

Transitioning from CalTPA to PACT: Implementation of Processes to Encourage On-Going
Program-Level Assessment and Improvement

PEIL Grant Project White Paper

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The PEIL Grant project, *Transitioning from CalTPA to PACT: Implementation of Processes to Encourage On-Going Program-Level Assessment and Improvement* was designed to improve credential candidate preparation and the assessment of candidate competency. Faculty members from three departments, Teacher Education, Educational Leadership, and Educational Psychology, representing a wide array of academic disciplines (Math, Science, Reading, Social Studies, Art, Psychology, and Technology) collaborated in this project. The following is a brief overview of the process that led to this project.

Senate Bill 1209 required all Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)-accredited programs of teacher education to administer performance assessments to their Single Subject and Multiple Subject candidates, beginning in the summer of 2008. This mandate was the basis for CTC Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Preparation Programs 19, 20, and 21, designed to ensure that beginning teachers enter the profession with the skills to be effective in the classroom. Credential programs were required to select one of two testing options: California Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA), Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) or to develop their own CTC-approved testing program. CSU East Bay selected the CalTPA, a CTC-designed testing program that consists of four holistically scored performance tasks.

During the first two years of CalTPA administration problems became evident with this high stakes assessment program. A consistent fifteen percent of our candidates failed to pass each task, despite continuing efforts to improve instruction. The TED faculty began to consider the possibility that both our candidate preparation and the CalTPA assessment that measures candidate competence are not functioning properly. At the end of the 2010-2011 academic year a correlational analysis of the CalTPA data was conducted, comparing candidates' CalTPA scores with their performance on the 13 Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs), based on university supervisor and master teacher evaluations. The correlations between average CalTPA scores on the Culminating Teaching

Experience (Task 4) and average TPE scores were non-significant (.07 for university supervisors and .05 for master teachers). Results of the analysis showed a moderately high, significant correlation between average university supervisor and master teacher TPE scores (.61), but very little association between CalTPA scores and candidates' performance in the field.

On November 2, 2011 the TED faculty reviewed the results of the CalTPA study and discussed the possibility of transitioning to a different system of teacher performance assessment. With the support of Dean Carolyn Nelson, we carefully investigated PACT, the other CTC-approved teacher performance assessment. We attended performance assessment conferences, conferred with colleagues at other universities, and brought PACT experts to meet with the TED faculty and conducted meetings with faculty members in the various disciplines. We were convinced that PACT provides an authentic performance assessment that addresses higher levels of learning, based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson, Krathwohl, Airasian, Cruikshank, Mayer, Pintrich, Raths, & Wittrock, 2001). Rather than merely testing recall of information, the 12 PACT rubrics assess candidates' ability to *create* effective lessons, *evaluate* student learning, *analyze* assessment results, and *apply* research-based strategies learned in their coursework. At the end of this process the faculty agreed that we should transition to PACT, with the intent of improving credential candidate preparation and the assessment of beginning teacher competencies.

The overarching goal of this project was to strengthen candidates' ability to meet Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), with a particular emphasis on helping them to "demonstrate expertise and integration of ideas, methods, theory and practice" and "apply knowledge of diversity and multicultural competencies to promote equity and social justice in our communities", and "work collaboratively and respectfully as members of diverse teams and communities" (ILOs, 2012). Teams of faculty members worked together on strengthening candidate learning outcomes as they developed embedded signature assignments in all methods courses. These assignments address components of the Degree Qualifications Profile (Lumina Foundation, 2011), specifically the application of specialized

knowledge and applied learning. For example, candidates administer an assessment to videotape a group of children in their student teaching placements. Under the supervision of faculty, candidates share their assessment results, analyze student learning, and collaboratively critique their own teaching performance. Assignments such as this require candidates to “think critically and creatively” (ILO #1) about the content they want to teach and the learning needs of their K-12 students. These carefully designed learning experiences, developed by faculty, addresses ILOs while preparing our candidates for success on PACT.

