EDUC 681—Capstone- Project, Portfolio or Thesis

Each will include:

1. A three-chapter proposal that includes:
   1. clear definition of an educational issue to be addressed and a delineation of learning objectives specific to student (either TEACH outcomes, or Michigan Standards for Preparation of School Principals, Entry-Level Standards for Michigan Teachers, or Michigan Standards for Teachers)
   2. A review of the relevant research literature
   3. An explanation of what you will do and your strategy for demonstrating how you have synthesized your graduate studies in MED or MSCTE (what methods you will use)

2. A faculty review of proposal before you begin

3. Completion of your proposed capstone and implementation of some type of outcomes assessment

4. A presentation to faculty/peers/community

5. A written product appropriate to project (ex. procedure manual, course materials, manuscript for submission for publication)

6. An abstract for presentation to broader community (professional meeting, organization/administration of work setting etc)

Policies and Procedures for Capstone Activities

1. Before registering for the capstone project hours, the student must complete an application and have it approved by his or her project advisor and committee members. The application defines a problem for investigation and/or a research question. It also includes a bibliography. The application must be completed and approved no later than the semester before the semester of graduation. The application can be downloaded at www.ferris.edu/education/education.

2. The student should work out a schedule with their advisor and committee members at the outset of the project. Adequate time should be allowed for the committee to recommend changes in the project before the Graduate School deadlines for graduation.

Evaluation Criteria for Capstone Activities

In the capstone project, the student should demonstrate

- Ability to frame a problem and research question relevant to education
- Ability to use methods that answer the type of question they ask in their study
| Knowledge of how their study relates to existing scholarship and studies |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Mature academic writing     |                  |
| o Using evidence and examples to develop the study |                  |
| o Organizing information    |                  |
| o Interpreting significance |                  |
| o Writing good prose        |                  |
| Synthesis of knowledge aligned to TEACH Framework |                  |
Thesis: A thesis can include but is not limited to:

1) an experimental design (clinical, school classroom) that looks into one or more variables with data usually based on human subjects and involving random assignments.

2) a descriptive design--survey research, observational studies, interviews, natural observations without manipulation of variables, case studies, ethnographies.

This research should be able to be completed in one semester. Your final Thesis document is needed before the end of the semester if you want your grade recorded on time. If your Thesis report is not received in final form in time for your professor to grade, or if it is received and still needs revision, you will be given an “Incomplete” when grades are turned in. You will then have one semester to complete the unfinished work. If it is not completed, the incomplete automatically becomes an “F.” To remove an “F,” you would need to take and pay for 681 again.

