

# Academic Program Assessment Report

**Assessment** is a term commonly used to encompass the process of gathering and using evidence to guide improvements.

SACSCOC requires that an institution "identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results".

**Be sure to SAVE your progress as you work!**

**Academic Program**

Montessori Education, M.Ed.

**Submission Year**

2021-2022

**Assessment Coordinator Name**

Edward Jackson

**Enter Assessment Coordinator Email**

ejackson@lander.edu

## Program Goal

### Goal

#### Goal 1

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

**Program Goal**

Students will be able to conduct applied research studies in classroom settings.

**Pillar of Success Supported**

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Students will complete action research proposals that are approved by Lander's Institutional Review Board, which includes successful completion of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Certificate.

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2020-2021

**Performance Target for "Met"**

Student proposal will meet approval of Lander IRB.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

NA

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Student proposal is not approved by Lander IRB.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Lander University IRB Application for Student Projects.

**Frequency of Assessment**

1 time per year.

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

Applications for 11 graduate level student projects, accompanied by Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) submitted to Lander's IRB and in the process of approval.

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

3

**Comments/Narrative**

All 11 Practicum Candidates submitted applications, including both undergraduate and graduate students, and all received approval from Lander's IRB. Throughout the process, students gained understanding of how to plan, execute and compose a graduate-level, research project and professional presentation. They were able to articulate the ethics and legal requirements for protection of human subjects, particularly children, in research settings. Lander's IRB committee approved each submission based on the stipulation that research projects were not be eligible for publication. However, students who requested their work be published were offered the opportunity to submit a more detailed IRB proposal. All eleven (11) students decided to forgo the additional criteria required for publication. Student consensus was that the extended time to receive approval combined with the restraints that COVID-19 was placing available research opportunities in their classrooms would not allow them to finish the projects by the April deadline. It would be highly recommended to begin the Action Research process the summer before the academic year Practicum.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

No additional resources are needed for the M.Ed. in Montessori program to meet this goal.

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

N/A

**Outcome 2**

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Students will successfully implement applied research projects in their classroom settings and share the results in a professional report.

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2020-2021

**Performance Target for "Met"**

A score of 20 - 24 on the action research rubric. This constitutes a 'B' or above.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

A score of 17 - 19 on the Action Research Rubric.

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

A score of 16 or below on the Action Research Rubric.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Lander University Montessori Teacher Education  
Program Action Research Rubric

**Frequency of Assessment**

Every spring semester in MONT 618

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

Scores ranged from 20 - 24.

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

3

**Comments/Narrative**

All students received a 'B' or higher on their projects. The rubric assessed the following: articulation of research question, literature review, methodology, data collection, findings and clarity of writing. Lander librarian Jean Thrift developed an online tutorial assignment introducing Lander's data bases and tips for conducting literature reviews. A professional presentation component was added as a requirement. Although, the pandemic created many unpredictable Practicum contingencies, it also required faculty and students to hyper-focus on organizing and planning research timelines in constrained environments. An area that will need to be evaluated is the Action Research expectations for undergraduate students. The three undergraduates struggled to meet the updated research requirements with their class load for their final semester.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

No resources required.

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

N/A

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

The action research project conducted in MONT 617 and MONT 618 adds rigor to the M.Ed. in

Montessori program. Through completion of a module on ethics in human research and participation in Lander's IRB process, students gained first hand knowledge of research practice, and become more reflective practitioners. Successful completion of the CITI module demonstrates that Lander students meet a nationally recognized standard related to research practice. Utilizing Lander's resources (Jean Thrift and the Jackson Library) and integrating research methods during the Practicum seminars improved the Action Research submissions.

### **Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

Although faculty commented on the overwhelming success of the Practicum, I recommend two areas for improvement. First, the timetable for the Action Research Project is problematic if publishable research is the goal. Many of the students are the lead teacher in their classrooms and have expressed concerns balancing the demands of the Practicum, meet publishable criteria, and manage a classroom. However, publishable research is a goal of the American Montessori Society (AMS) and not all Practicum students were lead teachers. A recommendation would be to create a tiered approach allowing students to choose a tract based on their circumstances: Graduate level publishable, Graduate level not publishable, or undergraduate. Second, field consultants/faculty would like to see a more formalized Action Research Presentation rubric similar to the EDUC 695 'Capstone' course.

### **Upload Rubrics/Other Files**

## **Goal 2**

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

### **Program Goal**

Students will demonstrate the skills, knowledge and dispositions of Montessori educators by successfully demonstrating that they exhibit the Competencies for Montessori Teacher Candidates as defined by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE).

