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The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) piloted its new student teaching assessment, the Candidate Assessment of Performance (henceforth CAP), during the school year 2015-2016. The CAP is designed to align more clearly than the formerly used Pre-practice Performance Assessment (PPA) with the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework for in-service teacher evaluation (DESE, 2016).[1]

As program supervisors during the spring and fall of 2016, we had the opportunity to experience the CAP process. In this article we will describe some of the new features of the CAP, including increased input from supervising practitioners, more self-assessment and goal setting, embedded subject-specific competencies, and the use of student evaluations. We hope to help you navigate the new procedures effectively, whether you are a program supervisor (henceforth PS), supervising practitioner (henceforth SP), teacher candidate (henceforth TC), or other person interested in the current landscape of student teaching. While our observations will be relevant to all fields, our focus will be on TESOL candidates.

INCREASED INPUT FROM THE SP
Under the CAP, the SP is expected to do 3-4 observations, advise the TC in goal setting, engage in calibration conversations, write formative and summative evaluations, and meet face-to-face with the TC to discuss progress. Thus when

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1 A complete comparison of the PPA and the CAP can be found in DESE's (2013) *Guidelines for the Candidate Assessment of Performance: Assessment of Teacher Candidates.*

choosing a SP, it is important to look for someone who has a thorough knowledge of professional responsibilities inside and outside of the classroom.

The relationship between the PS, SP, and TC will differ somewhat depending on the situation. For example, in our program, the TCs who were completing traditional practicums saw their SPs every day, but the TCs who were completing employment-based practicums sometimes had SPs from out-of-building who visited them primarily for required observations and meetings. Some of the SPs were already acting as mentors and had strong, working relationships with their TCs, while other SPs had just met their TCs at the beginning of the practicum. For this reason, we found it helpful to begin the process with a conversation among SP, PS, and TC about roles and expectations. As PSs, we often had the best understanding of CAP requirements and were able to offer insights and suggestions from our experience in a range of classroom settings. On the other hand, the SPs often had insider knowledge about the students, the school, and local politics.

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Since the CAP does not include elements from Standard III[2] of the teacher evaluation rubric from the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation, there is no specific mention of family or community engagement, such as conveying expectations about learning and behavior, fostering two-way communication, and so forth. However, the increased involvement of the SP can help the TC to develop crucial skills in this area. Ideally, the SP is connected to the cultural context and knows how to facilitate effective communication with ELL families.

The working relationship among the various stakeholders has the potential to be intellectually stimulating and idea generating. Upon completing their practicum experience, several SPs and TCs expressed an interest in taking on a leadership role in ESOL and possibly providing professional development to other teachers in the future. We plan to think strategically about how to encourage greater involvement from the SP, as some SPs provided TCs with valuable insights beyond the basic CAP requirements on topics such as intercultural communication and action research.

2 Standard III, "Family and Community Engagement," includes indicators for parent/family engagement, collaboration, and communication.

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND GOAL SETTING

Within the first few weeks of the practicum, TCs complete a self-assessment, create a SMART goal and identify an assessment tool to analyze their impact on student learning. TCs need to self-assess as soon as possible, and cover not just their teaching in general but also their roles as ESL teachers. TCs in traditional student teaching contexts will need guidance and scaffolding in goal creation, to ensure that the action steps are achievable within the time available and that the goals are aligned specifically to TESOL Standards or CAP Essential Elements. Some of our students had to revise their goals several times, and they needed particular assistance in aligning their goals with area-specific standards while also including a language focus.

In order to complete the goal-setting step within the first few weeks, the PS may want to provide sample goals for the TCs to look at, and schedule time for an individual conversation with each TC. For TCs in employment-based practicums, the goal-setting procedure can serve as an opportunity to get feedback from their PS on goals that they have already created with their school-based supervisors. The PS and SP might also consider providing a student-learning measure that will help ESL TCs to think critically about their students' language development.

It is important, early on, to establish a plan for revisiting goals over the course of the practicum. TCs should not only *meet* their goals, but also *reflect* on them, and consider what their next steps will be. We used weekly journals and asked students to reflect on their goals in a final journal entry; another time, we will have students begin self analysis earlier on in their journal writing.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS

In the CAP, TCs are expected to administer student feedback surveys during the course of the practicum. For ELLs, the main hurdle in these surveys is that they are in English, which poses a challenge for lower-level students. To maximize the potential for valuable student feedback, we have the following recommendations:

- First, TCs might administer the surveys midway through the practicum and again at the end. This would serve to uncover any challenges that students find in the language of the surveys while also providing time for the TC to reflect on and adjust to the students' feedback.

