Graduate Program (and degree(s)): (e.g., Special Education, MSE) Special Education Graduate Programs

Individual(s) Completing the Questionnaire/Report: David M. Gordon, Graduate Coordinator

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
1. Please list the emphases and post-baccalaureate certificate programs offered by your graduate program.

   **Emphases:**
   - Cross Categorical Special Education: Cognitive Disabilities Emphasis
   - Cross Categorical Special Education: Learning Disabilities/Emotional Behavior Disorders
   - Early Childhood Special Education

   **Certificates:**
   - Transitional Specialist Graduate Certificate
   - Autism Graduate Certificate

2. Provide the number of students (both FTE and headcount) and number of individuals who have completed their graduate degrees through your program during terms and years indicated.

   (Skip to Question #3. This information will be secured and filled in by the Campus Self-Study Coordinator)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Year</td>
<td>FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1996</td>
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<td>Spring 1997</td>
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<td>Fall 1997</td>
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<td>Fall 2004</td>
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<td>Spring 2005</td>
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</table>

3. Overview and evaluate the adequacy of the human, physical, and fiscal resources your department deploys to serve students and meet other programmatic needs by answering the questions below:

   **Human Resources**
   Evaluate the general adequacy of the human resources (i.e., the # of faculty and instructional staff and their skills) relative to the graduate program’s ability to serve its student populations and achieve other programmatic goals. Do this by assigning a number between “1” (completely inadequate) to “9” (completely satisfies needs).
In a paragraph or two, discuss why you’ve assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of limitations.

The department has lost 1.5 faculty/staff positions since 2001. Impact is seen most significantly in the need to hire ad-hoc staff to teach new curriculum courses and supervision in the postbac licensure program. In the Graduate program SPECED 704 Applied Action Research course which is the final field research in the program is staffed completely by faculty overloads. In addition, we have a serious shortage of advisors to support two basically new programs. Seventy-five percent of our class enrollments in the postbac program are at maximum and we are unable to offer additional sections in a training area of very high need nationally. In light of these serious shortages, student evaluations of our program remain highly positive.

Physical Resources
Evaluate the adequacy of the physical resources available to support the graduate program ability to serve its student population and achieve programmatic goals by assigning a number between “1” (completely inadequate) to “9” (completely satisfies needs). Consider such issues as office space, classroom space, supporting technology, lab space to support research and/or instruction, etc.

5 1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you’ve assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of limitations.

There is a critical shortage of classroom space with tables and technology especially in the evenings when approximately 60% of our courses are offered. It is difficulty for faculty to teach outside of the building due to needed demonstration assessment and instructional materials. Most significantly, the department lost its assessment facility two years ago. We have inadequate storage for assessment materials and lab classroom that is too small for the enrollment and the demonstration and practice of assessment skills.

Fiscal Resources
While recognizing that every academic program would benefit from a larger budget, evaluate the adequacy of fiscal resources allocated to the program to serve its student populations and achieve other programmatic goals by assigning a number between “1” (completely inadequate) to “9” (completely satisfies needs).

7 1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you’ve assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of key expenses, and key needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of fiscal limitations.

Our budget adequately supports services and supplies yet we often need additional funds to support technology resources. Minimal professional travel is supported by the university and our budget provides no additional resources for faculty presenting at conferences and requesting staff development. We have course fees to help support lab materials, however, due to recent cutbacks in state funding our total reserve budget for acquisition and re-supply of assessment materials was confiscated. Some support has been provided by the COE yet we must have an ongoing budget for this purpose.

4. In a paragraph or two, overview significant changes made in your graduate program or its curriculum since 1996 (i.e., the last North Central Association Accreditation Visit).

To meet the needs of our post-bacs interested in licensure, the Department has engaged in significant curriculum reform since 1996. In 2000, we secured a UW System Entitlement to Plan and changed the Early Childhood: Exceptional Educational Needs major to the
Early Childhood Education Dual Licensure in General and Special Education Prog. In 2001, we made significant revisions in our Masters Degree in Special Education by deleting categorical emphases in Cognitive Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, Emotional Behavior Disorders, and Transitional Special Needs and creating a generic degree including 24 credits of new coursework. This program also provides 12 credits of specialization electives in licensure areas or certificate programs in Transition or Autism. In 2004, we implemented a new special education licensure program deleting CD, LD, EBD categorical emphases and creating a cross categorical 1-12 licensure with specialization in CD or LD/EBD.

