Annual Assessment Report
Masters of Education in Reading
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1. Program Overview

1. **Program Overview**

1.1. **Degrees, diplomas, certificates, and/or minors and the mission and goals of each. Source: UAS Catalog**.

The graduate programs in Reading offer a Masters of Education (M.Ed.) in Reading-Reading Specialist and a Graduate Certificate (and Alaska State Endorsement) in Reading

The M.Ed. in Reading program is designed specifically to deepen K-12 teachers' pedagogical content knowledge with the aim of improved student (K-12) literacy achievement. This program is delivered in e-Learning formats so that it is possible to complete the degree while teaching in one's own district. Technological tools facilitate course delivery, communication, and research. Candidates in the reading program focus on developmental, cognitive, and sociocultural aspects of reading acquisition, instruction, and assessment. Professional and caring attitudes and beliefs about teaching lead to responsive and rigorous instruction in reading and literacy for all K-12 students, including those who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Accomplished teaching professionals promote collaboration with students, colleagues, parents, families, and the larger community to improve literacy learning and student achievement in their contexts. Students prepare an exit portfolio that is aligned to the program standards of the International Literacy Association (2017 Standards) to demonstrate levels of knowledge and pedagogy commensurate with the skills and dispositions of highly competent advanced teaching professionals.

All reading courses are delivered via synchronous methodology, meeting once a week for two hours using Blackboard Collaborate. Additional professional interaction related to professional readings is required via a discussion board. The supervised summer practicum course moved online in the Summer of 2020, and will remain online. Candidates study instruction and assessment, demonstrate their practical skills for assessment, and receive feedback to improve their pedagogical practice, while working one on one and with small groups of students in their home community.

The Reading M.Ed. serves teachers throughout the state of Alaska who wish to know more about teaching reading and literacy, either to do a better job within the classroom assignment they already have, to become a reading/literacy specialist, teacher leader or curriculum specialist. The role of the reading specialist has been shifting nationally from solely that of additional instructor to being an instructional coach, or a mix of both (Bean, 2015). The UAS M.Ed. Reading program has shifted its content to reflect these professional trends and appropriately prepare its graduates.

The UAS Reading M.Ed. serves an important role in the State of Alaska. The ability to read effectively is a student's cornerstone to success. Those students who struggle with reading become frustrated and often do not wish to or are unable to complete a K-12 education. While many people assume that initial preparation for teaching should be sufficient training for a teacher to teach reading effectively, this is not the case. Especially in Alaska, students come to school with varied needs, and teachers require a depth of understanding that requires a substantial period of learning time. Teachers need continual learning to be effective in matching reading and writing instruction to student needs. Reading specialists are needed to act as coaches with classroom teachers in their building or their district, to facilitate the professional change needed by each teacher in order to provide effective reading instruction to their K-12 students.

2. Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Throughout the 2019-20 and 2020-21, each course in the program has been updated to align with the 2017 International Literacy Association Standards. These are as listed below:

STANDARD 1. Foundational Knowledge Candidates demonstrate knowledge of major theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based foundations of literacy and language, the ways in which they interrelate, and the role of the reading/literacy specialist in schools.

1.1: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based components of reading (e.g., concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) development throughout the grades and its relationship with other aspects of literacy.

1.2: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based aspects of writing development, writing processes (e.g., revising, audience), and foundational skills (e.g., spelling, sentence construction, word processing) and their relationships with other aspects of literacy.

1.3: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based components of language (e.g., language acquisition, structure of language, conventions of standard English, vocabulary acquisition and use, speaking, listening, viewing, visually representing) and its relationships with other aspects of literacy.

1.4: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the historical and evidence-based foundations related to the role of the reading/literacy specialist.

STANDARD 2. Curriculum and Instruction: Candidates use foundational knowledge to design literacy curricula to meet needs of learners, especially those who experience difficulty with literacy; design, implement, and evaluate small-group and individual evidence-based literacy instruction for learners; collaborate with teachers to implement effective literacy practices.

2.1: Candidates use foundational knowledge to design, select, critique, adapt, and evaluate evidence-based literacy curricula that meet the needs of all learners.

2.2: Candidates design, select, adapt, teach, and evaluate evidence-based instructional approaches, using both informational and narrative texts, to meet the literacy needs of whole class and groups of students in

the academic disciplines and other subject areas, and when learning to read, write, listen, speak, view, or visually represent.

2.3: Candidates select, adapt, teach, and evaluate evidence-based, supplemental, and intervention approaches and programs; such instruction is explicit, intense, and provides adequate scaffolding to meet the literacy needs of individual and small groups of students, especially those who experience difficulty with reading and writing.

2.4: Candidates collaborate with and coach school-based educators in developing, implementing, and evaluating literacy instructional practices and curriculum.

