

Summary of Performance Data

Performance data on teacher candidates and graduates of the School of Teacher Education and Leadership are gathered from a variety of sources based on the Utah Effective Teaching Standards (UETS), which were derived from the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards. Data are collected for the program in general, for specific levels of the program, and on individual teacher candidates.

Table 1. Measurements used to evaluate teacher candidate performance and program success in the Elementary Education program.

Measurement	Teacher Candidates	Program
Course Evaluations		X
ACT/SAT/Praxis Core Scores	X	
Praxis Multiple Subjects	X	
Group Assessment	X	
Faculty Monitoring	X	
Grades in Courses (B- required in teacher ed. courses and an overall GPA of 3.0)	X	
Practica Evaluations/Levels 2-3	X	
Council on Teacher Education (including representative from local school districts)		X
Portfolios	X	
Student Teaching Evaluations	X	X

Course Evaluations

Each course in the School of Teacher Education and Leadership uses the IDEA Center Student Ratings of Instruction to assess effectiveness by focusing on learning and curricular objectives. The IDEA system gives students the opportunity to provide feedback on their progress in achieving specific learning objectives that are identified by the instructor, while adjusting for extraneous circumstances like class size. The IDEA system has a documented history of reliability and validity. Data from this evaluation are aggregated at the department, instructor, course, and class section level. Written comments from the teacher candidates are shared with the instructor.

Faculty Monitoring

Faculty monitor teacher candidates in the department at three levels. First, they are involved as evaluators for group interviews that are part of the program admission process. Second, they serve as chairs and members of the admissions committees and advisory boards to the separate levels that make admissions decisions, train adjunct faculty, and develop curricular improvements. Third, faculty members evaluate student progress through the levels in terms of grades as well as performance in their practicum experiences.

Fieldwork

Each level of the teacher education program requires a practicum experience of teacher candidates.

Level 1—Fieldwork requires 5 hours of public service, a minimum of 5 hours of classroom observation with an associated teacher interview, and the creation of an accompanying educational portfolio detailing the students' experiences and reflections designed specifically to further the students' understanding of the Utah Effective Teaching Standards and advance their ability to identify its effective implementation in the classroom through direct observation and self-reflection.

Level 2—Fieldwork is 100 hours of classroom observation and work as a teacher's aide. The assignments include a description of observations and experiences, with reflection. At this level, students work with students one-on-one and in small groups.

Level 3—Fieldwork is more than 140 hours of classroom participation, teaching alongside the mentor teacher, completing case studies, and teaching lessons based on requirements from methods courses. At this level, students are expected to teach some lessons to the whole class, as well as work with students one-on-one and in small groups.

Grades in Courses

Grades in courses are based primarily on performance indicators at the various levels as follows:

Level 1—Assessment is based on a combination of examinations concerning the UETS standards, readings from textbooks and other professional literature that focus on self and the teaching profession, the development of an advisement plan for completing the major, introduction to technology in education exemplified through materials available at the Young Educational Technology Center, and components of fieldwork described elsewhere. Each individual instructor may add other assignments according to personal teaching style, professional judgments, or teacher candidate interests.

Level 2—Assessment is based on the UETS, standards of professionalism, reflective reading of texts and other professional literature, collaborative work through group presentations and/or intraclass communications, self-evaluations of participation in class, examinations, research, and writing on assessment and learning theory, and components of fieldwork described elsewhere. Each individual instructor may add other assignments according to personal teaching styles, professional judgments, or teacher candidate needs/interests.

Level 3—Assessment is based on a combination of examinations, oral and written reflections on readings in mathematics, science, social studies, and literacy education; cooperative group work in science and

literacy education; learning material (e.g., lesson plans, learning centers) in mathematics, science, social studies, and literacy education; resource files in science and literacy education; case studies for remediation in mathematics and reading; technology integration in social studies education; and unit development in social studies education.

Practical Evaluations

Teacher candidates participate in a practicum experience at each level of the teacher education program. The teacher candidate is not evaluated at the completion of Level 1 because it focuses primarily on observation.

Success in the level 2 practicum is determined through self-evaluation and the evaluations by the mentor teacher and the university supervisor. The evaluation focuses on the UETS standards. At the end of level 2, the university supervisor makes a specific recommendation regarding the teacher candidate's continuance in the major.