In another paragraph or two, describe why these changes occurred. The impetus for Early Childhood Program was initiated by a strong national movement in the field to train all educators in early intervention strategies for young children with and without disabilities. The Cross Categorical Special Education Licensure Program was also initiated to meet new state licensure options and address the national trend in cross categorical teacher preparation. The changes in the graduate program were inspired by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Thus, we dropped the traditional thesis or written comprehensive exam process and moved to an classroom-based action research project as the capstone experience in the program. Additional certificate programs were developed to meet emerging demands in training at the regional, state, and national trends. Summer Institute programs have been developed as well to meet critical topics in the profession e.g., Alternative Assessment, Psychopharacological Aspects of Treatment, etc.

MISSION & PLANNING

5. In a paragraph or two, describing any significant projects/initiatives that the graduate program is planning or currently has underway, but has not yet completed. This department has just completed major revisions in all aspects of our program. We are currently working to develop and refine assessments of student learning and program and analyzing data for purposes of programmatic improvement. However, we are in the early stages of this.

6. Below are five “core values” the University identifies as central to its purposes. Please evaluate the importance of each core value in terms of how each aligns with the purposes of your graduate program (i.e., take a hypothetical 100 points and distribute them among the five values, with those values that align more closely to the purposes of your program receiving more points).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Value</th>
<th>Importance (100 points)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of the individual</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and professional integrity</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to serve</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to develop a sense of community, respect for diversity, and global perspectives</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total=</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Every academic program engages in planning. Review the list of variables below and evaluate the extent to which each of the following influences decision-making behind the planning process for your graduate program, particularly as it relates to your curriculum (i.e., take a hypothetical 100 points and distribute them among the planning variables, with those variables playing a larger role in your planning process receiving more points).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Variables</th>
<th>Importance (100 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mission of the University, the School of Graduate Studies, the department, or the graduate program</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic assessment data/information relevant to student performance against learning outcomes</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. In 1997, the Graduate Council approved the following mission statement as one that characterized the overarching mission of graduate education at UW-Whitewater.

The School of Graduate Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater oversees programs whose goal is to provide high quality, practitioner-oriented programs that use knowledge and skills acquired through baccalaureate degrees as a foundation for advanced preparation and professional development for careers in business and industry, education and human services.

The graduate programs achieve this through provision of learner-centered processes which couple professional experiences with advanced knowledge and highly-refined analytic, communicative and functional skills such that their students are capable of performances that characterize the best practices of their profession.

To that end, all master's level graduates will be able to:

- comprehend and discuss advanced theoretical questions and current issues;
- collect, analyze and interpret data applicable to complex questions and problems;
- conceptualize, evaluate and implement solutions to complex problems;
- use appropriate technologies as needed; and
- synthesize and articulate multiple concepts in a clear, concise and persuasive manner

Evaluate the extent to which this mission statement aligns with the purposes of your graduate program by assigning a “1” (has no alignment with the purposes of our program) to “9” (aligns closely with the purposes of our graduate program).


9. Does your graduate program have a mission statement?

Yes  No

If you answered “yes,” please list the mission statement here. Also, if your mission statement can be accessed on the web, please list the URL here.

Department Mission Statement: [http://academics.uww.edu/speced/index.htm](http://academics.uww.edu/speced/index.htm)

The Department of Special Education faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater strive to prepare teachers for the 21st century who demonstrate professional integrity and competence to work with students with diverse abilities and backgrounds, with families of the students they teach, with other professionals and with members of their communities.
We seek to accomplish this by maintaining high expectations for our students, by promoting self-reflection among our students, by facilitating our students' ability to engage in inquiry that broadens their vision and perceptions, and by providing access to a diverse, researched and theory-based curriculum. We view ourselves as a community of teaching scholars who model those abilities we expect of our students. We accomplish this through collaboration with one another, with our peers in the University community, and with the citizens of our community. We model the scholarship of discovery and the scholarship of application through our research, publication activities and community service. Individually we represent diverse philosophies, opinions, talents and skills. Together we draw from and celebrate that diversity!

If you answered "yes," please describe how, if at all, this mission statement plays a role in your graduate program's planning and/or decision-making, particularly as it relates to the curriculum.

