

INSTITUTIONAL REPORT: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OPTION

For Continuing Accreditation Visits in Fall 2012 and Beyond
Updated February 2011



***“Becoming teachers who teach boldly
in a changing world
through an ethic of care and critical reflection.”***

**Eastern Mennonite University
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Overview and Conceptual Framework

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

Eastern Mennonite University was founded in 1917 by the Mennonite Church, one of the historic “peace churches.” In response to the warring world around it, the Mennonite Church established Eastern Mennonite School, a Bible academy, to provide men and women of the Mennonite Church an opportunity to deepen their faith, examine God’s call to peacebuilding, study liberal arts, and gain specific skills in the professions of teaching, medicine, nursing, and social work. EMU initially received accreditation by the Virginia Board of Education in 1930 as a junior college, and was fully accredited as a four-year college in 1947. Willis Johnson, a local African American enrolled in 1948, making EMU one of the first Southern universities to admit a black student. After the addition of the Eastern Mennonite Seminary in 1965 and the Master of Arts (M.A.) in counseling in 1993, the institution changed from Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary to Eastern Mennonite University. Masters programs in conflict transformation, education, business administration, biomedicine, and nursing were added since 1993. Engagement with the world through service and study was, and remains today, central to the core beliefs of the school. Over the years EMU has grown from a small Bible academy into a fully accredited university with approximately 1,500 students enrolled in 35 undergraduate programs, three seminary and six graduate programs.

I.2 What is the institution's mission?

EMU is rooted in the Christian faith and its scriptures as they have been interpreted and lived out in a unique Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. The [mission statement](#) encompasses identity, mission, vision, and shared values:

Identity - *A leader among faith-based universities, Eastern Mennonite University emphasizes peacebuilding, creation care, experiential learning, and cross-cultural engagement. Founded in 1917 in Harrisonburg, Virginia, EMU is an educational institution of Mennonite Church USA. EMU serves students of diverse religious and cultural backgrounds and confers undergraduate, graduate, and seminary degrees.*

Mission - *EMU educates students to serve and lead in a global context. Our Christian community challenges students to pursue their life calling through scholarly inquiry, artistic creation, guided practice, and life-changing cross-cultural encounter. We invite each person to follow Christ's call to bear witness to faith, serve with compassion, and walk boldly in the way of nonviolence and peace.*

Vision - *EMU envisions a learning community marked by academic excellence, creative process, professional competence, and passionate Christian faith, offering healing and hope in our diverse world. To this end, we commit ourselves to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.*

Shared Values - *EMU embodies the enduring values of the Anabaptist tradition: Christian discipleship, community, service, and peacebuilding. Together we worship God, seek truth, and care for God's creation.*

I.3 What is the professional education unit at your institution, what is its relationship to other units at the institution that are involved in the preparation of professional educators, and what are the significant changes since the last NCATE review?

Eastern Mennonite University maintains a long history of excellence in teacher education and has been accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) since 1970. The professional education unit, known as the Education Department, is responsible for all initial licensure and advanced teacher education programs. The unit offers 16 [undergraduate initial licensure programs](#) and one add-on endorsement in five areas: early/primary education (PreK-3), elementary education (PreK-6), special education (K-12), and secondary education (6-12 and PreK-12) that lead to liberal arts or content area degrees with teacher licensure per the requirements of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Master of Arts in Education program on the main campus and on a site in Lancaster, Pennsylvania offers advanced study for teacher practitioners providing opportunities for professional growth and personal development through coursework and action research. Initial licensure in the master's program is available in teaching English as a second language (TESL) in [Harrisonburg](#) in addition to the reading specialist advanced licensure program, and five advanced programs. At [EMU Lancaster](#) the unit offers five advanced programs, four certificate programs, and one internal certificate ([Exhibit I.5.a.5](#)). All licensure programs are approved by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), and certificate programs at EMU Lancaster are approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Presently, there are no online undergraduate courses; there are seven online graduate courses taken as program requirements or electives.