Success in the level 3 practicum is determined through the observations by the mentor teacher and the university supervisor. Teacher candidates are required to complete teaching tasks assigned by the cooperating teachers (who are instructed not to have the teacher candidate overly involved in clerical work) and to implement lessons written during each methods course. The practicum is considered pass/fail and is not graded separately from the methods courses, but is considered a basic requirement to pass Level 3 successfully. Failure to pass the practicum results in exit from the program or taking an extra semester to complete a remediation practicum with specific goals for improvement. If one or more methods courses are not passed with the minimum B- grade, those courses are repeated along with practicum.

School District-Program Communication

The Council of Teacher Education holds monthly meetings that include representatives from Box Elder, Cache, and Logan School Districts. School district personnel are apprised of changes in the teacher education program and solicit advice and counsel on the program's structure and implementation and other shared concerns.

Portfolio

The development of a professional teaching portfolio is required of each teacher candidate in the elementary teacher education program. Candidates begin the portfolio during level 3 and complete it during student teaching.

Each teacher candidate must prepare a portfolio that provides evidence of the teacher candidate's knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to each of the UETS standards. The portfolio consists of at least one artifact in each standard and reflection statement about that artifact. The reflection must explain the relationship between the artifact and the standard. Portfolios are evaluated by university faculty. The primary purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate that the teacher candidate understands the UETS and can provide evidence of their ability to meet the standard.

Student Teaching Evaluations

The evaluation of student teachers is based on an extensive list of teaching competencies from the Utah Effective Teaching Standards. Teacher candidates are rated by the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher using a descriptive rubric with specific criteria for each outcome and level. A narrative evaluation and recommendation of ½ page is also provided by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. An evaluation is provided at the end of each 7-week block of student teaching. Teacher candidates complete two such blocks. Evaluations are based on development and implementation of curriculum assigned by the cooperating teacher, observations by the university supervisor and cooperating teacher, post-observation conferences, a reflective journal, and seminar participation. Both the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher are required to observe the student teacher formally at least twice each block. In addition, a triad conference is held with each student teacher each block.

Participation in External Evaluation Activities: *A Study of Novice Teacher Preparation in Utah*

Effective teaching is by far the greatest factor in student learning. Utah's ability to produce high-performing teachers depends largely on the quality of pre-service teacher education and initial support provided to novice teachers. But how do we go about developing high performing teachers? What factors predict high performance and what factors inhibit it?

A collaborative research project between Utah's teacher preparation institutions and the State Office of Education with the support of the Commissioner of Higher Education, was developed to assess the impact of educator preparation—both in colleges of education and in the first years of teaching—and to identify and share the most important factors in educator preparation that produce effective teachers.

Within the larger study, Dr. Sarah Clark, faculty member in the School of Teacher Education and Leadership, analyzed teacher self-efficacy of preservice and novice elementary school teachers at the end of their educator preparation program and again at the end of their first year of teaching. The sample (N = 123) for this study consisted of graduates of educator preparation programs throughout the state of Utah. A two-factor repeated measures ANOVA design was used to measure one between-subjects factor (Factor A) and one within-subjects factor (Factor B).

Factor A involved a comparison between two independent groups of prospective teachers based on the type of student teaching assignment, number of student teaching placements, and the number of literacy methods courses completed during their preparation program. The two levels of Factor B consisted of two different occasions upon which the Utah Teacher Efficacy Scale measured their perceptions of their preparedness. Results of this analysis indicated that preservice teachers in this study reported high teacher efficacy.

As these individuals became teachers, their teacher efficacy fell, indicating there is room for improvement in presenting the realities of teaching. Additionally, teacher preparation program characteristics such as the type of student teaching experience (student teaching or internship), and the number of student teaching placements (one or two) did not seem to provide statistically significant advantages over time. The number of literacy methods courses, however, did seem to provide statistically significant advantages in securing and maintaining high teacher efficacy over time in the areas of global and reading teacher efficacy.

This study also analyzed how school context variables affect teacher efficacy. Novice teachers (N = 136) were asked to rate the usefulness of professional development and the helpfulness of the mentoring support they received. Results of this analysis showed that professional development and mentoring support, if perceived as useful and helpful, had a positive and statistically significant correlation with teacher efficacy.

Clark, S. K. (2009). A comparative analysis of elementary education preservice and novice teachers' perceptions of preparedness and teacher efficacy (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/etd/427>