

Concordia University, Nebraska
Institutional Report – 2013
Onsite Visit – April 14-16, 2013

Explanation of Attachments: Attachments are coded to the section of the report. 1.3.a would indicate that the exhibit is in Standard 1, element 3, and is exhibit a. “I” indicates an exhibit in the Introduction. The entire report is also available at <http://wp.cune.edu/accreditation>.

Standard 4: Diversity

The vision of Concordia University, Nebraska states that “By 2015 Concordia University, Nebraska will grow and expand its influence to diverse populations by fostering collaboration and adapting to our changing environment while remaining faithful to our mission of excellent Christian education.” Our student body comes from 39 different states, 8 foreign countries, and 5 different continents. Undergraduate students are from 5 different ethnic and racial backgrounds and represent 8.05% of our student body. They represent 14 different religious denominations. [4.0.a Diversity Information CU Student Pop](#), [4.0.b Diversity - Minority Population](#)

Our graduate candidate population represents six different ethnic and racial backgrounds as self-reported. Of those reporting, 90.3% are Caucasian. This is very similar to our undergraduate population. Graduate candidates come from 29 different states, Ireland, and Canada. The large majority (81.6%) are from Nebraska. Those outside the state are generally in our online programs. [4.0.c Graduate Candidate Ethnicity](#)

About 60% of our university undergraduate students are members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. LCMS membership continues to be concentrated in the Upper Midwest. The five states with the highest rates of adherence are Nebraska, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa. The LC-MS is 95% Caucasian, 2% African-American, and 1% each of Hispanic, Asian, and other/mixed. [4.0.d Diversity Demographics - LCMS](#)

Diversity of Concordia University, Nebraska is comparable to the surrounding communities where most of our candidates complete their field experiences, first student teaching experience, and practicum experiences. [4.0.e Diversity of CU Compared](#)

Element 1: Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences

Initial Level:

One of the 15 teacher performance areas of the Conceptual Framework – LD-S2: Diverse Learners – specifically addresses the need for candidates to create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners. All candidates complete a course in Psychology of Exceptionality which addresses the various special needs of students at all levels and a course in Differentiated Instruction which prepares teacher candidates to meet the diverse needs of all students. Candidates are evaluated on the teacher performance area (LD-S2) during their field experiences and student teaching assignments. [4.1.a TED Cohort Analysis](#)

Data collected from candidates, instructors, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors on this performance area indicates that, while the evaluations are relatively low in the beginning (generally between 3.5 and 4 on a 5-point scale) they improve steadily over time as candidates are exposed to instruction about and interaction with people from diverse backgrounds. [4.1.b Diversity Data on Candidate Performance](#)

Required coursework in Education Psychology (EDPS210) focuses on accommodations in lesson planning for students of diverse backgrounds. Students attend a “Diversity Presentation” involving an educator or educators who discuss their work with highly diverse student populations. Candidates are required to write a reflection paper on the topic. Candidates are required to take the Implicit Aptitudes Test (online: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit>) from Harvard University. Results from the test are printed out by students and brought to class for discussion. They are specifically required to take the “Race” IAT. They are encouraged to try others such as “age”, “sex” “religion”, etc. [4.1.c Diversity Presentations](#), [4.1.d EDPS 210 Essays \(4 docs\)](#)

Psychology of Exceptionality and Multiculturalism (Psy324), a required course in professional education, focuses on understanding and appreciation of children from diverse backgrounds. Candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge of cultural, sociological, and psychological implications of teaching those children. A 15-hour field experience is conducted with special needs students. [4.1.e FE Field Experience Placements](#), [4.1.f Psy 324 Projects \(3 docs\)](#)

Candidates also take a class in Differentiated Instruction (Educ 424) which focuses more fully on designing instruction to meet the needs of all students. Candidates explore the diversity of students and learn methods to address that diversity through instruction. A 15-hour field experience attached to Educ 424 is conducted at People’s City Mission in Lincoln. Candidates tutor low-income and minority students as well as work with a youth club at the mission. [4.1.g Educ 424 Papers \(3 docs\)](#)

