Outcomes Assessment Plan/Report

Varying Exceptionalities
(Academic Degree Program and Campus)
2003-2004
(Assessment Period Covered)

Bachelors
(Degree Level)
July 30, 2004
(Date Submitted)

Planning Instructions:

Identify at least three student learning outcomes and complete the following portions of this plan. Student learning outcomes are defined in terms of what students will know, or be able to do, or believe as a result of instruction. The completed plan is e-mailed to Oaplans@acad.usf.edu

Reporting Instructions:

At the end of the assessment period, the assessment report is prepared and e-mailed to: Oareports@acad.usf.edu The report contains a summary of assessment findings identified. In addition, the report describes what changes (if any) were made as a result of a review of assessment findings. The discussion on use of results should, at the very least, indicate that faculty members reviewed the assessment findings.
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Student Learning Outcome #1

What will students know or be able to do or believe? Be specific.

Students completing the Special Education program will demonstrate classroom management skills that help set a positive classroom environment conducive to learning at or above a level expected for a beginning teacher.

ASSESSMENT PLAN - The completed assessment plan is e-mailed to Oaplans@acad.usf.edu at the beginning of the assessment period.

It is recommended that two means of assessment be prepared for each student learning outcome. One means of assessment may be sufficient.

Means of Assessment #1: At the end of each academic year, the department will collect, review and analyze ratings from the Final Internship Evaluation Form completed by each final intern’s cooperating teacher.

Criteria for Success: Eighty percent of the program graduates will proficiently demonstrate classroom management skills expected of or exceeding that of a beginning teacher (a rating of 4, “strong,” or 5 “outstanding,” on a five point scale) as evaluated by a Cooperating Teacher on the Final Internship Evaluation.

Means of Assessment #2: At the end of each academic year, the department will collect, review and analyze ratings from the Principal Survey completed by principals of schools in which our graduates who are two years out of the program teach.

Criteria for Success: Eighty percent of the program graduates will proficiently demonstrate classroom management skills expected of or exceeding that of a beginning teacher (a rating of 4, “strong,” or 5 “outstanding,” on a five point scale) on the Initial Teacher Preparation Principal Survey completed by principals of schools where our graduates initially teach.

ASSESSMENT REPORT - These items are completed after assessment activities, at the end of the assessment period. Completed assessment reports are e-mailed to Oareports@acad.usf.edu

Findings: What findings resulted from assessment activities?
Eight items on the Final Intern Evaluation Survey address a variety of classroom management skills (Accomplished Practice: “Learning Environments”). One-hundred percent of our graduates were rated as demonstrating acceptable performance for this accomplished practice. At least eighty percent of our graduates were rated 4 or 5 on seven of the eight items. The one item where less than 80% of graduates (71%) were rated a 4 or 5 was the item “Encourages student interaction.” Relative strengths for our graduates seem to be in the following areas: 1. establishes an active learning environment; 2. manages student conduct effectively while maintaining academic focus; 3. maintains learning momentum: keeps students on task. At least sixty percent of our graduates received a rating of 5 in each of these areas.

Eight items on the Principal Survey address classroom management skills. Over 95% of graduates were rated as demonstrating acceptable performance in this area. While there was only one item where 80% or more of our graduates were rated as a 4 or 5, 70% or more graduates were rated as 4 or 5 for all remaining items. There is not a great amount of variability in ratings among the eight items addressing classroom management. The range of graduates receiving 4’s or 5’s for each item is 70% to 80%. Our graduates are rated highest on: 1. maintaining instructional momentum; 2. protecting students from harassment and discrimination; 3) using a variety of developmentally appropriate activities to engage and motivate students; 4. establishing classroom routines; 5. involving students in establishing classroom rules for behavior.

Given the results, it appears that both cooperating teachers and principals believe our graduates are able to demonstrate strong skills in classroom management. Based on last year’s report, an area that the program chose to address was to better assist our students to integrate their classroom management & teaching practices, particularly as it relates to helping their students maintain an academic focus during learning activities and teaching self-responsibility for learning. Examining the items where this skill was assessed, it appears that our graduates demonstrated strong performance in this target area. Of particular note is the fact that both principals and cooperating teachers rated our graduates high on their ability to sustain learning momentum during instruction. Additionally, cooperating teachers rated our graduates high on their ability to manage student conduct while maintaining an academic focus.

