

DATE: July 26, 2012**SUBJECT:** New Academic Program
Middle Tennessee State University
Assessment, Learning and School Improvement (EdD)**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The proposed Doctorate of Education (EdD) program in Assessment, Learning and School Improvement is focused on equipping education leaders to improve student achievement. Conceived as a degree program focused on expanding the research and analytical capabilities of educational practitioners, this EdD forges a connection between the data gleaned from student assessment and the measures a school system or individual school can take to improve educational outcomes.

The EdD in Assessment, Learning and School Improvement is a unique degree program, and is distinct from other state doctoral programs in education focused on curriculum and instruction or leadership. The quantitative methods skills embedded within the curriculum, the focus on analysis of assessment results, and the cohort-based schedule result in a degree option that will provide instruction critical to the success of elementary and secondary schools in today's data-driven environment.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION DATE: August 2013

1.1.20A MISSION: The proposed program supports the MTSU mission of preparing professional educators, and builds upon current reforms of the College of Education under the Tennessee Board of Regents Ready to Teach program. The EdD was previously identified as one of four focus areas in the College of Education strategic plan, and is also consonant with the institutional 2007-2017 Academic Master Plan. This program has been endorsed by the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, the Tennessee School Board Association, and the Tennessee Education Association.

1.1.20B CURRICULUM: The program curriculum consists of 60 credit hours, with students completing coursework across three core areas: student learning, assessment, and school improvement. Additionally, students will complete a 9-credit hour research sequence and 12-credit hours of dissertation work. The assessment and research courses, in particular, distinguish the proposed program from other EdD programs currently in operation.

All courses are designed to be completed in a sequential format, with the cohort moving through the curriculum as a group, completing six to eight credit hours each semester. This pace of academic progress, combined with a planned dissertation period, would result in completion of the EdD within three years.

Most courses embedded within the curriculum are not yet in existence, and are currently in development. Course development has been undertaken in partnership with three nationally recognized education leaders. These consultants, distinctive from the external reviewers who participated in the campus site visit, provided input into the design of the curriculum that was ultimately adopted in the final proposal.

1.1.20C ACADEMIC STANDARDS: Applicants must hold a master’s degree with an average GPA of 3.5 along with competitive scores on the Graduate Record Examination. Students will be selected for the program based on three letters of recommendations (letter from school leader must address the student’s ability to lead an effort to improve student learning). Admission requirements also include submission of a personal statement that addresses professional goals and how the EdD in Assessment, Learning and School Improvement will prepare the applicant to achieve these goals. Finally, candidates who meet all admission requirements will participate in an interview.

Projected Program Enrollment and Productivity

Enrollment projections were developed based on productivity trends identified in similar programs already in operation at other institutions. It is assumed that virtually all students in the EdD program will be working education professionals, and will participate in the program as a cohort, progressing through the curriculum as a group. Historically, cohort programs have an unusually high retention rate, and this fact is reflected within the graduate projections.

Year	Full-Time Headcount	Part-Time Headcount	Total FTE	Graduates
1	0	20	13.4	0
2	0	40	31.2	0
3	0	60	44.6	15
4	0	60	44.6	17
5	0	60	44.6	17

1.1.20D FACULTY: A large portion of the instructional and advisory workload for this program will be assumed by existing faculty, all of whom hold graduate faculty status. In addition, a national search will be conducted for four tenure track faculty members that will play a key role in the EdD program. These searches are focused on recruiting faculty with expertise in research-based school improvement and will fill vacant positions already included in the budget from the current academic year.

1.1.20E LIBRARY RESOURCES: MTSU’s academic inventory currently includes several graduate programs in education, including doctoral level programs. As such, the library currently maintains holdings sufficient to support the proposed program.

1.1.20F ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION: In order to facilitate cross-department collaboration, the program will be housed as a direct report to the Dean in the College of Education. This college-wide model has been employed during implementation of several other doctoral programs at MTSU.

1.1.20G SUPPORT RESOURCES: The cohort model of instruction is very effective in mitigating the class scheduling and advising issues that often arise during a student's academic career. Students are able to plan, at the beginning of the program, the exact sequence of courses they will take at each juncture of the program. However, each student will have a dissertation chair that also serves as the primary advisor.

1.1.20H FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT: Facilities, equipment and technology support are adequate to support the program.

1.1.20I NEED AND DEMAND: In response to the demand for leaders educated in data application, the National Center for Education Statistics created CIP 13.0601, which will be the appropriate classification for this program. The proposed EdD will be the first and only program of this kind operating in the state. The reform movement that has become central to Tennessee's efforts to improve outcomes for K-12 students will benefit from a cadre of educators steeped in research-based school improvement. Additionally, the EdD will be unique to the SREB region and may be an attractive degree option to Academic Common Market students.

1.1.20J NO UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION: The proposed program would be the only one of its kind operating in the state.

1.1.20K COOPERATING INSTITUTIONS: None at this time.

1.120L DIVERSITY AND ACCESS: Diversity is a stated goal of the proposal, and it is anticipated that the program will attract students from minority groups and educators who work in and lead schools in underserved communities.

1.1.20M ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION: Accreditation for this program will be conducted through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The MTSU College of Education will be reviewed by NCATE in 2014; the EdD will be a component of that review. The program will also comprise a portion of the institutional SACS review in 2016-17.

Internal evaluation will occur as well, measuring program outcomes, student learning outcomes, student satisfaction, and program effectiveness. Assessment results from both external and internal evaluations will be used for program improvements.

1.1.200 EXTERNAL JUDGMENT: Two external consultants evaluated the EdD program proposal and conducted a site visit. The reviewers were Dr. Van Cooley, Interim Dean College of Education and Human Development at Western Michigan University and Dr. Angela Walmsley, Associate Professor of Educational Studies at Saint Louis University. Both reviewers endorsed the approval of the program, stating "we recommend approval of the proposed program because of the innovation of this particular program, the rigor involved, and the need in assessment education of K-12 leaders."

1.1.20P COST/BENEFIT: The proposed doctoral program will be funded through campus reallocations and additional tuition revenues generated by the program. Reallocation of university resources will only be required for the first year of the program.

1.1.30 POST APPROVAL MONITORING: An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five years following program approval. The review will be based on benchmarks established in the approved proposal. At the end of this period, the campus, governing board, and Commission staff will perform a summative evaluation. The benchmarks include, but are not limited to, enrollment and graduation, program cost, progress toward accreditation and other metrics set by the institution and agreed upon by governing board and Commission staff. If benchmarks are not met during the monitoring period, the Commission may recommend that the governing board terminate the program. If additional time is needed and requested by the governing board, the Commission may choose to extend the monitoring period.