Rubric for Research Capstone: Thesis (EDUC 681)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Elements</th>
<th>Proficient (3)</th>
<th>Developing (2)</th>
<th>Emerging (1) Not acceptable performance for final research capstone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One Introduction</td>
<td>Demonstrates thorough knowledge of problem, context, and importance. The research question is well-reasoned, and the findings would make an important contribution to knowledge or practice</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate knowledge of the problem and educational context. Contains clear statement of purpose. Findings may contribute to knowledge or practice.</td>
<td>Demonstrates limited knowledge of the problem and/or its context. Statement of purpose is limited in clarity or reasoning or potential importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Research question(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Explanation of problem and rationale</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Clear statement of purpose</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-Significance of study</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Key terms</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two Literature Review</td>
<td>Analyzes key research as it directly relates to the research questions. Develops a logical argument for study based on research. Shows how study would fill gaps in research. Scholarly writing and sources are used.</td>
<td>Summarizes works in the field that relate to the research questions with invalid sources (opinion articles, vs. scholarly sources) or unsubstantiated inferences. States how this study would contribute to knowledge or practice.</td>
<td>Cites work in the field, but limited in scope, explanation of connection to the research questions is limited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Synthesis of the research</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Analysis of key work in the field</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Development of an argument for the project</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Discussion of the theoretical framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Identification of gaps in the literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter Three Methodology</td>
<td>Thoroughly addresses (a) description of subjects, rationale for inclusion and grouping. (b) explanation of design of the study, procedures, instrumentation, location, and data collection/analysis. (c) description of sampling procedures. (d) discussion of potential limitations, validity and reliability. (e) data collection tools aligned with research questions, and (f) uses proper terminology</td>
<td>Adequately developed study design, description of participants, location, timeline, and rationale statements.</td>
<td>Inadequate development of study design, participants, location, and timeline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Description of subjects, rationale for inclusion and grouping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter Four Data Analysis</td>
<td>Chapter Five Conclusions</td>
<td>Format</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Identification of the results and their relationship to the problem</td>
<td>-Reflections on study/data</td>
<td>-Chapters are aligned with APA guidelines</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Use of figures and tables where appropriate with supporting narrative</td>
<td>-Draw conclusions about the data and the study</td>
<td>-Citations use APA format</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results are presented clearly and related thoughtfully to the research problem and the literature.</td>
<td>-Description of limitations of entire study</td>
<td>-Reference list is complete, has at least 25 items, and is aligned with APA format</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results are shared but may not directly address the research question.</td>
<td>-Recommendations for further studies</td>
<td>-Title page, table of contents, appendices, and body in correct APA format</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results are present but limited in detail, logic, or usefulness.</td>
<td>-Relationship of study to the research questions</td>
<td>-Abstract contains adequate description of the project</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions are presented clearly and focused on the research problem. The study addresses all research questions, limitations, and recommendations for further research.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation adheres to APA guidelines and graduate-level writing expectations. Contains no more than 5 writing errors and no more than 5 errors related to APA format.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions are present but limited in detail, logic, or usefulness.</td>
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<td>Presentation uses APA guidelines and conforms to basic writing expectations. Contains no more than 10 writing errors and no more than 10 errors related to APA format.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation conforms poorly to APA format and writing expectations. Contains up to 15 writing errors and up to 15 errors related to APA format.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Project:

Examples of the type of capstone activities which MED and MSCTE students can pursue:

- Completing a qualitative study using grounded theory to define an educational concept.
- Completing a qualitative study using grounded theory to understand the components of a successful process.
- Assessing the impact of an educational intervention on student/school achievement risk factors.
- Developing and implementing an education and/or advisement program targeting students/schools that are at risk.
- An extensive action research within the project designer's school, district, and/or community
- Writing a journal article to be submitted for publication
- Completing a Draft of the charter school petition (if applicable)
- Writing a case scenario (template) to be posted on the School of Education website
- Developing a protocol for a process related to education
- Creating a program evaluation process for a particular agency
- Writing a grant application
- Writing a policy memo analyzing a particular program

Whatever project is chosen, it should address a practical, real world challenge using the skills and knowledge students have gained throughout their graduate program.

The Capstone Project culminates in a paper and presentation. The written report should include the outcomes of the student's experience in addressing the challenge identified in the proposal. Along with the Capstone Activity report, students also submit any product that resulted from the project, i.e., a videotape, text, or CD, with a critical evaluation of the student's work from the client and project mentor(s).

Students may anticipate their projects early in the degree program, but the capstone activities represent the culmination of study for the MED and MSCTE and the student’s most mature academic work; thus they will be completed at the end of their program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Factor</th>
<th>Exceeded Expectations</th>
<th>Met Expectations</th>
<th>Did Not Meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respectful, maintained confidentiality where appropriate, demonstrated knowledge of boundaries between professional and personal life.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Performance</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Met the goals and objectives of the capstone project, made sound decisions and demonstrated professional judgment, demonstrated problem solving abilities, responded to feedback productively, efficient in completing tasks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Description
A project for students in some options within the SOE Master's Degrees. It will be designed with the assistance of the classroom instructor and the student's Faculty Capstone Committee. The project can be either quantitative or qualitative in design, and will demonstrate the synthesis of knowledge acquired in all courses within the Master’s degree program, with focus upon the student's career endeavors. Students will be required to present their project to a Faculty Capstone Committee selected by the student. All projects must be pre-approved and the application filed appropriately.

