

**Formative Feedback Report:**

**Georgia College and State University**

**Master of Education in Reading, Literacy, and Language - Reading Specialist**

**First Continuing Review**

**Group Summer 2016**

**With Responses from Georgia College and State University**

**Site Visitors’ Team**

**Chair**

Dr. Mike Mahan

**Team Members**

Dr. Lynda Chisholm

Dr. Rhonda Robbins

Dr. Joseph Peters

Dr. Lucy Green

Dr. Ruth Caillouet

GaPSC Education Specialist

Dr. Bobbi Ford

The following report is a review of the EPP’s initial preparation programs by the state Site Visitors’ team. This report is submitted to the Offsite team to assist with the development of the Formative Feedback Report to the EPP.

**Standard 1:** CandidateKnowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

*Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.*

* 1. **Area(s) of concern related to meeting the standard**

(1)

*Rationale:*

**1.2 Evidence that would support areas for concern**

**1.3** **Interview questions, if needed**

[1b] How do candidates facilitate student learning through the integration of technology?

Candidates facilitate student learning through technology in multiple ways through various assignments and projects in courses throughout the reading program of study.

* Candidates have access to electronic devices (i.e., computers, tablets) in their classrooms and their students read digital text in assignments and for researching projects (i.e., for literacy engagements, curriculum inquiry projects, tutoring).
* Candidates use online programs in tutoring for word study.
* Candidates have had their students create PowerPoint, digital books, websites, blogs, and digital storyboards, among other digital learning tools.
* One example below demonstrates the use of technology in tutoring during the advanced diagnosis course, which requires a student inquiry project, integrating technology, as part of tutoring project. A struggling 7th grade student heard about Malala and became interested in learning more about her story. As part of tutoring, the student and her tutor (our graduate candidate) read online and viewed short videos about Malala. As her project, she created this PowerPoint to share with her classmates before they went to a movie about Malala. This learning experience was student-centered, challenging, and integrated technology as a tool of learning and communicating.



[1c] How do the candidates develop meaningful learning experiences for students?

Candidates develop meaningful learning experiences by our theory to practice approach to field-based assignments across their instruction and intervention courses.

* In their courses candidates learn evidence-based practices to support literacy learning and development.
* Candidates consider the curriculum in their classrooms based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence and their district initiatives and requirements.
* Candidates consider their students’ learning needs (i.e., needs for support, interests, prior knowledge, etc.).
* By considering these factors, candidates design learning experiences that are evidence-based, supported by the GSE, and support the learning needs and interests of their students.
* Candidates differentiate, often through the levels of support (scaffolding), the materials selected, and the activities, and tasks assigned, using a range of text including print, digital, and graphic.
* A priority in meaningful learning experiences is the authenticity of assignments and audiences. Our graduate students in action research projects and curriculum inquiry projects have engaged students in authentic learning experiences involving local opportunities to empower students and demonstrate the importance and relevance of literacy in their lives. Examples include the following; A first grade teacher’s students researched and designed a new playground for their school and presented it to a board that was designing the new playground. One student added playground equipment for students with disabilities. Another first grade teacher’s action research focused on writing, specifically about famous African Americans, and student products were displayed in the Harriet Tubman Museum. This project was covered by the local news. Another sixth grade teacher included an oral history project involving veterans, based on school curriculum, in her action research to develop engaged and skillful writers that resulted in a school wide celebration with veterans, families, and the school community. Because of the success, this project has been added to the sixth grade curriculum.

[1c] What opportunities do candidates have to reflect on their practice? How does that reflection impact their teaching?

