Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

2.3 Areas for Improvement Cited in the Action Report from the Previous Accreditation Review

Summarize activities, processes, and outcomes in addressing each of the AFIs cited for the initial and/or advanced program levels under this standard. [12,000 characters]

1. The unit assessment system does not include a comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures that are used to monitor candidate performance at all appropriate transition points.

Concerning Standard 2, in fall 2007 the Northwest Missouri State University Professional Education Unit (PEU) selected five unit-wide key assessments to track the progress of each initial candidate. These key assessments are assigned to specific courses, including content methods courses, and scored at least twice (using the same rubric) during a candidate’s program so that progress can be monitored. The PEU also decided on specific courses wherein candidates’ professional dispositions are evaluated. Seven unit-wide key assessments for advanced program candidates were determined for first-time use in fall 2012.

In fall 2011 the PEU adopted the Tk20 data management system. Although Tk20 does not constitute an assessment system, it allows the PEU to facilitate data collection, aggregation for analysis, summation, and sharing in order to monitor candidate performance at all initial (Ex 2.4.a.2) and advanced (Ex 2.4.a.3) transition points. The assessment coordinator uses Tk20 to create reports on assessment activities at the candidate, program and unit levels. The Assessment System and Unit Evaluation Team (ASET) regularly (Ex 2.4.d.1) analyzes these data collected from multiple assessments in order to make data-driven and data-informed changes at the program and unit levels. Reports on individual candidates are shared with advisors and the assistant director of professional education to inform candidate decisions. Data is also available for advisement and to the candidates themselves so they may self-assess and adjust their behaviors. Also, program- and unit-level data can be analyzed using the Tk20 reporting feature and shared with program coordinators and the director of professional education to inform program and unit decisions.

Student assessment data were loaded into Tk20 beginning with the Spring 2012 trimester. A variety of activities set forth processes which have led to outcomes indicating the effectiveness of Tk20 and of the comprehensive assessment system.

Activities:

- Numerous NCATE committee meetings and program meetings have taken place in order to pinpoint transition points and how to develop comprehensive and integrated evaluation measures to assess candidates’ performances at each level.
- Elementary program meetings were held in order to pinpoint key assessments that could be uploaded to and scored on Tk20, as well as observation field experience data.
- Secondary education program meetings also took place in order to determine which assignments should be used to assess transition-point performance, and how these should be uploaded.
• Advanced program meetings took place to determine how to arrange assessments that would
gather advanced student data during key transition points.
• Field experience meetings were also held to determine what field experience assessments
should be completed during transition points at the initial and advanced levels.
• Student teaching meetings reviewed all of the data that could be gathered during this
important transition point for initial candidates.
• Numerous phone calls and emails with Tk20 staff took place in order to communicate these
assessment requirements with the system programmers and to train the assessment
coordinator on how to develop these assessments on the system.

Processes:
• Evaluation measures have been developed at transition points for undergraduate (Ex 2.4.a.2)
and advanced (Ex 2.4.a.3) candidates that are both comprehensive and integrated at the unit
level.
• All initial and advanced program candidates have assessments that they or faculty now
upload to Tk20 according to the Assessment Flowcharts by Transition Points (Ex 2.4.a.2 and
2.4.a.3).
• Additional initial program points of review include a score of 235 on the CBASE test, along
with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 as well as a 2.5 in both professional education courses and
content area(s) courses. (Beginning fall 2013 the requirements will change to a cumulative
GPA of 2.75 and a GPA of 3.00 in both professional education and content area(s).
Candidates must take content area PRAXIS II exams in order to begin student teaching. All
of these are gathered on Tk20, aggregated, summarized, and analyzed by ASET, program
coordinators, and advisors.
• All assessment measures are now coordinated with an assigned purpose. The Assessment
Life-Cycle Charts (Ex 2.4.d.2) summarize both the assessment collection and review
schedule and the assessment uses for program improvement.
• Candidate, faculty and course data is taken directly from the university database,
reconfigured and uploaded to Tk20 each fall and spring trimester.
• DESE will be instituting changes for evaluations collected during these initial program
transition points, beginning in the fall of 2013 which will have far ranging effects on our
assessments (Ex 2.4.a.14).

Outcomes:
The following initial program assessments are aligned with transition points and are completed
and stored using Tk20:
• The ACT composite score is aligned with the first transition point of entry to the
university. (See Ex. 2.4.b.1 for the 4666 scores.)
• From the second transition point, the Mini Disposition assessment for first practicum
courses was completed by 44 students in the Spring 2013 trimester. The average item
score was at least 3.25 on a 0-4 scale for every item on the assessment, with 0 being
Strongly Disagree with a disposition assessment and 4 being Strongly Agree (Ex 2.4.b.2).
• The CBASE is included as the entry exam into the third transition point, where most of
our programs in 2012-2013 averaged higher than a passing 265 score, counting 306
attempts during the 2012-2013 year (Ex 2.4.b.1).
In the fourth transition point, students are assessed by clinical faculty, again using the Mini Disposition assessment. The average score for all items increased across all items with 27 students being assessed (Ex 2.4.b.2).

