

Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: EDUCATION POLICY & EQUITY	Department: Educational Studies
Degree or Certificate Level: Ph.D.	College/School: School of Education
Date (Month/Year): October 1, 2022	Primary Assessment Contact: Kathryn M Pierce, Program Director
In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? Spring 2022	
In what year was the program’s assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? New program developed & approved Fall 2018	

1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program’s student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

The Education Policy and Equity doctoral program is currently at the start of its fourth year.

Enrollments:

Cohort	Starting Year	Enrollment
1	Fall 2019	6
2	Fall 2020	2
3	Fall 2021	4
4	Fall 2022	0

The following two outcomes were again the focus of our program assessment during the period of February 2022 through April 2022:

- Outcome #3: Students will be able to evaluate competing theoretical frameworks that are employed in the design of education policy research.
- Outcome #5: Students will be able to apply research tools and methods to analyze educational problems.

2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning

Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

NOTE: There are no Madrid students enrolled in our program.

The six students from Cohort 1 completed their Written Comprehensive Exam. These were used to assess Outcome #3: Students will be able to evaluate competing theoretical frameworks that are employed in the design of education policy research.

The two students from Cohort 2 completed their Research Methods Exam. These were used to assess Outcome #5: Students will be able to apply research tools and methods to analyze educational problems.

3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process

What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and include them in/with this report.

The EPE faculty group consists of seven members. This group has worked together from the beginning to build the program, recruit students, develop roadmaps for the program of study, and shape program culture. Usually working in teams of two (the faculty advisor and one additional member of the EPE group), faculty review student responses on the two portions of the program exams and provide detailed written feedback to students. Several students were required to revise and resubmit one or both of the comprehensive exam papers.

Regarding assessment work during this cycle, the group used monthly faculty meetings during Spring 2022 to examine student exams and student written and oral feedback on the process. Faculty responses to the use of the rubric were documented.

4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

Discussion of exam procedures

During the February 2022 faculty meeting, using data described above, concerns were raised about the “fit” of the rubric used for scoring the Research Methods Exam, particularly for those students completing the Qualitative Research version. Specific revisions are underway in preparation for the Spring 2023 administration of this exam. In addition, the faculty agreed to allow a longer period of time during which students could complete the exam.

During the April 2022 faculty meeting, using the data described above, faculty noted the need for further clarity on the timeline for the Written Comprehensive Exam for Cohort 1, particularly when a “revise and resubmit” was requested of a student. This discussion led to review of the timeline for the dissertation proposal, and the logistics that would be involved were the “three scholarly papers” option accepted as an alternative to the traditional dissertation.

During the September 2022 combined faculty meeting for the EPE program and the Curriculum and Instruction program, faculty discussed the common prompts for the Written Comprehensive Exam and whether the EPE program is designed to prepare students for the Theorization of Learning paper. Further discussions are planned.

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

Findings:

1. The review process is working – gaps in student proficiency in research methods are being identified and courses are being revised to better prepare students for this exam. The impact of the course changes may not be evident in the research methods exams for at least a year.
2. The faculty will use time during the 2022-2023 academic year to review the quality of student work on the Written Comprehensive Exams. This will include consideration of “goodness of fit” of the prompts and the focus of the overall EPE program.

6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

Monthly faculty meetings in Spring 2022 were devoted to discussion of these assessment results. In addition, the combined EPE/C&I Faculty Meeting in September 2022 provided a broader audience for the discussion.

B. How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you’ve initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies

- Course content
- Teaching techniques
- Improvements in technology
- Prerequisites

- Course sequence
- New courses
- Deletion of courses
- Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings

Changes to the Assessment Plan

- Student learning outcomes
- Artifacts of student learning
- Evaluation process

- Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)
- Data collection methods
- Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

Changes to Curriculum:

Research course content continues to be updated based on feedback about the quality of work on the Research Methods Exams.

Given the fluctuating enrollment numbers in the EPE program, preliminary discussions have included the pros and cons of integrating the EPE and C&I programs into a single degree with options for specialization that retain the intent/focus of the EPE program.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

N/A

7. Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

This continues to be a new program that is evolving with feedback from each cohort. The majority of the changes have focused on the procedures for the Research Methods Exam and the Written Comprehensive Exam. As students in the first cohort complete dissertations, further assessment of program outcomes will be possible.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

N/A

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

N/A

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We will continue to make intentional decisions linked to assessment work as we build the EPE program.

Next steps in program development will include the following: a) developing expectations and a process for **dissertation proposals and defenses**; b) developing expectations and a process for **dissertations** themselves as well as **dissertation defenses**; c) ongoing discussions with wider School of Education faculty teaching the research courses to ensure these courses are addressing the learning needs of students in the program; and, d) thoughtful review of **student recruitment processes** aimed at increasing visibility of the program to attract a larger number of students.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools and/or revised/updated assessment plans along with this report.