STANDARD 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation
The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on the applicant qualifications, the candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

Assessment System
Exhibit 2.4.a.1 presents a matrix of unit assessments aligned with MN standards, our conceptual framework and collected in association with major transition points. The assessment system was approved through appropriate unit procedures prior to the last accreditation visit and was described in a 2010 publication (2.4.a.2). Most recently, it was updated and presented to the unit Assessment and Accreditation committee in spring 2013.

As part of the NExT collaborative, SCSU has one representative on the *Common Metrics* committee (Exhibit 2.4.h.1). This group developed four instruments that are administered at the same time, to the same target group, at all fourteen institutions (Exhibit 2.4.a.11). Through data sharing agreements, aggregate and local data are now available. The four common metrics instruments have undergone significant reliability and validity studies and have become a central core of our assessment system. We are able to have a deeper understanding of our program strengths and areas for improvement by comparing data between our candidates and the NExT aggregate.

Data Collection
The unit collects candidate data at the following **transition points.**

- **Pre Admission -** A strong feature of our programs is the collection of data on candidates upon their first contact with an education program, via the Entry Survey (2.4.a.4), which all students complete in their introductory course. The Entry Survey is the first of the four common metrics tools administered to candidates, and helps us better understand them. In addition to the Entry Survey, candidates participate in an early field experience in their introductory course. Data are collected related to candidates' dispositions and early skills in this experience (Exhibits 2.4.b.4-6). Candidates are encouraged to attempt their MTLE Basic Skills tests early so they can re-take the exams and participate in remediation opportunities if necessary (Exhibits 2.4.a.5 & 2.4.b.7-8).
- **Admission –** Admission to teacher education is a two-part process. First, eligible candidates are admitted to individual programs. The admission standards for each program are published in undergraduate or graduate catalogs (Exhibit 2.4.b.1). As part of the unit's new criteria, each program assesses written and oral communication and student dispositions. Many programs have received mini-grants to support collaboration with P-12 to determine how best to assess critical skills and dispositions (Exhibit 2.4.b.9). Once candidates are admitted to their program, they are eligible for admission to teacher education (Exhibit 2.4.b.2), which requires candidates to have a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 and a minimum score of 220 (240 is passing) on the MTLE Basic Skills test. If the minimum score is not attained, candidates must receive permission to proceed by the Student Relations Coordinator, after jointly completing a comprehensive success plan.

- **Progression in Program –** As candidates pass through a program, they complete key assessments. Each program identifies a minimum of three key assessments that are used to monitor candidate progress in their program of study and measure necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions. Key assessments are included in program review documents submitted to the Minnesota Board of Teaching (Exhibit 2.4.a.3).
- **Eligibility to Student Teach –** Eligibility for student teaching requires candidates to meet all program requirements and *pass* the MTLE Basic Skills test. The Office of Clinical Experiences and Student Relations Office jointly monitor and support candidates as they apply to student teach. An appeal process is in place for students who petition to move forward without passing Basic Skills (Exhibit 2.4.b.10).
- **Exit –** At exit from an initial licensure program, the following data are collected.
  - Exit survey (Exhibit 2.4.a.6) – This is the second of the four common metrics administered. It is completed at the end of student teaching and measures candidate perception of program quality.
  - Performance Based Assessment (Exhibit 2.4.a.7). This instrument, completed by both cooperating teacher and university supervisor, is aligned with state standards. At the advanced level, practicum evaluations are collected from field supervisors.
  - edTPA (Exhibit 2.4.a.8). Minnesota adopted edTPA as an authentic assessment of candidate performance during student teaching. The edTPA is a nationally normed and standardized performance-based instrument measuring teaching performance in five domains: Planning, Instructing, Assessing, Analyzing Teaching and Academic Language. The edTPA rubrics have been cross-walked with Minnesota standards (Exhibit 2.4.a.9).
  - Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations. Candidates complete the MTLE Pedagogy and Content examinations at the culmination of their coursework. These are required for Minnesota licensure (Exhibit 2.4.b.13).
- **Induction –** Program completers are contacted approximately one year post-completion. The contact information gathered at program exit is shared through a partnership with our Career Services Office, who makes the initial contact with our completers. With these additional resources we have been successful in locating 90% of our program completers in 2012-13 and 87% in 2013-14. Each year a report is completed providing a snapshot of employment for our graduates (Exhibits 2.4.b.11-12).
  - At the time of the initial contact, Career Services gathers general information about the completer's employment status. Completers are told to expect a survey in the near future, and are encouraged to complete it.
  - A few weeks after the initial contact by Career Services, a link to the Transition to Teaching Survey (TTS) (Exhibit 2.4.a.14) is sent. The TTS is the third of the common metrics instruments, and is almost identical to the Exit survey, providing insight on how perceptions of preparation change after one year of professional practice. Summary data exist for both the institution and the NExT aggregate (Exhibit 2.4.b.14). Aggregate data has been helpful in gauging program and unit performance and identifying areas for improvement.
  - Per our Institutional Review Board, candidates completing the Transition to Teaching Survey are asked to consent to their supervisor being contacted regarding the quality of their preparation. The Supervisor Survey (Exhibit 2.4.a.15) is the last of the

