

SECTION 3, COMPREHENSIVE STANDARD 3.6.2

The institution ensures that its graduate instruction and resources foster independent learning, enabling the graduate to contribute to a profession or field of study.

JUDGMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Compliant

Partially Compliant

Noncompliant

RATIONALE FOR JUDGMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Although North Georgia College & State University educates a largely undergraduate population (for Fall 2005, undergraduate students represented 87.75% of the University's enrollment (n=4,247), the University has heightened its commitment toward expanding the breadth, depth, and academic quality of its graduate programs—especially targeted to serving the needs of our service area in northeast Georgia (12.25% or 593 graduate students). Additionally, it recognizes the value and necessity of independent learning skills and emphasizes research and professional development in graduate education (see Welcome message, Dr. Donna Gessell, Director of Graduate Studies and External Programs) [1]. Furthermore, of NGCSU's 593 graduate students (Fall 2005), only 24% of them are enrolled full-time. By far, the majority of graduate students elect to pursue their education on a part-time basis – less than 9 semester credit hours per semester (76% for Fall 2005), necessitating that NGCSU be especially proactive in reaching these students and ensuring that they have access to the resources they need to optimize their graduate education experience.

The University coordinates many of the services and resources available to graduate students through the Office of Graduate Studies and External Programs [2]. The programs' web page is an important resource from which all graduate students can access information when they need it. The webpage provide general information such as "Important Dates and Special Events" [3] and "FAQs" [4]. In addition, the Graduate Student Senate [5] provides funding to graduate students for travel and research opportunities.

Independent learning and the ability to apply knowledge gained to professional settings are best learned through research and field experiences/internships. Many programs have graduate internship

opportunities that provide a means of fostering independent learning appropriate to the discipline.

Internships/Practicum are provided in the following areas:

Education Specialist [[6](#), pp. 27-29]

TCHL 7901 Teacher Mentoring Internship

TCHL 7902 Instructional Supervision Internship

TCHL 7903 Curriculum Decision Making Internship

Master's of Education – Special Education [[7](#)]

SPED 7301 Practicum in Intellectual Disabilities

SPED 7401 Practicum in Interrelated Special Education

Master's of Education – all candidates have experience teaching prior to admission to the department, but all candidates must complete a capstone course in the major field that requires research in the area or performance measures. [[8](#), p. 31]

Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification –requires internship in a school setting. [[9](#)]

Community Counseling [[10](#), p. 67]

COUN 7660C Counseling Practicum

COUN 7680C Counseling Practicum

Master of Science – Nursing Family Nurse Practitioner [[11](#), pp. 72-77]

NURS 6030 Advanced Health Assessment – 60 Clinical Hours

NURS 6110 Rural Primary Care Nursing – 120 Clinical Hours

NURS 6120 Rural Primary Nursing II – 120 Clinical Hours

NURS 7010 Rural Primary Care Nursing III – 120 Clinical Hours

NURS 7140 Rural Primary Care Nursing IV – 120 Clinical Hours

NURS 7210 Rural Primary Care Nursing V – 240 Clinical Hours

Master of Science in Physical Therapy [[12](#), pp. 78-88]

PT 6712 Clinical Education

PT 6722 Clinical Education II

PT 6733 Clinical Education III

PT 7813 Clinical Education IV

Master of Public Administration [[13](#), pp. 89-96]

An internship (POLS 7980, Internship in Public Administration) is required of all students who do not have at least two years of professional experience in public service organizations as determined by the M.P.A. Program

Coordinator. The internship requires a full-time professional experience in a public service organization for ten weeks.

The University's graduate programs monitor student learning outcomes as part of the regular review and assessment process to ensure that students acquire advanced knowledge, critical thinking skills, communication skills, and technological/information literacy consistent with effective professional practice and research in their fields of study.

Examples of the monitoring of student learning outcomes include the following: The MS with a major in Nursing has 100% job placement rate and a 97% (first time) and 100% (second time) pass rate on national certification exams for Family Nurse Practitioners. This is in comparison to a 78% national pass rate for first time takers on the certification exam. Graduates and employers report that the NGCSU nurse practitioner graduates are as prepared or better prepared than graduates of other NP programs.

In order to be admitted to the master's teacher education program, all students must be certified in an area in education. Almost all students are employed in their field of study when they enter the program. During the capstone course (usually during one of the last courses to be completed as part of the program), students are asked to complete an exit survey related to how the program helped them develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Data related to these exit surveys for each area are available in the NCATE folios. Data related to the Early Childhood master's program reveal that most graduate students rate each dimension at least at the agree (3) level-based on a scale of 1 to 4 with 4 being strongly agree. A copy of the Exit Survey can be found found here [[14](#)].

The M.P.A. Program places emphasis on the results of the M.P.A. comprehensive examination in assessing the program. Since the program began operating in the spring quarter of 1996, 65 students have sat for the examination, and the scores (on the first attempt) have been distributed as follows:

| Exam Score | Number of Observations |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| 95-100 | 5 |
| 90-94 | 15 |
| 85-89 | 13 |
| 80-84 | 7 |
| 75-79 | 11 |
| 70-74 | 11 |
| 65-69 (below 70 is failure) | 1 |

| | |
|-------|---|
| 60-64 | 0 |
| 55-59 | 2 |

The program also tracks the performance of its pre-service students in their internship placements. All pre-service students (i.e., those who do not have at least two years of full-time experience in the public or nonprofit sector) are required to complete an internship. The evaluations from the interns' on-site supervisors have been consistently positive. We do not have instances on record of interns being evaluated by their on-site supervisors as deficient in any necessary skills.

