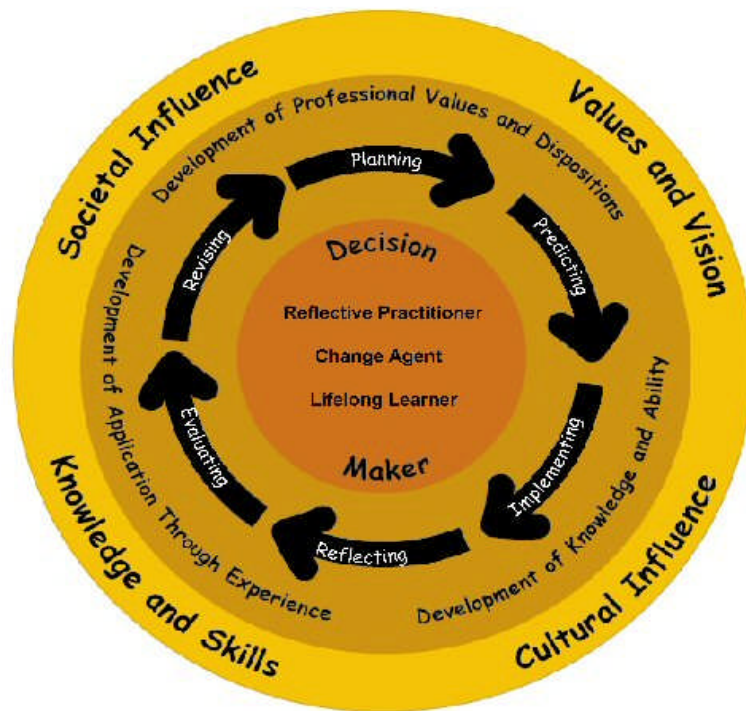


**ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**



**Educator as Decision Maker
Performance-Based Assessment System**

2007

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EDUCATOR AS DECISION MAKER PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Purposes and Assumptions

The College of Education (COE) faculty values assessment as an essential component of teaching and learning. Assessment is a critical element in the unit's continuous efforts to improve candidate performance and academic programs. In collaboration with representatives from the university and from the external professional community, the unit faculty has developed and implemented an assessment system that integrates the conceptual framework, "Educator as Decision Maker," and reflects state and professional standards. This system is designed to address the assessment needs of initial and advanced programs of study within the unit. With consideration of the American Association for Higher Education's "Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Learning" (1996, 2005), designers formulated three main purposes for the assessment system: (1) to enhance candidate learning and performance, (2) to improve program planning, development, and delivery, and (3) to improve unit operations.

The assessment system incorporates candidate proficiencies as outlined in professional, state, and institutional standards. It identifies transition points and describes key performance assessments for evaluating candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions at each transition point. The system also describes the design for collecting, analyzing, summarizing, and using assessment data. It addresses unit operations and explains how technology is used in the maintenance of the system.

The assessment system is grounded in the following key assumptions reflected in research and best practices concerning evaluation of curriculum, teaching, and learning (AAHE, 1996, 2005; Kauchak & Eggen, 2003; Darling-Hammond, et al, 2005):

1. An effective assessment system involves two key processes: measurement which includes all information gathered for assessment purposes and evaluation which refers to decisions made on the basis of the measurement information.
2. An effective assessment system functions to promote learning, to improve the effectiveness of instruction, and thereby to enhance the quality of the unit and of the institution.
3. An effective assessment system employs a diverse array of methods—including traditional testing, performance-based and other alternative assessments—used over time so as to reveal growth and change in the candidates' educational experience.
4. An effective assessment system addresses the questions: What expectations do we have of candidates entering our program? What do our candidates know and what can they do when they complete our program? What evidence serves to indicate the quality of their performance during matriculation in and upon completion of our program? How do we validate the accuracy, consistency, and fairness of the assessments?

5. An effective assessment system involves collaboration among representatives from across the educational community.

Development of the Assessment System

The unit's assessment system grew out of actions to review and revise an existing assessment plan. Following the April 1998 NCATE accreditation visit, the review and revision process was undertaken during Fall 1998 in an effort to address a weakness cited in the evaluation of programs in relation to the conceptual framework. This process continued through spring and fall of 1999 and spring of 2000. During this period, the dean, department chairs, and some faculty members began to research assessment models. In light of this research, we began to examine the SREP (Study, Revise, Evaluate, Practice) assessment plan being used by the unit .

In the fall of 2000, an assessment committee was appointed. This committee was later expanded to include representatives from the College of Arts and Sciences, the university administrative staff, and partners in P-12 schools, as well as faculty from the College of Education. The committee's first task was to continue the examination of SREP and to make a proposal about its efficacy as an assessment plan for the college. The committee's second task was to identify and describe the major assessments being used by the unit, to clarify the purpose of these assessments, and to provide direction in aligning the assessments with the conceptual framework and with state and professional standards. After we received the new NCATE standards, the committee determined that SREP would not satisfy NCATE standards. The conclusion reached was to develop a new plan for an assessment system for the unit that would be performance-based and specifically address the NCATE criteria. This new plan would draw upon the old one where feasible.

By the 2001-2002 academic year, the development of the new plan was underway. As work progressed, power point presentations were made at faculty meetings, and components of the plan were disseminated to the unit faculty and stakeholders for feedback. Recommendations and revisions were discussed and approved. The Teacher Education Assessment and Intervention Committee (TEAIC) approved the rudiments of the plan. The TEAIC is responsible for approving actions related to assessment of the teacher education program. This committee establishes admission criteria for the teacher education program and monitors admission decisions to ensure that assessment standards are followed. It is made up of administrators and staff in the College of Education and representatives from the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Music, the School of Graduate Studies, and the Instructional Development Center.

The unit underwent an accreditation review by NCATE in November of 2003. At this time, the system was in the initial stages of implementation, and the target date for full implementation was 2004-2005. The results of this first full implementation of the system were to be used for revision purposes. Revisions would include revisiting assessment instruments, policies, and processes in response to candidate performance data and professional standards and updating/modifying the assessment technology. The unit continues to revise and refine its assessment system guided by input from various stakeholders, by state and professional standards, and by university policies relating to evaluation measures and procedures.

Description of the Assessment System

Relationship of the Assessment System to the Conceptual Framework

The college faculty believes in systematic and ongoing assessment of candidates, programs, and the professional education unit. The assessment system describes the systematic approach employed by the college in collecting, analyzing, and using data in these three major areas. The college's assessment system is driven by and fully integrates the conceptual framework, "Educator as Decision Maker." The levels of assessment coincide with the components of the conceptual framework model and encompass the transition points for assessment of candidate proficiencies.

(1) Levels and Transition Points

Tables 1 and 2 describe the assessment levels for professional education candidates. Critical transition points for assessment are identified at each level. The major assessments are indicated at each transition point for determining candidates' readiness for proceeding to the next level. Table 1 presents the information for initial certification candidates (Class B and Alternative A Masters), and Table 2 for candidates in advanced programs (traditional Masters, Ed.S., and Ed. D.). For candidates whose assessments show that they are not ready to proceed to the next level, a plan of action is developed which includes diagnostic measures, remediation, and re-taking of assessments and/or re-evaluation of criteria. This plan of action is developed and implemented by the relevant department chair, faculty, advisor, candidate, and the Director of the Teacher Education Center.