Our mission has been and continues to be the philosophical base for curriculum development and refinement. Its focus on diversity is central to our profession and continues to guide the need for development in specifics issues of culture diversity. In addition to responding to several common university, college, and departmental goals, the reconfiguration of our current Masters Degree in Special Education is prompted by several other national, state and regional issues influencing educational practice.

Changes in the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) licensure specify that renewal of initial and professional educators' licenses will require a portfolio that identifies and documents professional development activities related to professional development goals. Suggested evidence of goal attainment includes portfolios of action research projects and results. Our proposed program changes include training in portfolios and action research and offer thematic institutes that will allow us to be responsive to the professional development goals of teachers in the region. Program faculty have established an advisory committee of regional administrators and teachers who will collaborate to determine themes, topics, and speakers for our Summer Institute Series and help to establish our new graduate program as a staff development resource for the region.

Recognizing that the single most important action that the United States can take to improve student performance is to strengthen teaching, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) set out in 1987 to identify the knowledge and skills that characterize accomplished teaching; create the nation's first advanced professional standards for K-12 teachers; and implement a voluntary national system of National Board certification for teachers based on high and rigorous standards for accomplished teaching. NBPTS, which is strongly supported by most major educational associations and the Wisconsin DPI, has certified nearly 5000 teachers nation-wide and expects to certify another 5000 this year; with growing interests among Wisconsin's teachers. Educators under the new licensing rules, who earn NBPTS, will also receive the Wisconsin Master Educators license.

The proposed changes in our graduate program are designed to help prepare teachers for this certification by: (1) integrating NBPT standards throughout the coursework; (2) providing instruction, coaching, and collegial web-based and other networks to create portfolio evidence of teaching practice; (3) teaching methods for analyzing and reflecting on that evidence in writing; and (4) assisting them in their preparation for the NBPTS examination of content knowledge and pedagogy.

Additional philosophical and structural changes in the nature of services provided for students with disabilities in public schools have prompted changes in our program. Parents, educators, and policy makers have promoted a shift away from segregated classrooms/facilities for students identified as having specific categories of disability (i.e., cognitive disabilities, learning disabilities, emotional behavioral disorders, etc.) to more inclusive practices where instruction is differentiated to accommodate the special learning needs of all children in general education settings. This shift, accompanied by the national
movement for students to demonstrate proficiency on state standards, requires the skilled collaborative efforts of special and general educators to develop classroom-based research on instructional practices evaluating both student outcomes and program effectiveness. Thus, the revisions in the Masters Degree Program are designed to promote the professional skills teachers need to accomplish this goal.

**Graduate Quality**

10. In the 1996 Report of a Visit filed by the visiting accreditation team, the lone “concern” mentioned in the report related to graduate programming. The Report recommended that “Existing graduate programs should be carefully reviewed with attention given to issues such as: inclusion of scholarship, opportunities for a true graduate experience, elimination of a number of dual-level courses, and faculty loads.”

Evaluate the extent to which having students engaging in scholarly activity relates to the student learning outcomes (or the process of achieving the student learning outcomes) of your program by assigning a “1” (student scholarly activity plays no role in our graduate student’s achieving our program’s learning outcomes) to “9” (student scholarship is essential to achieving the student learning outcomes of our program).

8

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you’ve assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of why and how student scholarship does and/or does not play a role in student learning in your graduate program.

The graduate program recognized the key issues of scholarship and the rigor of a true graduate experience by adopting an action research model as a replacement for the traditional comprehensive exam. We have had approximately 35 candidates complete the action research component and graduate since 2002 academic year. Topics include current key issues in special education (e.g., applied behavior analysis in relation to children with ASD, transition systems, efforts to enhance student learning, etc.). The response to the change in program outcome has been positive and the faculty are encouraged about mentoring student led scholarship.

In a paragraph or two, define how your program defines a “true graduate experience,” addressing, in particular, how graduate-level learning differs from undergraduate-level learning. (You may choose to address the difference in terms of the three conceptual differences identified by the Graduate Council: Content: What content areas of the course will graduate students explore with greater depth, and/or what additional content areas will graduate students examine? Intensity: What are the unique course requirements for graduate students—in terms of additional readings or assignments, different requirements in assignments, different role expectations, and/or different evaluation methods and/or standards—that reflect greater intellectual intensity and rigor? Self-Directed: What outside-of-class activities are required of graduate students, including research, and how do they reflect a greater degree of self-directed learning?)

