

South Dakota
Board of Examiner Report
for Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) approval

SD State Board of Examiners
Team:

Team Chair
Steve Fiechtner, DOE

Team Member
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Accreditation Visit to:

Dakota Wesleyan University

Dates:

March 18-20, 2018

Type of Visit:

- First
- Continuing
- Combination
- Probation
- Focused

Summary for Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)

Standards		Team Findings	
		Initial	Advanced
1	EPP's Mission, Conceptual Framework, and Responsibility	Met	N/A
2	Preparation of Candidates in Teacher Education	Met	N/A
3	Assessment System and EPP Evaluation	Met	N/A
4	Field Experiences and Clinical Practice	Met	N/A

M = Standard Met
NM = Standard Not Met
NA = Not Applicable

Standard 1

EPP Mission, Conceptual Framework, and Responsibility

Higher education programs for the preparation of education personnel shall operate under a written mission statement. The EPP's statements of goals and program objectives, consistent with the mission statement, shall serve as a basis for decision making regarding policies affecting all of the programs for the preparation of education personnel and shall assure that education graduates are prepared to serve in P-12 schools.

This section sets the context for the visit. It should clearly state the mission of the EPP. It should describe the characteristics of the EPP and identify and describe any branch campuses, off-campus sites, alternate route programs, and distance learning programs for professional school personnel. This section also provides an overview of the EPP's conceptual framework. The overview should include a brief description of the framework and its development.

Information reported in the institutional report for Standard 1 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the IR that are incorrect.)

EPP Mission	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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In 1883, a small band of Methodist settlers meeting in Dakota Territory secured a charter to establish the college that became Dakota Wesleyan University. By 1920, Dakota Wesleyan University was the largest independent college in the state, with an enrollment of more than 300. Now, 130 years later, DWU remains committed to transforming the lives of approximately 900 students. The student-to-faculty ratio (12:1) allows faculty to get to know each student on a personal basis, providing mentorship, guidance, and professional collaboration as essential parts of the education process.

“Impacting futures ... one mind at a time,” is the motto of the Dakota Wesleyan University Education Department. The mission of the teacher education program at DWU is to provide an organized, integrated system of study and experience for the preparation of elementary and secondary teachers. The program is designed to emphasize the development of human values that enhance the quality of interpersonal relations and the skills necessary for effective instruction. The central emphasis of the program is to develop the characteristics of competence and maturity to enable graduates to command respect as educated people and as members of the teaching profession.

The philosophy of the DWU education department is that theory and practice need to be integrated to promote excellent teaching. Constructivism and other learning theories provide a framework to guide departmental decision-making. As such, the DWU teacher education program provides many applied learning experiences both in the classroom and in practicums to

help prepare students to become effective teachers. The commitment to candidates is demonstrated through:

- developing an academic plan and maintaining personal involvement with candidates;
- fostering the development of professional teaching characteristics;
- providing candidates with a sound background in current theoretical knowledge and methodology;
- providing candidates with a variety of practical educational experiences; and
- providing educational resources and services to candidates and regional school districts.

Conceptual Framework	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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Teaching is a calling. At Dakota Wesleyan University, faculty members provide individual guidance and direction to ensure that future educators are well prepared, dedicated, and professional. Class size is limited to allow for effective interaction and development of relationships between faculty and candidates. Learning in the domains of Knowledge, Communication, Environment, Relationships, and Personal Attributes is applied in practical applications. Through reflective practice, candidates come to understand how their knowledge and experiences relate to student learning in the classroom. Real experiences in real classrooms with real students begin as early as the freshman year. All of the elementary and special education teacher candidates experience over 200 hours in actual classrooms before their professional student teaching semester. All secondary education majors experience over 150 hours in actual classrooms before their professional student teaching semester.

The goal of the Dakota Wesleyan University Education Department is to prepare competent, effective, and dedicated teachers and principals. The Five Foundational Pillars that guide the general education program at Dakota Wesleyan University also furnish support for the education program. These five pillars are: Critical and Collaborative Thinking; Effective Expression; Cultural and Global Awareness; Civic Values and Engagement; Personal Growth and Maturity.

The DWU Education Department provides a liberal arts program to help the candidate develop in five domains: Knowledge; Communication; Environment; Relationships; Teacher Attributes.