Placements in teacher aiding, practicum experiences, and clinical experiences are made in a variety of settings within 30 miles of the campus. Over the past three years public schools used for clinical student teaching experiences were 26.14% minority and 31.76% free and reduced

price lunch. Lutheran schools used were 12.79% minority and 1.91% free and reduced price lunch. Candidates will generally have at least one public school placement. Candidates are assigned to situations with diverse populations including cultural, ethnic, economic, and exceptionalities. [4.1.h Diversity Stats \(4 docs\)](#)

A small number of candidates are selected each year to participate in Student Teaching abroad. International schools in China and Australia have been used as student teaching sites since 1991. In the past three years Concordia has sent 10 student teachers to Shanghai, China and 2 to Queensland, Australia. Placement in an international school is competitive depending on spaces and subject areas available. Administrators from the international schools serve as university supervisors. [4.1.i Diversity-International Student Teachers](#)

Advanced Level:

The same Conceptual Framework is applicable to advanced level candidates. LD-S2 Diverse Learners is applied to the graduate candidate in their unique program and setting. At the advanced level the topics of awareness and understanding of the values, lifestyles, contributions, and history of a pluralistic society are covered in Serving and Leading in Community and World (SOC/THEO 565) which is a required course in all programs. Advanced candidates take Psychological Foundations of Teaching and Learning (PSY 511), a course which addresses the learning needs of all students. Candidates in some programs take additional coursework that addresses student needs – Enhancing Learning Through Linguistic and Cultural Diversity (EDUC 532 in C&I), Processes in Administration (EDUC 552 in the Principal program), Language and Culture (Educ 526 in the ESL/ELL and Literacy/ESL program), the practicum courses in each advanced program, and the entire special education program. [4.1.j Syllabi](#) (5 docs)

Advanced level candidates have a required practicum in their program. The diversity in practicum sites depends on the candidate since each candidate completes a practicum experience in his/her own school. Practicum experiences are monitored by the practicum instructor and every effort is made to include a diversity component in the experience. [4.1.k School District Diversity](#)

Element 2: Experiences Working With Diverse Faculty

Area For Improvement: 2005 - Candidates do not have opportunity to interact with unit faculty who are racially diverse.

Diversity among the full-time faculty at Concordia is limited. Good faith efforts have been made by the university to increase the number of diverse faculty members by conducting national searches with administrative approval of all applicant pools. Positions are advertised on the Concordia University, Nebraska Website, in the LCMS – Reporter, in the LCMS – Lutheran Witness, on the LCMS – Website, on the HigherEdJobs.com website, with Nebraska Workforce,

and on CareerLink.com. Since 2005, there have been 34 full-time faculty positions filled at Concordia. National searches were done for all positions. Of these 34 positions filled, 16 were female, 18 were male, and only one was of racial and ethnic origin. That one is the only minority person serving on the faculty of Concordia. The institution does have one staff member, the assistant director of Student Life, who is African American. The goal of increasing diversity in the faculty continues to be a priority even though we have not met with much success. By directive of the Board of Regents, the governing body of the institution, the faculty must maintain at least 90% LC-MS members. The LC-MS is 95% Caucasian. The location of Concordia in a small rural, eastern Nebraska town makes the challenge of recruiting qualified diverse faculty to campus a difficult endeavor. [4.2.a Faculty Additions since 2005](#)

Initial Level:

Since the last NCATE visit we have hired 6 new full-time unit faculty members. All faculty searches in the past were posted nationally, and we have not had minority applicants for any of the positions.

We assign candidates to field experiences and student teaching experiences in schools that are within 30 miles of our institution. Lack of diversity among teachers in the schools makes it very difficult to provide experiences with diverse faculty. [4.2.b Faculty Diversity in Field Experiences](#)

To help to offset the lack of diversity among the faculty and also among the schools where field and clinical placements are made, the institution has made a concerted effort to bring in speakers from diverse backgrounds and with experiences serving diverse populations.

