

STANDARD 1. Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

Candidate outcomes are drawn from multiple sources: state licensure examinations (Exhibits 1.4.c.1-2), performance-based summative assessments (Exhibits 1.4.c.3-4), exit surveys (Exhibit 1.4.c.5), cooperating teacher surveys (Exhibit 1.4.c.6) and follow-up surveys (Exhibits 1.4.c.7). The unit administers an employer/supervisor survey (Exhibit 1.4.c.8) for program alumni in their first year of teaching, but response rates are very low (Exhibits 1.4.j.3-7). We also collect general employment data in partnership with Career Services (Exhibits 1.4.j.1-2).

Content Knowledge*Initial Licensure*

- State Licensure Content Examinations. The Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations (MTLE) were first implemented in September 2010, replacing the Praxis series of tests. Content passing rates for all test takers (Exhibit 1.4.d.1) and program completers (Exhibit 1.4.d.2) are over 80%. Our Title II report, (Exhibit 1.4.b.3) also shows that over 80% of completers have passed all required licensure exams.
- Preparation of Program Completers. Exhibits (1.4.d.4&5) summarize data from three instruments. The *Exit Survey* (Exhibit 1.4.d.16), taken by candidates completing an initial licensure program, the *Performance-Based Assessment of Student Teaching* (Exhibit 1.4.d.3), completed by cooperating teachers and the university supervisors and the *Transition to Teaching* survey, administered to program alumni at the end of their first year of teaching (Exhibit 1.4.i.1-7). Content knowledge is measured in Standard 1: Subject Matter and Standard 7: Planning Instruction. Both of these standards are strengths for our unit and for our programs.
- Cooperating Teacher Survey. Cooperating teachers complete a second assessment of teacher candidates at the completion of student teaching (Exhibit 1.4.c.6). Data from the 2013-14 academic year (N=181) demonstrate that 90.1% of cooperating teachers found their teacher candidates to be prepared in content knowledge (Exhibit 1.4.d.9).

Advanced Preparation

Advanced programs measure candidate content knowledge through course-based assessments and licensure examinations. In 2013-14, 100% of advanced candidates (8 of 8) passed state content examinations (Exhibit 1.4.d.12).

Other School Professionals

School Counseling candidates take the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) in their final semester. The CPCE assesses candidate's content knowledge in eight core areas identified by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). In each of the past three years candidates from SCSU scored higher than the national mean in total score and in most content areas. In 2013 SCSU candidates exceeded the national average in every area (Exhibit 1.4.d.11).

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Initial Preparation

- Preparation of Program Completers (Exhibits 1.4.d.4&5). Pedagogical Content Knowledge is assessed in Standard 4: Instructional Strategies and Standard 6: Communication. In 2012-13 SCSU completers scored Standard 4 lower after teaching one year than at exit.
- edTPA (Exhibit 1.4.c.16; 1.4.d.6-8). The edTPA tasks for planning and instruction require candidates to demonstrate a wide range of strategies that engage students. Rubrics 1, 4, 7 and 9 are aligned with the requirements of demonstrating pedagogical content knowledge. Data reveal that while SCSU candidates consistently score below the national average, the internal scoring conducted in Fall 2013 rated candidates above a “2” (scale 0-3) on each of the four rubrics aligned with pedagogical content knowledge.
- Cooperating Teacher Surveys (Exhibit 1.4.d.9-10). Cooperating teachers assess 15 items that are aligned with this standard. Overall, 89.8% of our candidates were rated as prepared. Areas of particular strength include: designing learning communities in which students work collaboratively (97%) and using multiple strategies to teach concepts (96%).

Advanced Preparation

Pedagogical content knowledge is embedded and assessed through course activities, observations and feedback.

Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge

Initial Preparation

- Preparation of Program Completers. Professional and pedagogical knowledge is assessed in Standard 3: Diverse Learners, Standard 5: Learning Environment and Standard 9: Reflection and Professional Development. Findings point to weaknesses in the area of diverse learners. SCSU has a very strong multicultural and human relations component that is common to all programs. The areas in which candidates feel the least prepared reflected differentiating instruction for academically diverse students.
- edTPA. Rubrics 2, 3, and 10 of the edTPA are best aligned with professional and pedagogical knowledge. In the 2013 pilot study, SCSU candidate scores mirrored the national sample on Rubric 2 (planning to support varied student learning needs), but were much lower on rubric 3 (using knowledge of students to inform teaching and learning).
- Cooperating Teacher Survey. There are 9 items on the cooperating teacher survey that align with this standard. In the most recent administration of that survey (N=181), 89.1% of SCSU candidates were rated “prepared” on these aspects of teaching.

Advanced Preparation

Professional and pedagogical knowledge is embedded and assessed through course activities, observations and feedback.

Student Learning for Teacher Candidates

Initial Preparation

- Preparation of Program Completers. Competency in this area is assessed through Standards 2, 8 and 10. SCSU candidates tend to score quite well in student learning and collaboration,

but not as well in areas related to assessment. The 2012-13 cohort scored student learning lower after being in the field for a year than they did at exit.

- Cooperating Teacher Survey. There are 10 items relating to this standard on the Cooperating Teacher survey. 88.3% of SCSU candidates were rated “prepared” in this domain. Findings here mirror the results above, with items related to assessment of student learning rated lower than other items.
- The edTPA provides additional data related to student learning for teacher candidates (Rubrics 5, 7, 8, 10-15). Our candidates rated much better in engaging students in learning than the national sample in spring 2013. An area that has been identified in multiple measures as needing improvement is candidates’ ability to provide students feedback to guide learning. Samples of candidates’ analyses of student learning are provided (Exhibits 1.4.g.1-5).

Advanced Preparation

Student learning is embedded and assessed through course activities, observations and feedback.

Knowledge and Skills for Other School Professionals

Educational Administration: Candidates in the advanced programs leading to licensure as school administrators demonstrate the depth of their knowledge and skill through internships, at the end of which they are evaluated by the on-site and university supervisors. The panel assessment rubric is aligned with discipline-specific knowledge and skills delineated in the Minnesota Competencies for School Administrators (Exhibits 1.4.c.11&13). Core leadership competencies for all school administrators are assessed in the pre-post self-assessment (Exhibit 1.4.c.10). Candidates complete an electronic portfolio during their practicum that provides further evidence in each of the required competencies. (Exhibit 1.4.c.15).

School Counseling: Courses within the school counseling program are aligned with professional and state standards. Data on candidate competencies are collected through the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) and the Internship Student Rating Form (ISR) (Exhibits 1.4.c.12&14). Our candidates do far better on the CPCE examination as a whole, than the national mean. The ISR measures 9 domains aligned with knowledge and 16 domains aligned with skills. Our candidates consistently are rated at 4 (good) or above in these domains (Exhibit 1.4.d.11).

Student Learning for Other School Professionals

Educational Administration: These data come from core competencies of: Diversity Leadership and Instructional Management and Community Relations. Samples of candidate work in these areas provide evidence that our candidates are reflective practitioners, establish educational environments that support student learning and understand the complex family, community and policy contexts in which they work (Exhibits 1.4.h.8-10).

School Counseling: There are 9 items on the ISR that measure candidates in terms of student learning (Exhibit 1.4.d.11). Our candidates consistently score 4 or higher (of 5 points), with the highest domains being: genuinely desires to be helpful, treats students and colleagues with respect and accepts individual differences without prejudice.

Professional Dispositions for All Candidates

Initial Preparation. Professional dispositions are aligned with the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice (Exhibit 1.4.c.18). Assessment occurs during early field experiences and during student teaching (Exhibits 1.4.f.1a-c). In 2013-14, cooperating teachers rate 94.1% of SCSU candidates as prepared in the area of professional dispositions (Exhibit 1.4.d.9).

Advanced Preparation. Collection of data on professional dispositions is embedded and assessed through course activities, observations and feedback.

Other School Professionals. **School counseling** candidates are rated on 23 measures aligned with professional dispositions. In 2013 the average rating was 5 (out of 5) on all but 2 of these measures, resourcefulness and originality, in which the average rating was 4 (Exhibit 1.4.d.11). **Educational administration** candidates also score very high in measures of professional dispositions such as values/ethics, communication and judgment/problem solving on the pre-post assessment and the panel evaluation (Exhibit 1.4.d.13&14).

Additional **Candidate Work Samples** are provided in Exhibits 1.4.h.1-10.

STANDARD 1: Continuous Improvement

Highlights of innovative change resulting from program and unit data are provided below:

- **Revised admission criteria.** In response to evidence that our teacher candidates were struggling to successfully pass required licensure examinations, changes were made to the teacher education admission criteria, raising the minimum cumulative grade point average to 2.75 and requiring a minimum score on basic skills exams (Exhibits 1.4.c.17a-b).
- **Support for MTLE Preparation.** Low MTLE passing rates have resulted in changes to what used to be the Praxis Center and is now the MTLE Center. This center is staffed during the academic year with graduate assistants, under the direction of the Student Relations Coordinator. In addition to drop-in services for teacher candidates, the MTLE Center has added workshops aimed specifically at reviewing skills and test strategies to help candidates pass the Basic Skills examinations (Exhibit 1.4.m.6 a-b). Cross-disciplinary work was completed in 2012 with faculty from Elementary Education, Science and Social Studies to better understand the issues facing candidates taking the Elementary Education subtest 3. The subsequent changes resulted in increased passing rates on this subtest. The State of Minnesota has also recently passed legislation that is aimed at alleviating the pressure on our candidates of having only one means by which to demonstrate mastery of basic skills (Exhibit 1.4.m.1). The implementation of this new legislation will further impact our overall passing rates.
- **Orientation to Teacher Education.** There are a number of new initiatives and assessments for which candidates have felt unprepared. As a result of feedback to this effect, an orientation to teacher education has been developed (Exhibit 1.4.m.2). At this orientation, candidates are welcomed into teacher education and are provided critical information regarding the program expectations.
- **Classroom upgrades.** With the generous donation of an SCSU alumna, classroom upgrades have been targeted to methods classrooms which house elementary science and special

education courses. Other funds have been used to upgrade the elementary literacy classroom. These classroom facilities have been made accessible, student-friendly and relevant for the way students learn. Tables are movable to allow for collaborative activities. The literacy classroom features white-board tables that allow students to work in small groups and share their work with the larger group (Exhibit 1.4.m.7).

- **Graduate Travel Funds.** A portion of the gift from the same donor was specifically set aside to assist graduate students with travel funds to present (or co-present) their research at regional, state or national conferences. This fund helps encourage graduate research and dissemination of that work (Exhibit 1.4.m.4).
- **Instructional Technology Discovery Lab.** SCSU candidates have consistently rated integration of technology throughout their programs as needing improvement. In May, 2010 the School of Education wrote a grant request to the Morgan Family Foundation for the development of an Instructional Technology Discovery Lab (ITDL). The ITDL is a physical space in which teacher candidates can learn to creatively engage P-12 students using a variety of emerging and existing technologies (e.g. smart boards, assistive technology devices, iPhones, GPS equipment, Individual Response systems, digital video, Web 2.0 tools, and other interactive technology). The ITDL also serves as a place where faculty, cooperating teachers, school media specialists, and teacher candidates can explore instructional possibilities and practices using both state of the art and common technologies. It is a “safe” environment in which faculty can learn without feeling the need to have all the answers. Faculty from our Information Media department oversee the graduate assistants in the ITDL and have also created and hosted a number of informal technology-related learning opportunities for faculty, staff and students. There is a great deal of collaboration with P-12 practitioners in the design and delivery of these workshops (Exhibits 1.4.m.5a&b).
- **ED 460.** In response to data that our candidates were not adequately prepared to provide adequate and meaningful instruction to English Language Learners (ELL) in their classrooms, a curricular change was initiated, adding a course with significant ELL focus to the professional education sequence. ED 460, *Teaching English Language Learners in K-12*, provides theory, methods and sound instructional strategies (Exhibit 1.4.m.8).
- **Teacher Preparation Initiative.** St. Cloud State University, along with 13 other institutions that prepare teachers, has been supported by the Bush Foundation to study and make improvements to teacher preparation in a three-state region. The Teacher Preparation Initiative (TPI) has facilitated collaboration between university and P-12 faculty and staff working to enhance program quality and preparation of new teachers. All proposals emanating from a TPI work group are grounded in research and supported by data. Working groups were established around the main components of the initiative: Recruitment, Preparation, Placement/Employment, Support, Assessment and Integration of Technology. Some of the accomplishments of this collaborative work include:
 - *Common Educational Foundation Core* (Exhibit 1.4.l.1). The Prepare working group has developed a proposal to fundamentally change the preparation program at SCSU by developing a common educational foundation core for all candidates. While some of the existing foundation courses are included in the new core, there will be a greater emphasis on early field experiences in a wider variety of grade levels, understanding differences in learners, understanding the unit’s conceptual framework and professional dispositions. Themes that run through the proposed