STANDARD 3: Assessment and Evaluation: Candidates understand, select, and use valid, reliable, fair, and appropriate assessment tools to screen, diagnose, and measure student literacy achievement; inform instruction and evaluate interventions; assist teachers in their understanding and use of assessment results; advocate for appropriate literacy practices to relevant stakeholders.

3.1: Candidates understand the purposes, attributes, formats, strengths/limitations (including validity, reliability, inherent language, dialect, cultural bias), and influences of various types of tools in a comprehensive literacy and language assessment system and apply that knowledge to using assessment tools.

3.2: Candidates collaborate with colleagues to administer, interpret, and use data for decision making about student assessment, instruction, intervention, and evaluation for individual and groups of students.

3.3: Candidates participate in and lead professional learning experiences to assist teachers in selecting, administering, analyzing, interpreting assessments, and using results for instructional decision making in classrooms and schools.

3.4: Candidates, using both written and oral communication, explain assessment results and advocate for appropriate literacy and language practices to a variety of stakeholders, including students, administrators, teachers, other educators, and parents/guardians.

STANDARD 4: Diversity and Equity: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of research, relevant theories, pedagogies, and essential concepts of diversity and equity; demonstrate an understanding of themselves and others as cultural beings; create classrooms and schools that are inclusive and affirming; advocate for equity at school, district, and community levels.

4.1: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of foundational theories about diverse learners, equity, and culturally responsive instruction.

4.2: Candidates demonstrate understanding of themselves and others as cultural beings through their pedagogy and interactions with individuals both within and outside of the school community.

4.3: Candidates create and advocate for inclusive and affirming classroom and school environments by designing and implementing instruction that is culturally responsive and acknowledges and values the diversity in their school and in society.

4.4: Candidates advocate for equity at school, district, and community levels.

STANDARD 5: Learners and the Literacy Environment Candidates meet the developmental needs of all learners and collaborate with school personnel to use a variety of print and digital materials to engage and motivate all learners; integrate digital technologies in appropriate, safe, and effective ways; foster a positive climate that supports a literacy-rich learning environment.

5.1: Candidates, in consultation with families and colleagues, meet the developmental needs of all learners (e.g., English learners, those with difficulties learning to read, the gifted), taking into consideration physical, social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual factors.

5.2: Candidates collaborate with school personnel and provide opportunities for student choice and engagement with a variety of print and digital materials to engage and motivate all learners.

5.3: Candidates integrate digital technologies into their literacy instruction in appropriate, safe, and effective ways and assist colleagues in these efforts.

5.4: Candidates facilitate efforts to foster a positive climate that supports the physical and social literacy-rich learning environment, including knowledge of routines, grouping structures, and social interactions.

STANDARD 6: Professional Learning and Leadership: Candidates demonstrate the ability to be reflective literacy professionals, who apply their knowledge of adult learning to work collaboratively with colleagues; demonstrate their leadership and facilitation skills; advocate on behalf of teachers, students, families, and communities.

6.1: Candidates demonstrate the ability to reflect on their professional practices, belong to professional organizations, and are critical consumers of research, policy, and practice.

6.2: Candidates use their knowledge of adult learning to engage in collaborative decision making with colleagues to design, align, and assess instructional practices and interventions within and across classrooms.

6.3: Candidates develop, refine, and demonstrate leadership and facilitation skills when working with individuals and groups.

6.4: Candidates consult with and advocate on behalf of teachers, students, families, and communities for effective literacy practices and policies.

3. How the data is collected on the Program SLOs (rubrics, portfolios, etc.)

Each assessment in each course is aligned to the above standards. These assessments each have a corresponding rubric to determine level of proficiency with meeting the corresponding standard. Additionally, student grades and qualitative responses to mid-semester reflections and end of course reflections are drawn on to continue to refine and improve practice.

Program data are collected at several junctures, according to CAEP and ILA. The assessments that will be used for reporting and analysis in the next round of data reporting include:

| 1 | Licensure assessment, or other content-based assessment | Foundations Essay | EDRE 674 | Early program |

2	Assessment of Content Knowledge	Portfolio	EDRE 698	End of program
3	Assessment of Candidate ability to plan instruction	Analysis of Instructional Practice	EDRE 675	Early program
4	Assessment of internship, practicum, or other clinical experience	Teaching Video & Reflection Project	EDRE 680	Mid-program
5	Assessment of candidate effect on student learning	Instructional Case Study	EDRE 681	Mid-Program
6	Assessment that addresses ILA standards	Colleague Coaching Analysis	EDRE 696	Capstone/ End of program
7	Assessment that addresses ILA standards	Community Language Practices Ethnographic Analysis	EDRE 671	Early Program
8	Assessment that addresses ILA standards	Engaging Striving Readers	EDRE 678	Mid-program

4. The data collected on the Program SLOs during the previous academic year

Data collected from each course, as listed in the above eight assessments inform the below evaluation. Additionally, student grades and qualitative responses to mid-semester reflections and end of course reflections are drawn on to continue to refine and improve practice.

