

Standard 4: Diversity

4.3 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]

Areas For Improvement that resulted from the last NCATE visit were identified as: 1) Candidates have limited interaction with faculty from diverse ethnic, racial, and gender groups; 2) Candidates have limited interactions with peers from diverse ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups; and 3) Unit does not ensure field experiences with students with exceptionalities and students from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, and socioeconomic groups.

In an effort to address these points, Northwest is consistently working to deliver a variety of diversity-based experiences for our pre-service teacher candidates. That said, we recognize that improvements are slower in coming than we may like as reflected by relatively low percentages of diverse populations: 9% minority enrollment; 2% international enrollment; and 29% geographically diverse enrollments. We have also worked to increase the diversity levels of our faculty populations working within the PEU as evidenced by the fact that 28% of faculty are male, 72% are female, 1% self-identify as Native American, and 1% as Asian.

As a unit, we reach out to others not only with an eye towards highlighting our current economic situations, religious affiliations, gender roles, and ethnic statuses, but also by introducing others to past experiences which have helped us develop expertise within a variety of areas. PEU faculty invite each other to present to our classes on a host of issues, thereby allowing teacher candidates to learn from and experts with clearly different academic and life-experiences. One example of such an effort is the implementation of the multiple ELL modules into various education courses. As illustrated through our Faculty Travel Matrix (ex. 4.4.d.2), most PEU faculty have had experiences within diverse geographical areas around the globe and by sharing these background we are able to impart multiple perspectives thereby meeting the educational needs of our teacher candidates.

One PEU student requirement includes that they undertake 30 hours in-service with diverse populations outside of the classroom. This includes working with students with exceptionalities and interacting with students from disparate ethnic, racial, gender, geographical, and socioeconomic groups. Elementary pre-service teachers spend the first three years of field experiences in our on-campus lab school where pupils are identified as 13% Asian, 1% Indian, 2% African American, and 85% Caucasian; 13% of students have Individual Education Plans and 1% are ELL learners. The annual three-week elementary Urban Practicum experience has continues offering opportunities to teach in the North Kansas City School system (content, reading, and early childhood). The three schools participating in the program include Briarcliff Elementary (13% Black, 6% Asian, 18% Hispanic, 60% White), Northview (2% American Indian, 5% African American, 6% Asian, 6% Hispanic, 80% white), and Liberty (2% Asian, 6% African American, 5% Hispanic, 1% Indian, 85% Caucasian). The Secondary Practicum II course provides students with week-long experiences each semester in Oak Park school in the North Kansas City School district (2% Asian, 10% African America, 10% Hispanic, 1% Indian, 73% Caucasian).

As described in Section 4.2, the College of Education continues to facilitate the Ploghoft Lecture Series, which bring diverse speakers to campus and offering overseas placement opportunities to students thereby fostering diverse teaching opportunities to pre-service teacher candidates.

AFI 1- Candidates have limited interaction with faculty from diverse ethnic, racial, and gender groups.

Due to recent faculty retirements we have been given opportunities to hire several diverse faculty members who will begin working in our PEU beginning in the fall 2013. One such hire is our newest

Early Childhood Education faculty member who is Asian from South Korea. Overall, our faculty bring many unique geographical experiences to our classrooms which are especially illustrated in the attached Faculty Travel Matrix (ex. 4.4.d.2). Additionally, we invite faculty from across campus with expertise or personal experiences on various topics into classrooms to provide students with well-rounded educational experience. One example of this effort occurs within the 61-569 Multiculturalism in Education course where faculty from various backgrounds are invited to share their geographical, religious, socioeconomic, and professional experiences. Additionally, within 62-371 Introduction to Special Education, the faculty routinely invite people to share their experiences, as evidenced in the new panels that are incorporated in their course (Overview ex. I.5.b Syllabi). The panels are comprised of multiple people with various cultural backgrounds. These panels can and do change from term to term. This is also highlighted by our efforts to integrate ELL Modules into various education courses. We provide students with diversity hour expectations that include no less than 30 hours of interaction/observation in diverse settings, and 6 additional hours of interaction for advanced candidates. This provides a baseline platform to evaluate our effectiveness of our diversity proficiencies and if our students understand diverse issues and can implement effective diversity sensitive instruction to their students. This is being evaluated through our TWS data and our Disposition data (ex. 4.4.a).

AFI 2- Candidates have limited interactions with peers from diverse ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups.

Since this initial finding was highlighted the PEU and university have emphasized the need to increase overall student population diversification, thereby triggering the creation of groups like the Diversity Advisory Council and the Minority Educator group. As a result, percentages of Caucasian students have decreased by around 10% within the university and especially within our education programs. More pointedly, one can note an increase in the Black student population of 3.1% since the last accreditation cycle. In 2003, for example, Northwest's student population was 92.5% Caucasian, and in 2012-2013, the number decreased by our university student population who is Caucasian is 83%. In 2003, our initial programs student population self-identified as 97% Caucasian, while the currently initial programs cohort includes 86% of students who self-identify as Caucasian. Far more remarkable is that fact that in 2003, our advanced programs cohort consisted of 92% Caucasian students, while our current advanced programs cohort contains only 80.6% of students who self-identify as Caucasian. Overall, the PEU's gender-based demographics have held constant, with 58% of university students being female in 2003, and today's student-body being 56% female (Standard 1 ex 1.4.b.8 PEDS Annual Report 2013).

AFI 3- Unit does not ensure field experiences with students with exceptionalities and students from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, and socioeconomic groups.

The PEU has undertaken several significant activities during the last few years in order to offer educator candidates a variety of opportunities, like incorporating a week out experience for secondary undergraduate candidates that is fulfilled in socio-economically challenged urban and/or suburban settings. For the elementary undergraduate candidates, an urban practicum for early childhood, content practicum, and reading language arts practicum has been established and funded by the university in collaboration with the North Kansas City school district – one site of which includes an ELL hub school building.

Additionally, we are proud to note an increase in the diversity of our own lab school student body resulting in the following demographics: 13% Asian, 1% Indian, 2% African American, 85% Caucasian, 13% Individual Education Plan [I.E.P] students, and 1% ELL. This newly emergent arrangement at Northwest's Horace Mann Lab School allows our undergraduates to gain valuable experiences. Moreover, some of our advanced students, like those enrolled in the M.S.Ed. in ELL program, are able to

engage youth in this environment as the facility annually houses teacher candidates for practicum experiences.

Multiple courses incorporate field experiences for our undergraduate and graduate students. An example of this is the initial program 62-371, Northwest's Introduction to Special Education. During this course, students fulfill a 15-hour Service Project where they interact with and observe people with disabilities in conjunction with guided coursework and faculty interaction (Overview ex. I.5.b.7 EDCI 62-371 Syllabus).