The unit includes 45 full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty who teach both undergraduate and graduate courses and collaborate with faculty from other university departments and part-time adjuncts to serve 139 undergraduate students at various stages of exploration, enrollment, and supervised practice. The Master of Arts in Education serves 149 candidates: 55 candidates are enrolled through the main campus in Harrisonburg and 94 candidates are enrolled with the EMU site in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Another 200+ inservice teachers enroll in advanced courses for professional enhancement throughout the year.

The 2010 [NCATE/Virginia Partnership Protocol For NCATE and State Reviews](#) recognizes the alignment of state teacher education standards with NCATE and specialized professional association (SPA) standards, and makes submission of program reports optional in Virginia. Based on concern for faculty workload, the unit decided to discontinue the submission of 10 out of 11 SPA reports and currently maintains national recognition with only the Council for Exception Children (CEC). The unit continues to align programs with SPA standards ([Exhibits 1.3.c.1; 1.3.c.2](#)). Professional education programs in Virginia follow a state review process of biennial reporting of seven accountability measures and program alignment with endorsement area competencies ([Exhibits 1.3.a.1; 1.3.a.2; 1.3.a.3; 1.3.a.4; 1.3.a.5](#)). The unit currently holds “approved” status for all endorsement areas ([Exhibit 1.3.a.6](#)).

Since the last review, the initial program discontinued French, German, and physics programs. Computer science and teaching English as a second language endorsements changed from add-on to full initial licensure endorsements. The advanced program discontinued M.A. degrees in school counseling and initial licensure in special education. A restorative practices advanced program is in the research and development phase. At EMU Lancaster, certificates in reading specialist, TESL, school nurse, and instructional coach recently received approval from PDE and have been added to advanced offerings ([Exhibits 1.3.a.7; 1.3.a.8](#)).

- I.4 Summarize basic tenets of the conceptual framework, institutional standards and candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions as well as significant changes made to the conceptual framework since the last NCATE review?

The mission of the teacher education program is to prepare competent, caring, reflective practitioners who advocate for children and youth, develop caring learning environments, initiate and respond creatively to change, value service to others, and teach boldly in a changing world through an ethic of care and critical reflection. The teacher education program envisions preparing informed lifelong leaders and learners who value the dignity of all persons and are ready and willing to share a pilgrimage of openness and continuous growth as they invite others to join them. These reflective educators will offer healing and hope in a diverse world. The program employs the following phrase as our vision for preparing future teachers and for our professional activities: “Becoming teachers who teach boldly in a changing world through an ethic of care and critical reflection.”

Critical elements of the unit’s teacher education [conceptual framework](#) attend to our vision that teaching and learning in all school contexts should involve an ethic of care, constructivist understandings of learning, reflective practice, and attention to the expanding literacies for the 21st century. Each of these tenets shares a commitment to peacebuilding, advocacy, and equity for all learners, and involves a concern that future teachers observe and interact critically with the complexities of teaching, learning and school communities. Informed by these conceptual tenets, the program is designed to foster [professional dispositions](#) that value and demonstrate responsibility, relationship, scholarship and inquiry, and reflective action. Teacher education candidates are guided to achieve institutional standards, known as [teacher education outcomes](#):

- Scholarship: to acquire knowledge through the liberal arts, Core General Education Curriculum and specialty area studies and to organize and integrate that knowledge across disciplines and cultures.
- Inquiry: to generate questions and to use critical thinking to self-assess, to view problems collaboratively and from multiple perspectives, and to make informed, research-based decisions to enhance student learning.
- Professional Knowledge: to demonstrate pedagogical and professional knowledge in order to create, manage, and assess diverse environments conducive to learning and setting high expectations.
- Communication: to acquire and use knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and technological communication strategies to support student learning, to solve problems, and to create peaceable climates.
- Caring: to develop a nurturing spirit that honors diversity, advocates for students, integrates Christian faith and ethics, and promotes peacebuilding in diverse settings.
- Leadership: demonstrate high aspirations for themselves and their profession and to influence positive change in educational settings.

