

Spring 2016-Submission Schedule

DEADLINE	DATE
Task 2 & 3 Submission Open	Completion of Task 1
Task 2 & 3 Submission Close	March 3, 2016
Task 2 & 3 Score Reporting to Candidates	March 31, 2016 – Completion of Task 2 and 3
Task 4 Submission Open	March 31, 2016
Task 4 Submission Close	April 29, 2016
Overall Composite Scores Released to Candidates	May 27, 2016
Overall Composite Scores Available to EPP	May 31, 2016
Task Resubmission Window	
Resubmission Registration Window	May 27, 2016 – June 17, 2016
Resubmission Window	May 27, 2016 – June 17, 2016
Resubmission Scores Released to Candidate	July 11, 2016
Resubmission Scores Available to EPP	July 12, 2016

Task 3

Student and Parent Questions:

Q: There is a two page limit on the lesson plan length in Task 3 with no variance given if you teach 2nd grade (30 minute lesson) or Advanced Biology in a block schedule (110 minute lesson). Is there a way to make this equitable for all or will candidates in block-scheduled classrooms be allowed to surpass the two page limit with no penalty?

A: Requiring everyone to submit the same amount of pages is equitable. These are representative pages; the full lesson plan is not required. A rater needs to get a sense of connection between the written commentary and the lesson plan. Two pages allows for that.

Q: Please clarify in more detail what is meant by the "teacher instructional artifact" in Task #3? At a recent meeting we attended it was interpreted as an assignment sheet for the students; a task list for the students; or even a screen-shot of student board work. Would those be correct examples of "teacher instructional artifacts?"

A: Yes, it can be any one of those. A teacher instructional artifact is something the teacher creates to support student learning.

Q: Will a candidate fail if he/she fails to follow the directions related to Task 2 and Task 3?

A: Candidates must follow these guidelines. Supervisors, faculty members, and cooperating teachers are in the best position to prevent this from occurring. Scoring leaders will be asked to monitor the submissions. The scoring leader will return the

submission to the candidate to rectify the situation. The task will not be scored until submitted according to the directions.

Q: Is it ok for my lesson plan to be 3 days, since we only have 45 minute classes?

A: Yes, your lesson plan may span across more than one day – many lesson plans do, depending on the time requirements/constraints and the amount of teaching and learning that must go into the particular lesson. The key is that it is indeed a lesson plan with a focused learning goal(s), instructional strategies, learning activities, and materials and resources. This should not be a multiple lesson plan or a unit plan.

Q: The provided lesson plan template we can choose to use (posted on Sakai) is 4 pages alone. However, the artifact we upload for Task 3 on ETS says the “representative pages of your lesson plan” can only be a maximum of 2 pages. How is that possible if the template alone is 4 pages?

A: The key term is “representative.” The teacher candidate should submit a maximum of 2 representative pages of their lesson plan – not everything in it needs to be submitted. The responses to the prompts within the Written Commentary will provide other corroborating evidence of an effective lesson plan.

Q: The provided lesson plan template asks me to provide Standards/Quality Indicators/Skills for the lesson. Is this section referring to both the standards that my math lesson addresses (according to Common Core) and ALL the standards (#1-9) and related indicators that I am getting graded on based on the “Teacher Candidate Formative Assessment” scoring guide?

A: This section is only referring to the student academic content standard(s), such as the Common Core or NGSS, addressed in your lesson.

Q: For Task 3, what prompt do we link the work from the non-focus students?

A: Your artifacts need to be uploaded to your Library of Artifacts and then the artifacts will be available for linking to any task response.

Q: We have to have a representative page of a differentiated lesson plan for focus student 1 & 2 (max of 1 page each). Does this mean we have to create 2 entirely new lesson plans for each focus student? Or, do we just need to tweak the lesson plan in a manner that fits the differing needs of the 2 focus students?

A: You just need to tweak, re-write, or substitute for the portions of the lesson plan you have developed/adapted for the whole class that meet the learning needs of your two Focus Students. There is no need to create an entirely new lesson plan. Just make sure that your differentiated lesson plan addresses the learning needs of the 2 Focus Students via the learning goal(s) of the lesson.

Q: What is the teacher instructional artifact referring to (textbox 3.3.1)?

A: A teacher instructional artifact referred to would be something that the teacher prepared ahead and then used during the lesson that connects to the learning goal(s) of

the lesson to move student learning forward; e.g., a student worksheet, a quiz, a rubric, a sample response from a previous student.

