Section 6 – Areas for Improvement

New information added for the 2016 report is in bold

Areas for Improvement related to Standard 1 cited as a result of the last NCATE review:

1. *The unit lacks sufficient evidence that advanced candidate dispositions are assessed.*

   ADV   From the Conceptual Framework that is a visual representation of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified for teacher education at Concordia University, Nebraska, the M.Ed. programs in the College of Graduate Studies and Adult Education have taken the disposition statements and transformed into a self-evaluation and placed this evaluation in two strategic classes within the assessment system built in Chalk and Wire. The two placements are positioned to demonstrate perceived growth in graduate students regarding the disposition statements.

   The M.Ed. programs in the College of Graduate Studies and Adult Education have a self-evaluation placed in two strategic classes (EDUC 501 and SOC 565) within the assessment system built in Chalk and Wire. The two placements are positioned to demonstrate perceived growth in graduate students regarding the disposition statements. Data collection has begun with the first of the two courses (EDUC 501), the results will be compared to the second class (SOC 565) when it falls in the sequence of courses.

2. *The unit lacks sufficient evidence that advanced candidates can integrate technology in the performance of their duties.*

   ADV   Technology integration is included in the Core Courses for all advanced programs. Specific technology integration is included in Psychology of Teaching and Learning (core), Curriculum and Instruction artifacts, the use of online Student Records System in special education, electronic teacher evaluation in Educational Administration, presentations in Literacy, and a technology assignment in ESL.

   Core Classes

   PSY 511 – All M.Ed. programs include PSY 511 (Psychology of Teaching and Learning) in their programs. It is one of four Core Classes that is included in all M.Ed. programs. This course identifies technology as being a useful tool in teaching and requires candidates to give explicit explanation of the use of technology in their classes as the use relates to this Core Class.

   Curriculum and Instruction

Examples of technology integration and the candidates' growth in understanding and application of the INTASC Model Core Teaching Standards are demonstrated through the artifacts they include in their portfolios, and culminates in their capstone project where they apply their knowledge, skills and dispositions of the standards in a project of their choice that demonstrates their leadership dispositions to assist others in their own professional development.

Special Education:

EDUC 558 – Students learn how to use an online Student Records System (SRS) to write, record and share required documents for services for students with disabilities (e.g. IEP, MDT, and Notification of Meetings).

EDUC 576 – Students learn how to use technology to collect data, provide student feedback, and assist in shaping behavior.

EDUC 591 – Students learn how to use a variety of apps to assist students with more severe disabilities with communication.

Early Childhood

The use of technology for Early Childhood Education is still being developed as is appropriate to the goals and objectives of courses that focus on teaching young children.

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Education 578 – Infants and Toddlers: Development, Methods, Curriculum and Assessment

The text discusses technology with infants and toddlers in Chapter 4. It relates the importance of relationships and play over screen time activities. It stresses the need for face to face interactions at this age.

Students research the internet to find and share at least two websites that would benefit parents of children birth to 3 years old.

EDUC 580 – Pre-Primary Education: Development, Methods, Curriculum and Assessment

Article Review - **Choose and read three to five peer-reviewed articles pertaining to one of the following topics and write an informed review of your chosen topic.**

- **Reggio Emilia or Project Approach**
- **Assessments for Young Children**
- **Technology in the Early Childhood Classroom**

Assignment: Why We Play Presentation

Play in the early childhood classroom is of the utmost importance for a young child's development. Unfortunately in today's world more and more administrators, boards and even parents do not understand the importance of play and want it removed from early childhood programs and replaced with "seatwork." As an early childhood expert, you must be able to defend and support the importance of play, not only with knowledge gained from your studies, but from research that shows what a developmentally appropriate classroom and program looks like. Another aspect of play in the classroom is the use of technology or interactive media. Should it be utilized? Is it an age appropriate learning tool? Can it be over used?

You have been given the responsibility of the program portion of a "Parent Night" at your school. Not only will parents be in attendance, but also the school board and administrators that are in charge of your building. Create a 15 to 18 "slide" Why We Play presentation (not including title and reference slides) that shares the importance of play in the early childhood classroom. At least one slide should be dedicated to the appropriate use of technology or interactive media. Each slide should include speaker notes of at least 75 words that accompany the graphics and/or photos. You can use any one of several software or web-based presentation tools (such as Prezi, Google Docs, PowerPoint, Open Office, Haiku Deck, Voice Thread, Zoho Show, Keynote, GoAnimate, Slideshare, PowToon, etc.) to create your assignment. Allow yourself to be creative and create an engaging presentation.

Along with your textbook (Curtis & Carter, 2008), use three other peer-reviewed references for this presentation. Include APA-formatted in-text citations and an APA reference slide at the end of the presentation.

