

State University of New York at Oswego

School of Education

Unit Assessment System





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Section 51.21(b)(3) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, states that every registered academic program shall "...show evidence of careful planning. Institutional goals and the objectives of each curriculum and of all courses shall be clearly defined in writing, and a reviewing system shall be devised to estimate the success of students and faculty in achieving such goals and objectives..."

SUNY Trustees Resolution 2010-039, *Streamlining the State University Board of Trustees Policy on Assessment* adopted on March 23, 2010, that took effect in fall 2010 states:

A campus shall develop and implement one or more assessment plans that reflect its mission and goals, its curriculum and governance procedures, the State University of New York's policies, and the standards of both institutional and programmatic accreditation bodies. Such plans shall provide, at minimum, for the regular assessment of institutional and program effectiveness and student learning.

A campus shall develop and implement a plan for the periodic evaluation of each of its registered academic programs, and may group programs for this purpose, as appropriate for the campus. The plan shall meet campus assessment and planning needs, and be designed to meet or exceed the standards of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and, as applicable, programmatic accrediting bodies.

Each credit-bearing academic program shall be included in an evaluation plan. The evaluation itself shall reflect the program's mission and goals and, at minimum, include a self-study that refers to assessment of student learning, and external review or programmatic accreditation.

SUNY Oswego's School of Education assessment system reflects its conceptual framework, professional dispositions, and professional and state standards. Designed to collect and analyze data regarding candidate, program, and unit qualities to evaluate and improve teacher education and education professional programs, the assessment system is integrated with assessment at SUNY Oswego and the SUNY System.

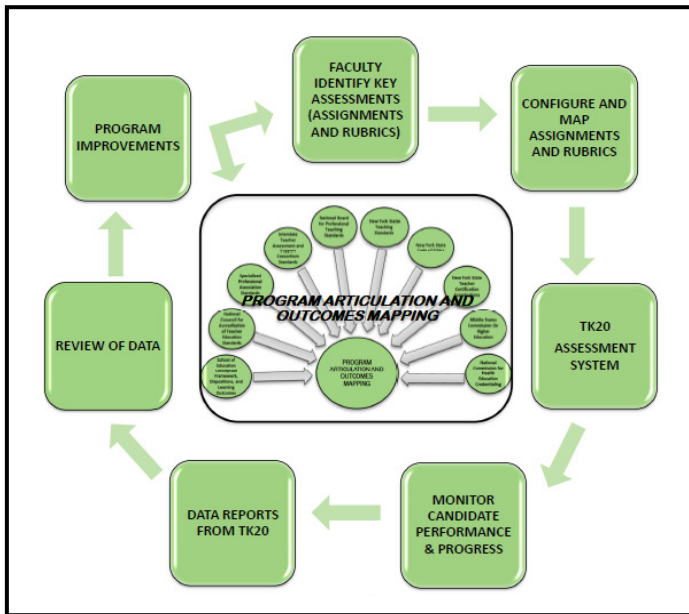


Figure 1.

Assessment system evaluates candidate, program, and unit quality using program articulation and outcomes reported through Tk20 promoting a cycle of continuous improvement.

