1. What student learning outcomes were assessed this year, and why?

**Graduate:** In measurable terms, the program concludes that ‘All CEC advanced competencies continue to be met in the graduate program.’

A similar review of graduate syllabi was done based on Council for Exceptional Children’s (CEC) recent development of ‘Competencies for Advanced Candidates.” Again the accreditation agency (NCATE) served as a structuring mechanism toward this end. As the CTL prepared for the last visit, EDSE had reviewed progress toward addressing the new CEC advanced standards.

To summarize, ongoing communication among EDSE faculty and monitoring of graduate and undergraduate programs maintain the program’s contention that all competencies are being addressed even as state standards change and professional-organization standards are formalized and available.

2. How were they assessed?

**Graduate:** At the EDSE graduate level, like most other programs, the closing thesis/project defense serves as the principal mechanism for program assessment. Quantitative evidence from graduate courses (student grades) confirms that students are maintaining academic excellence at this level. This is further supported by the fact that all thesis/project defenses have been successful.

This year, an EDSE 700 syllabus was developed to guide the current process. Now, couched in the thesis/project defense meeting are questions related to Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) advanced standards. These newly directed advanced-candidate standards are the basis for end-of-program questions that master’s students can use throughout as a guide throughout their coursework.

Success rate for completing the process with the added structured question to the thesis/project defense was 100% (1 candidate, 1 successful defense meeting). One graduate student concluded the EDSE masters this year. Evidence presented at the orals ‘defense’ confirm that the EDSE graduate program is meeting the standards for advanced candidates in the field.

3. What was learned?

Answer to #2 (above) pretty much addresses this.

**Graduate:** Thesis/project success continued this year. EDSE faculty re-learned that the process is working.

Regarding the addition of CEC advanced-candidate standards and our adaptation of these to the exit experience has taught us something else. Our 2010-11 student has a grasp of knowledge and skills that have always undergirded the EDSE program. Unfortunately, in-depth assessment of competence will be a challenge. The thesis/project defense was far more lengthy than the previous project. Discussion addressing this temporal issue will continue in 2011-12 faculty meetings.

4. What will the department or program do as a result of that information?
Graduate: Since the number of students enrolled in the graduate special education program has consistently been low for the five years, the special education faculty are in the process of converting our program to an online format. Special education is considered a high need area for school districts. We have a large number of our graduates wanting to pursue their graduate degree program through us, but cannot relocate to Ellensburg because they are needing to teach. We have received feedback from them that they would love to do an online master’s degree through our program. We want to start offering this program in the Fall, 2013.

5. What did the department or program do in response to last year’s assessment information?

Graduate: As noted above, routine (weekly) faculty meetings continue serve as a forum for formative program evaluation. Special education Program minutes substantiate these endeavors. Evidence of this can be seen in #3(above): at the undergraduate level - program evaluation leading to program change) at the graduate level – addition of CEC advanced-candidate standards as a focus for questions at the thesis/project defense.

6. Questions or suggestions concerning Assessment of Student Learning at Central Washington University:

None