fall 2013

Academic Year this plan will take effect: 2013-2014

Department/Program Mission Statement:
SUNY Potsdam education programs are closely aligned with the unit’s conceptual framework. A Tradition of Excellence: Preparing Reflective and Creative Educators. The unit’s conceptual framework provides the graduate literacy specialist program with a structure for understanding how our specific learning outcomes, drawn from the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals (2010), link to the wider goals shared by the other programs of the unit. The graduate literacy specialist program recognizes that professional skills, knowledge, and teacher dispositions are developed in a program that seeks to encourage our candidates to become Well-educated Citizens, Reflective Practitioners, and Principled Educators.

Well-educated Citizen
In the graduate literacy specialist program, we strive to develop our candidates’ knowledge base in literacy education and their ability to apply that knowledge to the roles of a literacy specialist and literacy coach. We recognize that our candidates will be expected to be able to take on leadership roles in the areas of designing school-wide literacy curriculum and intervention programs, and assisting their colleagues’ development and effectiveness as literacy educators. To be successful as curriculum leaders, our candidates must build an extensive base of knowledge in literacy and literacy education that prepares them to be resourceful teachers capable of making keen and research-informed instructional decisions. Our candidates are expected to explore current research in our field and how it underpins literacy education principles, informs best practices and influences legislation.

Reflective Practitioner
Our candidates are expected to engage in reflection about their learning and teaching as a means for improving their professional competence throughout their teaching career. In our program, candidates study research-driven instruction and design, and most importantly, the high-value of and methods for linking assessment with instruction. Our candidates demonstrate an ability to use both formal and informal literacy assessments, including technology-based systems, to organize and manage instructional programs and/or assist individual learners.

Principled Educator
The graduate literacy specialist program insists that our candidates hold professional demeanor in the highest regard. Candidates must be responsible for their own actions, and work well in cooperative and collaborative professional activities. Our candidates must be comfortable with a degree of uncertainty, remaining open-minded so to be able to think through critical information before drawing conclusions, which is quite often required when working with struggling readers or collaborating in complex teaching
environments. In short, we expect our candidates to be highly competent, have professional integrity, and maintain a high degree of respect for others.

The Literacy Specialist Program allows candidates who hold general education certificates to obtain an additional Initial certification at one of the following levels:
- Literacy Specialist (Birth-Grade 6)
- Literacy Specialist (Grades 5-12)

The Literacy Specialist programs at the B-6 and 5-12 levels incorporate opportunities for candidates to gain knowledge of research and how that research shapes policies and methods in literacy education. Candidates all apply and develop new skills in literacy assessment, planning and intervention for diverse students in individualized and group settings.

Our program includes a course in literacy foundations where candidates learn about major theorists in the field and the seminal studies that have greatly impacted literacy education. A course in literacy research helps candidates explore current issues in literacy education while enabling them to become more critical consumers of the research.

Coursework in literacy assessment and intervention strategies provides our candidates with considerable knowledge and skills for using formal and informal assessments to inform instructional programs. The course in family/school/community collaboration introduces candidates to the importance of viewing literacy and literacy education through a wider lens. This course, coupled with a course in literacy and linguistically diverse learners, provides candidates with knowledge about how socio-cultural aspects underpin literacy and schooling. A course in literature based literacy instruction affords candidates the opportunity to plan whole class instruction, taking into consideration the diverse levels, interests and backgrounds of students in that whole class. The practica help assure that our candidates are able to use their knowledge and skills to impact student achievement, work collaboratively with colleagues, and experience the role of literacy leader.

Department Assessment Coordinator or Faculty Member Completing this Form:
Carolyn Stone
**Intended Student Learning Outcome #1**
Students will demonstrate content knowledge in literacy education.

**Connection to University/Dept Mission/The Potsdam Graduate**
To be well educated citizens as stated in our Conceptual Framework and successful as curriculum leaders, our candidates must build an extensive base of knowledge in literacy and literacy education that prepares them to be resourceful teachers capable of making keen and research-informed instructional decisions.

**Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)**

**Direct Assessment #1: Licensure Test: NYS Content Specialty Test – Literacy**

NYSTCE: Literacy Test Framework

**SUBAREA I- FOUNDATIONS OF LITERACY**

0001 Understand theories of literacy acquisition and development.
0002 Understand the relationships among reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
0003 Understand individual differences in literacy development.
0004 Understand formal and informal techniques for assessing literacy skills.
0005 Understand how to use and communicate the results of literacy assessments.

