

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 5: Faculty

Preparation: Initial:

The unit has 11 full-time faculty members, 10 members who are full-time at the university and part-time in the College of Education, 2 emeriti members and 11 adjunct members who serve as instructors at the initial level. Adjuncts are chosen for their commitment to Lutheran education, previous involvement in the teacher education program as cooperating teachers, or expertise in the specific area of instruction. Of the 11 adjuncts eight are current practitioners and three are former teachers in schools. All have had extensive classroom teaching experience. Thirteen of the 21 full-time faculty members have terminal degrees. Five others are in doctoral programs. [5.1.a Faculty Qualifications](#)

Cooperating teachers for clinical experience candidates have three years of successful teaching experience and are recommended by their building administrator. University supervisors for field and clinical experiences who are not full-time faculty members are recruited from the ranks of school personnel with demonstrated competence in supervision. Most are retired emeriti of Concordia, are retired teachers from area schools, or are in current school-related positions near student teaching sites. [5.1.b Field Experience Supervisors](#), [5.1.c University Supervisors](#)

Advanced:

Full-time graduate faculty members hold an earned doctorate or have expertise in the area in which they teach. There are currently 40 instructors teaching a graduate level course during this academic semester. Nineteen of them have earned doctorates and two are near the end of their doctoral studies. The other nineteen have expertise in the areas they teach in the coursework offered in our graduate program. Five of the instructors are full-time at the institution; three are emeriti from the institution. [5.1.d Instructors - Advanced Level](#)

Teaching: Initial and Advanced:

Teaching effectiveness is the significant criterion in the evaluation of an instructor's contribution to the institution. Teaching effectiveness is evaluated by classroom performance, by efforts to improve as a teacher, and by a commitment to remain current with the changes and research in one's discipline. [5.1.e-f Online Course Evaluation](#) (2 docs)

Faculty members document best practices in teaching in a variety of ways. Faculty members are in positions for which they have education, training, and/or experience. The most tangible evidence of modeling best practices in teaching is evidenced in the course syllabi, selection of texts and readings, assignments, assessment strategies, use of technology, and candidate evaluations. All courses reflect the Conceptual Framework in their content, goals and objectives, and assessments. [5.1.g Course Syllabi Examples](#), [5.1.h Education Electronic Portfolio](#)

Every candidate is exposed to selected teacher performance areas of the Conceptual Framework and expectations of knowledge, skills, and dispositions in every course. The syllabi reflect experiential, collaborative, and project-based learning, group projects, hands-on work with students, mini-teaching experiences, candidate reflection assignments, assessments, and dispositional expectations. [See syllabi in the Introduction section I.5.b](#)

Scholarship: Initial and Advanced Levels:

Scholarship and professional activities hone the skills needed in one's discipline and maintain one's knowledge and understanding of new developments in the field. Furthermore, scholarship and professional activities contribute significantly to the improvement of the teaching task. [5.1.i Faculty Scholarship](#)

Concordia defines scholarship and professional growth activities to include attending and participating in professional conferences in one's discipline; remaining current with appropriate publications in one's discipline; performing professional activities such as research, publication, book reviews, serving on state boards, creating and performing in appropriate disciplines, consulting, and leading in-service workshops for P-12 educators or similar groups; continuing study toward the attainment of a terminal degree in one's discipline; and obtaining professional experience appropriately related to one's discipline and teaching responsibilities.

Faculty members are regularly presenting at conferences and conventions in their fields. They also serve as consultants for schools and other institutions of learning.

Service: Initial and Advanced Levels:

Concordia University, Nebraska is an excellent academic and Christ-centered community equipping men and women for lives of learning, service, and leadership in the church and

world. The preparation of candidates is enhanced by the role modeling of the faculty. Beyond the classroom and professional growth activities, the faculty member has a significant contribution to make to his/her campus, church, and community.

Campus service takes the form of student academic advisement, membership on committees, mentoring and peer evaluation, student recruitment, serving as a faculty advisor to a campus student group, assisting in worship, and attending campus events and activities. Community service includes participation in political organizations and service club activities as well as service to the profession through attendance, participation, and leadership in local, regional, and national conferences and conventions. Service to the church includes participation in local, District, and Synodical activities and events.

Such service is documented annually by faculty members as they complete the Four Pillars of Faculty Ministry Service and discuss that with their Dean and department chair. The four pillars include outreach, in-reach, academics, and scholarship. [5.1.j Faculty Service](#)

Collaboration: Initial and Advanced Levels:

The faculty members of the College of Education regularly collaborate with colleagues in P-12 schools, faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences, teacher education faculty from other institutions, and the professional community. These collaborative relationships have been significant in the ongoing partnerships we have. [5.1.k Faculty Collaboration](#)

Collaboration occurs at many levels and in many venues throughout the educational community: locally, regionally, and nationally. At the national level Concordia is one of ten institutions of higher education in the Concordia University System. Regular contact between faculty and administrators of the ten institutions has resulted in collaborative efforts to provide visiting semesters for students at all ten institutions and enhance the delivery of programs across campuses.

Concordia is a member of the Nebraska Association of Colleges of Teacher Education and of the Nebraska Council for Teacher Education. Faculty members regularly attend and participate in the meetings and activities of the two groups. Collaborative efforts take place in program review and revision as well as state-level standards for teacher education programs and certification endorsements. [5.1.l NACTE Website](#)

Faculty members are involved in the Nebraska Department of Education programs including review of state standards for subject endorsements, review of teacher education programs in state institutions of higher education, and review of foundational standards for teacher education institutions.

