

Student Learning Outcomes

2006 Academic Program Review: Early Childhood Education Division Graduate (MAE) Report

The faculty members in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction have decided that graduate benchmarks for student outcomes assessment for graduate programs in the department will be organized under four categories. These categories are the following:

Leadership. Graduates of programs in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction have the knowledge and skills to assume a leadership role in their respective career areas. This role is expected of graduate early childhood majors upon their graduation into the teaching profession.

Scholarship. Graduate Early Childhood students upon graduation will have an understanding of the research which serves as the base for the field and will possess the skills to investigate and evaluate current and proposed professional practices.

Understanding of Theory and Research. Graduate early childhood students upon graduation will have an understanding of the theories that serve as the base for current professional practices.

Application. Graduate students upon graduation will be able to apply theory and research evidence to the solution of practical problems.

Planned assessment activities occur in (a) determination of a program of study for each student, (b) completion of each course, (c) completion of the research requirement, and (d) completion of the post-graduation survey.

- **Determination of program of study:** All students in the program contact faculty advisors at the beginning of their program to identify a program of study to meet students' goals for the program and program requirements. Students and advisors maintain contact throughout the program to identify any needed modifications in the program of study.
- **Coursework:** Students are evaluated in a variety of ways during their early childhood courses. Each course has defined measures of evaluation with course objectives that are related to the outcomes listed above. Summary data from the students and from course instructors are all used to evaluate the students' strengths and areas needing improvement. Standards are based upon the National Association for the Education of Young Children guidelines for professional development.
- **Completion of the research requirement:** Each student must engage in a scholarly process which demonstrates the ability to apply and synthesize knowledge and skills developed during the program of study. The research requirement may be met through a thesis or the development of a written research report. The research report may be carried out through a scholarly review of literature, an action research study, a creative project such as curriculum development or professional development for early childhood educators, or a journal article. All research papers must follow a specified style. Each student is directed in this process by an early childhood graduate faculty member designated as the *First Reader*. An additional faculty member, the *Second Reader*, also reviews the work, provides feedback, and approves the final draft of the research work.