Keene State College
Teacher Candidate Preparation Program
Undergraduate Special Education

1. How have you used your data to make changes in the following areas of your program?

   a. advisement practices:

   The Education Faculty responsible for the undergraduate special education certification option have made a concerted effort to increase opportunities to engage our first year and continuing students in considering possibilities as they plan their college experiences. Data regarding enrollment and completion rates guide our conversations. Recent changes in first-year student orientation to the college opened doors for faculty to be involved in meeting and greeting students interested in pursuing special education certification along with general education certification. This took place at the end of August this year. We think this is an important step so students obtain early advising to complete their Integrative Studies Program, liberal arts major, and coursework for regular (general) education and special education.

   Enrollment and completion rate data have also encouraged us to use a color-coded planning sheet (developed by Nancy Lory) to illustrate how the SPED certification builds on elementary education at the undergraduate level and may be completed in four years with a few summer courses. While this is one focus of advisement, the other options are the four and one half years as well as the option for a fifth year Master's degree. We believe that many students have financial restraints and may opt not to pursue special education because of the extra requirements. Students with secondary education certification are being advised to pursue the graduate program.

   Two of the special education faculty teach a foundations course for students, i.e., EDSP 202 Development, Exceptionality, & Learning. This course serves as an excellent vehicle for recruiting students into our program. As part of this effort to reach pre-service teachers early for academic advising, we also reinforce the message that regardless of whether teachers are in a general education or special education setting, they will be asked to conduct assessments, contribute to IEPs, monitor student progress, and modify learning outcomes or instructional strategies.

   b. assessment practices or tools:
   (from report, 2008)

   As a result of CEC feedback, scoring guides for assessments were enhanced by expanding rating scale criteria into rubric formats; making distinctions clearer among the "exceed expectations, meets expectations, and needs improvement" categories. The increased clarity of the scoring criteria facilitated highlighting the predominant CEC Standards targeted by assessments and facilitated using data for evaluating both student outcomes and program effectiveness.

Review of data help us to center on whether we are supporting pre-service teachers' development of relevant competencies to serve them in their professional roles, given the evolving nature of the position and reforms over the past several years.

c. curricular design:
(from report, 2008)

Data collection and analysis have coincided with revisions to Keene State College's undergraduate programs including: 1) developing a new integrative studies program to replace general education, 2) changing all teacher preparation certification options in conjunction with adopting a four-credit model for courses. Feedback from CEC along with findings from assessments have offered faculty perspective and direction to discuss program strengths and gaps in light of evidence-based practices, prominent reforms in the field of special education, and regulations associated with the recent reauthorization of IDEA. As a result, the proposal for the courses in the revised undergraduate special education program continues to build on preparation offered through elementary and secondary teacher preparation programs, enhances current offerings in the special education option, and provides greater alignment with CEC Standards through expanded focus on content knowledge and development of professional and pedagogical skills.

Data are used to provide feedback about instruction, curriculum, and expectations of students.

d. Other:

2. How do evaluation instruments and feedback from pre-service candidate and partners (formative/summative) directly inform your program design and delivery?

Evaluation instruments and feedback provide opportunity to examine the outcomes of the program from the perspective of candidate competence and through the eyes of practicing professionals. School partners (cooperating professionals) offer another field-based perspective in addition to what faculty supervisors gather.

(from report, 2008)

Data have informed our approach about what to retain and improve within and across our courses in our current and proposed programs. The data have provided direction for reconfiguring course content and linkages with field placements, emphasizing the impact of language on academic and social competence of candidates (Standard 6), and extending content to more directly address different forms of collaboration (Standard 10). The identified program improvements are also designed to strengthen candidates' consideration of instructional planning, materials, and opportunities (Standards 4, 7), proficiency in working with challenging behaviors (Standard 5), and effectiveness as evaluators (Standard 8). We are committed to engaging in ongoing data collection and dialogue among faculty is a track for continuous improvement. During the Spring 2009 semester, Assessment #8 Language was added to the list of Key Assessments. A set of four

case studies were incorporated into EDSP 250 Context for Special Education and data were collected, giving more direct measures of Standard 6.

Assessment 4: *Student Teaching* indicates the extent to which the program meets its goals based on how candidates have demonstrated the range of competencies during their final field placement (student teaching). The data report that candidates meet or exceed expectations with regard to taking on the role of special educator; serving as evaluators, instructional planners, instructors, program coordinators (to the extent possible, given site and program possibilities), and collaborators/ professionals. Based on reviewer feedback, the original rating scale used in this assessment has been reworked into a rubric and provides more detailed criteria against which to judge candidates' performance. Additionally, two years of data have been collected (and feedback from the field) which will be used to revise the tool to work with and guide cooperating teachers and candidates at the student teaching level.

3. How is technology used in your program curriculum---

   a. to gather data and inform curriculum

      Keene State College has made a commitment to data and program management with the recent implementation of the Tk20 software program. We are embarking on the use of Tk20, which will serve as the vehicle for centralizing data collection, allowing for posting key assignments, collecting artifacts to demonstrate candidates' competencies, and providing more immediate access to information for analysis. This system will also provide support to students as they track their own progress through our special education programs.

   b. to engage our pre-service candidates by modeling best practices in our classrooms

      Faculty build on students' familiarity with computer software, encouraging the mindset of writing as a process, developing uses of Powerpoint for presentations, and tables and graphic organizers to arrange researched information. Students readily engage in the Blackboard course system, participating in discussion boards, assignments, and use of links. Pre-service teachers are prepared for and readily explore classroom applications of a range of technologies and assistive technology. They are eager to participate in learning about new applications.