Transformative - Experiential - Assessment Driven - Collaborative - Holistic

TEACH Framework for the Capstone Portfolio

The mission of the School of Education (SOE) is to provide high quality instruction in the preparation of quality teachers, administrators, and other educators in a variety of school and non-school settings using the most current research knowledge, technologies, and continuous improvement management philosophies in an innovative and stimulating environment. The conceptual framework for the School of Education is the acronym “TEACH” which serves as the underlying structure that gives conceptual meaning to our operations through an articulated rationale and provides direction for our programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, faculty scholarship and service, and unit accountability. Therefore, the logic of the Portfolio will allow you to reflect on and enact the SOE’s conceptual framework of TEACH.

T- Transformative
Facilitating opportunities for students to become reflective practitioners

E- Experiential
Providing diverse experiences that actively engage Stakeholders

A- Assessment Driven
Grounded in evidence-based research, resulting in data-driven decisions

C- Collaborative
Affirming teaching and learning as a social process

H- Holistic
Emphasizing the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts

Assumptions about a Capstone Portfolio

1. Capstone Portfolios are valuable for:
   a. Interviewing for a job or faculty position
   b. Interviewing for a supervisory position, deans, directors, principals and superintendents
   c. Use as a baseline for professional development portfolios required by many districts, colleges, supervisors, team and department leaders and principals.
      Therefore, it is recommended that candidates consider the portfolio as a draft document, which can continue to be crafted in the future to support ongoing career growth.

2. A capstone portfolio is a comprehensive representation of individual growth and achievement— it is not just a list or collection of items; it allows the individual to demonstrate her/his achievement through its contents.

3. A capstone portfolio is an opportunity to demonstrate what the candidate does with, and thinks about, the professional and
content knowledge being acquired through course work and related professional experiences.

4. A capstone portfolio is a basis for self-reflection about your graduate programs as well as a basis for important conversation between candidate and advisor; candidate and other professors; candidate and peers; candidate and teachers, staff, and the wider professional community.

5. An effective capstone portfolio is neither massive nor expensive. Rather, it communicates clearly and simply evidence of the candidate’s knowledge, growth, and leadership ability.

6. A portfolio has “real life” applications for the candidate in areas such as certification, professional development, and employment.

I. Written Contents of the Capstone Portfolio

The portfolio should be seen as a culminating and reflective activity. Please use a clear, expository writing style, using word processing, correct grammar and composed in APA format. Capstone portfolio projects will vary in length, content, and format; and responsibility for determination quality and acceptability rests with the adviser and the student’s committee. The capstone portfolio should be an activity that spans your entire graduate program. Because most of you are engaged in professional practice, you are often called upon to present and defend new ideas, while offering and accepting feedback from others. Capstone portfolio activities therefore emphasize self- and peer-evaluation. In this way, the capstone portfolio provides a means of strengthening the program’s links to the knowledge and skills of the professional workplace.

The following are required forms to be included at the defense/presentation

1. Cover Page

CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction
Or Master of Science in Career & Technical Education

By

Has been approved

December 03 2009

APPROVED:

Chair

Member

Member

Supervisory Committee

ACCEPTED:

Director School of Education
2. **Demographic Sheet**—that includes the following
   - Name
   - Student ID number
   - Home address, city, state, zip and phone number
   - Employer name and your position (if appropriate)
   - E-mail address
   - MSCTE or Med option (Instructor, Training & Development, Administration, Post-secondary Administration)

3. **Reflective Paper on MSCTE OR MED (five pages or less)**
   - Explain your short-term and long-range academic and career goals and how you see the MSCTE OR MED program supporting these goals
   - Explain your philosophy of education or training. What do you believe about teaching and learning?
     - You may share an anecdote, inspirational quote or your metaphor for teaching to complement your philosophy.
   - Summarize your professional growth since beginning your graduate program with at least three examples of major learnings, practical content, concepts, theoretical content or knowledge you acquired from the MSCTE OR MED program that made you better prepared to make immediate contributions to your employer or society upon graduation
   - Assess your strengths, areas for improvement and goals for continued growth in your chosen profession or job

4. **TEACH Framework with Rationales** – This section of your portfolio consists of a summary matrix (below) and five sections—one for each letter in the TEACH framework acronym and should describe how the MSCTE OR MED program has contributed to your professional growth related to each letter. The most important aspect of the portfolio, supported by the artifacts you include in it, is the rationale you provide the reader for each letter of the framework.
   Each section must contain a word-processed and grammatically correct detailed narrative that describes
   
