# Electronic Exhibit Room (user name: ncate; password: coe2011)
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### Online Institutional Report (IR) Template: Continuous Improvement Option

1. The online template in NCATE's database, Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS) with prompts and limited characters for the response.
2. Word document following the online prompts without character limitations, which is uploaded in AIMS upon completion. The IR should be no longer than 41 pages if the unit is moving toward the target level on only one standard; it could be a maximum of 49 pages if the unit is moving to the target level on all six standards.

### Content of Institutional Report

### A. Overview & Conceptual Framework

1. What are the institution's historical context and unique characteristics (e.g., HBCU or religious)? [one paragraph]

The University of Central Arkansas (UCA) is a public four-year residential institution accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. UCA was founded in 1907 by the General Assembly and named Arkansas State Normal School, reflecting its charge of training teachers for the state. Although it has undergone several name changes through the years and evolved into a statewide master's comprehensive university, UCA maintains its historical commitment to prepare professionals for the field of education. UCA aspires to be the premiere student-centered public comprehensive institution of higher learning in Arkansas, with a continuous record of excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, student development, scholarly endeavors and service to the local and global communities.

2. What is the institution's mission? [one paragraph]

The University of Central Arkansas is committed to high academic quality through the delivery of undergraduate and graduate education that remains current and responsive to the diverse needs of those it serves. The university promotes the intellectual, social, and personal development of its students and the advancement of knowledge through excellence in learning and teaching and scholarly endeavors. Students, faculty, and staff partner to create strong connections in service to the local and global communities. As a leader in 21st-century higher education, the University of Central Arkansas is dedicated to intellectual vitality, diversity, and integrity. In carrying out this mission, the university is guided by the following core values:

- Intellectual Excellence (Educated Citizens, Scholarship, Cultural Competence, Learning Environment)
- Community (Collegiality, Partnerships, Safe and Healthy Environment, Service)

- Diversity (Recruitment and Retention, Support, Knowledge)
- Integrity (Ethics, Respect, Responsibility, Trust)

3. What is the professional education unit at your institution and what is its relationship to other units at the institution that are involved in the preparation of professional educators? [1-2 paragraphs]

The primary responsibility for the preparation of professional educators at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA) is vested in the Professional Education Unit (PEU). The PEU has as its mission the preparation of school personnel who demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help *all* students learn. The Professional Education Unit devotes itself to providing programs of the highest quality in its mission of preparing qualified school personnel dedicated to maximizing the learning of all students.

The Professional Education Unit (PEU) is the principle unifying structure for collaboration across all education faculty, and includes representatives from all university programs involved in the preparation of those seeking to work within the P-12 school setting. Within the PEU, deans, department chairs, program coordinators, program advisory committees, and the Professional Education Council (PEC) have specific but distinct responsibilities for curriculum and policy-making. These include faculty and administrators representing programs in five colleges (College of Education, College of Liberal Arts, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, College of Fine Arts and Communication, College of Health and Behavioral Sciences) as well as professional education candidates, public school P-12 representatives, and members of the community. The dean of the College of Education (COE) leads the PEU and provides university-wide coordination for all education programs.

4. What are the basic tenets of the conceptual framework and how has the conceptual framework changed since the previous visit? [1-2 paragraphs]

*Enhancing educator efficacy through reflective decision-making* is the focusing agent for the unit and is manifested through eight attributes. In a synthesized and targeted way, efficacy provides a rationale for the conceptual framework—for both classroom teachers and other school professionals. In the realm of reflective decision-making, efficacy is the *reason why* we reflect—it represents our ownership of the learning environment and achievement of all learners. The degree to which PEU candidates demonstrate efficacy directly correlates to their attainment of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to positively impact the learning of all learners. The eight attributes within the Conceptual Framework represent our view of the ideal educator.

**Content Knowledge**—Educators demonstrate knowledge of the central concepts and modes of inquiry in their disciplines. They use this knowledge to support effective practice so that all students may achieve.

**Problem Solving**—Educators implement reflective and systematic problem solving strategies based upon empirical science. They actively seek solutions that benefit all constituencies and create a fertile learning environment for all students.

**Student Achievement**— Educators plan, design, and deliver instruction and other services in a manner that engages and respects students, enhances academic and social-emotional outcomes, and fosters positive interactions.  They employ alternative multiple pedagogical approaches to ensure that all students learn.

**Assessment**— Educators align assessments with the curriculum and instruction and provide a variety of ways for students to express knowledge, skills, and/or abilities.  They use assessment data to inform their practice of what students know and can do, as well as where students need additional support to meet learning outcomes.

**Diversity**— Educators are open-minded to the possibility and validity of different values, beliefs, cultural/ethnic norms, and learning preferences.  They are committed to the notion that all students can learn; therefore, they acknowledge and accommodate diversity, infuse multiple perspectives into their practice, and strategically plan to meet the needs of diverse student populations.

**Technology**— Educators integrate technology responsibly as a tool to enhance the learning environment for all students.  They use technology to engage students in instruction, to gather and analyze data to foster student success, to extend the technological literacy of students, and to more effectively communicate with constituencies.

**Professionalism**— Educators seek continual professional growth, advocate and model ethical standards, and serve as effective ambassadors of the profession.  They act to preserve the standards and integrity of their profession, and willingly accept responsibility for the learning of all students.

**Collaboration**— Educators promote and utilize a collaborative approach to professional responsibilities and activities.  They forge partnerships with others in order to assist in effective decision-making and provide the richest environment for the learning and development of all students.

The Conceptual Framework has been a living document in the PEU. In keeping with the unit's commitment to reflective decision-making, PEU members have engaged in continuous reflection on the impact and appropriateness of the Conceptual Framework, modifying as suitable. Such modifications include adopting both technology and diversity proficiencies, designing assessments to measure them, and integrating them into the unit's assessment system. Additionally, the Conceptual Framework was embedded into the unit's assessment system by linking each element to specific criteria in key assessment rubrics for every program area.

The largest evolution in the Conceptual Framework is currently underway. Beginning Fall 2009, the PEU engaged in several meetings and completed multiple survey tools—the results of which indicated that while the PEU was generally committed to each aspect of the Conceptual Framework, an additional element was needed to solidly capture the collective mission of all program areas.  Increased discussions occurred regarding the need to better prepare our candidates to work with struggling or otherwise disadvantaged learners.

The desire to enrich the educational experiences of these traditionally marginalized students compelled the placement of efficacy at the core of our conceptual framework. After feedback and approval from all constituencies, the Conceptual Framework (and its visual symbol) was revised in fall 2010 to incorporate "efficacy" as its focusing agent.

5. Exhibit Links

| Exhibits—Overview and Conceptual Framework |
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| 1. Links to unit catalogs and other printed documents describing general education, specialty/content studies, and professional studies |
| 2. Syllabi for professional education courses |
| 3. Conceptual framework(s) |
| 4. Findings of other national accreditation associations related to the preparation of education professionals (e.g., ASHA, NASM, APA, CACREP) |

**B.  Standard 1. 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.**

1. What do candidate assessment data tell the unit about candidates' meeting professional, state, and institutional standards? For programs not nationally/state reviewed, summarize data from key assessments and discuss these results. [maximum of three pages]

Graduates from PEU programs overwhelmingly report in follow up surveys that their education at UCA prepared them well for their roles with P-12 students, and we are pleased to have them as our ambassadors to the professional community. Arkansas requires novice teachers to undergo a first year induction before they can apply for a standard license. The final step toward this license is successful performance on the Praxis III exam. UCA candidates consistently score higher than the state average on this measure.  As reported in the Title II data, one hundred percent of the candidates in our initial programs pass the Praxis II content and pedagogy exams. Candidates in our advanced programs have a similar record on the Praxis II exams for their professional roles, though until recently not all advanced programs required this as an exit requirement. In addition to the state adopted Praxis I, II, and III exams, evidence of Standard I is apparent in GPAs, performance evaluations, and a series of other course-embedded and summative work samples. Additionally, graduate surveys are conducted annually and employer surveys every other year.  Data gleaned from all these sources provide evidence that candidates meet or exceed established standards of their disciplines.

All programs reviewed by SPAs are nationally recognized. The few programs recognized with conditions have already met with their faculty and advisory boards to initiate programmatic improvements. The annual Standard 1 report completed by the Director of Candidate Services and Field Experiences presents data on programs' summative assessments, as well as survey results from candidates, graduates, and employers at the building and district level. The Standard

I committee examines the report each year and shares the results with faculty and advisory boards in their programs. In addition to exit surveys, a representative sample of undergraduate candidates participates in an exit interview with the NCATE Coordinator and the director of Candidate Services and Field Experiences. This feedback is also shared with the Standard I committee, and has led to curricular revisions where candidates felt least prepared.

Prior to admission to Teacher Education, undergraduate candidates must have demonstrated knowledge of content through the attainment of a 2.5 GPA and a grade of "C" or better in all pre-requisite admission courses. They must also have earned a passing score on the PRAXIS I Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST); and received a minimum of two positive recommendations by members of the PEU. The transcripts of initial candidates enrolled in the Master of Arts in teaching (MAT) program are audited to ensure candidates have appropriate content knowledge needed for licensure in the state and to be successful in the classroom. Prior to admission to advanced programs of study, candidates must have earned an undergraduate degree (minimum GPA of 2.7), passing scores on their initial Praxis II content and pedagogy exams, and a valid teaching license.

