UNC CHARLOTTE
Cato College of Education

Quality Assurance System Manual

Professional Educators: Advancing Educational Equity through Excellence and Engagement

Quality Assessment System for Professional Education Programs at UNC Charlotte

4th Edition, 2019

Cato College of Education Assessment Committee

2019-2021
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Quality Assurance System for
Professional Education Programs in Cato College of Education
UNC Charlotte

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Introduction

The UNC Charlotte Cato College of Education Quality Assurance System (QAS) is designed to collect data, analyze findings and make judgments about candidate, program and unit performance, and operations. Monitoring is achieved through on-going assessment of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills, dispositions and impact on P-12 student learning. The expectations for candidates are based on UNC Charlotte general academic standards, the Cato College of Education (COED) Conceptual Framework (2017), the standards of accrediting agencies, and standards for professional educators approved by the NC State Board of Education.

Our assessment system reflects best practice in educator preparation programs (EPPs) as delineated in *CAEP Standard 5: Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement*:

> *The provider maintains a quality assurance system comprised of valid data from multiple measures, including evidence of candidates' and completers' positive impact on P-12 student learning and development. The provider supports continuous improvement that is sustained and evidence-based, and that evaluates the effectiveness of its completers. The provider uses the results of inquiry and data collection to establish priorities, enhance program elements and capacity, and test innovations to improve completers' impact on P-12 student learning and development.*

Quality and Strategic Evaluation
5.1   The provider's quality assurance system is comprised of multiple measures that can monitor candidate progress, completer achievements, and provider operational effectiveness. Evidence demonstrates that the provider satisfies all CAEP standards.

5.2   The provider's quality assurance system relies on relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative and actionable measures, and produces empirical evidence that interpretations of data are valid and consistent.

Continuous Improvement
5.3. The provider regularly and systematically assesses performance against its goals and relevant standards, tracks results over time, tests innovations and the effects of selection criteria on subsequent progress and completion, and uses results to improve program elements and processes.

Candidate, Program, and Unit/College Assessment

Data collection and related data reviews have three foci – candidate, program, and college (also referred to in this document as an "education preparation program," or EPP) as a whole. Candidate

data are reviewed to make decisions and provide feedback regarding strengths and areas of improvement. Program data are reviewed in the aggregate to make judgments about the efficacy of specific programs and to guide program improvement, including goal-setting and programmatic needs. EPP-level assessment data outline overall operations and aggregate candidate performance to guide unit improvement. Reporting outcomes to stakeholders is part of the EPP assessment model.

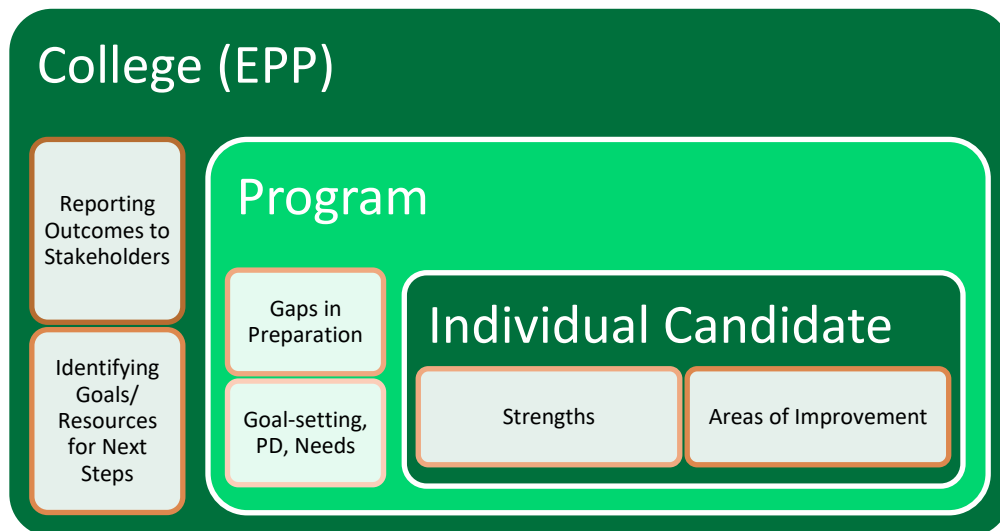Figure 1 demonstrates the interactions of the three groups in our assessment system.