The Teacher Education Center is the primary resource available to assist candidates in enhancing their knowledge, skills, and abilities and in strengthening areas of weakness. The center provides diagnostic testing and tutoring for test preparation; computer assisted instruction in a variety of skills; instruction in portfolio preparation, interview techniques, lesson planning, and micro-teaching; mock screenings for speech and dispositions; remediation when and where needed, and referrals for services as necessary. Other resources for referrals include the tutorial centers in University College: the Reading Center, the Writing Center, the Mathematics and Science Tutorial Center, and the Geography and Humanities Tutorial Center.

Level 1 assessments are representative of the outer circle of the conceptual framework model, the **prior context**. Candidates bring with them to the university and to the unit all of their prior knowledge, skills and abilities, values and vision, societal influences, diversity issues, and cultural influences. This level is referred to as the foundation upon which the educational experience is based. The **first transition point** for assessment occurs at this level. For initial certification candidates, assessments done at this level are designed to ensure adequate preparation for admission to and matriculation in the professional education curricula. At Level 1, advanced degree candidates are screened for admission to candidacy in the graduate school.

Level 2 and Level 3 assessments are representative of the **interactive context and the decision making cycle** in the conceptual framework model. Through interactions with the curricula, faculty, and other professionals, the candidates learn, develop, and refine knowledge, skills, abilities, professional values and dispositions in subject content and professional studies courses and in field and clinical experiences. In addition, candidates experience and learn decision

making through a continuous process of planning, predicting, implementing, reflecting, evaluating, and revising. These two levels encompass **transition points #2 and #3**. Assessments conducted at these levels are designed to check the candidates' (both initial and advanced) content knowledge, performance abilities, and professional dispositions prior to and following the clinical practice experience. A primary purpose is to determine how successfully candidates are able to blend theory and practice in becoming effective classroom teachers and professional educators.

Level 4 and Level 5 assessments are representative of the inner circle of the model. The ultimate goal of the unit is to produce the "Educator as Decision Maker" (both initial and advanced candidates). At this level, the professional educator is a **reflective practitioner**, a **change agent**, and a **lifelong learner** continuously expanding and refining his/her decision making abilities as a result of matriculating through the unit's curriculum. **Transition point #4** occurs at these levels. Assessments at these levels are administered at the time of graduation and after graduation when the candidates have entered their professional careers.

The systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of assessment data at the various levels and transition points serve to evaluate candidate performance and program and unit effectiveness and lead to recommendations for improvements. Decisions made and enforced through program and unit assessments are designed to support and facilitate the candidates' learning and growth in becoming informed and responsible decision makers who exhibit the characteristics of reflective practitioners, change agents, and lifelong learners (as outlined in the outcomes in the [conceptual framework document](#)).

Table 1: Initial TEP Program Candidate Assessment Levels, Transition Points, Criteria

	Class B Programs	Alternative A Masters Programs
Level 1: Prior Context	EDU 100 Preparation for Admission to TEP, Minimum grade of C Dispositions Assessment APTT I – Basic Skills, passing score 24 – 48 credit hours Minimum cumulative GPA 2.5 EDU 300 Foundations of Education, Minimum grade of C Application for admission to TEP	Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution Official transcripts Two letters of recommendation Minimum cumulative GPA 2.5 GRE or MAT score, GWCT 39 (or more) credit hours undergraduate teaching field EDU 500 Preparation for Admission to TEP, Minimum grade of C 12 credit hours graduate courses APTT I – Basic Skills, passing score Dispositions Assessment Application for admission to Candidacy (TEP)
Transition Point 1	Admission to Teacher Education Program	Admission to Candidacy (TEP)
Level 2: Interactive Context and Decision Making Context	APTT II – Praxis, passing score Dispositions Assessments Complete all coursework with GPA – 2.5 cumulative, teaching field and professional studies Complete application for admission to Clinical Practice	APTT II – Praxis, passing score Dispositions Assessments Complete all coursework with GPA – 3.0 cumulative, teaching field and professional studies Complete application for admission to Clinical Practice
Transition Point 2	Admission to Clinical Practice	Admission to Clinical Practice
Level 3: Interactive and Decision Making Contexts	Clinical Practice Evaluations Dispositions Assessments Portfolio COE Exit Exam Minimum cumulative GPA 2.5	Clinical Practice Evaluations Dispositions Assessments Portfolio Comprehensive Exam Minimum cumulative GPA 3.0
Transition Point 3	Exit Clinical Practice	Exit Clinical Practice
Level 4: Outcomes Context	Graduation Exit Survey Minimum cumulative GPA 2.5 Certification Application	Graduation Exit Survey Minimum cumulative GPA 3.0 Certification Application
Transition Point 4	Program Completion (Graduation)	Program Completion (Graduation)
Level 5 Outcomes Context	Alumni Surveys Employers Surveys BTAP PEPE	Alumni Surveys Employers Surveys BTAP PEPE

Table 2: Advanced Program Candidate Assessment Levels, Transition Points, Criteria

	MED, Ed.S. Programs	Ed. D. Program
Level 1: Prior Context	Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution Official transcripts Two letters of recommendation Minimum cumulative GPA 2.5 GRE or MAT score, GWCT Verification of Certification 12 credit hours graduate courses Complete application for admission to Candidacy Dispositions Assessment	Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution Official transcripts Two letters of recommendation Minimum cumulative GPA 3.0 undergraduate 3.50 graduate GRE (minimum 1000)or MAT (minimum 50) GWCT – Writing Sample Interview (dispositions included) Vita 12 credit hours graduate courses Complete application for admission to Candidacy
Transition Point 1	Admission to Candidacy	Admission to Candidacy
Level 2: Interactive Context And Decision-Making Context	Complete all coursework with minimum cumulative GPA 3.00 – A 3.25 – AA 3.25 – Ed.S. Praxis II (as applicable)	27 credit hours coursework Complete all coursework with minimum cumulative GPA 3.50 Minimum grade of B in each course Dispositions Assessment
Transition Point 2	Admission to Clinical Practice (or equivalent)	Admission to Clinical Practice
Level 3: Interactive and Decision Making Contexts	Complete minimum 21 grad. credits Cumulative GPA: 3.00 – A 3.25 – AA 3.25 – Ed.S. Clinical Practice Evaluations (as applicable) Praxis II – passing score (as applicable) Application for Comprehensive Exam Thesis Proposal Defense or Field Study	Clinical Practice Evaluations Research Portfolio Dissertation Proposal Defense Comprehensive Examination
Transition Point 3	Exit Clinical Practice (if applicable)	Exit Clinical Practice
Level 4: Outcomes Context	Graduation Exit Survey Minimum required cumulative GPA 3.0 Certification Application (if applicable) Comprehensive Exam Field Study (AA) Thesis (Ed.S)	Graduation Exit Survey Minimum required cumulative GPA 3.50 Dissertation
Transition Point 4	Program Completion (Graduation)	Program Completion (Graduation)
Level 5: Outcomes Context	Alumni Surveys Employers Surveys PEPE	Alumni Surveys Employers Surveys PEPE