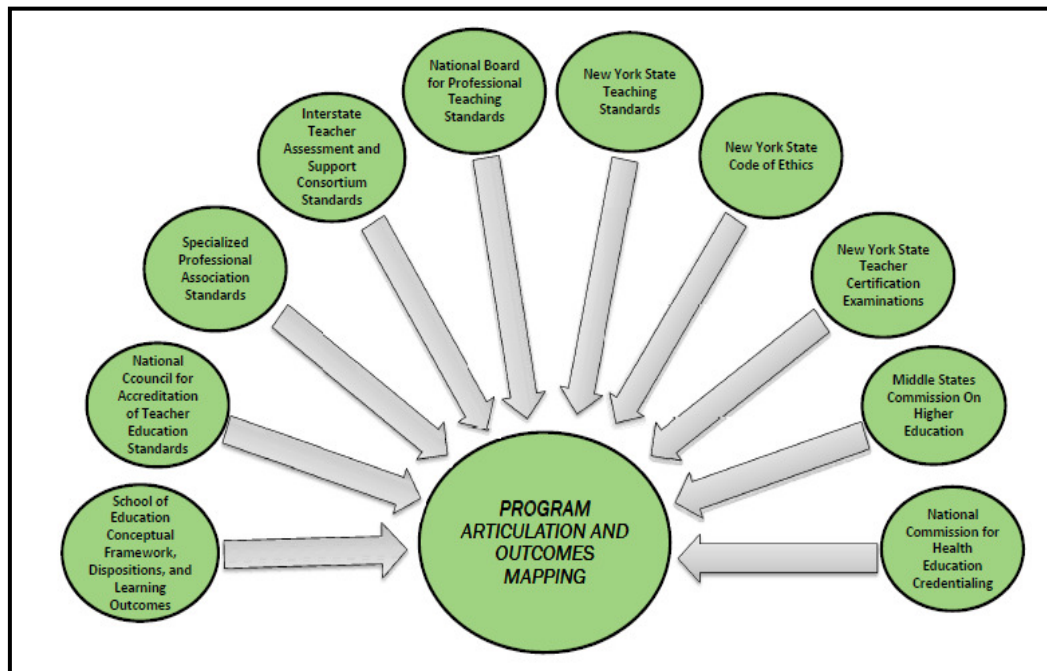


Figure 2.

Program learning outcomes and key assessments aligned and mapped to professional and NBPT standards, institutional goals, NCATE standards, and SOE Conceptual Framework principles.

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNIT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

A. Goals of the Unit Assessment System

The purpose of the Unit Assessment System at SUNY Oswego is to promote continuous improvement of candidate performance to enhance P-12 student learning in socially-just school environments. It is designed to offer credible evidence to guide improvement efforts in three areas:

1. Candidate Performance – Effective feedback to individual candidates at checkpoints such as at admission; during courses, at degree candidacy and/or entrance to student teaching/internship; and, at graduation or program completion enhance their performance as teachers or other professionals.
2. Program Quality – Useful aggregated data analyses of candidate performance on key candidate assessments at checkpoints and after graduation from the program to faculty and administrators support a continuous, data-driven program improvement.
3. Unit Quality –Useful data analyses to faculty and administrators on:
 - Overall unit program quality, by using the Conceptual Framework to organize aggregated program-level data across the unit.
 - Unit operations (e.g., governance, resources, faculty, program delivery, and candidate support) to support improved program delivery to candidates. This goal is largely met by a combination of institutional and School of Education data sources.

B. Guiding Principles of the Unit Assessment System

The candidate and program assessment process in the School of Education is guided by the following principles:

Assessment is continuous and systematic.

- Assessment is formative and summative.
- Summative assessment occurs at defined multiple decision points.
- Assessments are aligned with applicable national and state professional performance standards, the School of Education’s Conceptual Framework and Professional Dispositions.
- Assessment is fair, consistent, accurate, and free from bias.
- Candidate assessment is based on multiple measures of performance over time on tasks that are based on professional responsibilities in field settings.
- Program assessment is based on aggregating data from key candidate assessments at or near program completion.
- Program and unit-level assessment data are aggregated, analyzed, summarized, and shared on a regular basis with stakeholders to guide program and unit improvement efforts.

C. A Cycle of Continuous Improvement

The School of Education’s Unit Assessment System is based on a cycle of continuous improvement that is guided by our Conceptual Framework principles of knowledge, practice, reflection, collaboration and leadership, social justice and authentic learning. The assessment cycle begins with candidate performance; results in useful data that guide program improvements designed to enhance candidate and P-12 student learning and unit operations; and begins again with assessment of candidate performance.