common metric instruments. This survey provides data regarding supervisor views of the preparation provided by SCSU (Exhibit 2.4.b.15). Many discussions have transpired regarding the extremely low response rate on this survey, and means by which to improve our results.

- **Other School Professionals –** Candidates in school counseling and educational administration programs are evaluated by university faculty and practicum supervisors based on standards set by other accrediting bodies and professional associations (CACREP and BOSA). School counseling candidates are assessed using the School Counseling Internship Student Rating Form (Exhibit 2.4.a.16) and candidates in educational administration programs are evaluated using the Situational Panel Assessment (Exhibit 2.4.a.17).

Reliability and Validity
Several studies have been conducted over the years related to the quality of the instruments used in our assessment system.

- Internal consistency reliabilities for INTASC-based domain scores all above or very near .80 collected and reported for (a) the "old" Completer instrument (Exhibit 2.4.c.1), (b) the Performance-Based Summative Assessment (Exhibit 2.4.c.2), (c) and the Cooperating teacher Instrument (Exhibit 2.4.c.3).
- Scale validity and internal consistency data available for versions of the Transition to Teacher Survey. The instrument proved to have defensible scales with internal consistency reliabilities in the .9 range (Exhibit 2.4.c.4); the same data are available for the Entry Survey (Exhibit 2.4.c.5), the Exit Survey (Exhibit 2.4.c.6) and the Supervisory Survey (Exhibit 2.4.c.7).
- A study of the correlations between the edTPA and the MTLE Basic Skills – Writing was completed in preparation for administering the edTPA. This was done to determine whether the edTPA "operated" independently of basic writing skills (Exhibit 2.4.c.9). In addition, we looked at the relationship between edTPA scores and our internal summative instrument. While we feel that the Performance Based Summative Assessment is somewhat reliable and valid, the low correlations suggest that the tools measure different aspects of performance (Exhibit 2.4.c.10).
- An internal study looking at the performance of the edTPA both locally and nationally (Exhibit 2.4.c.11).
- A study of correlations between MTLE Basic Skills passing scores and various entry criteria, including candidate comprehensive ACT scores (Exhibits 2.4.c.8 & 2.4.c.12).

Use of Data
Implementing a systematic use of data for program improvement has been a challenge. We have held two data retreats, with minimal results (Exhibit 2.4.a.13). We have engaged assessment colleagues from our own campus as well as the NExT collaborative to discuss ways to move toward a culture of assessment. The TPI Assessment Working Group is addressing this issue as well, and will be making recommendations on possible improvements to our assessment system. A study conducted in Spring 2014 compiled data-based program changes made throughout the unit (Exhibit 2.4.g.1). That study found that while regular use of data may be limited, programs have responded to "voices from the field", making programmatic changes based on feedback received from candidates or teachers via advisory boards. Some disruptions in dissemination occurred as we transitioned to Common Metrics instruments, but have since been addressed and are reflected in

the updated data dissemination matrix (Exhibit 2.4.d.2). All program and unit reports are now housed in a SharePoint site accessible to faculty in the teacher education unit.

