

## Western Washington University Endorsement Review

In conjunction with the site visit, Washington teacher preparation programs are asked to provide a report on endorsements which summarizes results of three key assessments in each endorsement area. Two of the assessments are prescribed (WEST-E and Performance-Based Pedagogy Assessment) and the third is the program's choice.

This report does not result in discrete "findings" on each endorsement area, but is designed to inform the site visit process by identifying issues needing further exploration. Approval of endorsement programs is incorporated into approval of the teacher certification program.

Western Washington University is approved to offer endorsements in the following areas:

- Bilingual Education
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Dance
- Designated World Languages (Spanish, German, French, Japanese)
- Earth & Space Science
- Early Childhood Education
- Early Childhood Special Education
- Elementary Education
- English Language Arts
- English Language Learners
- Health/fitness
- Mathematics
- Middle Level Humanities
- Music: Choral
- Music: General
- Music: Instrumental
- Physics
- Reading
- Science
- Social Studies
- Special Education
- Theater Arts
- Visual Arts

With one exception, the university provided information for all endorsement programs, although, because of low numbers, assessment results were not provided for some areas. (Guidelines for the endorsement report stipulate that where the N is less than five in a given year, scores need not be listed, although programs are also asked to aggregate scores

across years.) In addition to WEST-E and PPA results, the program provided data from a third assessment, usually from the IDES assessment administered in student teaching or from earned GPA in a content methods course.

No information was provided on the Dance endorsement, which is available to WWU candidates only as a second endorsement. Data provided by the institution show no candidates earning this endorsement in recent years, so there is likely no data available.

In addition to assessment results, programs are asked to describe how each endorsement program reviews data for purposes of program improvement, and to describe some recent changes that have been generated by review and analysis of data.

### Assessment data

**WEST-E.** WEST-E is the content knowledge test required for all endorsements. The program reported WEST-E scores for the most recent three years. Since the assessment was transitioning in that period from the former Praxis II series to the new Washington-specific tests, the scores reflect a mixture of the two tests. Because programs are not required to report scores where the N<5, some low-incidence endorsements do not show average scores, although institutions are also asked to aggregate scores across years.

Below is a synopsis of WEST-E performance for endorsement areas reporting five or more candidates in the reporting period. This summary reflects only the new WEST-E, which is aligned with current endorsement standards. Passing score for all tests is 240.

Assessment	N	Average score
Early Childhood Education	9	263.78
Earth & Space Science	5	259.40
Biology	12	268.58
Health/fitness	13	272
Elementary Subtest 1	197	262.77
Elementary Subtest 2	197	262.96
English Language Arts	49	274.41
English Language Learners	46	275.22
Mathematics	15	267.67
Middle Level Humanities Subtest 1	12	273.92
Middle Level Humanities Subtest 2	11	256.91
Music: Instrumental	9	268.67
Music: Choral	5	263.80
Reading	43	269.07
Science	14	265.79
Social Studies	29	262.86
Special Education	26	257
Visual Arts	11	264.62

**PPA.** The Performance-Based Pedagogy Assessment is a unit design and teaching observation protocol administered during student teaching. The PPA was developed by the Washington Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (WACTE) and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and has been required by the state since 2004.

The program provided PPA results for a period of three years. All programs reported a pass rate of 100%, although noting a very small number of candidates who withdrew from student teaching prior to completion of the PPA. A high pass rate on the PPA (usually approaching 100%) is typical for Washington programs, as candidates have multiple opportunities to be assessed by the instrument during student teaching and are required to meet standard on all criteria.

### **Third Assessment**

There were two main types of assessments listed as the third assessment:

*IDES.* The teacher preparation program at Western Washington has developed an Internship Development and Evaluation System for use during the student teaching experience. This instrument assesses candidates on four criteria that are aligned with Washington standards:

- Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum
- Knowledge of teaching
- Knowledge of learners and their development
- Understanding teaching as a profession

Candidates are evaluated formatively and summatively on these criteria using a four-point rubric, with categories of exceptional, proficient, basic, and unsatisfactory.