Opportunities for study abroad have also been made available. [4.2.c Diversity International Experiences](#), [4.2.d Looking Beyond Speaker Series](#)

Advanced Level:

Diversity among the graduate faculty is limited. There are 186 instructors in our graduate pool. Only three of them are minority. Good faith efforts have been made to include diverse faculty in the graduate programs, but this has not succeeded to the level that we would hope. [4.2.e Diversity Adjunct Ethnicity](#)

Opportunity for advanced candidates to work with diverse faculty within their own schools is limited. The seven largest school districts with respect to candidates in our programs are: Omaha Public, Lincoln Public, Millard Public, Elkhorn Public, Papillion-LaVista Public, Grand Island Public, and North Platte Public. [4.2.f School District Diversity - Advanced](#)

Advanced candidates complete their practicums in their own institutions. The university has no control over the diversity of faculty at the practicum sites. [4.2.g Faculty Student Diversity](#)

Element 3: Experiences Working With Diverse Candidates

Area For Improvement: 2005 - Candidates have limited opportunities to interact and work with diverse candidates in professional education courses.

Initial Level:

While our current student body is only 8.02% minority (based on those who indicated an ethnicity) that percentage has risen over the past 3 years. Candidates in teacher education are 5.12% minority, slightly less than campus-wide. While the vast majority of our students on campus are Caucasian there are also students who are African-American, American Indian, Asian-Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Mexican, Puerto Rican, and about 1% who indicate “other” as their ethnicity. Candidates in initial teacher education programs have a similar ethnic background to those on campus. [4.3.a Diversity Information CU Initial Candidates](#)

Of the 178 candidates officially admitted into teacher education as of September 2012 five were minority (2.81% - three Hispanic, one African-American and one Pacific Islander).

One of the student organizations on campus is *Restoring Awareness Culturally and Ethnically*. R.A.C.E. highlights racial and ethnic diversity and provides a venue for students of any background to discuss issues on campus that relate to finding a "voice" when in a minority. This group is committed to promoting intercultural discussion and service in the campus community. Each month the group sponsors activities to support diversity awareness, bring students together, and help promote a culturally sensitive community. Annual events include a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day speaker series, international dinners, and the African American Read-In event.

The institution also sponsors a “Looking Beyond” speaker series. Over the past three years a number of speakers have been from minority groups. [4.3.b Looking Beyond Speaker Series](#)

The Admissions Department regularly participates in College Fairs throughout the United States and visits high schools with diverse student populations in an effort to recruit minority

students. Metropolitan areas with larger numbers of minority students have been included in the visits. [4.3.c Diversity - College Fairs](#)

Advanced Level:

Our graduate candidate population represents six different ethnic and racial backgrounds as self-reported. Of those reporting, 90.3% are Caucasian. Graduate candidates come from 29 different states, Ireland, and Canada. The large majority (81.6%) are from Nebraska. Those outside the state are generally in our online programs. [4.3.d Ethnicity of Advanced Candidates](#)

Advanced level programs (graduate level) are offered in a cohort format. However, over half of the candidates will take courses with another cohort in order to finish their program in a timely manner. In addition to the racial/ethnic mix of the candidates is the diversity of schools from which they come and areas in which they serve. While almost half of our advanced candidates come from one of seven school districts in Nebraska, the other half come from a variety of smaller districts throughout the state and across the US. Their interaction during classes both face-to-face and online provides a rich experience for all candidates.

