



# RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

*Feinstein School of Education and Human Development  
NCATE/RIPA Accreditation*

## MASTER OF EDUCATION (M.ED.) IN ADVANCED STUDIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Learning Outcomes for the M.Ed. in Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning are modeled on the Core Propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

<u>LEARNING OUTCOMES</u>	<u>Conceptual Framework: Advanced Competencies</u>	<u>PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION STANDARDS</u>
1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning. (NBPTS 1)	Knowledge 3 Practice 1	N/A
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects	Knowledge 1, 2, 3, 4 Practice 3	N/A

to students. (NBPTS 2)		
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning. (NBPTS 3)	Knowledge 1, 2, 3, 4 Practice 1, 3	N/A
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience. (NBPTS 4)	Knowledge 1, 2, 3, 4 Practice 1, 2, 3, 4	N/A
5. Teachers are members of learning communities. (NBPTS 5).	Knowledge 4 Practice 4	N/A

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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The M.Ed. in Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning at Rhode Island College is designed for practicing teachers at the middle and high school levels who are seeking advanced professional preparation toward a master's degree. This 30-credit cohort-based program includes a four-course Professional Core and an Emphasis Strand of individual choice. It is intended to be flexible and is designed with the needs of practicing teachers in mind. All courses include course content and learning experiences based on the student's work as a classroom teacher.

Our goal is to help develop knowledgeable, reflective practitioners who employ research-based practices in teaching and learning. The program is aligned with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. As does the National Board, we seek to identify and recognize teachers who effectively enhance student learning and who demonstrate a high level of knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments reflected in the NBPTS five core propositions for professional practice:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

The Professional Core is comprised of four 4-credit courses:

- SED 551 Inquiry into Classroom Practice
- SED 552 Social and Cultural Contexts of Education
- SED 554 Learning in Middle and High School
- SED 555 Literacies in the Disciplines

## ENROLLMENTS

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<u>ACADEMIC YEAR</u>	<u>ENROLLED</u>	<u>COMPLETED</u>
2009/10	29	14
2008/09	31	9
2007/08	29	11

## FACULTY

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1. Gerri August, Assistant Professor, Educational Studies
2. Lesley Bogad, Associate Professor, Educational Studies
3. Janet Johnson, Associate Professor, Educational Studies
4. Carolyn P. Panofsky, Professor, Educational Studies

Faculty profiles available at: <http://aims.ncate.org>

## ASSESSMENTS

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### ASSESSMENT 1. PRIOR CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

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#### DESCRIPTION

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Prior content knowledge is assessed by an applicant's undergraduate GPA in Content Area (which is the candidate's teaching discipline). In addition, candidate readiness is assessed by Miller Analogies Test or GRE.

#### EVALUATION RUBRIC OR INSTRUMENT

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Not applicable.

#### DATA

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<u>ACADEMIC YEAR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>MEAN SCORES</u> <u>GPA</u>	<u>MEAN SCORES</u> <u>MAT</u>	<u>MEAN SCORES</u> <u>GRE</u>
2009/10	8	3.19	55	--
2008/09	13	3.49	57	--
2007/08	8	3.26	64	--

### ASSESSMENT 2. CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

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#### DESCRIPTION

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Students' content knowledge is assessed using the results from their teacher research project conducted in SED 551: Inquiry Into Classroom Practice. Students explore and analyze research in the field of education in order to apply it to their own instructional and classroom practices and they engage in the process of researching their own practice in order to promote the incorporation of research into the recursive process of planning, action, and reflection. The resulting research project, conducted in the student's own classroom, is assessed using the rubric below.