The PEU is systematic in its preparation of candidates for the roles they will assume upon program completion. The vision of developing educators as reflective decision-makers (transitioning into *efficacious* reflective decision-makers) is introduced to all candidates upon entrance to their program as the Conceptual Framework is a prominent component of each syllabus in the PEU. Further, the integration of other institutional and professional proficiencies related to knowledge, skills and dispositions is evident in all syllabi, curriculum, and adopted assessments in the PEU. Having a clear vision of where candidates should be upon program completion enables the process of such development to be well established, and understood by all involved—faculty and candidates.

Candidates are made aware of the standards to which they will be held throughout their tenure in the program, and the PEU takes seriously its role in ensuring all program completers are ready to adopt the roles for which they are preparing.  Modeling the sense of efficacy we expect our candidates to adopt, faculty work to ensure all candidates have acquired essential content knowledge and pedagogical skills before exiting the program to assume their influential roles with students in P-12 schools. To this end, key assessments (p.3) were developed to measure these essential (national, state, institutional) outcomes. Candidates must demonstrate proficiency on every key assessment to continue in their program of study. A candidate who performs at an unacceptable level is given remedial instruction, revises the assessment, and then resubmits for further evaluation. This formative approach to assessment ensures that continual programmatic and candidate growth occurs, and this is solidified even further with data collected at the various transition points—admission to program, admission to Internship/Clinical, exit from Internship/Clinical, exit from the program (p. 13).

The focus on using assessment data to determine candidates' growth and proficiency is a valuable component to the continuous improvement of programs in the PEU, and our candidates are expected to do the same in their own classrooms/schools. During their field experiences, candidates collect student achievement data in order to evaluate their impact on P-12 students. Faculty and school mentors assist in the interpretation of this data; and discuss with candidates

the implications of the results and how to use these experiences to improve their practice. In order for candidates to design educational experiences that have a positive impact on student learning, candidates must understand the family and community contexts in which they work. Experiences are embedded in course work to equip candidates with the skills needed to acquire this knowledge. Mastery of communicative strategies makes up the core of key assessments in several PEU programs, and is integrated into assessments in all programs. All candidates interact with parents/guardians to communicate student progress, and provide documentation of ongoing communication with students and their families. Candidates also provide documentation of their collaboration with other professionals and involvement in professional activities.

While the development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to diversity are embedded throughout the curriculum, the four PEU adopted diversity proficiencies are assessed for undergraduate programs through designated course-embedded assignments. These assignments are treated in the same way as key assessments—collected in Chalk and Wire and require performance at a basic level on each rubric criterion before candidates can move forward in the program. Initial candidates in the MAT are assessed on the four diversity proficiencies through their "Diversity Unit Plan," which is a key assessment in that program. The other graduate programs assess their candidates' proficiencies related to cultural, linguistic, and special needs populations through a variety of course-embedded assignments and key assessments. Additionally, the unit requires all candidates (initial and advanced) to complete an "Attitudes toward Cultural Diversity" survey  when they enter the program and when they exit.

The focus on candidates' professional dispositions has increased substantially over the past few semesters within the PEU.  Summative assessments of candidates' Internship performance and rubrics used in scoring candidates' lessons have criteria designed to evaluate such dispositions as fairness, rapport, encouraging students, etc. These assessment instruments (modeled from Danielson's Frameworks of Teaching) have been at the center of our assessment system for many years, and ensure that dispositions are evaluated consistently in the program.  Most recently, the PEU has adopted the "Professional and Ethical Conduct" policy, directing candidates' attention to the importance of dispositional attributes. This policy is part of every syllabus, and candidates in initial programs attend a session designed to inform them of the specifics of the Arkansas Code of Ethics.  Further, a rubric designed solely to measure candidates' professional dispositions is in place for the MAT and are being developed for multiple programs in the unit. A key component in the PEU's conceptual framework is reflective decision-making, which is embedded in every course and field experience. For instance, candidates are asked to reflect on their professional growth—to identify in writing their strengths and weaknesses.  The unit places much emphasis on candidates' ability to provide rationales for their pedagogical decisions.

Four programs in our unit are neither evaluated by a SPA or the state. Of those, three (art, music, and the PhD in school psychology) are reviewed as part of their departments' accreditation process. All three of these departments are recognized in good standing by their accreditation bodies. The fourth program, Advanced Studies in Teacher Leadership (ASTL), is externally examined only as part of the NCATE unit review. All four of these programs do, however, engage in the annual assessment procedures described in Standard 2 below.

2. Please respond to 2a if this is the standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level. If it is **not** the standard on which you are moving to the standard level, respond to 2b.

    2a. Standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level [maximum of five pages]
- Describe work undertaken to move to the Target Level
- Discuss plans for continuing to improve

    2b. Continuous Improvement [maximum of three pages]
- Briefly summarize the most significant changes related to Standard 1 that have led to continuous improvement. (If no significant changes related to this standard have occurred since the previous visit, indicate "None" in this section.)

In Fall 2007 both technology and diversity proficiencies were developed, implemented, and integrated into the PEU assessment system. The technology proficiencies are based on the ISTE standards, and a programmatic change occurred in the undergraduate programs to reflect a shift in emphasis from surface level knowledge of technology to understanding why and how to develop technological literacy with P-12 students. To that end, a previously required educational technology course (EDUC 1240) was eliminated as a program requirement, and candidates now must demonstrate basic technological knowledge through an electronic competency exam. Those who do not pass the exam take EDUC 1240 as a required elective. Replacing EDUC 1240 as a program requirement is EDUC 4210, Integration of Technology into Teaching and Learning, which is taken in the senior year.  Placing this course toward the end of the candidates' program of study provides opportunities for infusion of technology into candidate-designed lessons, and the instructors of EDUC 4210 collaborate closely with methods instructors in planning for the course each semester.  Because of the specificity of technology for music majors, they have their own educational technology course (MUS 2211, Integration of Music Technology into Teaching and Learning).

Perhaps the most drastic undertaking related to Standard 1 was the identification and implementation of the 6-8 key assessments in each program area. While assessment of candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions has always taken place, candidate outcomes were not well defined across the PEU. The adoption of an electronic portfolio/assessment system (Chalk and Wire) facilitated the solidification of stated programmatic outcomes aligned to SPA, state, national, and institutional standards.

Dove-tailing with the Chalk and Wire implementation was the addition in 2008 of an internal program report submitted by program coordinators on an annual basis. Described more thoroughly in the Standard 2 section below, the report template guides program coordinators to identify their program outcomes (SPA/state standards), identify 6-8 assessments used to gauge student progress toward the standards, and discuss the alignment of the assessments to the program outcomes. Additionally, the reports include aggregated data of candidate performance on each of the assessments, analysis of these data, and a description of how the results may inform programmatic decisions.  After consultation with program faculty and their advisory boards, program coordinators submit the report to the NCATE Coordinator and Office of the Dean each September.

Fall 2008 was the first semester Chalk and Wire was required for use by all program areas to document candidate performance on key assessments. As mentioned in the Standard 2 section below, the first collection of data from this system provided opportunity for richer conversations among faculty and advisory boards regarding specific areas of strength and areas for improvement. Program faculty also worked to ensure that the elements of the Conceptual Framework, as well as diversity and technology proficiencies were tied to specific assessments. A policy was enacted that candidates must pass each key assessment before moving forward in any PEU program. Language was added to PEU syllabi and undergraduate/graduate bulletins to inform candidates about the policy.

Since Arkansas is requires acceptable performance on the Praxis III assessment to be fully licensed, UCA carefully monitors Praxis III scores released by the state. Graduates from our initial programs continue to score at or above the state average; however, we noticed a state-wide trend in the lower scoring candidates—they do not provide thorough rationales for their pedagogic choices. With our conceptual framework designed around "reflective decision making," we decided to bolster the focus on these rationales from induction into Teacher Education through exit. A major undertaking was to modify existing lesson plan templates into a single UCA-adopted template that closely mirrors Praxis III and includes required questions that prompt candidates to provide rationales for the decisions they make in planning (i.e. selection of objectives, student grouping, strategies, etc.). Additionally, guides were created for lesson planning and posted on the COE website. These materials have helped to ensure candidates get a consistent message of the expectation for these assignments. Similarly, candidate handbooks and other resources have been developed and posted on program websites for initial and advanced candidates—making it clear what the expectations are to which they will be held.

