

## **Development of the Unit Assessment System**

The professional community involved in the preparation of educator candidates collaboratively developed the COE unit assessment system. The Associate Dean of the College of Education initiated the development of the system at the program level in 2002. Program leaders and faculty in the SFASU educator certification programs reviewed state and national standards and developed key assessments for candidate review. As program faculty developed key assessments, the Associate Dean and department chairs researched tools to evaluate candidate dispositions. A committee was formed to craft documents to assess candidate dispositions. Using the core values in the conceptual framework and information collected, a Disposition Checklist and guidelines for a Philosophy Paper were developed to assess candidate dispositions. In April 2004, John Johnston, University of Memphis, made a presentation on dispositions in a college-wide workshop to assist faculty in the task of assessing dispositions (COE Dispositions Workshop sign-in NCATE Room). In addition to the development of key assessments, a committee was formed to research and recommend a data management system. The committee selected a portfolio system and piloted the system from Spring 2003 to Fall 2004 in elementary and secondary education technology courses using the Dispositions Checklist and the Pre-Philosophy paper.

In Fall 2004, the Unit Assessment Committee was formed with representation from all departments with educator preparation programs including both initial and advanced programs. In addition to faculty, the committee included a department chair and the coordinators of the assessment and accountability offices. This committee was charged with creating an assessment plan and an assessment system for the COE. During the 2004-2005 academic year, the committee planned the system, developed rubrics, lead the pilot testing of rubrics, and developed the unit assessment plan). Committee members sought input from faculty members within the programs in their departments. Assessment rubrics were pilot tested in the Spring 2005 semester and revisions were made. A comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures that are used to measure candidate performance and manage and improve unit operations and programs were developed. In January 2005, a draft of the Unit Assessment Plan was presented to faculty in a College of Education Faculty Meeting for review and revision. Each department charged with the collection of candidate data reviewed the unit assessments and made suggestions for revision. The revised Unit Assessment Plan was implemented in Fall 2005 at both the initial and advanced levels.

Before the development of the formal assessment system, the unit, through existing evaluation procedures and revisions that were in progress, already had a number of the assessments that were needed to evaluate candidates. Data, however, were not being systematically used to make decisions about candidates and to improve programs and unit operations. In Fall 2005, the College of Education Leadership Team and the Unit Assessment Team reviewed the portfolio system that was piloted for use as the data management system. The group determined that the portfolio system was not meeting our needs for data management and the decision was made to update existing software to design the COE data management system. The development of the assessment system in

conjunction with the revision of the conceptual framework has resulted in a comprehensive system for assessing candidates, and includes both internal and external assessments that incorporate professional, state, national and institutional standards.

The NCATE Coordinator and the Unit Assessment Committee coordinate all work on unit assessments. Over the last two years, a number of others from the professional education community have reviewed the plan and provided input into the development of the assessment system. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Teacher Education Council - A university-wide interdisciplinary committee that reviews, analyzes, and provides input on all aspects of the Teacher Education Program. Curriculum and program changes for teacher education must be approved by this committee. The Teacher Education Council minutes capture these discussions. The council is composed of representatives from Arts and Sciences, Education, Visual and Performing Arts, the Educator Certification Office, and the Office of Assessment and Accountability.
- College of Education Leadership Team – The leadership of the College of Education includes the five department chairs in the college, the associate dean, and the dean.
- Dean’s Advisory Council/College Council – Faculty representatives from each of the departments in the college meet monthly to work with the dean to evaluate policies and procedures of the college.
- Professional Development Schools Advisory Council-This group, formerly known as the Center for Professional Development and Technology, is composed of superintendents, principals, curriculum specialist and teachers from the partnership schools that work with SFASU to prepare educator candidates. They provide input on candidate assessments that are used in their schools.

For a comprehensive list of other groups that provided input into the development of the unit assessment system, see the Professional Education Community Participation in the Development of the Unit Assessment System.