Institutional Report on Teacher Education

Fall 2010

SMSU Education Department

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Introduction

Part A. Institutional Profile

      Established by the Minnesota legislature in 1963, Southwest Minnesota State College enrolled its charter class in 1967. In the intervening 43 years, the university has undergone several name changes, beginning with a change from the original name to Southwest State College in 1975, then to Southwest State University, finally to Southwest Minnesota State University in 2007.   SMSU is one of seven state universities and one of 32 colleges and universities governed by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU).   Reflecting its current name, the university will be referred to as Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) in the remainder of this document, regardless of time period referred to. SMSU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), most recently in 2004, with the next HLC visit scheduled in 2013-14.

      SMSU is located in Lyon County in southwestern Minnesota in the city of Marshall, a city of about 13,000 people. Marshall is a regional hub and population center with approximately 200,000 people in the surrounding area. The MN legislature founded SMSU with a primary service area of the surrounding 19-county region in southwest Minnesota. Farming- and agriculture-related industries are economic factors in the community, along with the Schwan Food Company, U. S. Bank, and SMSU as primary employers.   The Regional Event Center and various sports-related venues such as the Recreational/Athletic Facility are located in Marshall on or near the SMSU campus.

      The K-12 public school system includes Park Side Elementary, West Side Elementary, Marshall Middle School, Marshall High School, and Marshall East Campus Learning Alternatives, an alternative high school. There are also several private, parochial, and charter schools in the area. Early childhood programs include Early Childhood Family Education and Head Start in cooperation with Western Community Action; there are also preschools and child care centers, including one of the latter on the SMSU campus.

      SMSU offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs, including distance learning degrees designed for students who cannot travel to the campus. Undergraduate degrees include the Associate in Science, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Applied Science, and Bachelor of Arts. Graduate degrees include the Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Special Education, and Master of Science in Education.   Distance learning two-plus-two programs delivered through articulation agreements with technical and community colleges are offered for completion of the Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Applied Science in Management as well as the Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education.

Several types of information about SMSU may be accessed via the Web site: www.smsu.edu, and clicking on College Portrait in the bottom right corner of the screen. The College Portrait URL is http://www.collegeportraits.org/MN/SMSU. SMSU also has posted an online 2009-2010 FACT BOOK and currently has multiple online reports available on the Data Management Web page. The 2009-2010 FACT BOOK is available at http://www.smsu.edu/Administration/DataManagementInstitutionalResearch/Index.cfm?Id=6321. The FACT book includes demographic information about SMSU administration, faculty, and staff on pages 36-39. Information includes aggregated data for gender, age, rank distribution (for faculty), and salary for each employee group. Of the full-time faculty, two list their race as black, one as American Indian/Alaskan Native, four as Asian/Pacific Islander, and two as Hispanic. The remaining 96 faculty are listed as white. There are a total of 204 faculty members, with 113 being full-time and 91 part-time. Demographic information about students is available in the 2009-2010 FACT BOOK mentioned above.

Southwest Minnesota State University is a collective bargaining institution as prescribed in the Minnesota Public Employment Labor Relations Act. Bargaining occurs at the system level, rather than at the level of individual state universities. Interaction between faculty and administration takes place through a meet and confer process described in the Master Agreement between the Board of Trustees and the Inter Faculty Organization, the statewide faculty collective bargaining representative. Relationships between the administration and other employee units are also governed by collective bargaining contracts and meet and confer structures.

The U.S. News and World Report named Southwest Minnesota State University the number one college in its category on nine occasions. Criteria for rankings include peer assessment, average freshman retention rate, average graduation rate, percent of classes under 20 students, percent of classes of 50 students or more, student-faculty ratio, percent of full-time faculty, acceptance rates, and average annual giving rates.

Part B. Mission of the University
Southwest Minnesota State University is one of seven state universities that are a part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system. The MnSCU mission describes the system's overall purpose:

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system of distinct and collaborative institutions offers higher education that meets the personal and career goals of a wide range of individual learners, enhances the quality of life for all Minnesotans and sustains vibrant economies throughout the state.

The system's vision describes the system's overarching goal:

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system will enable the people of Minnesota to succeed by providing the most accessible, highest value education in the nation.

The mission and vision of SMSU fit within that of the MnSCU system's mission and vision:

Mission. Southwest Minnesota State University prepares students to meet the complex challenges of this century as engaged citizens in their local and global communities. Our comprehensive degree programs, taught in the liberal arts tradition, are dedicated to connecting students' academic and practical professional development experiences in southwestern Minnesota to the wider world.

Vision. Southwest Minnesota State University is a university of choice.

The mission and vision of SMSU was most recently revised and approved by the MnSCU Board of Trustees on September 17, 2008.

Goals. The University's goals, derived from the mission, establish the priorities for strategic planning and future decision making at SMSU:

1. The primary focus of all activities is to facilitate the learning experience of our enrolled students. All faculty activities, both within and away from the classroom, are designed to enhance the learning environment.

2. It is essential for SMSU to remain current with technological advancements in delivering classroom and laboratory knowledge to assure maximum interest, impact, and retention by our students.

3. Our faculty recognize the evolving environment in which we all live and the need to insure involving students with current information and developments from the world stage.

4. Student involvement in the learning experience is critical for retention, leading to our dedication to pedagogical improvements that have been shown to enhance the learning experience.

5. We are committed to being good stewards of our resources through demonstrating environmental and fiscal responsibility. Moreover, as responsible citizens and good stewards of our resources, we foster actions, programs, and scholarship that will lead to a sustainable future.

6. We maintain and consistently seek to improve a comprehensive system of support services designed to assist our students in any way possible during their tenure at SMSU and on into the next stages of their lives.

7. We believe in the integration of campus and community. We are committed to being responsive to the needs of southwestern Minnesota and recognize that partnerships with community entities provide us with valuable talents and expertise.

8. We value a safe environment for intellectual expression and encourage open and civil communication.

9. We value a campus safe for all members of the university community.

10. We value maintaining and enhancing a physical design to provide access to all members of the university community.

11. We embrace diversity by developing a quality, comprehensive educational environment that fosters interaction among people of all religions, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, physical abilities, and ages.

12. We foster cultural understanding on campus through social, educational, and administrative interaction with our diverse population of international students. We offer the opportunity to learn about different cultures through participation in our Global Studies programs.

13. We believe that the southwestern Minnesota region provides rich opportunities for learning that go beyond the traditional classroom and lab settings—community-based learning experiences. Therefore, we are committed to creating a variety of applied learning experiences that enhance students' practical problem-solving skills and strengthen their commitment to civic engagement.

The first version of Southwest Minnesota State University's Biennial Strategic Plan was published and distributed in December 2002. The format of this Plan for the Academic Years 2007-2012 is consistent with the original planning document (Biennial Strategic Plan, 12/2002). Supporting documents that contain more detail are available on the University's web site at http://www.smsu.edu/Administration/StrategicPlanning and in the offices of the Vice Presidents and the Office of the Provost. The SMSU Biennial Strategic Plan for 2007-2012 encompasses objectives with the seven strategic goals:

Goal One. Southwest Minnesota State University will continue to be the higher education institution of first choice in southwest Minnesota. Southwest will offer high quality academic programs; improve the curriculum, strengthen communication, marketing, enrollment, and campus beautification; cultivate relationships with employers and emphasize more opportunities to regional junior high and senior high

students.

Goal Two. *Southwest Minnesota State University will create comprehensive learning experiences for its students.* Southwest will increase cross-cultural interactions, offer integrated academic, co-curricular experiences, and encourage faculty and staff to attend professional meetings and conferences thereby creating a broad education focus, developing a comprehensive First Year Experience, actively seeking participation from a diverse population.

Goal Three. *Southwest Minnesota State University will develop students' talents to prepare them to be successful in life.* Southwest will develop the systemic integration of student services, student life, activities, academics, and other aspects of university life; establish an integrated approach and assessment of the advising process, graduation requirements, internships, employment, and non-employment student outcomes.

Goal Four. Southwest Minnesota State University will establish a distinguished record as a student-centered higher education institution. Southwest will advance electronic communications between all members of the University community and stakeholders in the University. Southwest will develop an integrated system of co-curricular transcripts.

Goal Five. *Southwest Minnesota State University will contribute significantly to the quality of life in southwestern Minnesota.* Southwest will facilitate access of SMSU facilities by the regional community; work collaboratively to identify regional issues and solutions; actively seek financial resources to improve the region's quality of life; and serve as a center for economic and social research.

Goal Six. Southwest Minnesota State University will manage itself to ensure high quality standards and to optimize its fiscal, human, and physical resources. Southwest will focus on the Vision Statement and Core Values to provide resources for achievement of long-term goals. Coordinate the collection, analysis, and use of data to improve teaching, learning, and institutional effectiveness according to Higher Learning Commission guidelines. Southwest will continue to decrease its environmental footprint by reducing energy use and obtaining energy from renewable sources.

Goal Seven. *Southwest Minnesota State University will optimize its fiscal, human, and physical resources.* Southwest will optimize enrollments, securing public and private resources and working external constituencies to ensure adequate levels of funding. Southwest will hire qualified candidates with outstanding credentials, experience, and provide opportunities for training and professional development. The facilities master plan and the University's mission to maximize the usefulness of its

facilities will guide Southwest. The mission, vision statement and priorities with values of stewardship, accountability, and partnership will guide future planning with the community established by the Brown and Gold Task Force.

Part C. Teacher Education Profile

The competency/performance-based teacher education program at SMSU is based upon state and national standards. It moves its candidates from research and theory on best practices in education into classroom practice to support the development of highly qualified teachers with a focus on student learning. To understand the current model, *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching*, it is important to know some of the nearly 40 years of history of continuous development in teacher education at SMSU.

History of the Program. The Teacher Education Program at Southwest Minnesota State University was approved by the Minnesota Department of Education in 1971 (1986 *Institutional Report on Teacher Education,* p. 36). This was also the year of the charter graduating class of 241 candidates. The program has always been innovative and highly experiential, preparing teachers to succeed in a variety of settings. It was designed as a competency-based, individually guided program where preservice teachers demonstrated their ability to influence the appropriate learning of students. The three original core concepts were (a) individualized, (b) personalized, and (c) field-based; these concepts supported the development of learning and teaching skills. Candidates worked with advisors to make decisions about their learning programs. It was recognized that competency development required varying lengths of time for study, research, and experience.

The Individualized Learning Building included the Learning Center, which was the hub of learning for teacher education on the campus. The original program was designed with modules and competency packages (ComPacs or learning guides) that allowed each candidate to proceed at an individual pace. Group seminars provided learning opportunities on specific topics. The program model included five steps:

> Identify educational outcomes
> Determine the condition of the learner
> Select materials, activities, and reinforcements for the learner
> Organize and manage the learning environment
> Evaluate progress and assess the new condition of the learner

Within a few years a sixth step, Human Relations, was added. Faculty members were trained by the Institute for the Development of Educational Activities in components of Individually Guided Education. They then provided training, based on the philosophies and components of the program, to area school personnel.

In about 1981, a cohort model of Education Blocks was added to create more of a social context for learning and teaching. The Elementary and Secondary/K-12 Education Blocks included clusters on growth and development, theories of learning, school organization, and philosophy of education. Each block had a field experience component.

Regular experiences in public schools from initial observations to student teaching were and remain valued. One of these experiences, the clinical field experience, required the candidates to team plan and teach a thematic unit with learners for two days in an area school. This practice continues today.

Originally, five districts were designated Center Schools (Canby, Granite Falls, Marshall, Montevideo, and Pipestone); they served much like the Professional Development School model. A coordinator, jointly hired by each district and Southwest Minnesota State University, provided support to classroom supervisors and preservice teachers in that district. In 1986, there were eight cooperating schools with contracts to supervise student teachers: Canby, Fulda, Granite Falls, Marshall, Montevideo, Pipestone, Redwood Falls, and Tracy. Other rural southwest Minnesota schools were available for early field experiences. Today, Southwest Minnesota State University has contracts with 74 schools for the supervision of student teachers.

By the 1991 Minnesota Board of Teaching review, the Teacher Education Program described the *effective educator* as one who created a positive climate where all students had an equal opportunity for learning, who understood that self-esteem was the first building block to growth, who used a variety of research-based teaching strategies that kept students actively involved, and who was a self-renewing person (*Institutional Report on Teacher Education, 1991*, p. 31). While terminology is somewhat different, the consensus beliefs identified by faculty then are similar to the values and beliefs supported by the program today. The consensus beliefs identified in 1991 included:

> Inclusive education as a constant goal
> Self-respect and respect for others
> Empowerment and involvement of both teachers and students
> Partnership with parents and community
> The problem-solving nature of teaching and learning
> The power of cooperative and collaborative actions (p. 32)

In 1991, a new licensure program in Early Childhood Education (ECE) began and had its first program completers in 1993. The B.S. in Early Childhood Education shared the same conceptual framework as other programs and included additional practicum and internship outcomes specific to early childhood (*1996 Institutional Report*, p. 5).

During this time, a required interview for Teacher Education Program candidates was added to the process of admission. The admission process had previously been a review of the written application materials. A point system was added to determine qualified candidates.

Monitoring candidate progress throughout the program was done by the Education Department faculty through regular staffing related to performance in course content, language competency, and field experiences. Candidates' dispositions (habits of mind and heart) were identified and assessed using the Teacher Education Readiness Inventory, with indicators similar to those published by Selection Research, Inc., of Lincoln, NE. Technology also received emphasis through specific courses and seminars.

Elementary education seniors graduating in 1991 were the first to be required to participate in the Portfolio Project, funded by the Minnesota Board of Teaching. Each education course syllabus indicated one assignment to be completed for the portfolio, and dispositions were emphasized through this portfolio development. An elective course, ED 303 Professional Development, was designed to expand upon and support the process. Candidates in the Secondary/K-12 licensure programs were invited, but not required, to participate in the Portfolio Project.

A new Master of Science in Education nonlicensure program enrolled its first students in 1995 with nineteen candidates in the first cohort group. Each candidate selected a specialization in Early Childhood, Education Leadership, Elementary, Health, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Science, or Social Studies. A specialization in Language Arts and Literature was added later. The program evolved to an off-campus Learning Community format in collaboration with the Minnesota High Success Consortium, Inc., a nonprofit organization. In 1998, Southwest Minnesota State University assumed full responsibility for the program. The program grew dramatically and the SMSU Administration separated the off-campus graduate, nonlicensure program from the Education Department, creating the Educator Development and Leadership Department in the spring of 1999. A smaller on-campus Master of Science Learning Community nonlicensure program remained in the Education Department.

In 1996, Southwest Minnesota State University filed an *Institutional Report on Teacher Education* for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Minnesota Board of Teaching (BOT). An intensive review and revision process evolved into the conceptual framework, *Communities of Teachers and Learners*. The Education Department has an ongoing commitment to the concept of inclusive learning communities, "where the different experiences of participants are valued and brought together for the good of everyone. In the teaching/learning community, those held first under our care in classrooms and schools are the students" (*1996 Institutional Report*, p. 3). The program model included a Venn diagram with *the learner* in the center of three components, *content, collaboration, and assessment*. The four program outcomes were

Use learner-centered models of teaching and learning
Engage learners in challenging content
Use a collaborative approach
Demonstrate accountability for goals and assessments.

Education faculty members collaborate with the SMSU library personnel to provide resources for technology and information literacy. Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education majors are required to conduct an action research project that includes support from the library. These projects have supported the development of leadership skills for candidates, as well as inquiry and data-driven teaching and learning practices.

Throughout SMSU's history there has been collaboration with stakeholders in the process of continuous development of teacher education programs. The collaboration has included input from current students, alumni, cooperating school personnel, university supervisors and community representatives to the Teacher Education Advisory Committee, and faculty from arts and sciences along with physical education through the Campus Liaison Committee.

Southwest Minnesota State University converted from quarters to semesters during the 1996-1997 academic year. This meant revising all programs while the Minnesota Board of Teaching was also implementing changes to the licensure structure. It was a transition year that was the beginning of many significant changes for teacher education at SMSU. In 1996, SMSU was not sufficiently organized for national standards, and NCATE accreditation was not achieved. The Board of Teaching, however, affirmed that SMSU graduates were highly qualified teachers and approved the continuation of all programs.

In 1997, Southwest Minnesota State University began the process of redesigning all teacher education programs to meet the new BOT licensure structure. By fall of 2001, all of the newly revised programs had been approved. During this time, there were many other changes occurring in teacher education at SMSU, including increased numbers of candidates and budget concerns. Even with these challenges, a focus on quality teacher education was maintained. In addition, extended options for teacher education were implemented with articulation agreements between SMSU and two community colleges.

An articulation agreement with Minnesota West Community and Technical College (MnWest) in June 2001 made it easier for MnWest students in Early Childhood Education to complete their four-year teaching degree at SMSU. The MnWest students completed their Associate of Arts degree and then worked toward the B.S. in Early Childhood Education at SMSU.

Another articulation agreement was signed with Central Lakes College (CLC) in Brainerd in November of 2002. This agreement provided the SMSU Elementary Education degree on the CLC campus in north-central Minnesota. The first cohort of 40 candidates began in the fall of 2001. This program was discontinued in 2007 due to low enrollment in the program and continuing budget concerns at SMSU.

In the fall of 2002 the Minnesota Board of Teaching approved four Special Education licensure fields at SMSU: Developmental Disabilities, Early Childhood Special Education,

Emotional Behavior Disorders, and Learning Disabilities. The addition of these programs helped to fulfill a longtime goal of SMSU.

The Reading licensure program was approved in 2003 and was offered for the first time in 2004. This program provides an additional licensure option to teachers throughout the area to provide intensive support to struggling readers in grades K-12.

The 2 + 2 ECE program began with a grant from the Bremer Foundation in 2005. The program is based on articulation agreements from AA, AAS, and AS degrees in technical and community colleges across the state. These articulation agreements allow students to complete a four-year Bachelor of Science degree for licensure in Early Childhood Education at Southwest Minnesota State University through a distance learning program. This program was first offered in 2006 and has grown as programs such as Head Start have started to require formal training for their teachers.

More information about the major accomplishments of the Education Department and the Teacher Education Programs can be found in the annual progress reports from the past several years. The Annual Reports for the past two academic years are available online on the Academic Deans' website.

Context for the Current Program. The 2009-2010 academic year brought a host of new changes to Southwest Minnesota State University, the Education Department, and the Teacher Education Program. First, SMSU worked throughout the year to develop a new Liberal Arts Core to be implemented in the 2010-2011 academic year. The faculty of SMSU worked together to design a liberal arts curriculum that would assist learners in meeting the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum via ten learning outcomes. More information on the LAC revision process, the student learning outcomes, and the proposed curricular items can be found at http://www.smsu.edu/Academics/LiberalArtsCore/index.htm .

The second change was the Minnesota State College and University system mandate to have all majors meet a 120 credit maximum threshold. This change is also due to be implemented during the 2010-2011 academic year. This requirement was intended to be met by all education programs during the fall of 2010, but recent changes in what courses are allowed in the MnTC have led to SMSU filing for an exemption for all programs in Education.

The third group of changes was brought about by the Minnesota Board of Teaching. The addition of new Standards of Effective Practice in the area of reading necessitated the addition of a new course in Early Literacy and Linguistics for Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education majors, and the addition of new content to the Teaching Reading in the Content Area course for the Secondary/K-12 majors. Another major change was the conversion of the Elementary Education licensure from a grade K-6 with a required specialization to a stand-alone grade K-6 Elementary Education license with optional endorsements. This requirement went into effect during the fall of 2010.

The final changes for the Teacher Education Program at SMSU came in the form of a change in faces. Associate Provost, Dr. Mary Hickerson, retired in June of 2010, and was replaced by our new Associate Dean, Dr. Vernon Harlan. Our Dean of Business, Education, and Professional Studies, Dr. Donna Burgraff, left in June of 2010 and was replaced by Dr. Daniel Campagna in July of 2010. Senior faculty member, Dr. JoAnne Glasgow, retired in August of 2010, and was replaced by Dr. Sonya Vierstraete. We have had several turnovers in the director for Placement and Licensure, with this position presently held for the second year in 2010-2011 by Interim Director Sheryl Kaiser. Both of our long-time support staff members also retired in the summer of 2010. Joyce Persoon, administrative assistant for the Education Department, was replaced by Carol Bossuyt. Dianne Eis, administrative assistant for the Placement and Licensure office, was replaced by Marcia Hubner. This plethora of personnel changes has left a void in our historical knowledge at both the institutional and program levels.

As of the fall of 2010, the licensure programs in SMSU's Teacher Education Program include the following:

Early Childhood Education (Birth – grade 3)

Elementary Education (K-grade 6) with optional endorsements:

    Preprimary (adds ages 3-5)

    Grades 5-8 Communication Arts/Literature

    Grades 5-8 Mathematics

    Grades 5-8 Science

    Grades 5-8 Social Science

    K-8 World Languages & Cultures: Spanish

Grades 5-8 General Science

Grades 5-12 Communication Arts/Literature emphasis

Grades 5-12 Communication Arts/Speech emphasis

Grades 5-12 Health

Grades 5-12 Mathematics

Grades 5-12 Social Sciences

Grades 9-12 Biology

Grades 9-12 Chemistry

K-12 Music: Instrumental Emphasis

K-12 Music: Vocal Emphasis

K-12 Physical Education

K-12 Visual Arts

K-12 World Languages & Cultures: Spanish

Offered as additional licensure to previously licensed teachers:

Special Education: Early Childhood Special Education

Special Education: Developmental Disabilities

Special Education: Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

Special Education: Learning Disabilities

Developmentally Adapted Physical Education (DAPE)

K-12 Reading

The SMSU Education Department applied to the Minnesota Board of Teaching for approval of licensure in English as a Second Language. Approval of this program was granted in September, 2010, and it will be offered for the first time in the fall semester of 2011.

Direction for the development of teacher education at SMSU is guided by the conceptual framework *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching*, state and national standards, the mission and vision of teacher education, wisdom of practice, and a focus on learning by all. This provides the assurance of high-quality teaching and learning for all who are involved in the teacher education program.

Part D. Mission and Vision of SMSU's Teacher Education Program
The mission of the Teacher Education Program aligns with the mission of MnSCU and SMSU. The mission and vision of the Professional Education Unit were adopted by the Education Department during the fall semester of 2001. They were revised and updated several times, with the latest revisions approved in May of 2009.

The Mission. The mission of the Professional Education program at Southwest Minnesota State University is to create communities of practice where each leaner is an active participant in the investigation of learning, teaching, and leadership processes. Teachers and learners will engage in educational theory, research, inquiry, critical reflection, and application in pursuit of excellence in education.

The Vision. Communities of practice investigating learning and teaching.

Part E. Conceptual Framework

The Professional Education Unit at Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) is the undergraduate and graduate faculty responsible for the licensure programs in the Education Department, along with the Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies. Undergraduate and graduate teacher licensure candidates demonstrate the Minnesota *Standards of Effective Practice* and the standards of the SMSU conceptual framework *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching.* The nonlicensure graduate education program candidates demonstrate the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards and the standards of the SMSU conceptual framework *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching.* The framework illustrates a relationship between learning and teaching in the context of participation in communities and the world.

Communities of Practice. Communities are social units where people live and work together in a variety of ways and in a variety of places. In communities, people participate in communication, negotiation, ownership, values definition, and sociocultural interactions. Communities of practice are developed to provide opportunities for educators to experience authentic, caring relationships. Participation in purposeful, inquiring, inclusive communities is critical for effective learning (Banks & Banks, 2003; Boyer, 1995; Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2009; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Jalongo, Jalongo, & Elam, 1991; Nieto, 2009; Palloff & Pratt, 1999; Peck, 1987; Senge, 2006; Senge, Kleiner, Cambron-McCabe, Smith, Lucas, & Dutton, 2000; Sergiovanni, 1994; Shapiro & Levine, 1999; Wald & Castleberry, 2000; Wenger, 1998).

Community members are constantly involved with collaborative projects. Over time the collaborative learning results in practices that reflect these efforts and social relationships. Practice is a process of experiencing the world and negotiating or constructing meaning out of participation. Wenger (1998, p.5) defines practice as a "way of talking about the shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives that sustain mutual engagement in action." Learners and teachers reflect upon their practices, make decisions as they implement instruction, and interact with peers. Professionals prepare in their fields through reflection, both "in" and "on" practice (Schon, 1990). As a result, they form understandings of instruction by generating theories about their practice, also described as "growth through practice" (Dantonio,

2001; Lieberman & Miller, 1999). Members of communities of practice struggle with a full range of experiences, such as successes and failures, chaos and order, harmony and conflict (Senge, et al., 2000; Wheatley, 2001).   Engagement is a process driven by values, doing, and learning. It informs community members about their developing talents that are productive in learning to teach. Practice and community come together when people are engaged in actions and relationships that give meaning to all types of experiences.

These Communities of Practice are gaining ground in PreK-12 education in the form of Professional Learning Communities. "The basic structure of the PLC is composed of collaborative teams whose members work *interdependently* to achieve *common goals,*" (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2004, p. 3).   Current research on professional development supports the importance of collaborative and collegial learning environments where colleagues reflect on learning strategies which have been implemented in the classroom (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Fogarty and Pete (2009-10) report that teachers who are involved in collaborative review of implemented practices demonstrate deeper understanding; this insures transferability of new learning to professional practice. The SMSU conceptual framework model *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching* is well suited to the structures that our teacher candidates will be involved with as they move into their early professional teaching assignments.

Investigating Learning and Teaching. Learning and teaching are linked. While learning takes place without teaching, effective teaching results in intended learning. Interaction depends upon providing resources and opportunities to create a context for meaningful participation and practice with a focus on learning.