All of our courses in the licensure program are cross listed and are dual leveled. The course syllabus of each course must reflect how the graduate component reflects differences in content, intensity, and self-directed. One example is of the language used in a syllabus is from 524 graduate component of the Foundations of Special Education course.

**Graduate Level Requirements**

*Content (Breadth & Depth).* The course content for graduate students has greater depth and more specialized coverage of advanced disciplinary issues relevant to theory and its application. The additional graduate project requires graduate students to complete a professional development activity, in addition to the other course requirements. Each student will select (with approval from the instructor) a professional development activity related to this course. Activities might include (but are not limited to), researching a topic of interest and doing a poster presentation; attending a professional workshop, mini-course, or conference session; involvement in a meeting with other professionals; attending
a lecture or presentation that surrounds the topics covered in this course. The written report of this experience will include: a copy of any material received at the activity, a description of the activity, and an evaluation of the activity (What did you learn from it and how can you use it in future?) and a description of the theoretical applications this activity has upon professional on practice. See assignment packet for a detailed description of requirements.

Intensity. The course content for graduate students reflects a more intensive level of study and greater academic/intellectual rigor than the undergraduate course work. The requirements for the graduate-level philosophy presentation include complex application of theory (humanistic, bio-medical, neurological psycho-dynamic behavioral, ecological, constructivist, or information processing) to current professional practice. The requirements for the graduate level IEP case study require the development of an instructional plan for students whose learning is affected by one of the disabilities discussed in the course. Specific activities for working with families, school staff, and community agencies are included. Standards of evaluation differ for graduates in terms of point allotment.

Process (Pedagogical Design). Graduate students are required to meet with the professor to develop and research a professional topic of interest. This will also require graduate students to complete out-of class activities that might include attending a professional workshop, mini-course, or conference session; involvement in a meeting with other professionals; attending a lecture or presentation that surrounds the topics covered in this course. Undergraduate students are not required to complete this requirement. The professional development activity will promote more individual interaction with the professor(s) as we develop and discuss ideas for professional development and it will necessitate more self-directed learning and greater use of campus learning resources than the undergraduate course work.

In a paragraph, discuss the role that dual-level (i.e., 300/500; 400/600) courses play in your graduate curriculum.
All of our courses in the licensure program are cross listed and are dual leveled. Many of our graduate students (64.5%) are also working for licensure in special education. Because many of our graduate students are also working toward licensure, all of the licensure courses are dual level. Also to meet the needs of many of these post-bac graduate students, all of our licensure courses have at least one section per academic year offered in the evening to accommodate for those working in the schools or other professional positions.

Does having responsibility for teaching graduate-level courses in your program alter the teaching load of your program’s faculty?
Yes No X

If “yes,” take a paragraph to describe how faculty teaching load differs, and why such adjustments are made.

**STUDENT LEARNING & ASSESSMENT**

11. List the student learning outcomes for each of the emphases areas and post-baccalaureate certificate programs identified in question #1.
   See Appendix A: Student Learning Outcomes Cross Categorical Content Analysis
   Appendix B: Masters Degree in Special Education
   Transitional Specialist Certificate Program
   Autism Certificate Program
12. Complete the grid below by listing the emphasis areas and post-baccalaureate certificate programs from question #1 across the top row (and indicated by the example). Then, under each emphasis and certificate program, place an “X” indicating which data collection methods are used to assess the extent to which the student learning outcomes are achieved (evidence that students know and can perform against the objectives). Mark, where relevant, both “direct assessment methods” (efforts that directly evaluate student performance) and “indirect assessment methods” (efforts that evaluate student performance based on perception of student, alumni, etc. ).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>(Example) Knitting (Emphasis)</th>
<th>CC: CD</th>
<th>CC:LD/EBD</th>
<th>MSE</th>
<th>ASD</th>
<th>TSN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum-Embedded Exams/Tests</td>
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<td>Curriculum-Embedded Essays</td>
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<td>Curriculum-Embedded Projects</td>
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<td>Capstone Project Review (thesis, comprehensive exams, etc.)</td>
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<td>Portfolio Review</td>
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<td>Reviews by External Evaluators (e.g., intern supervisors)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Placement Test Scores</td>
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<td>Performance on Post-Bac. Exams (e.g., GRE, GMAT, CPA)</td>
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<td>Exit Interview/Questionnaire</td>
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Please list specific data/information sets relevant to the graduate programs academic assessment efforts that the UW-W Self-Study Committees, and/or the Higher Learning Commission’s Visiting Accreditation Team can access to review/consult.

