

Wells College
Inclusive Childhood Education Major and
Adolescence Education program
Assessment Plan (2016)

Wells College Mission

The mission of Wells College is to educate students to think critically, reason wisely, and act humanely as they cultivate meaningful lives. Through Wells' academic program, residential atmosphere, and community activities, students learn and practice the ideals of the liberal arts. The Wells experience prepares students to appreciate complexity and difference, to embrace new ways of knowing, to be creative, and to respond ethically to the interdependent worlds to which they belong. Committed to excellence in all areas of its reach, Wells College equips students for lifelong learning and for sharing the privileges of education with others.

The Wells College Education Program Mission Statement

The Wells College Teacher Education Program proceeds from the belief that classroom teaching done well is enormously complex. Mastery of subject matter is necessary but hardly sufficient; to help their students understand and embrace important knowledge and skills, teachers must understand learners as diverse, intellectual, emotional, and social beings. To help our students develop this understanding, we take advantage of and build upon the foundation laid by a Wells general education—the ability and inclination to engage with (rather than retreat from) complexity, to examine arguments critically but also to imagine constructively, and to exercise a strong ethical sense. We aim to graduate outstanding pre-service teachers who can model these liberal arts traits for their own students, who can draw upon a rich base of instructional principles and practices, and who collaborate with others in order to fulfill one of the major goals of Wells College: “sharing the privileges of education with others.”

Program Claims

The Wells College Education Program faculty makes four claims about our program:

Claim 1: Graduates of our program are proficient in subject matter knowledge and apply this knowledge in their teaching.

Claim 2: Graduates of our program understand and apply the necessary pedagogy and methodology to meet the diverse needs of students.

Claim 3: Graduates of our program are responsive, reflective professionals who have the knowledge and skills to serve their students.

Claim 4: Graduates of our program utilize relevant teaching technologies, their knowledge of students' individual and multi-cultural differences, and opportunities for continued growth in order to serve their students.

These claims were originally developed as part of the accreditation process defined by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), which has now become the Council for the Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP). They provide the frame for our data collection and can be interpreted as broad goal statements that describe our program completers, regardless of their grade level focus or certifications, who have met the specific program goals, outcomes and objectives described below.

Goals, Objectives and Outcomes:

Inclusive Childhood Education and Adolescence Education

The restructuring of our childhood program around our new Inclusive Childhood Education major led to a faculty discussion on the possible revision of our established goals, outcomes, and objectives to align with the new major, specifically the increased focus within that major on teaching students with disabilities. Should the outcomes for this new major be different from those previously identified as indicators of effective teaching across all grade levels and content areas? Should the outcomes for those students completing the Inclusive Childhood Education major be different from the outcomes of those students completing the Adolescence Education program? In the end, we decided that the framework provided below identifies those aspects of instructional practice and teacher responsibilities that have consistently been supported by research in the field as promoting improved student learning. There are diverse learners across all levels and within all classrooms. It doesn't matter if it is a 3rd grade classroom or a 10th grade classroom, a general education classroom or a special education classroom, an inclusive classroom or a self-contained classroom. Regardless of the structure of the classroom or the specific needs of the students within that room, all teachers should be prepared to provide rich learning experiences for students with varied skills, interests, needs, and cultural backgrounds.

With that picture of effective teaching in mind, the education faculty decided to continue using the established framework for both the Inclusive Childhood Education major and the Adolescence Education program. This will allow us to continue to examine the collected data for trends, successes and issues across all of our completers, while still being able to disaggregate data as we examine student performance within the elementary and secondary grade clusters and across each secondary subject area. We have added, however, three projects in our list of assessment tools that specifically target pre-service teachers' competence in designing instruction for students with disabilities at the childhood level:

- EDUC 307 IEP project
- EDUC 307 Planning / Instruction / Assessment Project
- EDUC 405 Planning / Instruction / Assessment Project

With the additions of these three assessment tools, program faculty have begun discussing the elimination of other projects as a way of simplifying and streamlining the data collection process.

Beginning this spring (2016), the student teacher evaluation rubric, which includes specific performance indicators of the outcomes noted below, was distributed to

cooperating teachers with the additional request to provide feedback on our defined expectations of pre-service teachers. Although the initial information gathered has been supportive, we will continue to analyze this feedback to determine if specific expectations for working with students with disabilities needs to be provided.

In the meantime, the education faculty are exploring the development of practices and guidelines that will provide our pre-service teachers with the critical connections they need to enhance their planning, instruction, and assessment of ALL students, while also providing cooperating teachers with clarity in terms of our expectations of pre-service teachers in special education classrooms.

Domain: Planning and Preparation

Planning for Diverse Learners

Wells pre-service teachers will understand that although the basic principles of learning, motivation, and effective instruction apply to all learners (regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, socioeconomic status etc.), learners differ in their developmental needs, preferences for learning mode and strategies, the pace in which they learn, their cultural backgrounds and unique capabilities. Addressing the needs of diverse learners begins in the planning process.