Use of Results: What changes, if any, were made in response to the findings? This section should indicate that faculty members reviewed the assessment findings.

Based on last year’s results as well as informal observations of department faculty and partnership school faculty & administration, the program decided to restructure the second level semester when students are completing their second practicum. Two courses, Clinical Teaching & Behavior Management have been “blocked” together and the two faculty members are team-teaching the courses in an integrated way. Based on feedback from students during the fall semester, the department decided to extend this model to the third level practicum when students participate in a secondary field experience. “Assessment” and “Adolescents” were interrelated in a similar way with faculty engaging with students at the practicum site on a continual basis. Practicum seminars for both semesters were also implemented to provide opportunities to debrief students’ teaching and classroom management experiences and to provide additional learning opportunities at the practicum site.
Student Learning Outcome #2

What will students know or be able to do or believe? Be specific.

Students completing the Special Education program will use a variety of assessment methods (including formal and informal assessment) to monitor student progress at or above a level expected for a beginning teacher.

ASSESSMENT PLAN - The completed assessment plan is e-mailed to Oaplans@acad.usf.edu at the beginning of the assessment period.

It is recommended that two means of assessment be prepared for each student learning outcome. One means of assessment may be sufficient.

Means of Assessment #1: At the end of each academic year, the department will collect, review and analyze ratings from the Final Internship Evaluation Survey completed by our graduates’ cooperating teachers.

Criteria for Success: Eighty percent of the program graduates will be rated as “Strong” or “Outstanding” (a rating of 4 or 5 on a five point scale) by cooperating teachers for skills related to assessment based on the Final Internship Evaluation Survey.

Means of Assessment #2: At the end of each academic year, the department will collect, review and analyze ratings from the Principal’s Survey gathered two years after students graduate.

Criteria for Success: Eighty percent of the program graduates will be rated as “Strong” or “Outstanding” (a rating of 4 or 5 on a five point scale) by principals for skills related to assessment based on the Principal Survey.

ASSESSMENT REPORT - These items are completed after assessment activities, at the end of the assessment period. Completed assessment reports are e-mailed to: Oareports@acad.usf.edu

Findings: What findings resulted from assessment activities?

On each of the six items reflecting assessment skills on the Final Internship Evaluation Survey, more than 80% of our graduates were rated as “strong” or “outstanding” (rating of 4 or 5). Overall, 100% of our graduates were rated as demonstrating acceptable performance. Relative strengths (at least 40% of graduates received a rating of 5) are: 1. uses a variety of evaluation methods appropriate to the situation; 2. maintains accurate records to monitor student progress. Relative areas for
development (less than 20% of graduates received a rating of 5) are: 1. can explain how student readiness and performance data were used to plan instruction.

Seven items on the Principal Survey reflect our graduates’ abilities to engage in effective assessment practices. Overall, 95% of graduates were rated as demonstrating acceptable performance in this area. For three of the seven items, at least 80% of our graduates were rated as either strong (4) or outstanding (5). Of the remaining four items, at least 70% of our graduates received a 4 or 5. For one item, “analyzing the effects of your teaching on the learning environment and student outcomes,” less than 70% (i.e., 68%) of graduates were rated as either strong (4) or outstanding (5). Relative strengths of our graduates based on the perspective of principals include: 1. monitoring student progress; 2. employing a cycle of planning, implementing and evaluating instruction; 4. modifying instructional plans based on assessment of student outcomes.

Based on these data, it appears that both cooperating teachers and principals perceive our graduates to possess more than satisfactory skills in assessment. There is a slight drop in ratings compared to last year but only by a few percentage points in most cases.

**Use of Results:** What changes, if any, were made in response to the findings? This section should indicate that faculty members reviewed the assessment findings.

While the results for this objective are positive overall, the program is continuing to integrate more assessment experiences during practica, with a focus on informal assessment. An emphasis on assessment has been placed in five courses, Clinical Teaching, Behavior Management, Adolescents, Assessment, & Mental Retardation. This emphasis has been on helping our students to better understand how to use informal assessment in a flexible way dependent on individual student needs and the learning context. For each course, assignments have been enhanced that require students to apply continuous data collection methods in their early field experiences. For example, in Behavior Management, students implement a behavior change project where they implement various behavior observation data collection methods. Students are provided feedback on a weekly basis regarding their practice of continuously monitoring student progress and making behavior intervention decisions based on informal data collected. Students share their data weekly at an interdisciplinary team meeting among their peers and school staff.
Student Learning Outcome #3

What will students know or be able to do or believe? Be specific.

Students completing the Special Education program will integrate technology that enhances instruction and the learning outcomes of students at or above a level expected for a beginning teacher.

ASSESSMENT PLAN - The completed assessment plan is e-mailed to Oaplans@acad.usf.edu at the beginning of the assessment period.

It is recommended that two means of assessment be prepared for each student learning outcome. One means of assessment may be sufficient.

Means of Assessment #1: At the end of each academic year, the department will collect, review and analyze ratings from the Alumni Survey gathered two years after students graduate.

Criteria for Success: Eighty percent of the program graduates from the program will rate their preparation to integrate technology for enhancing instruction and the learning outcomes of their students as “well prepared” or “very well prepared” as measured by their responses on an Alumni Survey two years after graduation.

Means of Assessment #2: At the end of each academic year, the department will collect, review and analyze ratings from the Principal’s Survey gathered two years after students graduate.

Criteria for Success: Eighty percent of the program graduates will be rated as “Strong” or “Outstanding” (a rating of 4 or 5 on a five point scale) by principals for skills related to application of technology for teaching purposes based on the Principal Survey.

ASSESSMENT REPORT - These items are completed after assessment activities, at the end of the assessment period. Completed assessment reports are e-mailed to: Oareports@acad.usf.edu

Findings: What findings resulted from assessment activities?

Overall, 85% of alumni (N=27) rated themselves as having an acceptable level of performance in the area of technology. Of the three items on the alumni survey that address graduate’s preparation to use technology that enhances their instruction and student learning outcomes, less than 80% of alumni rated themselves as 4 or 5.” Alumni appear to perceive themselves most able to use technology for personal and teacher productivity, where 78% of alumni rated themselves as 4 or 5. Alumni perceived themselves as much less able to use technology to enhance student learning.

Of the three items on the principal survey that reflect use of instructional technology, our graduates did not meet the 80% criteria for any of the items. For one item, “using technology for personal and teacher productivity,” 74%
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of graduates were rated as 4 or 5. For the other two items, only 51% and 56% of graduates received ratings of 4 or 5. Only four of forty-nine graduates received a rating of less than 3. Overall, principals rated 90% of our graduates as demonstrating acceptable performance in this area.

While the results indicate that principals perceive our graduates as having satisfactory abilities to use technology for teaching, they also indicate that our graduates are more adept at using technology for personal purposes compared to instructional purposes. Alumni seem to believe they are less prepared to use technology than their principals. They believe they are best able to use it for personal or teacher productivity. It is clear that the program needs to address the area of technology as it pertains to graduates feeling prepared to use it effectively for instructional purposes.

Use of Results: What changes, if any, were made in response to the findings? This section should indicate that faculty members reviewed the assessment findings.

Based on the results of these data, the program has begun to more systematically integrate the use of technology both in terms of faculty use (for modeling purposes) and student opportunities to learn about and apply instructional technology. Several faculty have continued to integrate the use of technology in their courses, most notably by using wireless computers in the classroom. Data is currently being collected on the effectiveness of an inquiry-based learning unit (Clinical Teaching) on how to apply instructional technology to meet the needs of students with special needs and other learning difficulties. The department was chosen to participate in the COE’s wireless laptop initiative and hope to continue to enhance instructional technology into both our teaching and our curriculum.

Duplicate this sheet to assess additional student learning outcomes.