Employing the conceptual framework as both a guiding frame and a dynamic discussion of our teacher education goals and purposes, the unit has significantly revised this document since the last NCATE review. The revisions focused on increasing the ways in which our program provides support for future teachers who will foster positive, relational teaching and learning within current school structures and climates while also looking beyond current settings for opportunities to improve learning, increase equity, and enact positive change.

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.

- 1.1 What do candidate assessment data tell the unit about candidates' meeting professional, state, and institutional standards and their impact on P-12 student learning? For programs not nationally/state reviewed, summarize data from key assessments and discuss these results.

Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates

The alignment of professional, state, and institutional standards with unit assessments is delineated in crosswalk documents (Exhibits [1.3.c.1](#); [1.3.c.2](#)). Candidates in initial and advanced programs demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the content they plan to teach as measured by grade point average (GPA), Praxis II, Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE) (formerly the Virginia Reading Assessment, VRA) for early/primary, elementary, special education, and advanced licensure reading specialist candidates, and student teaching evaluations for all initial licensure candidates. Initial candidates exceed the 2.5 GPA required for admission to teacher education and the 2.7 required for admission to student teaching. Over 43% achieve above 3.6 upon exit from program ([Exhibit 1.3.d.1](#)). Candidates achieve a 100% pass rate on Praxis II with 27% scoring in the upper quartile to achieve the Educational Testing Service (ETS) recognition of excellence in the last two years ([Exhibit 1.3.d.2](#)). Data from the RVE examination show a 100% pass rate for all program completers in both initial and advanced programs (Exhibit [1.3.d.3](#); [1.3.a.1](#)). The [assessment of student teaching](#) shows excellent content knowledge in all program areas with average scores of 4.45 to 4.65 on a 5-point scale ([Exhibit 1.3.d.4](#)).

Advanced candidates demonstrate content knowledge with evidence of a teaching license in the content that they teach, and one year of teaching experience prior to admission to the literacy agent and curriculum and instruction practitioner programs. Candidates exceed the 3.0 GPA required for admission to program, candidacy and exit ([Exhibit 1.3.d.5](#)). Candidates in initial and advanced programs know their content and are successful in their employment as evidenced in employer satisfaction surveys (Exhibits [1.3.i.1](#); [1.3.i.2](#); [1.3.i.3](#); [1.3.i.4](#); [1.3.i.5](#); [1.3.i.6](#)).

Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Skills For Teacher Candidates

Candidates in initial licensure programs are taught the necessary pedagogical content knowledge and skills. Pedagogy [courses](#) aligned with professional, state, and institutional standards provide a broad range of technology and instructional strategies to help all students learn ([Exhibit 5.3.b.4](#)). During practica and student teaching, initial candidates are evaluated on their ability to plan and present content in clear and meaningful ways through the use of appropriate instructional strategies and technologies that promote student learning. In the [assessment of student teaching](#) candidates achieve an average score of 4.44 or higher on a 5-point scale in the areas of pedagogical content and professional knowledge and skills ([Exhibit 1.3.d.6](#)).

Advanced candidates show in-depth understanding of the content of their field and the theories related to pedagogy and learning through key assessments derived from core courses: EDCC 501 Creating Cultures of Change: Constructivist Environments (Exhibit [1.3.c.3](#); [1.3.d.7](#)); EDCC 521 Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution (Exhibit [1.3.c.4](#); [1.3.d.8](#)); EDCC 531 Social and Ethical Issues (Exhibit [1.3.c.5](#); [1.3.d.9](#)); and EDPC 611 Action Research Project (Exhibit [1.3.c.6](#);

[1.3.d.10](#); [1.3.d.11](#)). Key assessments require advanced candidates to apply and explain pedagogical theories in the selection and use of a broad range of instructional strategies and technologies that promote student learning.

Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills For Teacher Candidates

Initial candidates apply the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills of professional, state, and institutional standards to facilitate student learning. Candidates consider the school, family, and community contexts in which they work as they plan meaningful learning experiences that support the student's prior knowledge, and are assessed on their performance in the [assessment of student learning](#) ([Exhibit 1.3.d.6](#)). Initial candidates develop a philosophy of education for admission to program and exit portfolios that reflects their understanding of major schools of thought about schooling, teaching and learning and exceed the program requirement of 2.0 on a scale from 1 to 3 with an average score of 2.6 or higher over the past two years ([Exhibit 1.3.c.7](#); [1.3.d.12](#)). In ED 201 Computers and Instructional Technology in Education, candidates prepare a caregiver communication letter to demonstrate the importance of building a relationship between the school, family, and community. Revisited during student teaching, mastery learning is required until a score of 2.0 or higher is achieved on a scale from 1 to 3 ([Exhibit 1.3.c.8](#); [1.3.d.13](#)). Initial candidates analyze and apply research theory to practice in multiple ways and reflect critically on their role in the classroom to create meaningful learning opportunities for students. Integrated in multiple methods courses, candidates create lesson plans that highlight their ability to plan instruction to meet the needs of each student. Through a cycle of revision, candidates must achieve a score of at least 2.0 on each of four criteria in at least one of the two lesson plan evaluations for admission to student teaching ([Exhibit 1.3.c.9](#); [1.3.d.14](#)).

In each advanced concentration, a key assessment evaluates candidates on their ability to apply professional and pedagogical knowledge in order to provide positive learning environments for student learning. Candidates reflect on their own practices as well as current research and policies, and evaluate the relationship between policies, research and their instructional decisions ([Exhibit 1.3.c.10](#); [1.3.d.15](#); [1.3.c.11](#); [1.3.d.16](#); [1.3.c.12](#); [1.3.d.17](#)). Advanced candidates engage in action research that requires them to analyze educational research and incorporate the implications of research into their teaching practice ([Exhibit 1.3.c.6](#); [1.3.d.10](#); [1.3.d.11](#)). Candidates reflect upon their impact on P-12 learning and the interconnectedness among the school, family, and community to create meaningful learning experiences for all students.

Initial and advanced candidates recognize the supportive role of professional communities through participation in the Student Education Association, Assistive Technology Club, [Teachers of Promise](#), the [Shenandoah Valley Reading Council](#), and other professional associations.

Student Learning for Teacher Candidates

Candidates in initial and advanced programs intentionally focus on their actions through a process that allows candidates to evaluate student learning and adjust their teaching practices to meet the needs of their students. The documentation of student learning (DOSL) measures initial candidates' ability to impact student learning ([Exhibit 1.3.c.13](#)). During student teaching, candidates analyze the context, content, delivery, and assessment of their teaching in five consecutive lessons. They collect and analyze data from student learning samples to determine the impact of their teaching on student learning. Through a cycle of reflection, candidates revise

lesson plans to improve student achievement and instructional approaches that meet the needs of all learners. Revision of candidate work is expected until mastery learning has been achieved. Candidates demonstrate their ability to effectively plan, teach, assess, and monitor student progress with an average disaggregated score of 2.25 to 2.80 on a 3-point scale over the past two years, a score that exceeds the unit requirement of 2.0 ([Exhibit 1.3.d.18](#)). The [assessment of student teaching](#) provides evidence of candidates' ability to document student learning and to accurately describe the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching in relation to student learning ([Exhibit 1.3.d.19](#)). Average scores ranging from 4.27 to 4.74 on a 5-point scale affirm candidates' ability to integrate reflective practice into their own teaching.

Advanced candidates complete an assessment of student learning assignment in EDCC 501 Creating Cultures of Change: Constructivist Environments ([Exhibit 1.3.c.3](#)) that provides opportunity to implement an assessment-reflection-instruction cycle to analyze student learning. Candidates focus on an assessment activity, collect and analyze performance data, and make data-driven decisions about strategies for teaching and learning so that each student can learn. Data results show that candidates in EDCC 501 ([Exhibit 1.3.d.7](#)) and in the EDPC 611 Action Research Project ([Exhibit 1.3.d.11](#)) understand and apply theories related to assessing student learning in their practice.