EVALUATION RUBRIC

	Exceptional 5	Strong 4	Adequate 3	Needs Improv. 2	Absent 1	NOTES
<b>INTRODUCTION:</b> Offers an inviting introduction to the research question.						
<b>ARGUMENT:</b> Makes an argument based on the data collected. Explains why this question and research are important in this context and in the larger field.						
<b>METHODS/METHODOLOGY:</b> Explains the process and procedures of the project. Includes reflections on struggles and successes.						
<b>THEMES:</b> Supports the argument statement with three clearly articulated themes from the data.						
<b>DATA:</b> Uses three forms of data to substantiate each theme. Data are rich, descriptive and convince the reader that your interpretation is compelling.						
<b>ANALYSIS:</b> Offers analysis of the data in your own voice to explain <i>how</i> the data supports the theme. Don't expect data to speak for themselves.						
<b>LITERATURE:</b> Uses relevant literature to support the topic at hand.						
<b>CONCLUSION:</b> Summarizes discussion and offers suggestions for future research.						
<b>WRITING:</b> Organization and voice						
<b>WRITING:</b> Conventions and APA format						
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY:</b> Cite your sources using APA format						
<b>OVERALL:</b> Project offers evidence of critical and reflective practice						

DATA

<u>ACADEMIC YEAR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>MEAN SCORES</u>
2009/10	8	50.13
2008/09	13	48.7
2007/08	8	51.3

### ASSESSMENT 3. PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

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#### DESCRIPTION

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To assess professional dispositions, the program uses the Professional Goals Essay submitted as part of the program application process:

#### **Professional Goals Essay**

In considering your admission to an advanced program, the faculty of the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development will review evidence that demonstrates your potential to enhance your expertise in the professional field of your choice.

**Directions:** Prepare a well-organized, focused essay of 300 to 500 words describing why you want to pursue graduate education. Included in the essay should be a reflection on:

- Your experiences, skills, and lifelong learning, which make your decision to pursue graduate study a sound choice for you.
- Your level of preparation for graduate study, knowledge in your chosen field, and professional activities/collaboration.
- Your professional goals and how these goals will prepare you to serve individuals and families from diverse backgrounds, and
- Your reasons for choosing RIC's graduate program.

**Please note:** This essay should demonstrate your best writing. It must be double-spaced and word processed (or typed).

#### INSTRUMENT (OR RUBRIC)

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RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE  
Feinstein School of Education and Human Development  
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

600 Mount Pleasant Avenue  
100 Horace Mann Hall  
Providence, RI 02908

Feinstein School of Education and Human Development  
Graduate Programs  
**PROFESSIONAL GOALS ESSAY-SCORING RUBRIC**

Candidate \_\_\_\_\_ Reader \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Score: Initial Assessment \_\_\_\_\_ Revision Date \_\_\_\_\_ Score \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>CONTENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection on experiences, skills and lifelong learning.</li> <li>Level of preparation, knowledge base, and professional activities.</li> <li>Professional goals and their relation to serving all individuals and families.</li> <li>Reasons for choosing RIC's graduate program.</li> </ul>	<p><b>EXEMPLARY (4)</b></p> <p>All content criteria are evident and show evidence of clear, well-reasoned reflection and understanding of the goals of graduate study. Essay includes effective use of personal experience to discuss level of preparation and promising dispositions.</p>	<p><b>ACCEPTABLE (3)</b></p> <p>Most criteria are evident or some evidence of thoughtful reflection and understanding of graduate study goals. Essay includes some relevant examples based on personal experience to discuss level of preparation and promising dispositions.</p>	<p><b>REVISE/RESUBMIT (2)</b></p> <p>Some criteria are evident or show little thoughtful reflection and understanding of graduate study goals. Essay includes few relevant examples based on personal experience; does not generally use those examples to discuss level of preparation or promising dispositions.</p>	<p><b>UNACCEPTABLE (1)</b></p> <p>Content is relevant but not comprehensive or well integrated. There is little evidence of thoughtful reflection or understanding of graduate study goals. Essay makes little connection to personal experience and/or level of preparation.</p>
<p><b>CONVENTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expression and voice.</li> <li>Organization of thoughts and ideas.</li> <li>Use of the English language.</li> </ul>	<p><b>EXEMPLARY (4)</b></p> <p>Well-focused essay with evidence of thought and organization in composition, phrasing, and structure. Effective transitions between ideas. No spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors are evident.</p>	<p><b>ACCEPTABLE (3)</b></p> <p>Essay is focused and shows some evidence of composition skills. Transitions between ideas are weak or inconsistent. Essay is mostly clean from errors (no more than three errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar).</p>	<p><b>REVISE/RESUBMIT (2)</b></p> <p>Essay is not focused and shows minimal evidence of composition skills. Structure is weak and little evidence of transitions between ideas. Essay contains numerous errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar but they do not detract from reader's understanding.</p>	<p><b>UNACCEPTABLE (1)</b></p> <p>Essay is poorly expressed and disorganized with little attention to language and sentence structure. Essay contains numerous errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar that significantly undermine reader's understanding.</p>
<p><b>OVERALL RATING</b></p>	<p><b>EXEMPLARY</b></p>	<p><b>ACCEPTABLE</b></p>	<p><b>REVISE/RESUBMIT</b></p>	<p><b>UNACCEPTABLE</b></p>

