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State University

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NCATE

The Standard of Excellence
in Teacher Preparation

Unit Transition Plan

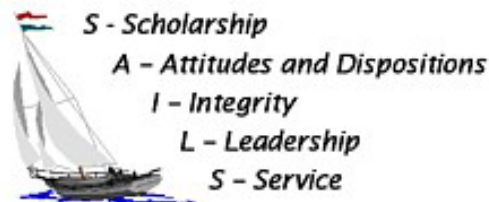
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Unit Transition Plan

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I. Transition Points at the Unit and Program Levels and Major Assessments to be Used at Transition Points

Candidate evaluation within the School of Education includes a series of sequential evaluation processes that assess candidate proficiencies from entry into our programs through program completion. The Unit conducts four major points of candidate assessment (transition points), which are referred throughout the remainder of this text as “Gates”. The Unit has established Gate requirements for candidates, and individual programs have augmented these requirements with complimentary program-specific assessments. In doing so, programs are better able to identify qualified candidates for their specific disciplines. Present Gate-specific requirements are slated to be re-examined in light of proposed revisions resulting from the continued collaborative efforts on behalf of program administrators and faculty from across the disciplines (see Transition Plan Matrix, below). At this time, the Unit’s transition points (“Gates”) and major assessments to be used at these transition points are defined as follows:

Gate 1:

Candidates applying for entry into one of the Unit’s programs must first successfully move through Gate 1, our entry gate. In order to do so, a candidate must:

- provide evidence of having passed an entrance exam (Praxis I PPST) required by the state of Connecticut, or must provide evidence of having earned a combined score of at least 1,000 on the SAT
- provide evidence of having earned a minimum GPA of 2.7
- submit two letters of recommendation
- satisfactorily complete an admissions interview

Gate 2:

Midway through program completion, candidates must pass through Gate 2. At this Gate, candidates must submit a *Midway Progress Portfolio*. Unit-wide artifact requirements for this portfolio include:

- a paper/project reflection that requires candidates to select an assignment completed in any course taken in their major and provide a one-page reflection describing how the assignment has contributed to their learning and how it has influenced them in becoming a teacher
- a self-reflection essay that requires candidates to write a self-assessment of their personal strengths and weaknesses at this stage of their teacher preparation program.

This self-reflection essay is to include evidence of service, as defined according to the Unit's conceptual framework

Gate 3:

Upon completing all course-work required of their respective programs, candidates must pass through Gate 3 by submitting a *Course Completion Portfolio*. The submission of this portfolio provides candidates with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and dispositions in the field of education. Unit-wide artifact requirements for this portfolio include the following items:

- a lesson plan assignment
- a paper/project reflection
- a self-reflection essay

Gate 4:

At program completion, the point at which candidates are eligible for graduation and certification, candidates must submit a *Gate 4 Program Completion Portfolio*. This portfolio assignment provides candidates with an opportunity to demonstrate how they have integrated their knowledge and experience sufficient to demonstrating acceptable levels of teacher performance.

Unit-wide requirements for this portfolio include the following items:

- a table of contents
- a minimum of six artifacts, each with its own caption
- two written reflective samples

At this time, the Unit is standardizing procedures for serving candidates who fail to meet Unit-wide Gate-specific requirements (see: Transition Plan Matrix, below). Whether or not departments will adopt a unified policy for candidates who fail to meet department-specific Gate requirements is slated to be discussed as part of the standardization process. Presently, departments possess various policies and procedures for serving students who fail to meet Gate requirements. The Department of Special Education and Reading for example, utilizes their Student Evaluation and Advisement Committee (DSEAC) for this purpose. This committee consists of faculty from within the Department who gather with any candidate who has been referred by a faculty member who is concerned that the student is at risk of or has failed a Gate-specific requirement, or who has failed to adequately or appropriately demonstrate those qualities that embody the values articulated via the Unit's conceptual framework. DSEAC strives to identify interventions that will help the candidate successfully move toward program completion. Interventions are individualized and may consist for example, of having the student repeat a core course within their program, recommending that the student seek additional tutorial support, recommending that the student seek counseling supports, or as a last resort, counseling a student out of the program.

