

# Standard 1 Structure and Context of Assessments

## Learner and Learning

Teacher candidate knowledge and competencies involving Learner and Learning (Learner Development, Learning Differences, and Learning Environment) integrated into candidates teaching are measured using the Teacher Work Sample (TWS, originated by the Renaissance Group), the Danielson Framework for Teaching, the Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA), and the Educating All Students (EAS) test, supplemented by the Exit Survey.

Aligned with the InTASC Standards (Danielson Group, 2014), there is substantial research that observations using the Danielson Framework reliably discriminate between effective and ineffective teaching (e.g. Sartain, Stoelinga & Brown, 2009), particularly when the observer is carefully trained in its use. Standards about the Learner and Learning are aligned with 1c. Plans with knowledge of students' background, skills and interests; 1d. Setting appropriate instructional goals; 1e. Designing coherent instruction; 2a. Creates an atmosphere of respect and rapport; and 3c: Engages students in learning. Three years of data were collected for analyses, from 2015 to 2018.

Beginning in 2014 in New York State, the edTPA was rolled out by the State Regents as a high-stakes assessment for teacher candidates who were to achieve an established summed score to be certified as teachers. The edTPA involves 15 rubrics (18 for Childhood Education) that are evaluated by outside reviewers, increasing the validity of the scoring system that has been normed against national and state standards. Passing total scores have been lowered in 2017. The State explicitly connected it to the implementation of CAEP Standards (New York State Education Department, 2013). This has established a dynamic where the edTPA is predictive of employment while the results from research of its predictive validity for teaching effectiveness is more mixed—particularly for candidates from underrepresented groups (e.g. Goldhaber, Cowan and Theobald, 2017). However, because it is a certification requirement—and because there are studies that have addressed the alignment of the Danielson Framework for Teaching with the edTPA in a crosswalk (e.g. SCALE, 2014), on the one hand, and the InTASC Standards aligned with the edTPA (e.g. SCALE, 2014), on the other, we used the rubric scores on the edTPA of our program completers as a second data set to assess the impact of our programs on their understanding of the InTASC Standards.

Overall on 15 rubrics of the edTPA, passing in New York State has been established as a total of 41 for most programs (through December 2017; 38 since then) for initial certification as a teacher. The edTPA for Childhood Education has 18 rubrics (with content in both Literacy and Mathematics) and required a total score of 49 prior to December 2017 and 46 since then. The rubrics reflect dimensions of Planning, Instruction and Assessment for 3-5 lessons, implemented and videotaped during student teaching.

In terms of our specific programs and rubrics related to the InTASC Standards, SCALE (2014) argued that all rubrics on the edTPA in Task 1 (Planning) and Task 2 (Instruction), except for Rubric 10—Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness—are aligned with those reflecting the Learner and Learning Standards, along with Rubric 14, Analyzing Students' Language Use and Content

Learning. [1.1.2 edTPA Candidate Data](#) offers a breakdown of teacher candidate performance on each of the rubrics aligned with the Learner and Learning Standards, by program and year, with means and percentages achieving the target score of “3” on each. Additionally, there is a summary of the mean, range of scores and percentage of teacher candidates passing the exam. The overall criteria for the EPP was established on each rubric as 80% of teacher candidates achieving the target score.

The Educating All Students (EAS) test was designed by Pearson under contract to New York State to determine candidates’ ability to address diverse learning needs, required for State certification as a teacher as of 2014. The test addresses five competencies: Diverse Student Populations, English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities and Other Special Learning Needs, Teacher Responsibilities, and School-Home Relationships. This exam is designed to ensure that candidates understand the characteristics, strengths, and needs of all learners. Each certification examination has gone through the process of content validation, job relevance and construct validity, has been field tested, and has involved P-12 and higher education representatives in the development, review, and standard setting process (EngageNY, n.d.). Scoring is in a range between 400 and 600. A passing score is 520 but the “safety net” of the test resulted in a lowered passing score of 500, which began in 2014 (a function of lower scores across the State) and will be in effect until a revised exam is released.

