

Standard 3. Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

3.1 Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

How does the unit work with the school partners to deliver field experiences and clinical practice to enable candidates to develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to help all students learn? [10,000 characters]

The Professional Education Unit (PEU) works with partners to design, deliver and evaluate field/clinical experiences to help pre-professional candidates (PPC) develop and deepen understanding of key attributes and knowledge as outlined in the conceptual framework: “*Learning to Teach – Teaching to Learn*” (Overview exhibit I.5.c.8 NW Conceptual Framework). Candidates, clinical, and university faculty contribute to program quality and the assessment of professional dispositions. Governance resides with the Council on Teacher Education (COTE), comprised of representatives from the PEU and school partners. Candidates self-assess through reflections and video; clinical faculty provide feedback on decision-making, learner behavior, and instructional processes; faculty and clinical supervisors complete disposition forms on candidates. The PEU’s commitment to collaboration is evidenced by relationships developed with schools in northwest Missouri, Kansas City, and Omaha. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines responsibilities (ex. 3.4.a.6 MOU Form). The Direct and Periodic Involvement Forms list faculty involvement (ex. 3.4.a.5 Direct/Periodic Involvement by PEU) and the Northwest Missouri Regional Professional Development Center (RPDC) provides professional development opportunities on critical topics (Standard 5 ex. 5.4.G.3 RPDC Trainings Calendar).

Introductory Field Experiences (Practicum I): Taken prior to admission to the Professional Education Program (PEP), this field experience introduces potential candidates to the profession through field observation and experiences with diversity of learners, schools and districts, multiple instructional styles, technology use, curriculum, and classroom management. Cooperating teachers (CT) provide opportunities for candidates to tutor, assist with projects and read stories to help candidates understand initial skills, roles, and responsibilities impacting student learning. CTs complete a mini-disposition on potential candidates. Elementary majors log 15 contact hours in classrooms in the Horace Mann Laboratory School. Middle and secondary candidates complete 24 hours. Observations and beginning instruction on elements of the Teacher Work Sample (TWS) form the basis of weekly discussions and written reflections (ex. 3.4.f.13 TWS Guidelines).

Mid-Level Field Experiences: These field experiences occur after admission to the professional education program (PEP). Candidates receive mentoring from high quality CTs at schools with long-standing relationships to the university. They are expected to be punctual, act responsibly, dress professionally, demonstrate a positive attitude and maintain confidentiality (ex. 3.4.F.7 Mini Ed. Cand. Disposition Inventory). Elementary candidates experience 5 hours of guided literacy instruction, complete 60 hours of supervised small group/whole class instruction, and complete another 60 hours of seminar and preparation time. Elementary candidates also complete 60 hours of supervised instruction in math, science, and social studies with an

additional 30 hours of seminars and preparation. Candidates who double major in Elementary and Cross Categorical/Special Education complete an additional practicum for 30 hours of student contact with a total of 90 hours of planning and teaching. Those who minor in Early Childhood Education take a 70-hour practicum—30 hours infants and toddlers, and 40 hours preschool children.

Middle school majors complete two mid-level practicums of 24 hours of observation/participation and a 90-hour practicum in Middle School Curriculum, Methods, and Practicum. Candidates have opportunities to tutor students and assist with assignments and projects, as well as teach at least 5 lessons. They learn more about the instructional process as they complete elements of the TWS. Mid-level experiences provide opportunities that further develop teaching skills that directly impact student learning.

Secondary education majors complete 40 hours in department-assigned experiences and an intensive week-long practicum during which they spend each day with an assigned CT in a pre-student teaching situation. Candidates have opportunities to assist with assignments and projects, plan and teach lessons and complete elements of the TWS.

Student Teaching: The culminating field experience for candidates consists of a 16-week student teaching experience facilitated by the PEU's Director of Field Experiences and partner schools. Placements include a variety of diverse populations; students with exceptionalities; students from varied socio-economic settings; students living in rural, suburban and urban districts; and students from a wide divergence of racial and ethnic backgrounds. As all need experiences with divergent student populations, diversity of previous field experiences is considered as placements are made. Candidates may also apply to take 8 weeks of student teaching abroad.