D. Key Candidate, Program, and Unit Information Used for Decision-Making

The unit assessment system is designed to collect data that provide multiple measures of important candidate, program and unit quality, including:

- Candidate performance, including content knowledge; pedagogical knowledge, skills and dispositions; and impact on p-12 student learning as measures of individual, program, and unit quality.
- Unit operation quality, including governance, resources, faculty characteristics, program delivery, and candidate support services.
- Key information collected by the unit assessment system includes:
- Quantitative measures, such as maintenance of GPA requirements by candidates; standardized state

- licensure content and pedagogy test scores of candidates; ratings of candidate performance by faculty, field supervisors and/or self-ratings; course evaluations of faculty by candidates; opinion surveys of candidates/alumni on program quality or quality of advisement and other services; opinion surveys of employers on performance of alumni and program quality; budget and enrollment trends over time; and faculty line allocations and workload.
- Qualitative measures, such as evaluations of admission essays or interviews; culminating and comprehensive examinations; reflective essays; and curriculum units. Most qualitative products and performances are now quantified using performance rubrics.
- Validation measures, such as completion of required courses or workshops; completion of prerequisite degrees or certifications; employment or graduate school status.
- Descriptive information, such as office and instructional space availability; library holdings; technology availability; and graduates employed or admitted to graduate school.

E. The Role of the School of Education’s Assessment Committee

The School of Education’s Assessment Committee is responsible for:

- Developing recommendations on policies, procedures, and priorities to implement and enhance the Unit Assessment System, which produces data on candidate performance, program quality, and unit operations that are used to improve the School of Education and its programs.
- Reviewing data on the quality of programs and unit operations generated by the Unit Assessment System; and reviewing program assessment plans and annual program assessment reports generated by the program faculty within departments; in order to coordinate collaborative efforts across departments to improve program and unit operations; and monitor the implementation of program and operational improvements.
- Coordinating professional development activities that will support faculty, administrators, and staff in each department and program in implementing the School of Education’s assessment goals.

F. Implementation of the School of Education Data Management System to Support the Unit Assessment System

The implementation of an integrated computer-based School of Education Data Management System to collect, store, and analyze candidate performance data over time ensures effective candidate, program, and unit level assessment within the assessment system.

The implementation of Tk20 is:

- Developmental (occurs in stages)
- Evolutionary (improves the implementation of later stages; customizable)

Employing the SOE data management system to support the unit assessment system enables:

- Collecting data on key program-level assessments through an online electronic software system.
- Creating the candidate level report – online summaries of individual candidate performance on multiple assessments aligned to program outcomes at program checkpoints.
- Institutionalizing an effective data archiving and retrieval system within the SOE.
- Reporting unit-level summative evaluations over multiple programs and years.

ARTICLE II. CANDIDATE AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

A. Candidate Performance Outcomes

1. Each program or group of similar programs defines candidate performance outcomes that:
 - Focus on the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified by Professional Association standards; the appropriate Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards or National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS); the appropriate New York State Education Department (NYSED) regulations; and the SOE’s Conceptual Framework.
 - Are succinct and relatively few in number (e.g., fewer than 15).
2. Each outcome or standard is described by one or more observable indicators that define acceptable versus non-acceptable levels of performance.
3. Indicators associated with each outcome define satisfactory candidate performance on a set of multiple,

varied critical performance tasks at defined program checkpoints (e.g., admission, candidacy and/or entrance to student teaching/internship, graduation, and after graduation from the program).

