

Assessment System Transition Points for Advanced Program Candidates Gifted Education and Talent Development

Transition Point 1: Admission to a program of study, candidates undergo a screening process that includes:

Criteria for Admission

To be considered for admission, candidates must submit the following:

1. *A completed application form* (the standard university application form required by the graduate college).
2. *A two to five page statement describing their philosophy of education, purpose for applying, educational achievements or honors, and academic interests.* This allows examination of a candidate's writing skills as well as providing insights into the candidate's beliefs, strengths, interests, and purpose for applying to the program.
3. *Official college transcripts.* (required by the graduate college and provides information about previous course work and degrees)

Plus any two of the following:

1. *GPA from their most recent 2 years of study of 3.00 or above.* This choice is given to students so that those who are good students can use their academic talent as a means of selection. We are interested in the most recent years of study, with the belief that the more recent the work the more likely it is to reflect current potential as a student.
2. *Miller Analogy Test Score of 45 or above.* This test examines students' ability to make connections between two or more items and their ability to reason. However, Robert Sternberg (1996) reports that this test is essentially a vocabulary test with little predictive value.
3. *Score of 500 on one or more portions of the GRE: verbal, quantitative, or analytical.* For both the GRE and the Miller analogy tests, we believe that they provide information regarding how some students test and therefore will do in certain educational situations. Our goal was to broaden our criteria to include those who may have been traditionally denied admission on the basis of a standardized test score but who had other talents to offer that were not measured by such tests--not to exclude someone who scores well by more traditional admission criteria. Therefore, the traditional graduate test criteria is not an option.
4. *Outstanding educational product or performance.* Here, candidates might submit any of the following: (a) curriculum, plans, or units that they have designed; (b) unique or outstanding teaching products, methods, or techniques; (c) interesting or unique applications of an educational theory or idea; (d) original presentation related to something the candidate has developed (perhaps presented at a regional, state or national conference), (e) evidence of outstanding teaching practice, or (f) original research investigation.

The goal is for candidates to make a case for themselves. Anything submitted is evaluated using the Product and Performance Assessment Form (PPAF) on which submissions are scored from very low (1) to very high (5) in six areas of merit. Products that score consistently high to very high in all areas are considered excellent examples in this area reflecting the quality that we seek in a candidate. The extent to which the rubric scores are used to quantify a candidate should be the decision of individual program coordinators and are provided solely as suggested guidelines by which to judge the merit of individual submissions.

5. Evidence of accomplishments outside the field of education in areas such as but not limited to the arts, sciences, literature, and community service. This again reflects our belief in multiple ways to demonstrate intelligence. It is also an important indication of the philosophy that educators should be role models to their students regarding interests and real-world productivity. Those educators who are productive outside the educational realm often provide links to their students regarding possibilities traditionally not addressed by the general curriculum. Submissions in this category vary widely and are discussed holistically among the faculty when they are received.

6. One or more samples of writing published in a juried academic journal. Such writing evidence would be indicative of creative productivity and sharing of knowledge, aligning closely with the mission of our program. We view this as extremely desirable in a candidate.

7. Evidence of outstanding academic writing. Candidates may submit writing samples that were not published in a juried academic journal. The ability to write fits in well with the stated goals for this program described above.

Writing samples are assessed using the MSU Writing Assessment Form (WAF) which are also scored from very low (1) to very high (5) in six areas (see Figure 2). This is very much like the PPAF described above. Writing that scores consistently high to very high in all areas may be submitted to support entrance into the program.

Transition Point 2: To move to advanced level clinical experience, candidates must:

This is a graduate program for teachers who already have a teaching license. The state of Minnesota does not have licensure requirements in the area of Gifted Education. This graduate program does not lead to additional licensure. This program does not include clinical experiences.

Transition Point 3: Candidates must successfully complete their clinical experiences to move to the stage of program completion.

This is a graduate program for teachers who already have a teaching license. The state of Minnesota does not have licensure requirements in the area of Gifted Education. This graduate program does not lead to additional licensure. This program does not include clinical experiences.

Transition Point 4: All advanced candidates must demonstrate content, professional and pedagogical (where applicable) knowledge and skills included in the curriculum for their

field of study. Program completion assessments vary from program to program, but each require:

1. ESSP 606 –Portfolio Project
2. ESSP 638 - Portfolio Project.
3. ESSP 635 –Portfolio Project
4. ESSP 641 - Curriculum Project
5. ESSP 650 - Staff Development
6. ESSP 610 - Capstone Application
7. Competency Exam A: Take home comprehensive exam
8. Competency Exam B: In class written comprehensive exam.