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DATA

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<u>ACADEMIC YEAR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>MEAN SCORES</u>
2009/10	8	6.7
2008/09	13	6.4
2007/08	8	6.5

\* If more than one measure is used, repeat the table for each measure.  
Note: If scores are not available, use course grades as a proxy.

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ASSESSMENT 4. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE/ACTION RESEARCH

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DESCRIPTION

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The program assesses candidates' professional practice based on a case study / action research project conducted in SED 554: Learning in Middle and High Schools. This project integrates mini-experiments with research-based instructional strategies and assessment strategies to improve the outcomes of focal case study students who are selected because they present particular challenges.

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EVALUATION RUBRIC

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[See next page]



## Project Rubric

CATEGORY	7 or 8 points	5 or 6 points	3 or 4 points	1 or 2 points
Descriptive Language	Language is consistently used with careful precision and evident respect for each student's uniqueness.	Language is mostly used with careful precision and evident respect for each student's uniqueness.	Language is sometimes used with careful precision and evident respect for each student's uniqueness.	Language is almost never used with careful precision and evident respect for each student's uniqueness.
Description of Context	Description of the context richly frames the discussion and supports the analysis and interpretation of data.	Description of the context helps to frame the discussion and to provides some support for the analysis and interpretation of data.	Description of the context is somewhat disconnected from the discussion and provides limited support for the analysis and interpretation of data.	Description of the context adds little to the discussion and fails to support the analysis and interpretation of data.
Amount of Information	All topics are addressed and all questions answered with enough sentences about each.	All topics are addressed and most questions answered with enough sentences about each.	All topics are addressed, and most questions answered with some sentences about each.	One or more topics were not addressed.
Quality of Information	Discussion clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Discussion clearly relates to the main topic. It provides some supporting details and/or examples.	Discussion relates to the main topic, but not enough details and/or examples are given.	Discussion has little or nothing to do with the main topic or no supporting details or examples are given.
Concept(s) from Readings	Any Concept from the course reading is fully explained and the application of the concept to the case study is clear.	Any Concept from the course reading is fully explained and the application of the concept to the case study is somewhat clear.	Any Concept from the course reading is somewhat explained but the application of the concept to the case study is somewhat unclear.	Any Concept from the course reading is not well explained and the application of the concept to the case study is unclear.
Instructional Activities	Any Instructional Activity used in the project is fully explained, observations are fully described, and focal students' activities are clearly analyzed.	Any Instructional Activity used in the project is fully explained, observations are fully described, and focal students' activities are somewhat clearly analyzed.	Any Instructional Activity used in the project is somewhat explained, or observations are somewhat described, and focal students' activities are partially analyzed.	Any Instructional Activity used in the project is not well explained, observations are not fully described, and focal students' activities are not adequately analyzed.
Reflection	Reflection offers important insights into the process and results of conducting the case studies.	Reflection offers some insights into the process and results of conducting the case studies.	Reflection offers limited insight into the process and results of conducting the case studies.	Reflection offers no insights into the process or results of conducting the case studies.
Organization	Discussion is very well-organized with well-constructed paragraphs and subheadings.	Discussion is organized with well-constructed paragraphs.	Discussion is organized, but paragraphs are not well-constructed.	The discussion appears to be disorganized.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	A few grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.