3. Exhibit Links

| Exhibits—Standard 1 |
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| 1. State program review documents[1] and state findings. (Some of these documents may be available in AIMS.) |
| 2. Title II reports submitted to the state for the previous three years (Beginning with the 2010 annual report, Title II reports should be attached to Part C of the annual report and will be available to BOE teams in AIMS.) |
| 3. Key assessments and scoring guides used by faculty to assess candidate learning against standards and the outcomes identified in the unit's conceptual framework **for programs not included in the national program review  process or a similar state process** |
| 4. Data tables and summaries that show how teacher candidates (both initial and advanced) have performed on key assessments over the past three years **for programs not included in the national program review process or a similar state process** |
| 5. Samples of candidate work (e.g., portfolios at different proficiency levels) |
| 6. Follow-up studies of graduates and data tables of results |
| 7. Employer feedback on graduates and summaries of the results |
| 8. List of candidate dispositions, including fairness and the belief that all students can learn, and related assessments, scoring guides, and data |

**C. Standard 2. The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the performance of candidates, the unit, and its programs.**

1. How does the unit use its assessment system to improve the performance of candidates and the unit and its programs? [maximum of three pages]

The Assessment system in UCA's Professional Education Unit (PEU) cohesively integrates a variety of assessment instruments and processes to evaluate (1) elements of the unit's Conceptual Framework; (2) standards adopted by the state and national specialized professional associations; (3) perceptions of preparation by program completers and employers; and (4) attainment of program-specific and unit-wide goals. As is the nature of purposeful evaluation, the unit's assessment system is cyclical and ongoing—drawing on data from internal and external sources, including nationally-normed instruments and assessment by practitioners in collaboration with PEU members.

Annual assessment reports that extend beyond the unit include the AACTE IPEDS report submitted through the Office of the Dean, and the Title II report, completed by the Office of Candidate Services and Field Experiences (OCSFE) Director. The results of the Title II report are shared with the college's administrative council (CAC). Additionally, each of the NCATE standing committees completes and submits an annual report to the NCATE Coordinator and Office of the Dean.  Progress toward department and college goals is summarized and included in the College of Education's annual report submitted to the provost. All of these reports contribute to the goal-oriented, data-driven culture within the PEU.

Candidates are made aware of the key assessment system and the use of Chalk and Wire at the beginning of their programs of study. The policy requiring acceptable scores on all key assessments is included in syllabi with key assessments embedded, as well as graduate and undergraduate program bulletins.  Candidates have access to all key assessment rubrics through their Chalk and Wire account, and many are available in other locations as well. Assessment results indicate no disparity across demographic populations.  Each syllabus in the COE includes the candidate grade appeals policy, which is also available on the COE website. Additionally, candidates have an avenue to file appeals through the university system, and complaints to the PEU. In the last seven years, there have been only six student complaints filed with the PEU.

The first assessment point for all program areas is entrance to the program.  Both undergraduate and graduate candidates must have demonstrated an acceptable threshold of knowledge, skills and appropriate dispositions as measured by (1) GPA; (2) a minimum of two professional references; and (3) passing Praxis scores.  Candidates in initial programs have passing scores on Praxis I as an entrance requirement; and candidates in advanced programs (except school psychology) must have a valid teaching license—thus having passed Praxis I, as well as the appropriate Praxis II content and pedagogy exams, and Praxis III.

Collection and analysis of data at the entrance level for undergraduate candidates is coordinated through the Office of Candidate Services/Field Experiences (OCSFE) and facilitated through the Candidate Account Manager database (CAM), which links to the university's Banner system and

is managed by the technology specialist in the unit's Technology Learning Center.  To better accommodate their continual enrollment policies, each graduate-level program maintains its own spreadsheet on candidates' entrance-level data, which includes fields completed from the university's Banner system.  Entrance-level data from both initial and advanced programs are housed on the PEU's shared drive and are reviewed on an annual basis.

As candidates move throughout their programs, they complete program-specific key assessments embedded in their course work. Passing scores on these key assessments, along with demonstration of acceptable levels on (1) GPA, (2) other performance assessments, including those that are field-based, and (3) professional and ethical conduct is a prerequisite for moving to the next assessment transition point—the Internship/Clinical experience. Assessments that occur during these experiences are conducted jointly by practitioners and PEU members.  To exit their programs, candidates must have (1) passed all program key assessments; (2) demonstrated proficiency on each of the Conceptual Framework elements (including those related to diversity and technology); and (3) met the state's requirements for licensure in their program area.

The final assessment point occurs after program completion. Follow up surveys are sent to graduate program completers a year after their exit.  Building and district level employers of former PEU candidates are contacted every other year in an effort to solicit their feedback regarding our programs' strengths and weaknesses as demonstrated by our candidates' professional preparation and performance.  Due to the state's involvement, follow up data regarding candidates from initial programs is especially rich and contains three parts: (1) scores on Praxis III exam—a performance-based assessment conducted by state officials in order for novice teachers to move from an initial to a standard teaching license; (2) program-evaluation survey by program completers' immediate supervisors; (3) program-evaluation survey completed by program completers. The employer and program completer surveys are part of the paperwork that must be completed in order for a Praxis III assessment to occur—resulting in a response rate just under 100%.  As evidenced in the exhibit files, each transition point is characterized by multiple assessment measures, representing a variety of assessment types and input from a range of assessors, including those external to the university.

The PEU assessment system is designed to provide information regarding our candidates' attainment of professional standards, as well as evaluate program quality and the unit's effectiveness—thus providing guidance for continuous improvement. Data collected from candidates in all programs include (1) results on program's 6-8 key assessments; (2) "Attitudes toward Cultural Diversity" pre and post program survey; (3) end-of-program surveys and/or exit interviews; and (4) employer and graduate follow up surveys—all of which are submitted electronically. This information is formally reported in the annual Standard 1 report completed by the OCSFE director, shared with the Standard I committee, and submitted to the NCATE Coordinator and the Office of the Dean.

Candidates submit the key assessments for their program through the electronic portfolio system, Chalk and Wire. This is also the system through which all rubrics are scored, ensuring that assessment data is captured and recorded in the PEU's central electronic database.  Additionally, results from candidate, employer, and program graduate surveys are incorporated into the database.  Almost all PEU key assessments are scored by multiple assessors.  Analysis of score

distribution results indicate that PEU members are generally well aligned in their assessments of candidates, with a few notable exceptions. Initially, there was great variation in scores on the *Lesson Plan* and *Impact on Student Learning Project*. Upon discovering this, recalibration workshops were held on three occasions for faculty to study in depth the assessment instruments and descriptors of performance levels. Additionally, a *Lesson Plan Guide* was created and posted online with detailed information regarding the intent of each prompt. These additions have helped unify assessment scores. Because the unit's initial licensure programs have assessments tightly aligned with the state's teacher evaluation and novice mentoring system (Praxis III/Pathwise), all faculty and field supervisors must participate in Pathwise recalibration training every two years. Further, several faculty in the PEU are certified Praxis III assessors for the state.

At the end of each term, the NCATE Coordinator pulls all data for each program and delivers it to the program coordinators. Since the initial licensure programs have some common assessments, the results of these data are discussed at the first program coordinator meeting the following term. This discussion enables faculty to reflect on unit data (as applicable) in relation to other PEU programs. Programs are also able to determine how their candidates perform as compared to national norms. All programs in the PEU (except ASTL) collect Praxis II data on their candidates. When the data are pulled each term for program coordinators, the comparison to the national norm is available. The immediacy and consistency of this reporting helps ensure candidates are meeting established standards; further, it enables programs to identify comparative strengths and weaknesses evidenced by data trends relative to national norms—and changes can then be made programmatically as warranted. The state of Arkansas uses the Praxis III assessment as the final assessment measure before a novice teacher (1st or 2nd year) receives a standard teaching license. Praxis III is modeled after Danielson's (2007) four domains of teaching, which are deeply embedded in our initial programs. This commonality in programs with the state's evaluation system allows the PEU to determine our candidates' attainment of standards relative to other teacher candidates in Arkansas.

Additionally, program coordinators meet with program faculty about key assessment results every semester, and with the program's advisory board either once or twice per year, depending on the program. Assessment data are also shared as part of an exit interview with a representative sample of program completers every spring. Conversations during these data sessions serve to inform programs and the unit as a whole about collective strengths and weaknesses, as well as specific revisions that should occur within each program. These discussions are documented in the advisory board minutes housed on the PEU shared drive.

At the beginning of each fall term, program coordinators submit an annual assessment report to the NCATE Coordinator and the Office of the Dean. These reports include (1) statements about the alignment between stated program outcomes and key assessments and their rubrics; (2) key assessment data collected from the previous academic year; (3) analysis of data results; and (4) narrative explaining how these results inform programmatic decisions. Other annual reports are completed by each standing committee. These reports have provided information that prompt rich and explicit discussions among PEU members and its extended professional community, enabling us to set targets for our continued development.

Please respond to 2a if this is the standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level. If it is **not** the standard on which you are moving to the standard level, respond to 2b.

    2a. Standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level [maximum of five pages]
- Describe work undertaken to move to the Target Level
- Discuss plans for continuing to improve

The adoption of an electronic portfolio and data collection system (Chalk and Wire) has greatly contributed to the evolution of a data-driven culture within the PEU. Every assignment housed in Chalk and Wire is linked electronically to the relevant elements of the Conceptual Framework, SPA, state, and institutional standards. The process of articulating this alignment is not only beneficial to candidates, but also to faculty. In several cases, analyzing the alignment between assignments and standards has led to the recognition that some of these links were tenuous at best. This recognition, in turn, led to revision of the assignment to strengthen the alignment to established standards.

