

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

1.1 What do candidate assessment data tell the unit about candidates' meeting professional, state, and institutional standards and their impact on P-12 student learning? For programs not nationally/state reviewed, summarize data from key assessments and discuss these results. [10,000 characters]

Northwest offers 38 initial certification programs, 7 programs for other school professionals, 5 endorsement tracks, and 11 advanced non-licensure programs (ex. 1.4.b Title II Reports). Census data from October 2012 show Northwest enrolled 6014 undergraduate and 815 graduate students, of which 1344 undergraduate and 373 graduate candidates were admitted to the Professional Education Program (PEP) (ex. 1.4.b PEDS Report). Programs are aligned with the Missouri Standards for the Preparation of Educators. Coursework and activities are aligned to seven principles set forth in the Conceptual Framework “*Learning to Teach – Teaching to Learn*” (Overview ex. I.5.c.8 NW Conceptual Framework). Sample program narratives, program-specific key assessment rubrics, and data tables are available as exhibits (ex. 1.4.a Prog. Narratives). All program narratives are available at the Northwest Accreditation website (url: www.nwmissouri.edu/accreditation/NCATE).

Missouri is in the process of implementing an annual program review system where data will be collected annually in the areas of academics, field and clinical experiences, tracking candidates through their first year of teaching, and university operations and resources. Pilot reports created from preliminary data revealed needed revisions to the data collection and analysis process. As these revisions are on-going, program reports are not available at this time. All professional education programs for initial or other school professional licensure at Northwest have been approved by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Admission to Program: All education majors must meet statewide criteria for admittance to a professional education program. Candidates must successfully pass all sections of the College Basic Academic Subjects Examination (C-BASE), and have a minimum GPA of 2.5 cumulatively and in the content area. While data for the 2012-2013 academic year, (including summer sessions) is not yet available, analysis of data for the 2011-2012 academic year indicates that 52% of prospective candidates passed all sections of the C-BASE exam on their first attempt; 63% passed all sections on retries and are admitted to the program (ex. 1.4.d.3 C-BASE Data). Prospective candidates that have not passed all sections of the C-BASE exam are blocked from enrolling in upper-level education coursework and are advised to consider non-education majors. Once admitted to the professional education program, candidates must maintain a 2.5 GPA to be eligible for student teaching placement and recommendation for certification. Candidates must also earn a “C” or better in all professional education coursework to gain certification.

Content/Pedagogical Knowledge: Multiple measures are used to determine if candidates know the content they plan to teach and can explain the principles and concepts outlined in the standards. These measures include student GPA, program-specific key assessments, a performance assessment - the Teacher Work Sample (TWS), and the appropriate PRAXIS II examination. All evaluate a candidate's knowledge of content and content-specific pedagogy.

Candidates for initial and other school professional licensures complete coursework aligned with subject-specific competencies developed by DESE (www.dese.mo.gov/eq/ep/competencies and ex. 1.4.a Prog. Narratives). All initial certification candidates must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 in the content coursework aligned to subject-specific competencies, and in the professional education requirements. Beginning in the fall of 2013, candidates will be required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.75 and a GPA of 3.0 in both content and professional education. Candidates for other school professional licensures must maintain a 3.0 GPA overall in their programs. All candidates recommended for initial certification meet these basic requirements; on average initial certification candidates graduate with a 3.14 GPA; other school professional candidates graduate with an average 3.76 GPA (ex. 1.4.d.4 GPA data).

Northwest educator candidates' pass rates on the required PRAXIS II examinations for initial /other school professional licensure exceed the nationally-required 80% pass rate. Aggregate pass rates at Northwest for the years 2006-2013 is 89.7%. At the building level, candidates for principal certification have a pass rate of 91% and at the district level candidates for superintendent certification have a pass rate of 83%. The pass rate for the School Guidance and Counseling candidates is 92% (ex. 1.4.d.6 PRAXIS Pass Rate by Prog.).

Professional Knowledge/Skills: Elements in our performance-based TWS assessments evaluate candidates' abilities to apply content and pedagogical knowledge to enhance student learning. Developmental instruction on each element is embedded throughout the coursework (ex. 1.4.c.3 Elementary and ex. 1.4.c.10 Secondary Prof. Ed. Alignment), thereby allowing candidates multiple opportunities to practice each element prior to creating a final product during student teaching. Successful completion of a full TWS is required to achieve a passing grade in student teaching.

Individual elements in the TWS address various aspects of teaching, for example:

1. Considering student, school, family, and community characteristics (Element 1: Learning Context);
2. Developing meaningful learning experiences (Elements 2: Learning Objectives and Element 4: Instructional Plans);
3. Creating appropriate assessments and analyzing the results (Element 3: Assessment Plan and Element 6: Analysis of Student Learning); and
4. Reflecting on their teaching practices (Element 5: Instructional Decision Making and Element 7: Reflection) (ex. 1.4.c.14 TWS Guidelines and 1.4.c.15 TWS Rubric).

