

Standard 6. Unit Governance and Resources

6.2.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.

As a result of the last NCATE report, Northwest developed a comprehensive assessment system with intermediate transition points for both initial and advanced programs. (ex. 2.4.a.2 Undergraduate and ex. 2.4.a.3 Graduate Assessment Flowchart by Transition Point). Central to our action on these transition points are the Teacher Work Sample (Standard 1 ex. 1.4.c.14 TWS Guidelines) and the Tk20 data management system. The Continuous Improvement Leadership Team (CILT) examined and revised the transition points and the scoring rubrics connected to the TWS in alignment with state and national standards. Then a formative process of using the TWS to assess candidate instruction and learning was identified and refined. After changes at the university administrative level in 2009, the CILT with other university leaders began investigating and evaluating assessment systems. The PEU purchased the Tk20 system and server, allowing candidates to invest through a one-time fee with access to the system for a 7-year subscription. Tk20 enables the PEU to monitor candidate assessment data at each transition point, and to view data in a variety of aggregated or disaggregated forms by individual candidate, by program, and in comparison between or within programs. Key assessments have been identified and included in Tk20 for all programs, thereby allowing the PEU to integrate student profile and assessment data from Northwest's Banner System. In-person and online training materials were provided to all potential subscribers and users of the system and beginning in fall 2012, the PEU required all undergraduate and graduate candidates in education programs to purchase and use Tk20. All assignments identified as key assessments are loaded, sent to students and scored by faculty using a variety of rubrics. Currently all student teachers upload their summative TWS to Tk20 for evaluation and University supervisors and cooperating teachers use the system to access the field observation assessment instruments.

Other key improvements made by the University include having:

- Added AC to provide data analysis and sharing
- Added a unit data management system (Tk20)
- 2006—Banner added student records
- 2009—Banner financial added
- 2010—DegreeWorks for advising was implemented
- Both initial and advanced dispositions instruments were revised and adopted
- Candidate analysis of P-12 learning was integrated into content methods courses
- Classroom management class was added to secondary programs
- The special education course expanded from 2 to 3 credit hours
- Review of GPA-by-major data resulted in a university-wide policy to supersede Cs
- New Professional Education admissions requirements were adopted for fall 2013
- In-field pilot program for beginning secondary practicum in fall 2013
- Co-teaching model pilot in spring 2013

- Technology, tools and access were improved
- Educator support increased at library
- CILT attended NCATE, AACTE and MACTE conferences
- All assessments were identified and a timeline was developed for review of data
- Renovation of LEET and Horace Mann Lab Centers (ex. 6.4.i.1 Unit Facilities)
- Liberty and St. Joseph Centers-expanded services
- Secondary Education Coordinating Committee synchronized improvements
- Educational Leadership and Curriculum and Instruction merged
- 19 university departments merged into 11

Despite decreasing state allocations, our expenditures in preparing educators has increased (ex. 6.4.f.1 Unit Budget). Moreover during a period in which educator preparation has come under scrutiny and criticism nationally, Northwest has thrived in its commitment to produce effective educators and to enhance performance through a continuous improvement cycle. The PEU has crafted the Conceptual Framework (Overview ex. I.5.c.8 NW Conceptual Framework) which it offers as evidence for quality regarding the: a) preparation of our candidates; b) commitment to preparing candidates to meet the needs of P-12 students; and c) dedication of faculty and staff to preparing highly qualified educators. Additionally, the unit's governance system (ex. 6.4.a.1 By-Laws and Rules of Order COTE) and commitment of resources are continuously sustained by the context of: 1) an historical institutional commitment to preparing teachers; 2) a tradition of effective governance and financial support; 3) a structure that ensures teachers are instructed and supervised by education faculty and in-field professionals with expert levels of content and pedagogical knowledge; and 4) a reputation of excellence in educator preparation.