## **Content**

The Scholar Teacher Education Program (STEP) is a 5-year program where content courses are given at the University whereas the Master’s program involves content courses taken elsewhere. Because many of the programs involve these two graduate populations, it was important to look at trends with each.

The Danielson Group (2014) with the Framework for Teaching, including the following domains and elements: 1a. Demonstrating knowledge of subject matter; 1b. Demonstrates knowledge of pedagogy; 1f. Designing coherent instruction; 3a. Communicates clearly and accurately with students; 3c. Engaging students in learning; and 3f. Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness. The Danielson Framework is introduced during the “exploration/synthesis” coursework (e.g. pedagogy courses) but used formally in the “reflective practice” phase of the programs during student teaching.

SCALE (2014) aligned the following edTPA rubrics to the InTASC Standards for content knowledge and application: Rubric 1 (Planning for Content Understandings); Rubric 2 (Planning to Support Varied Student Needs); Rubric 3 (Using Knowledge of Students to Inform Teaching and Learning); Rubric 4 (Identifying and Supporting Language Demands); Rubric 7 (Engaging Students in Learning); Rubric 8 (Deepening Student Learning); Rubric 9 (Subject-Specific Pedagogy); and Rubric 14 (Analyzing Students’ Language Use and Content Learning). [1.1.2 edTPA Candidate Data](#), again, offers a breakdown of teacher candidate performance on each of the rubrics aligned with content, by program and year, with means and percentages achieving the target score of “3” on each.

The InTASC Standards 4 and 5—Content Knowledge and Content Application—are aligned with the Content Specialty Test (CST), designed by Pearson for use within New York State for teacher certification. As with the EAS, the CST has undergone the process of content validation, job relevance and construct validity, has been field tested, and has involved K-12 and higher education representatives in the development, review, and standard setting process (EngageNY, n.d.). Each CST is revised individually by NYSED. The process began in 2016 and will continue through 2020. A new Multi-subject CST was created and will be available through June 2019. Part 2 (math) was revised and became available in November 2018. The Multi-subject 7-12 CSTs were newly created as well as a Part 3 exam, which all Multi-subject test takers must complete. The safety net for the redeveloped CSTs operational after 2016 allows a candidate to choose to take either the Safety Net (old version) CST or the redeveloped CST until June 30, 2019. The Multi-subject 7-12 CSTs were newly created as well as a Part 3 exam, which all Multi-subject test takers must complete. A passing score on the new or redeveloped CST exam is 520; whereas the passing score for the safety net CST exam is 220. Therefore, a total mean/range cannot be calculated.

## **Instructional Practices**

As noted earlier, the Danielson Framework has been formally aligned with the InTASC Standards (see the Danielson Group, 2014), including the Standards for the Instructional Practices (Standard 6, Assessment; Standard 7, Planning for Instruction; and Standard 8, Instructional Strategies), aligned with 1c. Plans with knowledge of students' background, skills and interests; 1f. Designs coherent instruction; 1g. Assesses student learning; 3b. Uses high-level, open-ended questions; 3c: Engages students in learning; and 3e. Provides appropriate feedback. Three years of data were collected for analyses, from 2015 to 2018.

SCALE (2014) aligned all of the edTPA rubrics to the InTASC Standards for Instructional Practices except for Rubrics 10 (Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness) and 14 (Analyzing Students' Language Use and Content Learning).

The Danielson Framework for Teaching was used to look at our candidates' competency in professional responsibility. As noted earlier, the Danielson Framework has been formally aligned with the InTASC Standards (see the Danielson Group, 2014), including the Standards for Professional Responsibility (Standard 9, Professional Learning and Ethical Practice and Standard 10, Leadership and Collaboration), aligned with 4a. Reflecting on Teaching; 4c. Communicating with Families; 4d. Participating in a Professional Community; 4e. Growing and Developing Professionally; and 4f. Showing Professionalism. Again, three years of data were collected for analyses, from 2015 to 2018.