Critical reflections are a regular component of every major assignment or project in graduate courses in reading. The common elements of these reflections are informed by the reflective practice cycle and include:

* Examination of student work, observations during lesson/activity, feedback from observer in some cases with consideration of the standards and objectives of the lesson (Georgia Standards of Excellence).
* Going beyond superficial insights to examine the challenges, surprises, and insights about student learning and the candidate’s instruction. Then, relating these insights to course content or other courses in the program of study. Critical reflections are a vital opportunity for our candidates to build on and integrate their professional knowledge across courses in the reading program.
* Appraisal: Now what? What are the next possibilities of learning for the student? What is the impact on ongoing instruction? What has the candidate learned and how will he/she use these new insights and this new knowledge in teaching practice?
* Contribution to teaching philosophy: So what? Candidates explore how these experiences influence values, beliefs, and principles regarding teaching and learning, literacy instruction and development, and the role and responsibilities of a reading specialist.

The table below demonstrates the assignments and projects requiring critical reflections across the program of study. In many cases, there are multiple assignments for each course.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Critical Reflections Assigned in Reading Graduate Courses | | |
| Course # | Course Title | Course Assignment |
| 6000 | Theory and Processes of Literacy Learning | Text Complexity Project |
| 6001 | Reading Assessment | Literacy Assessments (13 Assessments) |
| 6001 | Reading Assessment | Literacy Assessment Portfolio |
| 6001 | Reading Assessment | Literacy Assessment Interventions (4) |
| 6200 | Literacy and Language, K-­‐12 | Literacy Engagements (3 Assignments) |
| 6200 | Literacy and Language, K-12 | Content Literacy Inquiry Project (CLIP) |
| 6217 | Practicum (Year 1) – 8 wk Summer | Weekly tutoring reports (5 weeks) |
| 6217 | Practicum (Year 1) – 8 wk Summer | Final Tutoring Report & Reflection |
| 6217 | Practicum (Year 2) – 8 wk Summer | Weekly peer coaching reports (5 weeks) |
| 6217 | Practicum (Year 2) – 8 wk Summer | Final Peer Coaching Report & Reflection |
| 6661 | Advanced Diagnosis & Intervention | Weekly Tutoring Reports (10 weeks) |
| 6661 | Advanced Diagnosis & Intervention | Video Case Critique & Critical Reflection |
| 6661 | Advanced Diagnosis & Intervention | Critical Reflection in Tutoring Portfolio |
| 6251 | Literacy Leadership | Observation & Interview of Lit. Leader |
| 6251 | Literacy Leadership | Literacy Leadership Project |
| 6690 | Capstone | Manuscript of Action Research |
| 6690 | Capstone | Capstone Portfolio & Presentation |

In addition, candidates reflect and communicate insights, questions, and experiences with colleagues in blogs. Blogs (or discussion boards) are regular course assignments, since our program is partially on line. Another way that candidates share their critical reflections (i.e., insights, questions, analysis, conclusions, etc.) is through seminar discussions and seminar presentations for major course projects. In our capstone portfolio and presentation, our candidates present and discuss their critical reflections with a panel of faculty as a culminating project and requirement of their program of study.

**Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation**

*The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the performance of candidates, the unit, and its programs.*

**2.1Area(s) of concern related to meeting the standard**

(1)

*Rationale:*

**2.2 Evidence that would support areas for concern**

**2.3** **Interview questions, if needed**

[2b] How does the PEU collect and use data on their recent graduates?

The EPP has little data related to recent graduates performance after they leave the program. Prior to the program origination, the Board of Regents provided completer survey data (with very low responses) and recently the Georgia Professional Standards Commission has initiated the Inductee Surveys and Employer Surveys that are to be administered at the end of each year for initial teacher education programs only. The EPP is currently moving towards an in-house employer and completer survey for graduate programs. While the number of completers for the program is small it provides opportunities to maintain professional relationships with graduates and follow their professional trajectory. Additionally, the program coordinator has presented with a completer in regional, national and international conferences. At completion, data is gathered through the Capstone portfolio and presentation and the Dispositions survey. Both of these assessment points provide data that inform the continuous improvement of the program.

[2b] What is the process for the collection and documentation of formal complaints?