EDUC 583 – Primary Education - Development, Methods, Curriculum and Assessment

Putting Our Thinking on Display

Understanding each student's learning style is very important for teachers to continue to find ways to reach and teach all learning styles. Based on the knowledge you gained through this week's studies, please address the following:

- Describe inquiry tools you use in your classroom.
- Examine how these tools help your students learn and grow.
- How do you think out loud in your classroom?
- Describe a few resources you use to strengthen your curriculum and elaborate on your reasons for your choices.

- Describe technology resources that you incorporate into your curriculum and the benefits of using those technology tools in the classroom.

Are any of your classroom assessments completed on the computer/iPad? If so, what are the benefits of using technology to administer assessments?

Primary Grade Unit Plan

Create a detailed unit plan using a topic that you teach or would like to teach in a primary classroom (grades 1- 3).

This plan should include, but is not limited to, time frame for teaching the unit, activities, basic lesson plans (goals for each lessons), projects, evaluations, state standards, and resources.

Include at least five lesson plans in your project. Be sure not to include a specific textbook as some cohorts may not have access to a specific textbook. Include technology- lessons or activities- in at least two of your lesson plans.

Brain Breaks

Brain breaks are needed throughout for day for everyone- teachers and students. They can be very simple or more complex. In light of the knowledge you gained this week, explain why brain break are important. Highlight some of the negative consequences of not taking these types of breaks.

Develop a short list of criteria for choosing a "brain break" type classroom activity, website, or app.

Explore the internet for different brain websites or apps. Choose two that peeked your interest and elaborate on how each fit the criteria you identified. Include the link in your post. Briefly describe at least one classroom brain break activity.

Final Project

As a graduate student, you bring unique needs to your graduate studies. Reflect on current classroom practice. Which topics are of interest to you? In which way could you improve emergent curriculum instruction within the classroom?

Choose a project to create that could be implemented into a primary classroom. The project does not have to be implemented before the project submission. Focus on the most pressing needs.

Here are some examples:

1. Create a plan for implementing developmentally appropriate practices into the classroom

2. **Develop a strategy for intervening with a struggling student**
3. **Develop a way to improve relationships with families and home literacy**
4. **Create a presentation about developmentally appropriate practices to be used at a staff meeting, grade-level meeting, or a parent night**
5. **Create thematic unit that infuses literacy (reading/writing) into every content area (science/social studies)**
6. **Create ways to incorporate cooperative learning strategies in the classroom**
7. **Create a parent presentation about appropriate use of technology at home and at school**

These are only a few ideas. Be creative. Be sure to include research and correlate it to your district and state standards.

Educational Administration

EDUC554 (Supervision of Elem/Sec School Instructors)
Each student is required to complete a teacher evaluation electronically and submit it. Many of the students who teach in Omaha and Lincoln school districts use electronic evaluation. Some of the other electronic systems being used are Marzano and Danielson.

EDUC612 (School Community Relations)
students will complete an electronic Communication Plan that includes a needs assessment designed to collect scientific polling through surveys, quantitative data, a sociological inventory, a timeline to carry out communication methods, communicate progress toward vision and goals, have a plan for communication methods such as written, oral, electronic, print, meetings, and events, and crisis procedures. Students will also complete an electronic sociological inventory of their community evaluating customs and traditions, power structures, population characteristics, communication channels, influential community groups, current economic conditions, and social tensions.
Students will make a video for their school's website to introduce themselves and their school to visitors, parents, students, etc. and write two letters. One letter to welcome their staff back to school and another letter welcoming your students and parents back to school. The letter and video will include an Introduction, make use of comfortable words, personalize their message, provide a way to receive feedback, talk about their school's successes, confront challenges, and articulate their vision.

Students will demonstrate the use of technology to exchange and manage information to write an electronic newsletter of at least one page (Arial 12 point font –Double Spaced – one inch margins – bottom, top, left and right) to address a hot topic area that was a pressing concern for parents according to the Phi Delta Kappan and What Parents Want articles. Students will align their ideas with the operations, mission, vision, and goals of the school along with the district's strategic framework to address the issue

they choose. Students will also develop and upload an electronic staff organizational chart.

Students will plan with their field experience mentor to develop and upload two (2) or more forms of written communication that include objectives for school publications such as a website article, Facebook news article, Twitter story, Newsletter article, etc. Your written communication should include clear objectives, have and identify community partners, families, and caregivers as the audience, have appropriate content related to a pressing school issue, have a well-designed layout, and use photos to enhance.

Students will work with their field experience mentor to make a checklist and plan training for frontline people who deal directly with parents and the public on a regular basis. They will apply oral and collaboration strategies to develop district relationships with community partners while receiving school visitors, handling telephone calls and correspondence, servicing complaints, meeting everyday contacts, during requests for information,

Students will develop a checklist for working with the media during a crisis. This will include when they might want to contact the media and develop a checklist for handling the aftermath of a crisis.

