

UNIT REPORT

Annual Highlights Report

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Annual Report: Department of Reading and Elementary Education**NON-ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UNITS ONLY: Highlights of the Year:****ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UNITS: Goal #1:**

Programmatic development represented an important activity over the past year. Within the undergraduate program, the faculty developed a comprehensive model describing how each of the College's focus practices would be introduced, modeled, and rehearsed at various phases within the program. Through the implementation of the model, candidates will be able to gradually build their skills under the direct guidance and support of faculty at all phases of the program, culminating in successful use of the practices during the student teaching semester and beyond. The department continued to support study abroad opportunities for candidates. For example, under the guidance of Dr. Erik Byker, 15 students spent four weeks during the summer in Stellenbosch, South Africa, teaching in schools and engaging in community-focused projects. During the Fall Semester, Drs. Adriana Medina and Ian Binns led a seven-week study abroad trip to Ludwigsburg, Germany. Students visited sites of historical significance and engaged directly in activities that developed their intercultural competencies. Finally, Dr. Adriana Medina partnered with the Camino Community Center to deliver a program focused on improving the reading achievement of students categorized as English learners. The class met weekly at the Camino Community Center and the teacher education candidates worked directly with individual or small groups of children on various reading skills.

Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above::

External Partnerships (internships, joint ventures, community engagement)
 Student Success (Retention, graduation, high impact experiences, publications, scholarships, awards)
 Student Access (new or increased online delivery, number of course offerings, time to degree)
 External Public Relations/Outreach

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UNITS: Goal #2:

Similar to Goal #1, programmatic planning was significant with respect to graduate education. This occurred through the development of a residency program leading towards certification and the MAT degree. The residency model was created by removing six hours from the Graduate Certificate program, moving coursework online, and developing a 1 credit hour lab. The lab will be used to support various aspects of practice-based teacher education and provide candidates with opportunities to develop their skills related to the focus practices. Its creation will allow the department to expand its reach across the state and potentially increase enrollment in an already successful program. Phase II of the program will be focused upon advancing pedagogical skills in the areas of classroom management and differentiation and students will engage in action research prior to completion.

Three faculty in the department were awarded Faculty Research Grants through the internal grant competition sponsored by Research and Economic Development.

A notable accomplishment relative to the M.Ed. in Elementary Education program was an 86% increase in enrollment from AY 2017-2018 to AY 2018-2019.

Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above::

Student Success (Retention, graduation, high impact experiences, publications, scholarships, awards)
 New Educational Programs
 Student Access (new or increased online delivery, number of course offerings, time to degree)

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UNITS: Goal #3:

A specific accomplishment related to Goal #3 was the development and delivery of the year-long internship within Kannapolis City Schools. The initiative, which involved 20 candidates and six faculty, featured an embedded internship planned and delivered within a collaborative partnership between district administrators and teachers from Kannapolis City Schools and UNC Charlotte faculty. Notably, the internship required structured support and co-planning as clinical expectations were increased and candidates were observed by faculty and clinical educators during the first semester of the YLI. Clinical educators and faculty met several times to develop course-related activities within this partnership. Furthermore, the candidates and clinical educators (teachers) engaged in a joint book study as a form of professional development that was facilitated by students and faculty.

As previously mentioned, Dr. Adriana Medina partnered with the Camino Community Center to deliver a program focused on improving the reading achievement of students categorized as English learners. The class meet weekly at the Camino Community Center and the teacher education candidates worked directly with individual or small groups of children on various reading skills.

Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above::

External Partnerships (internships, joint ventures, community engagement)
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Examples of Data-Based Improvements :

Given the current and upcoming consequential nature of several assessments associated with programs in the Department of Reading and Elementary Education, data relative to the preparation of our candidates to successfully complete these assessments was a focal point in 2018. One area of focus for data analysis was candidate performance on the NC Foundations of Reading and General Curriculum tests. With regard to the former, analysis of data and candidate feedback revealed the need to directly align various facets of course content with test objectives. It was also

determined that candidates needed multiple opportunities to review content at various phases within the program. Thus, the department incorporated tasks and common assessments to provide practice for the exam and implemented boot camps to review key test objectives. Additionally, content-specific videos were added to coursework to provide candidates with opportunities to engage with content in a different medium. With regard to the General Curriculum test, content area modules were created that included links to resources and activities for the teacher candidates. The modules also included review packets and test taking strategies. Finally, faculty incorporated opportunities to review actual test questions within the delivery of coursework and, in some instances, administered abbreviated versions of the test.

Conclusions based on data were also used to guide specific efforts to improve candidates' performance on several tasks/rubrics associated with edTPA. For example, due to identified challenges in this area, faculty developed activities to assist the candidates in documenting their knowledge of students' cultural, personal, and academic backgrounds, and making explicit connections between that information and their learning segment. To support candidates on assessment-related rubrics, an area that has proven problematic in the past, discourse and syntax supports were introduced in lesson and unit planning to support candidates' performance in providing feedback using assessment data (Task 3). Relative to Task 4 (mathematics), revisions were made to MAED 3224 to improve candidates' conceptual understanding of mathematics, including the introduction of portfolio assignments and the requirement that candidates video record themselves explaining mathematical concepts.

There was a direct effort within the development of the residency model to examine graduate certificate data and address potential challenges associated with edTPA performance. For example, faculty used prior performances on rubrics 1-18 to determine placement of content related to edTPA within the newly developed course sequence. Furthermore, support sessions included as part of the labs were planned based on identified areas of need for students, e.g. Task 3, which has had the lowest mean for the primary literacy tasks for the past three years.

Data collection has also revealed candidates in the undergraduate program still need support in determining how to differentiate instruction and to meet the needs of English language learners. To address these areas, faculty have directly aligned assignments to facilitate candidates' ability to see how lesson plan and unit development are related to differentiation and the assessment of student performance. Specific modules have been developed and incorporated into coursework focused on instructional strategies for English Language Learners and the Sheltered Instruction Protocol (SIOP). Finally, techniques for differentiation, e.g., choice boards, playlists, have been integrated into coursework focused on instructional design.

Other Major Accomplishments :

Two faculty members from the department participated on an Expert Panel to the PEPSC Committee, formed by the NC state legislature. One of the responsibilities of this committee was to determine whether the licensure tests required for elementary teachers in North Carolina were effective measures of teachers' readiness to teach mathematics. As part of an expert panel, our faculty reviewed the existing test as well as other available licensure exams to determine the alignment to NC mathematics standards and types of knowledge assessed. The committee sent forth a recommendation about a new test deemed to be significantly more appropriate for assessing preparedness for teaching mathematics, which was subsequently adopted by the state.

Start: 07/01/2018

End: 06/30/2019

Progress: On Track

Providing Department: Reading & Elementary ED