Constructivism, a theory about knowledge and learning, has emerged as a foundation for understanding the teaching and learning process (Abdal-Haqq, (1998); Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Dewey, 1997, 1938; Girod, 2002; von Glasserfield, 1996). Investigating is the study of conditions necessary for learning and teaching (Dewey, 1997, 1916). Teachers provide learning environments where learners search for meaning, appreciate uncertainty, and inquire responsibly. Mutually, learners and teachers support sociocultural interactions, cooperative learning, and interdisciplinary curricula (National Research Council, 2001).

Communities of practice are formed to engage learners as co-owners of investigation into learning and teaching. Community members practice reflection, self-study, assessment, collaboration, and action research. From investigation into relationships between learning and teaching, students and instructors develop a perspective that meaning and relevance are important factors in the education process. Candidates, as well as faculty, create opportunities to understand relationships between learning and teaching (Danielson, 2006).

The Seven Core Values. To accomplish the mission of the Southwest Minnesota State University Teacher Education Program, the conceptual framework Communities of Practice

Investigating Learning and Teaching includes the core values of (a) inquiry, (b) human diversity, (c) sociocultural interactions, (d) learning environments, (e) belief, value, and knowledge structures, (f) democracy, and (g) leadership. Inquiry involves the use of research and reflective processes for learning. Affirming human diversity helps to support inclusive communities of practice. Sociocultural interaction requires understanding and applying cultural and social learning theories in context. Belief, value, and knowledge structures mean that learners organize their beliefs, values, and knowledge and construct meaning to guide practice. Positive learning environments nurture and enhance learning. The word 'environments' is plural to suggest that learning occurs in any environment, not only in schools. Democracy practices the principles of equitable and respectful treatment and encourages caring citizenship. Leadership is participatory learning opportunities and processes; responsibilities are shared by community members. A leader is anyone who facilitates them.

The Model. The conceptual framework is illustrated by a modified Yin Yang model. This model illustrates balance among forces that reflect natural parts of the dynamic learning process in Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching. In the colored model, tan suggests the diversity of communities. The green reflects growth through practice. The light blue represents the continual movement of the professional education process.

Concluding Statement. Learning to teach is about making connections between how perceptions and behaviors in instructional performance affect students, the curriculum, and learning environments. It is with a holistic understanding that educators take responsibility (action) to deepen awareness of the importance of investigations into learning and teaching through communities of practice.

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Part F. Actions Taken Since Last BOT Visit November 2003

After the November 2003 Board of Teaching Institutional Evaluation visit, Southwest Minnesota State University was granted continuing approval to prepare teachers in all licensure areas previously approved. The review team saw evidence that graduates were highly qualified to teach in their areas of licensure. Of the 40 BOT standards, there was one that was met with team comment and two that were not met (BOT Final Report 2003).

The area that was met with team comment was A(3): Assessment and evaluations are integral components of the professional education sequence and are used to monitor teacher candidate performance and program effectiveness. The team found this standard to be met with the system of assessment checkpoints in place at the time, and felt that the unit's ability to monitor performance and program effectiveness would be strengthened by the assessment system design that was proposed. This assessment system (*LiveText*) has been implemented gradually over the past several years and the unit intends to achieve full implementation in the 2010-2011 academic year.

The two standards not met are both related to this. E(4): The institution uses authentic performance-based assessments and systematic procedures and timelines to determine whether candidates have the knowledge and skills needed to advance through the program, and F(2): The unit demonstrates a systematic and comprehensive assessment design that is applied to all candidates throughout professional preparation. In the summer of 2003 the Performance Assessment Committee outlined the components for an assessment system of checkpoints that would be used to determine candidate competency and monitor students in the program. The unit was required to submit a written status report to the Minnesota Board of Teaching providing an update on the Department's activities to implement the proposed comprehensive performance assessment system. This report was submitted in June of 2006 and detailed the work of the Education Department in meeting the recommendations identified by the evaluation team (BOT Status Report on Assessment 2006).

The self-study report that follows describes additional actions taken since the last BOT visit to assure highly qualified teacher candidates and graduates. This includes a flexible, organized structure that supports continuous review and development of teacher education at SMSU.

Chapter 2

Evidence of Meeting Standards – Initial Licensure Programs

Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) is committed to providing strong programs and to developing highly qualified teachers within *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching*, based upon research, theory, and best practice. Programs are guided by a vision and mission that support development through learning, teaching, and leadership. Chapter 2 will describe and analyze current practices and evidence for quality in the initial licensure programs in relation to the 53 Minnesota Board of Teaching (BOT) Institutional Standards, which are organized into eight parts: A. Professional and Pedagogical Studies, B. General and Content Studies, C. Clinical and Field Experiences, D. Candidate Qualifications, E. Monitoring and Advising Candidate Progress, F. Competence of Candidates, G. Qualifications, Composition, and Assignment of the Professional Education Faculty, and H. Institutional Governance. Chapter 2 will provide evidence of strengths and make recommendations to the University for effective change.

Part A. Professional and Pedagogical Studies

Candidates must have knowledge of the foundations of education and best practices pedagogy to ensure that P-12 students are provided the high-quality learning experiences that allow them to develop the skills in critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation recommended by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2004). Candidates in SMSU's Teacher Education Program are engaged in connecting learning and teaching through active participation and inquiry in communities of practice. All candidates have multiple opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to effectively learn from, teach, and lead P-12 students.

There are a variety of practices that ensure high quality in the professional and pedagogical studies for teacher education candidates at SMSU. The Teacher Education Program integrates the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice and the Minnesota Content Standards as well as the standards of the department's Conceptual Framework. In addition to these standards, there are themes that assure high quality in the performance of candidates and graduates of SMSU's Teacher Education Program. These themes include early and regular links between theory and practice, diversity components, the integration of technology, and systematic communication.

High Quality Professional Education Programs

A(1) The institution has high quality professional education programs that are cohesive, comprehensive, and based on research, theory, and accepted practice.

SMSU's Teacher Education Program is built around the standards and themes referred to above and are developed to be cohesive, comprehensive, research-based, and focused on theory and best practices in education. Evidence for this can be found in the various documents cited or linked to the following five areas (standards, early and regular links between theory and practice, diversity components, technology, and systematic communication).

Standards. The Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice (SEP), the Content Standards (CS), and the standards of SMSU's Conceptual Framework *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching* provide the structures for assuring that the Teacher Education Program at SMSU are interconnected and based on research, theory, and best practices in education. The SEP are based on the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) principles, which thus provide continuity with other programs across the country. All of the individual SMSU Teacher Education Programs have been reviewed and approved by the Minnesota Board of Teaching to assure alignment to the Standards of Effective Practice and Content Standards (see the alignment matrices in the binders of Programs and BOT Approvals). The National Educational Technology Standards and Performance Indicators for Teachers (2008), developed by the International Society for Technology in Education, are introduced in a core foundational course (ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development) and are aligned to education courses. The standards of the *Communities of Practice* are aligned to the SEP (see the Education Department website) and to each of the education courses. Candidate proficiencies are assessed based on these multiple standards.

The Conceptual Framework (CF) *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching* was developed by professional education faculty at SMSU in 2002 and was reviewed in 2007. The research base supporting the framework can be found in the CF description in Chapter 1. The CF standards were integrated into SMSU's Teacher Education Program beginning in the fall semester of 2002. The SMSU Education department website (http://www.smsu.edu/Academics/Departments/Education/Index.cfm) provides support for communicating the framework to stakeholders. The CF is also included in the template for the Teacher Education Program portfolio template used by all initial licensure candidates. It is introduced to candidates in ED 101 Introduction to Education, and later reviewed in ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications, courses required for all education majors.

A syllabus template for education courses was developed to support a comprehensive, coherent, and research-based approach that would assure that the standards (SEP, CS, CF, dispositions, diversity, technology, and Minnesota Academic Standards) were integrated within courses and field experiences. This template was used for the first time in the fall semester of 2002 and has been integrated into courses and field experiences since then.

Candidate performance on standardized tests has been strong. The number of program completers passing the Praxis I Basic Skills Test in reading, writing, and mathematics in the past three years is comparable to the state pass rate, as are pass rates for the Praxis II exams in Pedagogy and Content. For more information on the results of Praxis I and II exam tests for the past seven years, see the Title II reports available in the Exhibit Center.

Early and regular links between theory and practice. The research base for connecting learning and teaching, theory, and best practices in education are supported in SMSU's Conceptual Framework *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching* (see Education Department website). The conceptual framework encourages a cohesive and comprehensive approach to linking theory to research-based best practices in education beginning in the first foundations courses and continuing throughout the Teacher Education Program.

All SMSU initial licensure programs share a common foundations core of courses and field experiences. Professional and pedagogical standards are introduced in the freshman courses ED 101 Introduction to Education and lab (3 credits) and ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development (2 credits). Prior to entry to the Teacher Education Program, candidates are required to complete 60 credits, which include specific grade requirements in the Liberal Arts, such as ENG 151 Academic Writing (4 credits) and SPCH 110 Essentials of Speaking and Listening (3 credits) with a grade of 'B-'or better, and MATH 110 College Algebra (3 credits) with a grade of 'C' or better. The education foundation courses introduce teacher candidates to themes that continue throughout the program, such as developing communities of learners, content knowledge, inquiry processes and critical thinking, diversity, technology, decision making, ethics, school and society, and the Minnesota Academic Standards. A 15-hour field experience tied to ED 101 Introduction to Education provides an opportunity to investigate and connect theory and best practices in learning and teaching. Provisions are made for transfer students to take these block courses immediately upon admission to SMSU if needed.

The teacher education programs at SMSU are known throughout the region for the quantity and quality of the field experiences in which candidates have regular opportunities to practice using the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for learning, teaching, and leadership. The initial field experience is intended to occur during the freshman year in ED 101 Introduction to Education. Candidates are assigned to a cooperating school classroom for 15 hours where they observe, tutor, and teach a basic lesson to P-12 students. They are introduced to the use of lesson design and the practice of writing reflections of their experiences. This first-year field experience is one of the unique features of teacher education at SMSU that is a cornerstone to other national models such as the UTeach program (www.uteach.utexas.edu).

During the sophomore or second year at SMSU, candidates have another valuable field experience during SPED 290 Introduction to Special Education and Lab. Teacher education candidates are assigned to a cooperating school classroom for 15 hours where they observe,

shadow, and work with a student with special needs in both the special education setting and in an inclusive general classroom setting. Candidates are asked to develop lesson plans with accommodations and/or modifications for the student and to assess the effectiveness of the plans based on student responses and feedback from the mentor teacher. Candidates continue with written journal reflections on their experiences. The field experience is intended to assist candidates in valuing diversity and inclusion in the regular education classroom.

During either the sophomore or junior year, candidates take a course relating to the growth and development of children. Elementary and Early Childhood Education majors take ED 251 Introduction to Child Growth and Development (3 credits), while Secondary/K-12 majors take PSYC 341 Child and Adolescent Psychology (3 credits). Candidates also take ED 312 Human Relations for Teachers (3 credits), which allows them to delve into issues relating to gender, culture, socioeconomic status, as well as other areas that can impact student achievement and development.

During the junior year, candidates have unique clinical experiences that teach about curriculum development, student motivation, and community building. Early Childhood majors have a year-long experience that provides opportunities to learn about thematic units, work sampling, and supportive environments. Secondary/K-12, Elementary, and Early Childhood majors participate in a two-day Clinical experience in local schools in which they teach all classes for their mentor teacher. University supervisors and mentor teachers provide feedback and evaluation during the experience, and candidates participate in written reflections on their teaching. Both Elementary and Early Childhood majors take part in the Junior Year Experience in which they are placed with one mentor teacher and students for their methods courses lab experiences (Developmental Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Action Research). This experience culminates in a ten-day Pre-Student Teaching experience (required of all education majors) during which candidates teach multiple lessons from a unit they design, video tape their instruction, and reflect through written journals and a visit from a university supervisor. Evaluations from the mentor teacher and the university supervisor provide evidence of the satisfactory completion of this experience required as eligibility for student teaching.

Student teaching is the capstone experience in which candidates demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and dispositions for teaching, learning and leading. They document their proficiency in meeting the Standards of Effective Practice, Content Standards, and the SMSU Conceptual Framework standards. More information about field experiences can be found in Part C of this chapter.

Diversity component. Efforts have been made at both the university level and the department level to provide opportunities to experience diversity both within the campus community and in the communities we serve.

The Office of Admission and the SMSU admission counselors undertake numerous activities related to recruitment of a diverse student population that includes students of color, international students, students with disabilities, first generation students, and students from low-income families. SMSU is a member of the Minnesota Association of Counselors of Color (MNACC) and attends events organized by MNACC, which is comprised of representatives from urban inner city schools. Admission counselors also attend Latino and Hmong college fairs, national college fairs, and other fairs likely to attract students of color. SMSU participates in the Page Scholarship program, a scholarship program developed by MN Supreme Court judge and former Viking Alan Page to sponsor and encourage minority students to attend college.

SMSU participates in Admission Possible (AP) and hosts a group of AP students on the campus each summer. Admission Possible is "a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping promising, low-income young people prepare for and earn admission to college" (from the Admission Possible Web site). Relatively few public universities in MN participate in the AP program, which includes mostly private colleges and universities. Further information about Admission Possible is available at http://www.admissionpossible.org .

The Academic and Diversity Resources area offers a variety of services and programs to support students. One such program is TRiO SucceSS, a federally funded program for first generation, low income, and disabled students who need academic support and/or other support services with the specific goal of retaining students. The Summer Bridge program, part of TRiO SucceSS, is open to 15-20 students who need a "jump start" (see http://smsu.edu/CampusLife/LearningResources/Index.cfm?Id=4870 for further information) on their academic careers. The students receive individual attention and additional academic support during their 7-credit summer enrollment.

SMSU is permitted to recruit for athletics outside the 5-state area for diversity purposes. In 2009-10, there were 4 international students who were members of SMSU athletic teams and several students of color from states outside the area. The number of athletes who are students of color varies from year to year and from team to team.

SMSU is well known among high school counselors for its accessibility to students with physical disabilities and for the programs available to students with learning disabilities. While there is no direct route through which to recruit students with disabilities, the Office of Admission makes information about resources, physical and otherwise, available to high school counselors and invites students to visit the campus whenever possible.

Over the course of the last several years, SMSU has taken part in the Difficult Dialogues series. The SMSU Difficult Dialogues Initiative was first funded by the Ford Foundation in 2005. Since then, SMSU has eagerly accepted the challenges and the possibilities that this funding brings, and we find that there is a desire on our campus for: awareness and acceptance of differences; programming that is relevant to our particular campus and to our classrooms; and

reflection that leads to action. For more information on the Difficult Dialogues Initiative, please see the SMSU website at http://www.smsu.edu/CampusLife/DifficultDialogues/ .

At the department level, SMSU is committed to preparing teacher candidates who support the learning of all students. The Education Department defines *diversity* in inclusive ways as defined in prominent research (similarities and differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, age, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area). Professional education faculty members integrate diversity components into many courses (see course syllabi). Courses that have a specific focus on diversity are ED 312 Human Relations for Teachers, SPED 290 Introduction to Special Education and Lab, and ED 301 Teaching and Learning Processes and Lab. In these courses and labs, candidates are encouraged to connect school, family, and community contexts in relating P-12 students' prior experiences to real world applications. Field experiences in several settings assure that candidates work with a variety of students of diverse backgrounds. Many of the cooperating schools where our candidates are placed, including the Marshall, Westbrook-Walnut Grove, Tracy Area, and Worthington public schools, have had a surge in the level of diversity in their communities (see the Participation Data link). SMSU's Teacher Education Program works to prepare our candidates well to teach within these diverse and multicultural contexts. We have recently gained approval to offer licensure in English as a Second Language to meet the needs of teachers in these increasingly diverse communities.

Integration of technology. Cohesive, comprehensive, and research-based programs are supported and enhanced by technology. Electronic communication connects candidates, faculty, and P-12 partners in a variety of ways.

The SMSU Web site (www.smsu.edu) provides a variety of resources for candidates and other stakeholders. Key features are access to the library, Desire to Learn (D2L, our course management system on campus), and online registration for classes. Specific information about teacher education is found via two paths on the Web site: the Education Department and the Education Program paths. The Education Department path has information of general interest for teacher development (accreditation, governance, strategic planning, etc.). The Education Program path has information of specific interest to current candidates (advising materials, application forms, field experience guidelines, etc.).

SMSU has a commitment to preparing candidates who have information literacy and technology knowledge, skills, and dispositions. It begins in the freshman- or first-year course ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development, where candidates are introduced to the concepts and integration of computer applications in the educational classroom. Candidates create projects in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Publisher, Excel, and Access. Skills introduced here are developed further in other courses and field experiences. Education students are introduced to the D2L platform, accessing library resources both on campus and online, use of electronic whiteboards, the development of webquests, and more. Education department

faculty members align education courses and field experiences to the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) from the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). The syllabus template includes a place for this integration. Students are asked to integrate this knowledge of the effective use of technology tools in education in their lesson plans created for methods courses throughout their education program. The Education department's commitment to integrating technology has extended to its faculty members as well. As of fall semester of 2010, all but two members of the undergraduate faculty have taught/co-taught ED 102 Technology, ensuring that the faculty members are informed about what types of technology the students are able to use and that the faculty members are able to use them as well.

The Education Learning Center and classrooms in the Individualized Learning Building are wired for internet access. The SMSU campus has wireless access available throughout. Education faculty members use this capability for teaching and for providing opportunities for candidates to develop technology skills. Some faculty members support course experiences with D2L.

 Technology is used to communicate with candidates through e-mail, electronic mailing lists, the internet, and the campus intranet. Candidates are expected to actively and ethically use these tools for dialogue, assignments, and communication.

As a result of the 2003 Board of Teaching accreditation visit, the Education Department began development of an electronic assessment system for tracking data. To assist with this goal, *LiveText*, a Web-based commercial service, was adopted for use with all education students. The ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development course was increased from one to two credits to allow for the development of an electronic teaching portfolio for all education students, and instruction on how to use this tool is required for documentation in later education courses. The teaching portfolio is aligned to the standards incorporated into teacher education programs at SMSU. *LiveText* supports an electronic portfolio for candidates and provides tools for tracking assessment data. Specific standards are entered into the system (e.g., Standards of Effective Practice and the conceptual framework) to facilitate a consistent and formatted electronic portfolio. *LiveText* enhances the portfolio process that is required of all candidates and provides custom templates, consistent rubrics, and an exhibit center. It enables data to be aggregated and disaggregated for program analysis and effective change. The development of this assessment system has moved forward somewhat slowly at first, mostly due to frequent turnover of faculty developing its use, but is now beginning to realize its full potential.

Systematic communication. Participants in *Communities of Practice* value sociocultural interaction that supports high-quality programs focused on learning by all participants. Regular and systematic communication among all stakeholders is important in the process to maintain cohesive and comprehensive programs.

Communicating with and among candidates is a priority. Current students are informed of state adopted licensure standards such as Standards of Effective Practice in the foundation courses ED 101 Introduction to Education and ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development. Students learn to tie Standards of Effective Practice to their reflections on their field experiences in ED 101 and learn how to provide justifications and reflections for artifacts included in their *LiveText* teaching portfolios in ED 102. They learn of the specific program standards within these courses as well. One of the signature assignments added to the ED 102 course is the development of an Education Timeline, where students use the program advising guides to develop a timeline for the courses they will need to take. Students also include specific markers for applying for admission to the Teacher Education Program, applying for field experiences such as prestudent teaching and student teaching, completing the degree check process, and completing graduation requirements. All of the licensure standards for the various education programs are included in this timeline. Students are encouraged to retain this timeline for use in future advising and selection for course registration each semester.

As described in the technology section, electronic forms of communication are used and monitored. There are two strong candidate-led organizations that support communication. Candidates are required to subscribe to the Education Minnesota Student Program (EMSP) electronic mailing list. It provides information about teacher education from and for candidates, faculty, and staff. The Family and Child Education (FACE) organization of the Early Childhood Education program has an electronic mailing list that is required for specific courses. Both EMSP and FACE have regular meetings providing social, service, and professional growth experiences for candidates. Many of these meetings, as well as classes, occur in the Learning Center, which serves as a central place for community building activities; it was designed to provide space and materials where candidates gather to dialogue about learning and teaching. University calendar time is established for advising. Classes are canceled for a day, and faculty schedule advising times. Faculty members serve as advisors to candidates. Orientation meetings are scheduled by the Placement and Licensure office each semester for candidates preparing for Pre-student Teaching Experience and Student Teaching.

Communication with the campus community is another priority. During Fall Semester 2002, the Campus Liaison program was initiated to systemize interactions that had been happening informally prior to that time. Education Department faculty partnered with arts and sciences faculty and support services personnel. Participants meet as a large group at least once each semester to discuss SMSU's programs in teacher education. Liaison partners meet at other times during the year as well.

A third communication priority is with P-12 partners (cooperating schools). Classroom supervisors receive written communication about field experiences. University supervisors provide orientation to the student teaching process for classroom supervisors. The Teacher Education Advisory Committee, composed of P-12 classroom mentor teachers and administrators from cooperating schools, SMSU faculty, members of the Placement and

Licensure office, SMSU university supervisors, and teacher education candidates, meets each semester and provides input to the communication process. This input is used to inform and assess the teacher education program on a regular basis.

Communication within the Education Department is another priority to assure cohesiveness. A variety of meetings occur to foster common understandings, including meetings for faculty involved in the undergraduate, off-campus graduate, on-campus graduate/Special Education, and full department meetings. The administrative support staff members in the department play a valuable role in effective communication among teacher education stakeholders (candidates, faculty, staff, and P-12 partners). They regularly update their electronic communication skills and mentor student workers.

Recommendation. Continue to use data to inform the development of high quality professional education programs that are cohesive, comprehensive, and based on research, theory, and accepted practice.

Professional Sequence Based on Minnesota Standards

> A(2) The institution requires that candidates in teacher preparation programs complete a professional sequence of courses based on the components under part 8710.2000.

In 2007, the Education Department submitted all licensure programs for review to the Board of Teaching. Matrices showing alignment to the standards of Minnesota Rules Chapter 8710.2000 document how all of the programs integrate the Standards of Effective Practice and the content standards (see SMSU Programs and BOT Approvals in blue binders). By fall of 2009, all of the licensure programs were approved. In 2009-2010, the Board of Teaching added new standards in the areas of technology and reading, and revised the structure for the Elementary Education programs to have a stand-alone K-6 license with optional Endorsements. At the same time, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system required that all majors fit within a 120 credit cap. At SMSU, we also underwent a massive updating of our Liberal Arts Core. Trying to meet all of these changes in the same year while preparing for our Board of Teaching accreditation visit has been a massive challenge, compounded by the loss of our Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies and the retirement of a senior faculty member and both support staff members.

While completing the matrices showing alignment in 2007, several Campus Liaison meetings were held (see agendas). All faculty members across the SMSU campus who teach courses in any teacher preparation program are invited to attend these meetings. Chairs and

faculty in the College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences worked closely with the Education Department Accreditation Team to ensure that all questions were answered in regards to requirements for the preparation of teachers within their content areas. A liaison member worked closely with each of the departments involved, attending their department meetings and offering individual meetings as needed to complete the matrices. This allowed the Education department to keep liberal arts faculty working with teacher preparation knowledgeable about the adopted standards.

When the changes to various program involved changes in course titles, descriptions (Less than Major changes), addition/deletion of courses, or redesign of a program (Major changes), the changes were brought to the undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees for their review. If approved, the Major changes were then brought to the full faculty assembly for discussion and final approval. This provided the opportunity for input and involvement in the implementation of the new standards in the curriculum.

At this writing, the required licensure changes for the technology and reading standards and for the Elementary Education major have been completed. The matrix showing changes made to the licensure programs will be submitted shortly. A few of the Secondary Education majors are working to complete changes required to add some of their foundation content courses to the Liberal Arts Core or make other changes needed to meet the 120 cap. Again, the matrices showing changes to those licensure programs will be submitted as soon as possible. Changes to our Teachers of Reading licensure program were made, and we are working on the responses to the reviewers comments. We expect that all of the reviewers' questions will be addressed prior to November 1, 2010.

The licensure programs in place during the fall semester of 2010 include the following:

Early Childhood (Birth-grade 3)

Elementary (K-grade 6) with the following optional endorsements:

Preprimary

5-8 Communication Arts/Literature

5-8 Mathematics

5-8 Science

5-8 Social Science

K-8 World Languages & Cultures: Spanish

5-8 General Science

5-12 Communication Arts/Literature with emphasis in either English or Speech

5-12 Health

5-12 Mathematics

5-12 Social Science

9-12 Biology

9-12 Chemistry

K-12 Music with emphasis in either Instrumental or Vocal Music

K-12 Physical Education

K-12 Visual Arts

K-12 World Languages & Cultures: Spanish

Additional licensures available to those completing initial licensure in one of the areas listed above:

Developmentally Adapted Physical Education

K-12 Reading

Special Education, with one of the following emphasis areas:

    Early Childhood Special Education

    Developmental Delays

    Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

    Learning Disabilities

Autism certificate (nonlicensure)

To be added in the fall of 2011 (recently approved by the Board of Teaching, awaiting approval of revisions required by the Board of Teaching from MnSCU):

K-12 English as a Second Language

Special Education. The Master of Science (M.S.) degree in Special Education consists of a minimum of 34 credits. To complete the degree, all applicants are required to complete the special education core (15 credits), a minimum of one licensure area (12 credits), and the research courses (7 credits). All graduate requirements must be completed within a seven-year period.

