

## Standard 1

### **What do candidate assessment data tell the unit about the candidates' meeting professional, state, and institutional standards?**

To ensure candidates have a clear understanding of content taught and its application as outlined in [professional, state, and institutional standards](#), data are collected from [key assessments](#) at each transition point allowing instructors to evaluate the candidates understanding of course content and pedagogical knowledge. Instructor feedback from key assessments provides the opportunity for candidates to modify teaching strategies to ensure effective learning for all students. Initial [licensure](#) candidates in the state of Tennessee are required to pass licensure in multiple areas including content knowledge and pedagogy, which is evidence that candidates know their [content](#).

All licensure candidates begin to build a [portfolio](#) in [TCED 211/TCED 780](#) which continues to develop as candidates progress through program coursework. Instructors evaluate individual portfolio documents assigned in their courses, while advisors evaluate them at each advising meeting confirming that candidates integrate content and pedagogy throughout the required documentation. Candidates are to show progress and growth as they matriculate through upper division course work. A [rubric](#) is utilized for the [portfolio evaluation](#) process to ensure candidates are scored consistently by all faculty evaluators. During advising, faculty advisors indicate when it is appropriate to take each required Praxis exam. Recommended [course sequencing](#) and Praxis testing information is available on the [Education Student Services](#) and [Education Graduate Program](#) websites for all programs. Faculty have [aligned](#) course content and assessments to [INTASC](#), national, and state standards. [All programs, both initial and advanced](#) are approved by the State of Tennessee with [Dance 7-12](#) being provisionally approved.

The Title II report for 2008-2009 is not available until October 2010, but preliminary findings indicate that the institutional pass rate is 90 percent for 2008, which is higher than the state requirement (80%). This data suggests an increase of two percent over the previous year, and

also suggests areas in need of improvement such as HHP and PreK-3 licensure areas. The Department of Health and Human Performance (HHP) faculty have expressed concerns, along with members of the unit, related to the consistently low scores candidates are earning on HHP content area Praxis II exams. HHP faculty are committed to improving candidate performance on these exams and are in the process of [revising program requirements](#) based on Title II test data and faculty recommendations. Additionally, Elementary Content Knowledge PreK-3 data for the 2008 reporting year indicates candidates are not passing this test at an acceptable level. The design of the content area of the curriculum for these candidates has been evaluated to determine the areas in which they are having difficulty so that this may be addressed. Advisors have encouraged PreK-3 candidates to attempt the content knowledge Praxis II earlier in their matriculation to ensure the assessment is taken as soon as candidates finish their general education requirements. In the last reporting year (2009), scores improved in that area with 99% of all candidates passing this test. [Title II data related to other school professionals](#), particularly School Counseling and Educational Leadership, indicate that students have a clear understanding of knowledge within their fields as evidenced by 100% pass rates on licensure exams for both programs during the last reporting year (2008).

Overall, the institutional pass rate of academic content areas for the latest [Title II](#) report is 96%, which is up by 2%. Although pass rates for content and professional knowledge have fluctuated one or two percentage points, the figures indicate all initial licensure programs have improved on both of these assessments over previous years.

Initial licensure and advanced candidates are evaluated throughout all programs in the area of [dispositions in key assessment courses](#). Faculty [evaluate dispositions](#) at each [transition point](#), and have the option of evaluating candidates at other times if there is a concern over any aspect of a candidate's disposition. These evaluations may include less than positive interactions with peers, faculty or P12 school personnel, general disregard for the standards of the profession or another aspect having to do with performance in coursework. The [Candidate Dispositions Remediation](#)

[Plan](#) outlines the formal process for handling issues which may be documented during a designated check point. All field experiences are evaluated by public school cooperating teachers with a [rubric](#) designed for the level of the field experience, as well as TEP supervisors.

### **Continuous Improvement**

There have been significant changes in both initial and advanced programs within the last two years based on data collected through unit faculty evaluation of programs/courses, exit interviews of candidates, and input from community and P12 partners. At the initial level, undergraduate [admission to teacher education requirements](#) were revised so that candidates are now required to maintain a 2.75 GPA (formerly 2.5) in the specialty area and professional education coursework, as well as, the overall cumulative GPA for degree completion. Recognizing the increasing demands of classroom teaching, professional education course requirements, and the requirement that candidates pass the required Praxis II exams, faculty in the teacher education unit adopted a minimum grade point average of 2.75 as a requirement for admission to the teacher education program effective fall 2008. Additionally, this change aligns with [Tennessee Lottery GPA requirement](#) which is set at 2.75. Review of [exit interview data](#) indicated a lack of consistency in advising, program requirements, and portfolio development in [TCED 211-Intro to Teaching](#). In an effort to rectify concerns expressed in exit interviews, a [student handbook](#) was developed and all sections of TCED 211 have been taught by the same person for the last three years providing consistency in meeting course objectives. Further review of [exit](#) and [employment satisfaction survey](#) data suggested that students need a deeper understanding of classroom management concepts and practical experiences in a school setting. Beginning in Spring 2008, TCED 302 (Integrated Teaching Strategies) and TCED 305 (Classroom Management) were linked to create a K-

