

# Assessment Plan

## Western Michigan University

### Blindness and Low Vision Studies

**Mission Statement:** The Mission of the Western Michigan University Department of Blind Rehabilitation is to offer instruction, research, and service in the preparation of professionals to serve persons with visual impairments. We are dedicated to the utilization of best practices, the responsible use of human and economic resources and the advancement of people with disabilities in society with a global influence.

**Vision Statement:** The Department of Blindness and Low Vision's intent is to strengthen our leadership position in pre-service instruction and research in the field of visual impairment to enhance the seamless integration of individuals with visual impairments into their desired roles in society and to facilitate socio-economic equality.

#### Core Values

\*We are committed to excellence in education in order to facilitate dignity, independence, and respect among individuals with visually impairments. We base our (teaching/instruction) on the following assumptions: a. support of self worth and self determination, b. individual assessment and instruction, c.. individuals with impairments have the potential to achieve the same quality of life as all individuals, d. specialized training is superior to generalized training.

\*We believe we must recruit and retaining high quality students and they must leave us knowing how to (teach/instruct).

\*We value our strong commitment to research and science as they server a critical role in the development of our profession and in guiding our (teaching/instruct).

\*We believe in maintaining a collegial, supportive, accessible environment for faculty and students.

\*We believe in fostering positive relationships with employers, agencies, consumers group, intern sites and other human services programs to best serve their needs.

\*We will demonstrate leadership in our field by educating the communities we serve about visual impairment and other disabilities, by committing our faculty to active involvement in our national professional organizations, and by sharing research that increases knowledge world wide.

#### Outcome: 1.0 Content Knowledge

Candidates in all four academic programs within the department will demonstrate mastery of the content necessary for professional performance.

**Track:** OMS  
RCT  
RT  
TCVI/OMC

**Outcome Status:** Active

**Assessment Evaluation:** A review of appropriate competencies for each of the four BLS Programs will take place on a five-year cycle. Initially, all programs will be reviewed simultaneously, and thereafter, at a time specified by the USAC. Review Process: The Orientation & Mobility for Adults program will be reviewed in 2007, 2012, etc. Rehabilitation Counseling/ Teaching will be reviewed in 2008, 2013, etc. Teaching Children with Visual Impairments/Orientation & Mobility for Children will be reviewed in 2009, 2014, etc.

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
Certification exams administered by the Academy for the Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals (ACVREP) or by the Council on Rehabilitation Education <b>Assessment Method Category:</b> Exam-Licensure	At least 80% of BLS program completers will meet proficiency scores as established by these certification bodies. The competencies are outlined for each of the professional programs through ACVREP and CORE	Administered several times annually on dates set by the certification agencies. They will be used as comprehensive exams for programs during the academic year 2007-08	Yes
Candidate performance in required content courses <b>Assessment Method Category:</b> Course Grade	Candidates must maintain a 3.0 grade point average in all required courses for continued		Yes

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
	enrollment in BLS programs. If the GPA falls below 3.0 for 2 consecutive semesters, candidates will be dismissed from the BLS program.		

**Outcome: 2.0 Application of content knowledge and professional skills**

Candidates will demonstrate the ability to use their knowledge and skills in applied settings

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 RCT  
 RT  
 TCVI/OMC

**Outcome Status:** Active

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Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
Proficiency tests within courses based on domains identified by the profession (ACVREP and CORE) <b>Assessment Method Category:</b> Course-Embedded Measure	Candidates must demonstrate mastery of each identified skill (items within a domain) to receive a satisfactory grade in each methods course. Course syllabi delineate requirements as do the ACVREP and CORE certification manuals.	Each semester the course is offered.	Yes
Clinical Practice assessments (unit supervisor and self-assessment instruments) <b>Assessment Method Category:</b> Field Experience Evaluation	Candidates will receive a rating of at least level 3 on a five-level rating scale when evaluated by their clinical supervisors.	Fall, Spring, Summer II	Yes
Follow-up survey of graduates and their employers every two years <b>Assessment Method Category:</b> Survey-Alumni	On the BLS follow-up survey instrument, 80% of graduates will rate their BLS educational experiences as "good" or better and 80% of employers will rate the BLS graduates at a "good" or better level	Survey conducted during even-numbered years beginning in 2006.	Yes

**Outcome: 3.0 Higher Level Thinking**

Candidates will analyze and synthesize data and ideas in their course-based assignments and their clinical experiences

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 RT  
 TCVI/OMC

**Outcome Status:** Active

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<b>Means of Assessment</b>			
<b>Assessment Method</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Active</b>
Instructor review of written "introduction assignment" in the BLS research course and three reports from program practica.	80% of candidates will receive an acceptable score as defined by the department, where the criteria are: A. writing quality, B. quality of argument, C. quality of literature review, and D. adherence to APA writing style. Guidelines for exemplar papers are presented in the syllabus and rubrics are used to evaluate student work. Inter-rater reliability is checked regularly	Assessment committee will review written documents and rubrics in October and February.	Yes