

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Elementary Education

Program Objectives

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Program Objectives
for
Bachelor of Science (B.S)
Bachelor of Science in Education (B.S.Ed)

The Elementary Education program objectives at Illinois State University are the nationally approved standards written by the Specialized Professional Association for elementary education, the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), and approved by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) for initial teacher certification and licensure:

1. Development, learning, and motivation – Candidates know, understand, and use the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to development of children and young adolescents to construct learning opportunities that support individual students' development, acquisition of knowledge, and motivation.
2. Central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of content – Candidates know, understand, and use the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of content for students across the K-6 grades and can create meaningful learning experiences that develop students' competence in subject matter and skills for various developmental levels.
3. English language arts – Candidates demonstrate a high level of competence in use of the English language arts and they know, understand, and use concepts from reading, language and child development, to teach reading, writing, speaking, viewing, listening, and thinking skills and to help students successfully apply their developing skills to many different situations, materials and ideas.
4. Science – Candidates know, understand, and use fundamental concepts in the subject matter of science – including physical, life, and earth and space sciences – as well as concepts in science and technology, science in personal and social perspectives, the history and nature of science, the unifying concepts of science, and the inquiry processes scientists use in discovery of new knowledge to build a base for scientific and technological literacy.
5. Mathematics – Candidates know, understand, and use the major concepts, procedures, and reasoning processes of mathematics that define number systems and number sense, geometry, measurement, statistics and probability, and algebra in order to foster student understanding and use of patterns, quantities, and spatial relations that can represent phenomena, solve problems, and manage data.
6. Social Studies – Candidates know, understand, and use the major concepts and modes of inquiry from the social studies – the integrated study of history, geography, the social sciences, and other related areas – to promote elementary

students' abilities to make informed decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse democratic society and interdependent world.

7. The arts – Candidates know, understand, and use – as appropriate to their own knowledge and skills – the content, functions, and achievements of dance, music, theater, and the several visual arts as primary media for communication, inquiry, and insight among elementary students.
8. Health education – Candidates know, understand, and use the major concepts in the subject matter of health education to create opportunities for student development and practice of skills that contribute to good health.
9. Physical education – Candidates know, understand, and use – as appropriate to their own understanding and skills – human movement and physical activity as central elements to foster active, healthy life styles and enhanced quality of life for elementary students.
10. Connections across the curriculum – Candidates know, understand, and use the connections among concepts, procedures, and applications from content areas to motivate elementary students, build understanding, and encourage the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and ideas to real world issues.
11. Integrating and applying knowledge for instruction – Candidates plan and implement instruction based on knowledge of students, learning theory, subject matter, curricular goals, and community.
12. Adaptation to diverse students – Candidates understand how elementary students differ in their development and approaches to learning, and create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse students.
13. Development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills – Candidates understand and use a variety of teaching strategies that encourage elementary students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
14. Active engagement in learning – Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior among students at the K-6 level to foster active engagement in learning, self-motivation, and positive social interaction and to create supportive learning environments.
15. Communication to foster learning – Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the elementary classroom.
16. Assessment for instruction – Candidates know, understand, and use formal and informal assessment strategies to plan, evaluate, and strengthen instruction that will promote continuous intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of each elementary student.
17. Practices and behaviors of developing career teachers – Candidates understand and apply practices and behaviors that are characteristic of developing career teachers.
18. Reflection and evaluation – Candidates are aware of and reflect on their practice in light of research on teaching and resources available for professional learning; they continually evaluate the effects of their professional decisions and actions on students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community and actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally.
19. Collaboration with families – Candidates know the importance of establishing and maintaining a positive collaborative relationship with families to promote the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth of children.

20. Collaboration with colleagues and the community – Candidates foster relationships with school colleagues and agencies in the larger community to support students’ learning and well-being.

Elementary education candidates must demonstrate proficiency in each of these twenty standards through standardized assessment tasks established across all sections of all required courses. Each standard is addressed and performance is documented at multiple data points in the program. Data are being collected and maintained about each candidate’s performance on these assessment tasks in an online database management system, LiveText (<http://www.college.livetext.com>). The Matrix of Assessment Tasks that follows shows the overall constellation of assessment tasks that candidates must successfully complete to address the standards (i.e., program objectives), and where they may be found in the elementary program.

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Performance-Based Assessment Plan

In addition to the standards-based assessment tasks in these areas that are embedded in the elementary program coursework, the Council for Teacher Education has adopted a Teacher Education Performance-based Assessment System to ensure that all teacher candidates possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for successful teaching. This assessment system establishes critical points or gateways at which all candidates for teacher certification are assessed on key knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The electronic portfolio system, LiveText, collects and aggregates this data for all programs.