(2) Design for the Assessment Process

The assessment process follows the decision making cycle described in the conceptual framework model. The design in Figure 1 illustrates the process for candidates, and the design in Figure 2 for programs and the unit. The **planning** phase includes involvement of the educational community in needs assessment based on education standards and policies, unit and institutional reviews and evaluations, and societal changes and issues impacting education. In the **predicting** phase, anticipated outcomes and goals are identified and measurement strategies are suggested. The COE Assessment Committee/NCATE Standard 2, the Teacher Education Assessment and Intervention Committee (TEAIC), and the COE External Advisory Committee(s) function at these phases to initiate the assessment activities. Instruments and methods of assessment are then (created/revised if necessary) employed in **implementing** data collection and analysis at critical points. Data collection and analysis procedures are conducted for candidate performance and for program/unit assessment. Transition points included in the Figure 1 design for candidate assessment are described in detail in Tables 1 and 2 above. Table 3, following figure 2, elaborates details about the data collection points indicated in the Figure 2 design for programs/units.

Various units within the university are responsible for **implementing** the assessment process. For example, the University Testing Center is responsible for those assessments required university-wide such as the Student Course Evaluation. The College of Education is responsible for candidate dispositions assessments, portfolios, internship evaluations, unit alumni and employer surveys, and others. The Office of Institutional Research administers graduation exit surveys. The other units transmit data results to the College of Education. To interpret and summarize the data for useful decision making requires **reflecting** on the data results by the relevant departments and committees in the college. In the **evaluating** phase, the responsible departments and committees make decisions and formulate recommendations for action based on the data findings. This phase identifies modifications necessary for program revisions and unit improvements to enhance candidate performance. Finally, actions are taken in the **revising** phase to enforce changes dictated by the evaluation decisions and recommendations. And the process begins all over again. This assessment process is ongoing and requires continuous feedback and monitoring.