- Secondly, TCs should ideally have someone conduct the surveys who can do oral translation for the students. If this isn't possible, then they can try to provide translations of key words, or have a translator/dictionary available for unknown words. The surveys could even be integrated into a language lesson where some of the vocabulary is pre-taught and used prior to doing the survey.

- Thirdly, lower-level ELLs should be given the "mini" or "short" form of the survey rather than the standard form, which is significantly longer. The SP or PS may advise the TC on selecting the appropriate form.

- Lastly, ELLs may need extra time to fill out the forms and may be able to provide better feedback if they are allowed to write a comment in either English or their native language on a separate sheet of paper. This could provide more context for the results and help candidates better understand students' perspectives beyond the questions on the form.

EMBEDDED SUBJECT-SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

When giving feedback to our TCs, we wanted to make sure our comments were geared specifically to ESOL, but we found ourselves struggling to figure out where to place ESOL competencies on the CAP Rubric. Initially, we thought that ESOL specific competencies would fit well under Meeting Diverse Needs, but as we engaged further with the CAP we realized that each of its sections should include ESOL approaches and techniques. We therefore used SIOP features (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2013) and some of the former PPA content-specific questions for ESL (MA DESE, 2013) to create a CAP framework that specifically includes ESOL best practices (See Table 1 on p. 44).

Throughout the CAP process, we should remember to focus when possible on TESOL research and practice, and bring relevant, current information about TESOL competencies into the conversation. Such meaningful connections and critical conversations during the Spring 2016 pilot strengthened our skills and our commitment to teacher education, fostered leadership in the SPs we cooperated with, and nourished the development of our TCs as they learned to work effectively with ELLs with diverse backgrounds and abilities. C

CAP Essential Elements	Ideas for TESOL Teacher Candidate Assessment
Well-structured Lessons	How has the candidate used the WIDA frameworks to plan instruction?
	How are content and language objectives communicated to students?
	How is students' prior knowledge incorporated into the lesson?
	How is practice in all language domains (speaking, listening, reading and writing) evident in the lesson?
	To what extent does the language practice reflect the content and language objectives for the lesson?
	How is students' vocabulary knowledge built?
	How does the candidate promote interaction?
Adjustment to Practice	What adjustments are made for differences in students' English proficiency levels?
	How are the adjustments implemented and evaluated?
	Are a variety of formative and summative assessments used to make small-scale adjustments in instruction?
Meeting Diverse Needs	How does the candidate assess the needs of his/her students?
	What adjustments are made for differences in students' background knowledge and/or learning styles?
	How was the lesson planned and paced to maximize engagement and learning?
	How has the candidate incorporated evidence-based practices for ELLs?
Safe Learning Environment	How is the lesson culturally and linguistically responsive?
	How has the candidate demonstrated knowledge of cultural and socio-emotional factors in instruction?
	How has the candidate integrated native languages of students?
	How has the candidate modified his/her speech to facilitate students' understanding?
	How are students encouraged to engage in cooperative learning?
High Expectations	How has the candidate supported ELLs to achieve grade-level standards?
	How are higher-order thinking skills and learning strategies taught and practiced?
	What opportunities are there for students to use academic language?
Reflective Practice	How does the candidate continue to reflect on and refine the goals he/she set at the beginning of the practicum?
	How does the candidate use information, including data from student questionnaires, to inform his/her practice?
	What specific aspects of language teaching is the candidate reflecting on?

Table 1: CAP Essential Elements with Potential TESOL-oriented Questions

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Dr. Emily Spitzman earned her Ph.D. from the University of Rhode Island and is now an Assistant Professor in the MA in TESOL Program at Bridgewater State University. She taught academic English to speakers of other languages at Johnson & Wales University for nine years. Prior to that she taught adult immigrants and K-12 students in a variety of contexts. Her research has focused on critical intercultural communication, and she has facilitated service-learning experiences and intercultural dialogue inside and outside the classroom.