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<u>ACADEMIC YEAR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>MEAN SCORES</u>
2009/10	13	52.1
2008/09	7	52.6
2007/08	11	54.7

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 ASSESSMENT 5. DIVERSITY
 

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 DESCRIPTION
 

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The Program uses an assignment from SED 552: Social and Cultural Contexts of Education to evaluate candidates' ability to use knowledge of diversity to design effective practice:

### Choices About Teaching in Context

Throughout the semester, [the instructor] will be asking you to think about your own classroom in relation to the texts we read. Therefore, this assignment is designed as an initial assessment of your school population and how it relates to the teaching and learning that goes on in your classroom.

#### PART I (due week three)

- Look up some **quantitative data** about the demographics of your school. (Rhode Island teachers can draw from InfoWorks at [www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2009/default.asp](http://www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2009/default.asp)) and explain the racial-ethnic composition, the socio-economic status, the languages represented, the special needs population and any other factors you think might be relevant. In a page or two, summarize the data you find.
- Offer some **analysis** about how your teaching reflects these demographics. I want you to look at the choices you make as a teacher and reflect on how (if at all) your choices about teaching explicitly reflect the population you serve. Do you see your population reflected in the space, climate, curriculum and practices in your school/classroom? (For example, if your school is 48% Latino, do notes go home in Spanish? Are there posters with non-white people on the walls? Any nods to cultural practices, holidays or events that specifically cater to a Spanish-speaking community? Or if your school is 98% white, how is that reflected as well?)

#### PART II (due week ten)

- **Reflect** upon these choices in relation to the texts we have been reading thus far in class. How do your choices offer both a mirror for your students (in which they can see themselves reflected) and a window (in which they look out and see the world as it exists beyond themselves).

EVALUATION RUBRIC

Choices About Teaching Rubric

	Excellent (9.5-10)	Strong (9-9.25)	Great (8.5-8.75)	Good (8-8.25)	Passing (7.5-7.75)	Unacceptable/Absent (under 7)
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>						
Includes narrative description of your school and community						
Includes demographic data from official sources						
<b>ANALYSIS</b>						
Describes how demographics are reflected in the space and structure						
Describes how demographics are reflected in the climate						
Describes how demographics are reflected in the curriculum and assessments						
Describes how demographics are reflected in the pedagogy and classroom practices						
<b>REFLECTION</b>						
Clearly articulates how the space, structure, curriculum, assessments, climate and pedagogy you choose offer (or don't offer) a mirror and/or window to students						
Includes connections to three texts we have read						
<b>WRITING</b>						
Writing skills (structure, grammar, flow)						
Writing skills (creativity, voice, engagement)						

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**DATA**


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<u>ACADEMIC YEAR</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>MEAN SCORES</u>
2009/10	8	92.7
2008/09	14	89.3
2007/08	9	90.5

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**ASSESSMENT 6. CAPSTONE OR SUMMATIVE EXPERIENCE**


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**DESCRIPTION**


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For the capstone project for the M.Ed. ASTL program, candidates conduct a research project in their own classroom, usually of one (but sometimes more) of their courses, related to some discipline-related literacy instruction. The project is conducted during the course SED 555: Literacies Across the Disciplines. This action research project is described as follows: "This project is an examination of one's literacy-based teaching. For this project, teachers will identify a research problem to address in their classroom, observe students' literacy activity, analyze students' work in relation to the implementation of literacy-based lessons (that are designed for this project), apply course concepts and readings to the interpretation of students' literacy activity, and analyze the results of their improvement-oriented activities."

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**EVALUATION RUBRIC**


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The FSEHD Capstone Performance Scoring Rubric is used for this summative assessment.

FENSTEIN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
CAPSTONE PERFORMANCE

REVISED CAPSTONE PERFORMANCE SCORING RUBRIC

Candidate \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ EMFLID \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Initial Assessment \_\_\_\_\_ Revision Date \_\_\_\_\_