Licensure in special education without a master's degree is possible if a candidate (a) holds a bachelor's degree, (b) holds a valid teaching license, (c) completes the special education core, coursework, and two practicums in a chosen licensure/specialty area, (d) receives a positive review of the professional portfolio, and (e) successfully passes the PRAXIS II/MTLE Special Education test.

The special education core courses are based on the components under Minnesota Rule part 8710.5000 and specific components of the licensure areas as indicated in each syllabus. The licensure courses are based on the components under each licensure area. The special education core courses and licensure courses may be taken concurrently. All coursework should be completed prior to or in the same semester as the second (final) practicum experience.

The following chart gives a list of courses required for licensure and degree completion. This information is available in the *2010-2012 Academic Catalog* through the University Web site, and in printed materials available in the Admission Office and the Education Department.

Southwest Minnesota State University

Special Education Graduate Program, 34 credits

Special Education Core (Mn BOT 8710.5000)   **Total Credits: 15 credits***

SPED-503	Behavioral Theories and Practices in Special Education	3 credits
SPED-523	Content Methods & Technologies for Special Education	3 credits
SPED-540	Assessment in Special Education	3 credits
SPED-570	Home-School-Community: Partnerships in Consultation/Collaboration	3 credits
SPED-580	Legal/Professional Issues in Special Education	3 credits

Specialty Courses (select at least one specialization)   Total Credits: 12 credits

Developmental Disabilities License/Specialization (Mn BOT 8710.5400)

SPED-621	Access and Support for DD	3 credits
SPED-641	Life Span Learning and Outcomes for DD	3 credits
SPED-681	DD Practicum in Special Ed: K-6	3 credits
SPED-691	DD Practicum in Special Education: 7-12	3 credits

Early Childhood Special Education License/Specialization (Mn BOT 8710.5500)

SPED-622	Foundations in ECSE: Birth to 6	3 credits
SPED-642	Programming for ECSE: Birth to 6	3 credits
SPED-682	ECSE Practicum in Special Education: Birth – 3	3 credits
SPED-692	ECSE Practicum in Special Education: 3-6	3 credits

Emotional Behavioral Disorders License/Specialization (Mn BOT 8710.5600)

SPED-620#	Characteristics of Students with Learning and Behavior Disorders	3 credits
SPED-643	Behavior Management and Teaching Strategies	3 credits
SPED-683	EBD Practicum in Special Education: K-6	3 credits
SPED-693	EBD Practicum in Special Education: 7-12	3 credits

Learning Disabilities License/Specialization (Mn BOT 8710.5700)

SPED-620#	Characteristics of Students with Learning and Behavior Disorders	3 credits
SPED-644	Teaching and Achievement Strategies for Learning Disabilities	3 credits
SPED-684	LD Practicum in Special Education: K-6	3 credits
SPED-694	LD Practicum in Special Education: 7-12	3 credits

Research Courses for Degree   Total Credits: 8 credits

ED 622	Applied Research & Assessment in Education	3 credit
ED 624	Action Research: Project Design	3 credits
ED 627	Action Research: Project Implementation	1-2 credits

* If all or some core classes have been taken for undergraduate credit, more specialty classes or graduate transfer credits may be selected to complete the degree minimum of 34 graduate credits.

This course satisfies both specialties.

Revised 6-12-09

K-12 Reading. The Master of Science (M.S.) degree in K-12 Reading consists of a minimum of 34 credits. To complete the degree, all applicants are required to complete the reading core courses (15 credits), the education core courses (11 credits), and the research courses (8 credits). All graduate requirements must be completed within a seven-year period.

Licensure in K-12 Reading without a master's degree is possible if a candidate (a) holds a bachelor's degree, (b) holds a valid teaching license, (c) completes the coursework and practicum (ED 451/551), (d) receives a positive review of the professional portfolio, and (e) successfully passes the PRAXIS II/MTLE K-12 Reading test. Minnesota Rule part 8710.4725 provides the foundation for the K-12 Reading courses at Southwest Minnesota State University.

The following chart gives a list of courses required for K-12 Reading licensure and degree completion. This information is available in the *2010-2012 Academic Catalog* through the University Web site, and in various printed materials available in the Admission Office and the Education Department.

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Southwest Minnesota State University

K-12 Reading Graduate Program, 34 credits

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Professional Education Core		Total Credits: 11 credits
ED 621	Critical Theory of Educational Systems	3 credits
ED 623	Professional Planning & Assessment	2 credits
ED 625	Research Based Analysis of Teaching & Learning	3 credits
ED 626	Democracy, Diversity, & Leadership	3 credits
Research Component		**Total Credits: 8 credits**
ED 622	Applied Research & Assessment in Education	3 credits
ED 624	Action Research: Project Design	3 credits
ED 627	Action Research: Project Implementation	2 credits
K-12 Reading Licensure Courses		**Total Credits: 15 credits**
ED 446/546	Advanced Developmental Reading Methods and Research	3 credits
ED 450/550	Reading Assessment & Evaluation	3 credits
ED 451/551	Differentiated Reading Instruction	3 credits
ED 402/502	Early Literacy & Linguistics	3 credits

ED 447/547   Teaching of Literacy   3 credits

* If all or some core classes have been taken for undergraduate credit, more specialty classes or graduate transfer credits may be selected to complete the degree minimum of 34 graduate credits.

Revised 10/14/10

Recommendation. We will continue to work to complete the documentation needed for the changes to any licensure programs that have not been submitted prior to the Board of Teaching accreditation visit.

Assessment and Evaluation

A(3) Assessment and evaluation are integral components of the professional education sequence and are used to monitor teacher candidate performance and program effectiveness.

The following section provides a general overview of assessment and evaluation of candidate performance and program effectiveness.

Candidate Performance. Four checkpoints are presently in place to consistently monitor progress of candidates: (1) admission to the teacher education program, (2) admission to student teaching, (3) satisfactory completion of student teaching and recommendation for licensure, and (4) performance of graduates. The following table gives assessment strategies employed by the Teacher Education Program at SMSU.

Table 1 Assessment Strategies

1. Article, book, or video review	12. Journal	23. Reading/Viewing Guide
2. Assessment Report	13. Lesson Plan	24. Reactionary Paper
3. Attendance Record	14. Microteaching	25. Reflective Observation
4. Case Study	15. Observation of Teaching	26. Research Paper
5. Class Assignment	16. Observation Report/Narrative	27. Self-Assessment

6. Class Discussion	17. Oral Examination	28. Skit or Role Play
7. Cooperating Teacher Evaluation	18. Participation Checklist	29. Simulation
8. Debate or Panel Discussion	19. PowerPoint Presentation	30. Student-Instructor Conference
9. Examination	20. Peer Evaluation	31. Unit Plan
10. Field Assignment	21. Portfolio Artifact	32. Videotaped Lesson
11. Group Project	22. Action Research	33. Examining Student Work Protocols

Admission to Southwest Minnesota State University. In order to be considered for admission into the teacher education program, candidates must first meet the University admission requirements for all students as described on the [SMSU website](#) and in the [SMSU 2010-2012 Academic Catalog](#).

University Admission Criteria

Freshman admission may be granted to applicants who meet the following criteria:

* Graduation from a regionally accredited high school with a composite score of 21 on the ACT or a combined verbal/math score of 990 on the SAT (ACT preferred). **Please note: The Writing portion is not required for admission.**

> **OR**

* Graduation from a regionally accredited high school and rank in the upper half of the graduating class

> **AND**

* Successful/satisfactory completion of the following preparation requirements:

-4 years of English, including composition, literature, and speech

-3 years of mathematics, including **2 years** of algebra (one if which is intermediate or advanced algebra) and **1 year** of geometry.

-3 years of science, including **1 year** of a biological and **1 year** of a physical science. Each should have a significant laboratory experience.

-3 years of social science including **1 year** of U.S. History and **1 year** of geography.

-3 years of specified electives. Students should have completed **3 years** of coursework in at least 2 of the following: world language, world culture or the arts.

-2 years of a single world language **(American Sign Language is accepted).**

The University will evaluate each applicant's credentials individually and note any deficiencies. Students admitted with deficiencies may be required to take additional coursework during their first year of attendance.

Students failing to meet the above class rank, ACT or preparation requirements may still be considered for admission under the Academic Opportunity-FYE program but should contact the SMSU Office of Admission for further details or criteria.

Students admitted under Academic Opportunity-FYE may be required to take specific coursework designed to enhance their opportunity for academic success. Semester credit limits, additional placement testing, and attainment of a minimum grade point average will also be required of students entering under this program.

Transfer student requirements. Students wishing to transfer from an accredited community college, technical college, or college/university must present a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. Students who have earned less than 24 semester credits from an accredited community college, technical college, or college/university with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale may be considered for admission but are required to submit qualifying high school documentation.

Checkpoint One: Admission to the Teacher Education Program

Students review requirements for admission to the Teacher Education Program as part of the ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development course, and include this item on their Education Timeline. The application packet is available in their *LiveText* teaching portfolio, on the SMSU Education Program webpage, or in print form in the Education office area. This packet contains the forms and lists the criteria for acceptance into the Teacher Education Program at SMSU. Students may submit applications during any of the enrollment periods, held on a rolling basis throughout the academic year and through the summer. The Chair of the Education Department and education faculty members review the information concerning each applicant and make recommendations as to whether to move the candidate forward for the interview.

In 2008, the passing rate for the Praxis I tests for teacher licensure at SMSU fell to 83.6%, below the state average of 91%. This, along with a change in the licensure tests for basic skills for teacher education candidates in the areas of reading, writing, and math, prompted changes to the criteria for admission to the Teacher Education Program. Suggestions for possible changes were made with input from SMSU administration, faculty in liberal arts core courses and core courses in the College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences, members of the Teacher Education Advisory Committee, education students and Education Department faculty. These changes were brought to the Campus Liaison meetings, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, and to the full faculty assembly, where they were discussed and approved. This intense input and review process provided the formal structures and opportunities for all faculty members to make sure that the teacher education programs at SMSU are cohesive, comprehensive, and based on available accountability data, research, theory, and accepted practice. Beginning with the 2010-2012 Academic Catalog, these criteria include the following:

Teacher Education Program Admission Criteria

Applicants must:

1. Have completed at least 45 semester credits prior to applying and show evidence that a minimum of 60 semester credits will be satisfactorily completed at the end of the semester in which the application is being made.

2. The minimum GPA requirement can be met by option A or B:

a. 2.8 cumulative GPA from all transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. The cumulative GPA requirement for admission to Teacher Education is different from the transfer of credits and grades for admission to Southwest MN State University. Students may plan with an Education advisor to retake at SMSU courses taken at SMSU or other colleges or universities in order to improve the cumulative GPA.

b. 2.8 GPA for at least two of the most recent four terms of college or university work. These two terms must each have a minimum of 12 semester credits of letter graded courses.

NOTE: The 2.8 cumulative GPA must be maintained for eligibility to student teach. All "I", "IP" or "F" grades must be successfully resolved to maintain eligibility for student teaching. A "C" grade or better must be maintained in all education courses to maintain eligibility for student teaching.

3. Have completed the following courses (or the equivalents) with a minimum grade of 'B-' in ENG 151 Academic Writing and SPCH 110 Essentials of Speaking & Listening, and a minimum grade of 'C' in MATH 110 College Algebra or higher LAC math (MATH 135, MATH 140, or MATH 150).

4. Demonstrated writing proficiency in education courses, documented in ED 101 Introduction to Education.

a. In ED 101, students will submit a writing sample to their instructor for evaluation; students who do not meet Education department standards are responsible for working with the SMSU Writing Center to improve written work.

b. In ED 101, students will be expected to review and edit at least 4 different written items other than their own.

5. Present biographical data.

6. Demonstrate competency in written communication by submitting an essay for application to the Teacher Education Program which describes his/her commitment to teaching. The essay will be reviewed for correctness in mechanics and spelling as well as for the ability to express ideas clearly.

7. Receive three positive recommendations:

a. Academic Reference Form: to be completed by a faculty member in your content area;

b. Education Faculty Recommendation: to be completed by a faculty member teaching an Education class you have taken; and

c. Intro to Education Classroom Experience Reference Form. The Classroom Experience Reference may be fulfilled by your Introduction to Education Field Experience Reference Form. If you are transferring in the Introduction to Education class, you will need to request a copy of this form and have it completed by a supervisor for a field experience with students from your prior school.

8. Complete the Teacher Education Readiness Inventory for the purpose of self-evaluation.

9. **a. Present evidence of liability coverage.** All SMSU Education students must hold personal liability insurance in an amount comparable to professional standards (minimum of $1,000,000). Students must have this coverage throughout their program in Teacher Education. This coverage which is available through EMSP must be renewed annually. The coverage for a school year is from September 1 through August 31 of the following year. Forms are available at

http://www.educationminnesota.org/pages/registration.aspx . Once you have enrolled, you will receive an email confirming your membership – bring or send a copy of this email to the Education Department for inclusion in your file. You will need to renew your membership yearly.

           b. Present evidence of enrollment in the EMSP list serve. All students need to subscribe to the EMSP list serve, as this is how we send program information out to students. To subscribe to the list serve, send an email to LYRIS@SSULIST.SMSU.EDU; type "subscribe emsp" in the body of the email, and leave the subject area blank. You should receive a confirmation email shortly after subscribing – bring or send a copy of this email to the Education department for inclusion in your file. This only needs to be done once.

      10. It is recommended you become a member of a professional organization.

      11. Submit results of the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam (MTLE) I Basic Skills test. Students who have not passed one or more sections of the test will be eligible for Conditional Admission to the Teacher Education Program, and will be placed on an Individualized Growth Plan. All sections of the MTLE I Basic Skills test must be passed prior to placement for student teaching.

This information provides the Teacher Education Admission committees, composed of education faculty members and faculty advisors from Arts, Letters, and Sciences, with indicators of basic skill development of the applicants. These requirements serve as the core entry-level prerequisites for admission to the Teacher Education Program at SMSU.

In addition to biographical data, three positive recommendations are required from applicants—one academic reference (usually from faculty in LAC courses in Arts, Letters, and Sciences), one Education department faculty reference from a faculty member who has had the candidate in one or more classes, and one field experience evaluation reference from the classroom mentor teacher in the ED 101 Introduction to Education lab, a 15-hour field experience.

By completing the Teacher Education Readiness Inventory, candidates experience self-assessment of dispositions and the skills of reflection. They must have taken the licensure test for evaluation of basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics (formerly Praxis I, now Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exams in Basic Skills). Test preparation resources are available online through the MTLE website (www.mtle.nesinc.com) and will be available in the Learning Center when print materials become available. SMSU Learning Resources provides tutoring for those candidates who seek and/or need assistance in the form of a Writing Center, Speech Center, and Math Lab. Education candidates are encouraged to take the foundation courses in English, Speech, and Mathematics required for admission to the Teacher Education Program during their freshman year, and to take the basic skills licensure tests early to allow sufficient time to address any deficiencies. If candidates have not passed all three areas of the basic skills tests at the time of admission to the Teacher Education Program, they can be admitted conditionally and will be provided with a Conditional Admission Improvement Plan to help them

address any problem areas. All three sections of the basic skills test must be passed prior to placement for student teaching.

Assessment and evaluation of education candidates begins with the ED 101 Introduction to Education field experience, a 15-hour lab placement in an area classroom. During this field experience, candidates are required to observe diverse learners in action and to assist in small group and tutorial activities. Near the end of this classroom experience a lesson is planned and taught. The classroom mentor teacher provides both verbal and written feedback. The written assessment is part of the evidence used for admission to the teacher education program.

The program portfolio requirements are explained during the ED 101 Introduction to Education course, together with the 10 Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice (SEP), which are modeled after the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards. Candidates begin compiling portfolio artifacts and enter them in their *LiveText* teaching portfolio to demonstrate progress toward linking learning and teaching and toward meeting the standards of the profession.

One primary way to assess what education candidates are hearing and seeing in early field experiences is through journaling. As candidates reflect on classroom experiences, they write about the learning environment. It is the intent of the SMSU program to support future educators who will be successful reflective practitioners. Evidence of reflective knowledge and skills is shown in the program portfolio.

In addition to the field experience assessment, applicants for admission submit an essay which demonstrates their commitment to teaching. The essay is reviewed for experiences with children, clarity of goals, as well as correctness in mechanics and spelling, and the ability to express ideas clearly.

Each applicant is scheduled for a 30-minute interview with a Teacher Education Admission committee. The purpose of the interview is to assess the applicant's overall potential as a teacher. The Teacher Education Admission committee is responsible for determining candidates who are qualified for admission. Appeals are brought before the Education Department. Based on submitted information and the interview, one of the following decisions is made:

Full admission

Accepted with routine conditions such as incomplete information

Accepted with conditions and a growth plan

Denied admission

The rationale and reasons for conditional admission or denial are shared in writing with the candidate. Candidates are informed of the decision verbally at the end of the interview and in writing through the mail. They have opportunities for addressing problems in a timely manner.

Students who transfer into the Education Department from another program must make an appointment with the Education Department chair or designee and/or the University transfer specialist to determine appropriate preparation for Checkpoint One assessment. Candidates must be admitted to the teacher education program before they enroll in any 300- or 400-level methods courses.

Checkpoint Two: Admission to Student Teaching

Elementary and Early Childhood Education candidates develop pedagogical content knowledge through specialized methods courses in communication arts/literature, mathematics, science, social studies, reading, health, physical education, music, and art. Assessment and evaluation for pedagogical knowledge are done across a candidate's program beginning with the ED 101 Introduction to Education field experience (see Checkpoint One). Many of these methods courses require concurrent field experiences, including tutoring, observing the characteristics of learners at specific grade levels, identifying classroom management techniques, assisting the teacher, developing age-appropriate lesson plans, and teaching lessons to an entire class. During each of these experiences, the classroom mentor teachers provide feedback to the candidates to improve their skills. Instructors of methods courses, classroom mentor teachers of field experiences, and other instructors or university supervisors support the assessment process for pedagogical and content knowledge. During field experiences, candidates are required to write journals analyzing best classroom practices that have a positive effect on student learning. Summary papers document what candidates observed, the level of participation, connections to theory or course discussions, and most importantly, reflections in response to experiences. Candidates assess student work in relation to the lessons they taught to determine what the students know and can do as a result of the teaching of the lesson. Candidates also continually revise and update their *LiveText* teaching portfolios to reflect the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice (SEP) and the SMSU teacher education program requirements. Opportunities to share ideas, experiences, and artifacts with peers, instructors, and advisors are scheduled both formally and informally throughout the candidate's program. Candidates then apply for student teaching.

Secondary/K-12 candidates are evaluated for mastery of content through their core courses in the Teacher Education Program and through the courses required for their content area major. Many programs have an additional GPA requirement for teacher education program candidates. Candidates must maintain at least a 2.8 cumulative GPA to continue advancing through the teacher education program. Currently this is monitored by Education Department faculty advisors and at the checkpoints.

All Education courses must be passed with a grade of 'C' or better for all education candidates.

The following criteria for admission to student teaching are identified:

Formal Acceptance to Teacher Education Program/Senior standing.
Application materials completed and submitted.
A cumulative GPA of 2.8 and record cleared of all "IP," "I," "W," and "F" grades in degree related courses.
All degree related courses completed or department approval required for exceptions.
Degree check completed or scheduled at Registrar's office.
Positive recommendation from Pre-Student Teaching Experience.
Elementary education majors must have a positive recommendation from their academic advisor.
Secondary education majors must have positive recommendation from their academic and education advisors.

The Director of Placement and Licensure and the education candidates' advisor are responsible for reviewing eligibility for student teaching. When questions about eligibility and/or placements arise, a meeting of the Director of Placement and Licensure, the Chair of the Education Department, and the student's education advisor is called to provide additional factors and date for decision-making. Requests for exceptions are brought to the Undergraduate Department meeting for final input and approval.

Checkpoint Three: Successful Completion of Student Teaching

The procedures for the placement of a candidate for student teaching begin when the candidate applies for student teaching placement after verification of successful coursework and field experiences. Placements are selected in a combination of early childhood, elementary, middle, or secondary settings. The Director of Placement and Licensure, Field Experience Coordinator, and the Field Experience Assistant collaborate with area administrators in the placement of candidates with qualified classroom mentor teachers.

During the student teaching experience, candidates develop lesson plans and assessments that give evidence of student learning. Candidates are observed for their ability to instruct and analyze their own success in instruction, to adapt instruction and curriculum to the needs of diverse learners, and to assess impact on learners and learning. Candidates monitor student learning in a variety of ways: observation, student projects, group work, and feedback from direct instruction. They are required to analyze and grade students' daily work and be responsible for assessment during a given period.

Candidates are observed and evaluated by the classroom mentor teacher and by a University supervisor to gather performance data about the prospective teacher's skills. These evaluations reflect the SMSU Education Department's conceptual framework and the Minnesota

Standards of Effective Practice (SEP). Discussion of the evaluations is conducted with a focus on improvement of learning for all students.

Important considerations are (a) what went well, (b) what could have been improved, and (c) what will be done differently in future lessons. Videotapes of lessons and regular reflective journals are used as informal assessments. Journals are either sent electronically or in hard copy on a weekly basis to the University supervisor.

Electronic journaling through e-mail allows the University supervisor to check in at intervals before and between scheduled visits. Candidates can post critical concerns and reflections and benefit from the supervisor's response more quickly than allowed by traditional means. This ongoing progress discussion ensures support at any time between visits to the classroom and is highly encouraged.

The Student Teaching Handbook includes the policy for Extension/Withdrawal/Termination of Student Teaching that is used when individual candidates need additional time, skills, and/or support to develop proficiencies as a teacher. The classroom mentor teacher, the University supervisor, the Director of Placement and Licensure, and frequently the principal and/or Chair of the Education Department work with the student teacher to implement a growth plan that assists the individual in making satisfactory progress. There have been a few occasions when a candidate has been terminated from student teaching. Advisors then work with the individual to support career development strategies and/or plans for teaching skill development.

All candidates are expected to document their developmental progress during student teaching in their *LiveText* teaching portfolio, using the ten Standards of Effective Practice as criteria. All candidates are required to take ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications, thereby establishing the advanced portfolio development process prior to student teaching. Candidates participate in a mock graduation portfolio review to provide feedback from review by peers and Education Department faculty members.

Upon completion of the student teaching experience, a summative conference is held with the candidate. The portfolio is presented and the classroom mentor teacher and University supervisor create written commentary for each of the ten areas of evaluation (see Student Teaching Assessment Form in the Student Teaching Handbook). The classroom mentor teacher and University supervisor collaboratively assess the proficiency of a candidate and sign the final assessment form that is placed in the candidate's credential file.

Criteria for Successful Completion of Student Teaching

Student Teaching Final Assessment

Student Teaching grade (Credit/No Credit)

Graduation Portfolio Review

Exit interview

Checkpoint Four: Performance of Graduates (at Graduation, 1st, 3rd, and 5th Years)

Assessing the success of SMSU teacher graduates has been informal. Graduates report that they have been hired to teach. Media stories of leadership roles that SMSU graduates take in schools and communities have begun to be collected, organized in the Learning Center, and/or reported on the Education Department Web pages. Unsolicited reports from area principals during the Teacher Education Advisory Committee meetings suggest that they are pleased with the performance of SMSU teacher graduates.

University-administered surveys of students (Student Satisfaction Survey and the Senior Survey) are available to provide broader information for assessing performance of graduates. The Graduate Survey conducted by Career Services indicates that SMSU teacher graduates are successful in finding jobs after graduation (see Graduate Survey).

The Education Department is exploring a process for development of more systematic means of assessing the performance of recent teacher graduates. Alumni and employer surveys have been proposed to assess perceptions of performance by graduates. Identification of education graduates and their employers remains a problem area as names of graduates may change and their mobility makes tracking them more difficult the longer they are out of college.

Program Effectiveness. The Education Department uses formal and informal means of assessing program effectiveness from within the Education Department, the region that we serve, and from broader, more formal resources. Faculty members use written assessments of course effectiveness to revise and make changes to courses they teach. Written assessments of the student teaching program are received from candidates and classroom supervisors. Area stakeholders such as classroom mentor teachers, University supervisors, area principals, and education students provide feedback at the Teacher Education Advisory Committee meetings held each semester. Title II reports provide data supporting the quality of the basic skills of SMSU teacher candidates. The Annual Report to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and the National Council of Accreditation in Teacher Education provides program assessment data. The Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education also collects data that is useful to SMSU in assessing program effectiveness.

Informally, the student organizations EMSP and FACE take leadership for providing feedback and program support to the Education Department. For example, the EMSP statewide

website publishes a number of informational documents to assist student teachers with issues such as classroom management and ethics in the classroom. Other informal means of assessing program effectiveness is to invite focus groups to campus or to hold meetings at P-12 school sites. An example of this is when kindergarten teachers in Marshall observed that, with the licensure changes, the preparation for teaching kindergarten seemed to be reduced. A meeting in a kindergarten classroom resulted in actions to integrate ED 318 Kindergarten Methods and 15-hour field experience into the required coursework for the Elementary and Early Childhood Education programs.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Assessment is an ongoing process in the K-12 Reading and Special Education graduate programs. Initial assessment is in the admission process, which includes a statement of career objectives by the candidate, two letters of reference, and an initial teaching license. A minimum GPA of 3.0 must be maintained throughout the graduate program. If a student falls below the minimum GPA, the student will be placed on probation. A grade of "C-"or below in any graduate course will not receive graduate credit.

Candidates are required to develop professional portfolios to document their professional competencies. The licensure portfolios are presented for peer and faculty review during the practicum courses for Special Education and during ED 451/551 Differentiation in Reading Instruction for the K-12 Reading program. Candidates completing the graduate program for a master's degree present an additional portfolio based on their action research and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards at the Voices with Vision conference held three times per year.

