

## **Assessments to Evaluate Student Learning**

Assessment activities will be varied and are intended to evaluate students' competencies under the six ISSL standards and to document their attainment of the identified learner outcomes. Mirroring the movement in PK-12 systems toward performance assessments, we continue to work collaboratively in identifying and developing authentic assessment measures. Over the years, we have reduced our reliance on traditional research papers and end-of-course examinations, except in those instances in which these methods will assist students in gaining content knowledge. At the same time, and because it is mandated through the *No Child Left Behind* legislation, we do expect our students to be skilled consumers of research, so that they may identify and incorporate effective instructional practices in their schools.

Students will complete self-assessments related to the ISSL standards, which will guide both their individualized course activities and field experiences. Many course activities will include required assessment components, with rubrics used to assess student performance and provide feedback. Mindful of adult learning theory, as students demonstrate their knowledge and skills under the various standards, they will be provided with the flexibility to select from an array of assessment measures, so that they may tailor their activities to their personal learning styles and self-identified areas for growth. Students will have reflective writing assignments in many courses, so that they will continuously self-assess their competencies and learning needs.

An electronic portfolio will be developed by each student, to document his/her mastery under the ISSL standards. This electronic portfolio requirement prompts the faculty to ensure that students are proficient with various forms of technology. Throughout the program, we intend to develop students' skills with accessing web-based materials; developing websites; manipulating spreadsheets; preparing PowerPoint presentations; using digital cameras; and using school management databases for attendance, scheduling, and budgeting purposes. At identified points within the course sequence, students will bring review their portfolios with their classmates, identifying areas where additional artifacts are necessary, and discussing upcoming activities they may have through either their courses or clinical experiences to develop these documents.

## **Candidate Performance and Exit Assessment**

It is essential for our preparation program to model behaviors and skills we wish to instill in our principal candidates. Because we have structured our program around principles of transformational leadership, instructional leadership, and reflective practice that lead to successful schools, our assessments should mirror these areas, within the overall ISSL framework. As we build our students' capacity to serve as instructional leaders, they should see through their personal experiences how assessment measures should be aligned with the curriculum. We have previously explained a variety of assessments that will be used, and our continuing efforts to incorporate more authentic

assessments in our program. This section will provide more detailed information concerning these measures, and will explain our proposed exit assessment process.

### **Performance-Based Assessments Throughout Program**

At the beginning of the program, each student will complete a self-assessment related to the ISSL standards, which is intended to guide their progress through their course activities and clinical experiences. Students will review their appraisals as a group during their initial course and will begin to develop their Personal Improvement Plans. At identified points throughout the program, students will revisit their self-assessments with their classmates and professors, so they can reflect upon their learning experiences to date and continue to identify areas in which growth is desirable.

A variety of measures will be used to document and assess students' competencies as they complete their programs. Assessment activities that are tied to coursework are listed within the syllabi, which are included in Appendix C, and they also are described in the Standards and Program Content Matrix (Appendix B). These appraisals will consist of student self-evaluations and assessments from multiple sources, including professors, field supervisors, and mentor principals. The faculty will use rubrics to assess and provide feedback on students' skills in the areas of written communication, oral presentation, interpersonal communication, intrapersonal communication, leadership, and technology (Appendix G). Students also will create authentic products, either working in groups or as individuals, which will be assessed through the use of rubrics. To develop their clinical supervision skills and to meet the state evaluator training requirements, students will be required to complete three clinical supervision cycles (planning conference, observation/data collection, feedback conference), and to submit videotapes of their feedback conferences. To develop their self-analysis skills, students will complete reflective papers in most courses.

### **Exit Assessment**

Exit assessment will include the following activities: a) assessments completed by mentor principals and university supervisors, b) an end-of-program self-assessment, c) artifacts contained in students' electronic portfolios, and d) assessment rubrics completed by the program faculty. Mentors and university supervisory will complete an evaluation of the candidates' performance upon completion of their assignment clinical experience, which will include their suggestions regarding whether the individual should be recommended for Iowa principalship licensure. If the mentors and supervisor do not agree on this recommendation, they will work together to reach consensus, and/or to determine what additional field-based activities (if any) the student would need to complete for a satisfactory rating.

When they conclude their coursework and clinical activities, students will complete a final ISLLC self-assessment. They will be asked to reflect on their growth, identify any areas in which improvement still is needed, and to develop a plan for continuing professional development. These materials will be included in their portfolios.

Students will submit their completed portfolios to the educational administration faculty for review. In addition to performance artifacts for each of the six ISSL standards, students will include a reflective essay for each standard, explaining how their experiences in the program have provided them with the necessary knowledge and skills for success. Students earning a master's degree will participate in a two-hour oral examination with their committee, which is required by the ISU Graduate College. Students who previously have earned a masters degree will not complete the two-hour oral examination, but they will be required to submit their electronic portfolios for faculty review.

When examining and evaluating individual portfolios, professors will use rubrics to assess students' mastery of the six ISSL standards and will make a final determination of their competencies. Students would receive a "pass," "conditional pass," or "no pass." Students earning a "conditional" or "no" pass will be required to participate in additional learning experiences (either coursework or clinical activities) until they demonstrate to the faculty that they have successfully mastered the ISSL content knowledge and skills.