

Standard 4: Diversity

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations, including higher education and P-12 school faculty; candidates; and students in P-12 schools.

4.1 Diversity

How does the unit prepare candidates to work effectively with all students, including individuals of different ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and/or geographical area? [10,000 Characters]

Northwest Missouri State University (Northwest) Professional Education Unit (PEU), while situated in a rural community, ensures a diverse scholastic experience for its education students by providing a wide variety of experiences through campus initiatives and professor expertise. Northwest effectively works with all education students by incorporating PEU undergraduate and graduate faculty in programmatic decisions that affect diversity initiatives. PEU administrators firmly believe that all students can learn, that individual and group differences matter, and that contexts are only lenses through which the impacts of student behaviors and performances are viewed. Our recently revised Conceptual Framework cross-references the incorporation of diversity in our coursework, field experiences, and extra-curricular initiatives with all assignments and students' dispositions within the PEU as well as with collaborating teachers, schools and school districts (Overview ex. I.5.c.8 NW Conceptual Framework). State-sanctioned teacher standards and dispositions provide us with cross-degree analysis points as well, thereby allowing us to incorporate challenges aimed at helping candidates develop cognitive complexity through engaged instructional conversations. Candidates and faculty regularly review assessment data on candidates' ability to work with all students as exemplified by the attached Diversity Document (ex. 4.4.h.8 Diversity Doc.).

The Curriculum: The preparation of initial candidates through general education, core content, and PEU course- and field-work provides candidates with a variety of diverse experiences. All initial candidates are required to complete special education (SPED), an Institutional Requirement in multiculturalism, and multiple courses which incorporate education of exceptional children, diverse learners, and ELL strategies. The advanced programs have diversity threaded throughout their unique programs (ex. 4.4.b.1 Curr. Diversity Matrix).

Elementary candidates complete 62-211 Observ. and Act., 62-301 Rprtng Pupil Prog., 62-216 Lit. in Elem., 62-456/407 Rdg /Lang. Arts Pract., and 62-420 Content Pract. 62-211 introduces the need for teachers to understand the backgrounds of the students within their classrooms by introducing the concept of the learning context (TWS), which provides an intimate view of how diversity affects teaching and learning (ex. 4.4.b.1 Curr. Diversity Matrix, Overview ex. I.5.a Syllabi, and ex. 4.4.c.6 TWS Guidelines).

Courses 62-371/62-641 are taken by all initial teacher candidates at Northwest including Elementary, middle school, secondary, and graduate candidates. These courses provide overviews to all candidates of P-12 students and intimate perspectives about meeting the needs

of all students to ensure all students can learn. These courses provide insights about: a) issues affecting curriculum planning and developmentally appropriate interactions; b) opportunities for students to examine their personal cultural background and the potential effects of their culture on teaching behaviors and decisions; and c) laws governing education of children with special needs. Here candidates gain insights about the attitudes, skills, and strategies needed to educate children with a diverse range of learning needs in the general education classroom, including gifted and talented learners, children who are at risk, and the culturally diverse students (Overview ex. I.5.b Syllabi).

Middle School and Secondary candidates complete 61-262 Pract.in Tchg I, 08-303 Ed.Psyc., and 61-362 Pract. in Tchg II and 62-371 Intro. to SPED. During 61-262 candidates gain introductions to teaching all students in a wide variety of educational settings in part through the exploration of element 1, the learning context, of the TWS. 61-362 provides candidates with requirements for accommodating instruction to meet diverse learning styles and needs, and ways to use varied instructional techniques (ex. 4.4.b.1 Curr. Diversity Matrix and Overview ex. I.5.a Syllabi).

Advanced Programs incorporate diversity through the common diversity hour expectation and course content. For example, Teaching ELL candidates experience diverse settings through their volunteer diversity hours and work within diverse settings during embedded practicum experiences. MEd in SPED presents teaching issues with special needs students and students with physical challenges, in minority settings, and with students from low socio-economic backgrounds (ex. 4.4.b.1 Curr. Diversity Matrix and Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a Program Narratives).

Extensive and substantive field experiences and clinical practices for both conventional and distance learning programs, in both initial and advance certification areas, are designed to encourage candidates to interact with students from a broad range of groups. Here candidates confront issues of diversity that affect teaching and student learning and develop strategies for improving student learning and candidates' effectiveness as teachers. This includes field experiences embedded in courses and diversity hours, required outside of specific courses.