The Standards of Effective Practice are used as a guide for candidate assessment during each practicum experience. An assessment form is completed for each practicum, reviewed, and signed by the candidate, classroom mentor teacher, and the university supervisor. Prior to recommendation for licensure, candidates must present a professional portfolio based on the SEP and the selected licensure/specialty area standards at a formal review assessed by faculty and peers. Portfolio review assessment forms are completed by university faculty members at this time.

Recommendation. Continue to develop a data-driven performance and program assessment system. Establish systematic means of obtaining aggregate data for assessing success of candidates and performance of graduates at specific times, such as first, third, and fifth years after graduation. Use *LiveText* in the undergraduate licensure programs to develop better ways to aggregate program data.

References: Chapter 2, Part A – Evidence of Meeting Standards
(2004). Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Retrieved from www.p21.org .

(2008). The National Educational Technology Standards and Performance Indicators for Teachers. Retrieved from http://www.iste.org/Content/NavigationMenu/NETS/ForTeachers/NETS_for_Teachers.htm

(n.d.) UTeach. Retrieved from http://uteachweb.cns.utexas.edu/About/Programs

Part B. General and Content Studies
Teacher education candidates at SMSU receive strong preparation in the liberal arts and content studies. Faculty members in each discipline strive to provide a variety of learning opportunities to university students and have a commitment to quality education. Part B will describe how standards for the general and content studies are met.

Liberal Arts Core

B(1) The institution provides and requires candidates in teacher preparation programs to complete a program of general studies in the liberal arts and sciences equivalent to the requirement for persons enrolled in programs not preparing persons for teacher licensure.

Teacher education candidates complete the same requirements as all other majors at SMSU and have opportunities to develop the broad knowledge base necessary for high-quality performance as a teacher. This also assures that the candidates have a strong knowledge base in relevant content areas. SMSU faculty and administration began the process of revising the requirements for the Liberal Arts Core (LAC) in 2005. More information on the LAC revision process can be found at http://www.smsu.edu/Academics/LiberalArtsCore/index.htm . The following shows the timeline for the revision process.

Phase I:	Design — Deciding what to build (years 1 - 4)
1	Draft Goals/Outcomes of the New Curriculum
2	Seek input from university community on goals
3	Refine Goals/Outcomes based on input from University community

4	Ratification of Goals/Outcomes statements by Academic Affairs Committee
5	Ratification of Goals/Outcomes statements by Faculty Assembly
6	Administrative Approval (Completed April 2005)
7	Input from university community regarding student learning experiences necessary for outcome achievement. (Fall 2005)
8	Investigation of Possible Structure for LAC (Spring 2006)
9	Investigation of Assessment Methods for LAC components (Spring 2006)
10	Articulation of LAC Outcomes to Student Learning Outcomes (Fall 2006 – Spring 2007)
11	Association of LAC Outcomes with MTC Goals (Spring 2007)
13	Specification of the LAC components for achieving the stated outcomes
14	Seek input from university community on components
15	Redefine component specifications based on input
16	Ratification of components by Academic Affairs Committee
17	Ratification of components by Faculty Assembly
18	Administrative Approval (Completed by May 2008)

Phase II:	Development — Creating the pieces (year 5)
1	Construction of the components based on the specifications
2	Creation of assessment plan
3	Input from university community
4	Refinement

5	Ratification of Curriculum Committee
6	Ratification of Faculty Assembly
7	Meet and Confer (Completed by May 2009)

Phase III:	Implementation — Putting the pieces together at SMSU (year 6 and beyond)
1	Staffing
2	Put structure in place
3	Initial course offerings
4	Initial assessment

As of the fall semester of 2010, we are entering Phase III in the implementation of the new LAC. At this writing, the LAC has not yet received final approval from MnSCU, and SMSU is addressing reviewer comments and concerns with further revisions. The following is from the LAC information posted on SMSU's website.

In 2009, the faculty at SMSU ratified the following Learning Outcomes for all students at our university. The SMSU Academic Catalog describes how all students seeking a degree from Southwest Minnesota State University must complete the Liberal Arts Core, a curriculum of education for undergraduate students. In keeping with national conversation focused on learning outcomes and goals, The SMSU Liberal Arts Core is based on ten Student Learning Outcomes. Courses are taken over a wide range of discipline areas and interdisciplinary fields. Communication, Critical Thinking, and Information Literacy are the core skills common to all areas of the LAC.

The courses designated to satisfy the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MTC) serve as starting points for a student's achievement of the ten Student Learning Outcomes.

Upon completion of the LAC at SMSU students will:

Outcome 1: Understand the techniques and habits of thought in a variety of liberal arts disciplines, having attained an adequate foundation of knowledge in those disciplines.

1) Summarize major themes and discoveries of these disciplines and understand how new work is created and evaluated.

2) Apply the methods by which practitioners of these disciplines process information and solve problems.

3) Articulate how these disciplines are interconnected and how they relate to the student's major areas of study.

Outcome 2: Communicate effectively.

1) Determine the nature and extent of information needed to formulate and develop a coherent and unified thesis.

2) Understand and select the best communication methods for achieving a given purpose.

3) Comprehend and synthesize messages conveyed in both oral and written contexts.

4) Recognize and employ various methods of verbal, nonverbal, cultural, and emotional communication.

5) Consider and account for the nature of audiences when presenting written and oral arguments.

6) Present ideas with comfort and confidence in written and oral formats.

7) Develop an appreciation for the significance and aesthetics of language.

Outcome 3: Be creative thinkers able to identify, formulate, and solve problems using interdisciplinary perspectives.

1) Break a complex issue or task into incremental steps.

2) Comprehend the differences and similarities among fields of study, and how these augment our understanding of important issues.

3) Employ multiple modes of inquiry and analysis to arrive at a range of possible solutions to a problem or task.

4) Apply a range of methods for producing creative results.

5) Exhibit increasing development of characteristics essential to being a creative thinker, including:

• Curiosity

• Aesthetic appreciation

• Desire to make things better

• Enjoyment of challenge

• Ability to suspend judgment

• Acceptance of and willingness to learn from mistakes and failures.

Outcome 4: Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped.

1) Demonstrate information literacy by accessing, utilizing, formatting, citing, and documenting relevant material accurately and correctly.

2) Interpret arguments by correctly identifying relevant premises, conclusions, and key assumptions.

3) Evaluate the extent to which evidence is reasonable, relevant, accurate, and sufficient to support intended claims.

4) Formulate clear, well-supported arguments.

5) Engage in civil discourse, self-reflection, and consideration of other points of view.

Outcome 5: Understand both physical and social aspects of the world and their place in it.

1) Demonstrate knowledge of concepts, methods, and theories designed to enhance understanding of the natural world and human society.

2) Demonstrate the ability to access, comprehend, compare, and evaluate contemporary scientific and social literature.

3) Demonstrate an awareness of multiple worldviews, and how each is shaped by the interaction of physical and social factors.

4) Critically consider the ethical and physical ramifications of scientific decisions on society and the environment.

Outcome 6: Embrace the similarities among peoples and appreciate the diversity that enriches the human experience.

1) Demonstrate awareness of personal identity as the result of a broad set of influences.

2) Engage in a variety of cross-cultural interactions.

3) View other cultures and social norms from multiple perspectives.

4) Explore one's biases while developing independent attitudes regarding the "difficult differences" in society.

5) Integrate and apply diverse perspectives to increasingly challenging questions and real world problems.

6) Develop an informed concern for the greater good.

Outcome 7: Analyze moral judgments and engage in moral discourse.

1) Demonstrate understanding of the meaning, application, and justification of a number of core ethical values, including, but not restricted to:

- Individual dignity

- Human rights

- Honesty

- Integrity

- Justice

- Compassion

- Personal and social responsibility

2) Demonstrate understanding of and respect for a variety of ethical viewpoints.

3) Recognize and critically reflect on one's own moral values and their determinants.

4) Recognize and address broad moral issues in a variety of contexts, including coursework, personal life, and global society.

Outcome 8: Practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities.

1) Develop the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions necessary to make a difference in local and global communities.

2) Recognize themselves as part of a larger social fabric, with public lives and personal ownership of social problems.

3) Explore the nature and use of power and authority in various contexts.

4) Engage in democracy as a life-enhancing, everyday practice of skills such as:

• Attentiveness to public affairs and current events

• Regular volunteering

• Creative use of conflict

• Active group membership

• Collective problem solving

5) Express their voices through informed citizenship and participation in civic and political processes.

6) Confidently engage in civic discourse, self-reflection, and consideration of other points of view.

Outcome 9: Continue life-long learning.

1) Continuously evaluate their ever-changing environment across multiple dimensions.

2) Engage in self-directed learning with an emphasis on "learning how to learn."

3) Cultivate curiosity and openness to varied experiences.

4) Integrate prior knowledge with newly obtained information.

5) Pursue formal and informal educational opportunities throughout life.

Outcome 10: Integrate mind, body, and spirit, the essential elements of a flourishing life.

1) Explore how mind, body, and spirit function in interconnected ways.

2) Reflect on the intellectual, physical, and spiritual factors that shape personal and social identities.

3) Understand their individual wellness from various disciplinary perspectives.

4) Acquire knowledge to pursue their full human potential.

The following policy statements guide the fulfillment of the Liberal Arts Core for students attending Southwest Minnesota State University:

A total of 41 semester credit hours of coursework is required to fulfill the SMSU Liberal Arts Core/ Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. The Liberal Arts Core (LAC) requirements for entering students seeking a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree are as follows:

1. **Foundation Courses**
    A. First Year Seminar 3 credits
    B. Academic Writing 4 credits
    C. Essentials of Speaking and Listening 3 credits

2. **Discipline Area Courses**
    A. Natural Sciences 4 credits
    B. Mathematics/Logical Reasoning 3 credits
    C. History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences 3 or 6 credits
    D. The Humanities and Fine Arts 3 or 6 credits

3. **Themes Courses**
    A. Human Diversity 3 credits
    B. Global Perspective 3 credits
    C. Ethical and Civic Responsibility 3 credits
    D. People & Environment 3 credits

4. **Advanced Courses**
    A. Writing-Focused Course 3 credits

SMSU Graduation Requirements
    A. Contemporary Issues Seminar 3 credits
    B. Major Capstone Course 0, 1 to 3 credits

• While completing the LAC, students cannot count more than two courses with the same prefix.
• Taking a course that satisfies more than one area of the LAC does not reduce the overall credit requirement.
• Students must consult with their academic advisors to assure that all LAC requirements are met.

The following statements apply to transfer students or students working under the direction of the SMSU Honors Program.

1. Students who have an AA degree, have satisfied the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, or who have a BA, BAS, or BS degree when they transfer to SMSU, are recognized as having fulfilled the SMSU Liberal Arts Core requirements.

2. Students who do not have a BA, BAS, BS, or AA degree when they transfer to SMSU must fulfill the current SMSU Liberal Arts Core requirements.

The following table shows how the Liberal Arts Core at SMSU fulfills the requirements of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

Table 2 Liberal Arts Core

LAC Course	MTC Competency	Primary LAC Outcomes	Associated LAC Purpose	Credits
The following two courses to be completed by the end of the student's <u>first</u> year at SMSU				
First Year Seminar	Ethical and Civic Responsibility	Practice responsible citizenship in their local and global communities	Introduction to all ten outcomes and initial assessments	
Introduction to Rhetoric and Composition	Communication	Communicate Effectively	Initial and formative assessments	
The following two courses to be completed by the end of the student's <u>second</u> year at SMSU				

Essentials of Speech and Group Communication	Communication	Communicate Effectively	Initial and formative assessments	
Introduction to Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking	Be critical thinkers who evaluate information wisely and examine how assumptions and positions are shaped.	Initial and formative assessments	
One course, with lab, chosen from an approved list	Natural Sciences	Understand the techniques and habits of thought in a variety of academic disciplines, having attained an adequate foundation of knowledge in those disciplines		
One course chosen from an approved list	Mathematical/ Logical Reasoning			
One course chosen from an approved list	History and the Behavioral Sciences			
One course chosen from an approved list	The Humanities and Fine Arts			

In fulfilling the MTC competencies in Human Diversity, Global Perspective, Ethical and Civic Responsibility, and People and the Environment, students must take one course from the each of the following areas:

Natural Science, History and the Behavioral Sciences, and the Humanities and Fine Arts.

One course chosen from an approved list	Human Diversity	Embrace the similarities among peoples and appreciate the diversity		
One course chosen from an approved list	Global Perspective	that enriches the human experience.	Initial and formative assessments in each of these areas.	
One course chosen from an approved list	Ethical and Civic Responsi-bility	Analyze moral judgments and engage in moral discourse.		
One course chosen from an approved list	People and the Environment	Understand both physical and social aspects of the world and their place in it.		
One course, at the sophomore level or above, chosen from an approved list, focused on writing instruction that develops all the core skills.	Completes the MTC	Develop the LAC Core skills.	Formative assessments of the core skills.	
One 400-level, contemporary issues seminar course chosen from an approved list. Taken by students after completing at least 60 credits, including 30 credits of the MTC, and the four foundational courses.		Be creative thinkers able to identify, formulate, and solve problems using interdisci-plinary perspectives	Formative and summative assessments of communication, critical thinking and integration skills	

Total Credits   44

Teacher education candidates at SMSU therefore complete the same liberal arts curriculum as all other majors at SMSU, but as described in Part A of this chapter, are required to meet specific grade requirements in the areas of communication (writing and speech) and mathematics for admission to the Teacher Education Program at SMSU. During the advising

process, faculty members use the Interactive Degree Audit Report for each student to ensure that all requirements for both the liberal arts curriculum and for the Teacher Education program are met. A Degree Check is done with the SMSU Registration office prior to placement for student teaching to verify that all Education majors have met these requirements.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Because candidates have completed their initial licensure requirements, this standard has been met through their undergraduate programs.

Recommendation. Continue collaborating with University faculty to assure a strong preparation of teacher education candidates in the liberal arts and sciences.

Academic Competence in Content

B(2) The institution provides programs that require candidates in teacher preparation programs to attain academic competence in the content that they teach.

Assessment of academic competence in the content for teacher candidates (Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary/K-12) begins with formal application for admission to the Teacher Education Program. The application process generally occurs at the end of the sophomore year or the beginning of the junior year and is described in more detail on the application forms available in the Education Department Office, in the SMSU Academic Catalog 2010-2012 , and in Part A(3) of this report. Assessment of subject matter competence at the time of application to the teacher education program is accomplished through review of the 60 required university credits, GPA, grades required in specified courses, Praxis I/MTLE Basic Skills Test scores, an essay, and recommendations from both an academic faculty member and an education faculty member.

Applicants for the SMSU Teacher Education Program must submit the results of the Praxis I tests (taken prior to Sept. 1, 2010) or the MTLE Basic Skills Tests (taken after Sept. 1, 2010) as a part of the application materials. If a candidate has not passed all of the tests at this level, the student may gain conditional admission and will be placed on a Conditional Admission Education Plan to provide remediation and development towards passage of the tests. Candidates must pass all of the basic skills tests prior to placement for student teaching.

All candidates seeking full-time Minnesota Teacher Licensure must also take and pass the Praxis II tests for content and pedagogy (prior to Sept. 1, 2010) or the corresponding MTLE tests (after Sept. 1, 2010). Student teaching is required for each licensure area. Criteria for Student Teaching are described in Part A(3) of this report. Knowledge of subject matter is assessed by GPA, grades in specific courses, all I and IP grades being complete, and a recommendation from an Education advisor. Candidates in various Secondary/K-12 education

majors are also required to maintain a specific GPA in their content area; these are found in the SMSU Academic Catalog 2010-2012 for those majors. Secondary/K-12 education candidates are also required to have a recommendation from their academic advisor in their content area as part of the application for student teaching.

Transcripts are carefully reviewed prior to student teaching by the candidate's advisor(s) as part of the application for student teaching, and then by the Director of Placement and Licensure to ensure that candidates have met each of the requirements. When problems with the content and/or pedagogy appear, candidates are called to a conference and a growth plan for improvement is developed. The Director of Placement and Licensure and the advisor monitor the candidate's progress and readiness for student teaching.

During student teaching, candidates are assessed for proficiency in the content and pedagogy standards by the classroom mentor teacher and the university supervisor. A policy guides the process if problems arise (see the Student Teaching Handbook for more details).

All teacher education candidates are required to complete an online teaching portfolio through *LiveText* for demonstration of program outcomes (content and pedagogy standards) and for reflecting on development as a teacher candidate. The portfolio is developed throughout the courses in the Teacher Education Program, and is shared in a peer review process in a Mock Portfolio Review as part of ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications. It is then presented at the Graduation Portfolio Review for final review and evaluation by SMSU Education department faculty members.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. A copy of the candidate's teaching license is obtained upon entrance to the graduate program and kept in the Education Department file. Candidates who are seeking initial licensure in Special Education are required to successfully complete the Praxis II/MTLE licensure tests for Special Education.

Recommendation. Continue collaborating with SMSU faculty to assure a strong preparation of teacher candidates in content and pedagogy.

Multicultural and Global Perspectives

> B(3) The liberal arts curriculum of the institution incorporates multicultural and global perspectives.

The objectives of the SMSU Liberal Arts Core (LAC) and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MTC) are described in Part B(1) of this report and are required for all SMSU students. Areas of the MTC address multicultural and global perspectives (Human Diversity, 3

credits; Global Perspective, 3 credits; Civic and Ethical Responsibility, 3 credits; and People and the Environment, 3 credits).

Other SMSU initiatives in the areas of diversity and multicultural and global perspectives can be found in Chapter 2, Part A(1) under Diversity Components.

Several opportunities are provided each year for education faculty and faculty in the liberal arts to interact on program development. Faculty members in many areas take the lead in providing professional development opportunities for others in the university and in the surrounding communities. Examples of this include the SMSU Professional Development Day (Education department members have led sessions in Assessment and in the Integration of Technology in Teaching); the SMSU Book Club (Education department members have facilitated the Book Club and joined as participants); meetings of the Southwest Minnesota Math Teachers Association/Southwest Minnesota Science Teachers Association (coordinated by Education department faculty and attended by faculty in Science and Math from SMSU and from local community colleges, along with many teachers from the area as well as SMSU students); and Campus Liaison meetings, which include all SMSU faculty who teach courses for education majors. All Education programs are required to be approved by the SMSU Curriculum Committees (undergraduate and graduate), and are then brought to the full faculty assembly for approval. Finally, the content area advisors for all Secondary/K-12 teacher education program candidates are invited to attend the admission to the Teacher Education Program interview for their advisees to provide their input into the candidates' strengths and areas where improvement is needed.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Because candidates have completed initial licensure requirements, this standard has been met through their undergraduate programs. Additionally, human diversity, sociocultural interactions, and democracy are key components in the Education Department's conceptual framework; these components are reinforced through the K-12 Reading and Special Education graduate programs through working with diverse learners in a variety of settings.

Recommendation. Continue collaboration with SMSU faculty on how multicultural and global perspectives can be enhanced.

Teacher Candidate Performance and Student Performance

B(4) Teacher candidates can integrate general, content, professional, and pedagogical studies, as measured by teacher performance, and performance of the students they teach.

Both SMSU and the Education Department use a number of indicators to determine the ability of candidates to integrate content, professional, and pedagogical knowledge when teaching students. This process occurs before, during and after admission to the SMSU Teacher Education Program. The initial phase begins with the admission to SMSU, as described in Chapter 2, Part A(3). A series of Checkpoints are used to document evidence of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of education candidates. University faculty and classroom mentor teachers use observations, assessments, evaluations, field experiences, unit plans, grades, etc. as part of the documentation of evidence. Candidates are rated on a scale of 1-4, where 1 = Aware, 2 = Developing, 3 = Competent, and 4 = Proficient. The descriptions for each level are as follows:

Aware: Demonstrates limited understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structure of the discipline. Fails to capture key ideas nor links them to students' prior understanding and ineffectively makes understanding relevant and meaningful to students. Poorly prepares for lessons.

Developing: Displays basic content knowledge but cannot articulate connections with other parts of the discipline or with other disciplines. Indicates some awareness of prerequisite learning, although such knowledge may be incomplete or inaccurate and does not anticipate student misconceptions. Minimally prepares for lessons.

Competent: Has an adequate understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structure of the discipline. Seeks to capture key ideas and links them to students' prior understanding, and effectively makes understanding relevant and meaningful to students. Effectively prepares for lessons.

Proficient: Effectively uses multiple representations and explanations of disciplinary concepts that capture key ideas and links them to students' prior understanding by making it relevant and meaningful to students. Represents different viewpoints, evaluates resources used to support teaching, and provides many opportunities to engage students. Effectively prepares lessons that include best practices.

The checkpoint system which shows our benchmarks follows with an explanation of what is included in the courses.

Checkpoint I: Foundation Courses in Education
All education students (ECE, Elementary, and Secondary/K-12 majors) must successfully complete the following two blocks of Foundation Courses to be eligible for admission to the Teacher Education Program. All these courses must be passed with a letter grade of C or higher. Candidates must receive an overall rating of "Developing" or higher for the Program Assessments indicated below to be admitted to the Education Program. Candidates receiving an "Aware" rating will receive a Candidate Growth Plan monitored by the Advisor. This plan addresses the area where the student needs to improve before admission to the program.

Foundations Block I: (5 Credits)

ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications   (2 credits)

ED 101 Introduction to Education and Lab   (3 credits)

Foundations Block II: (6 Credits)

SPED 290 Introduction to Special Education and Lab   (3 credits)

ED 251 Child Growth and Development (ECE & ELED)   (3 credits)

OR   PSYC 341 Child and Adolescent Growth (Secondary/K-12)

Checkpoint I: Preparing for application to Teacher Education: Explanation

ED 102: Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development. Students are introduced to *LiveText*, its use in Education coursework, and its role in completion of the required electronic portfolio. Course requirements include having each student develop a projected timeline for completing the teacher education program, with all checkpoints reached at appropriate times along the way. Artifact: a PowerPoint presentation to supplement a lesson plan.

ED 101: Introduction to Education/Lab. Students continue using *LiveText* and planning to meet the Standards of Effective Practice. Artifacts: a philosophy paper, "Why I want to be a teacher," a self refection paper on their 15-hour field experience, and the recommendation form from their supervising teacher in their lab experience.

ED 251: Child Growth and Development OR PSYC 341 Child and Adolescent Growth. Artifact: project examining the development of children.

SPED 290: Introduction to Special Needs and Lab. The students continue to use Live Text as they complete this course. Artifacts: a special topics presentation, a self-reflection paper of their lab experience, and the recommendation form from the classroom mentor teacher of their lab experience.

Application for Admission to Teacher Education (end of second year). Review includes maintenance standards such as an overall GPA of 2.8, completion of required courses, satisfactory pre-admission interview, completion of required forms, and checklist of items completed. Data, including grades, are imported from the university's degree check system. Special consideration is given to transfer students and distance learners. We work with each student on an individual basis.

Checkpoint II: Application to Teacher Education

All education students (ECE, Elementary, and Secondary/K-12 majors) must successfully complete the foundation courses in Checkpoint I, Block I to be eligible for admission to the Teacher Education Program. Their transcripts must show an overall GPA of 2.8. All Education courses must be passed with a letter grade of C or higher. Students must have satisfactory letters of recommendation from the ED 101 lab experience as well as from an academic professor and an education professor. They must successfully complete a 30-minute interview. A rating of Competent or Proficient is required on all the rubrics for admission to the Education Program.

Checkpoint II: Preparing for Admission to Student Teaching: Explanation

Students must have successfully completed all of the content courses and methods classes for their major with positive evaluations received in their labs. Development of their portfolio continues. Some artifacts are prescribed; others are selected by the students. All artifacts are entered into and accessible through *LiveText*. Artifacts include a 10-day unit, a classroom management plan, and other artifacts that meet checkpoint requirements and the Standards of Effective Practice. Education majors complete their preparation for student teaching by taking ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications, where they further develop their teaching portfolio and prepare for the student teaching experience by participating in a 10-day pre-student teaching experience (PSTE). During PSTE, teacher candidates teach lessons from their unit, videotape themselves teaching the lesson, and reflect on their experiences with their classroom mentor teacher and a university supervisor. They review the video with their university supervisor to further develop skills in using the reflective process to inform their teaching practice.

Integrating general, content, professional, and pedagogical studies is measured by the teaching performance of candidates and the performance of their students. Candidates have regular field experiences each year that are assessed by the classroom mentor teachers and university supervisors. These experiences provide opportunities for integrating knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Growth plans, monitored by advisors, support professional development and success for candidates who may need additional learning and practice prior to student teaching.

Application for Student Teaching. Students apply and demonstrate fulfillment of a series of requirements, again including an overall GPA of 2.8.

Student teaching is the capstone requirement for the Teacher Education Program in which candidates demonstrate the ability integrate general, content, professional, and pedagogical studies. Assessment is based on the ten Standards of Effective Practice (SEP) and the standards of SMSU's Conceptual Framework, which include all of the SEP components.

Checkpoint III: Application to Student Teaching

Students' transcripts must show an overall GPA of 2.8. All Education courses must be passed with a letter grade of C or higher with no I or IP grades. Students must have satisfactory letters of recommendation from the classroom mentor teachers of lab experiences as well as an academic reference. A rating of Competent or Proficient for each standard is required for successful completion of Student Teaching.

Student Teaching. Students continue to add artifacts throughout student teaching, including items that demonstrate satisfaction of the Standards of Effective Practice that demonstrate how the SEPs are incorporated into the student teaching experience.