Development of Embedded Signature Assignments

The development of Embedded Signature Assignments began with the Multiple Subject Program. CTC requires PACT institutions to administer three Content Area Tests (CATs) in addition to PACT. This is to ensure that they are capable of delivering instruction in each of the four major subject areas – math, science, social studies, and reading. CATs must be scored with PACT rubrics and scores must be reported to CTC. Since we administer the Elementary Literacy PACT, we were responsible for designing and administering CATs in math, science and social studies to our Multiple Subject candidates.

A number of meetings were devoted to the development of CATs which were administered to all MS candidates in the winter and spring. Faculty members in math, science, and social studies worked closely with the Leadership Team, submitting and revising the CATs until everyone was satisfied. The CATs were administered to the Multiple Subject candidates in the winter and spring quarters. Candidates who did not pass a CAT were given feedback and the opportunity to resubmit. Faculty members emphasized the importance of CATs in preparing candidates for success on PACT.

In addition to designing CATs, the Multiple Subject faculty agreed to develop and administer a number of ESAs, addressing PACT topics of planning, instruction, and assessment. As Table 1 demonstrates, eight CAT/ESAs have been developed and administered to our MS candidates.

Because of the CTC reporting requirement, we also had to configure Taskstream to allow CATs to be uploaded and scored along with PACT Teaching Events. The following table includes the newly designed CATs and ESAs for the Multiple Subject Credential Program.

Table 1

Multiple Subject CATs and ESAs

QUARTER	#	Course Title	CAT/ESA	PACT Rubric	PACT Topic
Summer	5311	Classroom Environment	x-plan	9, 10	Reflecting
Summer	5355	Equity and Diversity/EL A		1, 2	Balanced Inst Focus, Content A
Summer	5351	Psychological Foundations			
Summer	5352	Reading/Language Arts - A	x-plan	11, 12	Academic Language
Summer	5372	Team Seminar I /PACT Orientation		All Rubrics	Introduction to PACT
Fall	5356	Reading/Language Arts - B	Context	1, 2	Balanced Inst Focus, Content A
Fall	5357	Science, Health	Planning CAT	1, 2, 3	Balanced Inst Focus, Content A
Fall	5378	Special Populations		2	Content Accessible
Fall	5374	Team Seminar/ PACT Orientation		All Rubrics	Making Good Choices
Fall	5354	Student Teaching I		All Rubrics	x-plan
Winter	5350	Mathematics	Assessment CAT	6, 7, 8	Analyzing, Using Assessment
Winter	5360	Reading/Lang Arts/ Social Studies	Instruction CAT	4, 5 All Rubrics	Engaging, Monitoring
winter	5373	Team Seminar/ PACT Orientation	Context	1, 2	Balanced Inst Focus, Content A
winter	5359	Student Teaching II		All Rubrics	x-plan
Spring	5366	Equity and Diversity/EL B		1, 2	Balanced Inst Focus, Content A
Spring	5361	Student Teaching III		All Rubrics	x-plan
Spring	5375	Team Seminar/ PACT Orientation		All Rubrics	Preparing and Submitting PACT
Spring	5211	PACT Assessment	PACT		
Any	5377	Visual and Performing Arts			
Any	5110	Computer-Based Technology			

x-plan = lesson plan

Single Subject candidates are not required to take CATs, so the faculty focused on the development of Embedded Signature Assignments (ESAs). Cathy Zizakowicz from the PACT Consortium attended a faculty meeting in the fall and guided faculty members as they worked on

course revisions. After numerous meetings and email consultations, five ESAs were developed to address PACT topics of planning, instruction, and assessment. A number of other ESAs are currently in development and will eventually be administered in more than half of the Single Subject courses. Table 2 includes the newly designed ESAs for the Single Subject Credential Program.

