

## **MAT Single Subject: Analyses and Discussion of Candidate and Program Data**

The data presented previously for the MAT Single Subject program at Point Loma Nazarene University depicts candidates with a high level of proficiency, consistency across Regional Centers (multiple sites), as well as areas for improvement.

### *Strengths*

#### *Candidate competency:*

In the initial course of the MAT Single Subject program, EDU 600, candidates demonstrate an understanding of learning theory and an introductory knowledge of the professional attributes of teaching. Assessment data from the Signature Assignment (Table 1) for this course reveals that the strongest criterion represented is knowledge of research-based theories and principles of human learning and development with an average overall score of 3.93 out of 4. High marks for this criterion is consistent across all Regional Centers. Consistency of scores exists between traditionally-prepared candidates and interns.

Candidate assessment data on the Signature Assignment in EDU 620 reflects a high level of candidate proficiency with collecting literacy data on individual students to inform the teaching and learning cycle. The criterion with greatest consistency across Regional Centers relates to data collection through observation and conference with an average overall score of 3.91 out of 4. This foundational skill of learning about students recurs in the Teacher Performance Assessments 2, 3, and 4.

Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) 1 demonstrates that Single Subject candidates perform consistently among various content areas. Therefore, candidates from one particular content area do not lag behind the skills and knowledge of other candidates. This attests to the overall caliber of the candidates at PLNU. This also reflects upon the structure of our course design in the MAT Single Subject program as Single Subject candidates from all content areas complete the same series of three foundational courses prior to submission of TPA 1.

TPAs 2, 3, and 4 demonstrate high levels of candidate competency on the multiple criteria. The average overall scores for each of these TPAs are above 3.0. The average score above 3.0 exists for all Regional Centers. Transition from an older version of TPAs 3 and 4 to a newer version introduced in 2009 did not markedly change as candidates continued to perform above 3.0 on the newer version. Learning about students and reflecting were consistently among the higher scoring criteria for all of these TPAs. Comparison between traditionally-prepared candidates and interns on the TPAs reflected no significant discrepancies and demonstrated a high level of consistency in candidate performance between both preparation models.

Assessment of candidate dispositions reveals candidates with dispositions that align with the values of PLNU and with attributes of effective teaching. Of highest measure is Indicator 2: Honesty and Integrity. The average score (out of 4) was 3.74 with 77.55% of candidates assessed at the highest level 4. As a university founded upon Christian principles, this assessment offers encouragement regarding the caliber of our candidates and their commitment to this important disposition.

#### *Program effectiveness:*

The MAT Single Subject program at PLNU is administered at three Regional Centers. Candidates receive their preparation for the teaching credential almost entirely at their respective Regional Center. Assessment data on Signature Assignments and the Teacher Performance Assessments (TPAs) reflect a high level of consistency across the three sites. No significant variation exists across the sites in any particular assessment.

The overall high level of candidate performance on the data presented reflects a high degree of program effectiveness. The average scores for all 4 TPAs is above 3.0 and most criteria are consistently above 3.0.

Signature Assignment data for EDU 600 and EDU 620 represent measures of candidate performance that aligns with the content and goals of the course. As EDU 600 places primary focus upon the concepts of learning theory, the assessment data affirms the effectiveness of the course to meet this goal. EDU 620 places a significant emphasis upon diagnosis reading abilities of students the assessment data also affirms the effectiveness of the course to prepare candidates for this skill.

The Exit Survey demonstrates candidates' assessment of the effectiveness of the program after completing Clinical Practice and when applying for their Single Subject credential. One of the highest measures (average 1.2) was the preparation for constructing effective lesson plans. This skill is developed throughout the program: introduced in the foundation courses, developed in the methods courses, and refined during Clinical Practice. Another area of high measure was reflected in the use of assessment data to inform instructional planning. This skill is introduced in EDU 621: General Methods for Secondary Teachers and developed in EDU 603: Classroom Assessment and Research Practices, a course that candidates take concurrently with Clinical Practice. The highest of all measures (1.2) in this survey related to viewing teaching as a calling. This concept is central to the program at PLNU and this data affirms the effectiveness of the program to support this outcome.

#### *Areas for improvement*

##### *Candidate competence:*

In all four TPAs, the lowest scoring criterion was Making Adaptations. This lowest score was represented in all the content areas included in TPA 1 as well as TPAs 2, 3, and 4. (Tables 10 and 11) This criterion was the lowest score on the TPAs across all Regional Centers. In our 2009 Biennial Report, Making Adaptations was the lowest scoring criterion. Incorporating a new course, EDU 602: Foundations of Special Education and incorporating a strategic focus throughout all coursework to support students with special needs and English Learners has not sufficiently moved this measure as it persists as the lowest scoring criterion for the 2011 Biennial Report.

In TPA 2, this criterion score was higher than in TPAs 3 and 4. This may result from the fact that candidates submit TPA 2 while enrolled in EDU 621: General Methods for Secondary Teachers. This course, taken prior to Clinical Practice, incorporates significant emphasis upon planning instruction for diverse learners. Further means to address this finding will be included in the plan of action in Part IV.