Transition Plan Matrix:				
Transition Points at the Unit and Program Levels & Major Assessments to Be Used at Transition Points				
Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Unit's Gate and Artifact Requirements Reviewed and Revised	May, 2004	The Unit's Gate and artifact requirements will be reviewed and revised to ensure that artifacts gathered reflect both the Unit's Conceptual Framework and candidate's knowledge and skill development. Preliminary thoughts include adding under Gate 1 that candidates demonstrate proof of membership in at least one nationally recognized professional organization appropriate to their intended field of study.	Chairs and Quality Council Representative(s)	The Unit's Gate and artifact requirements will meaningfully reflect the conceptual framework and the development of candidate's knowledge and skill set.
Letter of Recommendation Checklist Developed for Unit	May, 2004	A letter of recommendation checklist will be developed to accompany letters of recommendations submitted by applicants. This checklist will ask that references rate applicants on items directly related to the Unit's conceptual framework and to further elaborate on these points in their letters of recommendation.	Department Chairs and Quality Council Representative(s)	The Unit will be able to identify those applicants who possess those specific qualities reflected within the Conceptual Framework.

Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Unit-wide Core Candidate Interview Questions Developed	May, 2004	A set of core interview questions will be developed for candidates seeking admission into one of the Unit's programs. These questions will reflect the Unit's Conceptual Framework. Individual programs will augment these questions with items that speak to their individual disciplines.	Department Chairs and Quality Council Representative(s)	The Unit will be able to identify those applicants who possess those specific qualities reflected within the Conceptual Framework.
Policy for Handling Candidates who are At-Risk of Failing or who Fail Gate-Specific Requirements Established by Unit	September, 2004	Quality Council special subcommittee will review Departmental policies re: handling of candidates at-risk of failing or who fail gate-specific requirements and establish a Unit-wide policy regarding the handling of such candidates. This policy will be sensitive to the goals of individual programs and departments	Quality Council Special Subcommittee And Special Committee Comprised of Department Faculty from Unit	Unit will utilize a shared procedure for the handling of candidates at risk of failing or candidates who fail to meet gate-specific requirements.
Unit's Gate-Specific Rubrics Modified to Reflect Rating Categories of: Unacceptable, Acceptable, Target	September, 2004	Gate-specific rubrics for the Unit will be modified to reflect rating categories consistent with NCATE language <i>and</i> criteria specific to the artifacts will be developed for the rating categories.	Department Chairs and Quality Council Representative(s)	The Unit will utilize rubrics for Gate-specific artifacts that are consistent with NCATE models and that clearly identify those criteria that are necessary for overall ratings of Acceptable, Unacceptable, and Target to be secured.

II. Timeline for the Development and Implementation of Major Assessments

Gate-specific assessments have been designed for the Unit and each is aligned with the Unit's conceptual framework, *SAILS*, and with INTASC Standards. The Unit has established initial scoring rubrics for Gates 2-4, described above (see attached). In addition, the Unit has scheduled faculty training in order to ensure that faculty who will be completing these rubrics are employing them with adequate consistency (see: Transition Plan Matrix, below). The Unit is establishing rubrics for components (3) and (4) of Gate 1 (see: Transition Plan Matrix, below).

Individual programs are in the process of creating rubrics for their Gate-specific candidate assessments, with some programs, such as Elementary Education, well under way with the implementation of these rubrics.

Transition Plan Matrix:				
Timeline for the Development and Implementation of Major Assessments				
Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Gates Implemented Across Unit	January, 2004	All Departments will be publicizing, implementing and evaluating students according to gate-specific guidelines: at various levels of implementation per individual department transition plans.	Departments	Departments will be responsible for assigning an appropriate committee to gather, analyze and generate a brief (2-3 page) report on gate implementation data. This report will be shared with the department chair <u>two weeks prior</u> to the August '04 Unit meeting for faculty. Chairs will share findings with faculty at their September '04 faculty meeting and discuss changes that may need to be made to the gates or the implementation and/or evaluation of the gate-specific data. Appropriate committees will be assigned specific tasks, as needed, based upon the discussion that ensues.
Report Format Developed for Gate Implementation Status Reports	September, 2004	A report format used to report on the implementation of Gates will be developed for use by Departments.	Special Committee Comprised of Department Faculty from Unit	Departments will follow specific guidelines for submitting Phase I Gate Implementation reports (see below)
Examination of Gate Rubrics	September, 2004	Quality Council Special Subcommittee to examine all gate-specific rubrics employed by departments/programs.	Quality Council Special Subcommittee	Strong/weak rubrics will be identified, and reasons for categorization stated. Model rubrics will be extracted in order to share with departments.
Faculty Training Plan (re: Rubrics – design and implementation) Developed	November, 2004	Quality Council Special Subcommittee to develop faculty training plan re: rubric development and implementation.	Quality Council Special Subcommittee	Faculty training re: development and implementation of rubrics will be designed based upon the weaknesses identified via examination of gate rubrics.

Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Faculty Training Plan (re: Rubrics- design and implementation) Presented to Quality Council and Chairs	December, 2004	Quality Council Special Subcommittee will present their recommendations for faculty training to Quality Council and Chairs.	Quality Council Special Subcommittee	Dean of Unit will convene QC members and Chairs for presentation of recommendations. Participants will have input into final training recommendations.
Annual Gate Implementation Reports Due from Departments	January, 2005	Departments will submit to Dean's Office, a report of findings re: gate implementation (see Transition Item: Report Format: Phase I Gate Implementation)	Departments	Departments will be able to determine what aspects of gate implementation, data collection and analysis may need further revision.
Faculty Training re: Design and Implementation of Rubrics – will include Training re: Determining the Validity, Reliability and Consistency of Assessments/Evaluators	February, 2005	Training team appointed by Quality Council Special Subcommittee will deliver training seminars to Unit faculty re: design/implementation of rubrics and verifying validity, reliability and consistency of assessments and raters alike.	Training Team appointed by Quality Council Special Subcommittee And Members, Department Curriculum Committee (from across Unit)	Departments will revise, as needed, existing gate-specific assessment rubrics to ensure that they are valid and reliable. In addition, Departments will develop/revise faculty training plans re: implementation of newly revised rubrics complete with how measures of inter-rater reliability will be secured for faculty reviewers (those individuals completing the rubrics).
Submission of Revised Gate-Specific Assessment Rubrics and Faculty Training Plans by Departments	April, 2005	As a follow up to April 2004 Faculty Training re: Design and Implementation of Rubrics, Departments will submit to the Quality Council, a copy of their revised gate-specific assessment rubrics and their faculty training plans.	Departments to Submit Quality Council to Review	Departments will alter gate-specific assessment rubrics, as necessary, following the April 2004 training and will identify how they are going to ensure inter-rater reliability for faculty reviewers.
Universal Gate Implementation	May, 2005	All departments will fully implement gates established by Unit, and any additional department-specific gates by this date.	Department Chairs	The Unit's Gate system will be fully operational.

III. Data Collection, Analysis, Summarization and Utilization

The Unit presently collects data from numerous internal and external sources that serve to advise the improved quality and functioning of our candidate preparation programs. The Center for Community School Action Research (CCSAR), a research, evaluation and training center that is a Center of Excellence within the Connecticut State University System, conducts research on various programs, interventions and initiatives that impact children and communities. Examples of data that are presently collected, analyzed and summarized by the Center for Community School Action Research (CCSAR), located at SCSU, include the bulleted data descriptors which appear on page 9 of this report.

These data, once summarized, are shared and processed with Department Chairs by CCSAR at monthly Chairs' Council. Chairs then discuss ways in which the data may be used most effectively. Outside of Chairs' Council, Chairs take care to share data with their faculty at monthly faculty meetings, ensuring that appropriate committees are then charged with any further exploration of, or response to, the data.

The Unit's data collection, analysis, summarization and utilization plan for candidates is slated to be re-examined in the Spring of 2004, per the Transition Plan Matrix presented below, in order to ensure that the plan compliments any changes made to the Gate-specific requirements and rubrics, to address the most useful means of analyzing both aggregated and disaggregated data, and to ameliorate some of the challenges that departments are facing in collecting and reviewing Gate-specific artifacts. At this time, programs are gathering Gate-specific candidate data as candidates complete their Gate-specific requirements and prepare to move onto the following Gate. All programs require that Unit-wide Gate requirements are met (see *Transition Points at the Unit and Program Levels and Major Assessments to be Used at Transition Points*, above) prior to moving candidates along the continuum by gathering specified artifacts from candidates and rating submissions according to the established rubrics.