**SUBAREA II- READING INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT**

0006 Understand phonological and phonemic awareness.
0007 Understand the development of concepts of print.
0008 Understand the development and application of phonics skills.
0009 Understand a variety of word identification strategies.
0010 Understand the development of vocabulary knowledge skills.
0011 Understand reading comprehension skills and strategies.
0012 Understand reading skills associated with content-area literacy.
0013 Understand the development of effective study skills.
0014 Understand the role of oral and written language in the development of reading proficiency.
0015 Understand strategies for promoting the reading development of students with reading difficulties.

**SUBAREA III- THE ROLE OF THE LITERACY PROFESSIONAL**

0016 Understand how to organize effective literacy environments and to manage literacy programs.
0017 Understand curriculum development and instructional planning for literacy programs.
0018 Understand how to select and use diverse instructional materials to promote literacy development.
0019 Understand how to collaborate and communicate with colleagues, parents, caregivers, and members of the educational community to promote students' literacy development.
0020 Understand professional responsibilities of literacy professionals.

**SUBAREA IV- READING INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT: CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT**
The content to be addressed by the constructed-response assignment is described in
Subarea II, Objectives 06–15.

**Direct Assessment #2: Landmarks Project**
The project is aligned with IRA Standards 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 (Foundational Knowledge), and 6.1 and 6.4 (Professional Learning and Leadership). In this project, candidates survey the history of literacy and theoretical foundations of literacy education. They investigate major theories and empirical research that have comprised the foundations of reading and writing development, processes, and components. They explore the impact of literacy theory/research and policy on each other. Finally, they consider applications of foundational knowledge and theories of adult learning in the research on organizational change, professional development, and school culture.
**Intended Student Learning Outcome #2**
Students will demonstrate pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills and dispositions.

**Connection to University/Dept Mission/The Potsdam Graduate**
In our program, candidates study research-driven instruction and design, and most importantly, the high-value of and methods for linking assessment with instruction. Our candidates demonstrate an ability to use both formal and informal literacy assessments, including technology-based systems, to organize and manage instructional programs and/or assist individual learners.

**Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)**

**Direct Assessment #1: Literacy Interventions Project**
The project is aligned with IRA Standards 1.3 (Foundational Knowledge), 2.1 and 2.2 (Curriculum and Instruction), 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 (Assessment and Evaluation), 4.1 and 4.2 (Diversity), 5.3 and 5.4 (Literate Environment). In this project, candidates focus on the use of assessment data to devise meaningful and effective literacy instruction. Candidates consult assessment reports and conduct their own comprehensive evaluations of learners to create comprehensive intervention plans with emphasis on different grouping and classroom configuration options, a range of curriculum materials, approaches and methods for learners at differing stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Candidates use multiple data sources to develop a summary and intervention needs for a culturally and linguistically diverse student. Planning emphasizes the importance of promoting lifelong readers. Candidates’ plans, results, and implications are demonstrated, shared, and discussed with a variety of audiences.

**Direct Assessment #2: Practicum Portfolio**
The practicum portfolio is aligned with IRA Standards 1.3 (Foundational Knowledge), 3.3 and 3.4 (Assessment and Evaluation), 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 (Professional Learning and Leadership). In the portion of this portfolio, which focuses on assessment, diagnosis and evaluation, candidates administer comprehensive assessment and communicate that assessment information to various audiences (i.e. parents, administrators, school psychologists, clinical specialists, classroom teachers). Candidates use the assessment information of these individual struggling readers of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to plan and provide instruction. Candidates collaboratively plan with other literacy specialists and classroom teachers to implement appropriate instruction for these individual struggling readers and to assist classroom teachers in using assessment to plan instruction. Candidates write a report which uses assessment data to evaluate a school wide literacy program and provide recommendations for changes to strengthen a school program. For the portion of the portfolio which focuses on professional development, candidates assist a classroom teacher in planning and implementing a personal professional development plan. Candidates conduct a professional study group and plan, implement, and evaluate a professional development workshop.