Figure 1. Purposes of COED data collection at the individual, program, and college/EPP levels.

Multiple assessment measures are used to assess progress. Assessment focuses on the systematic internal collection of information and data derived from candidate, program, and EPP-wide assessments. These assessments are useful in reporting outcomes to stakeholders and identifying goals/accompanying resources for future steps of action, at either the EPP or program level. In addition to locally collected data, we also examine external data collected by the university system, the State of North Carolina, and national testing entities.

Assessment data and reports that are examined include but are not limited to:
- Review of data from the COED QAS;
- Review of disaggregated program data collected and reported via Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Reports as part of the university's assessment system for SACSCOC accreditation;
- Strategic Plan and Department Annual Reports which include information on progress toward goals and program changes based on these analyses;
- North Carolina EPP Reports (formerly known as IHE reports);
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Surveys, Teacher Effectiveness data, and Principal Evaluation results;
- COED enrollment data, student evaluations, and faculty annual reports.

EPP-Level: The EPP specifically looks at aggregate data on candidates, graduates, individual program

performance, and EPP operations to improve overall effectiveness. A list of reporting and assessment measures at the EPP-level is provided in **Appendix A: Operations Assessments**. EPP-level assessments are approved and monitored by the COED Leadership Team, the Director of Assessment and Accreditation, COED Assessment Committee, and Program Directors. Many of these reports are also posted publicly in compliance with accountability requirements and/or submitted to the university's Academic Affairs division.

At the end of each academic year, the COED and all academic departments are required to write an annual report that includes two primary sections described below.

1. Section 1, *Updates on Strategic Plans*, documents progress annually on the college/department's strategic plan (which is directly aligned to the university's strategic plan). Unit heads (i.e., Department Chairs, Office Directors, Associate Deans) document a) activities undertaken within the college or department to accomplish plan goals, b) assessment methodology, c) assessment findings (i.e., what did the assessment of this goal reveal?), and d) changes planned as a result of assessment findings (may include changes to enhance effectiveness or to improve the assessment process). All the college/department annual reports are reviewed by the Director of Assessment and Accreditation, Associate Deans, and Dean before submitting to the university's Academic Affairs division.
2. Section 2, *Highlights and Examples of Data-Based Decisions*, provides highlights and examples of data-based decisions made over the last year which are included in the annual college and department reports. These are not exclusive; information included on the department reports may also be included on the college annual report. Faculty awards/grants/publications, college initiatives, work with external entities (including P-12 partners) and other notable activities are examples of information that may appear in this section of the annual report.

The EPP is also required to submit annual reports to external entities for accountability purposes. These reports include the North Carolina EPP Reports and the U.S. Department of Education Title II Reports. The NC EPP report requires us to explain how we are meeting specific legislative mandates related to teacher preparation, to provide a list of faculty service to North Carolina schools, and to report the numbers of educator candidates we produced during the reporting period. The Title II report also asks us to outline the numbers of completers we produce, and to provide an update on our established productivity goals in high-needs licensure areas (e.g., math, science).

Program-Level: As required by the university's assessment model for regional SACSCOC accreditation, all programs must establish SLOs to measure program outcomes. For the COED, SLOs are aligned with CAEP standards to fulfill multiple accreditation purposes. A listing of SLOs for each COED program is available in **Appendix B: SLOs Defined for All COED Programs**. Program data is collected each semester and analyzed yearly on a calendar year cycle (January-December), per the Office of Academic Affairs. Data for candidate performance is aggregated by program and compiled in the SLO reports. These reports are completed by the Program Directors and reviewed by Department Chairs and the Director of Assessment and Accreditation. Program directors are provided a common protocol to guide annual data review discussions with faculty and a summary of key data outcomes for their program area to facilitate authentic