The grievance and appeals process followed is the one published in the graduate catalog and followed by all graduate programs in the College of Education and Georgia College.

This grievance and appeals process is available on line at  
<http://catalog.gcsu.edu/en/2015-2016/Graduate-Catalog/Academic-Policies/Appeal-Process>

[2c] How is candidate assessment data shared with candidates and faculty?

* Candidate assessment data is shared at the end of the semester with candidates and also discussed in conferences that occur formally at the end of the semester, with informal progress and feedback given during the semester.
* Assessment data is shared with faculty during the annual Assessment Day when faculty reviews the program data points of the previous year and completes a university SMART report for compliance review.
* In addition, faculty members meet monthly at regularly scheduled faculty meetings and have the opportunity to discuss progress and formative assessments in graduate courses.
* Finally, the Literacy Program Advisory Board, comprised of school district partners (i.e., administrators, teachers) from surrounding districts, faculty, and alumni of the program and a current graduate student, meet twice during the year in the fall and the spring to review assessments and data points and discuss the progress of the graduate program in addition to any other critical topics determined by the Literacy Program faculty. Copies of the agendas from these Advisory Boards are available in the evidence room.**Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice**

*The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn.*

**3.1Area(s) of concern related to meeting the standard**

(1)

*Rationale:*

**3.2 Evidence that would support areas for concern**

**3.3** **Interview questions, if needed**

[3b] What is the criteria for school faculty?

At the onset of our M.Ed. in Reading, Literacy and Language, the Literacy Program established an Advisory Board that meets twice yearly to discuss the progress of the program, relevance to the local school districts, assessments, and program of study, including course development. Our criteria for school faculty is formal background in reading and literacy according to the guidelines established by the Professional Standards Commission and reflected in the 2010 Standards for Reading Specialists. According to 505-3.01, P-12 faculty or staff who supervise candidates in residencies or internships should be professionally certified in the field of certification sought by the candidate and have demonstrated successful performance in this field of certification. In this region of middle Georgia, we have not been successful in locating certified reading specialists to join our school faculty.

According to 505-3.01, when requirements for school faculty are lacking, the program must develop a plan to address the deficiencies. Our literacy program instructors invite local instructional coaches, administrators, and our recent program graduates to visit seminars as guest speakers on topics involving literacy leadership, assessment systems, coaching, and action research and the impact on teaching and learning. Field assignments also require our students to observe and interview instructional coaches and discuss major projects, such as the action research project and literacy leadership project with their school administrators. Our program continues to seek qualified reading specialists as school faculty. While we do not formally designate “school faculty” our Advisory Board composed of administrators and teachers from surrounding school districts that help develop our program of study and review our assessments and progress.

[3c] How do candidates collect data on student learning, analyze the data, reflect on their learning, and develop strategies to improve practice?

Please see 1c above for specific clarification on the critical reflective teaching cycle. Our literacy program uses the model first introduced by Schoen (1987) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. In our adaptation of the reflective teaching framework, candidates:

* Begin with an assessment of their classroom instruction, including curriculum standards (Georgia Standards of Excellence), their students’ learning needs, and their instructional goals.
* Design instruction using the assessment information, evidence-based literacy strategies and routines, specifics of their course assignments, and including student assessment and differentiated instruction.
* Implement the instructional design, observing during the instruction, collecting multiple assessment data (i.e., pre and post assessments, written products, checklists, conference records, anecdotal notes, etc.)
* Analyze observations, student artifacts, and other assessment data to determine student-learning outcomes. Identify successes, challenges, and questions. Determine levels of instruction and recommendations for ongoing instruction, especially considering next instruction for students with special learning needs.
* Appraisal: Candidates *critically reflect* (beyond superficial, surface level indicators) about their learning in relation to their students, their instructional practices, evidence-based literacy practices, and the role of literacy professionals. Candidates explore the direct impact of this new learning on their teaching and their understanding of literacy instruction and development and changes they will make.
* Impact on philosophy: Candidates reflect on the impact of this experience on their personal and professional beliefs and values about teaching and learning, literacy development and instruction, and their emerging roles as specialized literacy professionals.