Participation in the annual review process, likewise, has reinforced faculty focus on assessment results to inform practice within the program. Candidate data is shared with program faculty each semester and with external advisory boards at least once per year. [Feedback is solicited](#) from all involved parties, and program coordinators synthesize this information in an [annual report](#). One of the greatest benefits realized from this process is the bolstering of cohesion throughout each program—rather than looking at data solely at the micro-level (i.e. groups of students in a single course), faculty report now seeing themselves as part of the program continuum and take more ownership in candidates' progress through the program of study instead of only candidates' performance in a class.

Such a mindset has led to meaningful programmatic improvements. For instance, analysis of data, feedback from candidates, and discussions with school-based faculty in the P-4 program revealed that candidates needed more interaction from university faculty during their early field based experiences. To address this, a new course was added to the program (Internship I Practicum), in which UCA faculty formally observe lessons and offer feedback to candidates based on lesson observation. Collaboration among many parties was necessary to enact this change—(1) school-based faculty increased their availability to mentor candidates in the field, (2) Arts and Sciences faculty changed content courses from 3 credit hours to 2 credit hours, and (3) the department provided resources to appropriately staff the additional course load to faculty in the P-4 program.

Similarly, unit-wide evaluation is collaborative in nature. Every member of the PEU serves on at least one Standing Committee, which submits an [annual status](#) report. Information from these reports is further shared with the entire PEU at an annual meeting so that discussions can occur regarding areas of focus for the upcoming year. Layered with the assessment processes conducted by faculty are those *of* faculty by administration, faculty peers and students. Although the university policy requires student evaluation for tenured faculty only once per year, the COE has determined feedback from students is a significant factor in evaluating faculty effectiveness. Therefore, students evaluate all COE faculty in each course every semester. Faculty peers formally evaluate tenure track faculty with the mid-tenure and [Retention and Promotion](#)

processes.  A document for the latter was adopted last year in an effort to provide explicit guidelines regarding the expectations for tenure and promotion.  The annual faculty evaluation by administration is a formal process through which previous and current performance is examined, and goals established for continual growth.  This goal-oriented approach is also apparent in the annual College of Education report submitted to the provost, which articulates departmental and college goals and provides evidence of the degree to which each goal was attained.

The annual Standard 1 report synthesizes data collected at the four transition points, as well as follow-up data collected from program completers and employers.  It also includes initial candidates' performance on the Praxis III exam completed one or two years after program completion.  The alignment of criteria on assessments throughout the continuum and the consistency of scores assigned provide evidence of the validity of our assessment instruments.  The consistency of scores across unit and school-based faculty likewise signal the reliability embedded in the assessment system.  Chalk and Wire has embedded within the system multiple analysis operations, including performance level reports, and reports on specific SPA, state, or institutional standards.  It also allows faculty to determine how often standards are aligned with key assessments throughout the program.  Additionally, all data collected in Chalk and Wire can be exported into other statistical packages for more sophisticated analyses.  For instance, faculty have investigated the correlation of the key assessments to other measured variables, such as candidate dispositions.  Such faculty-driven initiatives indicate the degree to which assessment is increasingly integrated within the core of the unit, and ensure its role in directing future endeavors undertaken throughout the unit.

The foundation of the PEU's assessment system was systematically solidified over the last four years.  Policies enacted to engage all faculty in using data to evaluate the programs and the unit have greatly impacted the assessment culture in the PEU.  Initially, the focus was solely on candidates—determining through assessment data whether they were meeting standards.  Gradually, this transitioned to examining what the candidates' data indicated about our programs, including areas that need strengthening or where gaps exist.  The next layer to explore is faculty behaviors as assessors.  Scores clustered too tightly at the upper end of the assessment scale continue to persist.  However, the embedded practice of examining data at regular intervals has broadened the scope of assessment conversations to include a focus on the meaning of relevant feedback, the importance of a common interpretation of rubric descriptors, and a shared understanding of performance level definitions.  Newly arrived at this reflective stage, the unit's next challenge is to address the appearance of inflated scores so that candidates may receive effective formative and summative feedback to be fully prepared in the roles for which they are training.

> 2b. Continuous Improvement [maximum of three pages]
> - Briefly summarize the most significant changes related Standard 2 that have led to continuous improvement. (If no significant changes related to this standard have occurred since the previous visit, indicate "None" in this section.)

To better collect, compile, and analyze data, an electronic portfolio/assessment system (Chalk and Wire) was approved for adoption in Fall 2007, piloted in Spring 2008, and fully

implemented in Fall 2008. Upon the adoption of Chalk and Wire, all program areas were asked to submit electronic copies of their key assessment instructions and scoring rubrics. This exercise led to the realization among most program coordinators that the assessment rubrics were not as clearly aligned to program outcomes as they had envisioned. Therefore, most programs revised their assessments and rubrics to better measure program outcomes.

An internal reporting system was initiated in Spring 2008. Each September, program coordinators submit an assessment report containing data from the previous academic year (fall, spring, and summer semesters). The purpose of this assessment report is to systematically evaluate data in order to facilitate data-driven decision making. Specifically, it seeks to examine whether each program has the information needed to determine whether it is meeting its goals for *Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions*. In order for there to be systematic evaluation of program goals, each program area is requested to prepare a summary of their assessment activities and findings for the previous academic year. Each report should include the following elements:

- Intended program outcomes
- Student learning data for previous academic year (6-8 assessments)
- Summary of data (in table format)
- Descriptive comments
- Does it appear that the assessments accurately measure candidates' progress toward program outcomes?
- Comments on what the data show about candidate achievement of program outcomes. (What can be said about the program based on the data presented? What questions arise for further investigation?)
- Future plans in light of this analysis of assessment results (i.e. re-evaluating assessment rubric, relocating course placement, etc.)

3. Exhibit Links

| Exhibits—Standard 2 |
| --- |
| 1. Description of the unit's assessment **system** in detail including the requirements and key assessments used at transition points |
| 2. Data from key assessments used at entry to programs |
| 3. Procedures for ensuring that key assessments of candidate performance and evaluations of unit operations are fair, accurate, consistent, and free of bias |
| 4. Policies and procedures that ensure that data are regularly collected, compiled, aggregated, summarized, analyzed, and used to make improvements |
| 5. Samples of candidate assessment data disaggregated by alternate route, off-campus, and distance learning programs<br>Not Applicable |
| 6. Policies for handling student complaints |
| 7. File of student complaints and the unit's response (Password: NC820!!) |
| 8. Examples of changes made to courses, programs, and the unit in response to data gathered from the assessment system |

**D. Standard 3. The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn.**

1.  How does the unit work with the school partners to deliver field experiences and clinical practice to enable candidates to develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to help all students learn? [maximum of three pages]

The Office of Candidate Services and Field Experiences (OCSFE) coordinates field placements for all initial licensure programs, and manages assignments to ensure these candidates have field experiences in a variety of P-12 settings. Beginning with the introductory freshman course, the Office of Candidate Services and Field Experience works with faculty to ensure appropriate field based experiences for the potential teacher education candidate. The OCSFE continues in this role all the way through the culminating internships. Admission to teacher education, subsequent academic counseling, and careful monitoring of the progress of all teacher education candidates are important parts of the mission of that office. Records are rigorously maintained and application for the initial licensure is made through the OCSFE upon completion of the candidate's program of study. Field experiences are designed to deliberately expand and challenge personal and professional attitudes while providing personal and professional growth opportunities for prospective teachers. Observation and first-hand experience within community agencies and P-12 settings provide prospective teachers with information and tools that complement classroom study and assist in the development of pedagogical skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary for effective teaching.

The Director of Field Experiences maintains a Field Activities Chart that represents for each program area (1) which courses have a field component, (2) how many hours are part of that field component, (3) the type of school in which the field placement occurs (i.e. rural, low socioeconomic, etc.), and (4) assignments candidates complete as part of the field experience. Candidates in initial programs have multiple opportunities to teach P-12 students prior to their capstone experience. The PEU requires all candidates to have experiences with P-12 students of diverse populations, including students with exceptionalities, English language learners, students from various ethnic backgrounds, and students from various socioeconomic groups. Therefore, candidates are assigned to a variety of placement sites while in the teacher education program.

Internship II is the capstone experience for all undergraduate Teacher Education programs and provides candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency in all the Teacher Performance Outcomes Assessment (TPOA) domains. Candidates spend each day of the semester in a public school classroom under the guidance of a practicing teacher, who serves as a mentor for the candidate. The Director of Field Experiences maintains strong connections with school-based faculty, and they work together to make appropriate placements for teacher candidates. The Coordinator of Internship II makes the necessary arrangements for the Internship II placements. Because of their close working relationships with mentor teachers in their area, program coordinators often request particular placements to match their candidates with the mentors. Frequently, the program coordinators discuss placements with the mentors before the official request is made by the Internship II Coordinator to the school/district. Both

school/district administrators and the OCSFE strive to select school-based faculty who exemplars in the field.