discussion and decisions. Programs add or revise assessments as needed to measure success on program goals, the COED Conceptual Framework, CAEP standards, North Carolina educator standards, and proficiencies from other professional organizations as appropriate. A detailed list of assessment measures used in initial teacher licensure programs is available in **Appendix C: Initial Teacher Education Program Key Assessments (Detailed)**. A detailed list of assessment measures used in advanced educator programs is available in **Appendix D: Advanced Educator Program Key Assessments (Detailed)**. These assessments examine the progress of professional education candidates toward the exit outcomes delineated in identified standards sets for each program. Course-based SLO transition assessments occur every semester within targeted courses and candidate progress is monitored throughout the program. Feedback is provided to candidates on an on-going basis, with the goal of reflective practice and continuous progress toward excellent outcomes.

Candidate-Level: Candidate assessment examines the progress of professional education candidates toward the exit outcomes delineated in our Conceptual Framework as well as professional content standards and licensing standards set for each program. Course-based assessments occur every semester within targeted courses. Transition assessments occur as a part of the unit's QAS and candidate progress is monitored throughout the program. Feedback is provided to candidates on and on-going basis, with the goal of reflective practice and continuous progress toward excellent outcomes.
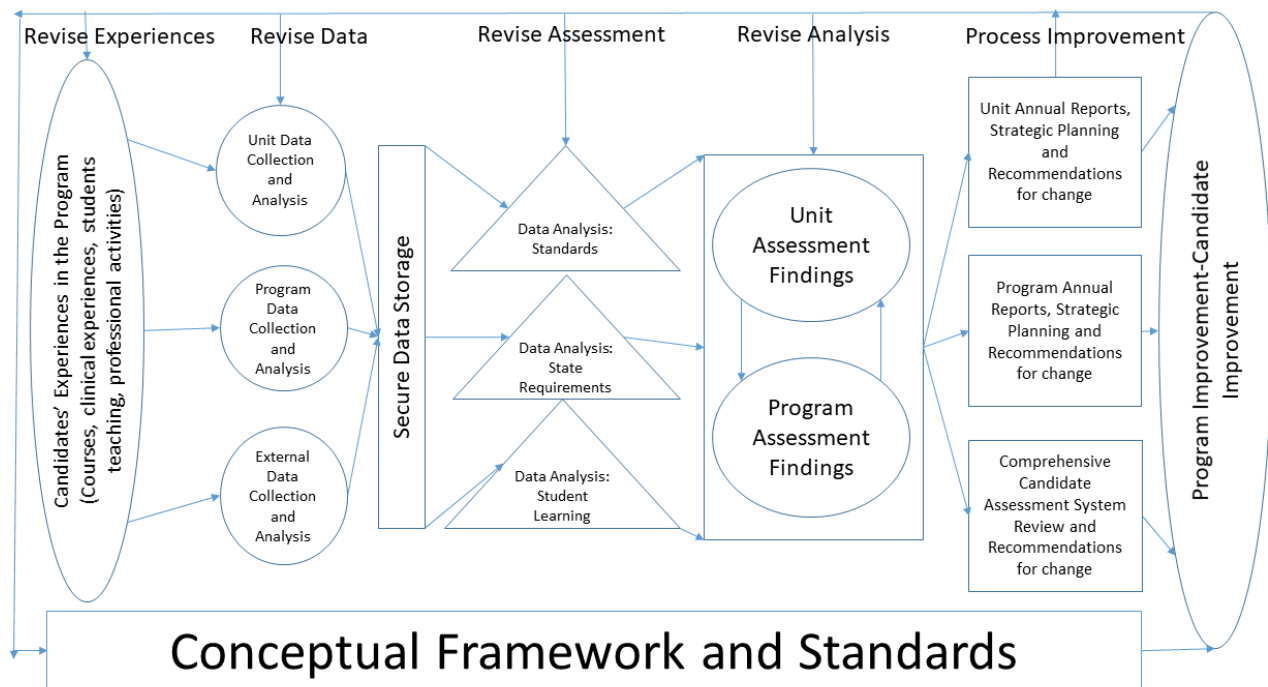
Modified from the work of Gene E. Hall
Figure 2. COED Assessment System logic model.