- For Post-Bacs in licensure program Unit Assessment Reports for The Department of Special Education Licensure Phase 3 and Phase 4 Portfolios for Fall 02, Spring 03, Fall 04
- Candidate Assessment of Graduate Program and Certificate Programs
- 
- 

13. Indicate specific changes to the department’s operation or planning, if any, that have resulted from the collection and use of the data/information identified in the preceding question. Place an “X” in the appropriate box in the far right hand column for any of the following changes that have occurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmatic Changes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcomes (e.g., changes in what students should learn in the program)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum (e.g., revisions to sub-major, change in pre-requisites, addition of new courses, deletion or combining of coursework, changes in existing course content, etc.)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling (e.g., when courses are offered, etc.)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Procedure (e.g., changes in advising)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In a paragraph, discuss your graduate program's use of academic assessment data/information as chronicled in the table above. Discuss, in particular, how these changes have improved or stand to improve student learning.

**Improvements in the following:** Advising procedures and materials, course assessment artifacts designed to meet standards, refinements in curriculum and spiraling nature of course objectives, portfolio instruction of reflection, selection of artifacts, and written documentation requirements, and final presentation portfolios.

14. In the box below, indicate the extent to which you think your graduate program has fully implemented its academic assessment program, with 100% representing a fully-implemented program. Consider the extent to which the department has developed clearly stated learning outcomes, systematically collects data/information that informs the extent to which the outcomes are achieved, and uses the data to make changes to the curriculum, etc.

95% to which academic assessment program is fully implemented

If you've indicated a percentage other than 100%, please list actions that remain to be completed before implementation of the assessment program is complete.

95% implementation in post-bac licensure programs and 50% in graduate program
1. collaboration with departments providing supplemental coursework to refine content and authentic assessment strategies to align with WTS/CEC standards/knowledge/skills for special educators
2. refinement and rater reliability studies on rubrics used to assess artifacts of performance
3. refinement and rater reliability studies on rubrics used to assess artifacts of reflection

In the graduate program, we are just beginning the actual collection of data, thus we need to:

a. collect initial student outcomes data
b. analyze and interpret data for purposes of program improvement
c. determine needed refinements in assessment process

If you've indicated a percentage less than 100%, what are the biggest obstacles to your graduate program fully implementing its assessment program? Consider such items as: faculty and instructional staff involvement, time, budget, understanding of academic assessment and the process, etc.

A major issue is lack of time and faculty resources for data collection and data management and time for the department to be able to collaboratively process and make decisions regarding program improvements.

15. Describe any initiatives on behalf of your graduate program (and its faculty) that have specifically promoted enhanced student understanding of issues related to diversity and inclusion.

All of our departments initiatives address the diversity and inclusion of individuals with special needs including: Improvements in our courses and related field experiences, which have been significantly expanded in the Cross Categorical Program; Refinements in course assessment artifacts; and, Refinements in rubrics to assess student performance on artifacts and field experiences.

**EXTERNAL CONSTITUENCIES**
16. Describe in a paragraph or two your graduate program’s relationships with constituencies external to the university (alums, employers or potential employers, advisory boards). What role, if any, have these groups played in (re)directing curriculum development specifically, and departmental planning generally?

The university and the College of Education conduct annual surveys of alums and employers. Data from these sources are reported to the each program. However, return rates are very low and data is not very helpful at this point. Several strategies will be employed to improve return rates. We have a department Advisory Committee that meets twice a year. The committee is fairly new and will serve as a constituency for program improvement and planning. In addition, cooperating teachers provide semester evaluations of our supervision in the field. These are very valuable documents for faculty and program improvement.

17. Does your department generally, or faculty or student groups specifically, offer special programming (e.g., non-credit workshops) or provide services (e.g., consulting services, project support) for constituencies external to the university?