Element 4: Experiences Working With Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

Initial Level:

Concordia continues to make a consistent effort to expose our candidates to opportunities to learn about and to interact with students from diverse backgrounds. Field experience placements include opportunities to interact with diverse students. The chart below summarizes the racial/ethnic and socio-economic diversity of the schools where our candidates complete their field experiences. [4.4.a Diversity Stats 2009-2012](#)

Candidates all take Teaching Diverse Learners (Educ 424) and complete a minimum of 12 hours of field experience in a diverse setting. Generally that setting is Peoples' City Mission in Lincoln working in their after-school tutoring program or their evening enrichment program. Children in those programs come from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Lesson planning includes specific strategies in addressing the learning needs of a variety of students. [4.4.b Diversity - People's City Mission](#)

Selection of field experience sites with high diversity is an ongoing task for the College of Education. On-site visits are conducted to identify diverse sites for student teacher placement. These sites serve as locations for Student Teaching II. In seeking diverse sites we also seek quality programs with excellent administrators and cooperating teachers. [4.4.a Diversity Stats 2009-2012](#)

One hundred hours of teacher aiding field experience is the minimum requirement of candidates prior to their student teaching experience. Candidates complete field experiences in regular classrooms, in reading intensive classrooms, and in settings with special needs students. These experiences give candidates the opportunity to work with students of diverse abilities. [4.4.c Field Experience Placements](#)

Advanced Level:

Candidates in the advanced programs complete their practicum experiences in their own classrooms in their own schools. Because the vast majority of the candidates are full-time teachers the institution does not ask them to complete their field experiences outside their own buildings. Some are able to arrange for a “trade” of classrooms for periods of time to complete work with diverse students. This is the exception rather than the rule.

4.2.b Continuous Improvement

While ethnic/racial diversity has been a challenge for Concordia with respect to candidate population, instructor diversity, and working with diverse students in a P-12 setting, progress has been made over the years and will continue to be a focus of our efforts as we expand our influence to diverse populations. Looking at the incoming undergraduate candidate population over the past three years the diversity has increased from 5.1% to 7.1% to 8.9% in that 3-year span. The institution is more diverse than the county in which we are located and is almost as diverse as the state of Nebraska. The institution will continue to reach out to a diverse population as we recruit for the future. [4.2.b.a - 4.2.b.b Diversity Charts](#)

Over the past three years candidates at Concordia University, Nebraska have participated in 44 different international experiences involving 198 students of which 74 were teacher education candidates. Experiences included student teaching (clinical experience), study tours, mission trips, study abroad, class tours and trips, individual teaching experiences, language schools, and mission/disaster response teams. Julie Johnston-Hermann coordinates international experiences for the university. These experiences have taken place in Central and South America, Australia, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Many are planned by Concordia faculty and staff members and others are done in cooperation with national and international organizations. Each one provides an opportunity for Concordia candidates to interact with other cultures and ethnic groups. These experiences fit well with our institutional mission to “grow and expand its influence to diverse populations by fostering collaboration and adapting to our changing environment while remaining faithful to our mission of excellent Christian education.” [4.2.b.c International Experiences](#)

Our student teaching (clinical) experiences have expanded more fully to international opportunities for some students. We continue to seek out quality international schools willing to host our candidates for their student teaching experience. Three of the 2012 graduates accepted teaching positions overseas after completing their studies at Concordia. One is teaching at Sekolah Pelita Harapan in Jakarta, Indonesia. The other two are at Buena Vista Concordia International School in Shenzhen, China. [4.2.b.d International Student Teaching](#)

Field Experiences have been reviewed and revised to focus on specific areas rather than general classroom education experiences. Candidates at the initial level have an experience in a diverse setting as they work at People's City Mission with students of racial and ethnic diversity. They have an experience working with special needs students in tutoring and reading intensive settings. The unit continues to search for appropriate settings to provide our candidates with rich opportunities for interaction with a variety of students. [4.2.b.e - 4.2.b.f Diversity Field Experiences](#)

The unit also works with others at the institution to continue to bring speakers to campus who have diverse backgrounds or who work with people from diverse backgrounds. The diversity presentation each semester brings an area educator to campus to discuss his/her work with students from diverse backgrounds. The Looking Beyond speaker series brings people on campus 3-4 times per year that can bring a new global perspective to our candidates. [4.2.b.g Looking Beyond Speaker Series](#)