A University supervisor visits a student teacher a minimum of every other week and provides immediate oral and written feedback to the candidate. The frequency of support needed is assessed for individual student teachers. Additionally, the classroom mentor teacher provides daily feedback to the student teacher via oral and/or written assessments. A midterm and final assessment of the student teacher is conducted via a three-way conference between the student teacher, classroom mentor teacher, and the University supervisor. The assessment process supports the integration of knowledge, skills, and dispositions during the student teacher performance.

Student Teacher Assessment of P-12 Students. The student teacher assesses student learning in a variety of ways, such as hands-on activities, one-on-one interviews, paper/pencil tests, demonstrations and projects, and rubric assessments. Plans are progressing to integrate student work samples into the student teaching evaluation, along with videotaping a lesson for reflection and improvement.

Checkpoint IV: Portfolio Review

A rating of Competent or Proficient is required for successful completion of student teaching. After student teaching the portfolio review process takes place. The student must receive a rating of Competent or Proficient on their portfolio to graduate from the Education Program.

The purposes of the Teacher Education Program Portfolio are to:

Show professional growth in the Standards of Effective Practice, the content standards, the SMSU Conceptual Framework Standards, and the technology standards.

Demonstrate ability to reflect on this growth in meaningful ways.

Show ability to objectively self-assess this growth.

Review Process. The portfolio is developed over the course of preparation to become a licensed teacher. In the beginning courses, the content is structured, guided, and entered into *LiveText*. As candidates develop a base of knowledge, skills, and dispositions, they assume more

and more responsibility for making professional decisions about how to document their growth. Education faculty and/or education administrators from the area are involved in the review process.

Application for Graduation. SMSU requires a degree audit, and students must show that they have fulfilled all other university requirements unrelated to the teacher education program.

Post-graduation. The education department surveys teacher education graduates after one, three, and five years. The Department initiated the survey of graduates in Spring 2005. Since then, the department has revised the survey and it was again sent in May 2006. In the survey, students were asked to rate the effectiveness of our education program. Data have been collected, analyzed, and used to review how well students have been prepared as teachers. Data are also used to assess progress toward program goals and to consider how to strengthen any areas of identified need.

As part of the assessment plan, the education department meets on a regular basis to review pass rates for the Praxis tests. Ongoing support must continue to be provided for students who do not pass these tests. During 2005-06, the department faculty asked the coordinator of the Academic Commons (a campus resource and study center) for assistance in putting together resources related to the Praxis tests. As a result, students were able to access software, practice books, Websites, and tutors in subject matter areas at the Academic Commons for help with each Praxis Exam. As students became aware of the materials and began using them, the education department faculty and the coordinator of the Academic Commons have continued to assess their effectiveness. This practice will be continued with the conversion to the new Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exams (MTLE) as the practice materials become available.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Each candidate completes practica in three different settings/age categories and creates a professional portfolio based on the Standards of Effective Practice and the licensure/specialty area standards. As part of the process, candidates complete extensive candidate assessments and write individual education plans that include outcomes, modifications/accommodations, transitions, and appropriate means for documenting progress. Candidate performance is evaluated through completion of the practicum assessment form(s) and review of the licensure portfolio.

Recommendation. Continue to develop the *LiveText* portfolio and the requirements for student teaching to provide data to assess the integration of general, content, professional, and pedagogical studies of a candidate's performance. K-12 Reading and Special Education candidates will include a videotape of a teaching segment and a written reflective summary in their professional portfolios.

Part C. Clinical and Field Experiences

Field experiences are a vital component of the teacher education program at Southwest Minnesota State University (see the SMSU 2010-2012 Academic Catalog, the Program Handbook, Student Teaching Handbook, and the Field Experience Summary Matrix). One of the hallmarks of the Teacher Education Program is that candidates are placed in field experiences as part of the ED 101 Introduction to Education foundation course and continue with multiple field experiences throughout each licensure program. The culminating experience includes a full semester of student teaching. Through these extensive experiences, candidates have opportunities to integrate their content knowledge, skills, and dispositions with sound training in pedagogy to support learning for P-12 students.

SMSU is fortunate to work with over 70 cooperating school districts (see Cooperating Schools listing), ranging in size from about 33 students to over 39,000 students. The majority of the schools have more than 30% of the student population on free or reduced lunch. More than half of the regional cooperating schools have 13% or more students receiving special education services (see Cooperating School District Data).

Broad Range of Experiences

C(1) The teacher licensure programs incorporate a broad range of ongoing clinical and field experiences that provide candidates opportunities to demonstrate the required skills and knowledge under part 8710.2000.

All teacher education candidates at SMSU have multiple opportunities to demonstrate the required knowledge and skills of the Standards of Effective Practice, the Content Standards, and the standards of the SMSU Conceptual Framework *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching*. Section C(1) describes a broad range of ongoing clinical and field experiences.

During the 15 hours of field experience associated with ED 101 Introduction to Education, the focus is on the development of observation and reflection skills for understanding such themes as relationships in a community of teachers and learners and inquiry into the teaching and learning process.

Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary/K-12 Education programs require 15 hours of experience working with P-12 students who have special needs in the SPED 290 Introduction to Special Education Lab. In this field experience, candidates have opportunities to learn about and value diversity and inclusion and to see the applications of federal mandates, early interventions, and Individual Education program planning with parents.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) candidates complete 30 hours of field experience over the course of one year during ED 315 Play and Creative Activities and ED 330 Curriculum Methods and Assessment in settings including infants/toddlers, preschool and kindergarten.

Candidates have opportunities to interact with young children to facilitate their growth and development through play and creative/expressive activities.

Early Childhood Education candidates develop leadership skills during a 60-hour practicum in an agency that serves young children and their families (ED 456 Practicum in ECE Leadership). From these experiences, ECE candidates begin to understand the infrastructure of the early childhood field and to demonstrate professional and ethical actions.

Both Early Childhood and Elementary Education candidates participate in a junior mentoring experience in a classroom for one year. Candidates complete 15-hour lab experiences in each of the content methods courses including early literacy, reading, math, science, social sciences, and action research. As much as possible, each candidate at the ECE and ELED level are placed with the same classroom mentor teacher for each of the content methods lab experiences. This year-long experience culminates with the 10-day PreStudent Teaching Experience (ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications), which occurs for five days during spring break and an additional five days immediately following the end of the spring semester. Secondary/K-12 candidates also participate in the 10-day PreStudent Teaching Experience. Candidates journal about their experiences and receive evaluations from their classroom mentor teacher and university supervisor. They videotape a lesson for review and reflection with their university supervisor. The PreStudent Teaching Experience (PSTE) is intended to assess readiness for student teaching. In the fall of 2010, the Education Department determined that Early Childhood Education majors would join the Elementary and Secondary/K-12 Education majors in completing the PSTE in order to better prepare the Early Childhood Education candidates for compliance with the upcoming Teacher Performance Assessments which will be required of future student teachers. This will be in effect for juniors in the Early Childhood Education major beginning in the spring of 2011.

Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Secondary/K-12 Education candidates all participate in a two-day clinical teaching experience in area schools (ED 423 Classroom Management Theories and Practices and Lab for ECE and ELED, ED 301 Teaching and Learning Processes and Lab for Secondary/K-12). Candidates gain practice in inquiry, planning, assessing, and building a positive learning environment with diverse learners. Candidates journal about their experiences and receive evaluative feedback from university supervisors.

Finally, Elementary Education candidates with an endorsement area and Secondary/K-12 Education candidates complete a 15-hour field experience in their respective content methods courses. This experience provides the opportunity to develop skills in the planning and implementation of content area lessons with a focus on the inclusion and assessment of student mastery of state standards.

Beginning in the fall of 2011, Elementary Education candidates with a Gr. 5-8 Endorsement area will complete four weeks of their student teaching experience at the middle school level. K-12 candidates in Art, Music, Physical Education or Spanish also complete four weeks of their student teaching experience at the elementary level. All Education candidates complete a full semester (15 weeks) of student teaching.

Candidates in all of the licensure programs in Education are required to document their knowledge, skills, and dispositions through a teaching portfolio, which is reviewed by Education department faculty members and adjunct instructors as part of the Graduation Portfolio Review at the conclusion of student teaching. Two required Education program courses support this process. Candidates begin their online *LiveText* teaching portfolio in ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development, continue to submit artifacts (some mandated, others elective) for their portfolio as they move through their program sequence, and then work to prepare their portfolio for Student Teaching and future employment as part of ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications. A mock Graduation Portfolio Review is completed as part of ED 304 to prepare candidates for the review process.

For a comprehensive view of each of the field experience requirements for each of the education program majors, please see the [Summary of Undergraduate Field Experiences](#).

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Because candidates have completed initial licensure requirements, this standard has been met through their undergraduate programs. Candidates in both programs complete ongoing field experiences to demonstrate the skills and knowledge needed for each licensure area. The assessment of practicum experiences and the professional portfolio are demonstrated using the Standards of Effective Practice.

Candidates administer a variety of assessment instruments to infants (Early Childhood Special Education), children, and/or adolescents (grades P-12). Candidates also complete practicum experiences for different age and/or ability levels. Each practicum in Special Education is a minimum of 120 hours of contact time, while the practicum in K-12 Reading requires 15 hours each in elementary, middle, and high school settings. One practicum can be on-the-job if the teacher's assignment is in the licensure area being sought. The other practicum may be during a summer program, although off-the-job school year placements are preferred.

Recommendation. As part of the PEPER review process, recent licensure changes, and program review, the Education Department reviewed our programs to ensure greater consistency, coherence, and effectiveness. We plan to assure that all candidates receive a variety of equitable field experiences that provide a rich diversity of P-12 learning environments and are tied to program course content. The emphasis is on the learning of P-12 students. We will work to implement the requirements of the Board of Teaching recently enacted within our programs, with the intent to prepare our candidates well for the upcoming Teacher Performance Assessment.

Experience with Diverse Populations

> C(2) Candidates have experiences with diverse populations, students with disabilities, and students of different ages under the direction of teacher education faculty in collaboration with school partners.

At Southwest Minnesota State University, candidates are involved in a variety of settings and field experiences that provide opportunities to work with diverse populations. Research from the Center for Rural Policy Development (2009) has shown a dramatic growth in the levels of cultural and socioeconomic diversity in rural Minnesota. As the diversity of our region has grown, our candidates have experiences working with students from a variety of cultural backgrounds, such as Hmong, Somalian, Native American, Hispanic/Latino, and Burmese. The document Cooperating School District Data shows the levels of cultural diversity, socioeconomic diversity, and the numbers of students with special needs for each of our cooperating schools.

All candidates receive training in cultural and socioeconomic awareness in ED 312 Human Relations for Teachers. As part of the course assignments for this class, students complete a textual analysis and a Native American Lesson Plan, which are required components of their teaching portfolio. All candidates receive training for the inclusion of students with special needs in their classrooms during SPED 290 Introduction to Special Needs. SPED 290 includes a 15-hour field experience in a classroom where candidates work with a student with special needs in developing appropriate programming to meet the needs of the student's Individualized Education Plan. Valuing diversity and inclusion are goals for candidates participating in all education courses and field experiences.

Other elective experiences available to SMSU teacher education candidates include a Global Studies experience and Student Teaching Abroad. The Global Studies experience is open to all SMSU students, providing a collaborative set of courses and travel experiences nearly every semester. The Student Teaching Abroad program is available through the Common Market and University of Minnesota – Morris Global Student Teaching Program. Some SMSU student teachers choose these options.

All candidates demonstrate proficiencies that support the learning of students in their culminating student teaching experiences. University supervisors and classroom mentor teachers assess candidates' abilities to work with all students via observations, lesson plans, reflections, and journals.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. The practicum experiences insure working with candidates of different ages and/or ability levels, and also insure diversity.

Recommendation. Continue to promote candidate experiences with students from a variety of cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic levels, and learning abilities through various field experiences.

Candidates' Licensure Level

> C(3) Candidates work in the field and at the licensure level for which they are to be recommended for licensure.

The Education Department at SMSU has guidelines for assuring that candidates work in the field at the licensure levels for which they are preparing to teach (Field Experience Summary Matrix). The Director of Placement and Licensure, the Field Experience Coordinator, and the Field Experience Assistant follow these guidelines to assure that all candidates are placed fairly and according to the Minnesota Board of Teaching and SMSU licensure requirements. When issues related to field experience requirements arise, they are brought to the Education Department Chair and/or to the Education Department faculty to resolve them in equitable ways.

Written assessments of field experiences are completed by classroom supervisors for individual candidates. These are reviewed by the Education department faculty advisors at the time of application for admission to the Teacher Education Program and for application for student teaching. Placement data for the field experiences are maintained in the Education Department.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Candidates are placed in field experiences that are appropriate to the licensure area and level. The candidate has a classroom mentor teacher within the licensure being sought. A copy of the teaching license of each classroom mentor teacher is placed in the candidate's file with the practicum application (see candidate's files).

Recommendation. Continue to monitor the placement of candidates in field experiences to assure compliance with licensure requirements.

Collaborative School Partnerships

> C(4) Each program is developed and implemented through collaborative school partnerships in which university faculty and school personnel share responsibility for planning, supervising, evaluating, and implementing the curriculum for candidates.

Programs are developed and implemented collaboratively with cooperating school personnel and university faculty to share responsibility for planning, supervising, evaluating, and implementing the curriculum for candidates. The Campus Liaison meetings held each semester provide an opportunity for faculty members teaching courses in any of the Education majors to learn about and discuss updates in areas such as licensure requirements, testing, admission to the

Teacher Education Program requirements, and field experiences. Some faculty members in Secondary/K-12 Education majors have chosen to become university supervisors for candidates in their content areas. All changes in each of the various Education programs are required by SMSU policy to pass through the curriculum committee and faculty assembly processes before adoption and implementation.

The Teacher Education Program seeks input about various Education programs from the Teacher Education Advisory Committee. This committee is comprised of Education faculty members, staff in the office of Placement and Licensure, classroom mentor teachers, university supervisors, student teachers, and administration from cooperating school districts. This group meets once each semester to provide updates and receive input on the preparedness of student teachers in relation to the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice and our conceptual framework *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching*. All members of the Committee are encouraged to provide input to improve the design and development of candidates' field experiences. Results are brought back to the full Education department and are used to guide curriculum and field experience development.

The purposes of student teaching are expressed during meetings held by the office of Placement and Licensure with candidates both prior to application for student teaching and when the student teaching placements are distributed. This provides opportunities for candidates to become informed of the expectations for this field experience and to ask any questions or share any concerns that may exist. Student teachers also come back to SMSU at mid-term for a Student Teaching seminar day to update them on expectations to that point and to provide information on graduation requirements, testing, and application for licensure.

The criteria for the various field experiences are developed in the education courses they are connected to and are evaluated by the classroom mentor teacher and/or university supervisor for that field experience. Field experience evaluation forms for each of the labs and student teaching are available in the Exhibit Center and in the Office of Placement and Licensure. The field experience criteria on the evaluations are connected to the Standards of Effective Practice, SMSU Candidate Dispositions, and/or Content Standards. The student teaching experience is evaluated by the classroom mentor teacher and the university supervisor in a three-way conference with the candidate at mid-term and again at the end of the student teaching experience.

Cooperating schools are chosen based partly on the geographical needs of our students, and also on the recommendation of SMSU Education Department faculty familiar with those districts. The Office of Placement and Licensure contacts a potential cooperating district and requests a contract for placement of candidates for field experiences and/or student teaching. Contact is initially made with district administration, who then takes the contract to their school board for final approval. Contracts are required for student teaching placements, although some of the other field experiences are occasionally done on a less formal level. These contracts are

used to define a formal partnership between a cooperating school and the SMSU Teacher Education Program. Once approval is gained, the Field Experience Coordinator contacts administrators at the cooperating schools as needed to ascertain recommended classroom mentor teachers for SMSU's Education candidates. Classroom mentor teachers are required to hold a license in their grade level/content area and to have a minimum of three years of teaching experience.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Candidates and graduates of the K-12 Reading and Special Education programs are invited to the Teacher Education Advisory Committee meetings to provide input into the programs for future updates and revisions.

Recommendation. Continue to develop and maintain good working relationships with our cooperating school districts to provide the best possible experiences for our teacher candidates.

Classroom Supervisor Licensure and Best Practice

C(5) School personnel hold valid Minnesota continuing licenses, or the equivalent, in the fields of specialization, and model good professional practice.

One strength of SMSU's Teacher Education Program is that all candidates receive regular and varied opportunities to practice and develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that support learning for all P-12 students in specific settings. This helps to support connections between learning and teaching.

Cooperating schools are surveyed annually by the Office of Placement and Licensure to request classroom supervisors (mentor teachers) and placements for student teachers for the following academic year. Principals are contacted and provided with the minimum qualifications needed for classroom teachers to supervise these individuals. School districts are accountable for hiring teachers licensed in their field. These teaching licenses may be verified through the Minnesota Department of Education's website.

Guidelines for classroom mentor teachers are found in the Student Teaching Handbook and discussed with them by the university supervisor. Currently SMSU relies on recommendations from principals in cooperating schools to assure that classroom mentor teachers model best practices.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. All classroom mentor teachers for special education are licensed in the special education area that the candidate is seeking. A copy of the classroom mentor teacher's license is verified and placed in the candidate's file with the

practicum application. Southwest Minnesota State University relies on cooperating schools to assure that classroom mentor teachers model best practices. Education Department faculty members also visit the candidate and classroom mentor teachers to observe.

Recommendation. Research additional ways to provide professional development for classroom mentor teachers and for university supervisors, including funding for travel, meals, and other expenses. Investigate how to improve the use of technology for communicating with student teaching candidates, classroom mentor teachers, university supervisors, and principals of cooperating schools. Seek ways to regularly provide supervision workshops and/or customized professional training to classroom mentor teachers.

References: Providing Clinical and Field Experiences

Center for Rural Policy and Development. (2009). A region apart: A look at challenges and strategies for rural K-12 schools. Retrieved from http://www.mnsu.edu/ruralmn/pages/Publications/reports/education09.pdf

Part D. Candidate Qualifications

Southwest Minnesota State University works to recruit, admit, and retain quality candidates to the Teacher Education Program. In order to evaluate the quality of the various programs, SMSU relies on data from assessments regarding applicant qualifications and performance. These data are collected through a variety of sources and at multiple points as the candidate progresses through the Teacher Education Program. The assessment procedure was modified in 2006 in response to reviewer recommendations following our 2003 Board of Teaching accreditation visit.

Recruitment, Admission, and Retention

> D(1) The institution recruits, admits, and retains candidates who demonstrate potential for professional success in schools.

Significant growth in recruiting highly qualified individuals has occurred since 1991. A steady increase in ACT/SAT test scores has demonstrated a commitment from SMSU to recruit high-quality individuals to the university. The Education Department recently revised the criteria for admission to the Teacher Education Program, moving the required grades for English and Speech courses from 'C' to 'B-' and requiring a mathematics course at the level of college algebra, precalculus, or calculus with a grade of 'C' or better. Another revision allows candidates who have not passed the Basic Skills Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exams (MTLE) in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics to be placed on a Conditional Admission Plan.

Completion of the individualized requirements of this plan in addition to passing the MTLE is now required prior to placement for student teaching. Further performance criteria for admission to the Teacher Education Program can be found in Chapter 2, Part A(3). These guidelines reflect a commitment and dedication to seeking highly qualified candidates for the teaching profession.

Current practices targeting candidate qualifications include a strong relationship with Admission counselors and staff in arranging visits with prospective candidates visiting the SMSU campus. The undergraduate faculty members have developed a schedule outlining which faculty member will be responsible for visits throughout each semester and through the summer; this schedule is then shared with the Admissions office. Individual faculty members meet with prospective candidates visiting the campus to provide program information, advising, and a tour of the Education Department area.

Other sources of data collected by SMSU at the institutional level are alumni, parent, senior, and student surveys conducted by the Research and Institutional Grants Office at SMSU. The Graduate Survey conducted by Career Services highlights the successes of teacher education graduates in finding jobs for which they are best qualified.

The Teacher Education Program takes advantage of advising days built into the Academic Calendar each semester. Classes are canceled to allow faculty members to advise students and assist with scheduling courses for the upcoming semester. Each education major is assigned an education faculty member as an advisor and informed of the Education advisor with their Admission to the Teacher Education Program letter and on their Degree Audit Report. Secondary/K-12 education majors also have a primary advisor in their major content field. Candidates Education faculty members participate in campus visit days sponsored by the Admissions Office throughout the academic year and during the summer in order to meet with and discuss the Teacher Education Program with prospective candidates.

The implementation of DARS (Degree Audit Reporting System) and other advising tools such as the Program Advising Guides exemplifies the integration of technology with the advising process. DARS is the automated process for tracking students' progress as they complete coursework leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate. Reports (audits) can be generated to show whether catalog requirements have been met, such as required courses, minimum GPA, and total credits. This system provides candidates and faculty advisors with a prescribed outline of necessary courses and other requirements needed to satisfy any given B.S. degree, education minor, or certificate program. DARS is especially helpful with transfer courses. When a transferring student's courses are entered into DARS, it automatically applies the equivalent courses agreed upon by SMSU and the transfer institution as listed in the USelect system. If courses exist that are not part of the USelect transfer system, SMSU employs a petition process. A course syllabus (preferred) or course description (minimum requirement) for the course in question is forwarded to a faculty member who teaches a similar course at SMSU. The faculty member determines whether there is a 70% match or more between the two courses; if the match

is found, the faculty member signs the petition and returns it to the department chair for approval. With that signature the petition is then forwarded to the appropriate Dean for final approval, and then to Registration for entry to the student's DARS.

In the fall of 2003, the Teacher Education Program began implementation of *LiveText* as a tool for demonstrating levels of competencies tied to Board of Teaching (BOT) standards. This electronic assessment system provides multiple formats for data collection and provides both students and education faculty with direct evidence of teacher candidate performance linked to BOT and SMSU guidelines. Full implementation of the *LiveText* assessment system has been gradual and has encountered some setbacks, but is now moving strongly and consistently forward.

Retention of candidates is addressed in many ways. Candidates are provided opportunities to belong to two active organizations sponsored by the Teacher Education Program: Family and Child Educators (FACE) and Education Minnesota Student Program (EMSP). These organizations are very active and visible with functions sponsored by the Teacher Education Program. Support services such as counseling, career testing, tutoring, and mentoring programs are made available to all SMSU students at no cost. Teacher Education Program candidates are also encouraged to meet with their advisors on a regular basis to discuss their educational goals.

SMSU recognizes the need to reach out to extend opportunities for providing *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching* to off-campus regions. The Teacher Education Program began delivering a degree completion program at Central Lakes College in Brainerd, MN in the spring semester of 2001. The program offered at that time was the B.S. in Elementary Education with a specialty in PrePrimary. Candidates transferred into the program either by satisfying the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum requirements or by obtaining an Associate of Arts degree. The program later expanded to offer the Mathematics specialty at the elementary level as well. Due to budget constraints and low enrollment, the program was terminated in the fall of 2007.

The expansion into off-campus markets with a degree completion program was developed again through a Bremer Foundation grant in 2005. SMSU's Teacher Education Program began offering the B.S. in Early Childhood Education in 2006 through a series of articulation agreements with several community and technical college programs. Courses were initially offered in a variety of formats including Interactive Television (ITV) and online, but were moved to a hybrid online (D2L)/ format in fall of 2009. Based on a cohort delivery model, candidates enrolled in this program must meet all the admission standards and maintain the same qualifications for retention and promotion as candidates in the SMSU Teacher Education Program on the Marshall campus. One full-time faculty member, other Education department faculty members, and numerous well-qualified adjunct faculty members deliver the program in

this off-campus program. The Office of Placement and Licensure provides placements for field experiences and final licensure in a manner comparable to that found for on-campus programs.

The SMSU Teacher Education Program developed a Due Process for student appeals in 2004. This document was reviewed and revised in the fall of 2010 and is available on the Education Department and the Education Program websites. Information regarding appeal processes is also included in the Student Teaching Handbook and in the Orientation Guide to the Teacher Education Program.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. The graduate marketing director at SMSU coordinates the marketing of the graduate programs in business and education. Candidates for these programs are recruited through print media, radio advertisements, print and email documents, and on the SMSU website. Information is distributed to school districts through the administration, special education coordinators, and directly to in-service teachers and paraprofessionals. Admission counselors also meet with Education Department faculty members to learn about the programs offered and better advise potential candidates.

The admission process sets criteria that indicate potential for success. The Education Department's conceptual framework, which emphasizes community building, provides a scaffolding structure where candidates can develop and flourish. The portfolio process helps the candidates reflect on his/her own learning and practice. All of these elements aid in retention of and program completion for candidates.

Recommendation. The Education Department recommends continued collaboration with the Admissions Office, Academic and Diversity Resources, the Athletics Department, and the Advising Center to review and enhance current policies for recruitment and retention of qualified teacher candidates from strategic locations such as community colleges, urban, and rural settings (see the recommendations for Part D(4) and H(3) also).

Multiple Criteria and Assessments

> D(2) Multiple criteria and assessments are used to identify candidates for admission who have potential to become successful teachers.

Multiple forms of assessment and data collection exist to identify candidates for admission to and retention in the SMSU Teacher Education Program. The checkpoint system described in Chapter 2, Part A(3) describes the processes used to ensure that candidates advance successfully through the program and to support faculty advisors as well. This information, along with advising sessions, satisfaction surveys, faculty and course evaluations, student input on the Teacher Education Advisory Committee, and interviews are forums for gathering information and data about the potential of candidates to become successful teachers.