Pre-service teachers will . . .

1. develop clear instructional goals/objectives that reflect high expectations, curriculum standards and varied student needs while also permitting sound assessment;
2. plan how to achieve student learning goals, choosing appropriate strategies, resources and materials to: differentiate instruction, develop appropriate sequencing and pacing of learning experiences, and allow multiple ways to demonstrate learning;
3. design developmentally appropriate learning plans that demonstrate a knowledge of the students being taught; and
4. engage in inquiry about learning and inclusive practices within the contexts of teaching, learning, and schools and effectively communicate their learnings.

Content Knowledge

Wells' pre-service teachers will understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) they teach.

Pre-service teachers will . . .

1. have a working knowledge of the content standard(s);
2. understand major concepts, principles, debates, methods of inquiry, and outstanding issues that are central to the discipline(s) they teach;
3. know and use the academic language of the discipline; and
4. apply tools, structures and pedagogical techniques of the discipline(s).

Assessment

Wells' pre-service teachers will use multiple, varied measures to document student growth, engage students in reflection and goal setting, evaluate instructional effectiveness and modify instruction.

Pre-service teachers will . . .

1. design and use diagnostic, formative and summative assessments that engage learners in demonstrating clearly defined knowledge and skills;
2. design and implement assessment accommodations and modifications;
3. develop and articulate assessment criteria;
4. provide timely, specific, constructive feedback to guide students' progress toward goals;
5. analyze and interpret assessment data to monitor student progress and inform instructional practice;

Domain: Instruction

Instruction

Wells' pre-service teachers will understand and apply a variety of instructional strategies that support diverse groups of students in meeting rigorous learning goals.

Pre-service teachers will . . .

1. implement a variety of active learning strategies based on principles of effective instruction that meet varied learning needs and encourage higher level thinking;
2. use a variety of resources, including human and technological, to engage students in learning;
3. vary their roles in the instructional process (e.g. instructor, facilitator, coach, audience) in relation to the content and purposes of instruction and needs of the students;
4. ask questions that serve different purposes—probing for learner understanding, helping students articulate ideas and thinking processes, facilitating factual recall, stimulating curiosity etc.;
5. model effective communication strategies;
6. use a variety of instructional strategies to support and expand learner's communication through reading, writing, speaking and listening;
7. monitor student learning and adjust instruction in response to learning needs; and
8. analyze and evaluate a range of instructional theories and practices for their effectiveness in meeting diverse student needs.

Domain: Learning Environment

Learning Environment

Wells' pre-service teachers will work with learners to create challenging, inclusive environments that support individual and collaborative learning, encourage positive social interaction, and develop motivation to learn.

Pre-service teachers will . . .

1. communicate and interact with students in ways that demonstrate respect and responsiveness to individual needs and cultural backgrounds; and

2. organize and manage a classroom effectively using the concepts of respect and responsibility as the cornerstones.

Domain: Professional Responsibilities

Professionalism and Collaboration

Wells' pre-service teachers will demonstrate professional responsibility and engage relevant stakeholders to maximize student growth, development and learning.

Pre-service teachers will. . .

1. participate actively as part of an instructional team and effectively collaborate with a variety of adults within the school community;
2. communicate and collaborate with families, guardians and caregivers;
3. maintain timely and accurate records;
4. maintain confidentiality regarding student records and information;
5. participate in school and district events;
6. demonstrate professional behavior and attitudes in the workplace;
7. understand and discuss schools as organizations within a historical, cultural, political, and social contexts; and
8. understand and discuss the alignment of family, school and community;

Reflection and Continuous Growth

Wells' pre-service teachers will use evidence to continually evaluate and adapt their practice to meet the needs of the learner and to set informed goals.

Pre-service teachers will. . .

1. reflect on their instructional decisions, assess their effectiveness and generate alternative actions
2. actively investigate and consider new ideas that improve teaching and learning and draw on current education policy and research as sources of reflection;
3. set goals to enhance personal strengths and address personal weaknesses in teaching practice; and
4. understand and discuss how personal identity, worldview, and prior experience affect perceptions and expectations, and recognize how they may bias behaviors and interactions with others.

Means of Assessment of Claims, Objectives, and Outcomes

Program assessment tools, imbedded in education courses and used to measure success on our student outcomes and objectives, are noted in our assessment map. These include:

Student Teaching Evaluation Rubrics scores and comments

Student Teaching Portfolio Rubric scores

Student Exit Interview scores and comments

Web Quest Project scores

EDUC 301/331 Before/During/After Project

EDUC 405/406 Curriculum Unit

EDUC 307 Individual Education Plan (IEP) Project
 EDUC 307/405 Planning / Instruction / Assessment Projects

See our *Inclusive Childhood Education Major and Adolescence Education Program Assessment Map* for assessment tools organized around program goals and objectives.

Many of these same assessments are used to measure the claims that frame our accreditation process. Additional sources of evidence used in our accreditation process include GPAs, New York State Teacher Certification Examination (NYSTCE) scores, exit interviews, graduate surveys and graduate case studies.