Figure 1: THE COE ASSESSMENT PROCESS CANDIDATES

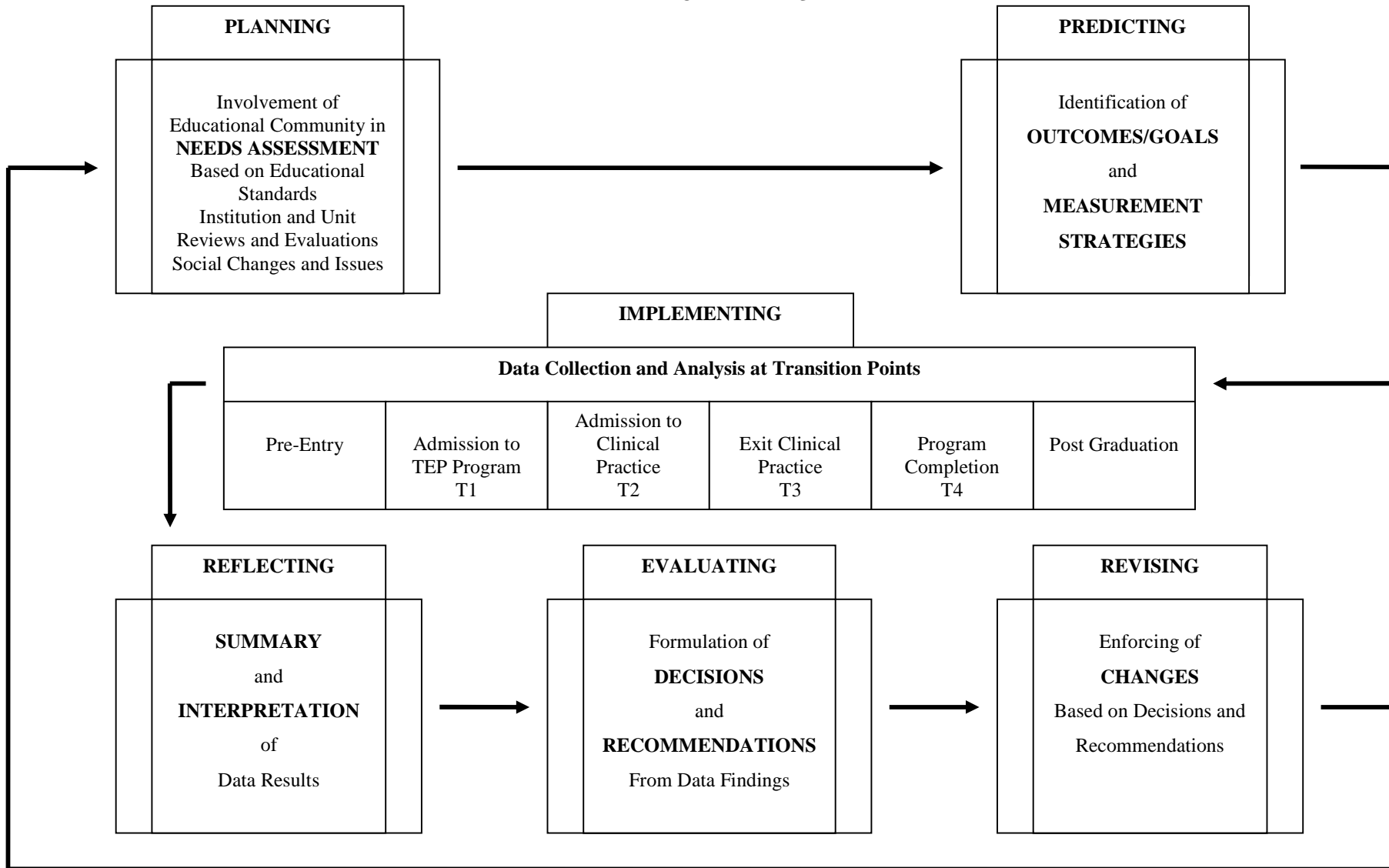


Figure 2: THE COE ASSESSMENT PROCESS PROGRAMS/UNIT

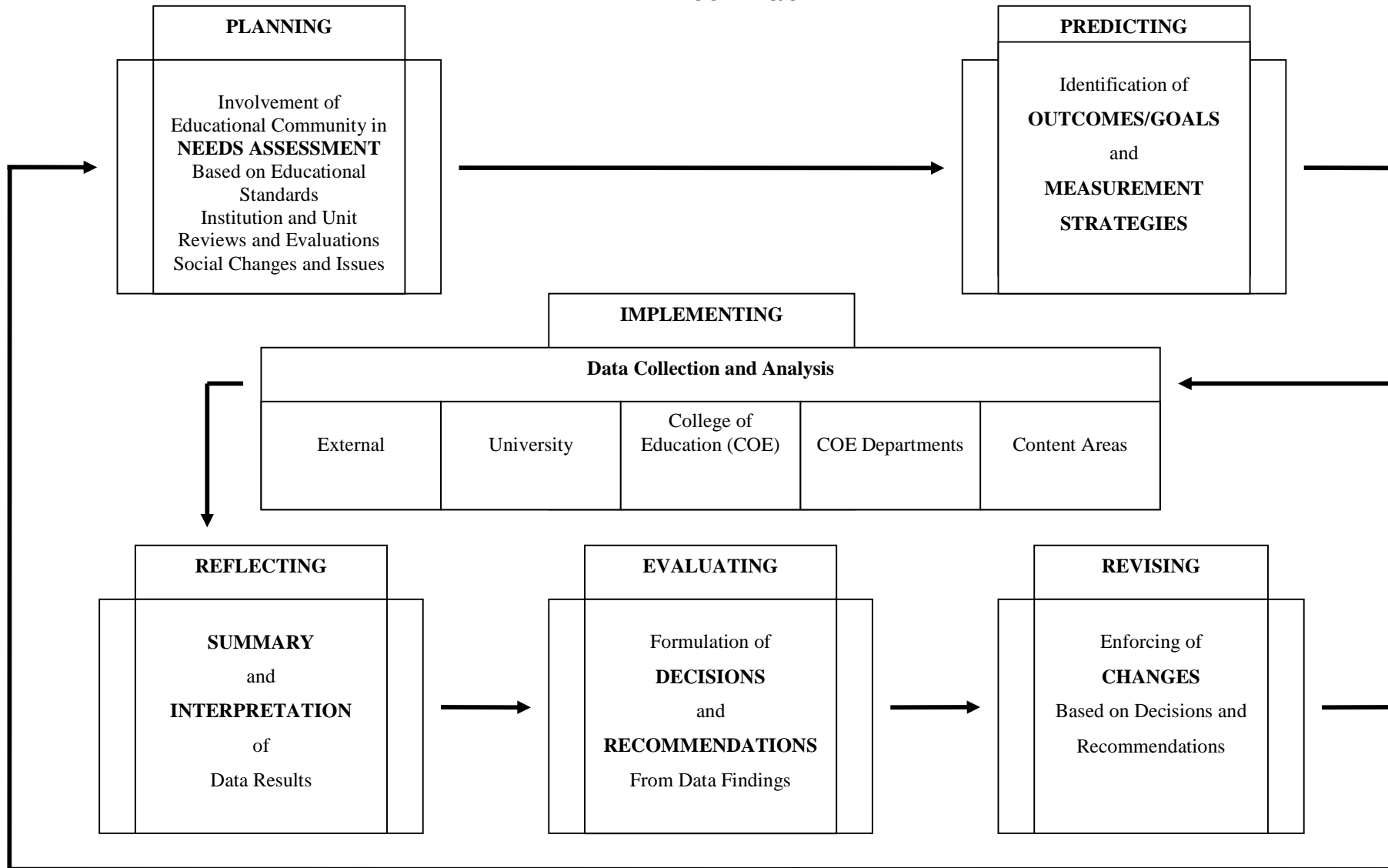


Table 3: Points of Program/Unit Assessment

External	University	College	Departments	Content Areas (Other Colleges)
SACS	Mission/Goals	Mission/Goals	Mission/Goals	Syllabi aligned with Standards
NCATE	Quality Assurance Plan	Conceptual Framework	Syllabi Alignment with CF and Standards	Candidate Work Samples
ALSDE	Faculty Evaluation Plan	ACE Student Database	Departmental Assessment Plans	Collaboration
ACHE	Student Instructional Reports/Student Course Evaluation	Professional Studies Standards Assessment	Professional Development Plans	
	Office of Institutional Research Surveys	Cooperating Teachers Evaluations	Program Advisory Councils	
	Strategic Plan and Evaluation	COE Alumni and Employer Surveys	Collaboration	
		Diversity Studies		
		External Advisory Committees		

Descriptions of Key Unit Assessments

In preparation for the NCATE 2003 review, an early task confronting the unit in the development of the new performance-based assessment plan was to identify and examine all major assessments being used by the college, revise them as needed to ensure alignment with standards and incorporation of NCATE 2000 criteria. The next task was to implement the revised assessments, collect data samples and review assessments to determine whether or not they are valid indicators of what our candidates know and are able to do and of the effectiveness of our programs and unit operations. These tasks proved to be much more daunting than we had at first anticipated; therefore, the process of reviewing, revising, and refining assessment instruments, policies, and procedures has been and continues to be an ongoing and dynamic process.

Key assessments employed by the college target candidate qualifications and performance and unit programs and operations. Multiple forms of assessment are used, including both externally and internally developed instruments. The assessments are comprehensive measures and are well-integrated throughout the unit’s professional education program. Table 4 lists the key internal and external unit assessments for initial and advanced programs. Table 5 identifies the assessments used by the unit for candidate performance and for programs/unit. Descriptions of the assessments follow the tables.

**Table 4: Key Unit Assessments for Initial and Advanced Programs
Internal and External Assessments**

INITIAL PROGRAMS	ADVANCED PROGRAMS
Internal Assessments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dispositions Assessments ▪ Professional Portfolio ▪ Professional Studies Standards Assessment (PSSA) ▪ Internship PEPE ▪ Cooperating Teachers Program Survey ▪ COE Exit Exam ▪ Student Course Evaluation ▪ Graduation Exit Survey ▪ Beginning Teachers Assistance Program (BTAP) Survey ▪ COE Alumni Satisfaction Survey ▪ COE Employer Satisfaction Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dispositions Assessments ▪ Graduate Writing Competency Test (GWCT) ▪ Professional Portfolio ▪ Professional Studies Standards Assessment (PSSA) ▪ Internship Evaluations ▪ Graduate Comprehensive Exam ▪ Student Course Evaluation ▪ Graduation Exit Survey ▪ COE Alumni Satisfaction Survey ▪ COE Employer Satisfaction Survey
External Assessments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ APTTP I: Basic Skills Assessments ▪ APTTP II: Praxis II: Subject Matter Assessments ▪ ALSDE Professional Education Personnel Evaluation (PEPE) ▪ ALSDE Satisfaction Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GRE/MAT ▪ Praxis II: Subject Matter Assessments (Instructional Support Personnel only) ▪ ALSDE Satisfaction Surveys

**Table 5: Key Unit Assessments for Initial and Advanced Programs
Candidate Performance and Program/Unit Assessments**

INITIAL PROGRAMS	ADVANCED PROGRAMS
Candidate Performance Assessments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dispositions Assessments ▪ APTTP I – Basic Skills ▪ Professional Portfolio ▪ Professional Studies Standards Assessment (PSSA) ▪ Praxis II (Subject Matter) ▪ Internship PEPE ▪ COE Exit Exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dispositions Assessments ▪ GWCT/GRE/MAT ▪ Professional Portfolio ▪ Professional Studies Standards Assessment (PSSA) ▪ Praxis II (ISP only) ▪ Internship Evaluations ▪ Graduate Comprehensive Exam
Program/Unit Assessments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperating Teachers Program Survey ▪ Student Course Evaluation ▪ Graduation Exit Survey ▪ Beginning Teachers Assistance Program (BTAP) Survey ▪ COE Alumni Satisfaction Survey ▪ COE Employer Satisfaction Survey ▪ ALSDE Report Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student Course Evaluation ▪ Graduation Exit Survey ▪ COE Alumni Satisfaction Survey ▪ COE Employer Satisfaction Survey ▪ ALSDE Report Card

1. Internal Assessments. Internal Assessments are those developed and administered by the college or by another unit within the university. These assessments include the following:

- Dispositions Assessments

Dispositions assessments occur across all programs in the unit. In initial programs, assessment of dispositions begins in EDU 100 for Class B candidates and EDU 500 for Alternative A Masters candidates, prior to the candidates' admission to teacher education (transition point 1). Dispositions are assessed again for admission to clinical practice (transition point 2) and for exit from clinical practice (transition point 3). In addition, course instructors are asked to evaluate the dispositions of candidates in their classes as a means of obtaining a global assessment for the college. A common instrument, reflecting the dispositions identified in the conceptual framework, is used in all dispositions assessments. Assessment of dispositions is also embedded in other evaluation measures.