   (a) your understanding of the concept of the letter (for example, what T=*transformative* means to you),

   (b) a reflective description of how the MSCTE OR MED program has provided you with, and/or improved your professional practice, as it relates to that letter,

   (c) a written description of at least one specific course/activity/assignment from your MSCTE OR MED program that contributed to your implementation of the letter’s intent and an example within your own practice that demonstrates your transferring the concept into your own practice, (**NOTE: This means a minimum of 10 artifact**) and

   (d) a written description with an explanation of each supporting artifact you will provide in the portfolio as convincing evidence that support your understanding or implementation on the intent of the letter. Label your artifacts A, B, etc. You should hyperlink the matrix to the actual artifact.

Create and include this completed summary matrix at the beginning of this section of your portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>MSCTE OR MED Program Example(s)</th>
<th>Example(s) from Your Professional Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T- Transformative</td>
<td>Course/Activity/Assignment/Reflective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E- Experiential</td>
<td>Providing diverse experiences that actively engage stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- Assessment Driven</td>
<td>Grounded in evidence-based research, resulting in data-driven decisions</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C- Collaborative
Affirming teaching and learning as a social process

H- Holistic
Emphasizing the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts

Note: We are asking that at a MINIMUM you should consider providing 10 artifacts—one for your graduate program and one from your professional experience.

Suggestions: In your Portfolio, you should consider hyperlinking this matrix to the actual document.

5. Signed Statement of Authenticity – affirming that the content of the portfolio is the candidate’s original work.

Statement of Authenticity

The material contained in this portfolio is my work.

Candidate’s Name ___________________________________________________________
(print name)

Candidate’s Signature ________________________________________________________

MSCTE OR MED Options _____________________________________

Date _______________

II. Presentation of Capstone Portfolio

You will be required to make a professional presentation on your portfolio to your 3 person committee on a scheduled date. You may use PowerPoint and any other media deemed appropriate for your content. If you require special media or set-up for your presentation, please notify the instructor in advance so accommodations can be made. Your professional presentation should be no more than 20 minutes and should include a summary of each section of the written portfolio.

Note- At least one week prior to your presentation, you should e-mail each of your committee members your written narrative (this does not need to include the supportive artifacts) or burn a CD and send the committee members a CD with all of your content.

Note—You should provide the instructor with a professional notebook that includes a CD with all of the portfolio sections and artifact documents.
### RUBRIC FOR GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description of Performance Indicators</th>
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</table>
| **Exceeds Expectations Score=A** | • Information presented in writing and orally was consistently accurate and appropriate  
• Content presented demonstrates an honest, critical and reflective review of the candidate’s graduate program  
• Literature is consistently cited in an appropriate manner  
• Ideas are consistently well-organized and expressed in a clear manner  
• Writing consistently demonstrates appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice  
• Extra number of artifacts, each of which clearly relates to the TEACH framework or appropriate number of artifacts with excellent reflection  
• Presentation was well organized and complete. |
| **Meets Expectations Score=B** | • Information presented in writing and orally was mostly accurate and appropriate  
• Content presented generally demonstrated a critical and reflective review of the candidate’s graduate program  
• Literature is generally cited in an appropriate manner  
• Ideas are generally well-organized and expressed in a clear manner  
• Writing generally demonstrates appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice  
• Appropriate number of artifacts, each of which generally relates to a response  
• Presentation was somewhat organized and complete. |
| **Needs Improvement Score=C** | • Information presented in writing and orally was sometimes accurate and appropriate  
• Content presented sometimes demonstrate a lack of critical or reflective evaluation  
• Literature is sometimes cited in an appropriate manner  
• Ideas are sometimes well-organized and expressed in a clear manner  
• Writing sometimes lacks appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice  
• Insufficient number of artifacts and/or minimal relationship between each artifact and a response  
• Presentation was sometimes organized and somewhat complete. |
TRANSFORMATIVE
The School of Education provides a dynamic learning community that focuses on helping students evolve from passive to active learners. Transformative education is an on-going process of lifelong learning that allows students to become professional educators. Students are transformed into thoughtful, thorough, and reflective practitioners. The program provides shared learning experiences that promote discovery and renewal. The faculty in the School of Education at Ferris State University are committed to this statement: “Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through a transformation of experience” (Dewey, 1938, Kolb 1984).