The Director of Field Experience works with district contacts to find good matches between districts, cooperating teachers and candidates (ex. 3.4.c.3 Criteria for Clinical Faculty); in fact, some districts interview candidates prior to selection for classroom placements to help ensure a positive match. Depending on areas of certification and participation in the co-teaching pilot, split placements may be in the same or different classrooms/grade levels. Candidates participating in the co-teaching pilot are placed in 1 classroom for the 16 weeks of student teaching. Other candidates may be placed in 2 8-week placements to give them experience with different ages. Early childhood education candidates do one placement preschool/kindergarten and one in elementary; middle school candidates are placed in 2 areas of certification; and those seeking K-12 certification in areas like music, physical education, art, and special education split placements to meet DESE requirements. Secondary candidates are usually placed in a single classroom for 16 weeks, while students enrolled in Graduate Internships for Student Teaching (GIST) may be in half-day placements for the full 16-week period or full day placements for 8 weeks.

Training opportunities for CTs and university supervisors are held at the beginning of each term on Northwest's main campus, in Kansas City and Omaha sites, and at individual schools as needed (ex. 3.4.c.1 Coop. Teacher and ex. 3.4.c.9 Univ. Supervisor Training). The university collaborates with other universities to provide training for co-teaching (exhibit 3.4.e.1 Co-Teaching Handbook). During the first visit to each PPC's classroom, the university supervisor

provides orientation to cooperating teachers and reviews responsibilities. University supervisors maintain weekly contact and conduct 4+ formative evaluations with the CT to provide feedback and support. They meet at the end of the placement to discuss the summative evaluation and the PPC's grade (ex. 3.4.e.13 St. Teaching Handbook).

During student teaching, candidates are observed and evaluated by their CT, university supervisor, and content advisor (as appropriate). The CT and university supervisor complete formative, summative, and disposition evaluations and hold conferences for each candidate (ex. 3.4.f.11 St Teaching Formative and ex. 3.4.f.12 Summative Eval forms). Candidates self-report dispositions and complete a self-evaluative reflection (ex. 3.4.f.3 Ed. Cand. Disposition Inventory). They also complete surveys on the performance of their cooperating teacher(s), university supervisor, and their preparation for student teaching. Survey results are used as part of the continuous improvement process to determine if changes are needed (ex. 3.4.d.3 Coop. Teacher and 3.4.d.8 Univ. Supervisor Eval data). Candidates must complete the 5-day TWS unit demonstrating their ability to impact P-12 student learning (exhibit 3.4.f.13 TWS Guidelines), and as part of this process all elements must be passed before they are deemed to have successfully completed their student teaching assignment(s). All candidates placed within 250 miles of campus return for 2 days of professional development during student teaching. Any concerns during student teaching are passed through the university supervisor, Director of Field Experience and the Assistant Director of Teacher Education; the complaint process follows university policy.

Advanced programs: Advanced program course syllabi and professional portfolios reflect a variety of field experiences which are aligned with the PEU conceptual frameworks and professional standards (exhibit 3.4.f Portfolio rubrics and Overview I.5.c.8 NW Conceptual Framework). Graduate faculty participate in the selection of external sites for field experiences and internship placements. Other school professional candidates complete field experiences in the endorsement area while candidates enrolled in advanced programs in the PEU must design, conduct and report on a research project which impacts student learning and improves instruction in classrooms or school districts.

Other School Professionals: Capstone field experiences for students in principal, superintendent, and guidance preparation programs at the master's and specialist's levels were collaboratively developed by faculty from Northwest's Departments of Professional Education and Behavioral Sciences (respectively) and representatives from regional school districts. Coursework is aligned with standards from the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, Missouri Standards for School Leaders, and feedback from field practitioners. Candidates work with advisors to select internship locations for 90 hours of practicum. Candidates in School Guidance and Counseling participate in 300 hours of supervised counseling experiences in an elementary school, secondary school or related setting to develop, practice, demonstrate, and refine counseling competencies (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a Ad. Prog. Narratives).

