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 "<u>identifies</u> expected outcomes, <u>assesses</u> the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and <u>provides evidence of seeking improvement</u> based on analysis of the results".

Be sure to SAVE your progress as you work!

Academic Program
Montessori Education, M.Ed.

Submission Year
2022-2023

Assessment Coordinator Name
Dr. Sarah Hunt-Barron

Enter Assessment Coordinator Email
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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 of Montessori methods in classroom settings to improve instruction in K-8 classrooms.

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 projects in their practicum classrooms during their 540 hour placement in MONT 617 and MONT 618.

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"
Each student in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn an A in the course, reflecting successful completion of their action research project.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Each student in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn a B or better, reflecting completion of their action research project.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Students in MONT 617 and MONT 618 did not all attain a B or better in the courses.

Assessment Measure Used	**Frequency of Assessment**
Grades in MONT 617 and MONT 618	1 time per year - data gathered in summer from previous semesters.

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
In Fall 2021, all 5 students achieved an A in MONT 617 and all 4 enrolled students achieved an A in MONT 618 (one student took a leave for medical reasons).	3

Comments/Narrative
To prepare for the action research project, all students successfully compete Lander's CITI training as if they are going through the IRB process. This ensures they understand exempt research on human subjects in classroom settings. After completing the CITI training, they draft a proposal for approval by their instructor and implement the action research project in their practicum classroom. The project is grounded in Montessori methods and enables students to implement a promising pedagogical practice in a classroom and gauge it's effectiveness with learners in their local setting.

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

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments
The action research project conducted in MONT 617 and MONT 618 provides an opportunity for students to gain 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. Students find this demanding assignment challenging, but it also demonstrates their understanding of Montessori pedagogy and offers an opportunity to examine the impact of this approach on students in unique contexts.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

Revising the assessment rubric to align this project fully with AMS and MACTE Standards for Accreditation within the rubric would assist with assessment and accreditation moving forward. Collecting this assessment in TaskStream might also be worthwhile.

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 2021-2022

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 2.8 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. Collection of this data is critical to accreditation and we are revising the collection mechanisms, to ensure we have data for all students and they are entered into MACTE's database immediately. As the program has grown in the past two years, the need to improve our record keeping mechanisms has become more apparent.

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. We continue to demonstrate are students possess the MACTE competencies as they enter the field. We will continue to track this information and are improving our record keeping mechanisms for future accreditation cycles.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal
We continue to work on data gathering and assessment to ensure we meet the requirements for our accreditors. In Fall 2022, we have developed new mechanisms for data collection related to portfolios and will use these mechanisms going forward to ensure we have accurate records for accreditation to demonstrate each of the competencies through multiple evidences.

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 and develop meaningful partnerships with our SC Montessori schools

Pillar of Success Supported
Highly-Valued Community Partner

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.

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Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

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

Enter Outcome
Enrollment in Montessori programs

Timeframe for this Outcome
2021-2022

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner	Annually
Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
Fall 2021: Rolling average 18 M.Ed. students	3

Comments/Narrative
Fall 2021 saw a spike in enrollment with 28 graduate students in Montessori, leading to an improved five-year rolling average. A partnership with Charleston County Schools was a major reason for this spike, with 24 students in Fall 2022 currently working toward some kind of Montessori credential. We hope to continue these partnerships with Laurens 55, Greenwood, Richland One, Lex-Rich 5, and Pickens school districts also sponsoring students in our programs in the 2021-2022 academic year.

We also are aiming to make the M.Ed. a five-year program possibility for Lander graduates. Currently, undergraduates may earn the Montessori credential, but do not earn the graduate credits toward the credential. For students who cannot afford to attend the summer of the their junior year or cannot take

consistent overloads of courses for two years (18 plus hours), another option is to offer a plan in which they could earn the M.Ed. in just five years. By revamping the academic regulations for senioe status, students could take up to 12 hours of credits at the graduate level prior to graduating. They could take four graduate courses as an undergraduate - all offered online - and then step into their Montessori methods coursework the summer of graduation. This would enable them to complete their M.Ed. in just a single year, taking courses from June through the following July.

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
Montessori Director is needed to maintain/ increase partnerships and outreach. Currently the Dean is working with all partners and districts. Although okay to fill in a gap, this is not sustainable. Spending some money on advertising once a director is fully in place would also be helpful ($15K).

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used
Advertisements through AMS and MACTE, as well a social media channels frequented by Montessori educators.

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
2021-2022

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 2021-22: 2

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

Comments/Narrative
The rolling 5-year average demonstrates an average of approximately 8.8 Montessori M.Ed. graduates each year. The current 2 graduates are a five year low, and represent in part some of the results of the pandemic. In 2022-2023, we expect at least 5 graduates, and the following year that number should grow to double digits, as we see our partnership efforts begin to take hold.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results
See Outcome 1.

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used
See Outcome 1.

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?
Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome
Students who enter the graduate program in Montessori will persist through graduation, with retention in the graduate M.Ed. in Montessori exceeding 60%.

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"
Retention in the M.Ed. Montessori Graduate Program will exceed 60% after the first year of enrollment.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
NA

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Retention in the M.Ed. Montessori Graduate Program is below 60% after the first year of enrollment.

Assessment Measure Used
Student 1 Year Disposition History provided by IR through PowerBi.

Frequency of Assessment
Assessed each Fall

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)
Fall 2021 - 61% - 16 returned, 2 graduated, 10 withdrew

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

Comments/Narrative
This is an aspirational goal to improve persistence to graduation in our graduate programs. As we onboard new students, our goal is to see them complete their programs of study. Changes to our course layouts and the consistent use of an online template are one way we hope to achieve this goal; students will be less frustrated facing a different course look each time they log into a course. Further, we are revising all courses as we rebuild them with new templates, ensuring consistency across courses and that courses are not repeating content learned in prior sections. Last fall, 61% of the students enrolled in Montessori program returned, which is a positive indicator. We hope to see this number continue to improve this academic year, particularly serving larger numbers of students. Recruiting students is not helpful if we do not retain those same students.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results
See Outcome 1

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used
See Outcome 1

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments
Enrollment numbers for the M.Ed. in Montessori exceed the Commission on Higher Education threshold of 6, but graduation numbers fell short of the CHE threshold of 3. As we move forward, ensuring that we do not have major dips in enrollments through efforts like partnerships with school districts is key. The program is making substantial strides to grow enrollment by adding new students through partnerships with Charleston and other school districts. We are also looking for ways to innovate and reach more people (fifth-year M.Ed., certificate programs, etc.) with our program.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal
We will continue to grow our partnerships; advising partnership students is a current focus of the Dean, as well as ensuring all districts know where each of their students stand in their education and what courses they can expect to be billed for in coming semesters. The program is also transitioning some 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 it's 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 and approving this report. The approval and a copy of the report will be emailed to you and the Assessment Coordinator.