

School of Education's Strategic Assessment Plan (2024-2027)

1. What are the student learning goals of your academic unit? How did your academic unit arrive at these goals? How are your academic unit's student learning goals shared with relevant constituencies?

In the last year, the Educational Studies department has undergone multiple changes. First, we are now a School of Educational Studies (SOES). Second, we have lost multiple members of the department and gained new members of the SOES. Third, we have reorganized coursework and academic procedures to enhance the educational experience for students and further, reduce obstacles for students to enter and graduate from the SOES. These changes include the following.

- Complete revision of the Teacher Education application system to reduce barriers for students pursuing teacher certification, particularly for under-represented students.
- Reorganization of curriculum to maximize flexibility for students interested in teacher certification and to enhance the educational outcomes of future teachers. This includes students taking EDUC 340 and 345 in the fall semester of their junior year (prior to student teaching phase 1) and a new full unit course of EDUC 360, 361, or 362 in the spring (depending upon students' area of specialization). These curricular changes are intended to enhance students' capacity to design and execute effective, differentiated instruction.
- Enhanced collaboration with Math and Biology which has made the double major more straightforward and easier to navigate.
- New PE major and endorsement courses which has fostered enhanced collaboration with the multiple departments.
- Three new members of the School of Educational Studies!

All of these changes merit an examination of two goals for the SOES. First, have these changes attracted more students and helped retain more students in the major? Second, are students graduating the SOE with evidence of learning specific teaching skills and strategies aligned with the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards? Given the SOES emphasis on teaching for social justice and effective instruction which engages all students, we will focus on the following two learning standards.

- Teacher education students will **identify the assets** diverse students bring to the learning environment and **incorporate these assets into their instruction** (IPTS 1L, 3K).
- Teacher education students will analyze and use student information to **design instruction** that meets the diverse needs of students (IPTS 1H).

Given the changes in staffing to EDUC 340/345, the SOES knows we need to monitor the learning outcomes of students in the teacher education program to achieve consistently high standards for teacher preparation. Further, due to the results in our previous assessment cycle, EDUC 340 and 345 is now taught in the fall and includes students gaining experience with

planning and teaching 5 full lessons to K-12 students. The significant changes to the course merit an evaluation to core learning objectives.

2. What measures do you plan to use to assess student learning goals? Why?

In Educational Studies, we traditionally use 2 distinct measures to evaluate students’ learning. Each measure offers evidence of preservice teachers’ ability to differentiate instruction. They are listed below.

- a. The performance-based *final student teaching evaluation* is an internal measure as Educational Studies staff and faculty employ this tool ([see at this link, most important area for this assessment is highlighted](#)). This tool is used to observe our teacher candidates within real K-12 classrooms as they offer instruction, manage a classroom, and assess student learning. Supervisors assign a numeric score for distinct teaching standards. We examined aggregated scores for each distinct teaching standard at the cohort level. This tool will provide concrete evidence of students’ capacity to differentiate instruction and students’ instructional design.

- b. The *senior exit survey* is an indirect measure which was used to assess teacher candidates’ perceptions of how well our teacher education program prepared them to manage and instruct a classroom of diverse learners. Unlike the final student teaching evaluation, the students' scores are reported in percentages and offer insights as to what percentage of seniors perceive themselves as competent in differentiated instruction. The senior exit survey will provide students’ perception of their capacity to design and enact differentiated instruction.

In this assessment cycle, we are also focused on student retention. In a spreadsheet, we will also track students. Specifically, the number of students who enter each fall for the next three years, the number of students who switch to Educational Studies between fall and spring, and the number of students who graduate each spring.

3. Timeline: Provide a timeline for your 1- to 3-year assessment cycles. What do you plan to accomplish during each assessment cycle and during each academic year of the cycle?

Year	Assessments	Analysis
Year 1 (2024-25)	1) How many students entered IWU in August as Educational Studies majors?	Our department will examine students’ enrollment and retention.

	<p>2) How many students started Spring 2025 as Educational Studies majors? How many graduate in Spring 2025?</p> <p>3) How well did seniors perform on the student teacher evaluation and their self-perception on the exit survey (Cohort 1)?</p>	<p>We will examine assessment data from the student teacher evaluation and senior exit-survey in May 2025.</p>
Year 2 (2025-2026)	<p>1) How many students entered IWU in August as Educational Studies majors?</p> <p>2) How many students started Spring 2026 as Educational Studies majors? How many graduate in Spring 2026?</p> <p>3) How well did seniors perform on the student teacher evaluation and their self-perception on the exit survey?</p>	<p>Our department will examine students' enrollment and retention.</p> <p>We will examine assessment data from the student teacher evaluation and senior exit-survey in May 2026.</p>
Year 3 (2026-2027)	<p>1) How many students entered IWU in August as Educational Studies majors?</p> <p>2) How many students started Spring 2027 as Educational Studies majors? How many graduate in Spring 2027?</p> <p>3) How well did seniors perform on the student teacher evaluation and their self-perception on the exit survey?</p>	<p>Using three years of enrollment data and documentation of student retention, the SOES will examine retention trends. We will also compare the three cohorts' academic outcomes on their final student teaching evaluation and senior exit survey.</p>

4. How does your academic unit plan to process the information gathered through the various measures?

We intend to use our standard process. The Assistant Director of Licensure, Ben Wells will collect enrollment data on students in a spreadsheet. He will also collect student data on the student teaching evaluation and senior exit survey. Ben will then provide the assessment liaison, Maggie Evans with the average scores for cohorts 1, 2, and 3 in years 2025, 2026, and 2027. Dr. Evans will perform an analysis of these results and consider different ways we may want to break down the scores (such as into elementary and secondary majors or STEM vs. English majors or the retention of students of color). Dr. Evans will make initial interpretations from these data. The entire department will be invited annually to make further interpretations of these data and consider how these data will inform curricular changes in our annual May meeting in which reflect upon student progress and make plans for the next academic year.