3.2.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.

Unit-wide improvements

In fall 2012, the PEU began using Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to formalize the responsibilities of all parties participating in field experiences (ex. 3.4.a.6 MOU form) including the PEU, school districts, and students. (ex. 3.4.a: Example MOUs). In the fall of 2011, the conceptual framework was revised around the theme “*Learning to Teach – Teaching to Learn*” to illustrate our expectations for candidate performance and help initiate dialogue about the dispositions and skills we seek to develop between the parties involved in applicable MOUs. The frameworks operationalize the proficiencies and provide a common language through which teacher candidates, faculty, cooperating teachers, students and other stakeholders can effectively communicate. Operationalizing the proficiencies also helps candidates understand the developing nature of these expectations (Overview see I.5.c.8 NW Conceptual Framework).

In summer 2011, the Tk20 data management system was purchased and a subcommittee of the Council on Teacher Education (COTE), the Assessment System and unit Evaluation Team (ASET), was formed as to analyze data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and program and unit operations in order to evaluate performance (ex. 3.4.f.5 Graduate and 3.4.f.15 Undergraduate Assessment Flowchart by Transition Point). ASET holds a total of six meetings each year to systematically review and analyze data to address concerns from the assessment coordinator and make recommendations to COTE (ex. 3.4.f.2 ASET Review Cycle Calendar). The Educational Candidate Disposition Inventory (adapted with permission from Niagara University), is used to collect reflection and disposition information which is reviewed for programmatic implications (ex. 3.4.f.3 Educational and ex. 3.4.f.7 Mini Ed. Candidate Disposition Inventory). Assessments are completed by cooperating teachers, students and university supervisors at both the undergraduate and graduate levels during student field experiences.

The Tk20 system supports online data gathering and scoring, and the use of video for assessment. These tools are currently employed in courses including: Health Methods in Secondary School (22-480) (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.20 Program Narrative Health Education); Reading (62-456) and Language Arts (62-407) practicums; and Content (62-420) practicum courses (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.19 Program Narrative Elementary Education). Additionally, both graduate reading practicum courses require videoed assessment of candidates tutoring individuals and one video of the candidate teaching a whole class or small group.

The Teacher Work Sample (TWS) has been revised for use with the new assessment/tracking tool, and now demonstrates better student planning and reflection abilities. The TWS was adapted from The Renaissance Group and Idaho State University in 2003, was revised in 2008, and updated to its current form again in 2012. The elements are aligned to the conceptual

framework, “*Learning to Teach – Teaching to Learn*” and up-to-date uses of technology are interspersed throughout the elements; students are also now required to think and express themselves reflectively during each element (ex. 3.4.f.13 TWS Guidelines).

Field experience

Northwest relies upon the qualifications delineated by DESE for clinical and university faculty that supervise teacher candidates (ex. 3.4.c.4 DESE Criteria for Clinical Faculty). In addition, expectations for cooperating teachers are discussed in the Student Teaching Handbook (ex. 3.4.e.13 Student Teaching Handbook).

Practicum 1 (early level field experience) for middle and secondary candidates and Observation and Activity for elementary candidates serve as the introductory field experience; candidates are expected to be actively involved in classroom activities. To meet the new DESE recommendations of a total of 75 hours of field experiences prior to students teaching, contact hours in Practicum I and II will be increasing to 30 and 45 hours respectively beginning fall, 2013. (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.20 and 1.4.a.22 Program Narratives Health and PE Education).

A pilot program has been established with the North Nodaway district for fall, 2013, during which they will host one section of secondary Practicum 1. A North Nodaway faculty member will teach the seminar and facilitate activities as an adjunct instructor. The goal of this integrated approach is to increase the number of hours candidates interact with students in classroom settings and to embed instruction in authentic settings.