The three gateways at which elementary education majors are assessed in the Performance-Based Assessment System are:

- admission to professional studies
- admission to student teaching
- exit from student teaching

At each of these three gateways there are specific requirements that must be met by candidates. Among these are required course grades and grade point averages, documentation of experiences with children, continuing acquisition of professional dispositions, test performance on Illinois Certification Testing System *Enhanced Basic Skills* and Elementary Content Tests, verification of meeting the standards for technology (the Instructional Technology Passport System, or ITPS) and inclusion, and successful completion of clinical experiences including student teaching. A chart showing the various Performance-Based Assessment requirements and their respective gateways in the Elementary Education Program follows.

Elementary Education PBA Requirements

**Admission to
Professional Studies**

**Admission to Student
Teaching**

**Exit From Student
Teaching**

| Assessment | Assessment |
|---|---|
| Document: Successful Experience with Children and Youth | Instructional Analysis for Inclusion* |
| Initial Reflective Essay* | Literacy Assessment* |
| Document: Assessment of Legal and Ethical Conduct | TB Test—good for one year from date of issue |
| Document: Criminal Background Check—good for one year from date of issue | Document: Criminal Background Check—good for one year from date of issue |
| TB Test—good for one year from date of issue | Pass University |
| ITPS #1 (Ethics) (Mallard Test) | Writing Exam |
| ITPS #2 (Telecomm.) | Major GPA 2.5 |
| ITPS #3 (Presentation) | Cumulative GPA 2.5 |
| ITPS #4 (On-line Search) | ITPS #5 (Web Page)* |
| Departmental Approval | ITPS #6 (Idea Dev.)* |
| State Basic Skills Test | ITPS #7 (Spreadsheets)* |
| Major GPA | ITPS #8 (Desktop Pub.)* |
| Cumulative GPA | ITPS #9 (Assistive Tech) |
| English 101 (C or better) | 100 Field Experience Hours |
| Communication 110 (C or better) | Departmental Approval |
| No or Satisfactorily | |

| Assessment |
|---|
| Multicultural/ Diversity Assessment* |
| Final Reflective Essay* |
| Realizing the Democratic Ideal Teaching Assessment* |
| Student Teaching Grade of C or better |
| ITPS #10 (Completed LiveText Portfolio) |
| No or Satisfactorily resolved Disposition Concerns |
| No or Satisfactorily Resolved Oral |
| Communication Concern |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Resolved Oral | Pass State Content Test |
| Communication Concerns | No or Satisfactorily Resolved Oral |
| No or Satisfactorily resolved | Communication Concerns |
| Disposition Concerns | No or Satisfactorily resolved Disposition Concerns |

*Evidence required to be placed in LiveText

Monitoring the Assessment Plan Results to Improve the Program

Throughout the Elementary Education program, faculty members gather information and make judgments about candidates' readiness for licensure and initial teaching. Some of these decisions are made on the basis of performance on the various standardized assessments such as the tests required for admission to professional studies or readiness for student teaching. Other decisions are made on the basis of student performance in clinical experiences and student teaching, as well as evidence submitted in the form of communication or disposition concerns. Decisions about student readiness to proceed through the program are made by faculty and experienced supervisors who work in conjunction with the schools in which the candidates apply their knowledge and skills. Faculty liaisons to the clinical schools and cooperating teachers look carefully at each candidate and assess not only the completion of the required activities for clinical experiences, but also the professional attributes exhibited by the candidates. On the basis of these evaluations, decisions are made about whether candidates may advance to the next stage of their career preparation, if they require additional experiences and supervision before doing so, or if they should be counseled out of the program.

Individual faculty members make decisions about candidate competency relative to the objectives on the basis of the standardized assessment tasks in the courses they teach, as previously noted. As the program has moved towards these uniform performance-based assessments across all sections of required courses, the nature of our program assessment and the means by which the candidates are evaluated have become more consistent and more informative. The Elementary Education program at Illinois State University is a recently revised program, and completion of its first full cycle will not be achieved until the end of Spring 04 semester. In this early stage of the new program and through the use of the new standardized assessments in required courses, we will monitor both the effectiveness of the assessment plan we have put into place, and the success of the candidates in achieving the program standards. We will compare the success rates of students across all sections of required courses, and revise the tasks and/or the rubrics if needed to yield the most useful information. We will alter instruction if and where indicated, to help candidates achieve greater success with the tasks.

Data from candidate and cooperating teacher surveys will be analyzed yearly to determine any areas of the program where a need for increased attention may be indicated.

The test scores of Elementary Education majors at Illinois State University have exceeded state averages on the Illinois Certification Testing System standardized tests for teacher candidates since their inception. We will continue to monitor these test results to determine whether this margin is at least maintained by the new program graduates.

Data from Disposition and Communication Concerns are new venues for evaluating student performance. It is anticipated that this system will better identify and remediate students with communication or disposition concerns that may prevent them from being effective teachers. It is also anticipated that students who cannot successfully resolve these concerns will be counseled out of the program. This effectiveness of this new venue will be carefully monitored during the next program assessment phase.