Assessments Organized Around Claims

Claim	Sources of Evidence
<p><i>Claim 1: Graduates of our program are proficient in subject matter knowledge and apply this knowledge in their teaching.</i></p>	<p>~GPA: Major ~NYSTCE score: CST ~Student Teaching Evaluation Rubric: Content Knowledge ~Exit Interview Survey: Content Knowledge (Question 1) ~Survey of Graduates: Content Knowledge ~Case Studies</p>
<p><i>Claim 2: Graduates of our program understand and apply the necessary pedagogy and methodology to meet the diverse needs of students.</i></p>	<p>~GPA: Education Program and Inclusive Childhood Education ~edTPA scores ~Student Teaching Evaluation Rubric: Planning for Diverse Learners ~Exit Interview Survey: Preparation (Question #2) ~Survey of Graduates: Planning ~Case Studies</p>
<p><i>Claim 3: Graduates of our program are responsive, reflective professionals who have the knowledge and skills to serve their students.</i></p>	<p>~Student Teaching Evaluation Rubric: Instruction for Diverse Learners ~Exit Interview Survey: Instructional Delivery (Question #3) ~Survey of Graduates: Instruction ~Case Studies</p>
<p><i>Claim 4: Graduates of our program utilize relevant teaching technologies, their knowledge of students' individual and multi-cultural differences, and opportunities for continued growth in order to serve their students.</i></p>	<p>~Student Teaching Evaluation Rubric: Instruction for Diverse Learners: Technology #2b Planning for Diverse Learners: Knowledge of Students Reflection and Continuous Growth Professionalism Criterion #6 ~Exit Interview: Know and Apprec. of Student Diversity (Question #5) ~Graduate Survey: Instruction Question #2- Technology Reflection and Continuous Growth ~ WebQuest ~Case Studies</p>

How Assessment Data Is Utilized

Education Program faculty meet weekly to plan and discuss issues, concerns and (when appropriate) assessment results. Assessment is an on-going conversation and students' successes and struggles on course assessments are shared regularly. A summary of all assessment results is reviewed when portfolio defenses (evaluated collaboratively), student teacher evaluations, exit interviews and New York State Teacher Certification Exam (NYSTCE) have been completed. In the spring faculty review the data collected and collaboratively develop program goals for the following year. Annual goals are developed using the data collected from the previous year. For example, data collected over the course of the 2014-15 academic year was used to develop our 2016 goals.

Typically the Education Program Assessment Report gathers and analyzes data from across the assessment tools noted in the chart above. Given that there were only two program completers during the 2014-15 academic year, education faculty decided to combine the collected data from these two graduates with the data collected from our five program completers in spring, 2016. The data from these two years (2014-15 and 2015-16) will be combined and reported on in our 2017 assessment report, guiding our program changes for the 2017-18 academic year.

For this year's annual assessment report, the Education Program decided to look closely at the results of the spring, 2015 case studies in order to determine what specific changes might strengthen our program and increase our effectiveness at preparing quality pre-service teachers.

In the fall of 2012, the Wells College Education Program (WCEP) undertook a small qualitative study of graduates as part of our application for accreditation through the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), now the Council for the Accreditation for Education Preparation (CAEP). This study was well-received by our accreditors and, more importantly, was informative for education faculty in determining how we have served our students well in the past, and how we can continue to improve as we move forward in relationship to the new CAEP standards and the Regents Reform Agenda.

During the summer of 2014 a revised outline/protocol for additional case studies was developed by Professor Levy and two undergraduate research assistants, and received approval from the Wells College IRB. In spring 2015, the WCEP, led by Professor Levy, conducted an in-depth qualitative case study of four (two elementary, two secondary) program graduates, including classroom visits and focus group interviews with the K-12 students of the graduates. The number of study participants was chosen because it provided robust data while allowing Professor Levy time to spend several days in each of the teachers' classrooms. Our research questions included:

- Does the Wells College Education Program (WCEP) effectively prepare future teachers?
- What aspects of the WCEP are present in teaching?
- How does the WCEP benefit K-12 students?

Data collected from this project was organized and analyzed during the 2015-16 academic year and reviewed on June 2, 2016, resulting in the following goals:

1. Increase student teaching and field placements in urban districts.
2. Increase opportunities for students to engage in discipline-specific instructional methodologies.
3. Review and redesign EDUC 226 to better reflect: current issues in today's classrooms; evidence-based practices for developing community and relationship building; and strategies for applying these practices in challenging systems.
4. Increase opportunities for student engagement with technology.
5. Revise the case study protocol and implement throughout 2016-17.
6. Explore changes to our program assessment plan (additions and deletions) in order to better serve the assessment of our new major and to streamline the assessment process.

A more specific description of the case studies project, an overview of the analysis of data collected, and an action plan for the resulting annual goals can be found in the 2017 Education Program Annual Assessment Report.