The fifth transition point includes many assessments related to student teaching, such as the TWS. 215 students completed the TWS in the academic year of 2012-2013, and scores declined from the fall to the spring trimesters (Ex 2.4.b.3). The standard deviation on 25 items increased and decreased on 9 items, implying we need to continue our efforts to increase inter-rater reliability.

The sixth and final transition point occurs post-graduation. Fifty-six graduates completed the Beginning Teacher Assessment by Principals self-assessment survey given by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the spring of 2013. Of these, 100% indicated that they felt the quality of their teacher preparation program was fair to very good (Ex 2.4.b.5).

The following advanced program assessments are aligned with transition points as well:

- From 2010-2013, 453 GRE tests were taken by our candidates to gain entry to an advanced education program (Ex 2.4.b.6).
- From the academic year 2012-2013, 78 advanced program dispositions were completed at various points in students’ careers. ASET and program committees will explore why the scores seemed to lower as the candidates continued in their programs (Ex 2.4.b.9).
- From the academic year 2012-2013, 13 candidates completed a midpoint advanced program survey to rate their perceived skills. All but two items in all three instruments scored an “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” average (Ex 2.4.b.7).
- 99% of 131 advanced program completers passed their comprehensive evaluation (portfolio or comprehensive exam) between fall 2010 and spring 2013 (Ex 2.4.a.15).

2. The technology infrastructure is insufficient to support the assessment activities at the candidate, program, and unit levels.

The infrastructure provided by Tk20 is now sufficient to support the assessment activities at the candidate, program and unit levels. All candidates in initial and advanced education programs are required to purchase a Tk20 subscription for seven years. All candidates are allotted 100 megabytes of storage, which can be increased if necessary. Furthermore, faculty members from all programs are now able to submit scoring rubrics for their assignments to the assessment coordinator who then configures the rubrics for the Tk20 system. Faculty can share rubrics or modify an existing rubric template and save it for their own program-specific key assessments. All instructors from all programs are able to send assignments with their rubrics using Tk20. Candidates in every education program can then upload their assignments, and faculty can score student work using Tk20. Also, all university supervisors, cooperating teachers, and content supervisors can use Tk20 to submit assessment results for their student teachers. Reports can be made from Tk20, aggregating data for candidate-, program-, or unit-level analysis and decision making.

Activities:
• Tk20 was purchased by the PEU in the summer of 2011.
• Candidates are sent instructions each trimester related to the requirement that they purchase a seven year subscription to Tk20. In addition, reminders from advisors are included in syllabi from courses requiring the use of the system.
• Candidates are offered trainings both in person and online. The assessment coordinator and student staff have offered in-class trainings at least six times each trimester since spring 2012. Power Point and video presentations are also available online.
• Faculty are provided in-person trainings as well as online slides and video trainings related to using Tk20.
• Data were uploaded from the university database to Tk20 three times each trimester since Spring 2012. This data includes student data, faculty data, course enrollment, and test scores.
• Cooperating teachers have been provided with in-person and online trainings, since the Fall 2012 trimester. These have been offered at the Liberty, Missouri Center, the Maryville campus, and at a high school in Omaha, Nebraska.

Processes:
• Key assessment rubrics are created by faculty and sent to the assessment coordinator via email or a campus-wide online course-management system (eCompanion). The coordinator then configures them on Tk20 in order to be used by faculty.
• Faculty use Tk20 to send key assessments, as assignments and the configured rubrics, to candidates.
• Candidates submit their assignments on Tk20, via the key assessment sent to them.
• Faculty score candidate work on Tk20 using the configured rubric attached to the key assessment.
• Key assessment data is reviewed by the assessment coordinator at the end of each trimester (using the reporting function of Tk20) and shared with advisors, program coordinators during professional development days, ASET according to our review-cycle calendar, and finally COTE, as needed.
• During student teaching, candidates are sent their TWS assignment using Tk20. They login to their accounts and upload their appropriate elements before submitting the TWS as a portfolio. Student teachers are trained on how to use Tk20 for this purpose during the previous trimester at a mandatory meeting.
• Tk20 support staff send candidates a field experience binder during their student teaching experience. Candidates complete assignments based solely on their student teaching experience using this binder, and then submit the binder using Tk20.

Outcomes:
• 231 candidates have received and completed a TWS portfolio on Tk20.
• 339 assignments were sent to courses in the Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 trimesters
• 19 surveys have been implemented using Tk20, with 1520 respondents