

Department of Educational Studies
Revised Assessment Plan - Effective January 2014

I. Mission

The Educational Studies Department, in collaboration with colleagues on campus and in the community, strives to fulfill a multifaceted mission focused on:

- providing opportunities for students to engage in the study of education as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry and advocacy;
- preparing teachers to provide social service and leadership in culturally diverse, economically challenged, urban public educational systems; and
- developing both contributions within the context of Macalester's continuing commitments to academic excellence, internationalism, cultural pluralism, and civic engagement.

As a selective liberal arts college in a resource-rich urban setting, Macalester offers distinctive opportunities to fulfill this mission. The Educational Studies Department coordinates major and minor programs in addition to courses and internships that contribute to liberal studies across the disciplines. Curricular offerings provide a vibrant and challenging environment for students to pursue a wide range of interests including both public school teaching and teaching in contexts that do not require state licensing (e.g., teaching abroad, private school positions, artists-in-residence, youth development and other outreach programs). Opportunities are also provided to pursue dimensions of educational studies addressing significant societal issues on local, national, and international levels (e.g., urban education, educational policy, multicultural and anti-bias education, environmental education, civic education, youth development, international and development education, aesthetic education, education for social justice).

II. Learning Goals

Integrative Theory: The Educational Studies curriculum is designed to ensure ongoing opportunities for conceptual integration across disciplines and across domains of theory, research, philosophy, policy, and practice. Drawing from diverse perspectives and methodologies ranging from empirical and behavioral analyses in the natural and social sciences, to critical and interpretive studies spanning the arts, humanities and social sciences, the curriculum promotes understanding of the complex constellation of factors that actively shape educational processes.

Engaged Inquiry: The Educational Studies curriculum enacts a cycle of learning progressing through stages supporting multi-dimensional exploration, critical reflection, creative development, and principled action. Engaged inquiry is intensely individual and profoundly social, continually opening opportunities for diverse learners to deepen personal meaning while expanding capacities to learn from, for, and with others.

Pluralism and Equity: The Educational Studies curriculum reflects commitments to pluralism and equity in schools and society. Diverse cultures increasingly co-exist in our modern world. Public schools remain as one of the few social settings through which diverse citizens can interact in sustained and meaningful ways to achieve a common and critical goal—that of preparing *all* young people to pursue life with intelligence, dignity, affiliation, and an ever-evolving sense of purpose and possibility. Accordingly, the Educational Studies curriculum embraces the concept of human diversity as a resource to schools and society. The curriculum further the ways in which unequal distributions of power and resources continue to affect education and life opportunities available to school-age youth and therefore emphasizes efforts to advance educational equity on individual and systemic levels.

Social Advocacy: The Educational Studies curriculum reflects John Dewey’s premise that, “education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform.” These words assume special significance at a time when there is widespread recognition that current social and educational policies designed to fulfill the needs and aspirations of children and youth are in crisis. Social advocacy is understood as the ethical imperative to enact educational theory, research, philosophy, policy and practice to deepen and extend human potential. Educational Studies prepares teachers and concerned citizens to provide social service, social vision, and social leadership especially as these commitments advance the welfare of children and youth and the role of public education in promoting democratic social and educational reform.

III. Learner Outcomes

Integrative Theory (2014)

Students will demonstrate skill in translating educational theory/philosophy/research into principled policy and practice.

Engaged Inquiry (2015)

Students will demonstrate skill in expressing and facilitating higher order learning.

Pluralism and Equity (2016)

Students will demonstrate skill in analyzing and facilitating major theories, policies, curriculum, pedagogy and social movements for the purpose of advancing educational equity.

Social Advocacy (2017)

Students will demonstrate capacity to contribute as teachers, public intellectuals, or social advocates.

V. **Assessment Strategies**

We will develop a set of assessment strategies specific to each year's focal learner outcome including the following:

Educational Studies Courses: Each year's focal learner outcome will be assessed in all Educational Studies courses in the form of *course assignments/rubrics* designed to support and to evaluate student progress, and *course evaluations* asking students to assess their own development.

Reflective Portfolio: All Educational Studies majors will evaluate and document their personal progress in relation to the department's focal learner outcome within their Reflective Portfolio.

Graduate Survey: Questions specific to the focal learner outcome will be included in the confidential survey completed by graduating Educational Studies majors each spring.

Collective Analysis: Department faculty will synthesize information collected across these sources at annual retreat each year in May and then develop an action plan in response.