foundation include context for learning, teacher identity, social justice, differentiation/individualization, teacher efficacy and teaching and learning in the 21st Century, all of which are incorporated in our conceptual framework.

- *Support and Induction.* The Support working group has implemented a number of initiatives aimed at supporting new teachers for their first three years of teaching. “Ready, Set, Teach: Tools for Success” is a new teacher workshop first piloted in 2012-13. The workshop occurs before teacher orientation and is designed to give new teachers increased professional confidence going into their first year of teaching (Exhibits 1.4.l.2-3). The Support Working Group has also developed and hosts four new teacher workshops per year, bringing new teachers together for an evening of timely information, support and networking. Topics for professional development are researched and follow the phases that new teachers typically go through (New Teacher Center, 1990). Common to all new teacher workshops are networking, differentiation, facilitation by SCSU Faculty and P-12 veteran teachers, engagement in the professional learning, and infusion of technology. The overall goals of our New Teacher Workshops align with New Teacher Center principles: enhance student achievement, accelerate teacher effectiveness, improve teacher retention, strengthen school leadership, and address educational inequities (Exhibits 1.4.l.4-6).
- *Future Educator Clubs.* With an eye to recruiting candidates into high need areas of teaching and changing the image of teaching as a profession, we helped our six P-12 partner districts launch Future Educator Clubs in their districts. At the same time, we have established a club on our campus, which brings together future teachers from every discipline with a common identity, as we build a sense of community. Our campus club collaborates with the high school clubs throughout the year (Exhibit 1.4.m.3).
- *Program-level mini-grants.* Through Bush Foundation funding, TPI offered programs and departments the opportunity to apply for a mini-grant to make programmatic change grounded in data and best practice. Eight licensure areas have been funded to take on this collaborative work, resulting in substantive change (Exhibit 1.4.l.7).
- *Teacher Education Unit.* While SCSU has always had an informal teacher education unit, the work being done through the Teacher Preparation Initiative has drawn attention to the benefits we could reap if we reaffirmed or formalized this structure. After a series of conversations, meetings and clarification, the proposal made in spring 2014 was adopted and will be implemented in fall 2014. In this model, a K-12 and Secondary Education Interdisciplinary Program will be created and will exist alongside the existing departments of Child and Family Studies, Special Education, Information Media and Teacher Development (Exhibit 1.4.l.8).
- **Program Approval.** In spring 2014, the unit submitted 36 programs to the Minnesota Board of Teaching for extensive review. They will be approved at the September 2014 Board meeting (Exhibit 1.4.a.1).

STANDARD 1: Areas for Improvement

St. Cloud State University had no areas for improvement cited in this standard during the last review.