Connections between Education Department faculty and prospective students begin when these students make their initial visits to the SMSU campus. Students interested in a career in education are encouraged to declare this field as a major. They then begin to work closely within the context of the advisor/advisee relationship with assistance from support personnel and student leaders as well. The foundation courses give students and faculty the opportunity to develop professional relationships and students have their first opportunity to be placed in a field experience. A concerted effort is made to expose entry-level candidates to other candidates already in the Teacher Education Program. For example, entry-level candidates are encouraged or required to attend Action Research presentations conducted by upper-level candidates. Participation in FACE and EMSP, the two student organizations available in the education major, is encouraged as well.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Candidates meet multiple criteria for admission to the graduate program. Candidates complete an application form and submit the application fee. An official transcript from an accredited college or university stating a Bachelor's Degree (B.S. or B.A.) must be submitted. Two letters of recommendation are required, with one from a person (a university professor, administrator, or professional colleague who has reviewed the work of the candidate over an extended period of time) who is qualified to discuss the academic potential of a candidate. Candidates complete a letter of application that indicates qualifications and career objectives. Candidates for the K-12 Reading and Special Education programs must also hold a valid initial teaching license.

Recommendation. Continue to collect multiple forms of assessment to identify candidates likely to be successful teachers. Continue to fully implement the *LiveText* assessment system to gather data on candidates, and to use this data for program improvement.

Transfer, Nontraditional, and Postbaccalaureate Candidates

D(3) The institution has clearly stated and applied assessment procedures for the admission of transfer, nontraditional, and postbaccalaureate candidates into undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs.

Transfer students seeking admission to the SMSU Teacher Education Program must first meet all SMSU admission criteria as outlined in the 2010-2012 Academic Catalog. Students transferring from an accredited institution acquire a transfer degree audit to determine whether basic competencies and/or course requirements have been met. This is completed with the assistance of the Transfer Specialist in the Registration and Records Office and other faculty members who have academic preparation and experience in the particular content area(s) in question. DARS is especially helpful with transfer courses. When a transferring student's courses are entered into DARS, it automatically applies the equivalent courses agreed upon by SMSU and the transfer institution as listed in the USelect system. If courses exist that are not

part of the USelect transfer system, SMSU employs a petition process. A course syllabus (preferred) or course description (minimum requirement) for the course in question is forwarded to a faculty member who teaches a similar course at SMSU. The faculty member determines whether there is a 70% match or better between the two courses; if the match is found, the faculty member signs the petition and returns it to the department chair for approval. With that signature, the petition is then forwarded to the appropriate Dean for final approval, and then to Registration for entry to the student's DARS. If candidates have taken the required foundation courses in education and meet the remainder of the admission criteria, they then apply to the Teacher Education Program. All candidates, whether full- or part-time, are required to adhere to institutional guidelines and university expectations relating to evidence of strong academic preparation, potential success, and equal opportunity without discrimination.

Nontraditional and postbaccalaureate candidates work with education and content advisors to assess course and field experience requirements to meet the standards of a particular teacher licensure program. Documentation of prior coursework and field experience(s) is required. Specific requirements are assessed by advisors based on evidence provided by the candidate. Education Department policy on the admission of nontraditional and postbaccalaureate candidates to the Teacher Education Program is included in the Admission Criteria documents provided to all candidates.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. All applicants for admission to the graduate programs are evaluated by the same criteria. Candidates who transfer from other institutions or states consult with a faculty member to complete an advising sheet to determine an individual plan based on previous coursework, experience, and/or out-of-state licensure.

Recommendation. Continue to collaborate with the Transfer Specialist in Registration and Records along with content faculty across the SMSU campus to provide services needed for transfer, nontraditional and postbaccalaureate candidates for the Teacher Education Program.

Diverse Candidate Population

D(4) The institution actively recruits and has plans, policies, and practices for admission and retention of a diverse candidate population.

The office of Academic and Diversity Resources and the Admissions Office actively recruit students to SMSU from diverse backgrounds. The mission of SMSU has moved from primarily serving students from our geographic region to being a university of choice for all students. Students are recruited from foreign countries, urban areas, and technical and

community colleges. The Education Department recognizes the importance of working with community and technical colleges and has demonstrated its commitment with a number of articulation agreements as part of the 2 + 2 Early Childhood Distance Education degree completion program. There are plans for enhancing partnerships with other technical and community colleges in this and other education programs in the future.

The Diversity Components section of Chapter 2, Part A(1) describes efforts by SMSU to recruit students from diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds and students with physical disabilities. SMSU provides essential supports for students with diverse backgrounds to assure their success.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Graduate program faculty attend regional and state events and conferences to bring attention to the graduate programs at SMSU. For example, the Day of Excellence, sponsored by the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative, is held on campus each spring. This event draws parents, paraprofessionals, health professionals, and other professionals involved with children who have special needs. Reading faculty members attend and present at conferences through the International Reading Association, along with others. Faculty in the Special Education program also attend and present at conferences to share their knowledge with others and to stay current in their field.

Recommendation. The Education Department will continue to collaborate with the Admissions Office, Academic and Diversity Resources, the Athletics Department, and the Advising Center to review and enhance current policies and practices for recruiting and retaining qualified teacher candidates with diverse backgrounds.

Prior Academic Preparation and Teaching Experience

D(5) The institution assesses and, if appropriate, gives credit to candidates for knowledge and skills acquired through prior academic preparation and teaching experiences that meet licensure requirements.

The aim of the SMSU Teacher Education Program is to provide high quality graduates who are actively sought by area employers for their knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the classroom and in the community. Part of the challenge of having off-campus programming is to ensure that teacher education candidates who are trained by SMSU possess a standard set of competencies regardless of their geographic location within the system. The Education Department has worked to meet this challenge by maintaining consistent standards between on-campus and off-campus programs, and by hiring well-qualified university supervisors to provide field experience supervision throughout the areas we serve.

As stated in Chapter 2, Part D(3), transfer, nontraditional and postbaccalaureate candidates work with education and/or content advisors and the Transfer Specialist in the Registration and Records Office to assess course and field experience requirements to meet the standards of a particular teacher licensure program. Documentation of prior coursework and field experience(s) is required. The specific requirements are assessed by education department advisors based on evidence provided by the candidate.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. An advising form is used to review the coursework and experience of each candidate. Course substitutions can be recommended and approved when the courses meet or exceed an SMSU course. One practicum may be waived if special circumstances exist. For example, a candidate may transfer licensure from another state that is multicategorical in special education, or that limits licensure to elementary or secondary. In this case a candidate may be given partial licensure in Minnesota. The required practicum would be designed to complete the unmet competencies in level(s) or licensure area(s).

Recommendation. Continue to collaborate with the Transfer Specialist in Registration and Records along with faculty in the appropriate content areas and education advisors to review and implement the policies for admitting transfer, nontraditional, and postbaccalaureate candidates to the Teacher Education Program.

Part E. Monitoring and Advising on Candidate Progress

The SMSU Education Department has procedures in place to monitor and advise candidates toward the goal of becoming a licensed teacher. Efforts are made to monitor and advise candidates in fair, individual, and equitable ways. Teacher candidates find caring support in their advising by faculty and from the assistance provided by staff and peers. Candidate progress is monitored through evidence submitted to meet the standards of the teaching profession.

Advisement of Candidates

> E(1) The institution provides appropriate academic and professional advisement at a candidate's admission and throughout the candidate's professional education.

Candidates receive advising from the time they show initial interest in teaching and throughout their programs of study. Advising days are built into the academic calendar for each semester; university classes are canceled so that advisors and candidates have designated times to address advising issues. SMSU undergraduate students receive a unique advising code from their faculty advisor and cannot complete the online registration process without this code. The Education Department faculty members schedule times for candidates to meet with them for the

advising process. Other advising and admission materials are also available in the Education Department and online on the Education Program webpage.

One recent addition to the ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development foundation course is the Education Timeline assignment. Candidates are provided with program advising materials for their intended major, along with important deadlines such as applying for field experiences, taking licensure tests, and completing Degree Audits. This project has made the advising process much smoother for both candidates and for faculty advisors.

During the application/admission process for the Teacher Education Program, each candidate is required to participate in an admission interview. This interview provides a formal time to assess and advise candidates. The interview is conducted by at least two faculty members from the Education Department; content faculty advisors from Secondary/K-12 education candidates are also invited to attend. Upon completion of the admission process and interview, candidates receive written notification describing the terms of their admission to a program. Candidates are assigned an education faculty advisor and have access to advising as needed. Secondary/K-12 education candidates also continue with an advisor from their content area.

If a candidate is conditionally admitted, a [Conditional Admission Plan](#) is developed during the interview to address any areas of concern. The Conditional Admission Plan is placed in the candidate's file, and information is entered in a computer server on campus. The list of candidates on a Conditional Admission Plan is reviewed by the Education Department faculty members prior to Advising Day. Faculty advisors review the candidate's progress toward full admission, and progress is noted and placed in the candidate's file and updated on the server. Any candidates not achieving full admission status will not be placed for student teaching.

Candidates regularly receive feedback from education faculty members relevant to their performance in education courses. They also receive regular feedback from university supervisors on their performance in field experiences. This feedback provides specific information about candidates' strengths and areas needing further development.

The Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) provides necessary information on candidate progress including requirements needed for program completion, current GPA, and status of teacher licensure testing. The electronic *LiveText* teaching portfolios first developed in 2003 also provide additional advising information to candidates.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Early in the program, candidates complete an advising sheet to plan their course and practicum schedule. Graduate students are directed to the online Graduate Education website, where all needed forms and documents are available to print.

Recommendation. Continue to develop up-to-date program advising materials for all licensure programs that can be used by education faculty advisors, content advisors, and education candidates. Continue to make these advising materials available in a variety of locations: in the Education Department, online, and in the undergraduate *LiveText* teaching portfolio template.

Criteria for Admission, Retention, and Student Appeals

> E(2) The institution maintains specific criteria for admission and retention, and defined student appeals process.

Criteria for admission and retention are described in Chapter 2, Part A(3) of this report. Specific criteria are reviewed periodically to enhance candidate quality based on standards, feedback, and wisdom of practice. The present admission to the teacher education program criteria were adopted in the spring of 2010 for students admitted to the program in the fall of 2010 and beyond in response to the changes in teacher licensure exams and feedback from the Teacher Education Advisory Committee.

Teacher education program candidates have the same rights and responsibilities as all Southwest Minnesota State University students. They are described in the *SMSU Student Handbook.* The Handbook provides detailed information about student rights and responsibilities, personal safety and security, policies and procedures, and student records.

Teacher education candidates have due process rights related to the Education Department as well. The department policy on Due Process/Appeals was last revised October 20, 2010. It is found on the SMSU Education Department and Education Program websites, in the SMSU Teacher Education Program Orientation Guide, and in the Student Teaching Handbook.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. An appeal process is outlined on the Graduate websites for the On-Campus and Special Education programs.

Recommendation. Continue to review and revise the Education Department policy on Due Process/Appeals to be comprehensive and consistent.

Records of Candidates

> E(3) The institution maintains complete, accurate, and current records of candidates in teacher preparation programs.

The Registration and Records Office and the Education Department maintain records on teacher education candidates. The Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) has enhanced the ability to maintain complete, accurate, and current records for education candidates. Personnel from Registration and Records, faculty from the Education Department, and staff in the Office of Placement and Licensure work together to develop and maintain these records so that advisors and candidates can regularly review progress in candidates preparing to be teachers. The Registrar also developed new codes in order to be able to identify licensure-only candidates (typically nontraditional and postbaccalaureate students who already have a content-area major and are now pursuing licensure).

The Education Department maintains records that include application materials, Praxis/MTLE test results, field experience assessments, and the Graduation Portfolio Review assessment. The Teacher Education Program began using *LiveText* in 2003 to further strengthen the data collection process for candidate performance with the use of the electronic teaching portfolio.

In addition to maintaining records for individual candidates, the Education Department submits reports to the Federal HEA – Title II, the Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and the Minnesota Board of Teaching.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. A database of graduate candidates and a filing system are maintained. The enrollment in graduate education programs has increased, while support staff has been decreased. The assistance of graduate assistants is used to fill in the gap in assistance needed to maintain student records.

Recommendation. Continue to work collaboratively with personnel in the Registration and Records Office, the Office of Placement and Licensure, and the Education Department support staff to maintain complete, accurate, and current records of candidates to use in celebrating successes and making effective changes in programs.

Performance-Based Assessments and Timelines

E(4) The institution uses authentic performance-based assessments and systematic procedures and timelines to determine whether candidates have the knowledge and skills needed to advance through the program.

Candidates in *Communities of Practice* regularly link theory and best practices in education as they progress through developmental coursework accompanied by regular field experiences. Assessment of candidates' performance within programs is a regular part of

monitoring candidate progress to determine their level of growth in teaching, learning, and leadership.

Performance assessments begin with the education foundation courses as candidates write reflective journals, develop PowerPoint presentations, and design and teach basic lessons in microteaching with peers and in cooperating schools with P-12 learners. A written evaluation from the classroom mentor teacher for the ED 101 Introduction to Education field experience becomes a part of each candidate's application to the Teacher Education Program.

The bonds between learning and teaching continue to be strengthened throughout the education programs in classes and field experiences. Candidates participate in videotaping lessons they teach in field experiences; writing reflective journals; investigating issues, content, and pedagogy; conducting action research; conducting student work sampling in their field experiences for lessons they designed and taught; and using the portfolio process to show evidence of professional growth and improvement in their teaching performance.

Candidates are required to enter clinical lesson plans, classroom management plans, and journal reflections from field experiences connected to ED 101 Introduction to Education, SPED 290 Introduction to Special Education, and ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications (prestudent teaching experience) in their *LiveText* portfolios as documentation of their progress through the Checkpoints in the education programs. They enter further documentation to show mastery of concepts in the growth and development of children and adolescents. Entry of a text analysis, a Native American Lesson Plan, and a project showing knowledge and understanding of disabilities show mastery of standards related to cultural diversity and diversity in student learning abilities. Candidates enter multiple artifacts from ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development in order to document their ability to integrate the appropriate use of technology for their grade level and content area.

Candidates participate in interviews for admission to the teacher education program. These interviews provide performance assessment evidence related to dispositions, communication skills, and knowledge of content and pedagogy. A Growth Plan is used to address needs in candidate performance.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Assessment is an ongoing process in the graduate programs. Initial assessment is in the admission process, which includes a statement of professional goals by the candidate, two letters of reference, and a copy of the initial teaching license. Candidates are required to maintain a 3.0 grade point average. A grade of "C-"or below in any graduate course will not receive graduate credit.

Candidates are required to develop professional portfolios to document their professional competencies. The Standards of Effective Practice and the content standards of the licensure/specialty area are used as a guide for candidate assessment during each practicum experience. An assessment form is completed for each practicum. The assessment form is

reviewed and signed by the candidate, classroom mentor teacher, and university supervisor. Prior to recommendation for licensure, candidates present their professional portfolios (based on the Standards of Effective Practice and the selected licensure/specialty area standards) at a formal review by faculty and peers.

Candidates are required to develop professional portfolios to document their professional competencies. The licensure portfolios are presented for peer and faculty review during the practicum courses for Special Education and during ED 451/551 Differentiation in Reading Instruction for the K-12 Reading program. Candidates completing the graduate program for a master's degree present an additional portfolio based on their action research and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards at the Voices with Vision conference held three times per year.

Recommendation. Continue to develop performance assessment components to assist candidates in meeting the requirements of the Teacher Performance Assessment. Refine the undergraduate *LiveText* portfolio process to further integrate these themes into the candidate performance assessment system in the four-year program of preparation to become a licensed teacher.

Criteria for Candidate Progress

> E(5) Criteria consistent with part 8710.2000 are used to determine candidate progress through each program.

The Standards of Effective Practice (Minnesota Rule 8710.2000) are the basis for the assessment of candidate progress through each of the teacher education programs at Southwest Minnesota State University. All programs were submitted to the Minnesota Board of Teaching with syllabi aligned to the Standards of Effective Practice. The syllabus template is used to remind faculty to include the SEP and other standards (such as Content Standards, dispositions, technology standards, and Minnesota Academic Standards, as appropriate) when making course revisions.

Candidates first receive knowledge of the 10 Standards of Effective Practice in ED 101 Introduction to Education. They are assessed on that knowledge through two reflective papers covering standards 4, 6, and 9. Candidates create an electronic teaching portfolio using a *LiveText* template in ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development. Field experience evaluations for the ED 101 Introduction to Education lab, the SPED 290 Introduction to Special Education lab, the ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications (prestudent teaching experience), and the Student Teaching experience are directly aligned to the Standards of Effective Practice. The Teacher Education Program portfolio and the

field experience assessments are evidence of candidate progress and performance in each teacher education program.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Course projects and artifacts in the professional portfolio document progress based on the Standards of Effective Practice. The core skills for Special Education and knowledge in each licensure area along with knowledge in K-12 Reading content are also monitored through the portfolio.

Recommendation. Continue to focus on candidate progress in relation to the Minnesota Board of Teaching standards.

Recommending Candidates for Licensure

E(6) The institution requires that candidates successfully complete all Board of Teaching licensure assessments before recommending a candidate for teacher licensure.

The Director of Placement and Licensure and the Registrar assure that candidates have successfully completed all Board of Teaching licensure requirements before recommending a candidate for teacher licensure. Candidates are required to complete a Degree Check as part of the application for student teaching process. Education advisors review the candidate's Degree Audit Report (DARS) for evidence of completion of each of the requirements for licensure, including successful completion of teacher licensure exams. A plan for completing any remaining requirements prior to student teaching is created and signed by the candidate and their advisor(s). Candidate records are reviewed to ensure that they contain evidence showing performance related to the BOT standards. Chapter 2, Part A(3) describes the Checkpoints that are assessed throughout the program. Typically, the candidate applies for graduation at the conclusion of a successful student teaching experience, unless other requirements for a non-licensure minor remain.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Prior to recommendation for licensure, a file review is completed to check for the candidate's current teaching license and successful completion of the required Praxis/MTLE tests and the portfolio review.

Recommendation. Continue to collaborate with personnel in the Office of Registration and Records and the Office of Placement and Licensure to ensure that all candidates successfully complete Board of Teaching licensure requirements prior to recommendation for licensure.

Publications and Faculty Advising

E(7) Publication and faculty advising provide candidates with clear information about institutional policies and requirements needed to complete professional education programs, the availability of social and psychological counseling services, and job opportunities.

Several publications are available to candidates to advise them in relation to institutional policies and professional education programs, including the [SMSU Student Handbook](). Education Department policies are noted in the syllabi for education courses, on the Education Department website, and in the electronic *LiveText* portfolio. Requirements for the completion of professional education programs are also available in the online [2010-2012 Academic Catalog]().

The Education Department provides information about teacher education programs through program advising materials available in the Education Department office, online on the [Education Department]() website, and through the electronic *LiveText* teaching portfolio.

Social and psychological counseling services are available to candidates through [Counseling and Testing Services](). These services are recommended to candidates when a need is evident. Personnel in [Career Services]() provide information about employment in the teaching profession. Representatives of Career Services help candidates with resume building, creation of cover letters, and interview skills. An online employment service for candidates to list their applications is also in use ([www.mustangjobs.com]()). Information on employment opportunities for candidates is also occasionally received from area school districts and related personnel; these opportunities are posted on the EMSP listserve and on the Education Department bulletin board located outside of the Education Department office area.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. The Education Department has copies of the graduate program advising materials available on permanent display. Packets of information that include an application and program information are regularly mailed out to persons who express interest in licensure in one of these areas. Candidates entering the program are given a copy of an advising form for reference and have access to forms through the Graduate Education website.

Recommendation. Maintain consistent and current advising materials for all licensure programs that can be used by candidates and advisors in Education and other content areas.

Part F. Competence of Candidates
Teacher education program candidates who are recommended for licensure are well qualified to teach, lead, and learn with P-12 students. They know their content areas and care for the well-being of their students; they understand and use standards-based education with a variety of learning models; they collaborate with education stakeholders; they are reflective

practitioners; they value the professional development process; and they participate and lead learning communities. Part F provides information and evidence about candidate competence.

Evidence of Candidates' Knowledge and Skills

> F(1) The unit provides evidence that licensure candidates demonstrate the skills and knowledge required under part 8710.2000.

Teacher education program candidates are regularly assessed by SMSU professors, classroom mentor teachers, university supervisors, and peers during courses and field experiences. The Field experience evaluations for the ED 101 Introduction to Education lab, the SPED 290 Introduction to Special Education lab, the ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications (prestudent teaching experience), and the Student Teaching experience are directly aligned to the Standards of Effective Practice. All candidates are required to document their knowledge and skills in the Teacher Education Program portfolio which is organized around the 10 Standards of Effective Practice. The portfolio is reviewed upon completion of student teaching at the Graduation Portfolio Review. Classroom mentor teachers and University supervisors provide written documentation of a candidate's readiness for licensure based on observation, written assessments, and portfolio evidence. The Director of Placement and Licensure assures that all requirements have been satisfactorily met. The requirements of all SMSU licensure programs were reviewed and approved by the Minnesota Board of Teaching by the fall semester of 2008 (see the SMSU Programs and BOT Approvals in the blue binders). Program revisions due to changes in licensure requirements and efforts to meet the MnSCU 120-credit cap are in progress during the fall of 2010.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. Because candidates have completed initial licensure under part 8710.2000, this standard had been met through their undergraduate program. The skills and knowledge required for each licensure/specialty area are demonstrated through the admission process, course projects, an action research project, portfolio review events, and practicum experiences.

Recommendation. Continue to develop the undergraduate *LiveText* teaching portfolio process to document evidence of candidates' knowledge and skills.

Comprehensive Assessment Design

> F(2) The unit demonstrates a systematic and comprehensive assessment that is applied to all candidates throughout professional preparation.

The area of Comprehensive Assessment Design was the only section 'Not Met' in the previous Board of Teaching accreditation visit in the fall of 2003. To meet this standard,

Education Department members began the process of designing a comprehensive assessment system during the 2002-2003 academic year. Dispositions standards related to the 10 Standards of Effective Practice were adopted. They have been refined and included in the performance evaluations for various field experiences for teacher education candidates.

Another initiative in the assessment design process was related to the development of the teaching portfolio. A template was developed for the electronic *LiveText* portfolio, which is designed around the 10 Standards of Effective Practice. The template has been updated and revised several times to reflect changes in education programming and to provide better documentation of candidate performance. The administration of the *LiveText* account has changed several times over the past seven years, leading to temporary inconsistency in the development of the assessment system. Funding for this position has also been sporadic due to budget constraints. Nevertheless, significant progress has been made and the implementation of the *LiveText* assessment system has moved forward.

Candidates create their *LiveText* teaching portfolio as part of the ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development foundation course. Education Department faculty have identified content from specific courses and field experiences to address each of the 10 Standards of Effective Practice (see Assessment for ECE, ELED, and Sec/K-12). Later in the education sequence, all education majors are required to take ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications, where they receive additional information about the portfolio for use in interviews, including a list of possible artifacts. One of the final projects for this class is participation in a mock Graduation Portfolio Review, where students are able to have their in-progress teaching portfolios reviewed by peers and Education department faculty for input and feedback.

In the fall of 2010, an initiative was undertaken to acquaint all university supervisors for student teaching to the *LiveText* assessment process. University supervisors were provided with a *LiveText* account and provided with training in how to use the rubrics in the *LiveText* system to evaluate the progress of student teachers. It is the intent of the Education Department to expand this initiative to include the PreStudent Teaching Experience in this assessment process in the spring of 2011.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. As described in Section E(4), assessment is an ongoing process in the graduate education programs, beginning with the admission process. The Standards of Effective Practice and the content standards of each licensure/specialty area are used as a guide for candidate assessment during coursework and each practicum experience. Syllabi from courses show assessment of knowledge related to the standards. An assessment form is completed for each practicum and is reviewed and signed by the candidate, classroom mentor teacher, and the university supervisor. Prior to recommendation for licensure, candidates present their professional portfolios, based on the Standards of Effective Practice and the selected licensure/specialty area standards, at a formal review by faculty and peers.

Recommendation. Continue to work on the development of the *LiveText* assessment system to provide evidence of candidate performance. Work to provide adequate release time for the administrator of the *LiveText* assessment system.

Criteria and Outcomes for Program Exit

> F(3) The unit established and publishes a set of criteria and outcomes for exit from each professional education program consistent with the standards of the Board of Teaching.

The program outcomes, based on the 10 Standards of Effective Practice, are the criteria reviewed for the Student Teaching assessment. The evaluation form is the same for all teacher education programs. The PreStudent Teaching Experience evaluation is similar, but assesses only the first seven Standards of Effective Practice. Both assessments are available from the Office of Placement and Licensure and are included in informational packets presented to the candidates during mandatory application and placement meetings held for candidates prior to prestudent teaching and student teaching.

K-12 Reading and Special Education. The criteria and exit outcomes for each of the approved licensure areas are available in printed documents and on the SMSU website. The criteria and exit outcomes for each licensure area are aligned with the Board of Teaching standards and were approved by the Board of Teaching in 2008.

Recommendation. Continue monitoring the criteria for outcomes for exit from each professional education program.

Outcomes Assessed with Multiple Sources of Data

> F(4) The program's stated exit criteria and outcomes are assessed through the use of multiple sources of data, for example a culminating experience, portfolios, interviews, videotaped and observed performance in schools, standardized tests, and course grades.

The criteria for exiting teacher education programs at Southwest Minnesota State University are based on the Board of Teaching standards and the standards of *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching.* Primary sources of data from student teaching include final assessments by classroom mentor teachers and university supervisors, videotaped lessons, portfolio artifacts, and journal reflections. Early Childhood and Elementary Education candidates also complete and present an action research project as part of their required coursework. There are plans to further integrate examining student work protocols into the

portfolio process to better assess the learning of P-12 students taught by candidates and to better prepare candidates for the Teacher Performance Assessments. To graduate from a teacher education program, candidates must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.8. Candidates applying for licensure must pass all required teacher licensure examinations (Praxis I and II, prior to Sept. 1, 2010, and the MTLE tests in Basic Skills, Content, and Pedagogy after Sept. 1, 2010).