The addition of a mid-program completion Gate, defined by our Unit as Gate 2, necessitated the sequencing of courses by each program. The result of which was that the candidate pool available to collect data on varied considerably by program. Some programs, such as Counseling and School Psychology, had previously sequenced their courses and were as such able to gather data for Gate 2 artifact requirements. Others programs discovered that candidates were at various places along the Gates continuum, in many cases making it impossible for them to back track for data collection purposes given the newly established artifact requirements of the Gates. It is for this reason, that the Unit does not presently have Unit-wide Gate 2 program data available for review. Given that most programs within the Unit have to date, sequenced their courses, it is expected that Gate 2 and subsequent Gate-related data will be collected and analyzed for the 2004-2005 academic year.

Individual programs have augmented the Gate-specific requirements established by the Unit, and have developed data collection and analysis procedures that compliment their programs and gathered artifacts. In the Department of Special Education for example, augmented Gate 2 requirements include having candidates submit a collection of key artifacts (e.g. a diagnostic report, a phonics lesson plan) resulting from their participation in a series of core courses.

Artifacts are to be submitted, complete with the Professor's grade and comments, and candidates' advisors simply check to ensure that the candidate has successfully met the stated Gate-specific requirement. Because the Department of Special Education has standardized the rubrics used to rate capstone assignments, there is no need to subject Gate-specific artifacts to further rating processes. Faculty simply checks that submitted artifacts have received a satisfactory rating by the Professor. The Department of Special Education, which has recently completed the sequencing of its courses, is presently preparing to gather candidate data for Gate 2 in the spring of 2004. Once candidate data is gathered, it will be entered for purposes of analysis into the Professional Educator Database (PED), described more fully under the heading *Use of Information Technology to Maintain the Assessment System*, below.

Because some programs within the Unit are well under way with the implementation of their Gates, they have already completed Gate 2 informal data analysis without the benefit of the PED, which is in its final stages of development (see for example, the *ExSTEP Report on the Professional Program Portfolio Process* dated November 20, 2003 located within the secondary file).

With departments slated to re-examine their data collection and review processes from a Unit perspective (see: Transition Plan Matrix, below) and the completion of the PED, the Unit is confident that present data management and analysis challenges will be ameliorated.

Transition Plan Matrix: Data Collection, Analysis, Summarization and Utilization				
Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Unit's Data Collection, Analysis, Summarization and Utilization Transition Plan Modified	April/May, 2004	The Unit's data collection, analysis, summarization and utilization Transition Plan will be modified to reflect changes made to the Gate-specific requirements and rubrics, to address the analysis of aggregated/disaggregated data, and to ameliorate the challenges that departments are facing in collecting and reviewing Gate-specific artifacts This plan will be developed in conjunction with the development of the PED structure, see Transition Plan Matrix, page 13.	Quality Council Special Subcommittee	The Unit's data collection plan will meaningfully compliment the types of data being gathered at the four Gates and the analysis plan will meaningfully inform program-specific practices.

IV. Unit Operations

The quality of Unit and program operations and offerings is formally assessed by two primary means, the Professional Educator Database (PED) and the Center for Community and School Action Research (CCSAR).

The PED is a database of candidate information that includes demographic information but more importantly, includes information about candidates' progress through Unit and program-specific Gates, ratings of candidates conducted by fieldwork supervisors, and information regarding candidate certification status. The types of information contained within the PED are intended to aid the Unit in identifying for example, the extent to which the requirements at the various transition points are for example, predictors of candidate success, defined in various ways (e.g. candidate certification status, employer satisfaction ratings, etc.). The Unit recognizes that in order for the PED to function as a valuable data collection and analysis resource, a strong link between the PED and CCSAR must be established.