Table 2

Single Subject Credential Program

QUARTER	#	Course Name	ESA	PACT Rubric	PACT Topic	x=lesson plan
Summer	5301	Psychological Foundations		1	Balanced Inst Focus	
Summer	5311	Classroom Environment		9, 10	Reflecting	
Summer	5320	Content Literacy		11, 12	Academic Language	
Summer	5326	Prep to Teach Els		2	Content Accessible	
Summer	5390	SubSpecific Methods	x - plan	1,2, 3	Balanced Inst Focus, Content Accessible	
Summer	5372	PACT Orientation		All Rubrics	Introduction to PACT	
Fall	5314	Teaching Special Pops	Context	1, 2	Balanced Inst Focus, Content Accessible	
Fall	5391	SubSpecific Methods	x- inst		Engaging, Monitoring	
Fall	5373	PACT Orientation		All Rubrics	Making Good Choices	
Fall	5381	Field Practicum				
Winter	5380	Health and Safety		7,8	Inform teaching, feedback	
Winter	5392	SubSpecific Methods	x- assess	6,7, 8	Analyzing, Using Assessment	
Winter	5382	Field Practicum				
Winter	5374	PACT Orientatiom	Context	All Rubrics, 1,2	Balanced Inst Focus, Content Accessible	
Spring	5361	Student Teaching III				
Spring	5305	Social/Cultural Context				
Spring	5318	Professional Responsibilities				
Spring	5393	SubSpecific Methods				
Spring	5375	PACT Orientation			Preparing and Submitting PACT	
Spring	5383	Field Practicum				
Spring	5211	PACT submission				
Any	5110	Computer-Based Tech				

Training and Calibration of Assessors

An important part of the transition to PACT was the training workshops, in which faculty, field supervisors, assessors and district partners examined examples of candidate work on PACT and learned to score accurately and reliably. Training for Elementary Literacy assessors was held the weekend of January 26-27. Twelve people attended the Elementary Literacy workshop. Training for Single Subject assessors was held the weekend of February 8-9. Separate subject-specific workshops were held in Math, Science, Social Studies, and English. A total of 26 people attended the workshops including eight English, six History, six Math, and six Science instructors. Although participants in the PACT training workshops found the experience very useful in terms of their work with candidates only a small number calibrated and scored PACT Teaching Events (TEs) submitted by our candidates. We were disappointed that only 17 out the 32 assessors who scored TEs were CSUEB faculty or supervisors.

Student Teaching Placements

In addition to improving course instruction, increased attention has been paid to the quality of the student teaching placements. Teacher Education faculty worked with professors in the Educational Leadership Department to identify schools where best practices for diverse students are modeled. Although we were able to match only a small number of Educational Leadership candidates with Teacher Education student teachers, those relationships demonstrated the potential for improving candidate preparation in both programs. Educational Leadership faculty encouraged candidates to share cultural traditions and prior experiences in school with the intent of increasing multicultural understanding between candidates and the K-12 children they teach. The outcome of this collaboration has been improved candidate knowledge of methods that benefit diverse students and strengthened candidate capacity to promote equity and social justice in schools. This work has addressed the Institutional Learning Outcome of “diversity and multicultural competencies to promote equity and

social justice in our communities” and is consistent with the Degree Qualifications Profile (Lumina Foundation, 2011) of “engaging diverse perspectives” and the CEAS college mission, “To prepare collaborative leaders, committed to professional excellence, social justice and democracy who will influence a diverse and interconnected world.”