B. Critical Performance Tasks

1. Each program or group of similar programs defines critical performance tasks that:
 - Are usually assigned and evaluated within required courses by college faculty, clinical faculty, and field supervisors.
 - Are based on (and/or predictive of) authentic, research-based, professional-level work with P-12 students, teachers, administrators, and other professionals.
2. Measure a variety of important outcomes, including:
 - Assessments of content knowledge, including results of state licensure tests of content knowledge.
 - Assessments of professional/pedagogical knowledge, skills and dispositions, including performance evaluations during field experiences, student teaching, or internships.
 - Assessments of impact on P-12 student learning, including Teacher Work Samples and/or edTPA.
3. Any professional-specific performance requirements (e.g., instructional planning ability for all initial teacher preparation programs; ability to develop supervisory plan for classroom-based instruction for school leadership, etc).
4. A variety of measurement types, including:
 - Quantitative measures, such as maintenance of GPA requirements; standardized state licensure content and pedagogy test scores; ratings of candidate performance by faculty, field supervisors and/or self-ratings; opinion surveys of candidates/alumni on program quality; and opinion surveys of employers on performance of alumni and program quality.
 - Qualitative measures, such as evaluations of admission essays or interviews; culminating or comprehensive examinations; reflective essays; and curriculum units.
 - Validation measures, such as completion of required courses or workshops; completion of prerequisite degrees or certifications; and employment or graduate school status.
5. Provide important information about candidate knowledge, skills and dispositions that is used:
 - At the candidate level to provide formative and summative feedback to individual candidates to improve performance or to advise unsuccessful candidates out of the program.
 - At the program level as the basis of a unit-wide, data-driven continuous improvement program review process.
6. Critical performance tasks consist of:
 - a. An assignment description (with date of most recent revision) that provides:
 - An overview of the assignment;
 - A rationale for its use in the course (and/or program);
 - Detailed directions to candidates for completing the assignment; and
 - A description of how the assessment specifically aligns with the appropriate professional standards or program outcomes.
 - b. A scoring guide/rubric for the assessment that:
 - Describes the performance criteria upon which performance is to be evaluated.
 - Has a 4- or 5-point rating scale, starting with 0 as the “not met” score category.
 - Includes an explicit statement of the decision rule(s) that define what constitutes a "passing score” on the entire task (e.g., which standards or how many standards must be met at what level on the rating scale; does “passing” the task depend on absolute or mean scores on indicators; are subareas or indicators equally important).
 - May provide a crosswalk between the performance criteria and the appropriate professional standards or program outcomes if not included in the assignment description.
 - c. Assessments at one or more program checkpoints including:
 - Admissions
 - During the program (e.g., during a course), at degree candidacy, or at entrance to student teaching/internship
 - Graduation or program completion
 - Post-graduation

7. All SOE instruments are fair, reasonable and free from bias, not only because they are based on national standards but also because the Conceptual Framework principle of social justice is the foundation. Procedures to ensure fairness, accuracy, consistency, and elimination of bias include:

- Using multiple measures at various checkpoints in the programs
- Using existing measurement tools with known reliability and validity characteristics.
- Using data entry methods that optimize completeness and accuracy.
- Using rubrics for rating and scoring measures.
- Defining performance using a four or five point scale for scoring.
- Using two raters for high-stakes decisions on candidate performance.
- Evaluating the integrity of critical performance task assessments; the first priority being evaluation of validity and reliability of program assessment instruments created by the institution and used for high stakes decisions (e.g., evaluation of student teaching and internship experiences) for large programs; the second being confirmation of the validity and reliability of unit-wide instruments based on nationally- validated models (e.g., Teacher Work Sample methodology) or instruments used within specific courses for candidate-level feedback.

C. Program Assessments

Each program or group of similar programs selects key program assessments from the set of candidate critical performance tasks that:

1. Are relatively few in number (e.g., 5-8).
2. Are based on the professional standards, INTASC/NBPTS standards if applicable, the appropriate NYSED requirements, and the SOE's Conceptual Framework and Professional Dispositions.
3. Are rich and robust measures of the full range of professional-level performance expected of program completers, including assessment of candidate content knowledge, professional and pedagogical knowledge, skills and dispositions; impact on P-12 student learning; and, professional-specific performance requirements.

D. Data Collection

Evaluation of critical performance tasks identified for each program:

1. Is carried out each semester by college faculty with appropriate expertise and experience; or by clinical faculty and field supervisors with appropriate credentials and experience.
2. Is submitted electronically in a timely manner each semester, directly into the SOE's online data management system, Tk20, keeping in mind that
 - a. The completeness of data entry by all faculty or field supervisors is a departmental responsibility supervised by the department chair, with support from the SOE's Technology Support Professional and Associate Dean of Assessment and Accreditation.
 - b. Departmental data collected and stored electronically for each program is archived at the end of each semester by the SOE's Technology Support Professional and Associate Dean of Assessment and Accreditation.

