

**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 6: Unit Governance and Resources**

The unit includes both the College of Education and the College of Graduate Studies. The Dean of the College of Education is the Unit Head. The Dean works in cooperation with the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies to coordinate programs. Each college has its own governance structure. Communication between the two Deans insures efficient operation of both programs and effective cooperation and communication between them. [6.1.a-d Concordia University Organizational Charts](#)

***Initial:***

Unit leadership at the initial program level includes the College of Education faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjuncts), the program directors, the education chair, the Dean of the College, and the Education Governance Committee. There are seven program directors – six in teacher education and one in parish education. [6.1.c College of Education Structure](#)

The Education Governance Committee consists of representative members from all constituent groups. Regular input is sought and included in decisions being made. The EGC exercises oversight of teacher education and approves programs, policies, and procedures for the College of Education. [6.1.e Education Governance Committee](#)

The Undergraduate Council consists of seven members elected from the full-time undergraduate faculty. The Undergraduate Council studies, evaluates, and reports to the faculty on policy matters affecting the academic life on the institution, the welfare of the faculty, and the life and welfare of the candidates. [6.1.f Undergraduate Council - Policy 1.105](#)

The Dean is the administrative head of the College of Education. The education chair assists with scheduling and faculty load weight. The unit has control over assignment of instructors to sections of courses, over methods used to present the program, and over scheduling of courses in the academic year as well as input into the summer term schedule. [6.1.g .1-2 Loadweight \(initial\)](#)

The College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences work closely together. Instruction in the subject content areas at the initial level is provided by the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences for courses assigned to them.

The unit has input into the fiscal and personnel needs of the program within the constraints of the overall budget set by the Board of Regents. The unit also evaluates program effectiveness and implements changes to the program based on needs assessment and data collection. The unit performs these functions within the limits set by the Board of Regents. [6.1.h Concordia Budget Process](#)

Regular review of courses and programs occurs at the faculty and program director level. Programs are evaluated and reviewed to insure alignment with state and national standards. Program changes are approved at the appropriate levels and necessary catalog changes are made on an annual basis. All publications used to advertise the teacher education programs are checked on an annual basis. [6.1.i-v Program Publications](#) (14 docs)

Faculty members are an integral part of recruitment as they meet with prospective candidates individually and in small groups during recruitment visit days. Recruiting and admissions practices are consistent with the goals of the teacher education program, all supported by a common understanding of the guidelines and limitations of the recruitment and admissions process.

Transition into the teacher education program is monitored by the Dean's office. Available services to assist new and transfer students include academic advising and academic support as well as access to the campus chaplain and the campus counseling office. Basic services are provided at no cost to the student. Services are widely publicized and easily accessible. Counseling services provide privacy of information. Faculty members are aware of the services provided and of the contacts and methods needed by students to access them. [6.1.w Student Handbook](#)

***Advanced:***

The Dean of Graduate Studies is the administrative head of the College of Graduate Studies. There are twelve program directors that report to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Six of these programs provide coursework in education. The Graduate Council oversees all programs. Recommendations for change come from faculty members or program directors and are then approved by the Graduate Council. [6.1.x College of Graduate Studies](#)

The Graduate Council consists of five members selected by the graduate faculty. The Graduate Council studies, evaluates, and makes recommendations to the graduate faculty on policies and coursework. [6.1.y Graduate Council Policy 1.415](#)

The Graduate and Undergraduate Councils oversee all programs within their respective areas. The councils provide oversight for program changes that affect more than one college. The faculty as a whole meets three times yearly to receive reports and approve changes in programs and policies.

#### **Unit Budget:**

Department chairs and others responsible for specific programs within the university prepare annual budget requests. These are consolidated and monitored by deans. Common templates are used throughout the university to provide consistency. Fiscal year budget recommendations are made at the lowest level and moved up through the decision-making chain to final approval by the Board of Regents. Monthly reports are generated for each program and shared with those responsible for monitoring the budget. [6.1.z CU Budget Summary](#), [6.1.aa CU Budget Process](#)

#### **Personnel:**

Assignment of course instructors and load weight is the responsibility of the Chair of the College of Education. Teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as online instruction is factored into the load weight. Faculty members who teach only at the undergraduate level are limited by Nebraska Department of Education rules to 24 hours of course load per academic year. Faculty members who teach at both the undergraduate and graduate level are limited to 21 hours of course load. Faculty members who teach only advanced level courses are limited to 18 hours. [6.1.ab.1-2 and 6.1.ac Loadweight documents](#)

#### ***Initial:***

Supervision of clinical experiences is assigned by the Directors of Student Teaching for the two placements (Student Teaching I and II). Load weight for supervision is assigned as one hour per three candidates in Student Teaching I and one hour per two candidates in Student Teaching II. Supervision load weight is part of a faculty member's total load weight for the academic year. [6.1.ad Student Teaching Load Weight](#)

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.

