



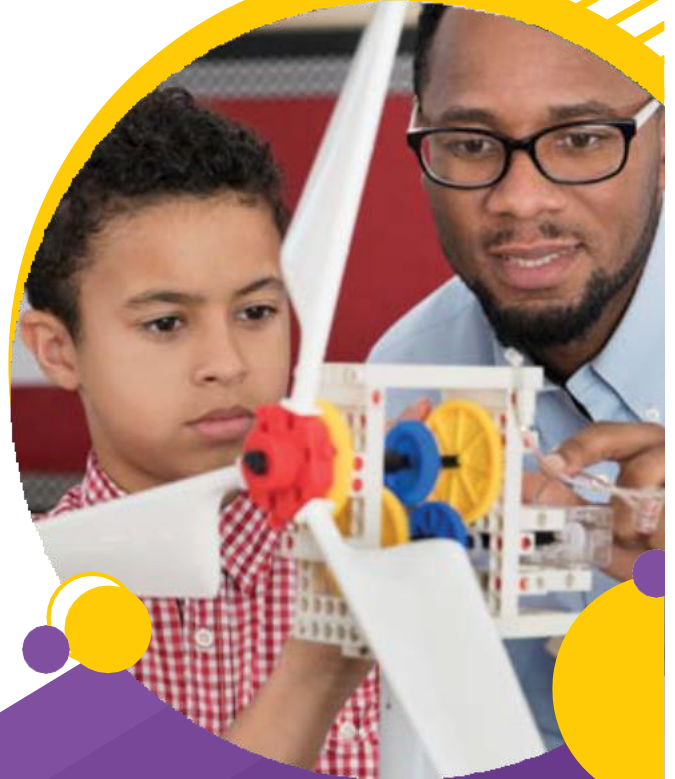
Strengthening Teacher Education

Data Results

Since 2017, the average score and the number of students successfully completing the edTPA® portfolio has shown consistent growth and stability. Overall, the candidates' average edTPA® scores (45.10) were almost 2-points higher than the previous year (43.33), and 3.02 (42.08) higher than in 2017. In 2019, edTPA® scores were over 7-points above the state required minimum score of 38 out of 75 (45.10).

Utilizing edTPA® to Improve Teacher Education Preparation

The College of Education (COE) Teacher Education Program has placed tremendous emphasis on preparing the best teacher candidates who are ready to teach on their first day in the classroom. To determine candidates' readiness to teach, the program utilizes a state-mandated performance assessment, edTPA®, which measures and supports the skills and knowledge important for successful teaching on that first day. On this assessment, teacher candidates are directed to produce and analyze a portfolio of artifacts that illustrate their teaching knowledge and skills. Candidates must demonstrate competence on three tasks (planning, instruction, and assessment) before they are considered ready for the job.



“Preparing Competent and Caring Facilitators of Learning, Committed to Diversity and the Success of All!”



During 2018-2019, all three Task Commentaries showed positive gains with the largest increase occurring in Task 2--Instruction. This is most likely explained by the larger gains in Rubrics 8, 9, & 10, where the candidates strengthened their instructional strategies to focus on student engagement supported by research practice and theory. Similarly, during 2017-2018, all three Task Commentaries showed positive gains. However, the largest increase occurred in Task 1--Planning. Additionally, the percentage of students successfully passing the edTPA® portfolio was 100% in 2017, 75% in 2018, and 100% in 2019. See Table below.

Year	% Passing	Average Overall Score	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3
2019	100%	45.10	15.35	14.90	14.85
2018	75%	43.33	14.81	14.21	14.31
2017	100%	42.08	14.10	13.93	14.04

Table-edTPA® Scores

Use of Data Results

The increase in Average Overall Score across the three years likely reflects the program's continuous improvement efforts based on an analysis of edTPA® scores. Although the passing rate dropped to 75% in 2017—a decline that may be attributed to a change in the cutoff score by the Tennessee Department of Education—the increase in Average Overall Score indicated steady improvement. Still, because of a culture of assessment, the program recognized the need to identify program weaknesses to ensure continuous improvement. Hence, the program relied on the college's Quality Assurance System (QAS), designed to measure and evaluate candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as to guide continuous improvement efforts. Data are systematically reviewed at the program and unit levels. A bi-annual data retreat is conducted to review data as a unit and to develop strategies for continuous improvement. As a result of the evaluation of assessment results, faculty made the following improvements in the program preparation of teacher candidates.

1. Adjustments were made at the course and program pathway levels to strengthen how teacher candidates were being prepared in pre-residency semesters and the residency-1 semesters.
2. Students were required to complete a two-or-three lesson plan sequence and the planning commentary for Task 1. Students were provided significant feedback to assist them with the planning task.
3. Key assignments were modified in EDCI 3220-Assessment of Student Learning. The students evaluated a Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) case study. This assignment required students to review results, analyze data, and make recommendations for improvements.
4. The faculty used the edTPA® assessment commentaries and replicated it in their classrooms. Students were required to conduct an assessment and interpret the data to determine if re-teaching is necessary. This allowed students to have practice and become familiar with how assessment occurs in the classroom and how the assessments are used to guide instruction.
5. In EDCI 4550-Math Methods, greater emphasis was placed on academic language and mathematical reasoning. The faculty decided to de-emphasize calculations and algorithms.
6. Students were required to analyze selected Accomplished Teaching, Learning and Schools (ATLAS) case commentaries made available through a joint grant with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
7. Modifications were made at course and program levels to meet the new state policy that requires teacher candidates to attain a minimum edTPA® score 42.
8. Students completed a two-or-three lesson plan sequence and the planning commentary task. Students were provided significant feedback on these assignments.

Conclusions

Faculty conducted a thorough review of candidates' performance on the edTPA®. An analysis of the candidates' performance on the three tasks indicated areas for improvement. Programmatic changes were implemented to incorporate instruction and assignments targeting areas of weakness. By so doing, candidates' performance improved significantly over the three-year span. Most telling was the steady increase of the Average Overall Score. It would appear that utilizing the data from the candidates' edTPA® performance to modify the program proved to be a success. Moreover, the data increasingly indicate that candidates are better prepared to teach on the first day in the classroom.

Think, Work, and Serve