Communication and Expression	EXEMPLARY 4	ACCEPTABLE 3	DEVELOPING 2	UNACCEPTABLE 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration and organization of knowledge</li> <li>• Effective oral communication to range of individuals in given field</li> <li>• Effective written communication to intended audience</li> </ul>	<p>The candidate consistently presents clear, organized and comprehensive knowledge, thoughts and ideas relevant to the field.</p> <p>The candidate's oral communication is consistently articulate and effective in conveying relevant information to intended audience(s).</p> <p>The candidate's written communication skills are consistently free of errors of language, focused and effective in conveying information to intended audience(s).</p>	<p>The candidate presents appropriate knowledge, thoughts and ideas relevant to the field.</p> <p>The candidate's oral communication is effective in conveying relevant information to intended audience(s).</p> <p>The candidate's written communication skills displays minor errors of language, but are able to effectively convey information to intended audience(s).</p>	<p>The candidate's presentation of knowledge, thoughts and ideas is disorganized or incomplete.</p> <p>The candidate's oral communication skills are ineffective in presenting relevant information to intended audience(s).</p> <p>The candidate's written communication shows errors of language that detract from comprehension of the information or the candidate's written communication does not effectively convey information to intended audience(s).</p>	<p>The candidate consistently presents unclear, faulty or incomplete knowledge, thoughts and ideas relevant to the field.</p> <p>The candidate's oral communication skills are inarticulate and ineffective in conveying information to the intended audience(s).</p> <p>The candidate's written communication skills show significant errors of language, lack of focus and are ineffective in conveying information to intended audience(s).</p>
<p>Total score:</p> <p>4 = Lowest score to 4</p> <p>3 = Lowest score to 3</p> <p>2 = Lowest score to 2</p> <p>1 = Lowest score to 1</p>				
<b>TOTAL SCORE =</b>				

FEINSTEIN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
CAPSTONE PERFORMANCE

Reflective Problem-Solving	EXEMPLARY 4	ACCEPTABLE 3	DEVELOPING 2	UNACCEPTABLE 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective problem-solving</li> </ul>	<p>The candidate identifies the problem in an accurate and comprehensive way, clearly defines course of action and presents a detailed and useful plan to evaluate efficacy of results.</p>	<p>The candidate accurately identifies problem, defines a course of action and outlines a plan to evaluate efficacy of results.</p>	<p>The candidate identifies part of the problem, defines a limited course of action and demonstrates preliminary knowledge of need to evaluate efficacy of results.</p>	<p>The candidate identifies problem inaccurately, defines an inadequate course of action with no viable plan to evaluate efficacy of results.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflection of outcomes</li> </ul>	<p>The candidate critically reflects on problem-solving techniques, strategies, and results. Offers clear insights regarding self-knowledge.</p>	<p>The candidate identifies problem-solving techniques that are most helpful. Offers limited insights regarding self-knowledge.</p>	<p>The candidate summarizes process with no or little critical reflection. Offers limited awareness about own learning.</p>	<p>The candidate does not show evidence of an attempt to reflect on problem-solving or own learning.</p>
<p>Total score: 4 = Lowest score to 4 3 = Lowest score to 3 2 = Lowest score to 2 1 = Lowest score to 1</p>				
<p>TOTAL SCORE =</p>				



FERNSTEIN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
CAPSTONE PERFORMANCE

Professional Practice	<u>EXEMPLARY 4</u>	<u>ACCEPTABLE 3</u>	<u>DEVELOPING 2</u>	<u>UNACCEPTABLE 1</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical consumer of research</li>   <li>• Evidence-based practice advances well-being of children, families, or community</li> </ul> <p>Total score: 4 = Lowest score to 4 3 = Lowest score to 3 2 = Lowest score to 2 1 = Lowest score to 1</p>	<p>Performance demonstrates thorough and theoretically coherent application of significant research in specified, practice-related settings.</p> <p>Use of multiple and varied data to plan and/or implement practices that advance the practices, skills, knowledge, and/or dispositions of diverse children, family systems, school systems, or communities.</p>	<p>Performance demonstrates theoretically coherent application of significant research in specified, practice-related settings.</p> <p>Beginning use of multiple and varied data based sources to plan and/or implement practices that advance the practices, skills, knowledge, and/or dispositions of diverse children, family systems, school systems, or communities.</p>	<p>Performance demonstrates application of research that reflects limited understanding of theoretical connections to practice.</p> <p>Limited use of data to plan and/or implement practices that advance the practices, skills, knowledge, and/or dispositions of diverse children, family systems, school systems, or communities.</p>	<p>Performance demonstrates little evidence that practice is theoretically driven or relevant (as specified settings).</p> <p>Little evidence of data based planning or practice, and/or planning, practice does not advance the practices, skills, knowledge, and/or dispositions of diverse children, family systems, school systems, or communities.</p>
<p>TOTAL SCORE =</p>				