At the local level the university partners with the public and parochial schools in Seward County and surrounding area to coordinate the placement of teacher aides, practicum students, and student teachers. Concordia offers a tutoring program for middle level and secondary students in Seward that provides additional support services for students as well as opportunities for teacher candidates to gain one-on-one teaching experience. The tutoring program is organized and coordinated through our Field Experiences Office. [5.1.m Partner Collaboration](#)

Performance Evaluation: Initial and Advanced Levels:

Concordia's faculty believes that an evaluation process is necessary "to monitor and assess the effectiveness of an instructor within the context of the college's mission." Formative evaluation is a continuous process that primarily focuses on the improvement of an instructor's classroom effectiveness. Formative evaluations of teaching faculty are conducted on a regular basis.

Advancement in rank is contingent upon ongoing evaluation and reaching minimum standards for educational achievement, experience, ministry, and professional achievement. The expectations for each standard at each level of rank – graduate assistant, instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor – are outlined in the Personnel Handbook. [5.1.n Advancement in Rank](#) (p.36-40), [5.1.o Faculty List - Rank](#) (p. 138-142)

Candidates evaluate faculty performance using the Online Course Evaluation system. This is done at the end of each course by candidates at all levels. [5.1.p Online Course Evaluation](#), [5.1.g Online Course Evaluation Response](#)

Unit Facilitation of Professional Development: Initial and Advanced Levels:

Professional development at Concordia takes the form of advanced studies, participation and presentation at local, regional, and national conventions and convocations, and consulting work done in one's area of expertise.

The university has provided a reduced load weight for faculty members pursuing an advanced degree. Currently seventy-three percent of all full-time faculty members across the university hold the highest terminal degree available in their field. Fifty percent of the full-time faculty of the College of Education hold a doctoral degree. [5.1.r College of Education - Unit Faculty](#)

Concordia has shown a strong commitment to increased awareness and use of technology in the teaching process. The 2012 iPad initiative and partnership in the TechEdge program with University of Nebraska-Lincoln have provided impetus in effective use of technology in the teaching learning process. [5.1.s Professional Development Funds](#)

Standard 5.2.b Continuous Improvement

Since the last NCATE visit in 2005 six new faculty members have joined the College of Education at the undergraduate level. These were replacements for retiring members or for those who left for other positions. Specific areas of need were identified and new faculty members were chosen who had experience in the needed areas. New faculty members filled positions as program directors for early childhood, special education, elementary education, and middle level education. Current experience was an important consideration in hiring. [5.2.a Faculty Changes since 2005](#)

At the advanced level new program directors have joined the institution. All of them came with experience in their area. The challenge at the advanced level is finding sufficient qualified instructors for the multiple locations and delivery methods currently available. The Nebraska Department of Education requires 50% of those who teach at the graduate/advanced level to have an earned doctorate. We are currently at 47.5% with two others in the final stages of their doctoral programs. Their projected finish is spring 2013 which will raise our percentage to 52.5%. In an effort to improve on that percentage we are continuing to identify and contract qualified adjunct instructors for our graduate program. [5.2.b Graduate \(Advanced\) Instructors](#)

With the great number of adjunct instructors, (80% of those teaching this semester in advanced programs) we have made and continue to make a concerted effort to provide an orientation for new instructors that includes ongoing professional development opportunities, instruction in the use of our technology system, and support from our institution. We are also identifying people who have the necessary experience and academic qualifications to teach in our programs. [5.2.c Graduate Instructors 2010-2012](#), [5.2.d Adjunct Handbook](#)

The new Online Course Evaluation process was instituted in fall 2011 as a pilot program. We expanded the process in spring 2012 and have it fully implemented in fall 2012. Course evaluations are completed by all candidates, and information is available to the instructor, the program director/department chair, and to the Dean. Evaluations are part of the regular performance review with instructors. [5.2.e-f Online Course Documents](#)

The development of the Four Pillars of Faculty Ministry Service during the 2011-2012 academic year has given the institution a framework that addresses instructor performance in the areas of outreach, in-reach, academics, and scholarship. All faculty members finish a self-evaluation which is then used in discussion with their department chair and Dean. The goal is to identify strengths and interests of the faculty member and also to use the discussion as an encouragement to broaden the instructor's service involvement in campus life and beyond. The first full round of evaluations and discussions will be finished in fall 2012. [5.2.g Faculty Pillars](#)

Through the implementation of a 1-to-1 iPad initiative, Concordia will establish a common mobile computing environment within our Christ-centered academic community. Within that environment, we will empower teachers and students to increase their collaboration through the use of technological tools, discover opportunities to improve teaching and learning, and prepare our students for life beyond college in an increasingly complex technological world. Formal and informal professional development is offered at the department, college, and institutional level. Candidates are encouraged to bring their mobile devices to class for use in the teaching learning process.

Concordia University, Nebraska is primarily a teaching institution with greater emphasis placed on the teaching learning process than on traditional research and publication. The use of research in the teaching and learning process is focused on best practices that can be modeled in the classroom to benefit candidates. The curriculum mapping process undertaken by the College of Education for the teacher education programs will use current research as a guide for strengthening candidate learning. The faculty members have initially identified the goals set in state and national standards as well as the teacher performance areas of the Conceptual Framework as the baseline for the map. We have identified where concepts and standards are covered and to what extent. We have also identified where assessment is taking place. The next step in the process is to address the “gaps and overlaps” to provide better coverage and assessment of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for candidate success and the impact on learning for all students. [5.2.h College of Ed Curriculum Mapping](#)

Collaboration has increased as the institution’s need for field experience sites has evolved. Candidates now have field experiences with special needs students and with students of diverse backgrounds. Collaborations with the Seward Public Schools and with People’s City Mission in Lincoln have provided these sites.