SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY.

Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: **Ph.D. Education Leadership**	Department: **Education Leadership**
Degree or Certificate Level: **Ph.D.**	College/School: **School of Education**
Date (Month/Year): **September 2022**	Primary Assessment Contact: **Sally Beth Lyon, Program Director; Jaime E. Welborn, Assessment Coordinator**

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? **2021 - 2022**

In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? **2022**

1. Student Learning Outcomes
Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

SLU Outcome:
Apply knowledge from the field(s) of study to address problems in broader contexts.

Articulate arguments or explanations to both a disciplinary or professional audience and to a general audience, in both oral and written forms.

PhD Student Learning Outcome #3 & 4:
Graduates will apply leadership concepts in their doctoral research and scholarship.

2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning
Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

The artifacts directly measuring student learning of *apply leadership concepts in their doctoral research and scholarship* are:

1) **Written Dissertation**
   a) Assessed by the dissertation committee members for each student, which includes but is not limited to EDL Faculty, using collaborative discussions and expectations from Ph.D. courses, namely EDR 6970 Research Topics in Education (see drafted rubric from EDR 6970 in folder)
   b) Collected in EDR 6990 Dissertation (Fall 2021 and Spring 2022)
   c) n = 5

All courses are taught in-person on SLU Campus.

3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process
What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and include them in/with this report.

1.) For each student, a dissertation committee of three members, which includes but is not limited to EDL Faculty, evaluated the dissertation in multiple phases. During the first phase, the student's advisor read the completed written dissertation and provided feedback using the rubric as a guide. The second draft was

forwarded to the committee of three for an additional round of feedback. In the next phase, the student combined all feedback to produce a final version, which then was evaluated through the dissertation committee following the dissertation defense. The committee voted on the final evaluation of the written dissertations as one of the following: 1)Pass; 2)Pass with Distinction; or 3)Fail. In addition, the EDL Faculty members who served on the committee then convened to discuss strengths and areas of improvement across all written dissertations with a focus on *applying leadership concepts in their doctoral research and scholarship*.

2.) The EDL Faculty members analyzed the effectiveness of the program based on the data gathered from the 5 dissertations, relevant to student learning outcomes #3 and #4, for the 2021-2022 assessment cycle.

3.) The EDL Faculty members identified themes of strength and areas of growth across courses for discussion at a faculty meeting for collective agreement on recommendations for improving the program.

4. Data/Results
What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

Written Dissertations

Five Ph.D. students took EDR 6990 during the fall and spring semesters and completed the Ph.D. program, including defending and publishing their written dissertation research studies, which led to the following results of the assessment of Student Learning Outcomes #3 and #4, *applying leadership concepts in their doctoral research and scholarship.* Four students completed their dissertations with a "Pass," and one student with a "Pass with Distinction." Notable strengths for these Ph.D. students' written dissertations included: Rich literature reviews, distinct alignment between the purpose statement, and questions/hypotheses, and research designs. In addition, all dissertations applied leadership concepts such as Culturally Proficient Leadership, Overidentification of Special Education, and HR practices. Each student's literature review had a section specifically designated to leadership.

Possible areas of growth drawn from this signature assignment included: Overall, students performed well on their dissertations, but there were some notable areas of growth in Chapters 4 and 5 of the dissertation. For example, all five students analyzed their data and reported their findings in "raw data" formatting in Chapter 4. Understanding of the difference between results and findings in the written dissertation seemed to be lacking. In Chapter 5, four out of five students did not understand how to move from findings to drawing conclusions. After direct instruction about the methodology and technical writing associated with the two chapters, the four students worked to improve their chapters. The outcomes of the assessment could have been strengthened by incorporating more class content related to data analysis, findings, and conclusions.

