

Analyses of edTPA Results for five Cohorts of NDMU Teacher Candidates

NDMU has gradually phased in a new requirement for program completers, the edTPA. The edTPA is a national assessment of...

Unlike many educator preparation programs that have phased in edTPA by content areas or by legislative mandate all at one time, NDMU has elected to phase this requirement in by program of study, e.g., first working with a pilot of Women's College students, then expanding to College of Adult Undergraduate students, etc. The goal is to make this a requirement of all teacher candidates by the close of 2019-20. As such, results from each cohort of teacher candidates are not available by content area because the 'N' is simply too small to draw any marked conclusions. Likewise, it could be argued that individual cohorts are, in some cases, equally small, too small to make any quantum leaps in our understanding of this new assessment. It is also worth noting that this new requirement at NDMU is not consequential, meaning that there is no required passing score. Once the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) establishes a passing score, all teacher candidates in Maryland will be required as of July 1 2025, to attain that score to be certificate-eligible. Thus, without any real consequence, these results must be taken with marked caution.

Notwithstanding this situation, the following data are shared to demonstrate transparency and to establish future goals so that NDMU can set its own required passing score prior to one being established by MSDE. The edTPA is divided into three primary Tasks: Planning, Instruction and Assessment. For some content areas, there may be an additional Task such as Task 4 for Assessing Mathematics for Elementary Teacher Candidates. Within each task there are specific rubrics, as listed below.

Task 1 – Planning

1. Planning for Learning
2. Planning to Support Varied Student Learning Needs
3. Using Knowledge of Students to Inform Teaching and Learning
4. Identifying and Supporting Language Demands
5. Planning Assessments to Monitor and Support Student Learning

Task 2 - Instruction

6. Learning Environment
7. Engaging Students in Learning Environment
8. Deepening Student Learning
9. Subject Specific Pedagogy (e.g., Elementary Literacy)

10. Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness

Task 3 - Assessment

11. Analysis of Student Learning
12. Providing Feedback to Guide Further Learning
13. Student Use of Feedback
14. Analyzing Student (e.g. Elementary Language Use and Literacy Learning)
15. Using Assessment to Inform Instruction

Task 4 – EX: Assessment of Math Literacy

16. Analyzing Whole Class Understandings (Math)
17. Analyzing Individual Student Work Samples (Math)
18. Using Evidence to Reflect on Teaching (Math)

These are our preliminary findings:

For Task 1 (Planning), as the number of teacher candidates completing edTPA increased over these five cohorts, the mean scores achieved by teacher candidates improved across all five rubrics. In all likelihood, this improvement can be attributed to the increasing knowledge of faculty and staff with regard to edTPA and the availability of informational resources targeted to edTPA that are now available to teacher candidates. Also, as instruction in edTPA becomes more embedded in courses throughout the teacher candidate’s program of study, their familiarity with this assessment is expected to continue to grow; newly designed tools such as lesson plan templates that mirror edTPA rubrics and the use academic language are expected to result in better informed and better prepared teacher candidates. Under ideal circumstances, NDMU is striving to ensure that teacher candidates achieve a mean score of 3.0 on each of these rubrics; these results suggest the need for improvement across the board to achieve this measurable goal, which based on cohort five results appears to be attainable.

		Task 1 – Planning (Mean Scores for Rubrics # 1-5)				
Cohort	# students	1	2	3	4	5
1	8	2.00	1.63	2.00	1.88	2.00
2	16	2.50	2.44	2.38	2.56	2.44
3	21	2.57	2.64	2.62	2.79	2.52
4	43	2.77	2.68	2.63	2.67	2.61
5	34	2.93	2.85	2.74	2.91	2.85

For Task 2 (Instruction), this same phenomenon of improvement over time was captured across all five rubrics used to assess Instruction. Except for 2 or 3 minor dips, mean scores continued to increase with each new cohort of teacher candidates. In addition, the mean scores for Instruction were generally slightly higher than the mean scores for Planning which suggests, for example, that teach candidates may need to devote more planning time to understanding the content and cultural knowledge and resources that students bring to the classroom setting. Again, NDMU is striving to ensure that teacher candidates achieve a mean score of 3.0 on each of these rubrics and have been successful with cohort five on two of the five rubrics.