Summary of Strengths: Through documentation and interviews, it was apparent that the mission/vision/purpose of the DWU educator preparation program is prevalent throughout the program. All people interviewed confirmed the “personal” caring and expectation of excellence during preparation of teachers. Documentation and interviews confirm the competence of these candidates.

Areas for Improvement: N/A

Rationale: N/A

Recommendation: Standard Met

Corrections to the Institutional Report: None

Standard 2

Preparation of Candidates in Teacher Education

The EPP shall print and distribute a policy with specific admission standards and procedures that govern student recruitment and acceptance into the preparation programs. The EPP shall provide written verification that candidates are informed about state laws and rules that govern the issuance of certificates for educational personnel.

The EPP shall prepare candidates to work in a school as a teacher, administrator or school service specialist. These candidates must know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge and skills necessary to help all students learn. Assessments shall be given to the candidate to ensure the candidate meets professional, state, and EPP standards.

Information reported in the institutional report for Standard 2 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the IR that are incorrect.)

Candidate Knowledge and Skills	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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Candidates are admitted to the teacher education program based on the attainment of the following requirements:

- A cumulative GPA of 2.6 or higher;
- Three letters of recommendation from Dakota Wesleyan University professors;
- Signed acknowledgement of South Dakota State Department of Education conditions of Certificate Revocation Codified Law;
- Completed review of Education Program Teacher Attribute Assessment;
- Core Academic Skills passing scores based on current student teaching handbook; and
- Completion of a criminal background check;

Once a teacher education candidate is accepted into the teacher education program, the candidates must maintain the following criteria:

- Proficiency in reading, writing and speech, as indicated by satisfactory completion (C or better) of the general education requirements;
- A 2.6 GPA in the teaching major(s) and courses required for certification. A cumulative GPA of 2.6 is also required;

- Recommendation of the chair of the department of education;
- Successful completion of an observation or field experience before student teaching;
- Successful completion of course requirements, with no grade below C in the major(s) and courses required for certification; and
- Ongoing demonstration of attributes requisite to teaching;

Pass Rates on Content Licensure Tests

For Period: AY 2014-2015

Program	Name of Licensure Test	# of Test Takers	% Passing State Licensure Test
Elementary Education	Praxis II # 5014	5	100%
Biology Education	Praxis II # 5235	0	N/A
English Education	Praxis II # 5038	1	N/A
History Education	Praxis II # 5941	5	100%
Math Education	Praxis II # 5161	2	N/A
Special Education	Praxis II # 5354	1	N/A
Music Education	Praxis II #5113	1	N/A

For Period: AY 2015-2016

Program	Name of Licensure Test	# of Test Takers	% Passing State Licensure Test
Elementary Education	Praxis II # 5018	4	N/A
Biology Education	Praxis II # 5235	2	N/A
English Education	Praxis II # 5038	1	N/A
History Education	Praxis II # 5941	0	N/A
Math Education	Praxis II # 5161	4	N/A
MS Math Education	Praxis II #5169	2	N/A
Special Education	Praxis II # 5354	2	N/A
Music Education	Praxis II #5113	0	N/A

The overall data submitted (not individual due to “N” size) indicates that candidates at Dakota Wesleyan University preparing to student teach and obtain certification consistently meet the qualifying score on the Praxis II Content Knowledge Exams.

Pass Rates on Pedagogical Tests for Initial Teacher Preparation

For Period: AY 2014-2015

Program	Name of Licensure Test	# of Test Takers	% Passing State Licensure Test
Elementary Education	Praxis PLT #5622	5	100%
Biology Education	Praxis PLT #5624	0	N/A
English Education	Praxis PLT #5624	0	N/A
History Education	Praxis PLT #5624	1	N/A
Math Education	Praxis PLT #5624	0	N/A
Music Education	Praxis PLT #5624	0	N/A
Special Education	Praxis PLT #5622	0	N/A

For Period: AY 2015-2016

Program	Name of Licensure Test	# of Test Takers	% Passing State Licensure Test
Elementary Education	Praxis PLT #5622	5	100%
Biology Education	Praxis PLT #5624	1	N/A
English Education	Praxis PLT #5624	2	N/A
History Education	Praxis PLT #5624	4	N/A
Math Education	Praxis PLT #5624	3	N/A
Music Education	Praxis PLT #5624	0	N/A
Special Education	Praxis PLT # 5622	1	N/A

The submitted data indicates that Dakota Wesleyan University candidates preparing to student teach and obtain certification consistently meet the qualifying score on the Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) Exam.

