

**The edTPA Planner: Providing a Roadmap for a High-Stakes Performance Assessment**

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### **Introduction/Need for Innovation**

In an effort to provide a more standardized assessment of student teacher competence upon entering the profession, an assessment tool known as the Educational Teacher Preparation Assessment (edTPA) was created by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity (SCALE). With the use of detailed plans, videoed instruction, and evidence of student work (Darling-Hammond, 2012), the edTPA portfolio addresses planning, instruction, assessment, reflection, and academic language to reveal the competence of the teacher candidate (SCALE, 2014).

Research has identified several challenges to preparation for and completion of the edTPA through teacher education coursework and the student teaching experience. When asked to provide suggestions on types of support that could assist in the completion of the performance assessment, participants identified advising/support, modeling, early introduction to PACT, and mentorship (Okhremtchouk, Newell, & Rosa, 2013). Other research has noted similar needs and suggested teacher educators can assist students by scaffolding the components of the edTPA and providing formative feedback throughout teacher preparation coursework (Okhremtchouk, Seiki, Gilliland, Ateh, Wallace, & Kato, 2009).

At NC State University, the edTPA was piloted by the first group of agricultural education student teachers in spring of 2014. As of spring 2017, the edTPA is a high stakes teacher assessment in which student teachers must achieve a cut score designated by the Department of Public Instruction in order to receive teacher licensure. Due to the high-stakes nature of the performance assessment, ongoing dialogue has been used with student teachers to obtain feedback and suggestions to inform and improve the edTPA process used in future student teaching cohorts. Due to repeated requests to introduce the edTPA earlier in the progression of the teacher education coursework, as well as help students make linkages between course content and assignments to components of the edTPA tasks, the edTPA planner was developed and implemented.

### **How it Works**

An agricultural education faculty member and graduate student who had recently completed the edTPA created a list of all the professional education core courses required in the program. Then using knowledge of the courses and edTPA requirements, an organizer was started to help guide students in making explicit connections between course content and expectations of the performance assessment. At the conclusion of this initial development, the document was distributed to other teacher education faculty to obtain their input specific to their courses. An example from the sophomore level Introduction to Teaching Agriculture course is included in Figure 1 below.

#### Introduction to Teaching Agriculture

- Collect lesson plans to be used as a resource in the development of your lesson plans.
- When reflecting on teaching performance, note specific time points in videos that are examples of strengths and/or areas for improvement.
- Start working on Theory/Research Table (see Figure 1).

Theory	Researcher	Description	Applications in Ag Ed

Figure 1. Excerpt of edTPA Planner – Introduction to Teaching Agriculture

In addition to including specific linkages between education courses and the edTPA, more general linkages were included for preservice teachers to observe and document in all their college coursework (see Figure 2).

All Coursework

- Note terms that are commonly used that may be confusing or new to your students (remember academic vocabulary from AEE 206)
- Be aware and consider when the following language functions are used in your classes:

Analyze	Argue	Compare/contrast	Construct	Describe	Explain
Evaluate	Hypothesize	Interpret	Predict	Summarize	Synthesize

Figure 2. Excerpt of edTPA Planner – All Coursework

**Results to Date**

The edTPA planner was introduced and distributed to students enrolled in the *Introduction to Teaching Agriculture* course in Fall 2017 and also to some of the senior-level students who were preparing for student teaching in Spring 2018.

**Future Plans/Advice to Others**

When using a document such as the edTPA planner, it is important to consider the best approach to introducing and integrating into course content. In Fall 2017, it was introduced in a stand-alone lesson near the end of the semester which seemed overwhelming and caused some unnecessary stress amongst the students. It is recommended that components of the planner be implemented throughout courses with course instructors highlighting linkages to the edTPA. Additionally, instructors should encourage students to complete sections that correspond with the courses they are teaching.

As student teachers complete the edTPA, their ideas and suggestions will be collected to continue developing and refining the edTPA planner for use by future cohorts. As the edTPA planner becomes more seamlessly integrated into teacher preparation courses, best practices will be identified for implementation and format of the document.

**Costs/Resources Needed**

Costs and resources needed for the implementation of this innovative idea were minimal. Time was needed for review of the course content, edTPA handbooks, and other available edTPA resources offered by the College of Education. Additionally, about two hours of class time in the *Introduction to Teaching Agriculture* course was needed to overview the edTPA and introduce the edTPA planner.

### References

- Darling-Hammond, L. (2012). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
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