IDES data was provided for 13 endorsement programs over a two-year period. Results were positive for all programs, with well over 90% of the final ratings falling into the “exceptional” and “proficient” categories.

*Pedagogical Content Knowledge.* The other major assessment reported by programs was for pedagogical content knowledge, as assessed by grades in content methods courses. Three years of data were provided for 18 endorsement areas. Results were highly positive, with three-year average grades ranging from 3.60 to 3.94.

Several other assessments were cited. The English Language Learners and bilingual Education endorsements reported results of the “Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol,” which is used formatively and summatively. For the two year reporting period, 54 of 55 candidates met standard at the summative administration, with an average percentage score of 90.38 on a 100-point scale. The Bilingual Education program requires a similar assessment, the Two-Way Immersion Observation Protocol (TWIOP). For the same two-year period, five of six candidates met standard, with an average score of 88.0. The Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, and Special Education programs also provided links to other internal program-level assessments, with similarly strong results.

### Program review and use of assessment data

As part of the endorsement report, programs are asked to describe how assessment data are reviewed and used for program improvement. All endorsement reports provided extensive information on this process.

Review of endorsement programs occurs within the context of the College of Education assessment system, particularly the “Closing the Loop” assessment reports that departments are required to submit in response to assessment data collected and shared by the College. Separate reports are submitted for the areas of Elementary Education (both for on-campus and off-campus programs); Special Education; Early Childhood Education; and Secondary Education, which includes endorsement programs housed in departments outside the College of Education (e.g., Social Studies, Music, Health/Fitness).

All endorsement programs were able to report recent discussions of assessment data and resulting actions, including institution of new advising procedures, revisions of coursework, and increases in field experiences. In addition, some areas are using assessment results to evaluate their assessment procedures (e.g., review of inter-rater reliability on rubrics). Secondary Education has created a Continuous Improvement Study Group for the purpose of reviewing its assessment procedures.

### Analysis

Data submitted on the endorsement reports reveals no serious areas of concern about performance of candidates in any endorsement area. Average WEST-E scores, the major external assessment of content knowledge, are well above the minimum required score. While the state does not currently have data on statewide average scores that aggregate initial endorsement and added endorsement programs, data from the most recent Title II report shows that candidates earning initial endorsements from Western Washington achieve average scores that are at or above the statewide average for all areas in which scores are available. (One emerging content-area concern was noted in the report for Designated World Languages, indicating that candidate performance on ACTFL assessments was inconsistent. ACTFL testing is a newer state requirement implemented in September of 2010. The program has begun reviewing its curriculum in light of those results.)

Other assessments covered in the reports likewise show strong performance across all endorsement areas. Data from the IDES reports appear to offer a valuable tool for assessing candidate performance via a field-based measure that is aligned with state standards for the residency certificate.

Inclusion of all endorsement programs in the College of Education’s assessment system appears to engage faculty in a robust process of program review. At a minimum, faculty are asked to formally respond to assessment data generated by the College’s assessment system, and the result appears to be wide-ranging discussions of candidate and program performance. In addition to the formal response on the “Closing the Loop” reports, faculty

engage in assessment discussions from a departmental perspective. These discussions lead to specific actions aimed at program improvement.

Although no major concerns emerged from the endorsement reports, the site visit team may wish to pursue several questions.

1. On-site conversations with faculty may help confirm the degree to which the College's assessment system is driving discussions and program changes across departments.
2. One program (Designated World Languages) indicated some sense of disengagement with candidate performance on the PPA. This may reflect the limited educative value of the scores (which show virtually no variance) or may indicate a need for information about assessment in student teaching. The PPA is being phased out, but similar questions may arise about the Teacher Performance Assessment which is replacing it.
3. The team may want to clarify the status of the Dance program.