The M.P.A. Program surveyed its alumni in the course of completing the program's Comprehensive Program Review in 2003. (Surveys were sent electronically to all alumni for whom E-mail addresses were on file.) The responses to questions concerning outcomes were distributed as follows:

| Statement | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral/No Opinion/Don't Know | Missing |
|--|----------------|-------|-------------------------------|---------|
| 2. The core curriculum of the M.P.A. Program provided me with a solid foundation for work in the public or nonprofit sector. | 15 | 4 | | |
| 9. In my employment, I find what I learned as an M.P.A. student to provide useful skills that I can use now. | 14 | 5 | | |
| 10. I am pleased with the outcome (obtaining employment, advancing in rank, taking on new responsibilities, or any other significant result) of my earning an M.P.A. degree. | 15 | 3 | 1 | |
| 11A. If I had the choice to make again, I would still enroll in an M.P.A. Program. | 15 | 3 | | 1 |
| 11B. If I had the choice to make again, I would still enroll in NGCSU's M.P.A. Program. | 16 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

(No respondents disagreed with any of the statements.) Accordingly, the program concluded that it is providing its students with the knowledge and skills that are necessary for them to find gainful employment and to be productive and satisfied in their careers in the field.

Document Reference:

| Number | DB Num | Document Title | Resource |
|--------|--------|--|---|
| 1, 2 | | NGCSU Graduate Studies | http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/ |
| 3 | | NGCSU Graduate Studies, Important Dates and Special Events | http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/deadlines.shtml |
| 4 | | NGCSU Graduate Studies, FAQs | http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/FAQ/faqindex.shtml |
| 5 | | NGCSU Graduate Student Senate | http://www.ngcsu.edu/bdf/gss/index.htm |
| 6 | | NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Education Specialist Program in Teacher Leadership, Program of Study | http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/programs/educspec_files/EdsPos.shtml (web site) http://www.collegesource.org/displayinfo/cataloglink.asp?pid={A0BA6F5B-46EF-41E2-A425-C3574803691F}&oig={1FD70D8E-2B26-4AEB-B696-5991983E2CD1}&vt=5 , pp. 27-29 in PDF, pp. 25-27 in hard copy. |
| 7 | | NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Masters of Education, Special Education | http://www.ngcsu.edu/Academic/Educate/educ/grad/grad_masters_deg.shtml#ise (web site) |
| 8 | | NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Masters of Education | http://www.collegesource.org/displayinfo/cataloglink.asp?pid={A0BA6F5B-46EF-41E2-A425-C3574803691F}&oig={1FD70D8E-2B26-4AEB-B696-5991983E2CD1}&vt=5 , p. 31 in PDF, p. 29 in hard copy |
| 9 | | NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification | http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/gradBulletin/C_Post-Bac.html (web site) http://www.collegesource.org/displayinfo/cataloglink.asp?pid={A0BA6F5B-46EF-41E2-A425-C3574803691F}&oig={1FD70D8E-2B26-4AEB-B696-5991983E2CD1}&vt=5 , p. 32 in PDF, Georgia Teaching Certificates, p. 30 in hard copy |

| Number | DB Num | Document Title | Resource |
|--------|--------|--|---|
| 10 | | NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Community Counseling Program | http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/programs/counseling.shtml (web site) http://www.collegesource.org/displayinfo/cataloglink.asp?pid={A0BA6F5B-46EF-41E2-A425-C3574803691F}&oig={1FD70D8E-2B26-4AEB-B696-5991983E2CD1}&vt=5 , p. 67 in PDF, p. 65 in hard copy |
| 11 | | NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Master of Science, Nursing Family Nurse Practitioner | http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/programs/fnp.shtml http://www.collegesource.org/displayinfo/cataloglink.asp?pid={A0BA6F5B-46EF-41E2-A425-C3574803691F}&oig={1FD70D8E-2B26-4AEB-B696-5991983E2CD1}&vt=5 , p. 72-77 in PDF, pp. 70-75 in hard copy |
| 12 | | NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Master of Science, Physical Therapy | http://www.collegesource.org/displayinfo/cataloglink.asp?pid={A0BA6F5B-46EF-41E2-A425-C3574803691F}&oig={1FD70D8E-2B26-4AEB-B696-5991983E2CD1}&vt=5 , pp. 78-88, pp. 76-86 in hard copy http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/programs/pt.shtml (web site, reflects new Doctorate of Physical Therapy) |
| 13 | | NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Master of Public Administration | http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/programs/mpa.shtml (web site) http://www.collegesource.org/displayinfo/cataloglink.asp?pid={A0BA6F5B-46EF-41E2-A425-C3574803691F}&oig={1FD70D8E-2B26-4AEB-B696-5991983E2CD1}&vt=5 , pp. 89-96 in PDF, pp. 87-94 in hard copy |
| 14 | | Graduate Exit Survey | http://www.ngcsu.edu/sacs/Reference_Room/documents/Institutional_Assess/Grad_Prog_Exit_Survey.pdf |