Candidates are not to contact the school personally about an assignment as all arrangements must be made by the Coordinator of Internship II. Candidates compose a personal narrative that is mailed to the superintendent or designee of that school district. After consulting with the principal and the mentor teacher, the school or district may accept or reject the request. If accepted, the district returns a letter to Candidate Services confirming placement with the name of the mentor teacher. Placement decisions are based upon availability of qualified supervisory personnel (supervisors are faculty from the disciplines who have school teaching experience), range of experiences needed by the candidate, and recommendations from university faculty, district personnel officers, principals, and other candidates. Placements are generally determined by the range of grade levels required in the candidate's program and by the site agreements with particular public schools; therefore, candidates may not request specific school placements and are never allowed to make their own arrangements for placement (see field experience handbook for full guidelines).

The Office of Candidate Services and Field Experiences also conducts training for school-based faculty at the beginning of each term. These sessions help ensure school-based faculty and university faculty are consistent with the expectations of candidates in the field. Facilitating this communication are handbooks for teacher candidates, school-based faculty, and university supervisors that are updated as needed, distributed to all parties, and posted on the College of Education's website. This group also shares feedback at the end of each term, which helps the university-based faculty evaluate what changes may be warranted.

The amount of time faculty spend observing candidates in the P-12 schools further enhances relationships with school partners. Faculty engage in continual conversations with mentor teachers during their field visits and as they work with mentor teachers to complete candidate evaluations. As the degree of candidate responsibility in the field increases throughout the program, so does the university faculty involvement with school-based faculty—increasing from informal conversations and verification forms in the early field experiences to collaborative evaluation of candidate performance in Internship I and II. Additionally, two programs (P-4 and middle level) have established partnerships with schools in three districts to provide instruction to candidates in classrooms on the schools' campuses. In fact, this year marks the tenth anniversary of the partnership between Bob Courtway Middle School and the middle level program.

The evaluation tool used to assess teaching episodes, as well as the practicum and internship experiences, is aligned with the state's assessment of novice teachers moving from an initial to a standard teaching license. The alignment of these two instruments—UCA's Teacher Performance Outcomes Assessment (TPOA) and ETS's Praxis III exam adopted by the Arkansas Department of Education—ensures consistency between expectations of candidates during the program and upon formal entrance into the profession. Accompanying the state's adoption of the Praxis III exam is the implementation of the Pathwise observation system, around which UCA's TPOA is framed. Mentor teachers assigned to novice teachers in the field must undergo training in the Pathwise system, and this is a requirement for those who mentor UCA candidates

during the final internship experience as well.  A few UCA faculty are certified by ADE as Pathwise trainers, who conduct training workshops three times a year for public school teachers who need initial training in the system, or to be recalibrated. Additionally, all PEU faculty and field supervisors must participate in Pathwise training at least every two years.

Having a common language and understanding of program outcomes regarding effective teaching through the four Pathwise domains creates an automatic bond between university faculty and public school partners. These groups are additionally united in mission through the advisory process.  Each program has an advisory board, led by the program coordinator, which includes representatives from public schools.  These groups meet either annually or biannually, depending on the program.  Additionally, the dean of the College of Education coordinates a Superintendent Advisory board.  Currently, this group includes superintendents from across the state and comes together biannually to discuss strengths and areas for improvement regarding candidates' preparation for their roles in public schools.

At the advanced level, candidates are generally accustomed to life as a school professional. Their field experiences are managed by the program coordinator and constructed to extend their current knowledge and skills to integrate those central to the professional role to which they aspire.  Since advanced candidates are practicing educators, there is a field application to almost every course. Further, assignments are embedded in specific courses that require candidates to work with diverse populations.  At times, this necessitates candidates having to engage in field experiences outside their own school environment.  In these situations, program coordinators work with school partners to arrange an appropriate placement.  In accordance with the variety of experiences, candidates are assessed in a variety of ways—including responses to reflective prompts, design of appropriate materials for implementation in the schools, and extended in-field performance.  Online programs make use of interactive and video technologies to supplement in-field supervision.

Field experiences for all programs are designed to give candidates authentic settings in which they can connect theory to practice and implement their developing pedagogical skills under the close supervision of university and school-based mentors.  These experiences are scaffolded in the initial programs in activities such as attending school board meetings, observing master teachers, working with P-12 students one-on-one and in small groups, teaching full lessons, and managing classrooms independently.  The capstone experiences require that candidates are completely immersed in the professional role for which they are training, and that they interact with P-12 student families and participate in professional development activities.  In both advanced and initial programs, rubrics used to assess candidates in the field are jointly completed by university and school-based faculty.

Candidates in initial programs must complete background checks prior to participating in any field experience. (Advanced candidates completed this with the state when they received their initial license).  Also, initial candidates must have earned a "C" or better in all their major course work and general education courses, have an overall GPA of 2.5, have been officially admitted into Teacher Education, and have passed any key assessment taken to remain in the program. To participate in the Internship II experience, candidates must also have taken the Praxis II content exam.  Exit from the program requires candidates to have maintained all previous criteria, as

well as successful completion of all Internship II requirements and passing scores on Praxis II content and pedagogy exams.

Entry and exit criteria for advanced candidates follow a similar pattern. To continue in the program (and participate in field experiences), advanced candidates cannot have more than two "C's," must maintain a GPA of at least a 3.0, and successfully complete all key assessments. Entrance to the capstone experience is contingent upon these criteria. Likewise, exit from the program requires all these criteria, along with successful completion of all capstone requirements.

School-based faculty for initial programs must (1) be Pathwise trained (2) have taught for three years; and, for those mentoring Internship II candidates, (3) attend an orientation seminar each term. Mentors either working on or having completed a graduate degree, and with at least one semester in their current building are preferred, as are those who are National Board certified. In-field supervisors for advanced programs are selected by the program coordinator. Mentors must be licensed in the area for which they are supervising, and their credentials are reviewed and kept on file.

In keeping with the unit's conceptual framework, candidates in every program (both initial and advanced) submit written reflections following each field experience. This enables faculty to provide feedback and offer suggestions for continual improvement. By the end of their programs these exercises develop the candidates' analytical skills, which are needed for analysis of their own impact on P-12 students toward the end of their programs of study. All program areas require candidates to collect student achievement data, use technology for analysis of the data, provide feedback on results to students and their families, reflect on candidates' strengths and weaknesses in light of the data, and determine what steps are needed for continued growth. This requirement has additionally been helpful for faculty as they work to ensure candidates are equipped to positively impact the learning environments/experiences of all learners. Patterns that emerge in candidates' strengths and weaknesses equip the unit with information needed to guide ongoing programmatic decisions.

2. Please respond to 2a if this is the standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level. If it is **not** the standard on which you are moving to the standard level, respond to 2b.

   2a. Standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level [maximum of five pages]
   - Describe work undertaken to move to the Target Level
   - Discuss plans for continuing to improve

   2b. Continuous Improvement [maximum of three pages]
   - Briefly summarize the most significant changes related to Standard 3 that have led to continuous improvement. (If no significant changes related to this standard have occurred since the previous visit, indicate "None" in this section.)

Up until Fall 2007, the P-4 Internship I block of courses had no practicum class. While the structure of the block of courses was the same as now, candidates were not observed in the field by faculty teaching the coursework. In an effort to involve faculty more in the field and to offer

more direct guidance as candidates work toward Internship II, a new course was added to the program (ECSE 4318: Internship I Practicum), with UCA faculty formally observing lessons and offering feedback to candidates based on lesson observation. In order to add the course, three content courses were changed from 3 hours to 2 hours. These included Concepts of Art (ART 4260), Concepts of Music Education (MUS 3251), and Motor Skills and Fitness for P-4 (KPED 3220).

Multiple changes have been made in field experiences for the School Leadership, Management, and Administration (SLMA) program based on feedback from the department advisory committee (composed of students, graduates of the program, and school practitioners), assessment data, and results from surveys completed by candidates and mentors/employers/supervisors. During the curriculum analysis and development process, course projects (CP) and field experiences (FE) were collaboratively developed by faculty, practitioners, and students. Each of the courses in the SLMA program contains 1-3 course projects for a total of 13 projects for candidates seeking the master's degree and 11 projects for candidates enrolled in the program of study track for licensure. Most of the FE's carry the expectation that candidates will work with diverse student groups within their school systems to gain leadership experiences working with diverse student populations. However, FE #13, the Focused Diversity Experience, is now specifically designed for candidates who may not have students in their school system that meet all the diversity criteria set forth in the program. In addition to the prescribed course projects and field experiences, candidates are expected to complete and document no less than 120 hours of individualized internship experiences.

After gathering data for three years and soliciting student feedback at the end of their program, revisions were made to SLMA course projects and field experiences in January 2011. The faculty's primary focus was to bring depth and complexity to the five field experiences. These revisions were shared and discussed with the advisory board members. Candidates are now required to take five internship hours; they normally take one hour of internship alongside the required courses. The candidate is now expected to complete one the five field experiences for each internship hour.

3. Exhibit Links

| Exhibits—Standard 3 |
|---|
| 1. Memoranda of understanding, contracts, and/or other documents that demonstrate partnerships with schools |
| 2. Criteria for the selection of school faculty (e.g., cooperating teachers, internship supervisors) |
| 3. Documentation of the preparation of school faculty for their roles (e.g., orientation and other meetings) |
| 4. Descriptions of field experiences and clinical practice requirements in programs for initial and advanced teacher candidates and other school professionals |
| 5. Guidelines for student teaching and internships |
| 6. Assessments and scoring rubrics/criteria used in field experiences and clinical practice for initial and advanced teacher candidates and other school professionals (These assessments may be included in program review documents or the exhibits for Standard 1. Cross reference as appropriate.) |

**E. Standard 4. The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations, including higher education and P–12 school faculty, candidates, and students in P–12 schools.**

1. How does the unit prepare candidates to work effectively with all students?
   [maximum of three pages]

Although the Conceptual Framework in the PEU has historically included diversity elements, the indicators for these proficiencies were not clearly articulated until 2007. These indicators have, accordingly, attained more prominence in the unit's assessment system—and candidates must demonstrate these proficiencies at an acceptable level in order to move through their program of study. In keeping with our Conceptual Framework, *Enhancing Educator Efficacy through Reflective Decision-Making*, the unit's collective passion is ensuring candidates are prepared to enhance the learning environment and achievement of all learners—particularly those traditionally marginalized and those who struggle to learn. This united vision is manifested in curricular design across the unit, and illustrated in almost every PEU course through specific course outcomes directed toward work with diverse student populations.

Additionally, each program has designed field-based assignments to ensure that all candidates (including those in online programs) have experiences in a variety of school settings and with: (1) students from at least two ethnic groups; (2) students with exceptionalities; and (3) students who are English language learners. Further, assessment measures throughout the unit require candidates to demonstrate (1) their knowledge of multiple instructional/assessment/intervention strategies for various learning styles; (2) their ability to link to students' experiences and cultures to learning experiences; (3) capacity to incorporate multiple perspectives in their instruction and planning; and (4) how to make appropriate accommodations/modifications for the students with which they work.

As part of the annual evaluation system, the PEU collects a pre/post program "Attitudes Toward Cultural Diversity" survey. Additionally, candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions regarding the education of diverse student populations is measured through specified elements of programs' key assessments and field experience reflections. The unit further recognizes the significant impact interaction with diverse populations during their programs of study has on their professional practice. As such, targeted initiatives have been undertaken to recruit and retain candidates and faculty from diverse populations. For instance, a new protocol was approved for all faculty searches conducted within the COE, which includes placing position announcements in at least two venues that specifically target underrepresented groups. Additionally, a brochure was created to highlight the elements of Conway and surrounding areas that may be appealing to diverse faculty candidates.

The combined percent of full-time and part-time faculty from underrepresented populations in the PEU has increased over the last four years—from 7.1% in 2003-04 to 9% in 2010-11. Of the school-based faculty serving as mentors in Fall 2010, 6% were from underrepresented

populations.  Though the PEU faculty remains predominantly white, recent hires are from underrepresented populations—and each department within the COE has members from underrepresented groups (who represent 10% of the COE faculty).  As a result, candidates are increasingly more likely to interact with racially diverse faculty.  The percentage of candidates from underrepresented populations has also risen from 7.96% in 2003-04 to 12.5% (initial candidates) and 16.4% (advanced candidates) in 2010-11.

Diversity statistics also are maintained for all of the public schools where candidates are placed for undergraduate and graduate programs, and the Office of Candidate Services and Field Experiences works with program coordinators to develop a tighter system for ensuring all candidates have experiences with at least two ethnic groups, students with exceptionalities, and English Language Learners. Each of these experiences is now attached to a specific assignment in a specific course. Candidates cannot move forward in the program until they have successfully completed these assignments.

2.   Please respond to 2a if this is the standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level. If it is **not** the standard on which you are moving to the standard level, respond to 2b.

   2a. Standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level [maximum of five pages]
      - Describe work undertaken to move to the Target Level
      - Discuss plans for continuing to improve

   2b. Continuous Improvement [maximum of three pages]
      - Briefly summarize the most significant changes related to Standard 4 that have led to continuous improvement. (If no significant changes related to this standard have occurred since the previous visit, indicate "None" in this section.)

The manifestation of the unit's commitment to diversity has increased in the last few years, evolving from a single "Diversity Day" workshop provided for undergraduate students just before their Internship II experience to the systemic integration of inclusion and multiculturalism throughout the unit's curriculum.  The unit's system for ensuring candidates have required experiences with P-12 students from diverse populations has undergone multiple transformations in the past few years.   Initially, candidates had to establish an account with the unit's Candidate Account Manager (CAM), and manually input the data representing the number of P-12 students from each population with which they interacted.  Not only was this system cumbersome, but it was also largely unreliable as candidates frequently forgot to enter their data and then attempted to recall all program experiences upon exit from the program.  Morphing from this system, an online survey was implemented to collect demographic data from both graduate and undergraduate candidates about their field experiences.   The survey was e-mailed to candidates enrolled in courses with a field experience, and the candidates were required to complete the survey and print for their instructors a completion certificate to verify data had been submitted.  A new system for managing field-based assignments (described below) has eliminated the need to collect P-12 demographic data from individual candidates.

In Fall 2009 a new partnership was forged with Conway public schools, which resulted in the creation of an assignment to be completed by undergraduate students in the EDUC 3309:

Cultural Perspectives course.  This assignment provides the candidates with experiences involving ELL students.  Similarly, the MAT program revamped requirements in its Practicum course to ensure candidates have experiences with both English language learners and special needs students prior to their capstone experience.  Following this model, both initial and advanced program coordinators identified specific courses where each diverse field experience would occur (students from diverse ethnic and socio-economic groups, ELL, and SPED). Assignments requiring reflection on each experience were also solidified in these courses.  This approach has eliminated the opportunity for candidates to "slip through the cracks" without having completed the requisite field experiences.

Analysis of Praxis data provided by the Office of Candidate Services and Field Experiences indicated that non-white pre-admit candidates are proportionately more likely to take the Praxis I exam multiple times and/or not be admitted into Teacher Education.  Additionally, a survey was given to all candidates enrolled in EDUC 1300 asking them to indicate areas of concern and/or desired elements regarding moving forward in the program.  The major items identified were (1) a mentor to help navigate the educational program, (2) tutoring, (3) test prep help, and (4) financial assistance.  It was also noted that 25% of the non-white students in that introductory course had decided not to pursue a degree in education.

To address these concerns, meetings were held with the Office of Minority Services and the UCA Writing Center.  Both provide services to help students on the Praxis I exam, and materials have been developed to highlight these opportunities for candidates.  Faculty have since held workshops each semester for COE students on academic probation, and a Standard 4 Task Force is currently working on an outreach initiative to retain those at risk for leaving education programs of study.  Recruitment efforts have also increased for underrepresented populations. For instance, a letter was sent to graduating students in the Delta area informing them about the Teacher Education program at UCA and encouraging them to explore teaching as a career. Multiple contacts were made with the admissions office to organize logistics of partnering with them on face-to-face recruitment efforts both at the high school and community college levels.

3. Exhibit Links

| Exhibits—Standard 4 |
| --- |
| 1. Proficiencies related to diversity that candidates are expected to develop |
| 2. Curriculum components that address diversity proficiencies (This might be a matrix that shows diversity components in required courses.) |
| 3. Assessment instruments, scoring guides, and data related to diversity (These assessments may be included in program review documents or the exhibits for Standard 1. Cross reference as appropriate.) |
| 4. Data table on faculty demographics |
| 5. Policies and practices for recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty |
| 6. Data table on student demographics |
| 7. Policies and practices for recruiting and retaining diverse candidates |
| 8. Data table on demographics of P-12 students in schools used for clinical practice |
| 9. Policies, practices, and/or procedures that facilitate candidate experiences with students from diverse groups |

**F.  Standard 5. Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance; they also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.**

1.  How does the unit ensure that its professional education faculty contributes to the preparation of effective educators? [maximum of three pages]

Members in the PEU possess advanced degrees in their area of expertise.  While the majority holds doctorates (73%), all faculty within the COE have relevant experience in P-12 settings (including clinical and adjunct faculty).   Several maintain currency in their Arkansas teaching license, and four have National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. School-based faculty possess a valid license in the relevant discipline, have at least three years of experience in their professional role, and, if applicable, have attained training required by the state for their roles as mentors/supervisors.  Each semester, candidates complete an evaluation of their course instructors.  The results of this feedback are included in the annual evaluations of faculty by department chairs, which also include the faculty member's development in research and service.  Information gleaned from these reports enables the College Administration Council (CAC) to prioritize faculty development opportunities supported through the college and/or department.