6 pilot program. The [pilot](#) allowed the two classes to be combined into a “block” so that students are on campus for pedagogy classes one day and in the schools learning practical knowledge another day. Coursework was placed on Blackboard (Bb) for convenient access to materials and assignments were made on Bb to extend the classroom learning and allowed students to apply classroom learning to the school situation. The first group of students that participated in the K-6 pilot program will student teach fall 2010. Exit interview data will allow the unit to compare student comments regarding the 302/305 block versus the non-block TCED 302 and 305 sections. Student feedback will be used to make adjustments.

[Changes](#) were made to the Master of Science with Initial Licensure (MSIL) programs ([Elementary, Secondary](#), and K-12) to bring it more in line with the undergraduate programs. MSIL candidates in this program were not completing enough field experiences, nor did they have content area methods classes in their program. Two new methods courses ([ELED 730](#), [ELED 731](#)) were designed to meet the needs of the candidates and are aligned with the standards of the appropriate national organizations. Both courses require field experiences in which candidates teach in the content area and [self reflect](#) on their teaching. Additionally, candidates are also evaluated by the cooperating teacher using [Level II field experience rubrics](#). The program revisions better prepare candidates for the Praxis II (10011) whose content covers curriculum, instruction and assessment. This change ensures the candidate’s have the beginning skills they need upon entering the classroom. Candidates create a portfolio and share the [Initial Licensure Conceptual Framework](#). [Portfolio](#) evaluations target the documents created in the content area methods, classroom management, general instruction strategies, educational

technology, and special education courses. The [MSIL K-12 program](#) (PE & SPED only) has been totally redesigned to closely align its requirements with the other MSIL program (Elem & Sec.). The previous program requirements did not include any content specific courses, pedagogy, methods, or field experiences. The unit feels the [changes to the MSIL K-12 program](#) will provide more in-depth knowledge and skills of the content candidates plan to teach. [Comprehensive exam requirements](#) have been revised for all Teaching-Initial Licensure majors. Moreover, all candidates are required to submit a student teaching notebook including a [“reflective paper”](#) while enrolled in student teaching, ELED/SED 793, 794, or Practicum, TCED 795.

At the advanced level, the most significant changes have occurred in Educational Leadership, School Counseling, Teaching-Interdisciplinary option, and the Comprehensive Exam process. The multitude of [revisions](#) the advanced programs have undergone better align with standards of national organizations and state mandated changes. Substantial [changes](#) in the comprehensive examination process have provided consistency across programs and ensure a thorough and non-biased assessment of candidates’ knowledge, skills, and applications. All examinations must be completed during the final semester of coursework in accordance with university policy. New requirements for comprehensive examinations were effective Fall 2009 regardless of the [catalog](#) the candidate used upon program entrance. The [comp exam narrative](#) provides a detailed timeline of the comprehensive exam process over the last two years and the rationale for the changes that were made for each major in the advanced programs.

New Interdisciplinary options have been added for candidates wishing to pursue an additional endorsement in [ESL](#) and [Reading Specialist](#) options effective Fall 2009. The

ESL option has been very attractive to many area school districts due to the significant [increase in the ESL population](#) across the state. Furthermore, the state has approved the Reading Specialist for K-6 licensed teachers and is part of Governor Bredesen's initiative for P-12 schools. Effective Fall 2010, an [Early Childhood Education](#) option will be available but does not lead to licensure. The addition of the Early Childhood Education option is in response to a request from the Office of Early Learning at the TN State Dept. of Education. Candidates will earn 18 graduate hours with an Early Childhood Learning and Development concentration on-line toward the M.S. in Education-Teaching degree. This focus is designed for those with an UG degree in education, child/family studies, social work, psychology, and related field.

In Fall 2008, significant curricular changes were made to the [Counseling program](#). The [changes](#), effective Fall 2009, were made in an effort to align the program curriculum more closely with the Council for Accreditation on Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards and to meet [new state guidelines](#). While the UTM counseling program is not CACREP accredited, we consider the CACREP model to be the optimal model for counselor education and adhere to the standards when possible.

Due to state mandated [changes](#), the Educational Administration and Supervision (EDAS) degree, now Educational Leadership, underwent extensive changes to better align to new standards. All changes were effective fall '09. Students who began the EDAS program will be permitted to continue in that program but must [complete all requirements no later than July 2011](#). Courses no longer applicable to the program were dropped or revised based on [new program guidelines](#).