**Direct Assessment #3: Assessment Profile Report**
This assessment is aligned with IRA Standards 1.1 and 1.3 (Foundational Knowledge), 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 (Assessment and Evaluation), and 4.1 (Diversity). In this report candidates focus on the meaningful use of assessment data to inform instructional decisions. Candidates conduct a comprehensive assessment (B-2/3-6 or 5-8/9-12) of learners’ literacy competencies of the major components of reading using a wide range of formal and informal assessments, tools, and practices. Learners are then placed along a developmental continuum and literacy proficiencies and differences are identified. An evaluative report is drafted that includes recommendations for supporting classroom teachers’ capacity to foster each learner’s literacy development, including forms of diversity and their importance in literacy development. To indicate their understanding of the importance of applying knowledge of research and practice, candidates will include a literature review of major theories and empirical research describing the cognitive, linguistic, motivational, and sociocultural foundations of reading and writing development. Assessment data and instructional plans are presented to classroom teacher colleagues for discussion, critical feedback, and reflection.

**Additional Consideration in our Assessment Process- Dispositions**

Candidate dispositions are assessed formally at the beginning of the program, in Foundations of Literacy. Dispositions are reassessed at the midpoint, in Literacy Interventions. Then, dispositions are finally assessed in the Practicum or Internship. These are selected points at which all candidate dispositions are formally assessed. Faculty members may also assess dispositions as needed throughout other experiences in the program. Our outlook is to help our candidates develop into the literacy leaders expected of the program and standards. To that end, our assessments must be used as formative tools, not only for summative data.

Following are steps program faculty members have taken to use information from assessments for improvement of candidate performance and the program. Faculty members teaching the Foundations of Literacy and Literacy Interventions courses evaluate candidate monitor and evaluate candidate dispositions throughout the course. Concerns are brought to the department for discussion and action if needed. Faculty members supervising the practicum and internship have used the dispositions rubric as a conference tool. To draw candidates’ attention to the professional dispositions and to provide more opportunity for candidates to meet or exceed expectations, candidates will conference with their professor and self-evaluate mid-way through the practicum or internship.
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**Intended Student Learning Outcome #3**
Teacher candidates will demonstrate effects on student learning.

**Connection to University/Dept Mission/The Potsdam Graduate**
In our program, candidates are expected to explore current research in our field and how it underpins literacy education principles, informs best practices and influences legislation. Candidates must be responsible for their own actions, and work well in cooperative and collaborative professional activities to impact student learning.

**Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)**

**Direct Assessment #1: Reflection on Effectiveness Project**
This project is aligned with IRA Standards 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 (Foundational Knowledge), 2.2 (Curriculum and Instruction), 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 (Assessment and Evaluation), 4.2 (Diversity), and 6.2 (Professional Learning and Leadership). Each candidate will develop a document reflecting on the effectiveness of the instruction provided during the graduate literacy clinical experience. This project will describe the candidate’s impact on student learning, referring to evidence collected in the literacy practicum or internship portfolio such as: in-depth and ongoing assessment, lesson plans, and samples of student work. Candidates will provide a theoretical context for their instructional focus, and will describe how professional dispositions and collaboration have impacted their success.

**Direct Assessment #2: Literature Review and Thematic Unit**
This project is aligned with IRA Standards 2.2 and 2.3 (Curriculum and Instruction), 4.2 (Diversity), and 5.1, 5.2, and 5.4 (Literate Environment). In this project candidates focus on the use of texts, technology-based information, and non-print materials that address diverse learners’ needs, interests, and abilities, including various cultural and linguistic backgrounds in a classroom setting. Candidates adopt a classroom, conduct a research-based literature review, and author a thematic literature unit with lessons that target students’ interests, reading and writing abilities, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

**Direct Assessment #3: Family Engagement and Community Partnerships Literacy Project**
This project is aligned with IRA Standards 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 (Diversity), and 6.4 (Professional Learning and Leadership). Each candidate will develop a project proposal that focuses on strengthening family-school-community partnerships to improve literacy teaching and learning. Each candidate will complete a project consisting of four elements: Compose a rationale developed from critically assessing local, state, and national policies regarding family engagement, literacy education, and diversity; Examine a case study of family engagement and community partnerships, comparing and contrasting with focus school; Construct a detailed plan of action and evaluation for the project; and Present the project for feedback and critique.