The undergraduate teacher education program includes three full-time administrative assistants in the College of Education. There are also five student workers assisting secretaries or faculty members with clerical work.

Faculty members receive regular training in technology. Each full-time faculty member has a mobile device and/or laptop computer with access to the university computer system and the Internet. The training provided focuses on appropriate use of the technology at varying levels of expertise.

***Advanced:***

Full-time graduate faculty members must 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. [6.1.ae Graduate \(Advanced\) Instructors](#)

Candidates in the advanced programs of administration, literacy, curriculum and instruction, ESL/ELL, and early childhood complete a practicum. The practicums are directly supervised by the course instructor.

Support personnel and office staff in the Graduate program include one part-time secretary and a student worker on the main campus and an administrative assistant, an enrollment manager, an enrollment coordinator, a student services specialist, a financial administrative specialist, and an associate registrar all located at the Fallbrook campus.

Course delivery has moved from an on-campus summer program to a program that is now offered on campus, in cohort format off campus, and in online courses with enrollment across the US. The online programs use a Blackboard based format with discussion boards. Cohort classes offered off campus also use the Blackboard format for part of their instruction. Technology training and support is offered through the instructional technology department of the university. Additional yearly adjunct workshops are held for professional development and program review. [6.1.af Graduate Adjunct Workshop](#)

**Unit Facilities:**

The institution completed the Thom Leadership Education Center (TLEC) on campus in the fall of 2000. Graduate coursework is offered at Fallbrook in the Lincoln area. The Teacher Administrator Center (TAC) and Burke High School in the Omaha Public Schools are used for graduate classes in Omaha. The buildings have adequate technology capabilities. [6.1.ag Thom Leadership Education Center](#)

**Resources including Technology:**

Concordia is also a member of the Nebraska Independent College Library Consortium, which includes an expedited interlibrary loan program providing books not currently available through the campus library. The library houses 159,300 titles and 181,400 volumes of material, of which 23,400 are online e-books. [6.1.ah Link Library](#)

Three professionals – a director, a catalog librarian, and a research and instruction librarian – currently staff the library. There are also 1.5 support personnel – an interlibrary loan/serials coordinator and a circulation supervisor – as well as twelve student workers in circulation and technical services.

**6.2.b Continuous Improvement*****Initial:***

Leadership in the initial programs has been divided among 7 program directors, 6 of whom are in charge in programs in initial teacher education. Program directors have 1 hour of load weight for their leadership. They are responsible for program content as well as recommendations for instructor assignments. The load weight was instituted in 2011-2012 and revisited and revised in spring 2012 for the 2012-2013 academic year. The original change impetus was to give greater authority and responsibility to the program directors. The revision recognized the unique nature of their programs and responsibilities compared to those of Arts and Sciences department chairs. This change increased authority and ownership of the programs. [6.2.b a College of Education](#)

New members have been added to the faculty since the 2005 NCATE visit. All filled positions resulted from retirement or a move to a different institution. Dr. Thad Warren joined the faculty in 2005 and became the Graduate Dean in 2012. Dr. Bernard Tonjes joined in 2006 as

Director of Field Experiences and has since also taken on the role of Director of Dual Credit. Amanda Geidel joined the faculty full-time in 2008 as director of the Special Education program. Annette Oliver joined in 2009 as Early Childhood Director. Beth Pester came as interim director of the Middle Level program in 2011 and became full-time in 2012. Shanna Opfer joined the faculty as a full-time interim in Elementary Education in 2011. All new faculty members come with significant, appropriate experience for their appointments.