K-12 Reading and Special Education. As stated in Sections E(4) and F(2), the exit criteria are clearly stated on the licensure recommendation forms that are available online and in hard copy to all candidates. The exit criteria include a valid initial teaching license, successful completion of the core and licensure/specialty area courses, practicum experiences, all required Praxis/MTLE tests, and a final faculty and peer review of the professional portfolio.

Recommendation. Continue developing the *LiveText* portfolio process to maintain multiple sources of data in assessing competency of candidates.

Part G. Qualifications, Composition, and Assignment of Professional Education Faculty

The faculty of Southwest Minnesota State University are highly qualified to facilitate the learning of teacher education candidates. They meet the rigorous requirements established by the university, the Education Department, and the Board of Teaching. They know their subject areas and value learning and professional relationships with candidates. There is wide participation in *Communities of Practice* and attention to candidates' learning and well-being. Part G provides evidence for these statements. These statements apply to all licensure programs, including the K-12 Reading and Special Education licensure programs at the graduate level.

Faculty Qualifications

> G(1) The unit ensures that all faculty are qualified by academic preparation for the faculty member's current assignments and are actively engaged in the professional

Academic Preparation. The education department faculty possess the academic credentials and professional experiences that qualify them for their assignments. The unit has established the Standards for Faculty Qualifications for hiring professional and clinical faculty (see the Education Department website). For undergraduate professional faculty, a doctorate degree is preferred, and a terminal degree must be completed at the time of tenure application. Faculty without a terminal degree can teach or supervise only within their area(s) of specialty. For clinical faculty, an earned master's degree is required. A teaching license and a minimum of three years of successful P-12 teaching experience are required for both undergraduate professional and for clinical faculty. In addition, undergraduate professional faculty must be

engaged in scholarship. Table 3 below displays the professional rank and degrees earned by Education Department faculty.

Table 3 Highest Degree and Professional Rank for Education Department faculty 2010-2011

	Masters	Specialist	Doctor	Totals
Professor			3	3
Associate			7	7
Assistant		1	3	4
Instructor				0
Total	0	1	13	14

All 12 of the 12 tenure-track or tenured faculty members (2010-2011 academic year) have earned doctoral degrees. Of the two fixed-term faculty members, one holds a doctoral degree and the other holds a specialist degree. The Education Department seeks tenure-track faculty with terminal degrees, and has made significant strides in improving the qualifications of our faculty members since our last BOT visit in the fall of 2003. Table 4 below shows the numbers of tenured, tenure-track, and fixed-term faculty and the degrees held within each status.

Table 4 Highest Degree and Faculty Status for 2010-2011 Academic Year

	Masters	Specialist	Doctor	Totals
Tenured			11	11
Tenure-Track			1	1
Fixed-Term		1	1	2
Total		1	13	14

Engagement in the Professional Community. Education department faculty members observe and supervise internships, student teaching, prestudent teaching, clinical experience, practicum, and other field experiences in cooperating P-12 schools and agencies. The clinical experiences for candidates in ED 423 Classroom Management Theory and Practice (Early Childhood and Elementary Education majors) and ED 301 Teaching and Learning Processes (Secondary/K-12 Education majors) are innovative projects that involve faculty and candidates working with P-12 students and professionals in a two-day teaching experience.

Professional education faculty have collaborated with colleagues in community and technical colleges and early childhood settings in southwest Minnesota to write grants for enhancing the qualifications of early childhood professionals. This resulted in a Bremer Foundation grant in 2005 which enabled the Education Department to develop articulation agreements with several MnSCU institutions to allow for a seamless transition into SMSU's Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education. The purpose of the grant was to provide access to a college degree for diverse and/or impoverished nontraditional students from across the state. This program has seen continued growth since its inception in 2006.

Education department faculty members have collaborated with other departments in the university and the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative to write several other grants to plan, implement, and evaluate other collaborative projects in the areas of K-12 math and science education. Additional grants have been secured for math and science education students from MnSCU and the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide for professional development opportunities, internships, and technology workshops.

Education faculty also assume leadership roles in professional associations and state committees, such as serving as a member on the Minnesota Department of Special Education as an Institution of Higher Education representative, as a district representative on the Minnesota Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and as a Higher Education representative to the Minnesota Rural Education Association. These external activities support the professional development of individual faculty members and help to bring current research and best practices to teacher education at SMSU.

Currently the course and committee load for full-time faculty is heavy. The Education Department makes every effort to have full-time faculty members supervise field experiences and participate in collaborative grants and projects.

Recommendation. Explore external sources of funding for special projects to support the education department programs.

Academic Preparation

> G(2) The unit assigns faculty qualified by academic preparation to support the teacher licensure programs.

Education department faculty members are assigned to teach and supervise in their areas of expertise and licensure. A review of the curriculum vitae and teaching licenses held by department faculty members shows that many are licensed in more than one subject field and level. The department faculty members take pride in hiring faculty with varied backgrounds. In addition to classroom teaching in public and parochial schools, faculty have worked in residential schools, Native American Reservation schools, school administration, as paraprofessionals, and in the business sector. Curriculum vitae show that Education Department faculty members have diverse academic preparation and experiences.

Recommendation. Continue to hire probationary tenure-track faculty with terminal degrees and documented expertise in specific disciplines.

Recruiting and Hiring

When hiring new faculty members, the Education Department follows established university procedure, which is guided by the SMSU Affirmative Action Policy. The Affirmative Action Officer is responsible for implementation and administration of the university's equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and policies. The action plan is modified every two years based on a workforce and utilization analysis that identifies the number and percentage of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities who are currently employed and compares these figures to the available market. The President, Affirmative Action Officer, administrators, supervisors, and search committee members are responsible for implementing the plan.

The following table represents the Education Department faculty professional rank distribution by rank, gender, and ethnicity.

Table 5 Faculty Rank, Gender, and Ethnicity for 2010-2011 Academic Year

	Professor		Associate		Assistant		Instructor		Total		Tenured		Tenure-Track		Fixed-Term		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
American Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Island	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
African American	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Hispanic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Caucasian	2	1	0	6	1	3	0	0	3	10	3	7	0	1	0	2	3	10

Recommendation. Continue to work within SMSU's institutional policy framework to recruit, encourage, and retain additional qualified faculty with diverse backgrounds.

Faculty Work Load

In accordance with Article 10 of the Interfaculty Organization (IFO) union contract, faculty work load consists of 24 semester credits through the academic year. Adjunct faculty members are limited to a total of 10 semester credits during the academic year. These credits

include teaching, supervision of student teaching and practicum, and special assignments such as chair of the department or director of a program. In addition, faculty are required to schedule at least 10 office hours per week to meet with candidates and help them to achieve their educational goals. Education faculty members are involved in numerous on-campus and off-campus professional committees. Faculty may elect to have overload credits; at SMSU, overload has been allowed for one class over the 12 semester full load. If the class taught as overload is a graduate level course, it incurs 4 semester credits of overload, for a maximum possible load per academic year of 32 semester credits.

One faculty member in the Education Department retired at the end of the 2009-2010 academic year, and was replaced with a fixed term position for the 2010-2011 academic year. Two faculty members were on sabbatical during the 2009-2010 academic year, one in the fall semester and one in the spring semester, resulting in somewhat higher loads for the remaining faculty members and the increased use of adjuncts to cover the courses traditionally taught by those faculty members. The figures shown below show the faculty load for the 2010-2011 academic year where only one faculty member will be on sabbatical (planned for Spring 2011).

Table 6 Faculty Course Load for the 2010-2011 Academic Year

Faculty	Course Credits	Supervision Credits	Reassigned Time	Credits per Semester	Total Credits
Fall 2010					
1	12	0.1	3	15.1	
2	6	0.86	7.5	14.36	
3	15	0	0	15	
4	15	0.5	0	15.5	
5	15	0	0	15	
6	16	0	0	16	
7	14	0.9	0.5	15.4	
8	19	0	0.5	19.5	
9	15	0	0	15	
10	19	0	0	19	
11	15	0	0	15	
12	15	0	0	15	
13	10.5	0.66	3	14.16	
14	13	0.66	0	13.66	
Spring 2011 (proposed)	Course Credits	*Supervision Credits	Reassigned Time	Credits per Semester	Total Credits
1	9	0	3	12	27.1
2	7.5	0	7.5	15	29.36
3	14	0	0	14	29
4	12	0	0	12	27.5
5	15	0	0	15	30
6	13	0	0	13	29
7	14	0	0	14	29.4

8	15	0	0	15	34.5
9	15	0	0	15	30
10 **	(12)				31
11	15	0	0	15	30
12	15	0	0	15	30
13	12.5	0	3	15.5	29.66
14	12	0	0	12	25.66

*Supervision credits are yet to be determined for Spring 2011

**Faculty member on sabbatical for Spring 2011

Recommendation. Continue to assign courses in a manner that maintains equity on the demands of faculty time. Additional probationary, tenure-track positions for the Education Department would support this goal.

Qualifications for Supervision

> (G5) The unit ensures that faculty who supervise field experiences are academically prepared and professionally experienced in a school setting.

The extensive expertise of Education Department faculty members is matched to the varied levels of field experiences of our candidates. Faculty supervise clinical experiences, prestudent teaching, student teaching, and practicum experiences. Due to the contract limits on the amount of load a faculty member may have and the greater distances involved in supervision for the 2 + 2 Early Childhood Education program, the Education Department uses well-qualified adjuncts for supervision of field experiences as well. As noted in the Standards for Faculty Qualifications, all faculty and adjunct faculty involved in field experience supervision are required to have a minimum of an earned Master's degree, a teaching license in the area and grade level of supervision, and a minimum of 3 years contemporary B-12 classroom teaching experience. The following table lists the full-time faculty and their involvement in P-12 settings.

Table 7 Fixed Term (FT), Tenure-Track (TT), and Tenured (T) Education Faculty Qualifications for P-12 Settings in 2010-2011

Faculty ID	Licensure Areas	P-12 Teaching Experience	P-12 Administrative Experience
1 TT	Minnesota Early Childhood B-age 8 Elementary K-gr. 8 Journalism gr. 7-12 Early Childhood Special Ed North Dakota	14 years	
2-T	Minnesota	9 years	

	Mathematics gr. 7-12		
3-T	Minnesota Elementary gr. K-6 Coaching gr. 7-12 Principal K-12	14 years	1 year
4-T	Minnesota Home Economics gr. 7-12 Special Ed Mild to Mod gr. K-12 Early Childhood Special Ed B-age 6	17 years	
6-T	Barbados Secondary Education, all areas	12 years	
7-FT	Minnesota Elementary gr. 1-6 Special Ed Mod-Severe gr. K-12 Director of Special Education Elementary School Principal	13 years	15 years
8-T	Minnesota English/Language Arts gr. 7-12 Life Sciences gr. 7-12 District Superintendent Secondary School Principal	12 years	14 years
9-T	Iowa Elementary Education K-6 Minor in PE (K-6), Psychology Reading Endorsement Elementary Principal	7 years	4 years
12 -T	Minnesota Elementary gr. K-6	17.5 years	
13-T	Minnesota Elementary gr. 1-6	14 years	
14-FT	Minnesota Elementary gr. K-6 Coaching gr. 7-12 Reading gr. K-12 Principal gr. K-12	10 years	2 years

*Faculty ID # 5, 10, and 11 do not participate in supervision of education licensure candidates

Curriculum vitae provide additional information about the qualifications of university supervisors and clinical faculty. Information for adjunct faculty hired for clinical supervision is available in the Office of Placement and Licensure.

Recommendation. Continue to review the process for assessment of university clinical supervision to ensure the necessary academic preparation and professional experience.

Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty

> G(6) Any part-time and adjunct faculty and graduate students in teaching roles provide integrity, quality, and continuity of teacher preparation programs.

The Education Department follows an established policy for the hiring of part-time and adjunct faculty (see the [Standards for Faculty Qualifications](#)). Education department faculty members evaluate the application materials for all possible adjuncts and call references as needed before voting to approve an applicant as an adjunct faculty member. The department has strong adjunct faculty who meet the criteria and have expertise for teaching. One adjunct faculty member is a national trainer for NWEA; another holds a reading license, while three more hold Special Education licenses. Graduate students are not used for teaching or supervision.

Information on courses to be taught and methods of assessment is provided to adjunct faculty members by Education Department faculty members who have previously taught the course. Adjunct clinical faculty receive guidelines on the field experiences to be supervised and methods of evaluation from the Director of Placement and Licensure.

Recommendation. It is recommended that the Education Department further develop and update an adjunct faculty handbook to integrate adjunct faculty into the education programs and professional development activities.

Research-Based Practice

> G(7) Faculty and teaching in the unit are of high quality reflecting current research and best practice consistent with the curriculum goals of the program.

The Education Department faculty members support the mission, purpose, and core values of the education programs. They place emphasis on teaching, learning, and leadership. They have deep understanding of their fields and skillfully integrate their content knowledge with pedagogy based on best practices in their classrooms. In the fall of 2002, faculty agreed to develop course syllabi using a template that clearly indicates how the courses are aligned not only with the Standards of Effective Practice, but also with the content standards, local conceptual framework standards, dispositions standards, technology standards, and the Minnesota Academic Standards (see course syllabi, candidate action research projects available in the Academic Commons, and candidate portfolios available online through *LiveText*).

Faculty members keep abreast of current research and best practices in their respective fields by reading professional journals, participating in electronic listserves, and attending and presenting at professional conferences at the international, national, and state levels (see curriculum vitae). They model new strategies and discuss research findings in the courses that they teach. The conceptual framework supports the use of a research-based approach to learning

and teaching. Faculty help candidates investigate teaching with a focus on learning in *Communities of Practice*.

Recommendation. Continue to encourage and support faculty members as they seek out current research on best practices in their content areas. Continue to explore external sources of funding through grant writing for work on collaborative projects and other special projects to support the education programs.

Modeling Best Practice

> G(8) Faculty and cooperating school personnel model and reflect the best practice in the delivery of instruction.

Education Department faculty use various instructional approaches to address multiple intelligences and different learning styles through their teaching. They incorporate active learning through debates, role-plays, simulations, inquiry tasks, presentations, and case studies. Guest speakers are invited to classes to share their expertise with the candidates. Faculty members engage students in community building through cooperative learning and collaborative group work. They involve elements of experiential learning in their courses through field trips and action research projects (see course syllabi, candidate action research projects available in the Academic Commons, and candidate portfolios available online through *LiveText*).

Education faculty members integrate technology in the delivery of instruction, and through this process help candidates develop competence in using technology themselves. They either teach or enhance courses online, use the university's Desire to Learn (D2L) course management system to deliver course resources, have students use webquests, research interactive websites, or require class presentations in PowerPoint. Efforts are made within the department and the university to enhance the technological skills of the faculty and raise their levels of comfort in using technology to enhance and/or deliver instruction. Within the last five years, faculty have had training on the use of D2L, *LiveText*, Nings, and the use of Smartboards in their teaching.

Recommendation. Continue to develop best practices in the delivery of instruction, including the integration of appropriate forms of technology to enhance teaching and learning experiences.

Modeling for Learning

> G(9) Faculty use a variety of instructional strategies that reflect an understanding of different models and approaches to learning.

Education Department faculty model best practices in teaching for the candidates (see course syllabi and candidate portfolios). For example, faculty members use a modified constructivist approach to promote higher order thinking skills in candidates and to model this style of teaching. To elevate the process of learning, they emphasize inquiry-based learning, investigations, problem-solving, and applications of knowledge. They use approaches that emphasize thorough understanding of core concepts and challenge candidates to construct new meaning. Plans to more fully integrate the examination of student work protocols in prestudent and student teaching will place additional emphasis on the evaluation of student learning.

Recommendation. Continue to support faculty initiatives to develop *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching*.

Problem-solving

> G(10) Instruction encourages the candidate's development of reflection, critical thinking, problem-solving, and professional dispositions.

Faculty engage candidates in higher-level thinking both in courses and field experiences (see syllabi, field experience evaluations, candidate *LiveText* portfolios, and action research projects). Candidates read articles about reflection and participate in guided activities designed to help them understand the role of the reflective practitioner in the first of their foundation courses in the education programs, ED 101 Introduction to Education. In the second of the foundation courses, ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development, candidates create their teaching portfolios and learn to write justifications and reflections for each of the artifacts they enter in their online teaching portfolios. Other faculty members require candidates to select current issues in their fields and develop policy papers around those topics.

Candidates are involved in reading, inquiry, dialogue, and collaborative and individual projects that require the skills of teaching and learning, relate to the standards of the teaching profession, and fit with the mission, vision, and standards of *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching*. For example, in ED 304 Professional Development and Classroom Applications, candidates read a variety of case studies and provide written responses to the classroom and ethical situations described. They also participate in class and online discussions relating to ways to document mastery of the Standards of Effective Practice through artifacts that they enter in their teaching portfolios and in a peer review of their teaching portfolios.

Recommendation. Education Department faculty should continue to integrate learning experiences that naturally develop reflection, critical thinking, problem-solving, and professional ethical judgment and dispositions into education courses and field experiences.

Diversity and Exceptionalities

> G(11) Teaching in the unit reflects knowledge and experiences with diversity and exceptionalities.

The Education Department faculty members integrate diversity into all of the education courses. Faculty promote diversity in education programs by encouraging more males in Early Childhood and Elementary Education program majors, and more females in math and science education majors. Candidates are naturally diverse in age, cultural backgrounds, and physical abilities, and these differences are appreciated and celebrated by department faculty. Candidates are encouraged to share their diverse experiences with their peers in education courses.

Faculty members have demonstrated an appreciation for diversity in a number of ways, including hosting international students, participating in Global Studies clusters, acting as foster parents for students of diverse cultures, traveling abroad, and researching the teaching of reading strategies in New Zealand. Some faculty participate in or attend cultural programs with candidates, such as Pow Wows, Chinese New Year celebrations, Black History Month events, and the International Student Food Festival. They encourage students to volunteer for the Special Olympics. Faculty encourage interested candidates to participate in the Student Teaching Abroad program. Faculty share with candidates their direct experiences with families and friends who are of mixed cultures or have exceptional needs. Faculty members have attended workshops related to diversity that were sponsored by the Difficult Dialogues initiative at SMSU. Education faculty members value and seek diverse experiences.

Recommendation. Continue to encourage faculty members to focus on experiences with diversity in their teaching as well as in their professional development.

Facilitation of Professional Development

> G(12) The institution systematically evaluates the effect of faculty on candidate performance and fosters faculty professional development.

Evaluation of the performance of professional education faculty is embodied in a systematic review of faculty teaching, scholarship, and service, which revolves around the Professional Development Plan (PDP). In accordance with the *IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement*,

each faculty member prepares a Professional Development Plan for the period to be covered by the evaluation. This plan includes specific objectives, methods, and expected achievements in respect to five specified criteria: (a) demonstrated ability to teach effectively and/or perform effectively in other current assignments, (b) scholarly or creative achievement or research, (c) evidence of continuing preparation and study, (d) contribution to student growth and development, and (e) service to the University and community. The completed plan is provided to the Dean of the College of Business, Education, Graduate, and Professional Studies and to Education Department members through the department chairperson for written feedback to assist the faculty member in his or her professional development and, if applicable, provide guidance with respect to promotion and/or tenure. The appropriate dean or other appropriate supervisor writes comments on the plan to assist the faculty member in professional development, and, if applicable, provides guidance with respect to personnel decisions.

The University President/designee establishes timetables for preparation of PDP annual progress reports, periodic evaluations, and giving of recommendations regarding nonrenewal, tenure, and promotion, subject to the provisions of Article 25 of the IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement. The evaluation period varies with faculty status.

At the end of the evaluation period, each faculty member prepares a summary report, together with appropriate documentation describing the progress made in respect to achieving his/her objectives as specified in the professional development plan. Documentation may include such materials as attention to student advisement, peer reviews, student assessments, papers delivered at meetings, grants received, curricular proposals or revisions, supervising student projects, and community presentations.

Copies of progress reports are sent to the faculty member through the appropriate chair and to the dean. The progress report goes through the same course as the plan. Department members write comments to support the faculty member in professional development. The faculty member meets with the dean to discuss achievements made during that period. A written summary of the dean's assessment of the faculty member's accomplishments in respect to the plan is sent to the faculty member and placed in the faculty member's official personnel file. The annual evaluation informs final recommendations relative to reappointment, acquisition of tenure, and promotions.

Consistent with the conceptual framework, the unit supports the notion of life-long learning and provides resources for the professional development of its faculty.   Every year, each faculty member receives approximately $1300 as contractual money for professional travel. In addition, each faculty member may apply for faculty improvement grants (FIG), no to exceed $800 within a biennium, to use on projects to pursue scholarship goals and continuing preparation for teaching, as indicated in the professional development plan.

Faculty are members of professional organizations at the state and national levels and participate in selected meetings. For example, faculty have attended the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) annual meetings for several years. In January 2008, the Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies and a team of four faculty members attended the AACTE annual meeting in New Orleans. Over the past three years, education department faculty members attended training in English as a Second Language at Brigham Young University in Provost, Utah. This professional development has resulted in the recent approval of a licensure program in English as a Second Language at Southwest Minnesota State University which will be offered beginning in the fall of 2011.

Recommendation. Continue to encourage participation in faculty professional development to enhance candidate learning and program opportunities at SMSU.

Scholarship

G(13) The unit's faculty demonstrates knowledge, skills, and dispositions, which model best professional practices, assessment, and scholarship.

Chapter 2, Parts G(6) and G(12) describe how faculty at SMSU model best professional practice in their teaching. Ongoing participation in *Communities of Practice* also demonstrates best professional practice. The Education department schedules meetings for various program levels on a monthly basis, and also hosts a Teacher Education Advisory Committee meeting and a Campus Liaison meeting each semester in which faculty demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

The Education Department's commitment to the assessment of student academic achievement is reflected in the multiple forms of assessment that match the multiple instructional strategies that are used (see course syllabi and candidate portfolios). Faculty demonstrate to candidates how to effectively use assessment tools such as the DIAL test, student work sampling, and several types of reading assessments. Individual and group projects are assessed. Rubrics and lesson objectives tied to standards are developed to prepare candidates prior to course assignments. Faculty arrange a two-day clinical experience in elementary and secondary classrooms to observe and assess the candidates' actual teaching. They require candidates to develop portfolios to document meeting each of the standards. Faculty evaluate assessment tools and make modifications as needed. Formal and informal assessments are completed to inform decisions about what content is critical to include.

Professional education faculty demonstrate scholarly work related to teaching, learning, and their fields of specialization. Faculty members have regularly made presentations at annual conferences for international, national, and state professional organizations, including the Clute Institute for Academic Research, the Society for Information Technology and Teacher

Education, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Faculty have participated in collaborative grant writing with colleagues in the university and outside agencies in the areas of math and science education and early childhood education.

Recommendation. Continue to explore external sources of funding for collaborative action research and special projects to support education programs at SMSU.

Part H. Institutional Governance

The governance structure of Southwest Minnesota State University supports teacher education in a variety of ways. This section will provide information and evidence to verify that teacher licensure programs are administered to ensure vitality of programs and future capacity of resources. These statements in this section apply to all licensure programs, including the K-12 Reading and Special Education licensure programs at the graduate level.

The Professional Education Unit

> H(1) The professional education unit is clearly identified and has primary responsibility for all programs offered at the institution for the licensure of teachers and other professional school personnel.

The SMSU Organizational Structure 2010-2011 includes the Education Department in the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies. The Dean of this college reports to the Provost, who reports to the President (see SMSU Organizational Web 2010-2011).

The mission of professional education at SMSU is to create *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching* where each learner is an active participant in the development of learning, teaching, and leadership processes by engagement in inquiry, critical reflection, and study of educational theory, research, and practice in pursuit of excellence. It is intended that the mission and the local, state, and national standards guide the governance of the Professional Education Unit. The unit is the Education Department, responsible for all licensure programs.

The Professional Education Unit of Southwest Minnesota State University is the undergraduate and graduate faculty in the Education Department and the Dean of Business, Education, Graduate, and Professional Studies. The Professional Education Unit is responsible for teacher licensure programs. The unit makes decisions on initial and advanced teacher licensure programs that affect the department such as policies, procedures, library resources, faculty qualifications, staffing, and coordination of undergraduate and graduate licensure programs. The department makes decisions and has voting rights as spelled out in the *IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement*, of the Inter Faculty Organization and the Minnesota State

[Colleges and Universities](#). The unit head is the Dean of Business, Education, and Professional Studies.

The Education Department at Southwest Minnesota State University has the leadership and authority to plan, deliver, and operate coherent teacher education licensure programs which include Early Childhood, Elementary, Secondary, K-12, Reading and Special Education. A new licensure in English as a Second Language will be offered in the fall of 2011. The Education Department effectively manages or coordinates all programs so candidates are prepared to meet the standards required to become educational professionals who work effectively in P-12 schools. The Education Department submits all licensure programs to the Minnesota Board of Teaching.

Recommendation. There are two recommendations for strengthening the governance in relation to BOT Standard H (1). The first is that the unit expands the definition and organization of the Professional Education Unit to include nonlicensure teacher education programs. The second recommendation is for the expansion of the licensure offerings at SMSU to include administrative licensures such as the Director of Special Education, K-12 Principal licensure, and K-12 Superintendent licensure.

Responsibility and Authority for Teacher Education

> H(2) Responsibility and authority for teacher preparation programs are exercised by a defined administrative and instructional unit, for example, a department, division, school, or college education.