- Professional Portfolio

The portfolio is an across-the-program and a course-based assessment. It is used for both formative and summative evaluations. Portfolio building is done across several courses in individual programs using the electronic portfolio feature of LiveText.

For initial teacher education programs, development of the professional portfolio begins early in the candidates' program of study, usually in EDU 100/500 and EDU 300 with the construction of a resume and the writing of a philosophy of education. Artifacts are added as instructors in the courses require. Completion of the professional portfolio occurs during the internship where artifacts specific to the internship are included and a binder-type portfolio is assembled by each candidate with selected artifacts from the e-portfolio and the internship requirements. Artifacts in the portfolio are divided into proficiency areas that are aligned with institutional, state, and professional standards. The final product is evaluated by the university supervisor, the director of laboratory experiences, and the advisor using a standard rubric.

Development of the professional portfolio reflects candidates' engagement in the college's decision making process which culminates in the internship experience where knowledge and practice must connect with student learning and where all of the **components of the decision making process** come into play. Through unit and lesson plans, candidates engage in **planning** instruction and **predicting** outcomes. Pre-assessments enable them to evaluate their students and make the further predictions necessary to modify or adapt instructional plans before actually teaching. **Implementing** occurs with the delivering of instruction as planned and conducting post-assessment activities to measure actual outcomes. Analyzing assessment data and **reflecting** on the results of instruction as evidenced by student gains in learning involves candidates in **evaluating** their own performance and **revising** as necessary.

Advanced programs in Instructional Support use the e-portfolio feature of LiveText, and the doctoral program requires a research portfolio.

- Professional Studies Standards Assessment (PSSA)

The professional studies standards assessment is an assessment of candidate performance on the ALSDE professional studies standards. The standards are entered onto the ACE Database. Teachers evaluate candidates' performance on standards taught in courses during a semester.

Standards addressed in a course are identified in the syllabus of the course and aligned with course objectives and with relevant unit proficiencies outlined in the conceptual framework. Candidates in a course complete assignments designed to demonstrate achievement of an objective (thus of the ALSDE standard and the unit proficiency aligned with the objective), and the teacher of the course evaluates the candidate on the standard by entering a score for the standard in the ACE Database. A standard may be taught and assessed in more than one course; therefore, a candidate's performance on a standard would be evaluated more than once by more than one teacher.

The ACE Database allows viewing of candidate performance on the PSSA in multiple ways: by average scores for individual candidates and by each candidate's performance on each standard; by average scores on a standard across all programs, in each program area, in each course and each section of a course, and by majors. Assessments are made for undergraduates and graduates, for candidates in initial and advanced programs.

This assessment was first used in fall 2006 and in spring 2007. It provides a measure of candidate performance on standards and is used to identify areas of strength and weakness in courses and instruction. As assessments and procedures are further refined, it may be used to monitor each candidate's progress in mastering professional studies standards through the transition points; that is, it may be used, along with other criteria, to determine whether or not a candidate is ready to move from one transition point to the next.

- Field and Internship Evaluations

Internship PEPE: The Professional Education Personnel Evaluation (PEPE) is a school-based evaluation conducted by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). PEPE standards and format have been integrated into courses, and a modified PEPE is a key internship assessment in COE initial teacher education programs and in some advanced programs. Both initial and advanced programs use field observation assessments and specialty areas internship assessments specific to their programs.

- COE Exit Examination

Teacher candidates are required to complete a written exam on their philosophy of education. The exam is administered by the ASU Testing Center at mid-term of the candidate's internship. Candidates who fail the exam are provided remediation in the Teacher Education Center and must be approved for a re-take by the director, and must pass the exam prior to their expected exit date.

- Graduate Writing Competency Test (GWCT)

The GWCT is a test of writing proficiency required for admission to the graduate school and to COE advanced professional education programs.

- Graduate Comprehensive Examination

The Graduate Comprehensive Examination is required of all candidates prior to completing graduate degrees. Program areas provide study guides and tutorials for the examination as needed.

- Cooperating Teacher's Program Evaluation

Cooperating teachers in the P-12 schools where teacher candidates do their internships are asked to complete an assessment of the teacher preparation program by evaluating the degree of preparation they believe the teacher candidates possess. They are also asked to provide ideas, suggestions, comments which will assist the unit in improving the program. This is used as a program evaluation and is not a component of the candidate's assessment for grading purposes.

- Beginning Teachers Assistance Program (BTAP)

BTAP is an assessment targeting P-12 teacher education graduates who have been certified and placed in teaching positions. The assessment is adapted from the ALSDE professional studies standards common to all teaching fields. It was first administered in spring 2006 and again in spring 2007. Results from these two surveys will be used to create a baseline study of the areas of greatest need identified by program completers for high quality teaching. The purpose is to assist non-tenured teachers during their first three years in the classroom in such areas as preparing and delivering effective instruction, managing the classroom environment, and evaluating student performance.

- COE Alumni Satisfaction Survey and COE Employer Satisfaction Survey

These surveys were developed to supplement the ALSDE surveys in the Program Performance Profile. The COE surveys address the unit's conceptual framework proficiency outcomes and dispositions and replace prior follow up surveys. They were first administered spring 2007.

- Student Course Evaluation

The Student Course Evaluation is developed and administered by the university's Instructional Development Center (IDC). It is an assessment by students in all classes of their courses and instructors. The IDC disseminates a college's unit, department, faculty, and course evaluation results to that individual college as well as a general compilation of results for all colleges for comparison purposes.

- Graduation Exit Survey

The Graduation Exit Survey is administered to graduates at the point of graduation by the university's Office of Institutional Research. The survey identifies respondents by college.

2. External Assessments. External assessments are those developed and administered by agencies outside of the university. These assessments include the following:

- Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or Millers Analogy Test (MAT)

A score on the GRE or MAT is required for admission to the Graduate School.

- Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) Assessments (Report Card)

External assessments are conducted by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). The ALSDE reports assessment results annually in the Alabama State Department of Education Teacher Preparation Program Performance Profile. The report includes the following assessments of performance for teacher education programs across the state:

Alabama Prospective Teacher Testing Program (APTTP):

ACT Work Keys System (three basic skills assessments)

ETS Praxis II (subject-matter tests)

Alabama State Department of Education Teacher Preparation Program Performance Profile (The ALSDE has temporarily suspended these assessments for revisions.):

Professional Education Personnel Evaluation (PEPE)

Local School System's Satisfaction with Teacher

Graduate Satisfaction with Program
P-12 Clinical/Field Faculty Satisfaction with Program

Assessments: Incorporation of Standards

The COE’s conceptual framework outlines the proficiencies expected of candidates and aligns them with state and professional standards. The proficiencies are stated as the conceptual framework outcomes; each outcome is further detailed with specific indicators. The outcomes and indicators form the unit standards which are the focus of the assessment system. The instruments used by the unit to evaluate candidate proficiency incorporate INTASC, NCATE, NBPTS, ALSDE, and COE professional education standards. These standards focus generally on competence in the areas of knowledge, skills, dispositions, and student learning. Table 6 indicates the areas of the standards that unit assessments of candidate performance address.

Table 6: Assessments of Candidate Performance--Alignment with Areas of Standards

AREAS FOR STANDARDS	Disposi- tions	Portfolio	PSSA	Intern PEPE	TEP Exit Exam	Grad. Compre. Exam	APTTP I & II
Knowledge		X	X	X	X	X	X
Skills		X	X	X	X	X	X
Dispositions	X	X	X	X			
Student Learning		X	X	X			

In addition to the across-the-program assessments, a variety of course-based assessments are used in both initial and advanced programs to evaluate the candidates’ pedagogical, content, and professional knowledge, abilities, and dispositions. These are aligned with standards and tied to course objectives. The assessments are indicated in course syllabi and include mid-term and final examinations, tests, group and individual presentations, essays, lesson and unit plans, case studies, policy studies, critiques, micro-teaching scenarios, and others. Rubrics, checklists, scoring and rating scales are among the tools used to assess candidate performance on these evaluations. Candidate performance in courses is reflected in the assessment system by the minimum grade for passing courses, by required GPAs, and by satisfactory completion of the designated credit hours.

Systematic, standards-based assessment is used to measure candidate performance. As indicated, the college's programs are guided by state and professional standards. These include ALSDE, NCATE, INTASC, and NBPTS. These standards have been aligned with the outcomes in the conceptual framework. Conceptual framework outcomes and the standards have been aligned with course objectives, activities, and assessments in the course syllabi to ensure that candidates gain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of effective professional educators. The quality assurance procedure enforced by the college and the university ensures that syllabi reflect these alignments. It includes a system for reviewing and approving course syllabi to verify that objectives, assessments, criteria for passing the course, and grading practices match. Candidates are evaluated in each course based on their mastery of the stated measurable learning objectives, and they must meet stated mastery criteria related to course objectives and requirements to pass the course. In COE courses, objectives and other criteria clearly delineate proficiency expectations for candidates. These objectives are aligned with standards. Thus, when the objectives are achieved, the standards are met.

Assessments As Predictors of Candidate Success

Assessments at each transition point in the COE assessment system are designed to serve as predictors of candidate success in the professional education program. Assessments required for admission to the program areas serve as screening tools to assure entry of candidates who possess certain levels of knowledge and skills and represent promise as professional educators. Data from multiple assessments across courses and programs are collected and analyzed over a period of time at the points of continuation and program completion. The data results reflect increases in average score ratings across all assessments and thereby indicate that assessments are viable measures of candidate success. Supporting this contention also are the results from follow-up assessments. Data results are presented in exhibit room documents.

Eliminating Sources of Bias in Performance Assessments and Establishing Accuracy, Consistency, and Fairness of Assessment Procedures

The first phase in eliminating bias in performance assessments and establishing accuracy, consistency, and fairness of assessment procedures is to ensure that assessments are aligned with curriculum, instruction, and standards. Such alignment means that these elements work together to establish common learning for all candidates, to provide consistent implications for improving instruction, and to assure use of assessment practices that are consistent and fair to all candidates. The quality assurance process employed by the university's Instructional Development Center (IDC) assists the unit in this first phase. As described above, the IDC follows designated guidelines in reviewing and approving all syllabi to verify that certain components are included and are in alignment.

Secondly, key assessments of candidate performance are grounded in state standards which have been aligned with the unit's conceptual framework proficiencies. The standards-based aspect and the manner in which these ALSDE derived assessments are used decrease opportunities for bias and promote fairness and consistency. The ALSDE's standards-based Professional Education Personnel Evaluation (PEPE) is the assessment for performance in the teacher education internship. Competencies for this evaluation are accessible to candidates in courses, in the internship handbook, and are reviewed with candidates in workshops and seminars. Thus, in addition to being standards-based, the assessment is done on knowledge and skills that candidates are aware of and have an opportunity to learn. This assessment also has a formative and a summative feature and is completed and reviewed with the candidate by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. Sessions are held to acquaint these evaluators with the content and procedures for this assessment.

The ALSDE's professional studies standards have been formatted as an assessment on the ACE Database and used by course instructors to evaluate candidate performance on common and program specific standards addressed in their courses. A standard may be taught and assessed in more than one course; therefore, a candidate's performance on a standard is evaluated more than once by more than one instructor. This assessment will be used to monitor candidate performance through transition points once studies have been completed to establish performance guidelines and levels for each transition point. Studies are also planned to evaluate the consistency of ratings for a candidate across several courses taught by different instructors. Future studies will also establish comparative data for looking at the consistency of candidate performance on similar proficiencies measured by this and other assessment instruments.

For assessments that are rated by faculty teams, inter-rater reliability workshops are conducted to prepare faculty. The portfolio, COE exit exam, and the graduate comprehensive exam are examples. In addition to the general workshop, raters engage in a brief training prior to each grading session to standardize the process for that session. Training involves review of the rubric, the rating scale, and the procedure to assure a consensus of understanding. It also involves a short trial-run as a test of rater agreement for the session.

We are still developing and conducting thorough studies to establish absence of bias and to assure fairness, accuracy, and consistency of the performance assessment procedures. This is an ever-evolving, continuous process for the unit.

General University and Other Assessment Measures

In addition to the assessments described in the above, the College of Education, like all other units within the university, participates in general university evaluation plans and procedures. For the academic units, a university-wide quality assurance procedure exists which includes a system for reviewing and approving course syllabi. This system is managed by the Instructional Development Center (IDC). Syllabi review and approval guidelines are described in the document, *ASU Quality Assurance Plan: Requirements for Course Syllabi*.

The quality assurance procedure also embraces the faculty evaluation plan, *A System of Faculty Evaluation for the Improvement of Faculty Performance*. This plan is designed to evaluate the teaching effectiveness of individual faculty members through an annual performance review. At the beginning of the academic year, each faculty member submits a plan for evaluation of professional activities in four areas: teaching, academic citizenship, research and creativity, and community service. Faculty performance in these areas is assessed by department chair observations, peer evaluations, student evaluation, and the documentation of activities by the faculty member. At the end of the year, the department chair conducts the annual review and presents an appraisal of actual performance as measured against the agreed-upon plan proposed by the faculty member. The faculty evaluation plan also includes criteria, guidelines, and procedures for tenure and promotion. The annual performance review is central to the tenure and promotion process, which also involves evaluations and recommendations by departmental faculty committees.