STANDARD 2: Continuous Improvement

We have engaged in a number of significant improvements since our last visit.

- **Culture of Assessment -** Prior to our last NCATE site visit in 2008, our feedback related to assessment data was based on a data-use format (Exhibit 2.4.a.10). Members of the Assessment and Accreditation Committee expressed concern that too few departments were finding time to systematically examine and discuss data, making it difficult to implement program improvements grounded in data. In an effort to set aside time to engage faculty and staff in conversations about data, program-level data retreats were held in Spring 2011. Attendance was lower than hoped and the format of the meetings themselves did not lead to any significant conversation or program revisions. A second attempt was made at engaging faculty in discussions about program-level data with a data retreat in Spring 2013. Again, the results were uninspiring. Several meetings were scheduled for conversations about data in the 2013-14 academic year, but were ultimately pre-empted by urgent conversations about program review requirements from the Minnesota Board of Teaching. Instead of holding data retreats, the focus for the 2013-14 academic year became attending to relationships between departments, and laying a foundation for the importance and strength of assessment processes. Our goal is to create a culture in which assessment is not seen as something we do because we "have to", but rather, that is something we "want to" do because it helps us become better. We will organize another opportunity for programs to come together to review and discuss critical unit and program data in fall 2014. We will be inviting P-12 partners to join us in reviewing our strengths and areas in which improvements are sought. Together with our P-12 partners, we will determine priorities and action plans for addressing program gaps and ways in which to build upon program strengths.

- **Data Management System -** Our internal system of storing candidate, program and unit data has become outdated and incapable of providing the real-time reports needed to truly promote a culture of assessment. Our old assessment system relied upon one office to disaggregate and disseminate all findings. Faculty and/or programs had to request data if they were going to engage in program evaluation activities at times that did not coincide with the set dissemination schedule. Knowing this was an area in which we needed to improve, the Assessment and Accreditation Committee began to explore a number of potential data management systems. In 2011, after visits to our campus and demonstrations from a number of potential vendors, the recommendation of the committee was that the education unit enter into a contract with Innovative Learning Assessment Technologies (ILAT) for their PASS-PORT data management system. This recommendation was carried out and our relationship with PASS-PORT began. The Assessment Director worked closely with PASS-PORT to create program transition points and unit surveys in the system. In 2012, the university decided a data management system was necessary for the entire campus, and began the process of selecting a vendor. Faculty, staff and administrators from all parts of campus were involved in this process, and in 2013 SCSU selected Tk20 as a campus-wide assessment and data management provider. The School of Education was faced with terminating the relatively new working agreement with ILAT PASS-PORT, and move to the

new system. We have been working closely with Tk20 since that time to implement assessment in the education unit. We are excited about the potential Tk20 holds for unit and program assessment, with immediate access to data related to key assessments and candidate performance. We are still in the stages of building our system and aligning standards, but have operationalized many features, including field experiences, surveys, advising and edTPA portfolios. We were hoping to pilot the collection of key assessment data in Tk20 in Fall 2014, but have had to postpone implementation until Spring 2015 so there is a seamless interface between D2L and Tk20. In Fall 2014 we will expand our collection of field experience data and bring our programs for other school professionals into the system. We are working with students in an instructional design course over the summer and into fall (2014) to help us develop and create resources to assist Tk20 users.