Summary of Strengths: Candidate's assessments and the follow up surveys continue to show consistently strong results. There appears to be a strong link between instruction, standards, and assessment. The strong professional relationship between students and faculty lend to achievement of these positive results.

Areas for Improvement: N/A

Rationale: N/A

Recommendation: Standard Met

Corrections to the Institutional Report: None

Standard 3

Assessment System and EPP Evaluation

The EPP shall develop an assessment system with its professional community that reflects its conceptual framework and professional and state standards. The EPP's system shall include a comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures that shall be used to monitor candidate performance and to manage and improve programs. Decisions about candidate performance shall be based on assessments conducted during admission into programs, at appropriate transition points, and at program completion. The EPP shall take effective steps to eliminate sources of bias in performance assessments and work to establish fair, accurate, and consistent assessments.

The EPP shall regularly and systematically compile, summarize, and analyze data, which shall be used to improve applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate proficiency, and program quality.

The EPP shall regularly and systematically use data, including candidate and other school personnel performance information, to evaluate the efficacy of its courses, programs, and clinical experiences. The EPP shall analyze program evaluation and performance assessment data and initiate changes if necessary. The EPP shall regularly share candidate and faculty assessment data with candidates and faculty to help them reflect on and improve their performance.

Information reported in the institutional report for Standard 3 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the IR that are incorrect.)

Assessment System	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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Listed below are the transition points and key assessments required by Dakota Wesleyan University. These tables indicate the diversity, appropriateness and thoroughness of the assessments in place and with these assessments, DWU is able to track and verify a candidate's preparedness for teaching.

Initial Program Candidates

Transition Points	Key Assessments
Acceptance to Teacher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cumulative GPA of 2.6 or higher ● Completion of EDU 201 (no lower than a C) ● Passing Core Academic Skills for Educators tests ● Three letters of recommendation ● Successful completion of background check

Admission to Student Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coursework completion with a C or higher ● Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.6 ● Passing Praxis II content exam ● Successful completion of an observation or field experience ● Recommendation of department chair
Completion of Teacher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation of Professional Electronic Portfolio ● Passing Praxis PLT ● Attributes Review ● Successful completion of student teaching ● Program/Unit Evaluation ● Exit Survey
Follow-up Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Graduate Survey ● Employer Survey

Secondary Certification and Degree Candidates

Transition Points	Key Assessments
Admission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of undergraduate degree ● GPA 2.7
Acceptance to Teacher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Passing Praxis II content exam
Admission to Teacher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GPA 3.0 ● Passing Praxis PLT
Completion of Teacher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Submission of impact study ● Successful completion of student teaching ● Thesis project ● Successful defense of thesis
Follow-up Studies	

The following tables identify the assessments used and reviewed to manage and improve the EPP programs and unit.

Initial Program Candidates

Program	Unit
GPA	Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor Evaluations
Core Academic Skills	Exit Survey

Praxis Content and PLT Scores	Employer and Graduate Survey
Unit of Study	
Impact Assessment	
Final Student Teaching Evaluation	
Exit Survey	
Course Evaluations	
Employer and Graduate Surveys	

Secondary Certification and Degree Candidates

Program	Unit
Praxis PLT	Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor Evaluations
Unit of Study	Exit Survey
Impact Study	Course Evaluations
Final Student Teaching Evaluation	Employer and Graduate Surveys
Capstone Evaluation	
Course Evaluations	
Employer and Graduate Survey	

Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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The Education Department has a support specialist to input assessment data into the unit assessment system. The education support specialist monitors the data and candidate expectations monthly to ensure candidates are transitioning through the program and are meeting program requirements. Education faculty meets weekly to monitor candidate admission and progression through the teacher education program. Education department unit meetings are held at least once a semester for all program faculty to monitor programs and their candidates. At a fall department meeting the unit provides stakeholders, which include education department unit faculty, the assessment committee, and university administration, with assessment data that has been formatted in tables and charts to summarize and analyze candidate, program, and unit data.