The EAS test includes two competencies—Teacher Responsibilities and School-Home Relationships—that are aligned to Professional Responsibility. Scoring is in a range between 400 and 600. A passing score is 520 but the “safety net” of the test resulted in a lowered passing score of 500, which began in 2014 and will be in effect until New York State releases a revised exam. [\*1.1.3 Educating All Students \(EAS\) Candidate Data\*](#) offers both the overall means,

ranges and pass rates on the EAS for 2015-18 as well as scores broken down by program, year and competency. Pass rates and/or rubric averages are offered for each program on these two competencies over the three-year period.

## **Professional Responsibilities**

SCALE (2014) viewed Professional Learning and Ethical Practice—Standard 9 of the InTASC Standards—as being aligned with Rubrics 10 (Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness) and 15 (Using Assessment to Inform Instruction). [1.1.2 edTPA Candidate Data](#) offers a summary of the mean, range of scores and percentage of teacher candidates by program on these two rubrics over the three years.

### **Standard 1.2**

We understood the standard and element to be reflected in the candidates' use of research and theory to justify their lesson planning, instruction, and assessment of P-12 student progress. Three of the rubrics on the edTPA address this: Rubric 3 (Using Knowledge of Students to Inform Teaching and Learning), 10 (Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness) and 15 (Using Assessment to Inform Instruction). [1.1.2 edTPA Candidate Data](#) offers a summary of the mean, range of scores and percentage of teacher candidates by score on these three rubrics by program over the three year period.

Danielson's Framework for Teaching involves several domain elements that are aligned with research and evidence of the impact of their teaching on P-12 student progress, including 1f. Designing Student Assessments, 3d. Using Assessment in Instruction, 4a. Reflecting on Teaching, 4b. Maintaining Accurate Records, and 4e. Growing and Developing Professionally. Again, three years of data were collected for analyses, from 2015 to 2018.

### **Standard 1.4**

The Danielson Framework has elements that are aligned with the goal of having all P-12 students gain access to rigorous standards, including almost all elements in Domain 1 of Planning and Preparation (1a. Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, 1b. Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, 1c. Setting Instructional Outcomes, 1d. Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, and 1e. Designing Coherent Instruction), several of Domain 2 (2a. Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, 2b. Establishing a Culture of Learning, 2c. Managing Classroom Procedures), several of Domain 3 (3a. Communicating with Students, 3b. Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, 3c. Engaging Students in Learning, 3e. Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness), and some of Domain 4 (4a. Reflecting on Teaching and 4c. Communicating with Families).

We viewed critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, communication and transfer of skills as evidenced in Rubric 6 (Positive Learning Environment) as related to collaboration, 7 (Engaging Students in Learning) as related to communication, 8 (Deepening Student Learning) as related to critical thinking and problem-solving, and 9 (Subject-Specific Pedagogy) as related to transfer of skills. Teaching to the diverse strengths and needs of P-12 students were

particularly reflected in Rubrics 2 (Planning for Varied Student Learning Needs), 3 (Using Knowledge of Students), 5 (Planning Assessments to Monitor and Support Learning), and 15 (Using Assessment to Inform Instruction), reflecting differentiation of instruction and assessment to support student access to college- and career-relevant standards.

### **Mid-Point Assessment**

In previous years, the teacher education programs designed a curriculum unit plan for the “exploration/synthesis” phase of their candidates’ progress. Typically, these units are assignments within pedagogical courses that have fieldwork requirements and the rubrics were used as a key assessment in the programs’ SPA reports. An effort to conduct an alignment study of these assessments in Summer 2018 was conducted, with the aim of creating a unified key assessment. However, this was unsuccessful because of the specific elements required by each of the program’s SPA-related standards. Thus, individual rubrics are used as assessments for the unit plan. The EPP faculty aligned the program-based assessments with the InTASC Standards. [\*Table 1.1.6 Mid Point Assessment \(Unit Plans and Course Grades\)\*](#) offers those alignments.