Each of these elements is aligned with the principles contained in our conceptual framework "*Learning to Teach – Teaching to Learn*" (Overview ex. I.5.c.8 NW Conceptual Framework). Northwest's TWS rubric underwent revisions to reflect the new standards implemented by the state in 2012, and to change the scoring system from a 0-2 to a 0-4 point range. Analyzing data from previous years, as well as from 2012-2013, reveals strong evidence that teacher candidates

at Northwest develop the knowledge, skills, and disposition needed to become high-quality educators who positively impact Pk-12 student learning (ex. 1.4.d.8 TWS Data and ex. 1.4.d.9 TWS Graphic).

Coursework in programs for other school professionals is aligned with the Missouri Leader and Superintendent Standards (ex. 1.4.c.7 Leader and ex. 1.4.c.12 Superintendent Standards Continuum) and prepares school leaders who can create positive educational environments. Candidates in programs for other school professionals document an in-depth understanding of content and pedagogy that promote student learning in a graduate portfolio (ex. 1.4.c.5 Graduate Portfolio Scoring Guide). Example portfolios are available in the Tk-20 data system.

Student Learning: During student teaching candidates select a particular group of students (one class period for middle/secondary candidates) and a unit of study around which to develop their TWS. Two elements of the TWS, Element 3: Assessment Plan, and Element 6: Analysis of Student Learning, require that candidates: 1) design assessments aligned with the learning objectives; 2) develop appropriate assessment instruments; 3) collect pre/post-test data; and 4) analyze data to determine growth in student learning and next steps in instruction. Candidates are also required to analyze data for the whole class and identified sub-groups within the class and discuss their findings (ex. 1.4.g Samples of TWS Analysis of Student Learning). Information gathered from these evaluations indicate that our candidates make strong impacts on Pk-12 student learning and are able to use the results of their assessments to inform their instruction (ex. 1.4.d.8 TWS Data and ex. 1.4.d.9 TWS Graphic).

Teacher candidates are evaluated on 11 indicators during student teacher placements, assessing developing knowledge, perfecting skills, and acquiring professional disposition (ex. 1.4.c.11 Summative Student Teaching Evaluation form). These indicators are aligned with Missouri's Educator Evaluation System Teacher Standards (ex. 1.4.c.13 Teacher Standard Continuum). Analysis of data from summative student teaching evaluations indicate that most teacher candidates from Northwest are at or nearing proficiency on all eleven indicators (ex. 1.4.d.7 Summative Student Teaching Evaluation data).

Graduate portfolio evaluations require candidates for other school professional licensures to demonstrate their ability to promote student learning and success (see 1.4.c.5 Graduate Portfolio Scoring Guide). Data from portfolio evaluations may be found in the Advanced Program Narratives (ex. 1.4.a Advanced Prog. Narratives)

Professional Dispositions: Data on professional dispositions are collected from faculty, supervisors, cooperating teachers and candidates themselves at multiple transition points throughout all initial and other school professional programs of study. For initial certification candidates, disposition data are collected in practicums and at student teaching. In advanced programs data are collected at 3 transition points (ex. 1.4.c.4 Graduate and ex. 1.4.c.16 Undergraduate Assess. Flowchart by Transition Pt.).

Analyses of disposition data indicates that supervisors and candidates believe they demonstrate professional behaviors that are consistent with the ideals of fairness and the belief that all students can learn (ex. 1.4.f.1 Advanced and 1.4.f.2 Initial Certification Disposition data).

Information gathered through the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program survey of first and second-year teachers also indicate the majority of our candidates believe they were well prepared or very well prepared for the profession (ex. 1.4.i NWMSU 1st year teacher surveys).

1.2 Moving Toward Target or Continuous Improvement

1.2.b Continuous Improvement [10,000 characters]

- Summarize activities and changes based on data that have led to continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.
- Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in this standard.

Changes implemented to overall education program:

Each element of the Teacher Work Sample (TWS) is aligned to the Missouri Standards for the Preparation of Educators (ex. 1.4.c.13 Teacher Standard Continuum). To ensure that each candidate receives quality, developmentally appropriate instruction, activities associated with the elements are embedded throughout a candidate's program (ex. 1.4.c.3 Elementary and 1.4.c.10 Secondary Prof. Ed. Alignment). Identified as key assessment points within specific courses, each element is scored with the same rubric used to score the full TWS, thereby allowing us to monitor candidates' growth throughout the program. Each candidate is scored two or three times on each element of the TWS, culminating with the TWS assessment submitted during the student teaching period. Early data from this process indicates that candidates for secondary certification struggled with the elements associated with in-class assessments and analyzing student learning. These findings lead the PEU to embed these elements into secondary content methods courses to aid candidates in tying assessment plans and strategies to specific content areas. Since taking this action we have noticed an increase in scores in these elements within the group.