### **Pillar of Success Supported**

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## **Outcomes**

### **Outcome 1**

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

### **Enter Outcome**

Students will attain an average score 3 or higher on an electronic portfolio tied to the Competencies for

Montessori Teacher Candidates as defined by MACTE.

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2020-2021

**Performance Target for "Met"**

Students will attain an average score of 3 or higher (on a scale of 1-4) on the portfolio rubric.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

Students will attain an average score of 2.9-1.9 on the portfolio rubric.

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Students will attain an average score below 1.9 on the portfolio rubric.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Lander University Montessori Teacher Education  
Program Portfolio Rating Form

**Frequency of Assessment**

Once per year in spring semester.

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

All students received a 2.7 or higher on the rubric.

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

3

**Comments/Narrative**

The electronic portfolio, based on the MACTE competencies for Montessori Teacher Candidates, has been used by Lander's program for many years. MACTE has identified the competencies, but allows programs to set their own assessment criteria. As a graduate level university program, Lander's criteria are rigorous.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

No resources required.

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

N/A

## Outcome 2

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Graduates will assess the effectiveness of Lander's M.Ed. in Montessori program Montessori in preparing them with the knowledge, skills and dispositions of Montessori Teacher Candidates as

defined by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE).

#### **Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2020-2021

#### **Performance Target for "Met"**

Graduates will indicate that they "strongly agree" or "agree" on the effectiveness of Lander's M.Ed. in Montessori Education program in preparing them to implement the Montessori Competencies.

#### **Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

Graduates will indicate that they "strongly agree", "agree" and "disagree" on the effectiveness of Lander's M.Ed. in Montessori program in preparing them to implement the Montessori Competencies. (mixed results)

#### **Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Graduates will indicate that they "disagree" on the effectiveness of Lander's M.Ed. in Montessori Education program in preparing them to implement the Montessori Competencies.

#### **Assessment Measure Used**

Montessori Graduate Survey

#### **Frequency of Assessment**

Once per year after graduation

#### **Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

Data will be collected at the end of their first semester teaching, Fall 2021.

#### **Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

2

#### **Comments/Narrative**

Previous survey results have been positive. Of 120 items rated (6 responses on 20 competencies), only 2 items were rated "disagree". In order to receive the highest response rate, the survey is designed to be completed without comments or narrative, so it is not possible to know why these two items were rated negatively. They were: "The Lander University Montessori Program prepared you on the scope and sequence of curriculum (spiral curriculum." and "The Lander University Montessori Program prepared you on authentic assessment."

#### **Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

No resources required.

#### **Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

N/A

### **Outcome 3**

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

## Student Learning Outcome

### Enter Outcome

Employers will assess the effectiveness of Lander's M.Ed. in Montessori program Montessori in preparing their teachers with the knowledge, skills and dispositions of Montessori Teacher Candidates as defined by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE).

### Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

### Performance Target for "Met"

Employers will indicate that they "strongly agree" or "agree" on the effectiveness of Lander's M.Ed. in Montessori Education program in preparing their teachers to implement the Montessori Competencies.

### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Employers will indicate that they "strongly agree", "agree" and "disagree" on the effectiveness of Lander's M.Ed. in Montessori program in preparing their teachers to implement the Montessori Competencies. (mixed results)

### Performance Target for "Not Met"

Employers will indicate that they "disagree" on the effectiveness of Lander's M.Ed. in Montessori Education program in preparing their teachers to implement the Montessori Competencies.

### Assessment Measure Used

Montessori Employer Survey

### Frequency of Assessment

Once per year in the year following graduation

### Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

Data will be collected at the end of the student's first semester of teaching, Fall 2021.

### Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

### Comments/Narrative

Previous results indicated that employers are satisfied with Lander's Montessori Teacher Education Program, although the survey response rate has been below 20%. As a former principal, I believe that survey participation will improve if sent to school leadership towards the end of the student's first semester following the Practicum.

### Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

No resources required.

### Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

N/A

## Goal Summary

### Goal Summary/Comments

The Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education is Lander's Montessori program accreditor. The state of South Carolina requires its public Montessori teachers to receive certification from MACTE accredited programs, so it is vital for use to use MACTE Competencies for Montessori Teacher Candidates in our program assessments. Previous results show that we are performing well and serving the needs of our students. In order to improve participation, surveys will be sent at the end of the Fall semester 2021.

### Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

Previously, there were two proposed changes, discussed in the narratives for Outcome # 1 and Outcome # 2, needed to demonstrate that the M.Ed. in Montessori Education program is working toward continual improvement. First was to make refinements to the portfolio rubric to make it an effective, reliable assessment tool. Second was to meet with Montessori faculty to analyze survey and portfolio results and determine ways to assure that every MACTE Competency is addressed multiple times throughout the program. After collaborating with Montessori faculty throughout the past academic year, a new assessment/rubric will need to be created to re-evaluate Montessori Teacher Candidate implementation of the MACTE competencies throughout the Practicum experience.

## Upload Rubrics/Other Files

### Goal 3

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

#### Program Goal

To comply with Program Productivity standards as defined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

#### Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

#### What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

#### Enter Outcome

Major Enrollment

#### Timeframe for this Outcome

2020-2021

#### Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (M.Ed. in Montessori Education) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 6.

#### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

NA

### Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (M.Ed. in Montessori Education) is less than 6.

### Assessment Measure Used

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner

### Frequency of Assessment

Annually

### Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

Fall 2020: 13 Graduate students  
3 T & L Montessori Graduate students

### Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

### Comments/Narrative

Fall 2020 enrolled 13 graduate Montessori students which, was slightly off the 5-year rolling Fall average of 15.2 students. The enrollment average for 2020 Fall, Spring, and 2021 Summer (academic year) averaged 15 students. The 15 student average is slightly down from the 5-year rolling average of 16.7 students each academic year (Fall - Summer). Although new to the program, I believe that the lower enrollment numbers can be attributed to student and district deferments due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unlike typical non-degree seeking students, Montessori students are required to take 27 or more credit hours. We have engaged in on-going efforts to increase enrollment with Charleston County and Laurens County contracts, but have limited resources and do not participate in the professional minimum of institutional marketing and advertising (No National marketing/advertising presence in publications and national conferences - crucial to increase our footprint outside of our limited physical radius.

As discussed in previous reports - offering a certificate program in Montessori education would allow those students who already hold Master's degrees to attain financial aid, because they now are identified as non-degree seeking and not eligible for financial aid.

### Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

\$12,500 for institutional advertising and a booth at the AMS national convention.

### Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Advertising in the American Montessori Society (AMS) Montessori Life with other University training programs: \$10K

A booth at the AMS National Conference (average attendance is around 5K): \$2,500

## Outcome 2

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Operational Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Completions (Degrees Awarded)

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

2020-2021

**Performance Target for "Met"**

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (M.Ed. in Montessori Education) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 3.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

Not Applicable

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (M.Ed. in Montessori Education) for Master's First Professional is less than 3.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner

**Frequency of Assessment**

Annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

Candidates who successfully graduated 2020-21:  
11

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

3

**Comments/Narrative**

The rolling 5-year average demonstrates an average of approximately 9.8 Montessori M.Ed. graduates each year. The current 11 graduates is the program's 5-year high and does not include the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning with a Montessori focus (3 in the program). There will be a slight decrease in graduates the upcoming year due to students delaying enrolling in classes (COVID-19). However, these figures will increase the following year substantially with the addition of Charleston and Laurens County District Montessori Teaching students entering Practicum.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

\$12,500 for institutional advertising and a booth at the AMS national convention.

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

Advertising in the American Montessori Society (AMS) Montessori Life with other University training programs: \$10K

A booth at the AMS National Conference (average attendance is around 5K): \$2,500

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

Enrollment numbers for the M.Ed. in Montessori exceed the Commission on Higher Education threshold of 6, just as its graduation numbers exceed the CHE threshold of 3. The program is making substantial strides to grow enrollment by adding new cohorts with Charleston and Laurens County School Districts

as well as a solid partnership with the Lexington School District.

**Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

As stated in the summary, enrollment is growing by adding new cohorts with Charleston and Laurens County School Districts as well as a solid partnership with the Lexington School District. The program is currently transitioning five Montessori Methods courses from the traditional summer course format to hybridized-academic year offerings. These changes should be popular amongst graduate students currently teaching in schools by allowing the program to decrease their summer requirements.

Eventually, restructuring the course offerings will allow Lander to increase its Montessori graduate footprint outside of its traditional recruiting area. However, Lander will need a national commitment to advertising and marketing within the Montessori niche to grow the graduate footprint.

**Upload Rubrics/Other Files**

**Thank you for completing your assessment report. Your report will be sent to your College Dean for their review and approval after you hit "Submit" below. Please enter their email address below.**

**Dean's Email Address**

shuntbarron@lander.edu

**Thank you for reviewing this report. The disapproval and need for changes will be sent to the Assessment Coordinator. Please communicate the changes needed to them. They will need to contact the Director of Institutional Effectiveness to edit and resubmit their report.**