Q: The Work Samples submitted as artifacts seem to be a form of assessment that provides evidence of student learning, right? How much information about the assessment should students include?

A: The student work samples that you submit can be a form of assessment but need not be. They could also be such things as notes from a small-group scientific investigation, a paragraph of persuasive writing, the outline of a 3-D art work, or a description of the 5 Platonic solids. And, yes, the key is to provide evidence of student learning related to the learning goal(s) for the lesson.

Q: Can you be more explicit about the distinction between instructional strategies and learning activities?

A: Instructional strategies are approaches used by the teacher candidate in the classroom to best meet the learning goal(s) and needs of the students and to engage them in the content – basically, instructional strategies are things the teacher does during instruction to actively engage students with the content; e.g., setting up learning stations around the classroom or arranging for a think/pair/share. Learning activities are experiences provided to students that support and facilitate their learning – basically, learning activities are things the students do during an instructional experience to move their learning forward; e.g., evaluating a peer’s work using a rubric or arguing with evidence during a whole-class discussion.

Q: Can you be more explicit about the distinction between materials and resources?

A: Materials are the spectrum of educational materials that teacher candidates use in the classroom to support specific learning goals, as set out in lesson plans; e.g., copies of a scientific journal article or pastel paints. Resources are tools and personnel used by the teacher candidate to provide additional support to meet the learning goal(s) and needs of the students; e.g., a local weatherman coming into the classroom to discuss weather patterns or a computer simulation.

Q: Does our lesson plan have to be the MoPTA formatted lesson plans that are on the site?

A: No – candidates may submit a plan of their own.

Q: Why do candidates working toward certification in Elementary Education have to focus on mathematics instruction in Task 3?

A: The Department wanted to have some indication about a candidate’s performance in teaching mathematics. Task 3 of the MoPTA was chosen instead of requiring candidates take a separate mathematics test.

Q: Are candidates working toward Early Childhood, Mild-Moderate Cross-Categorical and/or the other Special Education Certification areas required to focus Task 2 on Reading and Task 3 on Mathematics?

A: No. When appropriate, Early Childhood and Mild-Moderate Cross-Categorical candidates are encouraged to use literacy and numeracy activities for Task 2 and Task 3.

Q: Is it only Elementary or is it SPED and ECE as well?

A: Elementary candidates must select literacy as the content focus for Task 2 and must select numeracy as the content focus for Task 3. Early Childhood and Mild-Moderate Cross-Categorical candidates are encouraged to use literacy and numeracy activities for Task 2 and Task 3 as well.

Q: If SPED candidates are placed in an elementary school, are they required to follow the guidelines for elementary candidates for Tasks 2 and 3?

A: Candidates who are completing SPED and ECE are encouraged, not required to focus on literacy for Task 2 and numeracy for Task 3. These decisions should be driven by the student's IEP and if all possible should focus on literacy for Task 2 and numeracy for Task 3.

Q: Are candidates student teaching in a departmentalized elementary setting for science and/or social studies required to focus on literacy for Task #2 and numeracy for Task #3?

A: Yes. Candidates working toward elementary education certification are required to meet this requirement. For example, a candidate teaching social studies in an elementary school departmentalized setting would teach a literacy lesson and numeracy within the context of social studies. The candidate would clarify this when discussing the context of the lesson.

Q: Will Music Education follow same instructions for SPED and ECE on the literacy focus for Task 2 and numeracy for Task 3?

A: The MoPTA is designed to and will work with all grade level and certification areas. Candidates working toward elementary education certification MUST use literacy for Task #2 and numeracy for Task #3. Candidates working toward certification in Early childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education; and Mild-Moderate Elementary or Middle Level/ Secondary Education are encouraged to use literacy in Task #2 and numeracy in Task #3. Candidates working toward certification in other areas should be using lessons that are developmentally appropriate for their content area. These decisions should be driven by the student's IEP and if all possible should focus on literacy for Task 2 and numeracy for Task 3.

Q: If we have placed students in some schools that use "scripted" classrooms (i.e. scripted texts such as Saxon, etc.) that allow little leeway in creating lessons or assessments, should we consider alternative schools so that our students are given

opportunities to create authentic lessons/assessments or does that matter (particularly with Task #2 and Task #3)?