- **Common Metrics -** St. Cloud State University has entered into a data sharing agreement with Hezel, Inc. to aggregate and disaggregate data resulting from the four common metric instruments employed by fourteen teacher preparation programs in a tri-state area (Exhibit 2.4.a.11). The Common Metrics instruments have been aligned with the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice (Exhibit 2.4.a.12). Philip Piety's 2013 book, "*Assessing the Educational Data Movement*" articulates some of the challenges the common metrics group has faced and overcome (Teachers College Press, pp. 56-57). Working across state lines to develop common instrumentation has been challenging, but the resulting data has been incredibly helpful in better understanding the strengths and limitations of our current programs. Perhaps more importantly, we are engaged in important conversations about assessment with our colleagues. We are able to share ideas and engage in joint problem-solving through this collaborative. Through our common metrics collaboration we have significantly improved our ability to track our graduates into their first year of teaching, we are improving our ability to collect data post-graduation and we have improved the data collection instruments utilized.

- **Monitoring student progress -** In reviewing our data related to teacher licensure examination passing rates we have discovered the need not only for the additional support services mentioned above, but the need to better monitor candidate testing. A study was conducted in 2011 to determine predictors of success on Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exams (Exhibit 2.4.c.8). We have been better able to advise students with ACT scores below the optimum level, and we have implemented systems in which candidate test attempts are reviewed on a regular basis by our Student Relations Coordinator and the Office of Clinical Experiences.

- **Performance-Based Summative Assessment of Student Teaching -** The Assessment and Accreditation committee has reviewed the reliability and validity studies completed in 2013 and has recommended a working group be convened in fall 2014 to revisit this instrument (Exhibit 2.4.c.2). It is generally felt by the committee that an instrument more aligned with current InTASC standards and the new areas of focus in our conceptual framework would be beneficial.

- **Teacher Preparation Initiative Assessment Working Group -** This working group is charged with identifying current teacher preparation and P-12 assessment practices, studying best practices in teacher evaluation and learner outcomes, recommending methods to coordinate assessment and data collection P-16, and making recommendations about ways to improve assessment practices across the partnership. They have been meeting over the summer and

will be making recommendations for improving assessment P-16, in Fall 2014. The Assessment Working Group facilitator also conducts a number of ad hoc studies for both TPI and the unit regarding specific research questions that arise. This research expertise has been an extremely valuable asset to our unit.

- **Teacher Education Unit -** To enhance the communication and collaboration necessary to move our assessment agenda forward, we have focused on relationship building and information sharing between content and education faculty. Monthly unit conversations have focused on sharing information and facilitating broad discussions about our teacher preparation programs. With a focus on building a sense of community within teacher preparation, we have a tendency to overlook our programs for other school professionals, one of whom is no longer in the school of education. (School Counseling was moved from the School of Education to the School of Health and Human Services in the institutional reorganization of 2010-11). Our attention to building a cohesive teacher education unit has not been without a price. The task of preparing this self-study has brought to light the fact that attention now needs to be placed on school counseling, educational administration and our advanced teacher preparation programs as we widen our view of "unit" to include the preparation of all school-based professionals.

- **Student Relations Coordinator –** As our institution reviewed structure and resources in the reorganization process, it was decided that smaller units, such as the School of Education, would no longer have Associate Dean's. In order to put greater emphasis on our services to students, including managing the complaint process, a full-time Student Relations Coordinator position was created. The Student Relations Coordinator handles all student complaints and concerns in accordance with institutional policy and procedure (Exhibit 2.4.e.1). The Student Code of Conduct describes the behavioral expectations and disciplinary processes associated with conduct violations, including grade appeals and complaints against faculty (Exhibit 2.4.e.2-4).

- **Partnership with Career Services –** As we explored ways in which to maintain better connections with our program completers, it became obvious that the most efficient way to reach them would be by partnering with Career Services. The Career Services office maintains contact with program completers from all parts of campus and has the resources and expertise to assist us in this endeavor. While the partnership is young, it has been formalized and has been extremely beneficial (Exhibit 2.4.d.3).

STANDARD 2: Areas for Improvement
There were no areas for improvement noted in Standard Two.