EXPERIENTIAL
Using a constructivist approach, “experiential” refers to a variety of interactive instructional techniques that engage students and faculty in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students and faculty engage in experiential learning using resources, such as libraries, web sites, observations, interviews and learning groups, to enrich their knowledge bases. The ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate is demonstrated through a variety of structured and sequenced activities including, projects, presentations, experiments, simulations, internships, curriculum projects, developmental portfolios, practicum, field placements, independent study projects, peer teaching, role playing, or written assignments. Experiential delivery may include active learning, cooperative or collaborative learning, distance education, distributed learning, online tutorials, guided discussion lists, video streaming, teleconferencing, internet delivery, or self-paced learning.

ASSESSMENT DRIVEN
We prepare professional educators who transmit theory into practice by delivering assessment driven instruction. Assessment is aligned with curriculum standards/outcomes and is authentic occurring before, during and after instruction (formative/summative). Professional educators are reflective practitioners and make valid inquiry-based and data-driven decisions. Students and graduates adhere to professional standards demonstrating integrity and accountability within the school and work setting.

COLLABORATIVE
Professional educators will be collaborative, productive, stakeholders inside and outside the classroom, school, and community. Teaching and learning is primarily a social process, teachers should develop and maintain relationships across all community aspects.

HOLISTIC INTEGRATION
Through the holistic integration of five dimensions, the Teacher Education faculty and staff at Ferris State University prepare students to excel in the teaching profession. Specifically, our Teacher Education Program:

- delivers a curriculum that integrates technology, methodology, course delivery, field experience, curriculum development, research and assessment,
- includes a focus on the intra- and interpersonal integration in cognitive processes, ethical attitudes, social interactions, and professional dispositions of our students,
- nurtures teacher candidates who demonstrate the ability to engage the whole student, interacting with students in a holistic manner in a way that attends to their holistic development in the social emotional, cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.
- integrates teaching practices through the use of multiple research based practices, cross curricular planning and delivery, multiple learning styles and intelligences and behavioral interventions.
- produces highly-skilled professional educators who are able to work collaboratively in a variety of educational settings.
Purposes of the capstone portfolio defense is:
1. To evaluate candidates’ professional growth and future goals.
2. To determine candidates’ ability to reflect upon his/her professional growth as it aligns to the TEACH framework.
3. To collect data for MSCTE program evaluation and improvement.

Possible Interview Questions:
1. Which of the five TEACH acronyms do you feel you have made the most significant progress?
   - T=Transformative
   - E=Experiential
   - A=Assessment Driven
   - C=Collaboration
   - H=Holistic

2. Discuss one specific artifact and explain its relationship to your professional growth
   - Identified and Explained Clearly
   - Identified and Explained Unclearly

3. What professional strengths and/or growth areas are most evident? Why do you think so?
   - Explained Clearly
   - Explained Unclearly

4. Which artifacts are you the most proud of? Why?
   - Explained Clearly
   - Explained Unclearly

5. What have you learned about yourself during the preparation of your portfolio?
   - Explained Clearly
   - Explained Unclearly

6. Do you feel you have been better prepared for your professional goals? Would you please give some specific examples to support your answer?
   - Appropriate examples were provided
   - No appropriate example was provided

7. What future goals do you have in better preparing yourself for your career?
   - Explained Clearly
   - Explained Unclearly

8. What did you find as strengths and/or needs of the MSCTE graduate programs when you compiled your portfolio? What suggestions can you make to improve the program?
   - Explained Clearly
   - Explained Unclearly
## Overall Assessment of Capstone Portfolio Defense Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Professional growth was not clearly explained and/or not supported by evidence.</td>
<td>☐ Professional growth was clearly explained and was well supported by evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Specific future goals were not explained clearly.</td>
<td>☐ Specific future goals were explained clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ The candidates did not demonstrate his/her understanding of the relationship between the TEACH framework and his/her professional growth and/or future goals.</td>
<td>☐ The candidate demonstrated his/her understanding of the relationship between the TEACH framework and his/her professional growth and future goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: