

# 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**  
Special Education, B.S.

**Submission Due Date**  
Fall 2025: October 1, 2025

**Assessment Coordinator Name**  
Carol Hoyle

**Enter Assessment Coordinator Email**  
choyle1@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

Graduates in the Special Education program of the Department of Teacher Education will demonstrate specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions in accordance to the South Carolina Teaching Standards and Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards.

#### 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

Results of the Teacher Work Sample (TWS)

### Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

### Performance Target for "Met"

The average score for Lander's Department of Teacher Education Special Education Teacher Candidates on all 30 components of the Teacher Work Sample (TWS) is 2.75 or higher.

### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

The average score for Lander's Department of Teacher Education Special Education Teacher Candidates on 20/30 components of the Teacher Work Sample (TWS) is 2.75 or higher.

### Performance Target for "Not Met"

The average score for Lander's Department of Teacher Education Special Education Teacher Candidates on less than 20 components of the Teacher Work Sample (TWS) is 2.75 or higher.

### Assessment Measure Used

Teacher Work Sample (TWS)

### Frequency of Assessment

Once, during final semester of the special education professional program (student-teaching).

### Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

The average score on all 30 components was 2.75 or higher.

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

3

### Comments/Narrative

The Teacher Work Sample (TWS) assessment is designed to allow teacher candidates to demonstrate their performance during student teaching. Successful completion of this assessment demonstrates that teacher candidates are prepared to enter the classroom as entry-level teachers.

The TWS assessment was developed by the Lander Department of Teacher Education and is aligned with InTASC standards and the South Carolina Teaching Standards.

The TWS is professional demonstration of educator competencies through a performance-based assessment tool that provides direct evidence of a teacher candidate's ability to design and implement standards-based instruction, assess student learning and reflect on the teaching and learning practice. This was completed during the student teaching semester after consultation with the cooperating teacher regarding choice of appropriate topic to be taught in a particular subject area(s) as determined by each program. Candidates planned a unit based on the requirements of our program. The teacher candidates planned for, taught, assessed, analyzed assessment results, and reflected upon this unit of study that they created. Prior to designing instruction, the teacher candidate considered the contextual factors of the community, school, and students as well as the classroom environment, management techniques to be used, and procedures to be followed that would ensure student success.

Analysis of the results from the 2024-2025 school year demonstrates that the average score for special education student teachers on 30/30 of the components was 2.8 or higher with 27 of them being 3.0 or higher. Target score for this assignment is 3 (Met) with top score of 4 (Exemplary).

Analysis of component average scores indicate that these candidates showed strengths across 27 of these components with just 3 average scores below the target score of 3 and 13 average scores 3.4 or

above. The strongest score for this group of students was a 3.6 in TWS 2: Unit Goals Alignment to Standards.

Three areas of weakness were found where the average scores were all 2.8: TWS 1: Classroom Factors and Student Characteristics along with TWS 6: Small Group/Individual Differentiation. These results suggest that candidates continue to need to work on fully identifying and explaining the classroom factors and characteristics that may impact student learning. They also to need to adjust instruction to meet the different needs of their students as needed during instruction and fully explain this in their TWS.

#### **Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

\$0.00

#### **Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

No additional resources needed

## **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?**

Student Learning Outcome

#### **Enter Outcome**

Results of the EDUC 461 Final SC 4.0 Evaluation of Lesson Observations

#### **Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2024-2025

#### **Performance Target for "Met"**

The average score for Lander's Department of Teacher Education Special Education Teacher Candidates on all 29 components of the EDUC 461 Final SC 4.0 Evaluation of Lesson Observations is 3.0 or higher

#### **Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

The average score for Lander's Department of Teacher Education Special Education Teacher Candidates on 20/29 components of the EDUC 461 Final SC 4.0 Evaluation of Lesson Observations is 3.0 or higher

#### **Performance Target for "Not Met"**

The average score for Lander's Department of Teacher Education Special Education Teacher Candidates on less than 20/29 components of the EDUC 461 Final SC 4.0 Evaluation of Lesson Observations is 3.0 or higher

**Assessment Measure Used**

EDUC 461 Final SC 4.0 Evaluation of Lesson Observations

**Frequency of Assessment**

Once, during final semester of the special education professional program (student-teaching).

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

The average score on all 29 components was 3.0 or higher.

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

3

**Comments/Narrative**

Special Education Teacher Candidates taught a total of 10 lessons (4 the University Supervisor observed and 3 the Cooperating Teacher observed). Each was scored using the South Carolina 4.0 Rubric. A final meeting was held at the end of the clinical. In this meeting, the university supervisor, cooperating teacher, and candidate met to review all lessons and determine a final score for each component of SC 4.0 Rubric. This is the same rubric used by districts in South Carolina to evaluate their teachers. The rubric assesses the students on planning, instruction, classroom environment, and professionalism while in their final clinical setting (student teaching). The target for certified teachers is 3.0 for components.

Analysis of the average scores for spring candidates found the following:

The candidates' average score on all components was 3.0 or higher. These candidates' average score was 4 for 5 of the Professionalism components. These results suggest that these Lander graduates exhibited highly professional behaviors throughout their final clinical (student teaching) semester.