Another change to the education program came when we altered the way dispositions are assessed. While previously using a faculty developed instrument based upon the MoSTEP standards, research lead us to identify and adopt a new instrument and a process to ensure that candidates' dispositions are assessed multiple times at key transition points throughout the program. Transition points have been identified for both initial and advanced programs (ex. 1.4.c.4 Graduate and 1.4.c.16 Undergraduate Assessment Flowchart by Transition Point).

In 2010, the state of Missouri expanded content requirements in special education modules to include instruction on autism and other spectrum disorders. To accommodate these new requirements Northwest's PEU increased the Introduction to Special Education class, taken by all elementary, middle and secondary candidates, from a 2-hour to a 3-hour course.

Beginning with the incoming freshman class of 2013, teacher candidates, upon completion of the program, are required to have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 and minimum GPAs of 3.0 in all coursework associated with both content areas and professional education requirements. Existing university policy allows students to supersede grades of "D" or "F", however it was determined students would need the opportunity to retake courses in which they received a grade of "C" or below. After a faculty-wide discussion, Northwest implemented a new policy—supersede courses with eared grades of "C" or below—which more closely matches that of other

universities in the state.

A unit-wide effort to monitor data and make changes based on analysis of that information is facilitated by a person who now holds the newly created role of Assessment Coordinator. This individual oversees operations of the PEU's recently initiated data management system to collect and store information across all professional education programs. Data collected at specific transition points for initial and advanced programs have been identified and a timeline for reviewing the data has been created to insure systematic evaluation and timely reports of findings to program coordinators (ex. 1.4.c.4 Graduate and 1.4.c.16 Undergraduate Assessment Flowchart by Transition Point, and 1.4.c.2 ASET Review Cycle Calendar).

Changes implemented in the Elementary Program

Changes to the Horace Mann Laboratory School and early childhood education centers have created better learning environments for children and teacher candidates by moving the early childhood center out of a basement space and into a more open area. Moreover, the University created a café space where PreK-6 students can now share lunch together in the same building where they attend school. Across campus, technology and access to technology have been steadily improving, bringing a greater focus on technology into classes designed for education majors. As such, education curriculums now offer instruction to candidates about best practices for use of technology to increase student learning rather than simply spurring more active levels of student engagement.

Changes implemented in the Secondary Program

By creating a Secondary Education Coordinating Committee, Northwest has facilitated better communication and collaboration between and among faculty involved in secondary education programs. This helped ensure the smooth implementation of a revised secondary program as described below:

Based on feedback from the Beginning Teacher Assessment Program surveys, Northwest revised the classroom management instruction the teacher candidates were receiving. Previously strategies were taught as components of various courses rather than in a specific course as is currently required. Additionally, candidates are now required to enroll in a 1-hour Classroom Management Seminar course concurrently while student teaching, thereby allowing them to reflect more directly on their experiences with faculty and peers in order to develop their own classroom management methods and philosophies.

When the secondary education program was revised the PEU determined it vital to also provide more cohesive and extensive field experiences for secondary teacher candidates. While elementary candidates receive extensive quality field experiences at the Horace Mann Laboratory School similar opportunities were not available for secondary candidates. Hence, each secondary program was redesigned to allow candidates to take a block of courses (Practicum II, Classroom Management, School and Society, and the appropriate content methods course) concurrently during the semester prior to student teaching and, as part of Practicum II, the candidates participate in a week-long field experience where they shadow one teacher in one classroom for an entire school day each day for one week. This redesigned field experience allows candidates opportunities to teach a series of lessons. These field experiences are

monitored by University faculty, allowing more direct feedback than was possible in the previous model. University faculty also build relationships in schools to ensure proper placement of future practicum and student teachers.

Changes implemented in the Advanced Programs

Feedback from surveys given to recent graduates of Master's and Specialists programs highlighted areas for improvement. In order to be eligible for financial aid, students needed to be able to take more credit hours concurrently. Research also emphasized the need to increase candidates' clinical field experiences. To address these issues, we revised how the coursework was offered. A traditional 3-hour course involves 45 hours of face-to-face time involving 3 hours one night a week for the semester. Because full-time teachers seeking advanced degrees are often not able to attend more than one night per week, we implemented an innovative model that allowed the candidates to enroll in two courses simultaneously. Each of these courses involved 20 hours face-to-face class time (meeting 5 times per semester for 4 hours per meeting), the equivalent of 20 hours of time spent online, and 15 hours of clinical field experience. The addition of the online component of the course allows the class to meet less often, thus, the face-to-face meeting times were staggered. A candidate could attend class one night a week yet still be enrolled in two courses for the semester. In changing how the courses were offered, we were better able to meet the needs of our candidates while not compromising any of the content in the course. Additionally, we were able to include 15 hours of clinical experience in each course which greatly increased the amount of field experiences contained in the program.