Knowledge and Skills and Student Learning for Other School Professionals

As demonstration of content knowledge and skills, 100% of reading specialist candidates achieve a passing score on the RVE/VRA licensure exams ([Exhibit 1.3.a.1](#)). Pedagogical content knowledge is demonstrated through a case study key assessment in EDLA 511 Literacy Assessment in which candidates collect data from literacy assessments and use the data to plan a comprehensive program of instruction to enhance student literacy skills. Candidates achieve at the Exemplary level in every component in this assessment ([Exhibit 1.3.c.11](#); [1.3.d.16](#)). In EDLA 531 Literacy in the Family Arena, candidates examine their role as advocates for promoting literacy in community, family, and workplace literacy environments ([Exhibit 1.5.b.2](#)).

Professional Dispositions for All Candidates

[Dispositions](#) are an integral dimension of the unit's conceptual framework and candidate development throughout program. Conceptual framework themes, particularly an ethic of care and reflection, inform four categories: responsibility, relationships, scholarship and inquiry, and reflective action with nineteen observable behaviors derived from attitudes, values, and beliefs. Ideas of fairness and the belief that each student can learn are translated into observable and measurable behaviors. Initial candidates complete a dispositions self-assessment in ED 101 Exploring Teaching, and again in their admission to program and exit portfolios ([Exhibit 1.3.e.1](#)). Unit and P-12 faculty assess candidate dispositions on practica evaluations ([Exhibit 1.3.e.2](#); [1.3.f.1](#)), admission to program and student teaching recommendations ([Exhibit 1.3.e.3](#); [1.3.f.2](#); [1.3.f.3](#)), and on the assessment of student teaching ([Exhibit 1.3.f.4](#)). In practica, candidates must achieve an Acceptable score in Section E: Professionalism for each criterion on at least one of two evaluations for admission to student teaching. At any point in program, a professor or advisor may elect to complete a student growth plan with the candidate to address dispositional concerns ([Exhibit 1.3.e.4](#)). At the advanced level, dispositions are measured in admission to program and candidacy recommendations ([Exhibit 1.3.e.5](#); [1.3.e.6](#); [1.3.f.5](#); [1.3.f.6](#)).

1.2.b Continuous Improvement

- Summarize activities and changes based on data that have led to continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.
- Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in unit Standard 1.

Continuous Improvement

The Education Department faculty provide strong leadership for the vision and work of the larger professional education unit. Conversations about teaching and learning permeate our professional life together and frequently center on candidate performance and program quality. Proximity of faculty offices generates rich sharing to improve pedagogy or program, mentor a struggling student teacher or practicum candidate, or engage practitioner-based research questions. A collegial spirit within the Education Department, university, and P-12 school community enables us to work collectively toward continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.

From 2007-2009, unit faculty collaboratively aligned all initial and advanced licensure course objectives with state matrix competencies required by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) regulations for program approval. This process allowed faculty to articulate the pedagogical content knowledge and skills required of candidates, and to identify specific course content that develops candidates' knowledge and skills. In 2008, the unit discontinued initial licensure programs in PreK-12 French and PreK-12 German, initial licensure at the advanced level in special education, and advanced licensure in PreK-12 school counseling due to discontinued majors and/or declining enrollments in these programs. In 2009, computer science and teaching English as a second language endorsements changed from add-on to full initial licensure endorsements. A restorative justice advanced program is in the research and development phase. In 2011-12, the Master of Arts in Education program at Lancaster received approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for reading specialist, TESL, school nurse, and instructional coach certificates.

Since submission of specialized professional association (SPA) reports for program approval became optional in Virginia in 2010, the unit decided to discontinue submission of program reports, with the exception of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), in part to address an area of improvement cited in the 2005 review pertaining to heavy faculty workloads. The unit continues to align professional standards of SPAs with state and institutional standards to prepare candidates with the content knowledge to become recognized experts in the content they teach.

The unit maintains a history of candidate success on state licensure examinations as a measurement of content knowledge. Unit faculty use examination results to revise curriculum in areas where candidate scores are weakest. Although Virginia does not require Praxis II for licensure in special education, computer science, and theater, the unit added these tests as a measure of candidate content knowledge. In fall 2012, a change in the administration of the RVE examination created scheduling conflicts with the Praxis II exam for PreK-3, PreK-6, and special education candidates. The unit adjusted the test date requirements for admission to student teaching to ensure content preparedness of candidates taking these exams.