Need some clarification about clinical practice and field experience. In PROBE the program describes “field based projects” which are embedded into courses and provide candidates with the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills that they have learned in the course. In the evidence room they list “Field Experience Documentation Form” and “Field Experience Requirement” where it describes candidates observing in other teachers classrooms (P – 12) and then reflecting on that observation.

**The above concern also was listed in 7.1. Please see the complete requirements for field and clinical experiences and the purpose of the “Field Experience Documentation Form” in section 7.1.**

**Standard 4: Diversity**

*The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations, including higher education and P–12 school faculty, candidates, and students in P–12 schools.*

**4.1Area(s) of concern related to meeting the standard**

(1) Lack of data on faculty, candidate, and school demographics

*Rationale:*

**4.2 Evidence that would support areas for concern**

[4b] Faculty demographics indicating male/female, ethnicity and race

[4c] Candidate demographics indicating male/female, ethnicity and race

[4d] School demographics indicating male/female, ethnicity and race & socio-economic status

Evidence of the requested information can be found in the Addendum Evidence Room labeled 4b, 4c, and 4d.

**4.3** **Interview questions, if needed**

[4a] How are candidates’ proficiencies related to diversity assessed?

Candidates’ proficiencies related to diversity are assessed in a number of ways across the program of study.

* Literacy Program Dispositions Survey is a data point that surveys diversity at critical data points in the program.
* Diversity proficiencies are assessed in course assignments and projects. Critical data point assessments in the program (that are course related assignments) are assessed by diversity standards for reading specialists.
* The capstone portfolio and presentation also assesses diversity proficiencies as one of the standards for reading specialists.

**Standard 5:** Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

*Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance; they also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.*

**5.1Area(s) of concern related to meeting the standard**

(1)

*Rationale:*

**5.2 Evidence that would support areas for concern**

**5.3** **Interview questions, if needed**

[5a] What are the required qualifications for school faculty?

**See the response to 3(b) above.**

According to 505-3.01, P-12 faculty or staff (school faculty) who supervise candidates in residencies or internships should meet these requirements:

* Be professionally certified in the field of certification sought by the candidate. In this case reading specialist. Requirements are successful completion of preparation in advance reading program and successfully passing the Reading GACE.
* Have a minimum of three years of experience in teaching, service, or leadership role
* Have demonstrated, through formal evaluations, successful performance in the field of certification sought by the candidate.

[5b] How does the faculty guide candidates in developing their understanding of professional, state, and institutional standards?

Faculty incorporates state P-12 standards into candidate lesson and unit planning. Professional and state standards for candidates and accredited programs are incorporated into individual course syllabi and assessment rubrics and discussed throughout the sequence of courses.

Course instructors guide candidates in professional, state, and institutional standards throughout the courses in the reading specialist program of study.

* In the courses focusing on literacy instruction and evidence-based practices, assignments are guided by the standards, most recently *Georgia Standards of Excellence.* Since our candidates are teachers and practice meeting these standards, our focus goes deeper in the ELA standards and in literacy across the curriculum.
* Candidates are introduced to the professional standards for reading specialists in their first year courses, these standards are highlighted in major assignments, and candidates must demonstrate 2010 ILA Reading Specialist standards in their capstone portfolio.
* Ethical standards are integrated throughout the program of study and assessed in the literacy dispositions survey. In tutoring, these are ethical considerations in relation to student assessments and the final clinical report. In action research design, candidates must complete an IRB application and review and become certified through the human subjects training of NIH.
* The reading specialist standards for diversity and advocacy are a focus across the program; for example, differentiation in instructional courses, advocacy for literacy opportunities in instructional courses and tutoring, and ethical, responsive, and supportive practices for strengthening families and children from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds in literacy leadership.