Yes X No

If “yes,” please provide a list of these initiatives and the constituencies they serve.

- Summer Institutes - serve as regional staff development for alums and professionals
- National, regional, state, and local conferences (e.g., Council for Exceptional Children, Council for Learning Disabilities, American Psychological Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, etc. - serve professionals
- Staff Development consultants and workshop/inservice trainers - serves k-12 systems, parent organizations, juvenile justice system
- Student conference presentations e.g., Midwest Symposium on Behavior Disorders, Council for Exceptional Children, etc.

18. Related to the preceding question, does the unit regularly collect data/information to evaluate how effectively it serves its constituency(ies)? (This might include surveys of constituencies.)

Yes X No

If “yes,” please list specific data/information sets that the UW-W Self-Study Committees, and/or the Higher Learning Commission’s Visiting Accreditation Team can access to review/consult.

- Individual faculty evaluation from specific constituencies where workshops, consultations, or advocacy activities were engaged

19. Does your graduate program offer any service-learning courses, or do any of your faculty use service-learning as a teaching method?

Yes X No

If “yes,” please list specific courses and faculty.
• Individual faculty evaluation from specific constituencies where workshops, consultations, or advocacy activities were engaged

• SPECED 704 Applied Action Research - Dr. David Gordon

• SPECFLD 585 and 685 - specified instructors


SELF-EVALUATION

Strengths

20. List and prioritize no more than three primary strengths that have emerged in your graduate program efforts to meet its mission, goals, or objectives. To identify these strengths, you may wish to consider: What does your graduate program do very well? What good things do people say about your graduate program? How has your graduate program aided the campus in meeting its mission? In what ways has your graduate program "gone beyond the call of duty?"

After identifying each strength, specify supporting evidence that suggests that the statement is true. This may include data/information gathered relevant to graduate program performance, trend data from the Office of the Registrar or Institutional Research, special recognition from external agencies, etc.

1. Specific Strength: Strong preparation of teacher candidates

   • Supporting Evidence:
     • All of our candidates secure employment in the field
     • Assessment data from cooperating of exit portfolios
     • Evaluations from cooperating teachers and artifacts of practice in phase 4 portfolios

2. Specific Strength: Creating reflective practitioners

   • Supporting Evidence:
     • Action research reports
     • Exit portfolios
     • Diversity of topics explored in action research
     • Support individual professional development interests

3. Specific Strength: Student Enthusiasm

   • Supporting Evidence:
     • Graduate Program is one of the fastest growing enrollments in graduate programs in the university; rapid growth in participation in summer institutes; student evaluations of summer institute sessions; Autism Summer Institute 2003 lead to significant interest and enrollment in our new Autism Certificate. student evaluations of instruction
     • Growing student membership in Student Council for Exceptional Children
     • Student faculty relations

Concerns
21. List and prioritize no more than three primary concerns that have emerged in your graduate program's efforts to meet its mission, goals, or objectives. To identify these concerns, you may wish to consider: What could be improved? What is done poorly? What do we, as a graduate program, avoid doing, even though we know it’s important?

After identifying each concern, specify supporting evidence that suggests that the statement is true. This may include data/information gathered relevant to departmental performance, trend data available from the Registrar or Institutional Research, information gathered from accreditation visit, etc.

Finally, identify one or more recommended actions to address the area of concern. This may include actions that your graduate program has already underway, actions being planned, or preliminary thinking about how to address the area of concern.

1. **Specific Concern**: Licensure and Graduate Program: management of assessment systems
   - **Supporting Evidence**: time and additional financial resources needed to implement, minutes of multiple meetings to manage the system
   - **Recommended Actions**: redesign faculty loads to support components of data collection, analysis and reporting

2. **Specific Concern**: Licensure and Graduate Program: quality of advising for new curriculums and equity of advising loads
   - **Supporting Evidence**: faculty concerns regarding equity; student requests for more specific advising regarding new curriculum
   - **Recommended Actions**: improve webbased advising, streamline advising checklists, develop written procedures and policies for faculty, analyze advising loads, develop special advising programs

3. **Specific Concern**: need for expanded content in issues and practices to strengthen cultural diversity
   - **Supporting Evidence**: program reviews from accrediting bodies
   - **Recommended Actions**: examine current curricular focus, engage faculty in staff development, design and refine course content; broaden field experiences.