EDUC557 (School Law)
Students are required to do a review of the implications for social media. Students are encouraged to use technology to examine case law as well as district policies.

EDUC552 (Processes in School Administration)
In this course students are required to create a Power Point presentation describing what all is involved in being a principal.

EDUC553 (Administration of School Relations – Finance)
Students are required to create a Power Point with 7-10 slides that outlines an effective public relations plan with central focus being on school finance.

EDUC581 Introduction to Education Administration
Students are introduced to using electronic portfolios in this class as well as electronic forms to report data about their school.

EDUC551 Curriculum & Design
In this class students will use online articles and websites to find ideas and data to support their writing. Students will review their district policy in purchasing technology. Students will use animated video from Youtube (Cognitive Media – Sir Ken Robinson). In EDUC551 students will be asked to share some of their favorite 21st Century tools, resources and apps with their classmates.

EDUC552 Processes in Elementary/Secondary School Administration
Discussion questions are posed to students regarding the decision making process for beginning a one-to-one laptop program in their school.

EDUC610 School Resource Management
Students in this class will use PDF's. Students will review their home district's technology plan.

EDUC554 Supervision of Elementary/Secondary School Instruction
Students will use links on Wiki pages; Youtube videos; TedTalks; Youtube Searches; analysis of school websites; using technology in the hiring process; and will write a paper about the impediments to "computerization" of their school.
The final project is for students to create a video/slideshow.

EDUC557 School Law
Students in the School Law class will learn about Social Media issues that schools deal with (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, etc.) and how they will use/create policy, as an administrator, to deal with these. Students will also develop and/or review their district Technology Plan.

EDUC612 School Community Relations
Students in EDUC612 will be working to review and update district websites, Twitter, Facebook and or blog. Students will create a report on their district's electronic tools and use those tools to create a public opinion survey. Students will also create or review policy for dealing with the media (radio, television, and online) for the purpose of press releases in the case of a crisis at their school or in their community.

EDUC620 School Improvement Process
Students in EDUC620 will record a weekly journal that will aid them in creating a Personal Philosophy Video at the end of the class. Students will view TedTalks videos. Students will interview their mentor (usually building administrator) about the impact of technology on their school.

Literacy

EDUC 520 (Assessment)
A final project for this class is the creation of a workshop/presentation for a school system. This presentation requires the use of technology for its organization and implementation.

Much of this encouragement comes from each other - one might critique an article about using technology to enhance their literacy instruction. For example, one teacher reviewed an article about ways to use Nearpod:

One solution to including more technology in the classroom is by using Nearpod. Nearpod is an app that a teacher can log onto and create an account. Once the account is created, the teacher can find and create quizzes, polls, or draw. With Nearpod, students can log into the quiz or whatever, and then they will see slides on their screens. The teacher has control of when students move to the next slide together. Teachers should check out the video on www.nearpod.com in order to learn more about the program (Delacruz, 2014).

Other teachers read this/respond with their own ideas/uses of iPads or other classroom technology. This is one example - much of the encouragement comes from collaborating with each other.

Many of our candidates include the use of technology in their classrooms. Several students write about using iPads to facilitate the writing process in their classroom. They have mentioned revising and peer editing works well with classroom technology. In addition, students have recommended several websites for their peers in relation to that week's particular topic. In my opinion the students that I have worked with are very comfortable with technology and have expressed that they use what is available to them in their school districts.

Special Education:

EDUC 558 – Students learn how to use an online Student Records System (SRS) to write, record and share required documents for services for students with disabilities (e.g. IEP, MDT, and Notification of Meetings).

EDUC 576 – Students learn how to use technology to collect data, provide student feedback, and assist in shaping behavior.

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TESOL

TESOL and ESL Endorsement students complete an assignment that is submitted to C&W entitled "Big Deal eBook Review" during EDUC 525 (the second course in the sequence). This assignment requires students to evaluate Internet resources and discuss how they would use them in the teaching of an ESL class or a class with English language learners.

Areas for Improvement related to Standard 2 cited as a result of the last NCATE review:

1. *The unit does not consistently analyze data for program and unit improvement.*

   ITP Sufficient data has been collected in our Teacher Assessment Data (TAD) program to allow us to analyze for program improvement.

   Department meetings are held after each semester to review the data from our annual assessment project and also to look at candidate progress based on the evaluations completed by faculty, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors. All evaluations are aligned with our Conceptual Framework which is based on InTASC standards and Nebraska Department of Education requirements.

   ADV During the 2013-1014 academic year, the College of Graduate Studies and Adult Education began a search for a tool to use of data collection and analysis. The tool chosen was the software program Chalk and Wire. Each M.Ed. program is required to have an exit portfolio for program assessment. The use of Chalk and Wire will allow data collection by course by program.

