

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 Due Date
2023-2024

Assessment Coordinator Name
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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

100% of Montessori practicum students will successfully complete action research projects in their practicum classrooms during their placement in MONT 617 and MONT 618 (placements are 540 hours for Early Childhood concentrations and 1080 hours for both Elementary I and Elementary II concentrations).

Timeframe for this Outcome

2022-2023

Performance Target for "Met"

100% of students in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn an A in the course, reflecting the successful completion of their action research project.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

90% - 99% of students in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn an A in the course, reflecting the successful completion of their action research project.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 89% of students in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn an A in the course.

Assessment Measure Used

Grades in MONT 617 and MONT 618

Frequency of Assessment

1 time per year - data gathered from Fall (MONT 617) and Spring (MONT 618)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

In Fall 2022, all 18 students achieved an A in MONT 617 and all 15/17 enrolled students achieved an A in MONT 618 (one student took a leave for medical reasons; two earned B's). This means 88% of students were fully successful in completing their action research project.

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

2

Comments/Narrative

To prepare for the action research project, all students successfully complete 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 its 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

These two courses are based on a yearlong action research project. The students were all successful in semester one, but some fell off in terms of their scores in semester two. This year, the instructors for this course are working together to ensure that in term one, students are given enough direction and asked to complete enough of the research project to be successful in term two, rather than weighting the implementation so heavily in the second semester of the sequence.

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.

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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

2022-2023

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 2.5-2.9 on the portfolio rubric.

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Students will attain an average score below 2.5 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)

Students averaged a 3.4 (n=16).

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. Lander's criteria are rigorous. Collection of this data is critical to accreditation and we revised the collection mechanisms this past year to better capture and maintain all data in Montessori programs.

The data this year also revealed a need to establish interrater reliability across the three concentrations (Elementary II, Elementary I, and Early Childhood). Overall, ratings were higher for EII (average of 3.7) and lowest for EC (average of 3.0). This seems to reflect the reliability of the individuals rating the portfolio across programs, rather than the quality of the student work. Two students in early childhood overall achieved a 2.9, putting these two students in the "partially met" category, but overall students exceeded the 3.0 threshold. After speaking with the Interim Director, we realized this is likely an inter-rater reliability issue. In the past, one individual scored all portfolios, as the number of students completing the program was much lower (typically 5-7 students).

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

This year, we revised the entire data gathering process for assessments, moving to a digital data collection mechanism wherever possible, establishing digital files, and revising all materials to match the expectations for accreditation reports. Because we were also writing the early childhood reaccreditation report, we took this opportunity to revise all processes for the EI and EII programs as well. In the Spring of 2024 we will plan inter-rater reliability training related to the scoring of the MACTE Accreditation portfolio.

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

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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

2022-2023

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 and grows by 5% per year.

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 2022: 45 students were enrolled, five-year rolling average of 24.6 M.Ed. students

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Fall 2022 saw another spike in enrollment with 45 graduate students in Montessori, leading to an improved five-year rolling average. A partnership with Charleston County Schools continues to be the major reason for this spike. We continue to work with Pickens, Laurens 55, Greenwood, Richland One, and Lex-Rich 5, who sponsor students in our programs each year. We are also looking to help a local public district potentially add Montessori to the district's offerings, which would further expand our partnerships. We continue to be Charleston's preferred provider and although the number of students in the program will decrease as more of their teachers earn certification, we expect they will still provide a smaller but steady number of students to our programs.

This year we have two undergraduate students aiming to complete their M.Ed. in Montessori during a fifth year at Lander and we revised the senior status requirements to make this possible in the 2022-2023 academic year. This adds a track for undergraduates interested in Montessori, but not interested in taking over 140 hours at the undergraduate level and paying for summer courses out of pocket to earn that credential.

Frances Marion planned to open a Montessori program, but that appears not to have come to fruition. In the next six months, we will begin marketing directly to public Montessori schools in that region to offer programs for their teachers.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

We need to replace our Interim Montessori Director and a search is underway. The Dean continues to advise all Montessori students and works with all partners and districts. We also need funds for outreach to other schools/ districts in our state and through AMS.

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Advertisements through AMS and MACTE, as well as social media channels frequented by Montessori educators.

Outcome 2

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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

Completions (Degrees Awarded)

Timeframe for this Outcome

2022-2023

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 2022-23: 14, with a five-year rolling average of 10.

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

3

Comments/Narrative

The rolling 5-year average demonstrates an average of approximately 10 Montessori M.Ed. graduates each year. That number declined dramatically in Fall 2021, with a single year of only 2 graduates. In 2022-2023, that number of graduates was slightly above normal, with 14 graduates. This academic year, we anticipate over 25 graduates by August 2024 as many of our Charleston cohort will complete their degree.

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.

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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

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 2022-2023

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)

NA

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

Comments/Narrative

The data for this goal was not available this fall. 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. Two years ago (Fall 2021), 61% of the students enrolled in the 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.

We have reached out to IR to get the Fall 2022 retention number and will report it in our next report, along with the Fall 2023 retention number.

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 exceeded CHE minimums for productivity and returned to more typical numbers of graduates. The total number of students in the program is likely larger than it will be in future years and maintaining 10-12 students annually, both graduating and continuing in the program, is our goal. Adding the fifth-year M.Ed. gives us a pathway for students, especially those with dual enrollment credits as they enter college, to pursue a Montessori degree. The number of students returning this year could not be determined at this time due to numbers in PowerBi not being available.

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 transitioned some Montessori Methods courses from the traditional summer course format to hybridized-academic year offerings this past year and that has resulted in better enrollments in the courses. Eventually, restructuring the course offerings will allow Lander to increase its Montessori graduate footprint outside of our 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**Dean's Email Address**

shuntbarron@lander.edu

Approved by Dean?**Signature of Dean****Comments from Dean's Review**