Student Performance on PACT

The goal of improving candidates’ pass rate on the high stakes teacher performance assessment (PACT) was not realized. Approximately 20% of our candidates failed PACT on their first attempt, compared to the previous 15% who failed the CalTPA. We believe that this disappointing outcome is due to the newness of the assessment and the fact that faculty preparation and revision of syllabi took place throughout the academic year. Candidates complained that their professors were not entirely familiar with PACT couldn’t always answer their questions. We believe that this situation is rapidly improving as faculty become familiar with the new assessment. Collaborative work by the faculty in revising syllabi and implementing the ESAs will provide higher quality preparation for our candidates, hopefully, reducing the failure rate in the future. An examination of mean scores on the individual PACT rubrics reveals important information that can be used for program improvement. As Table 3 demonstrates, candidate scores were weakest on Rubrics 7 and 8, rubrics that measure candidate competence in assessment. These data suggest a need for increased instruction in designing, administering, and interpreting assessments. We have responded by adding ESAs in assessment to methods courses in the Multiple Subject and Single Subject Credential Programs. Candidates also demonstrated weakness on Rubric 11 which measures their ability to analyze academic language demands in texts and instruction. This is another important piece of information that is being used for program improvement. The Single Subject Content Literacy course instructor has developed an ESA designed to build candidate competence in academic language. This topic will also be the focus of an ESA in Reading A in the Multiple Subject Program.

Table 3

Candidate Performance on PACT Rubrics

	Rubric1 Planning: Instr Focus	Rubric2 Planning: Content Access	Rubric3 Planning: Design Assess	Rubric4 Instruct: Engage	Rubric5 Instruct: Monitor	Rubric6 Assess: Analyze	Rubric7 Assess: Inform Teaching	Rubric8 Assess: Feedback	Rubric9 Reflect: Monitor	Rubric10 Reflect: Learning	Rubric11 Academic Language Understand	Rubric12 Academic Lang Dev
N	Valid 169	169	169	169	169	169	169	169	158	158	158	158
	Missing 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	11	11	11
Mean	2.3550	2.2781	2.3314	2.0947	2.0059	2.1065	1.9231	1.9822	2.0759	2.1266	1.9937	2.0063
Std. Deviation	.88875	.89286	.89789	.86769	.85563	.79464	.77152	.86927	.66337	.53815	.65323	.55862

A vitally important outcome is the improved assessment of candidates of color. As we noted in our PEIL proposal, African American and Latino/a candidates underperformed on the CalTPA at a higher rate than white and Asian candidates. We hoped to address this problem by switching to PACT, since research suggests that PACT has no inherent bias (Darling Hammond, 2010). PACT results are mixed but generally encouraging. Seventy-seven percent (23/30) of Asian candidates, 79% (11/14) of Hispanic candidates, and 79% (56/71) of White candidates passed PACT on their first attempt. Fifty percent (3/6) of African American candidates passed PACT, but only six candidates were included in this analysis. A large number of candidates declined to identify their ethnicity, 79% (37/47) of whom passed PACT on their first attempt. The strong performance of Hispanic candidates is particularly encouraging; though more work needs to be done to improve the performance of African Americans. We believe that PACT is a fair and unbiased assessment. With more effective instruction and targeted support, PACT will help CSUEB fulfill its responsibility in credentialing more candidates of color for California’s increasingly diverse schools.

A final outcome was the transition our program from an outdated and ineffective assessment model to one that is on the cutting edge of national teacher performance assessment. We noted that the correlation between CalTPA scores and candidate performance in the field was extremely low: .07 for university supervisors and .05 for master teachers. The correlation between PACT rubric scores and evaluations by university supervisors is substantially higher: .22** for university supervisors and .13 for master teachers. These data suggest that PACT is measuring competencies more closely aligned to performance in the field than the CalTPA.

We have worked closely with the PACT consortium, implementing PACT. Consistent with the CSU East Bay Shared Strategic Commitment to “demonstrate our continuing record of leadership and innovation in higher education”, we have joined teacher educators from more than 20 states who are committed to best practices in teacher performance assessment. As numerous scholars have pointed out, high quality teacher performance assessment is a powerful tool for credential program improvement and professional learning experiences for pre-service teachers (Pecheone & Chung, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000). The PEIL Grant has enabled us to transition to PACT and engage in a year-long, intensive process of program improvement.

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