A: No. The four tasks required in the MoPTA encourage the use of three kinds of writing: descriptive, analytic, and reflective. The evidence that you select as representative of your practice for the purposes of this assessment should provide raters with a view of not only what is happening in your classroom but also of your rationale for those events and processes and your view regarding the significance of the results of your teaching. What matters for Task 2, is that the selected lesson will allow the candidate to demonstrate his or her ability to understand, analyze and apply assessment and data collection to measure and inform student learning. What matters for Task 3, is that the selected lesson will allow the candidate to demonstrate his or her ability to develop instruction, including the use of technology, to facilitate student learning.

Q: If there is a Special Education candidate that only had 2 students turn in permission forms out of a possible 10 students, how will they come up with a third student for task 3? What do they do in this case?

A: They will need to use what they have permission for. If it is possible to get permission from additional students that would be ideal.

Q: What standards do the teacher candidates write to? For example, Teacher Candidate A is student teaching in Nebraska and Teacher Candidate B is student teaching in Iowa. What standards do they align their teaching and learning to?

A: This assessment was developed and aligned to the Missouri Model Teacher Standards, Quality Indicators and the Professional Continuum. Each task outlines which standards and quality indicators are being measured. Candidates will write to the Missouri Standards, Quality Indicators, and the Professional Continuum regardless of the geographic location of their student teaching placement.

Faculty and Supervisor Questions:

Q: Can we get access to the Permission Forms?

A: Yes. The MoPTA-V and MoPTA-NV forms are available on the MoPTA website. The link is: <http://meqa.ets.org/test-takers/mopta/build-submit-tasks/permission-forms>.

Q: Whose responsibility is it to store the permission forms for the video and student work? Is it the EPP or the candidate or both?

A: The candidate must submit their permission forms to ETS. They should also retain copies for their records. School district partners and educator preparation programs are also welcome to maintain copies.

Q: Are these uploaded into the ETS system anywhere?

A: Yes, the permission forms are uploaded in a folder within the submission system by the candidate.

Q: How long do these need to be kept?

A: ETS will retain the responses and video for no more than one year without the permission of the candidate.

Q: By scanning and uploading permission slips, students and schools are easily identified instead of remaining anonymous. How do we ensure that students' artifacts will remain unidentifiable and reassure parents of this so that they will sign permission forms?

A: The permission slips are kept in different files and will not be seen when candidates submit their documents.

Q: Do ETS personnel understand the huge burden that these release forms are placing on the student teacher?

A: Educational Testing Service and the Department is fully aware of the efforts required to secure, send, and retain the permission forms.

Q: Will ETS provide technical support for students if they are having problems uploading files?

A: ETS will provide both customer service and technical support five days a week, Monday - Friday from 8 am to 6:45 pm Central Time.

Q: Is there support available for candidates later in the evening? Our candidates are in schools all day so they will only have support during the few hours after school before 6:45 pm.

A: Candidates are always welcome to submit emails after the service center has closed to mega@ets.org.

Q: Is there a list of appropriate file formats that can be used in the MoPTA?

A: The list of appropriate file formats can be found at www.mega.ets.org.

Q. What will happen if a student submits artifacts that cannot be viewed? Will the student need to wait to be notified of this problem? Will part of the task be scored?

A. Students are required to check all of their responses, artifacts, and video to ensure they have uploaded the materials correctly. If there is a technical problem with any of the submitted tasks, raters are trained to score what they can and tag it for technical issue. The candidate will be notified of the problem so that the issue can be resolved in a timely manner.

Q: How does the ETS system handle files that cannot be opened but they are part of the submission?

A: Candidates should check all their responses, artifacts, and video prior to submitting to ensure they open properly within the submission system. A student will not get credit during scoring for files that are not able to be opened/viewed by the rater.

Q: Can candidates begin the response, save it, and then go back later to finish the text box?

A: Yes. Candidates may save entries in the system and go back to finish them later.

Q. For the unit plan representative pages, is it ok for candidates to make their own template or does it have to be in the same form as the lesson plan?

A: Please refer to p. 48 of your MoPTA Teacher Candidate and Educator Handbook, which states “all the materials are optional, except the Professional Competency Profile, which is required.

Q: Can students/candidates take a cell phone picture of their permission forms and upload that instead of scanning them?

A: As long as the file that is uploaded to the system meets the file requirements below, they should be OK. In most cases, I think cell phones create jpg files.

- Each file must be in doc, docx, pdf, ppt, pptx, xls, xlsx, jpg, jpeg, gif, rtf, txt or png format and cannot exceed 3 MB
- File names cannot exceed 50 characters and cannot contain spaces or include such characters as ! + \$ & , ' ^ * < > [] { } ? # / - = @ ; %