In the assessment of candidate dispositions, Indicator 8: Diligence in Work Habits and Responsibility represented the lowest score of 3.30 out of 4. In fact, 9.18% scored at the level of a 2 while 48.98% scored as the level of a 3. Since effective teaching necessitates these attributes, an increase in expectations for our candidates in this area may be needed. All of our candidates in the MAT Single Subject program take coursework in the format of evening courses, many of them confront the demands of other professional responsibilities that compete with their graduate studies and teacher preparation. An awareness of this reality and a programmatic focus on the importance of this disposition can improve the competence of our candidates.

*Program effectiveness:*

Analysis of TPA data reveals that Making Adaptations for students remains an obstacle for some candidates. Therefore, an even more targeted focus is needed throughout the MAT Single Subject program to better prepare candidates with the knowledge and skills to support all learners. This lowest scoring criterion extends across all Regional Centers and provides evidence of an area for improvement to enhance overall program effectiveness.

Pre-service teachers have historically lacked command of classroom management strategies. Evidence from the Exit Survey demonstrates that this deficiency persists. During the period of review of this Biennial Report, PLNU has offered training in Classroom Organization and Management Program (COMP) to candidates during Clinical Practice. Two adjunct professors in the School of Education have are certified trainers in COMP and offer this training to Single Subject candidates at the three Regional Centers. In EDU 621: General Methods for Secondary Teachers (a course taken prior to Clinical Practice), Single Subject candidates construct a classroom management plan. Even with these two tangible efforts, few candidates who have completed our program have reported that this is an aspect with which they feel well prepared. This reflects upon our overall program effectiveness and demonstrates a need for further efforts to prepare our candidates.

The Signature Assignments in EDU 600 and EDU 620 are assessed according to common rubric across all Regional Centers. However, these assignments are assessed by varying instructors that introduces a degree of variance and potential scoring bias. Calibration of assessors for these assignments would help ensure a greater inter-rated reliability of these assessments.

## Use of Results

### Master of Arts in Teaching: Single Subject Preliminary Credential

#### Use of Assessment Results to Improve Candidate and Program Performance

Analysis of data from candidate assessments, data related to candidate dispositions, and exit survey data revealed many successful components of the MAT Single Subject program. However, the analysis also identified areas for improvement. Below is a plan of action for response to these identified areas for improvement.

Table 16

Data Source	Plan of Action or Proposed Changes Made	Applicable Program or Common Standard(s)
TPAs	<p>Since the Biennial Report in 2009, PLNU has fully implemented the MAT Single Subject program. In this new program, all candidates take EDU 602: Foundations of Special Education. Enhanced efforts have also occurred to incorporate a strategic focus throughout all coursework to support students with special needs and English Learners. However, data for the 2011 Biennial Report reveals that candidates continue to score lowest on the Making Adaptations criterion of the TPAs. This is most pronounced in TPAs 3 and 4 where a greater knowledge and application of adaptations is expected of candidates. Candidates submit TPAs 3 and 4 during Clinical Practice while under the supervision of a cooperating teacher and a university supervisor. Additionally, candidates participate in a seminar course for reflection during this time.</p> <p>To improve candidate performance on this criterion of TPAs 3 &amp; 4, PLNU will provide additional support to university supervisors by ensuring that they have a clear understanding of best practice and are able to support candidates in this work. Currently, PLNU offers training for Cooperating Teachers. In this training, PLNU will provide additional support for Cooperating Teachers with the expectations for candidates to plan and make adaptations for students with special needs, including</p>	<p>Common Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel</p> <p>Common Standard 7: Field Experience and Clinical Practice</p> <p>OR,</p> <p>Program Standards—</p> <p>9: Equity, Diversity, and Access to the Curriculum for All Children</p> <p>12: Preparation to Teach English Learners</p> <p>13: Preparation to Teach Special Populations</p>

	<p>English Learners. Instructors for the seminar course will incorporate strategies for making adaptations into the curriculum of the seminar course. Centrally, the candidates receive support from multiple sources during Clinical Practice. Focusing this support for candidates on the knowledge and skills needed to make adaptations for students with special needs can lead to improved candidate performance on this assessment.</p>	
Signature Assignment Data	<p>The Signature Assignments in EDU 600 and EDU 620 are assessed according to common rubric across all Regional Centers. However, these assignments are assessed by varying instructors that introduces a degree of variance and potential scoring bias.</p> <p>The MAT Single Subject program will construct a means to calibrate assessors for these assignments to help ensure a greater inter-rated reliability of these assessments. All instructors of EDU 600 and EDU 620 will undergo this calibration prior to teaching the respective courses.</p>	<p>Common Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel</p>
Exit Survey	<p>In all methods courses in the MAT Single Subject program, Candidate Learning Outcomes include gaining knowledge of strategies for classroom management. Since some candidates who have completed the program report that this is an aspect of our program that did not fully prepare them, all methods courses will include a singular assessment of these CLOs that reflect candidate knowledge and understanding of classroom management strategies.</p> <p>Require the COMP or increase participation in COMP training?</p>	<p>Program Standard 4: Relationship Between Theory and Practice</p> <p>Program Standard 10: Preparation for Learning to Create a Supportive, Healthy, Environment for Student Learning</p>