Plans for continuous improvement are rooted in a history of commitment to excellence in teacher preparation. Northwest began in 1905 as Missouri's Fifth District Normal School to provide teachers for the schools throughout a 19-county region. The University still fulfills this mission, but is now a comprehensive state university with more than 130 undergraduate programs, 34 master's degrees, three collaborative graduate programs, three specialist degrees, a cooperative doctoral program and five certification programs. Northwest is a vibrant and diverse learning community with an enrollment of more than 7200 students from 47 states and 30 countries. About 750 faculty and staff are employed by the University, which offers classes at its main campus in Maryville, on two satellite campuses—one in Liberty, and the other in St. Joseph—and online.

The current administration consistently supports the PEU's commitment to excellence and dedicates the resources necessary to ensure quality educator preparation. The current Dean has roots in preparing educators as a past Chair of the Educational Leadership Department, NCATE coordinator, and Assistant Director for Teacher Education. The PEU's governance complements the university leadership providing guidance to the dean on all elements of educator preparation and curriculum oversight (ex. 6.4.a.11 Policies for unit governance and operation). In July 2011, the university President presented to the Board of Regents "*Northwest 2011-2014: Executing and Succeeding*" a strategic plan that highlighted teacher education as one of six institutional priorities (ex. 6.4.a.12 Strategic Plan Document). University leaders are committed to implementing and reviewing improvement plans that resulted from a recent university-wide AQIP review and Foundations of Excellence self-study and survey recommendations related to

the first year experience for a student success model focused on college completion. Additional university-wide planning includes the opening of a Teaching and Learning Center and engagement of work teams in strategic enrollment and retention study.

The CILT of the PEU (ex. 6.4.b.1 PEU Organizational Chart) consists of Dean and Director of Professional Education, Dr. Joyce Piveral, Assistant Director of Professional Education, Dr. Cheryl Malm, Chair of the Professional Education Department, Dr. Joe Kreizinger, Director of our program self-review, Dr. Nissa Ingraham, Assessment Coordinator, Michael McBride, TESS Coordinator, Amy Wilson, and Alternative Certification Coordinator, Dr. Jan Glenn. Dr. Malm attends the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reform meetings. Revisions to the Missouri standards and educator preparation requirements have been discussed and implemented by the CILT. Processes, practices and planning have been examined not only to address the latest changes in state and federal standards and reporting requirements, but also to ensure that our educators are meeting the needs of the schools we serve.

Unit, department, and program planning meetings occur on a regular basis. The CILT meets weekly, the Council on Teacher Education once a month (ex. 6.4.a.3-8 COTE Minutes). Department faculty, staff and program coordinators meet twice monthly and address topics such as changes to standards and requirements, updates to programs and curriculum, and review of data for program improvements. Plans addressed by these teams focus on TWS assessment, student performance, and positioning teacher education within university initiatives.

In addition to the unit and university meetings, P-12 advisory groups inform teacher training programs and professional development. Faculty attend monthly area P-12 administrator meetings and teacher meetings by invitation. The Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals, Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals, Missouri Association of School Administrators and Missouri School Counselors Associations hold yearly meetings and faculty attend to stay current in addressing program changes. Many faculty attend local, state and national association meetings in content areas and serve as leaders for local, state and national organizations.

The reputation for excellence in teacher education warranted a continued focus on teacher education as critical to academic programming in the 2011-2014 strategic plan. Since the last NCATE visit, Northwest received the prestigious Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Teacher Education and many graduates of Northwest have been recognized as leaders in their field including:

- Darryl Johnson who was awarded Missouri Teacher of the Year recognition and is being inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in 2013;
- Christy Compton who was named American Star Teacher;
- Dwight Pierson of Iowa who was named Superintendent of the Year; and
- Former Dean, Max Ruhl received the Robert C. Howe Service to Secondary Education Award and Northland Chamber Excellence in Education in Kansas City (ex/ 6.4.e.18 P-12 Award Winners).

Faculty have been identified as leaders in their field; Matt Symonds received the Presidential Award for contributions to the field from the Missouri Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance in 2011; and Rochelle Hiatt received the Guidance Director/Supervisor of the Year from the Missouri School Counselor Association in 2011.