The university has a campus-wide planning and evaluation system encompassing all education and administrative functions. The university's "Strategic Plan and Vision for the years 2000-2010" and the "Annual Five-Year Planning Document" enumerate the institution's broad

planning goals and objectives. Based on these, unit managers set forth their objectives, activities to achieve the objectives, methods of evaluating outcomes, and the means of using evaluation results to improve unit operations. Each summer, the Board of Trustees, president, vice presidents, deans, directors, department chairs, and other university leaders and concerned parties participate in an off-campus retreat in which evaluation data are reviewed and incorporated into the strategic planning process for both educational and administrative functions.

In addition to internal college and university assessments, candidates, programs, and the unit are reviewed by external approving agencies and associations. The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) conducts an annual comprehensive review of teacher education and instructional support programs. Along with the NCATE continuing accreditation review, the ALSDE evaluates programs every five years. The state's approval of ASU teacher education programs has been acceptable in lieu of the specialized professional associations' (SPA) evaluations. In addition, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) reviews and recommends approval decisions for new programs and evaluates existing programs for continuation according to established viability criteria. Every ten years, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) evaluates all university programs for reaffirmation of accreditation.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation

The ACE Database: Maintenance of the Assessment System Through Information Technology

Through its *Educator as Decision Maker Performance-based Assessment System* (EDMPAS), the College of Education has created a design for systematically collecting, analyzing, reporting, and storing data. Information technologies are a vital part of the operation and maintenance of the system. A technology-based, integrated data management system has been developed which we call the Advisement Certification Evaluation (ACE) Database. The ACE Database facilitates storing and retrieving data on candidates and monitoring candidate performance. It provides faculty advisers, department chairs, and certification officers with the tools to make sound decisions concerning candidate advisement and program management. ACE is available online to all College of Education faculty and staff. It is also used by the University College Advisement Center and the School of Graduate Studies.

Most of the general candidate information on ACE is drawn from the SCT Plus System on the Alabama State University mainframe. In addition to other application systems, SCT includes the Student Information System (SIS) which houses student information and records. Data retrieved for ACE go back to 1994 and are downloaded into a Microsoft Access database. Additional data obtained from the University Testing Center and from the dean's office (APTT scores, Praxis II scores, internship evaluations, diversity ratings of area schools, etc.) are included on the database. Critical COE candidate assessment components indicated on ACE include the conceptual framework levels, transition points, key assessments used at the transition points, and

the professional studies standards assessment. In addition, curriculum program sheets for each program area are available on ACE. This allows the advisor and the certification officer to track candidates' progress through programs of study. Each course in a candidate's curriculum has the grade awarded and the semester the course was taken.

ACE is managed by a COE faculty member in computer technology (in conjunction with university Management Information Systems (MIS) staff) who ensures that student records maintained in the database remain current. This database manager also is responsible for making modifications in assessment components when warranted.

ACE continues to grow in scope and accessibility as we build on previous components and add more features to meet NCATE's and ALSDE's performance-based standards. Table 7 shows the type of data available in ACE. The number beside the data elements are the online ACE menu numbers. The ACE Database may be accessed and reviewed with a code/ID that will be provided as necessary.

Table 7: Data Elements from the ACE Database

Aggregate/Programmatic	Candidate
6. GPA of All Students in a Major by Level (2000 to current)	2. APTT Scores
8. Current Student List by Major and Level	3. Praxis II Test Scores by Test 3a. Praxis II Test Scores All Scores 3b. Praxis II Test Scores by Student
14. Number of Students in Each Major (Currently Enrolled Students)	4. Candidate Advisement Form
15. Grad Student Aver GPA by Major	5. Candidate Enrichment Plan
16. UG GPAs by Major	7. GPA of an Individual Student (2000 to Current)
17. Aggregate GPA by Major Undergrad (Currently Enrolled Students)	9. GPA -Teaching Area, Professional Studies (2000 to Current)
18. Aggregate GPA by Major Graduate (Currently Enrolled Students)	10. UG GPA - TF, PA, Overall
19. Grad GPA By Major and Level (Currently Enrolled)	11. Unofficial Transcripts Sorted by Course (2000 to Current)
20. Current Course Enrollments	12. Unofficial Transcripts Sorted by Semester (2000 to current)
21a. UG Tracking Form	13. Transfer Courses
21b. Grad Tracking Form	
22. State Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View which state standards are included in a course • View Average Scores for each State Standard • View Average Scores for each State Standard in a Course • View Average Scores for State Standards in a Program • View State Standards by Degree Program 	22. State Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate Candidates on State Standards • View a Candidate's Progress on State Standards • View a Candidate's progress on State Standards in a Program
26. Admittance to TEP (all)	23. Four by 12 checklist
28. GCE by Program	24. 32-19 Checklist Menu
	25. Admittance to TEP
	27. GCE by Student

The Procedure for Data Collection, Analysis, and Review

The assessment system is implemented by the director of assessment and the manager of the ACE Database who handle assessment activities in conjunction with other units within the university. Both internal and external assessment collection, analysis, and reporting activities related to the college are their responsibility. The ACE Database manager and the assessment director (and their support staff) report directly to the dean of the college. The assessment responsibilities outlined below indicate the step-by-step logistics for handling assessment matters through the dean's office.

The assessment team is responsible for

1. Collecting raw data from the points of administration of evaluations (tests, surveys, etc.) both within and external to the college/university.
2. Analyzing, aggregating, summarizing and correlating the data and managing the presentation and reporting of data results in usable forms and formats (or coordinating these activities with other units as necessary) using appropriate computer software (e. g., SPSS, EXCEL).
3. Submitting data results to the dean's office and assisting the dean's office staff in the dissemination of data results to the appropriate committees, department chairs, and faculty.
4. Assisting with the interpretation of data findings, identifying and comparing trends.
5. Conducting reviews and studies, in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research and the Instructional Development Center, to check assessment instruments and procedures for accuracy, consistency, bias, and fairness.
6. Updating/modifying the ACE Database for monitoring student performance and progress for advisement, record keeping, and assessment purposes.
7. Assisting with recommendations for evaluating the assessment system and identifying areas for data-driven changes in the system, including revision of assessment instruments and procedures, updates in technology.

The Teacher Education Assessment and Intervention Committee (TEAIC) is the central body for reviewing assessment data for initial and advanced teacher preparation programs. Data reports are shared with this committee which is composed of the dean, the assessment director, COE department chairs, and representatives from other colleges and administrative units within the university. From this committee, assessment reports are shared with the faculty in the departments through the department chairs. The Department of Instructional Support Programs is the point of dissemination and review of assessment reports for other professional school personnel programs.

Once data results are transmitted, committees and departmental faculties reflect on the findings and share summaries/interpretations with the appropriate constituencies, including external advisory councils and committees. Recommendations are made for using data findings in program reviews to determine whether the need for modifications is indicated. If needed changes are identified, the appropriate and official college and university procedures are followed to enforce the changes.