Use of Data for Program Improvement	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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The Education faculty meet weekly at which time assessment data is reviewed and the question of how the program(s) can be improved is discussed. Because the department is relatively small, the discussion and reflection about the assessment data results and possible program changes can

happen simultaneously. All faculty have access to the assessment system for continuous monitoring of student progress.

Some of the recent data-driven changes in the EPP are: a required reading course was split into two courses, the lesson plan template and evaluation forms were revised to align with the Danielson framework, both the elementary and special education degrees transitioned from a BA degree to a BS degree.

Summary of Strengths: A small number of faculty has frequent opportunities to monitor data regularly and also know students individually and keep abreast of their progress. This is done regularly by the DWU faculty and the student/teacher relationships are strong and positive.

Areas for Improvement: N/A

Rationale: N/A

Recommendation: Standard Met

Corrections to the Institutional Report: None

Standard 4

Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

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

In this section the EPP must include (1) initial and advanced programs for teachers, (2) programs for other school professionals, and (3) off-campus, distance learning, and alternate route programs, noting differences when they exist.

Information reported in the institutional report for Standard 4 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the IR that are incorrect.)

Collaboration Between EPP and School Partners	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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The Dakota Wesleyan University Education Department collaborates with the Mitchell School District as well as with other PK-12 schools in the surrounding area. (The majority of student teachers and practicum students are placed in the Mitchell School District). Cooperating teachers and school administrators are essential partners with DWU for placement of their candidates in their field experiences. Data from cooperating teacher evaluations and follow-up surveys serve as assessment measures to help monitor the design, delivery, and evaluation of field and clinical experiences.

The DWU Education Department has a collaborative relationship with L.B. Williams Elementary School (Mitchell). Approximately 25 years ago, the elementary school was constructed adjacent to the Dakota Wesleyan University Education Department. A double door and a short hallway separate the school from the education department. Over the years, a rich relationship has developed among the education department, teacher candidates, principals, teachers, and elementary students. Many field/practicum experiences take place in L.B. Williams School.

Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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The criteria established for entry and exit in the student teaching program are as follows:

Initial Certification program

- full admission status in the teacher education program;
- successfully passing the Praxis II content exam;
- a 2.6 GPA in the teaching major(s) and courses required for certification;
- a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.6;
- successful completion of an observation or field experience before student teaching;
- no grade below C in the major(s) and courses required for certification;
- demonstration of attributes requisite to teaching.

Secondary Certification and Degree program

- prior acceptance into the teacher education program;
- a cumulative GPA of 3.0;
- successful completion of an observation or field experience before student teaching;
- no grade below C in the major(s) and courses required for certification;
- demonstration of attributes requisite to teaching.

Prior to the beginning of student teaching, the university staff establishes communication and expectations with the cooperating teachers through printed documents and by having in-person conversations.

The clinical faculty that supervise and mentor candidates in the teacher education program are well prepared in their role to help candidates develop and demonstrate proficiencies outlined in professional, state, and institutional standards.

Cooperating teachers complete candidate evaluations throughout the student teaching experience. The first evaluation is conducted during the fourth week of student teaching; a second is conducted at midterm (the midterm evaluation consists of a formal evaluation of two lesson presentations); and a third and final evaluation (toward the end of the student teaching period).

The criteria for selecting cooperating teachers for clinical-based experiences are as follows:

- Hold a valid State of South Dakota certification in the teaching assignment;
- Have a least two years of teaching experience;
- Completion of at least one year in the current grade level/content area;
- Have thorough knowledge and understanding of his/her teaching field;
- Willing to allow the teacher candidates to try different teaching methods;
- Have an interest in accepting a teacher candidate and guide him/her in clinical supervision.

Summary of Strengths: Dakota Wesleyan University has developed productive and functional relationships, especially with staff within the Mitchell School District. The majority of the student teaching and practicum experiences happen within the Mitchell District and a great number of DWU graduates are hired to teach in the Mitchell District, based on multiple and varied practicum experiences and demonstrating strong teaching skills.

Areas for Improvement: N/A

Rationale: N/A

Recommendation: Standard Met

Corrections to the Institutional Report: None