Established Transition Points and Alignment to Standards

Initial Licensure Programs: All licensure programs have four transition points: For the initial teacher educator programs, these points are 1) Entry (admission into teacher education), 2) Midpoint (admission into student teaching/graduate internship), 3) Completion (end of student teaching/graduate internship), and 4) Follow-up (first year as practitioner); see **Appendix E: Admission & Gateways-Initial Teacher Programs**). Programs may add additional assessments as needed to address individual program standards or transition gateways (e.g., the OPI exam for Foreign Language programs). At the initial teacher licensure level, all programs are aligned to common national and state standards, including *INTASC* (CAEP national standards) and the *North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards* (state teaching standards). Both initial and advanced programs are also aligned to the COED Conceptual Framework. Programs also identify content specialty area standards as appropriate (e.g., Special Education programs also align to the Council for Exceptional Children standards). Because the initial teacher programs use common standards, a set of common assessment products are expected across all initial teacher licensure programs. These assessments are used as data sources for annual SLO reports. Standards are "crosswalked" to ensure that data collected meet all required competencies (see **Appendix F: Crosswalk of Standards for Initial Teacher Licensure Programs**).

Advanced Educator Programs: For the advanced educator programs, transition points are 1) Entry (admission to program), 2) Midpoint (research proposal phase), 3) Program completion, and 4) Follow-up. Advanced level programs must also submit evidence of SLO reports annually to the institution. Unlike initial teacher programs, advanced program key assessments are program-specific to address content area specialization. A list of all measures at each transition point for all programs is provided in **Appendix G: Advanced Programs-Admissions & Transitions**. At the advanced educator licensure levels, programs are aligned to CAEP Standard 1 for Advanced Programs and established North Carolina standards for advanced program candidates (e.g., *North Carolina Graduate Teaching Standards*, *North Carolina Standards for School Executives, North Carolina Standards for Superintendents*) (these standards are available online at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/educators/teachers-corner/educator-standards). Advanced content specialty standards are added where appropriate.

Curriculum Maps for All Programs (stored in Google Folder)

Curriculum maps for each licensure program are established to ensure the identified standards are addressed within the coursework. As changes are needed, curricular revisions are determined by each program and submitted for review and approval through the university's governance process using the Curriculog Online System (https://facultygovernance.uncc.edu/course-curriculum). Curriculum maps are maintained on a secure Google drive folder accessible to all faculty via their NinerNet login. Program directors work with the Director of Assessment and Accreditation to ensure that curriculum maps are up to date. Curriculum maps were reviewed for all programs associated with licensure prior to the 2020 CAEP Accreditation review. Curriculum-to-standards alignment documents for non-licensure programs that are not subject to CAEP are updated as part of the university's program review process.

Access to the Course Outlines and Curriculum Maps Google Drive Folder is available to COED faculty

by clicking this link and using NinerNet credentials to login.

Monitoring Completer Achievements

In North Carolina, legislative mandates direct the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to provide designated completer metrics to educator preparation programs. At the initial level, these metrics include principal evaluation ratings of our completers' classroom performance based on the NC Educator Evaluation System (NCEES); Employer Survey results recording principals' perceptions of our completers' performance in comparison to other teachers; teacher impact data in the form in EVAAS ratings (i.e., how well the P-12 students taught by our completers score on state testing measures; and New Teacher Survey results recording our recent graduates' perceptions of their preparation programs one year after program completion. These metrics are provided to us by NCDPI on an annual basis, disaggregated by licensure area where available. These measures are added to our COED Data Dashboard, shared with faculty, and included in our annual data review. Our college also monitors regional news outlets for awards and recognitions of completers now working in schools at both the initial and advanced levels. These achievements are celebrated and shared with our stakeholder community via alumni announcements, our website, and our *Extracurricular* magazine published once per year.