      During students' first year of college, they are required to take a *Thinking and Writing* course that is a themed base version of the traditional freshman composition course. The KSC course requires a minimum 15 page research paper on the topic associated with the theme. Students are instructed by course and library faculty on effective research strategies including using electronic sources and databases.

      In EDSP 202 Development, Exceptionality, & Learning, students participate in an Inclusive Lab School Simulation (created by Dr. Nancy Lory) where class grade groups are formed and students use the Blackboard Discussion Board and Group feature as a social networking and work site for collaborative projects.

In the EDSP 250 Context for Special Education course, students complete a case study that explores the use of assistive technology (AT) in the classroom setting. Low and high tech options are discussed and the instructor brings the students to the KSC Office of Disability Services where Mr. Wayne Harvey demonstrates the range of AT that is used on campus. Examples include Dragon Naturally Speaking, Kurzweil Reading System, JAWS, Books for the Blind and Dyslexic, embossing of graphic representations for students who are blind or visually impaired, and closed system enlargers. In addition, the instructor uses the CEC Technology Wheel that summarizes the ways in which teachers can select appropriate AT for their students. High tech and low tech communication boards are emphasized for students with either communication or physical disabilities that preclude oral communication.

Throughout the special education program, prospective teachers demonstrate the use of graphic organizers and visual tools for concept development, pre-writing techniques, and note-taking strategies as instructional tools. In the elementary education program, students are engaged in using *Inspiration* Students are also involved in web searches, examining the values of information, quality of research reported, lesson ideas, instructional materials and tools presented in the web results (EDSP 352, 354, and 356). Students are also involved in Blackboard, using discussion boards to enhance their depth of understanding concepts, to invite risk-taking in terms of sharing perspectives, and to promote *listening and building* on others' contributions through the threads. Further, Blackboard is used to model ways to prompt time management, suggestions for organizing tasks, and ideas for enhancing study strategies. In some of the placements for Practicum and Methods and Student Teaching, students are using the Smartboard as a tool for instruction; modeled first by cooperating professionals.

c. to inform the curriculum design and pedagogy with students in the field?

One focus is keeping in contact with our students during their Student Teaching experiences. Meeting Wizard, email, and/ or Blackboard are used to convene groups of students on campus, keep them in conversation with each other to support planning instruction and processing challenges they face. Links to effective sites are also part of sharing with technology. Students in the field/ student teachers use email and phone conversations (old fashioned technology) to touch base, ask questions, raise issues, share concerns, problem solve around curriculum, students with whom they are working, and collaborations with cooperating teachers.

4. For your program, please list all forms of technology used to develop and / or reinforce content mastery for our pre-service candidate and in service candidates

Modes of Communication
Phone
Internet/ email
Face-to-face

Computers

Word processing
Power Point
Blackboard
Inspiration
Web and Library Searches
Assistive Technology

5. How have you made program adjustments and changes through the examination of dispositional data (include unit and SPA related dispositional data) for our candidates over the past three years?

We continue to question how dispositional data may be augmented through direct measures of collaboration competence. We are piloting a tool during the Fall 2009 semester.

(from report, 2008)

Assessment 7: *Dispositions* demonstrates that candidates meet or exceed expectations with regard to personal and professional attributes and actions required of special educators. However, the evidence falls short of generating direct insights with regard to the competencies relative to *Standard 10 Collaboration* in terms of working with parents/ caregivers, facilitating meetings, co-planning with colleagues, co-teaching in general education settings, and/ or advocating for students. While Assessments 2 and 5 supplement the Dispositions data, faculty feel that it is important to address collaboration in ways that more directly approximate what candidates are expected to do as special educators. In response, the data have encouraged faculty to add more experiences to address the critical area of collaboration – in all of its applications in the field. These experiences will appear in the new program in the Practicum/ Methods course and again in Student Teaching with an assignment and rubric that directly measures candidates' collaboration competence through simulations of facilitating evaluation, IEP, and parent/caregiver meetings and co-planning and co-teaching with general education teachers. The data generated will be used to document program and candidate effectiveness.

6. If you did not provide student work samples demonstrating "did not meet" quality, please explain why:

While it is not unheard of for students to not meet expectations, it has been several years since a student's work demonstrates challenges to deem her/ his work in need of such improvements that s/he is ineligible for certification. The bulk of assessments occur during Practicum/ Methods and students' developing competence is treated as a process. Assessments related to lesson planning, on-site teaching/ supervision, and reflection are examined after there has been direct instruction, substantial opportunities to practice in the college classroom and in the field, and considerable feedback prior to documents used to judge performance. Similarly, for Assessment II (Documenting the Special Education Process) and Assessment VI (Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior), students receive instruction, write drafts, engage in peer revision meetings, get faculty feedback, and submit final versions. The products that are evaluated remain the student's as each chooses to use input from others in her/ his own way, expanding on use of assessment data, working on technical writing, and drawing from resources on intervention strategies or teaching approaches. As a result of the processes that guide college instruction, the

products currently available are of solid quality. Given the quality of recent students, that is all that was available.