Mid-level field experiences for the Elementary Education program may consist of Reading/Language Arts (60 contact hours), Content (60 contact hours), and/or Early Childhood (70 contact hours), or Special Education (30 contact hours) (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.19 Program Narrative Elementary Education). Middle School candidates complete two practicum experiences, the first of which is 61-362 for 30 hours and the second is 62-511 for 90 hours. (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.21 Program Narrative Middle School). Health and Physical Education candidates have field experiences totaling 35 hours during three courses. (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.20 and 1.4.1.22 Program Narrative Health and PE Education). As part of the secondary reinvention, a “week out” experience was added for Secondary and K-12 candidates. Currently, candidates complete 35 hours, but will be logging 45 hours beginning fall, 2013 during their “week out.”

Student Teaching

Students submit four choices for student teaching experiences and notes concerning their placements are kept by the assistant to the Director of Field Experiences. Within the student teaching semester, 2 professional development days are held on campus (ex. 3.4.b.11 and 3.4.b.12 Undergrad Cand. Placements).

Currently, most candidates in elementary education, cross categorical special education, early childhood, middle school and secondary education serve two 8-week placements in their selected areas of certification. Beginning in fall 2014, all candidates will meet the DESE expectation of a 12-week minimum student teacher placement in their primary certification area, while the remaining 4–6 weeks may be served in another area of certification. The Student Teacher Handbook will be revised to support these changes and Northwest will continue to expand communication opportunities with cooperating school districts.

A co-teaching model was initiated by the PEU in fall 2012, in collaboration with the Park Hill, Independence, and Platte City partner districts. Training to effectively employ co-teaching strategies was offered to clinical and university faculty as well as individually to school partner districts (ex. 3.4.e.1 Co-Teaching Handbook). Northwest expects to expand this model to include other districts in the future.

The Graduate Internship in Secondary Teaching (GIST) is a Northwest option designed for candidates who already possess college degrees in a certifiable field but currently lack necessary certifications to become secondary teachers (ex. 3.4.e.7 Graduate Internship in Secondary Teaching overview). This option is restricted to students who are candidates for the M.S.Ed. Teaching degree, and who meet the same state and institutional requirements for secondary teacher certification as undergraduate students—although they are able to substitute graduate-level courses for undergraduate courses wherever possible. GIST candidates averaged 31 early level field experiences hours, and one semester (16 weeks) of student teaching during the 2012-2013 academic year. If GIST students enroll in the graduate level 61-690 internship, they can complete a half-day for a full semester or a full day for 10 weeks.

Advanced Programs

Since the M.S. Ed., Reading degree can lead to K-12 certification as a reading specialist, another practicum has been added to meet DESE requirements. Candidates now tutor 30 hours during each practicum for grades K-6 (Practicum I) and 7-12 (Practicum II) (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a Program Narratives).

The M.S. Ed., Teaching English Language Learners Program has been developed since the last accreditation visit and, based on feedback from DESE and staff in districts in the Kansas City area, has strengthened field experiences for candidates. A “Letter of Understanding” is sent to all candidates participating in the ELL field experience for them to disseminate to their potential field placement sites (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.7 Program Narrative ELL/Certification Program).

For the M.S. Ed. in Guidance and Counseling, two assignments were added to 68-629 Practicum in Elementary Counseling, and 68-630 Practicum in Secondary Counseling. Based on new MoSPE standards and collaboration/advisement with the Missouri Counselor Educator Advisory Board and the Missouri School Counselor Association, these courses include the collection of

results-based evaluation assignments that assess a specific student intervention, and the implementation of an Internal Improvement Review project aimed at highlighting the level of Comprehensive Guidance Program Implementation within the district of placement (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.1 Program Narrative Guidance and Counseling).

Professors in the M.S.Ed. and Ed.S. programs in Educational Leadership made the decision to embed 15 hours of field experience in each course taught based on recommendations made in current research. This increase in practicum hours also meets the increased DESE field experience requirement of 300 hours (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a Advanced Program Narratives).