At the advanced level, COED uses NCDPI data when it is available (some data are available beginning fall 2019) and focus groups with employers and recent graduates to gain additional insights into completer achievements. The plans for collecting employer and completer data on program perceptions via focus groups are in place and scheduled to begin 2019-20. In addition, the COED also engages in review of completer performance in collaboration with our largest district partner, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS). This review encompasses data for completers at both the initial (teacher) and advanced (principal) levels. Staff from the CMS Human Resources Analytics office meet annually with the Director of Assessment and Accreditation to review UNC Charlotte completer data for candidates now employed in CMS. These collaborations provide additional analyses for triangulating data related to completer impact on a local level and also serve to strengthen ties with school partners. We also monitor the employment patterns of our graduates in specialty fields (e.g., principals, counselors), using this information as evidence that they are working in the positions we have prepared them for.

Data Collection and Availability

The QAS is designed to collect data at the program level. Data are also provided by concentration to the extent applicable. Data are collected each semester. Data from the QAS is disaggregated by program and provided to the Program Directors, Department Chairs, Deans, and faculty via the following systems:

- Taskstream. Taskstream is the COED's data collection and management system. Data are collected and housed in TaskStream. Directions for accessing Taskstream for faculty and students are available from the COED Taskstream Resources website (http://education.uncc.edu/taskstream). All faculty must complete the Taskstream evaluations associated with their courses each semester. Taskstream evaluations are due the same day as final grades. Each program has identified courses where assessments will be collected via

Taskstream. These are listed by Department as charts on the Taskstream Resources website.

- COED Secure Shared Assessment Drive (i.e., "S-Drive"). De-identified individual level data are stored on the university's secure shared drive which is accessible to all program directors and full-time faculty.

- COED Data Dashboards. Beginning in fall 2018, the Office of Assessment and Accreditation developed the COED internal data dashboards for both initial and advanced programs. These dashboards are available to faculty via their NinerNet login and provide "real-time" data to assist faculty with data interpretation and review. The dashboards provide visually appealing data presentations and include proficiency averages and percentages, student counts, and comparison points across programs and demographic groups. . This is important as we are committed to providing equitable experiences for all candidates. Being able to look across subgroups to identify various trends is important as faculty provide resources and support to candidates. Directions for accessing the COED Data Dashboards are available on the COED Assessment Website at http://edassessment.uncc.edu.

- Research Purposes. Faculty may request access to COED datasets for research purposes. Faculty are encouraged to discuss research projects with the Director of Assessment and Accreditation prior to submitting an IRB proposal to ensure data availability. Once IRB approval is secured, faculty may request data by completing this Data Request Form.

Establishing Fairness, Accuracy, and Consistency

The following sections outline the policy and procedures used to estimate fairness, accuracy, and consistency of measures used in the Professional Education Comprehensive Assessment System. CAEP Standard 5.2 reads:

> *The provider's quality assurance system relies on relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative and actionable measures, and produces empirical evidence that interpretations of data are valid and consistent.*

To meet this standard, the Office of Assessment and Accreditation provides guidance to programs. The following steps guide the process to ensure candidates are provided opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become effective practitioners in their content specialty. These measures are intended to build a fair and equitable system, allowing for triangulation of data.

a) All candidates have had experiences that provide opportunities to learn the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are being assessed. Curriculum maps and course outlines with aligned objectives for each program are maintained and available to all faculty, Program Directors, Department Chairs, and Deans via a Google folder with NinerNet login credentials. These objectives and standards alignments are embedded in course outlines and syllabi. When an assessment is part of a course, information about the assessment is also included.

b) All assessments have been reviewed by multiple faculty and the Director of Assessment and Accreditation as part of the COED Content Validity protocol to evaluate potential

bias towards any subgroup of candidates (e.g., race, disability, gender, culture, etc.) and potential contextual distractions that distract candidates (e.g., vague instructions, poor testing environment, lack of proper equipment). This review also complies with CAEP Criteria for EPP-based assessments.

c) The COED Office of Assessment and Accreditation disaggregates assessment results by program areas to determine potential bias and areas for improvement. For key assessments required for licensure, we also examine data by racial subgroups when possible. If significant differences are detected, faculty review curriculum, assessments, and other potential reasons for differences.

d) Testing accommodations recommended by the Office of Disability Services are provided.

e) All candidates have a right to file a grievance if they believed that were treated unfairly using the UNC Charlotte Student Grievance Procedure (https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-411).