Northwest Missouri State University has remote sites located in St. Joseph and in Liberty where students can enroll in advanced courses closest in proximity to their place(s) of residence and/or employment. This often results in a cohort at the Liberty site comprised of candidates working in urban/suburban schools, a cohort in St. Joseph comprised of candidate working in and around that small city, and a cohort in Maryville comprised primarily of candidates working in rural settings. Candidates from all three sites enroll in the same course and are connected for instruction by ITV while the instructor rotates between sites, thereby interacting in face-to-face venues with each group. Connecting candidates from these three different sites promotes interaction among those from diverse school settings and strengthens exploration and understanding of issues associated with school leadership in a variety of professional environments.

1.3 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)

- **Standard 1: Limited data are available for documenting candidate performances at intermediate transition points in their programs.**

The area for improvement cited by the visiting team asks for clear identification of gateway or transition points throughout the preparation program and the development of a systematic means by which to collect and analyze data at each transition point. In the spring of 2006, the Council on Teacher Education (COTE) established a new subcommittee, Assessment System and unit

Evaluation Team (ASET), which began the process of addressing these needs. In Fall 2011, Northwest adopted the Tk-20 data management system which allows the PEU to facilitate data collection, aggregation for analysis, summation, and sharing in order to monitor candidate performance at all initial and advanced transition points.

In the fall of 2007, the assessment team met bi-weekly to implement a series of 6 transitional measurement points at which data is gathered and analyzed as follows:

- Transition Point 1: Admission to the University – ACT and demographic data collected.
- Transition Point 2: Completion of non-blocked professional education courses – dispositions, TWS element artifact assessment data collected.
- Transition Point 3: Entry to professional education program – GPS, C-BASE exam scores collected. This data is vital as it highlights candidate's performances based upon field experiences prior to student teaching.
- Transition Point 4: Pre-student teaching semester – candidates demonstrate competencies as it related to the seven TWS elements, and data about student performances in the eleven Missouri Beginning Teaching Standards (INTASC standards based) is collected.
- Transition point 5: Student teaching placement – data from a full trimester of student teaching is collected.
- Transition point 6: Entry into professional practice – feedback from beginning teachers during the 1st and 2nd year of teaching experience with regard to program preparation, and feedback on teacher performance from direct supervisors is collected

(ex. 1.4.c.16 Undergraduate Assessment Flowchart by Transition Point)

The Advanced Programs Committee also identified three transition points and key assessments common to all graduate education programs include:

- Entry Level: GRE or department exam scores and candidate disposition assessments from the candidate's work supervisor.
- Midpoint Level: Candidate reflection papers (qualitative and content focused) and disposition from the student's advisor and engaged faculty teams.
- Exit Level: Action research project and the candidate's self-disposition.

((ex. 1.4.c.4 Graduate Assessment Flowchart by Transition Point)

ASET has schedule six meeting per year to systematically review and analyze data collected at these transition points. The schedule for data review is as follows:

Fall

1st—Review diversity hours and disposition data. This information is shared with the entire Professional Education Unit (PEU) during a Professional Development (PD) day meeting early in the trimester.

2nd — Ask Admissions to present ACT student demographic data to the ASET. In addition, retention data will be reviewed at this meeting. Currently, the only data collected on retention in the profession comes from a survey sent out by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to 1st and 2nd year beginning teachers and their principals.

3rd — This report serves as a reminder regarding the importance of using the Tk20 review system and collected artifacts detailing how many students and faculty are using the system as well as any field experience data that was collected. This information is presented to the PEU during the PD days in the spring.

Spring

1st — Review disposition data and direct and periodic involvement form data.

2nd — Review GPA data from the middle of March.

3rd — Review teacher work sample (TWS) data (from April) and all other student teaching data. Do a small program review (similar to that conducted by DESE), and share this with programs in April so that they have the summer to review actionables, write brief reports concerning how this will impact their programs, and if necessary, revisit subject competencies and scope and sequence matrix. This information will also be shared with the PEU during fall Professional Development (PD) days or in the first Professional Education Unit retreat in the fall (giving departments the PD days to write work on their reports).

(ex. 1.4.c.2 ASET Review Cycle Calendar)