[5c] What are the expectations for faculty members in regards to Scholarship?

Boyer’s expansive definition of scholarship informs faculty standards for scholarship in the College of Education, including literacy program faculty. Boyer’s model outlines:

* Scholarship of discovery: original research
* Scholarship of integration: synthesis across disciplines, programs – one honored by Georgia College as a liberal arts institution
* Scholarship of application (or engagement): service related to area of faculty expertise that occurs outside the university in a rigorous and publically shared.
* Scholarship of teaching and learning that involves self-study by faculty.

Expectations for scholarship are outlined in Tenure and Promotion policies and guidelines and the College of Education Individual Faculty Review Rubric that is used in annual evaluation of faculty. (See Addendum Evidence Room – IFR Rubric\_5c)

Literacy Program faculty engage in traditional research publishing and conference presentations at the international, national, and regional levels, including American Educational Research Association, Literacy Research Association, and the International Literacy Association. In addition, faculty are actively involved in professional development school partnerships with local schools, conducting professional development, grant writing and monitoring, and providing literacy consultation and expertise (scholarship of application).

[5d] What are the expectations for faculty members in regards to Service to the Profession?

Expectations for faculty service to the profession are outlined in tenure and promotion guidelines and the rubric established by the College of Education for the annual Individual Faculty Review. Our faculty members participate in service to the profession in a variety of ways, including reviewers for national literacy research publications, reviewers for conference proposals at the international, national, and regional levels, active membership in international, national, and state literacy professional organizations, providing service as chairs and discussants at international and national conferences, and serving as members in special interest groups in national literacy organizations.

**Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources**

*The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.*

**6.1Area(s) of concern related to meeting the standard**

(1) None

*Rationale:*

**6.2 Evidence that would support areas for concern**

**6.3** **Interview questions, if needed**

**Standard 7: GEORGIA SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**

***(N/A for Endorsements)***

The professional education unit ensures that all preparation programs meet all applicable requirements of Rule **505-3-.01, REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR APPROVING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION UNITS AND EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS**, Education Personnel Preparation Rules and Procedures.

**7.1Area(s) of concern related to meeting the standard**

1. [7g] Field experiences, as documented in the Evidence Room, only require candidates to reflect on their observation. This does not meet the requirements of 505-3-.01 for Field Experiences.

The Literacy Program assumes a theory to practice approach to professional development of reading specialist candidates. The results are assignments and projects, especially program assessment points, that are field-based and clinical practice experiences.

The purpose of the “Field Experience Documentation Form” is to document specifically the experiences that the candidates have had that meet the requirements of 505-3.01 (4) Requirements for Partnerships, and Field and Clinical Experiences.

First, it should be noted that we have strong partnerships through our Literacy Advisory Board and MOUs with neighboring school districts and an MOU for our Professional Development School Partnership with Baldwin County Schools.

In addition, all of our candidates are certified teachers that have current contracts and teaching positions. Our candidates are fully certified in their teaching area (i.e., not an initial certification for teaching), but seeking initial certification as a reading specialist, K-12. To this end, our focus is to ensure that they have the experiences of a reading specialist at grade levels as outlined in PSC Standards and the 2010 Standards for Reading Specialists, fully focusing on the primary roles of reading specialists: instructional expertise, interventionist, and literacy leader (Galloway & Lesaux, 2014).

Because our candidates have full time teaching responsibilities, their field experiences look different than an initial program in which full time students are assigned placements for a year of field experience and internship. To satisfy the requirements of initial certification, our candidates seek experiences (as reading professionals) that will address the grade levels of P-12 certification (i.e., P-2, 3-5, 4-6, 9-12).