E. Data Analyses

Data analyses of critical performance tasks selected as program assessments:

1. Are conducted on a regular basis (annual or other) for each program.
2. Involve aggregating performance data from candidates over multiple courses and time periods; and may involve disaggregating performance data from candidate groupings of interest (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, methods versus student teaching experience, native versus transfer candidates).
3. Are integrated with data from other critical performance tasks and institutional data of various types to draw conclusions about candidate content knowledge; professional or pedagogical knowledge, skills and dispositions; impact on P-12 student learning; etc.
4. Are shared with faculty in the SOE, CLAS, and SCMA, and with members of the professional school community as appropriate.

F. Data-driven Program Improvements

Consistent with best practice, professional standards, the Conceptual Framework, and Professional

Dispositions, data-driven program improvements may include changes in or within courses or field experiences, professional development for faculty or school professionals, policy changes, technology support, and resource allocation.

G. Program Assessment Plans

The SOE Unit Assessment System guides the development of program assessment plans created at the department level. Each department chair or designee is responsible for facilitating the creation and maintenance of a current program assessment plan for each program, which consists of checkpoints, program assessments list, scoring guides or rubrics, and decision rule or other appropriate descriptive information. Program Assessment Plans are to be re-visited on a regular cycle.

H. Annual Program Assessment Status Report

The department chair, the SOE Technology Support Professional and Associate Dean of Assessment and Accreditation complete an annual program assessment status report including:

1. A summary that lists the name of each assessment; a description and location for each stored data set collected in the past year; the stage of use for each data set (collected, extracted, cleaned, analyzed, summarized/reported, shared among the appropriate stakeholders).
2. A brief narrative that summarizes the planned or completed program or operational improvements.
3. Each year, departments are encouraged to concentrate on reviewing data from one type of program assessment instrument (e.g., content knowledge; professional or pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions; impact on P- 12 student learning) over several years, rather than all instruments every year. In this way, departments cycle through all the major program assessment types at least twice in the 7-year period between accreditation reviews.

ARTICLE III. UNIT-LEVEL ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS

A. Unit-Level Assessments of Candidate Performance across Programs

Unit-level assessments of candidate performance across multiple programs are built upon the key program assessments identified for each program, using the Conceptual Framework to organize data summaries. The Conceptual Framework Principles and Professional Dispositions are common to all programs in the School of Education. They serve as key indicators of overall quality for unit-level assessment. Each program assessment instrument consists of outcome indicators that are aligned to the six elements of the Conceptual Framework plus the SOE Professional Dispositions.

B. Assessment of Unit Operations

1. Unit operations are assessed in the areas of:
 - a. Governance, including organizational leadership, structures, policies, and procedures.
 - b. Resources, including budget allocations, expenditures, and facilities (office and instructional space).
 - c. Faculty characteristics, including qualifications (academic preparation, professional development and experience in schools); performance in teaching, scholarship and service; and, workload.
 - d. Program delivery, including enrollment trends and diversity; curriculum quality; and field experience quality and diversity.
 - e. Candidate support services, including advisement; library; technology and technology support; and, all academic support services.
2. Key information collected by the Unit Assessment System about unit operations includes:
 - a. Quantitative measures, such as data on budget allocations and expenditures; faculty qualifications and diversity; course evaluations by candidates; faculty workload; enrollment trends and diversity; field placement diversity; library holdings; technology availability; and candidate and alumni/employer survey data on quality of faculty, programs and candidate support services.
 - b. Qualitative descriptions, primarily in the areas of organizational leadership, structures, policies, and procedures; facilities, faculty qualifications and performance; and curriculum.
3. The implementation of an integrated computer-based School of Education Data Management System to collect, store, and analyze candidate performance data over time ensures effective candidate, program, and

unit level assessment within the assessment system.