In 2010, state testing requirements changed to allow candidates to satisfy the basic skill assessment for admission to teacher education with a Praxis I math passing score and Virginia and Communication Assessment (VCLA). Although the unit did not initially support this apparent lowering of admission standards, this change has allowed some candidates admission to teacher education that had previously been denied. The first candidate to benefit from this change was a candidate of racial diversity, and several other candidates have since been admitted to teacher education who would not have previously met admission requirements.

In fall 2012, candidate dispositions were revised in order to align more closely with our revised conceptual framework. Admission to teacher education and student teaching recommendation forms were also revised based on feedback from a focus group study that recommended a more user-friendly instrument for use by external referees. The revised recommendation form includes quantitative assessment in addition to qualitative feedback pertaining to any Unacceptable ratings. The Teacher Education Admissions Committee (TEAC) reviews all Unacceptable ratings and qualitative comments. If the rating requires further attention, TEAC will take formal action to deny or defer admission until the candidate has developed a student growth plan ([Exhibit 2.3.c.6](#)) with the advisor to address areas of concern.

In order to ensure competencies in effective lesson planning and dispositions for admission to student teaching, the unit created two assessment tools to evaluate candidate performance: (1) a lesson plan assessment and rubric which requires mastery in planning instruction, assessment, and differentiation to meet the needs of all learners, and (2) a practicum evaluation which evaluates the candidate's proficiencies in professional behaviors during early field experiences.

At the advanced level, EDCC 551 Action Research in Educational Settings course evaluations in Lancaster suggested that a section of the course be moved to fall semester to allow for continuity in spring when candidates conduct their action research studies. In Harrisonburg, when class size swelled, an assistant was hired to provide editorial feedback on research study drafts. In Lancaster, an instructor was added due to large class size to decrease the teacher to candidate ratio. Based on course evaluation data, the action research presentation is now included in the final action research project rubric.

In 2011, the number of administrators responding to the alumni/employer survey was too few to fairly evaluate the data. Feedback from P-12 representatives on the Committee on Teacher Education suggested early spring distribution of the survey. In 2012, the first and fifth year alumni/employer survey was distributed in March and administrative responses increased. The unit will continue with annual distribution of the survey in March.

Areas for Improvement Cited from the Previous Accreditation Review

Standard 1. Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

The unit does not provide sufficient evidence of candidates' capacity to assess student learning.

To address the area for improvement, the unit has become more intentional in building capacity within candidates to enhance the individual learning of each student. The intentionality of our focus on student learning is evident in multiple aspects of our work as teacher educators. At the time of the 2005 review, the use of an electronic portfolio system was relatively new to the unit,

and we had not fully realized how to best use data for the purpose of analyzing candidate impact on student learning. The establishment of a schedule for data review and the data use report form ([Exhibit 2.3.d.2](#)) have systematized data management, and unit faculty are better able to collect, analyze, and incorporate evidence of candidates' capacity to assess student learning for program improvement. Since 2005, the unit implemented a cut-off score of 2.0 in every element of the DOSL assignment, requiring candidates to achieve mastery learning. Currently, disaggregated program data show that candidates are achieving average scores of 2.25 to 2.80 on a 3-point scale, which exceeds the unit's cut-off score requirement of 2.0. Data shows that candidates are improving in their impact on student learning since the 2005 review ([Exhibit 1.3.d.18](#)).

Early DOSL data results indicated that candidates were not performing as highly as the unit hoped in areas of differentiation and assessment. A process of revising the conceptual framework gave unit faculty opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation about our mission and beliefs that each student can learn. A conceptual framework created by current faculty has renewed and inspired reflection on our own instructional and assessment practices as teacher educators that are consistent with an ethic of care, constructivism, reflective practice, and expanding literacies. Department faculty are currently backwards-mapping the DOSL requirements to ensure that curriculum adequately prepares candidates to assess and positively impact student learning.