		Task 2 – Instruction (Mean Scores for Rubrics #6-10)				
Cohort	# students	6	7	8	9	10
1	8	3.00	2.63	2.50	2.25	2.00
2	16	3.00	2.63	2.56	2.06	2.21

3	21	3.00	2.71	2.71	2.29	2.17
4	43	2.97	2.77	2.65	2.31	2.17
5	34	3.10	3.01	2.99	2.76	2.68

For Task 3 (Assessment), yet again the mean scores improved significantly and consistently with each new cohort of students. These mean scores more than doubled from the first cohort to the fifth. However, the desired goal of 3.0 for each rubric was not attained; only rubric #12 came close. All others will require some dramatic shift in thinking about how students are assessed across multiple measures, how they use that feedback/information, and how this should inform future decision-making.

		Task 3 – Assessment (Mean Scores for Rubrics #11-15)				
Cohort	# students	11	12	13	14	15
1	8	1.29	1.50	1.13	1.43	1.63
2	16	1.50	1.81	1.94	2.00	2.00
3	21	1.95	2.48	1.90	2.43	2.21
4	43	2.24	2.13	1.93	2.23	2.31
5	34	2.45	2.95	2.48	2.59	2.59

Finally, for those candidates who opted to complete Task 4, the results have been inconsistent at best. Mean scores from cohort to cohort have fluctuated, rather than showing consistent improvement (as with rubrics #1-15), and two of the three rubrics fell far markedly short of the 3.0 goal.

		Task 4 – Assessment of Math (Mean Scores for Rubrics #16-18)		
Cohort	# students	16	17	18
1	2	1.50	1.00	1.33
2	12	2.00	2.00	2.00
3	6	2.00	2.00	1.67
4	23	2.16	1.96	1.74
5	4	2.75	3.25	2.00

The table below depicts the composite mean scores for each cohort, i.e., those who completed 15 rubrics and those who completed 18 rubrics. Under ideal circumstances, with 3.0 as the desired goal, a candidate being assessed on 15 rubrics would yield a score of 45.0 and those being assessed on 18 rubrics would attain a composite score of 54. Except for the first pilot cohort of 8 students, these respective goals have not been achieved; nor has there been continuous improvement. However, it is anticipated that, once the edTPA becomes a ‘consequential’ requirement (i.e., a required passing score for graduation and certification), there will be more consistent and higher mean scores.

Notwithstanding these preliminary results, NDMU has committed to ensuring that all teacher candidates will be adequately prepared to meet these expectations. The edTPA infrastructure within the School of Education has shown continuous improvement. For example, five faculty have achieved national scorer status, thereby enhancing their understanding of edTPA and ability to better prepare teacher candidates; another faculty who coordinates the edTPA program is the President of Maryland’s edTPA Collaborative placing her in the strategic position of promoting edTPA across the State; faculty have begun to engage in the reading of a text on edTPA based on first-hand experiences, including one chapter co-authored by our faculty; a newly designed NDMU online course with specific modules helps to guide teacher candidates through the edTPA process; over 20 faculty and staff have attended specialized edTPA conferences to learn and expand their knowledge; and a library of related resource materials have been placed in a Goggle Docs Center for students and faculty. All of these strategies, combined, are helping NDMU to become a leader in edTPA preparation and assessment. We are proud of the progress we have made to date and anticipate even more progress in the years to come.

Composite Mean Scores for 15 Rubrics and for 18 Rubrics				
15 n	15 R total	18 n	18 rub total	# condition codes*
8	44.00	2	61.00	0
15	38.00	12	43.00	3
20	38.85	6	51.50	4
38	37.49	23	40.53	7
34	40.81	4	51	3
*Some candidates’ submissions were not scoreable; more explicit instructions should help to minimize this occurrence in the future.				