Service project and diversity hours: A required Service Project involves all candidates seeking initial certifications. It is completed during their pre-clinical phase coursework in the 62-371/62-641 Intro to SPED courses. Candidates complete a project including 15 hours of diverse field experience. Projects entail field experiences with a diverse population(s), reflective activities, and in-class discussions about experiences in relation to students' future classrooms. These 15 hours also can be used towards the fulfillment of the 30 hour undergraduate diversity hour and/or the 6 hour advanced program diversity hour mandate prior to graduation. These are reflected on in either courses or within the diversity form, then reviewed with faculty in courses or during advisement sessions (ex. 4.4.h.8 Diversity Doc. and ex. Standard 1.5.b.7 EDCI 62-371 Syllabi).

Ensuring diverse field experiences-elementary: To ensure that elementary candidates have field experiences with students from diverse backgrounds, the faculty reviewed data available for the local school (Title I, high SES) and HM Laboratory School (13% Asian, 1% Indian, 2% Black, 85% White, 13% IEP students, 1% ELL) and have added an urban practicum within a district offering additional diverse ethnic and linguistic interactions (ex. 4.4.f.1 Coop. Schools Demo. Matrix).

Ensuring diverse field experiences-secondary: To ensure diverse field experiences for secondary candidates, Northwest implemented a 61-360 Pract. II experience in the urban settings of Kansas City and/or St Joseph, MO, thereby allowing candidates to refine teaching techniques, assessment approaches, and collaboration efforts among diverse populations (ex. 4.4.f.1 Coop. Schools Demo. Matrix, ex. 4.4.b.1 Curr. Diversity Matrix and Standard 1 ex. 1.4.a.24 Program Narrative Social Science).

Ensuring diverse field experiences-advanced: Due to the individualized nature of our curriculum, all advanced programs provide different diversity experiences. Multiple advanced programs currently have measures in place to ensure diverse settings are used for field experiences (ex. 4.4.f.1 Coop. Schools Demo. Matrix).

Candidate-faculty interactions: Candidates in conventional and distance learning programs at Northwest interact with professional education faculty, faculty in other units, and school faculty from a broad range of diverse groups and previous experiences. Higher education and school faculty with whom candidates work throughout their preparation program are knowledgeable about and sensitive to preparing candidates to work with diverse students. PEU faculty have many different personal diversity experiences from which to draw during instruction, advising, and supervising of teacher candidates, for example: working with low SES students; engaging students from inner city high schools; teaching high ELL populations; educating in small rural communities; working with children who have mental illness; and collaborating through study abroad experiences (ex. 4.4.d.2 Faculty Travel Matrix and ex. 4.4.g Vitae).

Student and faculty demographics: The gender/ race demographics of all candidates, PEU faculty, and Northwest faculty are within the demographic exhibit matrices (ex. 4.4.d.1 Faculty Demo. Matrix and ex. 4.4.e.2 Candidate Demo. Matrix). While these demographics are relevant, Northwest is proud to host faculty who have a rich history in traveling extensively, thereby allowing them to highlight disparate experiences with diverse cultures as evidenced by the attached Travel Matrix (ex. 4.4.d.2 Faculty Travel Matrix). PEU faculty have made at least 94 trips to 35 countries; six have taught in at least six foreign countries; faculty have led 23 student groups to 15 countries; 8 faculty have taught internationally in 6 countries; and faculty have presented their research at least 17 times in at least 13 countries.

Cooperating teachers: To ensure diverse placements for our students, Northwest collaborates with a variety of schools (ex. 4.4.f.1 Coop. Schools Demo. Matrix and ex. 4.4.h.8 Diversity Doc.).

Candidates engage in professional education experiences in conventional and distance learning programs with cohorts from a broad range of socio-economic, racial, and gendered groups. This is illustrated through our diversity of teacher candidates (86% white) as compared to the diversity which exists within our 19 county region (90% white). The active participation of candidates from diverse cultures and with different experiences is solicited, valued, and promoted in classes, field experiences, and clinical practice. Candidates reflect on and analyze experiences within their courses and field experiences in ways that enhance their development

and growth as professionals which, in turn, allows them effectively to promote future students' educational development.