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
2024-2025

Assessment Coordinator Name
Laura Light

Enter Assessment Coordinator Email
llight@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 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
2023-2024

Performance Target for "Met"
100% of students in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn an A in the Action Research assignment, 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 Action Research assignment, 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 on the Action Research assignment.

Assessment Measure Used
Grades for the Action Research Assignment 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 MONT 617/618, 11 out of 13 students made an A on the Action Research Project while 2 of the 13 made a B.

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 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
These two courses are based on a yearlong action research project. The students were successful in semester one, but some fell off in terms of their scores in semester two. This year, the instructor for this course is working 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.

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 grade of an A in MONT 617 and MONT 618 based on the Competencies for Montessori Teacher Candidates as defined by MACTE.

Timeframe for this Outcome
2023-2024

Performance Target for "Met"
100% of students in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn an A in MONT 617 and MONT 618 tied to MACTE competencies.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
90% - 99% of students in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn an A in MONT 617 and MONT 618 tied to MACTE competencies.

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Less than 89% of students in MONT 617 and MONT 618 will earn an A in MONT 617 and MONT 618 tied to MACTE competencies.

Assessment Measure Used
Final grades in MONT 617 and MONT 618

Frequency of Assessment
2 times annually, 617 in fall and 618 in spring

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)
In Fall 2023, 12/13 students achieved an A in MONT 617 (1 earned a B). In Spring 2024, 11/13 enrolled students achieved an A, in MONT 618 (two earned B's). This means 89% of students were fully successful in completing their action research project.

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

Comments/Narrative
As the new director of the Montessori Education program, we will improve by better supporting the students in developing the MACTE competencies of Knowledge, Pedagogy, and Practice. All of these competencies are embedded throughout the Montessori coursework so supporting those students who may need extra help early on is essential. The belief that early action and identification of those students is a top priority to improve our results to 100%.

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. With the digital aspect, the director can monitor each students develop towards those MACTE Competencies.

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
2023-2024

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
Program Productivity Report	Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
Fall 2023: 34 students were enrolled, five-year rolling average of 27.2 M.Ed. students	3

Comments/Narrative
Fall 2023, we saw a decrease in enrollment but that correlates to the increase in graduation rates. Our large group of Charleston students have started to finish the program. We continue to work with Pickens, Laurens 55, Greenwood, Richland One, Newberry, 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
Social media account(s) would be beneficial in reaching more potential students. We also need funds for outreach to other schools/ districts in our state and through AMS.

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used
Advertisements showcasing our strengths and offerings to potential students.

Outcome 2

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?
Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome
Completions (Degrees Awarded)

Timeframe for this Outcome
2023-2024

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
Program Productivity Report	Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
Candidates who successfully graduated 2023-2024: 22, with a five-year rolling average of 12.	3

Comments/Narrative
The rolling 5-year average demonstrates an average of approximately 12 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 15 graduates. For 2023-2024, the large Charleston group earning certification is the reason for the spike.

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 2023-2024

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 Enrollment Data from Fall 2023 to Fall 2024

Frequency of Assessment
Assessed each Fall

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)
3 students were admitted in Fall 2023 and those 3 students remain in the Montessori Program in Fall 2024

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

Comments/Narrative
Our goal is to see our students 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. The course schedule has improved our retention rate by offering more hybrid courses so students do not have spend weeks during the summer on campus since majority of our students are full time teachers. This allows more ease in retaining students and allows flexibility for completion.

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 Director, 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 in the past couple of years 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?
Yes

Signature of Dean
Sarah Hunt-Barron

Comments from Dean's Review
When thinking of goals for the future for Montessori enrollments, setting a baseline for new students per year may help better support a larger program. A solid number would be 12 new students per year; adding additional districts, as well as private schools, will help to acheive this number annually, as would pulling in more candidates from across the country.

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.