   The use of Chalk and Wire has provided data collection by course by program. The integration of Chalk and Wire began across all M.Ed. programs March 2, 2015. The first set of data from all M.Ed. program directors was collected for a January 31, 2016 deadline. Each M.Ed. program has an initial set of data for program assessment. A second set will be collected July 31, 2016.

2. *The unit does not involve the professional community in the development and evaluation of its assessment system.*

   ITP An Education Governance Unit that includes institutional and stakeholder members has been formed to provide input and feedback on EPP processes and systems.

   The Education Governance Committee meets at least twice each academic year to review teacher education programs and to discuss evaluations and data collection. The committee consists of three members from the Teacher Education program, one member of the College of Arts and Sciences, two members who are practitioners in P-12 schools, and two teacher education candidates.

   ADV With the implementation of Chalk and Wire as the gathering tool for program assessment, the use of an electronic portfolio has been in the forefront of discussion across programs and within programs, including choosing artifacts and assessment of those artifacts.

With the continued implementation of Chalk and, the use of an electronic portfolio continues to be in the forefront of discussion. The professional community has been heavily involved in each program to delineate the appropriate program assessment per course per artifact.

3. *The unit does not systematically and comprehensively monitor candidate performance at transition points.*
   ADV
   a. Entrance into a graduate program
      i. Baccalaureate degree
      ii. GPA
      iii. Entrance essay
   b. GPA throughout the program
   c. Program completion
      i. Exit portfolio
      ii. Artifacts that demonstrate knowledge, skills, and disposition related to program outcomes
      iii. GPA
      iv. For programs that will lead to an added endorsement, Praxis II exams will be a requirement for adding that endorsement and will begin September 2015.

Additional information on candidate performance by program

Curriculum and Instruction
This is a work in progress. At the time this report was written, candidates' performance was monitored upon entrance into the program by meeting the entrance requirements, and at the end with their portfolio review. With the transition to the partnership, each standard is now being monitored through the courses they are associated with through the written Standard narrative which includes their rationale for the standard's importance to their profession, how they apply the standard in their practice and the dispositions they have toward the standard with the research they have conducted and shared. They also identify the artifact(s) associated with the standard to include in their portfolio to include in their rationale statement, and their plans for future professional development.

TESOL
TESOL and ESL Endorsement students are monitored for progress in lesson plan writing through a SIOP Lesson Plan that they submit to C&W for EDUC 524 (course 1 in the sequence) and then for EDUC 527 (final course in the sequence for ESL

Endorsement students; next-to-last course in the sequence for TESOL degree students).

TESOL and ESL Endorsement students are monitored for ESL teaching-related performance at the end of each course which requires fieldwork experiences: EDUC 524 (course 1 in the sequence), EDUC 525 (course 2 in the sequence), ENG 530 (soon to become EDUC 623, course 3 in the sequence), EDUC 526 (course 4 in the sequence) and EDUC 527 (final in the sequence for ESL Endorsement students; next-to-final course in the sequence for TESOL degree students).

Educational Administration
Evidence that candidate performance is systematically and comprehensively monitored at transition points.
Students are required to write a *Philosophy of Education* paper as an assignment in their first class (EDUC582 Intro of School Administration) and again in their final class (EDUC620 School Improvement Processes).
Students are monitored throughout their program by the Program Director for practicum hours and state standards (NDE Rule 24) through the use of an electronic portfolio turn-in class.

Areas for Improvement related to Standard 4 cited as a result of the last NCATE review:

1. ***Candidates do not have opportunities to interact with unit faculty who are racially diverse.***
   ITP - One of the standards of our Concordia University System identity statement is that faculty members are active members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. National searches are conducted for all open faculty positions, but we have very few applicants of racial diversity. Our current faculty and staff at the institution include two people of minority descent.

   The College of Graduate Studies and Adult Education at Concordia University, Nebraska has entered into an academic partnership with Concordia University, Portland and Concordia College, Bronxville. This partnership has added a new route for adding instructors for the M.Ed. classes. This route has had a greater national effect in hiring instructors. The unit faculty has gone from primarily Nebraskans to faculty from 36 states and the District of Columbia

2. *The unit does not assure that all candidates have the opportunity to work with diverse P-12 students.*

   ADV   The candidates' work in practicum experiences may be limited to the school where they are hire to teach. They may additionally be limited geographically to a rural homogeneous environment. The unit is unable to assure

that all candidates have the opportunity to work with diverse P-12 students due to the limiting factors of work placement, home placement, and time constraints of the work day.

3. Candidate proficiency related to diversity is not assessed.

ADV   Similar to the response as to why candidates may not have an equal opportunity to work with diverse P-12 students, candidates may have a lack of opportunity to be assessed relating to proficiency in diversity.