Validation/Reliability Research of Assessment Instruments: In order to generate measures that are relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative and actionable, we have several mechanisms in place. Below we outline the steps we use to evaluate the validity/reliability of measures:

a) All locally created rubric assessments have been subjected to the College of Education content validity protocol, thereby establishing each instrument's validity via external expert review. A content validity index (CVI) is then generated for each rubric instrument; a CVI of .80 or higher is considered acceptable. Rubrics that do not meet this threshold must be revised and reassessed with the protocol until a CVI of .80 is established.

b) All locally created survey assessments for initial programs and have been psychometrically evaluated; three programs at the advanced level have also had survey assessments evaluated. Plans are in place for all advanced program exit surveys to be psychometrically evaluated by spring 2021. This evaluation includes a review of each survey for meeting CAEP standards.

c) All propriety assessments include documentation of validity and reliability as established by appropriate statistical analysis by the owner of the instrument.

d) Standards-based assessments are aligned to the standards they are intended to measure. The assessments reflect the content categories and performance expectations found in the standards.

f) Additional statistical analyses have been conducted on various assessment tools as needed based on data review, faculty inquiry, or both.

Besides validity, below are the steps we follow to evaluate the consistency of measures:

a) We document the consistency in the raters' scores when conducting rater training for our local assessment tools. These calibrations have been launched for EPP-created tools in initial programs, and plans have been created to establish interrater reliability in advanced licensure programs.

b) Whenever possible, we use multiple raters.

c) We investigate interrater reliability for EPP key assessments. When discrepancies emerge, faculty review the results and brainstorm root causes. Steps for future action, including

ongoing professional development and recalibration, are a part of our continuous improvement model.

Use of Data for Program Improvement

The Director of Assessment and Accreditation summarizes data at the end of each calendar year and presents the results to the Deans, Department Chairs, and Program Directors in the spring semester. The Program Directors present the data to faculty during regularly scheduled meetings in preparation for completing SLO reports. College procedures require all departments to use one annual department or program meeting (usually in February) to review data and make program recommendations for improvement based on the data. These data decisions are reported annually by programs via the SLO reports, which are aligned to CAEP standards and allow us to use the same data for multiple purposes. Annual reports for each academic department are submitted to the Provost in June, and typically require three examples of data-based decisions that were used for program improvement. Implementation of new assessments or revisions to current assessments are considered in this process; when changes are needed, it may take up to two years before an internally developed assessment is ready to be fully implemented with consequences for candidates, depending on the nature of the changes. Faculty are also encouraged to base their research agendas on college data, which in turn, contributes to our knowledge base for program improvement. Faculty may request access to COED datasets for research purposes. These kinds of innovative programs are possible because of the robust nature of our assessment system.

Community Stakeholder Feedback

The development of assessment instruments and procedures has evolved over that last seven years since our last accreditation review. Community partners such as teachers and principals from our Partner School Network and our P-12 Advisory Board assist with the development and implementation of the assessment system, as well as in examining the fairness, accuracy, and consistency of the assessments used. In addition to the regularly established mechanisms to seek community partner feedback on using data for improvement, the COED holds annual events to review data, evaluate our processes, and seek feedback from external stakeholders on continuous improvement. These have evolved into a series of highly anticipated events that provide actionable data to the college faculty. These events have included a COED Data Day for the university community (2015); a Charrette for Stakeholder Feedback (2016); a Program Data Review Day for P-12 Stakeholders (2017); and P-12 Employer/Completer Focus Groups (2019-present).

Governance and Leadership Responsibilities

The overall purpose of the QAS is to improve candidate, program, and EPP effectiveness. The QAS is collaboratively planned by the Program directors, Department Chairs, the Director of the Assessment and Accreditation, with feedback from the College's Assessment Committee, and monitored by the College's Leadership Team. Implementation of assessment activities is the shared responsibility of the Associate Dean, the Director of Assessment and Accreditation, Program Directors, and the individual faculty within the Cato College of Education.