The Education Department is responsible for and has authority for the preparation of candidates who are seeking licensure to teach in Minnesota. The Dean of Business, Education, and Professional Studies oversees the department.

The Education Department divides itself into three areas for the purposes of monthly meetings to determine program updates and needs. These areas include the faculty teaching in the undergraduate programs; the faculty teaching in the on-campus graduate programs, including the Reading and Special Education licensure programs; and the graduate faculty teaching in the off-campus learning communities. Several faculty members serve in more than one area as programmatic needs and professional experience and licensure dictate.

The Campus Liaison Program was initiated by the Education Department during the 2002-2003 academic year. It provides a method for ensuring regular discussion and updates on changes within the education programs with content area faculty from across the campus. This program is described further in Chapter 2, [Part H(6).](#)

Recommendation. It is recommended that the Education Department continue to meet on a regular basis to deal with operational needs both within the unit and across the SMSU campus.

Faculty, Curriculum, and Resource Decisions

> H(3) The unit is directly involved in the areas of faculty selection, tenure, promotion, and retention decisions; recruitment of candidates; curriculum decisions, evaluation, revision, and the allocation of resources for institution activities.

The Education Department chooses the members of each search committee, develops a plan for recruiting candidates, meets with Human Resources personnel, reviews files of persons applying for a faculty position, and makes recommendations to the SMSU Administration for hiring. The administration usually hires the applicant recommended by the search committee (see *IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement*). Each advertisement for a position has the following three sentences:

A candidate must have an understanding of and appreciation for liberal education.

The university is committed to fostering a global perspective.

A successful candidate will have demonstrated ability to teach and work with persons from diverse backgrounds.

Each faculty member develops a Professional Development Plan (PDP) that is regularly assessed each year (see Section G(12) also). The department and the department chair are authorized by contract to make a recommendation to the administration regarding a faculty member's application for tenure and/or promotion. The faculty member applying for promotion makes the application available for department review about a month prior to the time of recommendation. Documentation includes materials related to the five professional development criteria stated in the *IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement* (see hardcopy examples of faculty portfolios).

Sections D(1) and D(4) describe how the unit is involved in the recruitment of candidates. Admission counselors, advising staff, and education faculty and staff work together to provide accurate and useful information to individuals who indicate an interest in teacher education at SMSU.

Professional curriculum is developed, evaluated, and revised by the Education Department as needed each year. The University's Curriculum Committees (undergraduate and

graduate) review curriculum proposals submitted by departments. After approval from these committees, the SMSU Faculty Association votes on the proposals that come forward.

The Education Department receives an operating budget and a clinical budget that it administers. It has influence over selection of resources in the SMSU Library. Further information on budget and resources is given in Sections H(8) and H(9).

Recommendation. It is recommended that opportunities supporting the development of professional education faculty directly involved in teacher education be expanded to include a more systematic mentoring program for new faculty. The department plans to continue the practice of having faculty share their professional portfolios, with faculty seeking tenure and promotion preparing presentations for the meeting of their choice each academic year. It is recommended that the Education Department continue to collaborate with the Admissions Office, Academic and Diversity Resources, the Athletics Department, and the Advising Center to review and enhance current policies and practices for recruiting and retaining qualified teacher candidates from strategic locations and regions, such as community colleges, urban, and rural settings (see Chapter 2, Parts D(1) and D(4) also). It is recommended that the Education Department continue to involve candidates in the hiring process for new faculty. It is also recommended that particular emphasis be placed on recruiting candidates from underrepresented groups.

Administrator of Licensure Programs

> H(4) The administrator of the defined unit is authorized to submit licensure program proposals for the Board of Teaching approval and is responsible for administering licensure programs.

The Professional Education Unit is authorized to submit licensure program proposals for Board of Teaching approval. The Education Department chair at Southwest Minnesota State University coordinates the administration of licensure programs.

Recommendation. The Education Department chair and the department faculty will continue to monitor licensure changes.

Licensure Officer

> H(5) The administrator of the defined unit is authorized to recommend for teacher licensure candidates who have completed the institution's teacher preparation programs.

The area of the licensure officer at SMSU is one that has seen significant changes since the last Board of Teaching visit in 2003. Prior to the fall of 2008, the licensure officer was a faculty member who had reassigned time to serve as the unit's licensure officer. As was noted in the recommendations in the last Institutional Report on Teacher Education in 2003, the growth of the education programs at SMSU warranted that the amount of time set aside for the licensure position needed to be adjusted. In the fall of 2008, this position was revised to be a separate Office of Placement and Licensure which would handle the placements for most field experiences and all licensure programs in the Education Department. A full-time person was hired to staff this position, which is no longer held by a faculty member. The Director of Placement and Licensure is assisted by a Field Experience Coordinator (at .73 FTE) and a Field Experience Support Staff position (at .5 FTE).

The Licensure Officer is ultimately responsible for recommending candidates for licensure with support from the Registrar and the Education Department chair. The Education Department chair reviews all applications for Student Teaching and all Degree Checks and signs off on each one. The Registrar signs all Degree Checks. The Licensure Officer reviews the candidate's transcripts and records before recommending licensure. The candidate must have completed all the requirements of the Board of Teaching and of SMSU for licensure in the state of Minnesota.

Recommendation. It is recommended that the amount of support for the Office of Placement and Licensure be reviewed annually and adjusted accordingly as the number of placements and applications for licensure reflect the growth of the education programs at SMSU.

Collaboration

> H(6) School faculty, candidates, and other members of the professional community are actively involved in the unit's policy making and advisory boards.

The Teacher Education Program seeks input about various Education programs from the Teacher Education Advisory Committee. This committee is comprised of Education faculty members, staff in the office of Placement and Licensure, classroom mentor teachers, university supervisors, student teachers, alumni and administration from cooperating school districts. This group meets once each semester to provide updates and receive input on the preparedness of student teachers in relation to the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice and our conceptual framework *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching*. All members of the Council are encouraged to provide input to improve the design and development of candidates' field experiences. Results are brought back to the full Education department and are used to guide curriculum and field experience development.

Candidates have input into the development of the programs and policies by giving feedback to the faculty through the EMSP and FACE organizations, participation on the Teacher Education Advisory Committee, and participation in occasional focus groups.

The Campus Liaison program includes representatives from other departments and programs at the university who support the Teacher Education Program. The meetings each semester have been instrumental in helping faculty and staff across the campus to develop more common understandings of the SMSU Teacher Education Program and ways to work together to strengthen our programs.

Department retreats have been scheduled occasionally for extended discussion and development of goals.

Recommendation. Continue to elicit feedback from all stakeholders and the Campus Liaison members to systematically consider making program changes and integrate input.

Long-Range Planning

H(7) The unit has a long-range planning process that is regularly monitored to ensure the ongoing vitality of the unit and its programs, and the future capacity of its physical facilities.

The faculty members of the Education Department meet regularly to develop strategic goals for review and action by the department. The Education Department's Strategic Plan aligns with the SMSU and MnSCU strategic goals. The three main goal areas are:

> Develop and support state of the art programs that enhance learning, teaching, and leadership.
> Continue collaborating with stakeholders.
> Expand personally and professionally through communities of practice.

Recommendation. The Education Department Strategic Plan includes several goals for strategic thinking, planning, and action (see Strategic Goals). It is recommended that these goals continue to be coordinated with opportunities that develop on campus to facilitate their achievement. The Strategic Plan should also continue to be updated regularly.

Financial Resources and Institutional Support

H(8) The unit has sufficient financial resources and institutional support to sustain teacher preparation programs.

The Education Department receives budgetary allocations for our departmental operating experiences and for the support of the clinical experiences of candidates in the education programs. In addition, the department has been receiving funds for graduate assistants for the past several years. Some department-related expenses that fall outside the usual operating or clinical budgets (e.g., *LiveText* conferences/training) are paid through the office of the Dean of Business, Education, and Professional Studies. Budgetary allocations and actual expenditures for the past seven fiscal years are shown in Tables 8 and 9 below. Funds in the tables shown below support the licensure programs of the Education Department, including the licensure programs in Special Education and Reading at the graduate level. They do not include the non-licensure graduate programs. The 2 + 2 Early Childhood Program was initially funded by a grant from the Bremer Foundation, which ended in August of 2010; this program is now included in the 2010-2011 fiscal year budget. Salaries for faculty members and adjuncts are not included in the Operating Expenses, but are included in the Clinical and Graduate Assistants budget and expenses.

Table 8 Allocations - Education Department

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Clinical	23,000	23,000	30,000	26,500	27,000	20,000	30,000
Grad Assists	24,000	20,000	15,016	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
Operating Expenses	42,750	45,801	39,485	33,938	50,070	47,500	48,200
Grand Total	89,750	88,801	84,501	68,438	85,070	75,500	86,200

Table 9 Expenditures - Education Department

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Clinical	29,845	29,029	31,372	45,255	33,616	30,772	39,412
Grad Assists	25,372	5,694	20,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
Operating Expenses	50,247	46,643	48,354	62,730	51,973	55,271	48,564

Grand Total	105,464	81,367	99,726	115,985	93,589	94,042	95,976

The number of preservice teachers in SMSU's education programs has grown steadily over time. This has increased the need for budgetary support, both in the operating budget and the clinical budget that supports the numerous field experiences, especially student teaching. The allocation amounts listed above would be commensurate with a relatively flat demand for resources, but that has not been the case, and the allocation process has lagged behind the growth of the education programs. Given the difficult financial times we are presently dealing with and the reductions in MnSCU allocations, we are doing the best we can with what we have to work with.

Recommendation. Continue to make the most of all resources, including faculty time and budgeted dollars, to provide the highest quality programs possible for our education candidates.

Adequate Resources

> H(9) Facilities, equipment, and budgets are adequate to support the unit's mission and goals.

The Education Department and Southwest Minnesota State University have campus facilities to support candidates in meeting standards. The Individualized Learning (IL) Building houses the Education Department and the Culinology program. Fourteen offices for education faculty are housed there, along with the Office of Placement and Licensure. It also includes a small conference room, two rooms for records, supplies, and accreditation work, and the Upward Bound program offices. Four classrooms of various sizes and arrangements are included on the second level, along with the Academic Commons and the office area for Academic and Diversity Resources. Other areas of support for education candidates include the campus computer labs, the IT helpdesk, and the SMSU library.

In regards to technology, the Business Services Office inventories all equipment on campus. The entire SMSU campus now has wireless access, and all classrooms in the IL Building are hard-wired for computer access as well. The computer labs on campus are listed and briefly described in Table 10 below.

Table 10 Campus Computer Labs

Room	Type	Computer	Elmo	VCR/	Projector	Smartboard	Sympodium	Laptop	No. of other

Room	Type	Model		DVD				Connection	computers
BA 229	Lab	755	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	22
BA 230	Lab	755	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	24
BA 314	Lab	755	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	32
BA 319	Lab	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	16
CH 102	Lab	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	24
CH 126	Lab	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	30
CH 128	Lab	Mac	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	24
CH 104	Lab	N/A	N	N	N	N	N	N	4 Macs, 20 PCs

Presently, four interactive television (ITV) studios are available on campus and identified in Table 11. These studios are used for events such as distance meetings and webinars attended by faculty.

Table 11 Campus Interactive Television (ITV) Labs

Room	Type	Computer Model	Elmo	VCR/ DVD	Projector	Smartboard	Sympodium	Laptop Connection	No. of other computers
IL 138	ITV	745	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	0
ST 218	ITV	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
ST 252	ITV	620	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
ST 266	ITV	620	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	0

The SMSU University Technology Advisory Committee has designated funds for *smart* classrooms to be installed campus-wide over the past several years. Two of these are located in the IL building, with others found in academic buildings across the campus. Table 12 shows the *smart* classrooms available with a description of the technology in each room.

Table 12 Smart Classrooms and Descriptions

Room	Type	Computer Model	Elmo	VCR/ DVD	Projector	Smartboard	Sympodium	Laptop Connection	No. of other

									computers
A 102	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	0
A 231	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
A 235	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
A 240	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
H 204	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
H 206	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
H 208	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
H 219	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
H 222	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
A 225	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
L 208	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
L 210	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
E 212	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
E 214	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
M 269	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	0
S 204	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0

S 205	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	0
S 206	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
S 208	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	0
S 228	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
S 230	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	0
S 237	Clrm	755	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	0
S 239	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
T 216	Clrm	760	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	0
H 201	LH	760	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	0
H 217	LH	760	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	0

*Clrm = classroom; LH = Lecture Hall

In addition to the technology resources available campus-wide, Education faculty members have access to a variety of other resources for use with candidates in classrooms and field experiences. Most of the education faculty use Desire to Learn (D2L), the campus course management system, for their classes. Other resources available include laptops and printers, digital cameras, video cameras, and copy/print/fax/scan capabilities. Faculty members also have faculty accounts with *LiveText*, which was adopted into the undergraduate licensure programs with implementation beginning in the fall of 2003. The following table shows the software available in various locations on the SMSU campus.

Table 13 Software Availability at SMSU

Software	Location
SMART Notebook	Instructor Stations
SMART Response	Instructor Stations

Stellarium	ALL
WinMySQL	ALL
jEdit 4.2	ALL
Maple 14	ALL
Microsoft Office Enterprise 2007	ALL
Microsoft SQL Server 2005	ALL
NetBeans IDE 6.7	ALL
Notepad++	ALL
Photo Story 3 for Windows	ALL
Python 2.5.1	ALL
Sketchpad	ALL
Wolfram Mathematica for Students	ALL
ArcGIS Desktop	ALL including ST158
Mini Tab	CH102, CH126, BA314, Academic Commons, BA229/230
Polar E Series Software	CH126 Instructor, CH104
SPSS	CH126, CH104 (as many as possible)

The Academic Commons (AC) is a central part of the education programs and supports the mission and vision of the Education Department's conceptual framework. Candidates regularly use the Academic Commons for student organization meetings, studying, and group projects. SMSU faculty and students appreciate the ambiance of this area. One result of the fire in the fall of 2001 was the addition of a printer, a bookbinder, a die cut machine, and a laminator for student and faculty use. As stated in the national *Guidelines for Curriculum Materials Centers*, "Curriculum materials centers are essential to the instructional and research needs of students and faculty in programs preparing educators for P-12 schools." The Academic Commons houses a full curriculum library and also hosts the action research projects for undergraduate students. The budget for the Academic Commons is part of the Academic and Diversity Resources office. Further information is given in Chapter 2, Part H(10).

Technology resources are also available to education candidates in the SMSU Library. All public computer workstations are accessible by students in wheelchairs, and some computer workstations are specifically designated for wheelchair access. Additional adaptive technology is also available in the library for students and faculty with visual and/or hearing impairments. Faculty and students may reserve equipment (in person, by phone, or online) for classroom and presentation use. Because teaching-librarians strive to model effective use of technology in teaching, the library has *Smart* classrooms available in BA 319 for small group use with a smartboard and in BA 314 for large class use with a sympodium and projector system for information literacy sessions.

The SMSU library hosts a [webpage](#) with access to an online catalog, databases, and reference assistance, available via chat, email, phone, and in person, for students and faculty both on- and off-campus. The library has allocated limited resources each year to the various departments across campus to support and enrich courses, making books, journals, and non-print resources available to faculty and students. The library has also provided access to the Foundation and Grant-seeking database (FDO) along with print resources for grant opportunities. The link to this database is provided on the library website (http://maps.foundationcenter.org/cc_state/CCUS.php). The library is also a selective depository for federal documents, so there are many resources in all formats available for Education faculty and students.

Each year this library allocation is given and explained to the Education Department. The Bremer grant for the 2 + 2 Early Childhood Program included $10,000 for library support. For fiscal years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, the library has been the recipient of federal stimulus money to upgrade the resources available; the Education Department has made full use of these resources to supply materials for our candidates in all education programs.

In June of 2003, Governor Pawlenty signed a bill to provide funds for the renovation of the SMSU Library, which included an improved entrance to encourage community educators to use the collections. One of the goals of the library staff was to have a facility that was recognized as a place of pride to refresh and satisfy the informational needs of the region. We believe the library restoration project has accomplished these goals.

Recommendation. It is recommended that the Education Department and the university continue to review space needs for offices and storage for the teacher education programs. Continued investment in the upgrade and maintenance of technology resources is also encouraged.

Resources that Support Teaching and Scholarship

H(10) Candidates and faculty have access to books, journals, and electronic information that support teaching and scholarship.

Southwest Minnesota State University addresses this standard with many different approaches. For example, all residential halls and the student center are wired for internet access (both hard-wire and wireless access are available). Another aspect is that software in the computer labs, the student center kiosks, and on computers in the library is consistent for ease of integrating data into writing and presentation projects.

SMSU library. Each year the SMSU Library allocates a dollar amount to the Education Department for faculty to select educational resources to be added to the library collections to supplement courses. In addition to the specific allocations, faculty may recommend other purchases, and have also had the resources for the federal stimulus funding available in the past two academic years. Information is being compiled as these new resources are purchased to show the titles in the library collections now available for education candidates and faculty. These resources are in addition to any resource requested and supplied by the interlibrary loan service.

When new courses (or programs) are considered, the University Curriculum Committees strongly encourage that librarians be included in the planning process. During the curriculum approval process, a library checklist would be completed so the Education Department is aware of resources available to support the course assignments and projects. An important consideration is assuring that the majority of the informational resources needed to support course requirements or academic learning are available in or through the library.

Faculty and students have physical and virtual access to the SMSU Library for information resources. The library has a proxy-server to provide equal access to quality education resources for students and faculty. With this, faculty and candidates may conduct research with depth of content and quality of resources whether they are on- or off-campus.

Education faculty and students have access to recommended databases and journals for national education programs. The library staff have developed a series of Research Guides with recommended databases for Education, Early Childhood Education, and Special Education. Many of the databases provide full-text articles. A description of all of the databases available can be seen on the library web page under 'A-to Z list of databases' and 'Subject guide to databases'. The Research Guides also provide links to books, general reference links, images, music, audio, primary sources, statistics, style manuals, and other library information.

The library provides four essential services. The first is prompt, courteous reference assistance by phone, in person, and online through chat or email. The second is prompt, easy – to-request online interlibrary loan service. The third service is a library liaison who works closely with the Education Department to keep faculty informed of changes in resources, pertinent deadlines for purchasing, and trial times for various databases. This person also provides communication between the library staff and education faculty and candidates, and

shares time and expertise. The fourth service is to provide instructional presentations and suggestions for the implementation of literacy into education courses. A spin-off has been the development of the Course Handouts with resources for individual courses, which are easily accessible through the library homepage.

Library collections include books (print and electronic), reference books, videos/CDs/DVDs, journals, federal and state publications, maps, and a children's book collection. All of these resources can be found by searching the online catalog, including electronic-access-only resources (i.e., *NetLibrary*). Reference materials are only available for use within the library. The video/DVD collection is available for faculty and candidates for one week per checkout. A small preview area is available in the library, and video monitors/players with headphones are also provided.

Academic Commons. A significant accomplishment for the education candidates and faculty was the development of an area for education curriculum materials. During 2002-2003, a procedures manual was drafted for organizing curriculum resources. The person managing the Academic Commons visited a few curriculum collections in Minnesota and several websites for curriculum centers, and procedures based on best practices were then drafted. The curriculum materials are organized and convenient for candidates to use. Education candidates have free use of many teaching and learning supplies, such as craft paper, scissors, and glue. An Accu-Cut machine with accessories was won by an Education Department faculty member, who donated this valuable machine to the Academic Commons for free use by candidates and education faculty.

Other Avenues to Support Teaching and Scholarship. Support for professional development is guaranteed across the university through contractual travel in the amount of $1,300/year for each full-time faculty member (2010-2011 award level). This allocation may be used to attend professional conferences and/or to purchase software and print materials.

In addition, the university receives an allocation each year for professional improvement of faculty. The application/funding process for these grants is governed by meet-and-confer of the SMSU Faculty Association and the SMSU Administration. Twice each year, the Professional Improvement Committee recommends to the administration the funding of Faculty Improvement Grants (FIG). The Office of Research and Institutional Grants assists with the publication of grant deadlines, collection, and distribution of proposals to the faculty committee, and the maintenance of records. Faculty may apply for a maximum of $800 during a two-year biennium.

Recommendation. Continue to ensure adequate resources available for candidates and faculty through the SMSU Library. Continue to support the acquisition of curriculum materials for the Curriculum Library in the Academic Commons.

Training in Access to Current Technology

> H(11) Candidates and faculty have training in the access to current educational-related technology.

Candidates have training in accessing current education-related technology in the following venues: (a) faculty model use of technology in the classrooms; (b) the library liaison attends Minnesota Educational Media Organization (MEMO) conferences to learn applications in P-12 classrooms and shares information with candidates in ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development (a required foundation course) and other education courses; (c) ED 102 Technology: Classroom Applications and Portfolio Development requires the development of technology skills, including the use of the electronic whiteboard in basic lesson design, the use of Desire-2-Learn (D2L), and the use of *LiveText*; (d) student teaching and other field experiences introduce candidates to the various technological resources available in P-12 schools; and (e) journals and electronic books are available in the library.

Education faculty have opportunities to attend (a) I-Teach conferences that demonstrate using technology in higher education; (b) Minnesota Educational Media Organization conferences to learn applications in P-12 classrooms; (c) workshops hosted as part of campus-wide professional development days and within the Education Department; and (d) Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) workshops and online webinars. A goal for the department is to integrate awareness of issues about current education-related technology, such as cyber-bullying and safe internet searches, with the promotion of information literacy.

The SMSU facilities support faculty members' and candidates' use of information technologies for instruction. SMSU is steadily adding more *smart* classrooms on the campus to enable faculty to include and require technology skills in their courses.

Recommendation. Continue to provide access to quality P-12 software for candidates, P-12 practitioners, and SMSU faculty. Conduct professional development workshops for area educators in the use of instructional technology and software.

Human Resources to Ensure Quality Programs

> H(12) The unit has sufficient faculty and administrative, clerical, and technical staff to ensure the consistent delivery and quality of programs.

The numbers of declared Education majors from Fall 2005-Fall 2009 are available on pages 10-18 of the FACTBOOK 09-10. Information on the numbers of degrees awarded is also available in the FACTBOOK. A copy of this is included in the exhibit center.

Faculty. The Education Department has a policy in place for selecting new faculty (see the Standards for Faculty Qualification). One purpose for developing this policy was to provide consistent delivery and quality of programs. Adjunct faculty are drawn primarily from qualified professionals who represent the SMSU cooperating schools. This practice helps to strengthen relationships with P-12 partners.

SMSU Education Department faculty have numerous committee involvements, both on-campus and off-campus. A listing of the committee involvements on campus for the 2010-2011 academic year is available on the SMSU Faculty Association website. These faculty members also actively participate in education-related state organizations and strategic campus committees. This professional involvement requires time in addition to teaching responsibilities. Additional information is provided in Chapter 2, Part G(12) and G(13).

Administration. For the past several years, the Dean of Business, Education, and Professional Studies has averaged about 50% time with the many aspects of the Education Department programs, partnerships, and responsibilities.

The Education Department chairperson responsibilities are accomplished by a person nominated and elected by department faculty. This person spends approximately 50% time with departmental issues and 50% time teaching. The duties of department chairs are spelled out in the *IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement*.

Some department members, as part of their assigned duties, have other administrative areas of responsibility vital to the education program. These areas of responsibility are Director of Early Childhood Distance Learning, Director of the Graduate Programs, and Accreditation Coordinator.

Clerical staff. The Education Department has one full-time secretary who oversees general office management, including maintaining advisee, applicant, candidate, and graduate files. This position supports the Department Chair and Accreditation Coordinator in submitting reports to and for the university, outside agencies, and accrediting bodies. The position also involves supervision of student workers.

An additional secretary, working 50% time, is the Field Experience Assistant in the Office of Placement and Licensure. Responsibilities in this position include maintaining all field experience records for more that 800 placements made each year.

A Field Experience Coordinator works 73% time. This person is responsible for procedures related to placements of preservice teachers in field experiences and for communication with cooperating school districts.

The Director of Placement and Licensure is a full-time position, created in the fall of 2008. This person is responsible for coordination of the field experience placement activities and for the licensure of all education candidates.

One position that has been reduced due to budget issues is that of a support staff person for the graduate education programs. Formerly this position was funded at 79%, but the position was cut and duties divided between the Director of Graduate Education, the Graduate Office support person, the Education Department secretary, the Office of Placement and Licensure, and graduate assistants. This division of responsibilities has left gaps and inconsistencies in the graduate programs that we are struggling to fill.

Technical staff. A number of campus support personnel (i.e. Computer Services, Library, Duplicating, Career Services, Registration and Records) are available so programs can prepare candidates to meet standards.

Recommendation. The Education Department has three recommendations for this area. First, we will continue to explore the functions available within *LiveText* to use technology to assist in managing the increased data due to the increased enrollment in education programs. Second, we will continue to explore the possibility of a graduate secretary for both the Business and Education programs to provide continuity and quality in service to our candidates at this level. Finally, we will continue to explore avenues for evening and weekend technology support for our graduate and off-campus education programs.

Future Directions

Southwest Minnesota State University education graduates are highly respected teachers in schools and educational programs across the state and nation. They bring a background of knowledge, skills, and field experiences related to investigating learning, building communities of learners, and teaching content. The provide leadership for learning of P-12 students.

The SMSU Education Department is committed to creating communities of practice where each learner is an active participant in the development of learning, teaching, and leadership processes. The Education Department Strategic Goals describes foals and actions that align with the goals of SMSU and of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and with the mission of the unit. The goals emphasize partnerships with stakeholders, which is one of the key elements of the conceptual framework. The collaborative teacher education programs and university-wide review and development processes at SMSU assure continued success of candidates who participate in *Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching* and who positively influence the learning of P-12 students.