- a. The implementation of Tk20 is:
 - Developmental (occurs in stages)
 - Evolutionary (improves the implementation of later stages; customizable)
 - b. Employing the SOE data management system to support the unit assessment system enables:
 - Collecting data on key program-level assessments through an online electronic software system.
 - Creating the candidate level report – online summaries of individual candidate performance on multiple assessments aligned to program outcomes at program checkpoints.
 - Institutionalizing an effective data archiving and retrieval system within the SOE.
 - Reporting unit-level summative evaluations over multiple programs and years.
4. The process of unit-level assessments of program quality and assessment of unit operation quality is integrated with institutional and SUNY System data management systems and protocols as follows:
- a. Course and candidate data from the Banner system are downloaded to SOE's Tk20.
 - b. The Dean's office routinely receives institutional, NYSED, and SUNY System data on unit operations related to budget and facilities, personnel, professional development, enrollment, instruction, advisement, diversity, and other data.
 - c. Formal evaluations of all programs must be submitted to NYSED and the SUNY System on a regular 5-7 year cycle. The accreditation program review is the basis for reports on SOE programs.

ARTICLE IV. DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TO SUPPORT THE UNIT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

A. Specifications for the School of Education's Data Management System

Tk20 is the data management system based on specifications defined by faculty, administrators, and institutional researchers and adopted by the School of Education. It implements the key operational and analytical requirements of a computing system that supports effective campus-based teacher education assessment and continuous, data-driven program improvements as follows:

- a. Access and Security.
- b. Faculty and program coordinators/directors have the same secure access to the Tk20 as they do to the institutional student information system, BANNER.
- c. Tk20 supports varying levels of access depending on the user (i.e., each candidate only sees her or his own record; faculty only see records of their students or advisees; clinical faculty only see appropriate assessment input; as appropriate, administrators may see all individual data or only aggregated data).
- d. Access is identical to the user's access level and username/password in the existing institutional student data management system.

B. Operational Functionality

The SOE data management system requires a blend of operational and analytical capabilities. Candidate reporting is from an up-to-date operational data source. Analytical reports are better stored in a data warehouse environment, where reports are assembled over time and information stored in a stable/consistent format.

Tk20 captures all data electronically, when and where it is entered the first time.

Operational functions interface in real time with other campus databases that store important data for candidate management. Tk20 imports data on a regular basis from various external sources of candidate performance data such as state licensure test scores from NYSED and post-graduation NYSED certification and employment history.

The SOE data management system supports:

- Submission and storage of electronic products from candidates.
- Import or collection of survey information, both campus-wide (e.g., SUNY System Student Opinion Survey) and specific program/department surveys.
- Storage of candidate contact information; records of informed consent; and employer contact information (e.g., for non-teacher education post-graduate programs).

C. Candidate Management/Reporting

The Tk20 system tracks performance of individuals against program standards over time at defined checkpoints. Real-time candidate reports identify assessment standards, observable measures for each, and display if the standard has been met or not met. Candidates, faculty, and college administrators can view the appropriate up-to-date candidate-level record(s) online at any time. Candidate-level reporting for undergraduate transfers and graduate students entering initial programs must be as complete as that for native undergraduate candidates. Tk20 utilizes whatever degree audit functionality exists in the institution's operational system not only to display the candidate level reports but also to allow electronic transcript evaluation (e.g., calculation of content GPA). Meeting some standards depends on a course instructor entering scores on critical performance tasks defined by departments and programs. The system has the capacity to monitor or synchronize course grade entry with entry of critical performance task scores required for the course.

D. Program Analyses/Reporting

The SOE data management system, Tk20, is capable of:

- Mining data and aggregating and disaggregating data by program and candidate characteristics (e.g., transfer versus native, candidates who failed a field experience versus those who did not).
- Linking, sorting, selecting and exporting data from various sources within the system to provide samples of individuals based on candidate characteristics for analyses within the system and/or for export to other analytical applications.
- Reporting progress of individual candidates and groups of candidates over time on related assessments.

