Defining Graduate Program Goals and Assessing Student Outcomes
Master of Education – Early Childhood Initial Licensure

Goal Statement

The early childhood initial licensure program is designed to prepare outstanding teachers of young children who will have a strong foundation in child development theory and research and developmentally appropriate methodology for teaching children within the early childhood years (birth – age 8.) Clinical experiences in the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School and in local urban/suburban public schools create a strong experiential base in which to apply the principles and methods learned in University courses. Emphasis is placed on understanding individual learners, working with diverse learners, using a variety of instructional strategies, inclusive programming for children with and without special needs, working closely with families, creating positive classroom communities, all forms of professional writing and lesson planning, authentic assessment, documentation of student learning, reflective practice, and professional development and ethics.

The program is offered through the Institute of Child Development, which is part of the College of Education and Human Development. All programs are aligned with the central themes of the college’s conceptual framework.

Conceptual Framework for P – 12 Professional Education Programs
The central themes of the Conceptual Framework are:
- Promoting inquiry, research and reflection
- Honoring the diversity of our communities and learners; and
- Fostering a commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.

Skills/Outcomes

All required coursework and clinical experiences are aligned with the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers:

Standard 1 – Subject Matter
The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structure of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

Standard 2 – Student Learning
The teacher understands how students learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
Standard 3 – Diverse Learners
The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and with exceptionalities.

Standard 4 – Instructional Strategies
The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students’ development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

Standard 5 – Learning Environment
The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Standard 6 – Communication
The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

Standard 7 – Planning Instruction
The teacher plans and manages instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

Standard 8 – Assessment
The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

Standard 9 – Reflection and Professional Development
The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of her/his choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

Standard 10 – Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships
The teacher communicates and interacts with parents/guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support students’ learning and well-being.

Means for Assessing Learning

1. Coursework – courses are designed to align and cover all of the Minnesota Board of Teaching Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers. Students must complete all coursework with a grade of C- or better to receive course credit.

2. Clinical Experiences – University supervisors and community cooperating teachers use both a dispositions assessment and a rubric aligned with the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice. The disposition assessment and the rubric were designed and adopted
by College of Education and Human Development and are used as both formative and summative assessments of each candidate’s readiness for teacher licensure.

3. Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations - All Early Childhood teaching candidates must pass the Basic Skills Test (Reading, Writing and Mathematics), the Early Childhood Content Test, and the Early Childhood Pedagogy Test before being recommended for licensure.

4. Teacher Performance Assessment – the edTPA is a standardized portfolio style performance assessment that focuses on teacher candidates’ classroom instruction and relationships with students that are linked to improved student learning. Each edTPA submission is assessed by calibrated scorers not affiliated with the University of Minnesota. Completion of the edTPA is required by the Minnesota Board of Teaching.

Plan for Review

The Initial Licensure Program in Early Childhood Education program is reviewed regularly during both College of Education and Human Development and Minnesota State Board of Teaching processes.

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation is scheduled to visit the College of Education and Human Development in 2018 for reaccreditation. More information about their standards can be found at http://caepnet.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/final_board_approved1.pdf

Teacher licensure programs at the University of Minnesota are evaluated every two years as part of the Program Effectiveness Reports for Continuing Approval for the Minnesota Board of Teaching. Programs are evaluated against the Minnesota Board of Teaching Standards. This is a continuous improvement model where programs report on areas for improvement. More about that process can be found at http://mn.gov/board-of-teaching/images/RD4186.pdf