

Valdosta State University

Dewar College of Education

Assessment Committee

Minutes of the October 26, 2007, meeting

Members present: S. Sanderson, J. Reffel, L. Hilgert, H. Hummel, E. Martin, H. Brasell, S. Lahr, L. Corbin, G. Langford, L. Minor, S. Andrews, L. Brockmeier, J. D. Thomerson, M. Willis, B. Suber, J. Nienow, R. Califf, M. Wetherington, J. Kinney, and R. Seiple.

Introductions were made to acquaint members with each other and introduce new members.

Purpose of the meeting was to bring all partners up to speed as to the assessments in place and to enlist help from P-12 partners regarding needs of the College.

Julie Reffel said that this was the most important committee of the College of Education as it decides how well initial and advanced candidates plus school psychology and school counseling candidates must perform to be recommended for certification. This is especially true regarding the "impact on student learning" standard. VSU will look for commonalities among the programs and pull all the expectations together regarding how VSU reports candidates' achievement to the PSC regarding standards. She further reminded the partners that VSU must meet both State (PSC) and National standards (NCATE). She then presented NCATE Standard 2 (Assessment System) and asked the group to respond to the question, "How do we make sure the candidates have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions appropriate for teachers?" Reffel then asked how these were assessed in the schools? This is important because VSU must report on whether VSU is meeting the needs of the schools related to graduates success one and two years after induction. She then shared the unit-wide assessment system and asked help with tweaking a couple of the VSU instruments.

Reffel then presented a detailed review of the VSU/COE assessment system.

- Internal/external sources of data
- Transition points: admission to program, admission to student teaching, exit from student teaching, first year, second year
- Decision points
- Data Calendar

Performance is the ultimate criteria: beyond GPA and grades – Can they teach??

The charge of the committee is to look at "impact on P-12 student learning" for initial candidates. CRCT scores are not sufficient. Need a snapshot of in-the-field activity.

Another activity for the committee will be to look at the dispositions instrument, especially Item 11 re "all students can learn."

What else is possible?

Test Tracks – ITBS and CRCT

“Success Maker”

“Waterford”

Grades – pre/post unit tests

Can the students assess the candidates? Might work at middle and high school levels

Classroom management: number of referrals to office; observations by principal and/or assistant principals; ability to organize under pressure; handle difficult, unmotivated students; pedagogy; non-verbal skills; motivation (Staff Development usually addresses these last three – difficult to measure); being overwhelmed by the system and volume of work.

Disposition – need to build candidates’ belief that teaching matters more than family background and socio-economic status. The wording of the question may influence the response – too many variables. A lengthy discussion ensued as to how to re-word and clarify the question.

The three new Area F courses for education may have an effect on candidates’ beliefs but this may take some time.

A suggestion was made to add case studies re social matters to stimulate debate as well as to provide strategies to motivate students.

Homework was assigned 1) to reword questions 1 and 11 for initial and advanced candidates in a way that won’t generate answers they think we want, and 2) how can we determine candidate impact on student learning. The concern is about achieving a depth of content knowledge – betting beyond traditional testing.

A question: Will VSU candidates pass student teaching if the DON’T impact student learning? What’s the minimum?

Next meeting: January 14, 4:00, room 255 Dewar College of Education (same room).

A visitor’s pass will be issued for LiveText so that committee members can access the minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Corbin
Professor of Music