Professional development opportunities are provided on a continual basis through participation in a wide range of professional conferences at the state, regional, and national levels, as well as those available on campus through events sponsored by the College of Education and the university's Instructional Development Center.  As illustrated in course syllabi, faculty maintain currency on developments in the field and model effective pedagogy (including the integration of technology and a variety of instructional strategies) in their classes.  Course objectives and materials are reviewed and modified as warranted to ensure candidates engage in appropriate curriculum and experiences to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.  Revisions in the curriculum must be approved through formal proposals that must pass through the appropriate department faculty and Department Curriculum Committee, Department Chair, the appropriate College Curriculum and Assessment Committee, Dean, the Professional Education Council (PEC), University Undergraduate or Graduate Council, Council of Deans, and Provost.

In keeping with the unit's Conceptual Framework, faculty embed opportunities for reflective decision-making in each course and structured field experience in every program of study.  As discussed in Standard 4 above, faculty take seriously their responsibility to prepare candidates for their roles working with diverse student populations, and have integrated specific theories and strategies throughout the programs to prepare candidates to this end.  Likewise, the preparation of candidates to develop the technological literacy of their P-12 students is a prominent goal of the faculty in the PEU.  While other aspects of the Conceptual Framework are not necessarily integrated into each course, faculty have worked together to ensure programs develop in candidates the eight attributes integral to the Conceptual Framework—content knowledge, problem-solving, enhancing student achievement, assessment, technology, diversity,

collaboration, professionalism. The [Conceptual Framework is assessed](#) as part of the unit's assessment system.

Results of this assessment data, along with data from other programmatic assessments (including end-of-program, graduate, and employer surveys) are shared with all faculty at the end of each term. Faculty meet along with school-based faculty and program advisory boards to interpret data results and collectively make recommendations for program/unit improvement based on this information. With the integration of "efficacy" in the Conceptual Framework, the PEU has begun to focus more on their responsibility to develop appropriate dispositions of candidates preparing to work in P-12 schools. To an extent, this is established through the [Professional and Ethical Conduct Policy](#) adopted for the unit as a whole in 2010, as well as through rubrics designed specifically to assess candidates' dispositions pertinent to the roles for which they are preparing.

All members of the PEU engage in [scholarly activity](#), though the degree to which this occurs is dependent upon their assignment. Grant activity is on the rise, and involvement in [professional associations](#) is a trademark of in the PEU. In addition to the professional growth opportunities engaged in by PEU members each year, outreach and workshops and other education-related services are provided by the PEU to other entities at the local, state, and national levels. In keeping with the mission of a "teaching college," the number of peer-reviewed publications is exceeded by the number of professional presentations and service-oriented activities. The PEU at UCA is highly collaborative—as demonstrated in their multiple service endeavors in the public schools. They also function cohesively as a unit, with many engaging as part of a team in publications and presentations.

2. Please respond to 2a if this is the standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level. If it is **not** the standard on which you are moving to the standard level, respond to 2b.

   2a. Standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level [maximum of five pages]
   - Describe work undertaken to move to the Target Level
   - Discuss plans for continuing to improve

   2b. Continuous Improvement [maximum of three pages]
   - Briefly summarize the most significant changes related to Standard 5 that have led to continuous improvement. (If no significant changes related to this standard have occurred since the previous visit, indicate "None" in this section.)

Efforts related to Standard 5 have essentially remained stable since the previous NCATE visit. As the university has grown, so has the enrollment in education programs. In recent years the PEU has been able to convert several Visiting faculty positions to tenure track lines. This trend helps to assure continuity in faculty practices and consistency in program implementation. Other initiatives undertaken include the development of more specific criteria for [Tenure and Promotion](#) and for the attainment of [Graduate Faculty status](#). Both of these documents describe more clearly the expectations for tenure track faculty in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

In Fall 2009, the university moved to an online student evaluation process.  While this has presented challenges relative to return/participation rates by students, faculty are receiving results faster.  Thus, they are able to use this feedback from students to inform decisions for courses the following semester.  There have also been increased opportunities for technology training, and several members of the PEU have participated in multiple workshops funded by the COE on the Common Core standards (recently adopted by Arkansas) and assessment.

3.  Exhibit Links

| Exhibits—Standard 5 |
| --- |
| 1.  Data table on faculty qualifications |
| 2.  Licensure information on school faculty (e.g., cooperating teachers, internship supervisors) |
| 3.  Samples of faculty scholarly activities |
| 4.  Summary of service and collaborative activities engaged in by faculty with the professional community (e.g., grants, evaluations, task force participation, provision of professional development, offering courses, etc.) |
| 5.  Promotion and tenure policies and procedures |
| 6.  Samples of forms used in faculty evaluation and summaries of the results |
| 7.  Opportunities for professional development activities provided by the unit |

**G.  Standard 6. The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.**

1.  How does the unit's governance system and resources contribute to adequately preparing candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards?
    [maximum of three pages]

The Professional Education Unit (PEU) is the principal unifying structure for collaboration across all education faculty, and includes representatives from all university programs involved in the preparation of those seeking to work within the P-12 school setting.   The Professional Education Council (PEC) provides leadership for all professional education programs.   It initiates, receives, and develops recommendations on all policies, proceedings, and standards affecting professional education.  The PEC ensures that all professional education programs are organized, unified, and coordinated to allow fulfillment of the mission of the professional education unit; and that the professional education curricula are built upon knowledge bases essential for effective practice and upon the findings of research.

Within the PEU, deans, department chairs, program coordinators, program advisory committees, and the Professional Education Council (PEC) have specific but distinct responsibilities for curriculum and policy-making.  Narratives for Standards 1 and 2 above further describe the role of faculty and other members of the professional community regarding program design, revision, implementation, and evaluation of PEU programs.  The PEU currently has 85 full time faculty.  These include faculty and administrators representing programs in five colleges (College of

Education, College of Liberal Arts, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, College of Fine Arts and Communication, College of Health and Behavioral Sciences) as well as professional education candidates, public school P-12 representatives, and members of the community. The dean of the College of Education leads the PEU and provides university-wide coordination for all education programs.

Like many institutions across the nation, funding allocations to UCA have fluctuated in recent years making it essential to better direct available resources in the most efficient manner to meet the needs of the educational community. Funding for UCA comes primarily from state allocations, tuition, and student fees with some support from external funding sources. Planning, allocation, and expenditures of these financial resources occur with the college-based academic structure. While department chairs and directors monitor annual budget expenditures of their units, budgetary responsibilities for all academic programs primarily rest with the college dean. The COE dean holds the financial responsibility for programs and faculty housed within the college. The College of Education is comprised of three academic departments (Early Childhood and Special Education, Leadership Studies, and Teaching and Learning), and two service departments—Candidate Services and the Technology Learning Center. The financial oversight of content programs outside the COE and faculty members teaching in those programs is conducted by the deans of the respective colleges. As with COE departments, content department budgets cover teacher education faculty salary, as well as maintenance and operation support, professional development/travel, and technology and assessment needs of those faculty members. Budgets supporting the preparation of teachers and other school personnel have shown small and variable changes over the past five years. The budget within the PEU is adequate to support programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. It is difficult to make budgetary comparisons to other clinical programs at UCA given the variation in preparation levels. For instance, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech/Language Pathology are all graduate programs. Given the high demand of these areas, the resources allocated to their home departments are higher across the board, including faculty salaries, to be competitive on a national basis. Other clinical programs at UCA A closer review of the financial data further indicates equity and strong support for the College of Education. Complete budget information for all COE departments and units is available in the exhibits.

Professional development is supported in a variety of ways at both the institutional and unit levels. While a standard amount to support professional development activities per faculty member is not consistent across university departments, department chairs report allocations for professional travel, research, technology, and instructional materials are consistent. Provision of adequate office space, computers and printers, as well as access to clerical and research assistance through office administrative assistants and graduate assistants are additional means of supporting the work of faculty members. UCA also maintains opportunities for faculty to access additional financial assistance through internal grants funded through the UCA Research Council, UCA Foundation, and the Instructional Development Center.

While limited faculty members have sought sabbatical leave as a source of support for professional activities over the years, application for a sabbatical award is an option for tenured faculty members. In addition to supporting faculty efforts and productivity, the COE has a strong history of championing student success through the support of financial assistance and

scholarships.   Availability of scholarships for both undergraduate and graduate candidates has increasingly become an area of focus.  In addition to Academic Achievement scholarships, Transfer scholarships, and minority recruitment grants, candidates have access to scholarships specific to ART education, World Languages, early childhood education, middle school education, and special education.  Further, candidates in all advanced programs are eligible for the Graduate Study Incentive Program.

Unit policies and practices provide the necessary structure for the unit to meet and/or exceed expectations.  Supervision of clinical practice stays within the guidelines stipulated by NCATE.  In the initial licensure programs, supervision of four interns is the equivalent of a 3-credit course.  Supervision of candidates in advanced programs utilize similar formulas.   For example, in the Library Media program, six interns equate to one three-credit course.  Undergraduate-only faculty teaching assignments are typically 12 hours per semester and for 9 hours per semester for graduate-only faculty.  The Faculty Handbook identifies four factors that can be used to adjust the undergraduate teaching load of a faculty member: administrative duties, director of student co-curricular activities, reassigned time for research and professional development activities or special assigned duties and graduate teaching assignment.  These polices, administered at the departmental level with appropriate approvals for modifications, help create an environment that allows individual faculty members to be engaged in teaching, scholarship, assessment, advisement, collaborative work with P-12 agencies and service.  Within the College of Education, program coordination may further reduce faculty teaching loads.