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions
What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

Given the data from the artifacts assessed during the 2021-2022 assessment cycle, our Ph.D. graduates are able to *apply leadership concepts in their doctoral research and scholarship.* We have learned that the Written Dissertation, assigned to Ph.D. students who take EDR 6990 occurs at the end of their program. EDR 6970, Research Topics in Education is taught the semester before they begin their dissertation, which is the course in which they learn many foundational skills necessary to be successful in the writing of the dissertation. Evidence of applying evidence-based leadership practices and theories develops throughout their program, which was clearly demonstrated in the written dissertations. While all students received a "Pass" on the written dissertation, we have learned that our students really struggle with the last two chapters of the dissertation, findings and conclusions. This indicates that our approach to meet this outcome is succeeding because they are clearly able to apply leadership concepts and provide us details regarding the necessity of being intentional about teaching how to analyze the data, report the findings, and draw conclusions from those findings. It is important for us as faculty to consider their sequence of research courses to build those skills as well.connecting the student learning outcomes to the assessments we are giving students, especially during the early sequenced courses.

6. **Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of <u>Current</u> Assessment Findings**
   A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

   These results were discussed at a Ph.D. sub-committee meeting in August 2022. The instructors of record for EDR 6990 and dissertation committee members shared the results and findings of the five written dissertations. The committee discussed overall strengths, areas of growth needed for students, and possible curricular and pedagogical recommendations. Particular focus was on the need to use the rubric from EDR 6970 in EDR 6990 to more clearly define "Pass" "Pass with distinction" and "Fail," as well as realigning the rubrics across the program to address all student learning outcomes.

   B. How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies	• Course content • Teaching techniques • Improvements in technology • Prerequisites	• Course sequence • New courses • Deletion of courses • Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings
Changes to the Assessment Plan	• Student learning outcomes • Artifacts of student learning • Evaluation process	• Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics) • Data collection methods • Frequency of data collection

   Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

   As a faculty, particularly those who teach courses in the Ph.D. program, we will realign the rubrics used in EDR 6970 to address all student learning outcomes for EDR 6990. In EDR 6970, the teacher of record will review the course materials and adjust curriculum to include instruction and review on the research methods and technical writing skills necessary to finish Chapter 4 and 5. We plan to incorporate something like "Brown-bag lunches" or "Saturday-Classes" to ensure students have the support they need to write Chapter 4 and 5 with greater success. The changes necessary are part of a larger conversation we will have with the faculty who teach research courses to ensure curriculum alignment. It is imperative students learn how to analyze data, report findings, and draw conclusions before enrolling in EDR 6990 and EDR 6970. Beginning in Spring 2023, students in the Ph.D. program will begin to receive feedback on the rubric related to the student learning outcomes in EDR 6970.

   If no changes are being made, please explain why.

7. **Closing the Loop: Review of <u>Previous</u> Assessment Findings and Changes**
   A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

   The comprehensive examination for the entire EDL program has been enhanced. For example, the previous comprehensive exam used to be a one-day comprehensive lab process. Now the exam protocol is a take-home process which reflects the application of knowledge. During the 2019-2020 assessment cycle, no Ph.D. students took the comprehensive examination; hence our desire to monitor the progress of the changes to our program again during the 2021-2022 assessment cycle to ensure we are closing the loop.

   B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

The change of the comprehensive examination was implemented in fall 2020. Faculty members who teach the courses aligned to the examination questions assess students' attainment of the student learning outcomes. Strengths and areas of growth are discussed at a faculty meeting following the grading of the examinations using the *Comprehensive Exam Rubric (see attached)*.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

During the 2021-2022 assessment cycle, we had 1 Ph.D. students take the comprehensive examination. One hundred percent (100%) of students passed the comprehensive examination.

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

The Ph.D. faculty plans to continue monitoring the change of the comprehensive examination and discuss strategies for strengthening students' understanding and application of all student learning outcomes in the comprehensive exam. During the 2022-2023 school year, the faculty will review the assessments using student learning outcomes #5.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools and/or revised/updated assessment plans along with this report.