The Annual Assessment Timeline

The unit's assessment system is closely aligned with the conceptual framework. The unit's overarching goal is to prepare professional educators who are informed and responsible decision makers; thus, the unit, itself, must exhibit informed and responsible decision making. Assessment of candidate performance and program quality is an interactive, decision making process. The major assessment activities of the unit take place within the interactive and decision making contexts of the conceptual framework. As Figures 1 and 2 illustrate, the unit's assessment process coincides with the process the unit employs to prepare candidates who are decision makers: planning, predicting, implementing, reflecting, evaluating, revising. The annual assessment timeline outlined in Table 8 reflects the alignment of each semester's assessment activities with the decision making process that is embedded in the interactive context described in the conceptual framework.

The data collection, analysis, and evaluation process occurs with great regularity, as indicated in the above description of the assessment system. Assessment tools (tests, surveys, portfolios) and criteria (GPAs, course grades, credit hours) are used at designated transition points to determine candidates' successful progression through a program of study. Multiple assessment methods are currently in use to gather data from internal and external sources. The foregoing description also defines the systematic routine for evaluating courses and programs.

The Procedure for Addressing Candidate Grievances

The college maintains a file of candidate complaints and documentation of how such complaints have been handled. The college addresses candidate grievances within the parameters of the university's student grievance policy, guidelines, and procedures. These are outlined in the "Pilot," the student handbook published by the Office of Student Affairs. The college's grievance plan and procedures are printed in the grievance document which also contains samples of complaints and their dispensation. The file is maintained in the dean's office. An exhibit is available in the NCATE exhibit room.

Table 8: Annual Assessment Timeline

Time Period	Assessment Activities
<p><u>Fall Semester</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ August – Sept. 	<p>Planning and Predicting: Review prior year’s summaries of data findings and recommendations; conduct needs assessment; develop goals, strategies. Develop faculty assessment plans for annual reviews. Approve candidate admission recommendations (Transition Points 1 and 2)</p> <p>Revising: Begin revisions of instruments, policies, procedures, courses, syllabi based on data findings, recommendations, and needs assessment.</p> <p>Implementing: Collect and analyze enrollment and admissions data by programs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oct. – Nov. 	<p>Implementing: Collect and analyze data from faculty self-assessments and peer observations, Student Course Evaluations (SCE), and APTTP I & II. Administer and grade Graduate Comprehensive Exams. Conduct remediations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ December 	<p>Implementing: Collect and analyze data from interns assess., final course grades, GPAs, cooperating teachers assess. Reflecting: Review all data collected for semester; update Ace Database. Revising: Continue work with revisions.</p>
<p><u>Spring Semester</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jan. – Feb. 	<p>Planning and Predicting: Continue needs assessment; approve candidate admission recommendations (TP 1 and 2). Implementing: Collect and analyze enrollment and admissions data by programs; Reflecting and Evaluating: Disseminate and review data results from fall semester; develop recommendations. Revising: Secure administrative approvals for recommended revisions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mar. – Apr. 	<p>Implementing: Dept. Chairs observe & evaluate faculty; conduct annual faculty reviews. Collect and analyze data from APTTP I & II, internships, graduate comps., etc.; conduct remediation; conduct follow-up surveys, collect and analyze data.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May 	<p>Implementing: Complete all data collections and analyses; prepare reports. Reflecting: Disseminate and review assessment data results for semester; update ACE Database.</p>
<p><u>Summer Term</u></p>	<p>Reflecting and Evaluating: Summarize and report data findings for the year, including semester comparative studies; conduct studies for validity, reliability, fairness of policies and procedures; formulate decisions and recommendations for actions. Revising: Prepare for fall semester implementation of approved revisions.</p>

Use of Data for Program Improvement

Assessment findings are used in several ways to improve program quality and unit effectiveness and thus to strengthen candidate performance. These include routine revisions in course syllabi and in various aspects of the instructional program. For example, the University Testing Center provides test scoring and objective mastery results by test and by course (at the end of the semester) for most of the basic academic skills and core courses through a computerized instructional management system. Data reports permit teachers and department chairs to view results against course objectives, to compare results, and to develop appropriate intervention strategies for the improvement of instruction. Such strategies may include identifying objectives, content, test items, and instructional methods that need recasting, clarifying, and/or revising. Areas in which students need assistive instruction may also be identified so that the appropriate referrals can be made. The university's instructional management process helps to give a degree of assurance that candidates entering College of Education and other degree programs have gained the required level of competence in general studies courses.

Examples of decisions and actions prompted by assessments in the College of Education are discussed below. All of these changes, resulting from data findings and continuous alignment with standards, have been made in an effort to strengthen programs and improve candidate performance.

Course syllabi are routinely updated and revised, and textbooks are reconsidered/changed in response to changing trends, issues, and standards and also in response to the performance of candidates on course-by-course assessments.

Candidate performance on the ALSDE's basic skills tests in the Alabama Prospective Teacher Testing Program (APTTP) led to the revamping of admission requirements for the Teacher Education Program (TEP). A passing score on the tests became a requirement for admission to the Teacher Education Program. In addition, test data showed a significant difference in the scores of candidates who completed EDU 100 before taking the test and those who did not take the course. Consequently, EDU 100 was made a requirement for admission to TEP. One reason for the establishment of the course was to assist candidates in preparing for the tests. Staff in the Teacher Education Center give special attention to identifying weak areas in the performance of pre-candidates on the tests and providing prescriptive tutoring to address these weaknesses. Candidate performance on the tests has greatly improved over time.

Beginning fall semester 2005, the ALSDE began requiring Praxis II content tests as a part of the Alabama Prospective Teacher Testing Program (APTTP). The ALSDE established a "no fault" period during which the performance on the test did not count against candidates. In 2006, the Alabama State Board of Education adopted minimum passing scores for candidates completing approved teacher education programs at Alabama colleges and universities. In the College of Education, a passing score on the appropriate Praxis II content test is now required for admission

to clinical practice in initial teacher certification programs. The unit has also instituted activities to assist candidates in making passing scores on the Praxis II. In spring 2006, the unit included Praxis II assessment and curriculum alignment as main sessions in the College of Education Retreat. During the “no fault” period, professional development and enrichment workshops were conducted for teachers and candidates. Responding to passing rates for all candidates attempting the tests, the unit began offering courses for candidates in summer and fall 2007. Also, Praxis workshops are continuing in some areas. In the school counseling program, for example, faculty hold a four to six hour workshop each semester. As a result, the passing rates for candidates in this program have increased significantly.

In response to data from the ALSDE’s Professional Education Personnel Evaluation (PEPE), unit faculty have taken measures to improve the performance of teacher candidates going into the field. PEPE standards and formats have been integrated into curricula, courses, and evaluations. For example, faculty have revised the internship assessment and incorporated standards, format, and items that match more closely those reflected in the PEPE evaluation. In addition, workshops and focus groups have been conducted for candidates and faculty.

Additional descriptions and explanations of how data have been used for program improvement are available in Standard 2 exhibits in the NCATE Exhibit Room.

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