Enrollment in professional education courses generally does not exceed 20 candidates for post-admission courses, or 30 for preadmission courses.  Graduate courses typically do not exceed 22 students.  Online-course size is also governed by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education's expectation of 20 students as maximum enrollment.  Department chairs work with individual faculty to verify load assignments each semester, and faculty with overloads are provided extra compensation.   Faculty members report their loads each semester via the Faculty Instructional Activity Schedule that is signed by the department chair before moving forward to other levels.

Program staffing is achieved via full-time and part-time faculty.  Every program has a Program Coordinator and a core group of permanent faculty who assume responsibility for program coherence.  In the COE, program coordinators receive three to six hours of reassigned time per year or other compensation to provide leadership in the areas of orientation for part-time faculty and new students, assessment, and recruitment.  Program coherence and integrity are enhanced through long-term involvement of many part-time faculty that teach the same course across semesters.   Programs based outside the College of Education, depending upon program size, employ similar arrangements.

Academic departments are all assigned an administrative assistant.  In the College of Education, two departments have two administrative assistants.  These support personnel assist with general administrative office functions, helping with the scheduling of rooms and courses, budget oversight, travel requests, departmental records and interface with other campus offices and units.  All departments in the College of Education and most departments within the PEU have graduate assistants that provide additional support.

In addition to support personnel located within academic departments, the PEU is supported by other personnel.  The Office of Candidate Services and Field Experiences coordinates admission to the teacher education program, eligibility and placement for internships, and placements for early field experiences.  The OCSFE is staffed by one 12-month professional employee (Director) and two nine-month professional employees—the Field Experience Director and Coordinator of Internship II.  It also has two administrative assistants and work-study students to facilitate their work.

The Technology Learning Center is available to support teacher education programs.   Its mission is to provide a climate conducive to individual and group inquiry, research, and study.  This facility includes a drop-in computer lab that may also be reserved for technology training or class sessions.  The computer lab houses 33 PCs and 7 MACs.  The main resource room houses copiers, laminators, Ellison cutters, poster printers, spiral binders, educational resources, curriculum materials, and serves as a study/group work common area.  The Center is staffed by two professional technology employees on 12-month contracts, an administrative assistant and a combination of work-study students and graduate assistants.  The professional staff members provide technical support for faculty and students who need assistance with software programs or other technology.   They also provide support for the unit assessment system.

The Office of the Dean includes three professional employees, two full-time (Dean and Assistant Dean) and one half-time.  The Assistant Dean's role is accreditation support and general administrative duties assigned by the dean.  The half-time position is the Accreditation and Assessment Coordinator (NCATE Coordinator).  This position provides assistance for all PEU programs, including technical assistance and training programs.  The Office of the Dean has two administrative assistants, work-study students, and graduate assistants to help with the work load for both the PEU and College of Education.  The College of Education also has a professional member of the staff assigned half-time to the Academic Advising Center (AAC) to work with new students (mostly freshmen) who have not yet been assigned an advisor in the College of Education or admitted to the teacher education program.   Similar positions exist for other colleges that are part of the PEU.

Resources and opportunities for professional development are managed primarily at the departmental level with some support through other offices.  The university sponsors a series of workshops/training sessions through the Office of University Training that keep all employees abreast of trends in diversity and employee responsibilities.  The Sponsored Programs Office provides assistance for faculty who are writing proposals or have been awarded grants.  The Instructional Development Center offers professional development opportunities throughout the year for all UCA faculty on topics ranging from preparing tenure and promotion documents to improving classroom instruction.   PEU faculty members are active participants in these institutional opportunities.

Departments assume the primary responsibility for supporting faculty with funds for professional travel and development.  Travel support in recent years has been inconsistent primarily because of institutional budget issues.  However, even in years where travel support was included in base budgets, departments were funded for less than $500 per faculty member.   Although

departments were not funded for this type of travel in FY2010, chairs could reallocate money from their own M&O budgets to provide funds.  FY2011 funds were allocated to departments based upon growth in summer school revenue.  The funding amounts across academic departments were highly variable.  Within the College of Education, the Dean and Chairs have expressed a goal of sufficient funds to allow faculty members to attend a national and a regional/state conference and/or appropriate professional development that supports the faculty member's research, service or instructional role within the college.

UCA's Department of Instructional Technology (IT) provides technical assistance in the utilization of various technologies as well as support for faculty and students engaged in on-line courses.  IT provides a variety of services to the UCA campus, including Audio/Visual, Distance Education, Desktop Support, Networking, Programming and Business Applications.  The Distance Education division provides distance education support for the students, staff and faculty of UCA.  Services available include the Blackboard online learning system, the Course Studio product from SunGard as well as four video teleconferencing rooms across campus.  The Desktop Support division provides call-in and walk-in helpdesk services, depot services, receiving, setup and distribution of new computers.  This division also provides onsite technical support to campus members and support for various computer labs across campus.  The Networking Division provides many campus-wide services such as file sharing, multiple email services, server and application hosting, various Internet services, network printing, VPN services, security, network infrastructure, wireless networking, data backup, account maintenance and server management.  The Programming Division maintains our business applications and supports system users with modifications required for their particular department needs.  The Business Applications division includes database management, automated test scanning, content management for the university web pages as well as the MyUCA portal that provides an interface to the business applications to students and employees.

The university library's (Torreyson) mission is to be the center of intellectual life for the University of Central Arkansas community.  The library has more than 410,952 book holdings, over 1.2 million print and non-print items,  more than 331,000 monograph titles, and more than 432,000 monograph volumes.  The Torreyson Library collection also includes over 53,000 government documents, 620,000 units of microform, 500 journal subscriptions in print format, 37,000 journal subscriptions in e-format, and 25,000 music titles.  Faculty librarians staff the Reference Desk during all open hours—95.5 hours each week.  The Library's "Night Owl Study," also staffed, is open Sunday through Thursday from midnight until 7 A.M.

Assessment is a priority at the University of Central Arkansas; therefore, institutional and unit resources are dedicated for this important initiative.   The University of Central Arkansas is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) as a bachelor's, master's, specialist's, and doctoral degree granting institution and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.  To support the Unit's Assessment System, the College of Education employs an assessment director (Dr. Lisa Daniels) and utilizes the Chalk and Wire electronic portfolio and data collection system.  Finally, the unit employs several graduate assistants during the academic year to assist in data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

The College of Education consists of three departments:  Early Childhood and Special Education, Leadership Studies, and Teaching and Learning.  The Department of Leadership Studies was moved to the College of Education July 1, 2006.  Since its creation, the department has acquired programs previously in other departments—school counseling, library media, and instructional technology.  Also, the Department of Teaching and Learning has undergone two changes since the last visit.  At that time it was the Department of Middle/Secondary Education and Instructional Technologies (MSIT), and then transitioned to the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Technology (TLT).  In January 2010, the COE underwent some reorganization, and the Library Media (LIBM) and Instructional Technology (ITEC) programs moved to the department of Leadership Studies from the TLT department, whose name was revised at that time to the Department of Teaching and Learning.  Additionally, during the last visit, the Department of Psychology was part of the College of Education.  It has since been moved to the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences.

The College of Education has been under the leadership of six deans since the last visit.  When Dr. Jane McHaney left UCA, Dr. David Skotko served as Interim Dean for one year until Dr. Larry Robinson assumed the deanship in Fall 2006, then left in Fall 2007 to take a position as Associate Provost at another institution.   Dr. Patricia Phelps (professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning) was appointed Interim Dean from October 2007 to June 2008, at which time Dr. Kathleen Atkins (chair, Department of Early Childhood and Special Education) began a one year term as Interim Dean.  After a successful national search, Dr. Diana Pounder was hired as Dean for the COE, effective July 2009.  From February, 2006 to Fall 2009, Dr. Terry James served as interim chair for the department of Leadership Studies; and was permanently assigned to the position in July, 2009.  Lastly, Dr. Cheryl Wiedmaier chaired the Department of Teaching and Learning from Summer 2007 to Summer 2010 when Dr. Tammy Benson was appointed chair.

3. Exhibit Links

| Exhibits—Standard 6 |
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| 1. Policies on governance and operations of the unit |
| 2. Organizational chart or description of the unit governance structure |
| 3. Unit policies on student services such as counseling and advising |
| 4. Recruiting and admission policies for candidates |

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| 5. | Academic calendars, catalogs, unit publications, grading policies, and unit advertising |
| 6. | Unit budget, with provisions for assessment, technology, and professional development |
| 7. | Budgets of comparable units with clinical components on campus or similar units at other campuses |
| 8. | Faculty workload policies |
| 9. | Summary of faculty workloads |
| 10. | List of facilities, including computer labs and curriculum resource centers |
| 11. | Description of library resources |
| 12. | Description of resources for distance learning, if applicable |