Because there was not a cohort of graduates during the Summer of 2020, there is not new data related to the EDRE Final Portfolio for this report.

5. An evaluation of the data collected on the Program SLOs during the previous academic year

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Program:
It is important to note that these overarching findings in the assessment data are triangulated with observations of students' performance and discussion in class, looking closely at student work, as well as student reflections and feedback (both informal and through course evaluations).

Overall, data indicate that candidates are developing proficiencies to meet the standards (ILA, 2017). Because each of the candidates is a practicing teacher, opportunities to try out the ideas examined in the courses in real time, is a powerful learning tool. This field-based approach to the entire program, and the opportunity to continually apply theory and practice is essential. Each course has *at least* one or more field-based assessments. As we have moved forward, additional opportunities to engage in video practicum experiences

(instructional, coaching, and leadership) continues to deepen their ability to reflect on practice and these experiences.

The shift of the summer practicum to an online format in the summer of 2020 actually created additional opportunities for data collection. We were able to collect a series of video data and corresponding analysis by candidates related to Standards 2 & 3.

6. Current and Future plans to improve student learning

Making the transition to the student learning outcomes related to the 2017 Standards put forth by the International Literacy Association has required some additional shifts in course content:

Standard 1: The role of writing and the writing process has been called out separately through the adoption of the new standards, and upon reflecting with the group who just completed their capstone project, it was clear that this can be made more explicit in the course work. Adjustments to readings for EDRE 674 (Foundational Knowledge), EDRE 679 (Content Literacy) and EDRE 680 (Assessment and Instruction I) are being made for the 2021-22 school year to increase attention in this area.

In the Spring of 2021, candidates explicitly explored the foundational understandings of the roles of reading specialists and the evolution of this role historically to better align with standard 1.4.

Standard 2: In light of both the national and state level conversations related to what constitutes "evidence-based" reading and writing instruction, I adjusted the foundational theory assignment in EDRE 674 to create space for candidates to critically analyze research related to a topic of their choice (that they see as urgent for the students they work with). They are asked to pull research from a variety of sources and consider the commonalities and contrasts in these bodies of research.

Standard 3: An area for growth in the program is in relation to Standard 3.1 (*Candidates understand the purposes, attributes, formats, strengths/limitations (including validity, reliability, inherent language, dialect, cultural bias), and influences of various types of tools in a comprehensive literacy and language assessment system and apply that knowledge to using assessment tools.*) This is a standard that is introduced in the Ethnography Practicum (EDRE 671), but needs to be further addressed in both of the Instruction and Assessment courses more fully. This is a goal for the 2021-22 school year.

Standard 4: The diversity and equity standard has taken on additional specificity in the 2017 standards, and, in relation to 4.3 and 4.4, candidates were asked to consider these in relation to their final projects for their capstone course (EDRE 696). However, since this was the first time I've drawn on this standard in that course, it will continue to need refinement. Creating additional opportunities for advocacy based on the research being examined in more than one course will require some additional design work. The Summer 2021 practicum course will have a strong focus on "designing and implementing instruction that is culturally responsive and acknowledges and values the diversity in their school and in society" (ILA, 2017).

Standard 5: There is a stronger focus on collaboration with families and communities than there was in the 2010 IRA standard, and this will continue to be an area of improvement. Candidates have incorporated "home letters" to the summer practicum, and are asked to collaborate with parents in each of the instruction and assessment courses as they both do initial data collection on students' interests and goals, and also as they continue to communicate strengths and areas of growth from school to home.

The role of technology has also been folded into this standard, where in previous years technology was a separate standard.

Standard 6: In the past few years I have worked to bring in additional resources related to adult learning and systems thinking, and that has been a big support for candidates' growth in these areas. However, additional opportunities for facilitation of one on one and group professional learning will continue to be a focus.

Standard 7 (not measured in the final portfolio, but a core component of the program design) has been added to increase the role of practicum experiences. As stated in previous reports, an increased emphasis on data collection and analysis during the practicum, as well as peer feedback on instruction has been emphasized during the summer practicum and extended through the rest of the coursework that follows.

Growth in students' capacity to provide one another with effective feedback on instructional practices, as well as their capacity to ground their instructional decisions in student data has been apparent. Beginning early in the program, with EDRE 675 and EDRE 679, candidates are asked to participate in video observations and analysis of instructional design. When they enter EDRE 680, the summer practicum, this becomes the central focus, while layering on the design of assessments. Opportunities to build on the practicum, in EDRE 681 and EDRE 696 continue to be refined based on the needs of each cohort.

Because we do not observe candidates in their communities in this program, these virtual observations are essential.