E. Current Components of the School of Education Data Management System

The School of Education Data Management System specifications outlined above describe an online integrated data management system for teacher education that interacts seamlessly with or within Oswego's Banner student data management system. Tk20 is:

- A comprehensive system for outcomes-based assessment, accountability, and reporting specifically designed for education.
- Able to generate valuable reports leading to candidate, faculty, program, and unit successfully achieving SOE goals and objectives.
- A set of tools for managing outcomes-based assessment and measurement of student learning as well as institutional activities such as program improvement curriculum mapping, institutional effectiveness, and reporting.
- Customizable to accurately reflect institutional processes. It allows for immediate and future assessment needs to be met, including communicating across and between departments, meeting the needs for state and national accreditation, and supporting the work of academic advising and field experience.

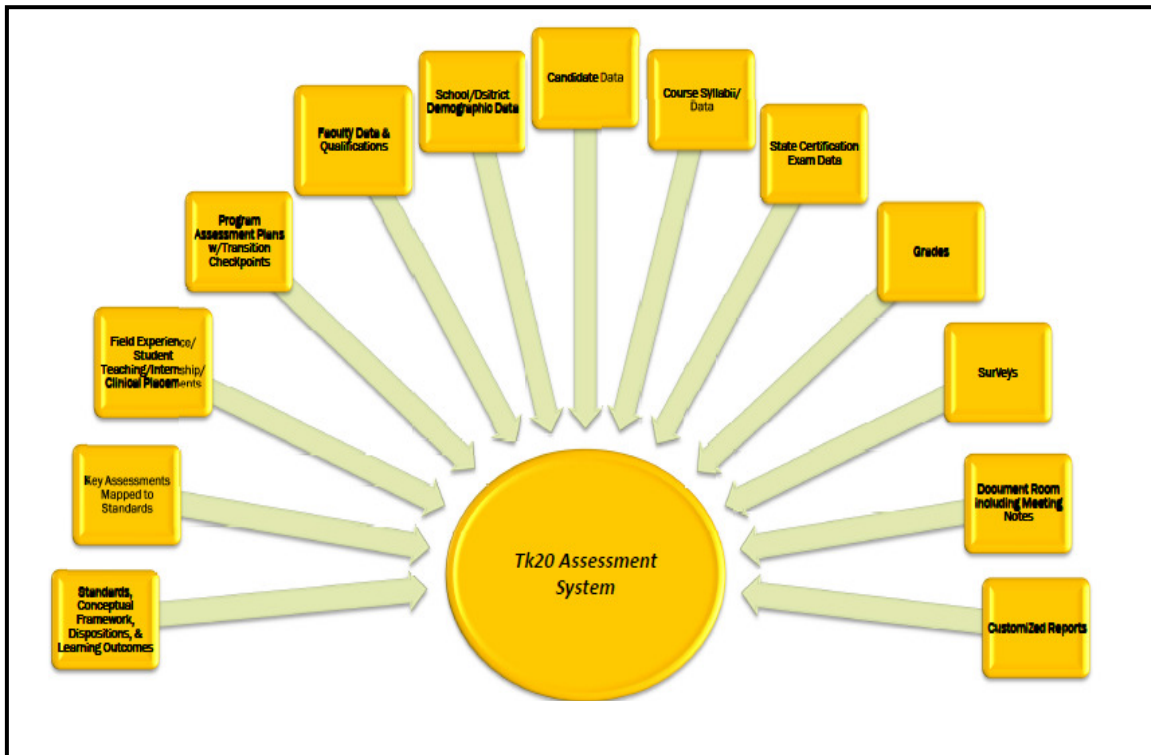


Figure 3.

Illustration of components entered into the Tk20, available to SOE faculty, clinical faculty, and candidates through Oswego Laker ID log in. Data and subsequent reports are used to support continuous improvement of candidate performance, program quality, and unit quality.