Our candidates make arrangements to satisfy the four grade level experiences within the course work of their program whenever possible, in consultation with their advisor and the course instructor. Below is a table that demonstrates the field-based, field-experience requirements over courses and the program of study.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Field Experiences and Clinical Experiences as Field-Based Course Assignments** | | |
| Course #/term | Course Title | Field-Based Assignment |
| 6000/Fall\_Yr1 | Theory and Processes of Literacy Learning | Text Complexity Project |
| 6001/Spr\_Yr1 | Reading Assessment | Literacy Assessments (13 Assessments) |
| 6001/Spr\_Yr1 | Reading Assessment | Literacy Assessment Interventions (4) |
| 6200/Spr\_Yr1 | Literacy and Language, K-­‐12 | Literacy Engagements (3 Assignments) |
| 6200/Spr\_Yr1 | Literacy and Language, K-12 | Content Literacy Inquiry Project (CLIP) |
| 6217/SU\_Yr1 | Practicum (Year 1) – 8 wk Summer | Tutoring – 2 sessions weekly (5 weeks) |
| 6661/Fall\_Yr2 | Advanced Diagnosis & Intervention | Tutoring 2 sessions weekly (10 weeks) |
| 6500/Fall\_Yr2 | Language and Literacy Research | Action Research Project |
| 6251/Spr\_Yr2 | Literacy Leadership | Observation & Interview of Lit. Leader |
| 6251/Spr\_Yr2 | Literacy Leadership | Literacy Leadership Project |
| 6217/SU\_Yr2 | Practicum (Year 2) – 8 wk Summer | Peer Coaching – twice weekly (5 weeks) |

As you will notice from the courses listed above, field-based assignments and experiences are organized and thoughtfully sequenced across courses in the program of study to provide our candidates with opportunities to put into practice course content (i.e., theory to practice approach), observe, assess student outcomes, and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of reading specialists according to PSC and 2010 International Literacy Association standards. In addition, the experiences increase with complexity, beginning in the first year focusing on research and theory, classroom instructional practices, and reading assessment and continuing in the second year to action research that is conducted in their classrooms, advanced diagnosis and intervention, and literacy leadership during involving a leadership project (i.e., peer coaching, professional development, school wide literacy initiatives).

Since field experiences and assignments are individualized based on the candidates’ school placements and opportunities, “The Field Experience Documentation Record” is a mechanism for each candidate to maintain their progress of this requirement through their program of study. This documentation is monitored by advisors in the program and submitted in the final capstone portfolio. However, the depth and breath of each of these field-based requirements are monitored and assessed throughout the program by instructors of each course.

**Please see response to 3(c) above on this question of field experiences.**

*Rationale:*

**7.2 Evidence that would support areas for concern**

**7.3** **Interview questions, if needed**

[7e] Describe how the candidates’ work through the program aligns with the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

Candidates in reading are teachers and, while they are often very familiar with Georgia Standards of Excellence of the grade level that they teach, learning the continuum of standards P-12 is new to them. In courses candidates have aligned the GSE with their instruction in field-based assignments, such as the literacy engagements noted earlier and assigned in EDRD 6200 Literacy Instruction Across the Curriculum, K-12. In addition, in tutoring during practicum and the advanced diagnosis course, candidates review the GSE for the grade level of the student being tutored. The alignment of standards and the initial assessments inform the intervention plan for tutoring. In the course in literacy leadership (EDRD 6251), candidates rely on the GSE for goal setting with teachers during peer coaching projects and for informing professional development planning. For example, a pre-kindergarten teacher led a grade-level study group focusing on phonemic awareness as her leadership project, since her grade-level colleagues had questions about this component of emergent literacy and wanted more information about how to best address the standards and successful students learning. The field-based focus of assignments support the continual alignments with the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

**Standard 8: ALIGNMENT WITH GaPSC-ADOPTED PROGRAM CONTENT STANDARDS**

*Candidates in all programs demonstrate competence on the appropriate program-specific content standards adopted by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.*

**8.1Area(s) of concern related to meeting the standard**

(1) None

*Rationale:*

**8.2 Evidence that would support areas for concern**

**8.3** **Interview questions, if needed**