The three lowest average scores of 3 were found in Presenting Instructional Content, Grouping Students, and Thinking skills. This suggests that candidates would benefit from more direct instruction in these three areas.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

none

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

n/a

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

Lander University Special Education Teacher Candidates demonstrated their mastery of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for the South Carolina Teaching Standards and Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards as seen in their meeting the performance outcomes for the TWS and the EDUC 461 Final SC 4.0 Evaluation of Lesson Observations. These two assessments evaluate how the teacher candidates plan, teach, and manage the classroom in their final clinical setting (student teaching).

Candidates showed strengths in designing instruction and planning their classroom environment and demonstrated professionalism throughout their semesters.

While candidates designed their lessons well, presenting that instruction and making decisions on when to adjust that instruction are areas that they found some challenges.

**Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

Emphasis for the 2024-2025 year will be placed on providing feedback to candidates in their clinical experiences on how to clearly present instruction using explicit instruction, modeling, and visuals.

Candidates often struggle with using various grouping in a lesson as their special education classes are smaller in number. More assistance in finding ways to have students work together will be provided in special education methods courses.

## 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

To comply with Program Productivity standards as defined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

### Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## 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

Major Enrollment

### Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

### Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (special education) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 12.5.

### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Not applicable

### Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (special education) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 12.5.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner

**Frequency of Assessment**

Annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

33.8

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

3

**Comments/Narrative**

Special Education faculty attended Lander Open Houses or provided information for faculty attending to enhance recruitment of special education majors. Special education faculty encouraged new education majors to consider the special education major. Dean and chair have encouraged teacher cadets interested in special education to come to Lander.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

\$0.00

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

No additional resources needed to sustain the results.

## 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**

Academic Year 2024-2025

**Performance Target for "Met"**

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (special education) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 8.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

Not applicable

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (special education) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 8.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner

**Frequency of Assessment**

Annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

7.6

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

1

**Comments/Narrative**

We have seen a drop in our graduates in the past few years. Our graduate number for 2025 was 6. We currently have 5 special education majors graduating this academic year and the number will remain below 8 for 2027. This drop in graduates has happened since COVID along with a trend in students telling me that parents and others have told them not to go into special education. We are working to dispel the negatives from the outside of Lander and show students the positives in pursuing a career in special education. Our current sophomore number is back over 8.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

\$0.00

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

No additional resources are needed to sustain the results.

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

The Special Education Program met expected outcomes for this goal.

**Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

Assistance and supports will be provided to special education majors to successfully complete the requirements to move forward in the program and graduate at expected semesters. Candidates will be encouraged to take their required Praxis Core Exams in a timely manner and study materials will be provided to support them in preparation.

The program coordinator will be welcoming teacher cadets into her class and speaking with them on Teacher Cadet Day this year to encourage them to consider special education.

**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**

All Special Education Majors will attain a score of 155 on the Praxis II required for their teaching certification in the state of South Carolina (Passing Score is 145)

**Pillar of Success Supported**

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

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**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

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

Student Learning Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Praxis II-Test #5355

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2024-2025

**Performance Target for "Met"**

Praxis II Test #5355- score of 155 or higher

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

Praxis II Test #5355- score of 145-154

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Praxis II Test #5355- score of less than 145

**Assessment Measure Used**

Praxis II-Test #5355

**Frequency of Assessment**

Yearly (prior to student teaching)

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

6/6 teacher candidates who took the exam scored  
163 or higher

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

3

**Comments/Narrative**

Students are encouraged to pass their professional Praxis II exam prior to enrollment in EDUC 461 (student teaching). This was the first year that all students took the new required exam: #5355 Special Education: Foundational Knowledge.

The program coordinator conducted an analysis of the scores for the 6 teacher candidates who took the exam for this academic year. All 6 passed the exam required score of 145 and scored 163 or higher on the exam. Candidates' mean score was 172.7. The range of scores was 163-187 with a median score of 172.5.

Candidate scores for each of the four categories on the exam were reviewed by looking at whether candidates' scores fell within the average range, below the average range, or above the average range as noted in individual score reports.

Two areas of strength this year were found: Effective Planning and Instruction and Productive Learning Environments (1) and Professional Learning, Practice, and Collaborations (2). This supports the results

found in Goal 1 in which candidates showed strengths in designing instruction and planning their classroom environment and demonstrated professionalism throughout their semesters.

Scores did not indicate an area of weakness across the 6 candidates, but 1 candidate did show lower scores in Human Development and Individual Learning Differences. This aligns with the findings for TWS in Goal 1 in which candidates had difficulty fully identifying and explaining the classroom factors and characteristics that may impact student learning and adjusting instruction to meet the different needs of their students.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

\$0.00

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

No additional resources are needed to sustain results.

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

100% of the students who took the exam passed the exam again this academic year and met the expected score of 155.

**Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

Additional emphasis will be placed on identify classroom factors along with other contextual factors and connecting how these impact student learning in both methods and clinical courses. Emphasis will be placed on identifying how these factors impact instructional planning and instruction. Students will reflect on these areas after teaching their lessons in their SPED 329 and 429 clinical experiences.

Dr. Hoyle will analyze student reports again this coming year to determine if there are any specific areas that need to be emphasized as the students continue to take this new exam version.

**Upload Rubrics/Other Files**

**Dean's Email Address**

sbismarck@lander.edu

**Approved by Dean?**

Yes

**Signature of Dean**

Stephen Bismarck

**Comments from Dean's Review**

**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.**