CCSAR is a Center of Excellence within the Connecticut State University System and functions as a research, evaluation and training center that conducts research on various programs, interventions and initiatives that impact children and communities. Presently, CCSAR collects and analyzes the following internal and external data for purposes of guiding best practices within the Unit, and the Unit evaluates this data per our Transition Plan (see below):

- course evaluations that assess candidate perceptions of the quality of teaching at the program level (internal)
- analysis of biannual focus group sessions conducted with senior undergraduate and graduate students (internal)
- analysis of biannual principal survey questionnaires completed by area principles who have Unit graduates in their employment (external)
- analysis of senior undergraduate and graduate surveys conducted to ascertain students' perceptions regarding the quality of the SCSU educator preparation program (internal)
- analysis of student teacher competencies completed by Cooperating Teachers for student teachers placed by the Unit (external), and
- analysis of portfolio scores received by the Unit's graduates participating in the State of Connecticut's BEST program (external)

Data gathered by CCSAR informs the improved practice of our individual programs. Once data are entered into a summary report format, these reports are shared with faculty and key administration (see: Transition Plan, below), and CCSAR facilitates a discussion of what the data indicate as areas in need of improvement. Program improvement occurs under the direction of the program Chair, who delegates change-related responsibilities to appropriate program committees.

The data dissemination schedule (see: Transition Plan, below) allows for regular summary reports of data to be shared with candidates, faculty and key administration, and this assessment data is routinely processed according to established methodologies. All data is reflected upon in

terms of what data indicates or suggests about candidate preparation, about faculty performance, and about program practice.

In an effort to support CCSAR in collecting the types of data that will inform the improved practice of the Unit, according to the mission articulated within the Unit’s Conceptual Framework, the Unit is collaborating with CCSAR to redefine its relationship with the Unit. The Unit seeks to increase CCSAR’s involvement in all discussions and decision making that impact candidate data collection and analysis practices. One of the Unit’s goals is to ensure that the PED can communicate with the databases presently operated by CCSAR so that analysis of candidate data may be readily conducted by the Unit.

In addition to the data presently gathered and analyzed by CCSAR, individual programs have developed data collection and analysis plans geared toward assessing program effectiveness. At the program level, the responsibility for data collection, management and evaluation rests with the individual Department Chairs and program faculty under the direction of the Chair.

Course evaluations are one means of assessing program efficacy. The Office of Institutional Research processes course evaluations, prepares a summary report of course section evaluations and forwards the summary reports and original evaluations to Department Chairs. Department Chairs review this data and the aggregated data and/or student comments may indicate conference with individual faculty regarding what areas of improvement. In addition, Faculty complete annual Activity Reports that serve to inform the Unit of faculty productivity on departmental, University, local, national and international levels. Faculty are required to state annual goals and are responsible for reporting on their progress toward reaching these stated goals in subsequent Activity Reports, which are reviewed by the Office of the Dean and by Department Chairs.

Transition Plan Matrix: Unit Operations				
Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Unit/CCSAR Relationship Redefined	March, 2004	The relationship between the Unit and CCSAR will be redefined in order to ensure that data collected is meaningfully articulated via the Conceptual Framework, and that data collected is meaningful to assessing the effectiveness of Unit operations.	Dean’s Office, CCSAR	The Unit and CCSAR will establish a shared vision for candidate-related data collection and analysis procedures.

Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Cooperating Teacher Survey	March, 2004	Data submitted by cooperating teachers will be analyzed by CCSAR.	CCSAR	<p>Unit will reflect upon programmatic changes that need to be made in order to positively impact Cooperating Teachers' perceptions of student preparedness</p> <p>Data processed at April Chairs Meeting</p> <p>Chairs to share data with faculty at May faculty meetings – appropriate committees assigned to explore those changes that may effect positive change and to initiate those changes according to Department procedures.</p>
Post-Graduate Survey	March, 2004	Post graduate survey completed by individuals who have completed a Unit program two years prior.	CCSAR	<p>Unit will reflect upon programmatic changes that need to be made in order to positively impact graduates' perceptions of professional preparedness</p> <p>Data processed at April Chairs Meeting</p> <p>Chairs to Share Data with Faculty at May Faculty Meetings – appropriate committees assigned to explore those changes that may effect positive change and to initiate those changes according to Department procedures</p>
Analysis of Praxis II Series Institutional Report Data	March, 2004	Praxis II data will be analyzed	CCSAR	<p>Unit will reflect upon academic proficiency of candidates preparing to enter the field.</p> <p>Data will be processed at the April Chairs meeting.</p> <p>Unit will review all reports generated using internal/external data and determine what changes may positively effect candidate preparedness.</p>

Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
				(continued) CCSAR will distribute reports, including a final summary report, to Quality Council members and department Chairs <u>two weeks</u> prior to meeting with Chairs at their April meeting.
Role of Quality Council Determined	March, 2004	Quality Council will invite Chairs to participate in a discussion of what role a revised Quality Council would best serve.	Quality Council And Chairs	A revised Quality Council will facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Unit's Transition Plan, which includes the facilitation and monitoring of Departmental Transition Plans.
Distribution of ALL Evaluation Reports Generated by CCSAR, Including Final Summary Report	April, 2004	All evaluation reports generated by CCSAR will be distributed to Department Chairs and key administrators in the Unit	CCSAR	Unit will review all reports generated using internal/external data and determine what changes may positively effect candidate preparedness. Chairs will discuss ways in which to use the data most effectively.
Development of Unit Policy re: Sharing Data with Candidates	April, 2004	Quality Council, with input from Chairs, will develop policy for sharing data with candidates. Policy is to address, among other things: how candidates receive feedback from the Unit/Department regarding their movement through the Gates; how candidates are kept apprised of changes that are being explored by the Unit so their input may be solicited, etcetera.	Quality Council and Chairs from Unit	Unit will develop and utilize a shared method for disseminating data to candidates.

Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Adjunct Training and Supervision Plan for Unit Discussed and Developed	May, 2004	Discussions regarding how best to coordinate adjunct training and supervision for the Unit and development of coordination plan.	Assistant Dean Quality Council Representative(s) And Department Chairs	Unit will have a coordinated plan for training and supervision of adjuncts.

V. Use of Information Technology to Maintain the Assessment System

The Professional Education Database manages gate-specific candidate data. Specifically, demographic data and information pertaining to candidate performance on Unit-wide assessments required at the four Gates are gathered. The Office of the Assistant Dean for the School of Education is responsible for maintaining this database, per annual data submissions provided by individual programs (see: Transition Plan Matrix, below) and is responsible for generating reports ordered by the Dean. This database is described and discussed more fully on page 9 of this report.

Transition Plan Matrix: Use of Information Technology to Maintain the Assessment System				
Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
PED Structure Determined	May, 2004	The structure of the Professional Educator Database will be determined – with report-specific goals in mind and with the ability to communicate with CCSAR databases established.	Quality Council And Special Committee Comprised of Department Faculty from Unit And CCSAR Data Analysis Specialist	Departments will have access to a well-designed, universal data collection format and system that allows them to conduct analysis of candidate data utilizing information from both the PED and CCSAR databases.
PED Revision Complete	September, 2004	The Professional Educators Database will be revised per outcome of May, 2004 meeting to determine its structure.	Unit PED Manager, Appointed by Quality Council	The Unit will have access to a meaningfully revised PED.

Transition Item	Implementation Date	Description	Responsible Party	Method/Outcome
Departments to Identify PED Managers	September, 2004	Departments will identify database managers who will be responsible for maintaining input and analysis of data.	Department Chairs	Departments will manage their own data input and will be able to generate reports for internal use.
PED Unit Manager Named	September, 2004	Quality Council will determine who will design and manage the PED for the Unit as a whole.	Quality Council	The Unit will have a dedicated database manager whom departments may contact with questions and suggestions regarding the PED.
Faculty Training in Development/Use of PED	October, 2004	Departments will be trained in use of the Professional Educator Database for purposes of collecting, managing, analyzing gate-specific candidate data	Quality Council Representative(s) and Database Managers from Departments	Departments will be empowered with a universal data collection methodology for gate-specific candidate data. The Unit will be able to generate Unit-wide and Department-specific/Program-specific reports.
PED Data Entry Begins	November, 2004	Candidate data is input into the PED.	PED Managers	Candidate data is accessible for purposes of program and Unit analysis.