The Education Governance Committee had been inactive for about a year. The intent of the reconstitution of the committee in fall 2012 was to provide broader representation from constituent groups. The committee hears reports and discusses and approves program changes for initial teacher education programs. [6.2.b.b Education Governance](#)

The faculty of the College of Education is currently in year two of a curriculum mapping process intended to review alignment of the program with state and national standards. Program content and assessment are key elements in the review. The process will help clarify goals for programs as well as instruction and assessment associated with those goals. [6.2.b.c College of Ed Curriculum Mapping](#)

Since its opening in 2000, the Thom Leadership Education Center (TLEC) has been updated to include wireless access throughout the building as well as two wired computer labs. The majority of initial teacher education courses are offered in TLEC. Candidate and instructional availability were the key reasons for the technology updates.

Full-time faculty members across campus were able to request an iPad for use in instruction and administration. The iPad initiative is intended to establish a common mobile computing environment within our academic community to empower instructors and candidates to increase their collaboration through the use of technological tools, discover opportunities to improve teaching and learning, and prepare our candidates for life beyond college in an increasingly complex technological world. This is especially important as candidates enter schools that use technology widely in the classrooms. Professional development opportunities are provided on a regular basis at the department, college, and institutional level. Eighty-four iPads have been purchased for faculty and staff since spring 2012.

In summer 2011 funds were allocated to full-time faculty members with a terminal degree for professional development use. Faculty members without a terminal degree receive financial support in completing a degree. Expenditure of funds is monitored through the Provost's office. This was the first significant allocation of funds for professional development that was not competitive as sabbatical funds had been in the past. Thirty-eight faculty members made use of the funds during 2011-2012. [6.2.b.d Professional Development Funds](#)

The institution uses Quality Matters to monitor their online courses. Quality Matters (QM) is a faculty-centered, peer review process that is designed to certify the quality of online and blended courses. All online instructors are required to complete the Quality Matters training. The institution has trained peer reviewers among the faculty. The training is required of both initial and advanced program instructors.

***Advanced:***

During the past two years additional full-time faculty and staff have been added to the College of Graduate Studies. This is in response to the growing number of candidates in our programs. Prior to 2009 the program was an on-campus summer term program with limited online opportunities. That spring K-12 Teacher Alliance (KTA) from Chicago was contracted to assist in marketing and recruiting for the advanced level teacher education programs. Enrollment grew and classes were offered at the Fallbrook Lincoln site and in two locations in Omaha. Recruitment for online programs continued in the spring. The programs have continued to thrive with current enrollment of 610.

The admissions process for graduate/advanced level candidates was revised to include a required essay where the candidate indicates his/her goals for entering the program. Essays give additional information to program directors as they work with candidates.

New faculty added included Dr. Kathleen Wheeler – Literacy/Reading Specialist, Dr. Vicki Anderson – ELL/ESL, and Dr. Alice Epstein – Special Education endorsement. Dr. Robert Smallfoot – Educational Administration, Annette Oliver – Early Childhood, and Barb Perlewitz – Curriculum and Instruction and Secondary Graduate Teacher Certification had been on staff prior to 2009. Staff members have also been added to meet the student services needs of candidates. Position descriptions have been reviewed and aligned with needs of the candidates and the programs. Dr. Smallfoot serves as a coordinator of education graduate programs. In that position he oversees scheduling and enrollment to provide maximum service to candidates and fiscal oversight for efficiency in course offerings. [6.2.b.e College of Graduate Studies](#)

With new directors, a review of curriculum alignment with state and national standards and a review of assessment needs were begun in the summer of 2012. Processes for admission and retention of candidates as well as candidate access to student services were also reviewed.

The budgeting process for the expanded programs continues to evolve. Program directors are more fully involved in enrollment projections and cost estimates for delivering instruction. Sufficient funds have been made available for an annual summer adjunct workshop for professional development and program review. The interviewing and hiring process for adjuncts has also been reviewed with changes implemented to streamline the process.

The institution also has a campus in the Fallbrook area of Lincoln with wireless access and a computer lab as well as the use of classrooms in two Omaha Public School buildings. All facilities provide access to technology for teaching and learning.

A study was undertaken in the fall of 2012 to determine graduate candidate persistence in the program. Using data from admissions, program directors, and the Registrar all candidates who entered the program from fall 2009 to the current term were tracked through initial registration, halfway through the program, and graduation. Persistence rates for programs ranged from 79% to 100% for those who registered for the first course. The intent of the ongoing study is to determine best practices to maximize candidate success in our advanced programs. [6.2.b.f Graduate Persistence Report](#)