FEINSTEIN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
COURSE PERFORMANCE

Technology Use	EXEMPLARY 4	ACCEPTABLE 3	DEVELOPING 2	UNACCEPTABLE 1
Evidence of information technology use to develop new knowledge, application, to transfer existing knowledge, or to create new knowledge.	Performance demonstrates strong and widespread application of technology to effectively develop, transfer, or expand knowledge.	Performance demonstrates technology application to develop, transfer, or expand knowledge in a focused area of learning.	Performance demonstrates an emerging application of technology to support learning.	Performance demonstrates limited or no application of technology.
TOTAL SCORE =				

TOTAL SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_/16

DATA

ACADEMIC YEAR	N	MEAN SCORES
2009/10	13	13.7
2008/09	8	14.8
2007/08	10	13.3

DATA USE

The M.Ed. A.S.T.L. program was re-designed in 2005. Prior to the re-design, the program was moribund, attracting very few or no students in each of the last few years before re-design. Although the program remains small, it attracts enough students every year to comprise a new cohort and the data show that the students have a very high completion rate, as well as a fairly rapid completion rate. These levels and rates of completion contrast significantly with the program prior to re-design: there are many students who failed to complete that program, in contrast to the current program that has almost no students who have failed to make steady progress and currently all are on track to complete the program within 5 years.

One aim of the re-design was to use a cohort structure, and the success rate of students is probably linked to the cohort structure of the program. The program has a core sequence of 4 courses (all newly created as part of the re-design) that students take as a cohort over 4 consecutive semesters. The core and the cohort structure help to overcome the disparate interests and assignments of teachers whose work spans the middle and high school content areas. That is, although many of the students take many or all of their electives (comprising half of the program), in the content area in which they teach, all of the students come together for 2 consecutive years of course work in the core courses. The support structure that develops in the core courses, and the collegial relationships that are created, especially among content colleagues, likely contribute to the success of individuals

and to the program as a whole. Each year, new applicants to the program follow others from their school who came before.

Since the re-design, the core courses have been taught by a small group of faculty that has continuously monitored the curriculum and the linkages between courses. As a result, the curriculum has twice been modified in order to better accomplish the aims of the program. In 2009, the original 5-course core was reconfigured to four courses. This change allowed us to better support the cohort structure, since some students were unable to enroll in the core course that was only offered in the summer. In addition, the change led to greater integration of some curricular themes across the core courses. A second change has been planned that will be implemented in Fall 2011. This change will re-sequence the first two courses in a way that we think will better prepare students to meet expectations in the teacher research course, which will now be taken as the second course. We will monitor this upcoming change in part by comparing results in assessment data presented here as Assessment 2, as well as the data in subsequent assessments.

Part of the program re-design was to integrate the idea of “teacher leadership” into the program structure. As a result, the capstone experience was revised to be a performance in which each candidate presents the results of an action research project as an oral presentation for professional peers. The performance is evaluated by department faculty, using the school-wide performance rubric. However, many of the faculty who participate in the evaluation process do not teach courses in the program core. In future, program faculty will spend additional time with non-core faculty preparing for the evaluation activity in order to increase reliability of scoring.

The M.Ed. A.S.T.L. program exists in a challenging context. The degree carries no certification or endorsement, and there are no policies in the state that encourage or reward the achievement of a master’s degree. For some students, the state’s professional development requirements reportedly are in conflict with their graduate studies. Thus, the teachers who seek the degree do so for other than utilitarian reasons. Given this situation, the program faculty must remain mindful of challenges and responsive to students’ interests and needs, as in the changes made since the original re-design. In addition, program faculty will continue to discuss program assessments and outcomes to maximize students’ accomplishments and to promote the development of teachers who are prepared to be not only reflective practitioners, but also teacher leaders of their colleagues in the schools, the state, and the profession.