The intentionality of our focus on student learning inspired revision to professional studies coursework, beginning in the first education course, ED 101 Exploring Teaching, in which candidates reflect on their ability to plan for and assess student learning when teaching a mini-lesson. In their methods instruction, faculty explicitly articulate practices in planning, assessing, and reflecting on candidate learning, and model multiple types of instruction and assessments that candidates can use when teaching P-12 learners. A new course, Management and Assessment, has been added to the health and physical education program requirements to teach candidates to effectively assess and manage student learning in physical activity settings.

Practica and student teaching requirements are more focused on the data and analysis of student learning, and the adjustments teachers make to improve student learning. University consultants and cooperating teachers are oriented to the DOSL requirements so they can promote reflection on student learning during student teaching. Candidates reflect on their impact on student learning during their student teaching seminar. The unit's emphasis on candidates' capacity to assess student learning using formative and summative assessments is preparing our candidates for the teacher performance assessments they will face as future teachers.

At the advanced level, key assessments that provide evidence of candidates' capacity to measure and improve P-12 student learning are found in EDCC 501 Creating Cultures of Change: Constructivist Environments, EDLA 511 Literacy Assessment, and EDPC 611 Action Research Project ([Exhibits 1.3.d.7](#); [1.3.d.16](#); [1.3.d.10](#); [1.3.d.11](#)). A key assessment to ensure candidates' ability to assess student learning was recently revised and piloted in the Harrisonburg course, EDCC 501 Creating Cultures of Change: Constructivist Environments. Since the course is taught in the summer schedule at EMU Lancaster, full implementation has not been achieved there. Key assessment data continue to be taken using the constructivist project rubric. Any assessment of student learning data will need to be located in a course that is taught during the school year. This challenge is under consideration at this time.

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.

- 2.1 How does the unit use its assessment system to improve candidate performance, program quality and unit operations?

Assessment System

The unit assessment system (UAS) ([Exhibit 2.3.a.1](#)) was created in 2000-01 and has been regularly evaluated and refined by the unit and the professional community including P-12 partners on the Committee on Teacher Education (COTE), the Assessment Committee, and consultants and professionals from other NCATE institutions of higher education. The assessment of candidate performance, program effectiveness and unit operation requires a coordinated and comprehensive system that is currently given oversight by the Assessment Committee ([Exhibit 2.3.d.3](#)). The UAS reflects the six outcomes of the conceptual framework and professional/state standards at both the initial ([Exhibit 2.3.a.4](#)) and advanced levels ([Exhibit 2.3.a.5](#)) to ensure the alignment of instruction and curriculum with institutional, professional and state standards. Thus, the UAS includes comprehensive and integrated assessments ([Exhibits 2.3.a.2; 2.3.a.3](#)) that measure candidate performance, program/unit effectiveness and operations, as well as the effectiveness of the UAS itself.

The UAS uses multiple measures to assess candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions at both the initial and advanced levels ([Exhibit 1.3.c](#)). The [Teacher Education Admissions Committee \(TEAC\)](#) uses data from multiple measures, such as course grades, interviews, GPA, state licensure examination scores, lesson plan and practicum evaluations, dispositional measures, portfolio assignments, and field experience/student teaching performance evaluations conducted by university consultants, practica supervisors, clinical faculty and cooperating teachers, to make decisions at the key transition points of admission to program, admission to student teaching, admission to M.A. candidacy, and at program completion ([Exhibits 2.3.b.1; 2.3.b.2](#)).

According to the schedule of data review ([Exhibit 2.3.d.2](#)), the unit also aggregates data that measure candidates' knowledge, skills and dispositions at the program and unit levels, annually in May, to effectively manage and improve the unit and its programs. The unit has taken effective steps to eliminate bias and establish fairness and accuracy. Fairness is first established by regular communication of the outcomes by which candidates are assessed through discussion in courses and publication in syllabi. In addition, fairness is addressed by the use of multiple evaluators and multiple assessments ([Exhibits 2.3.b.1; 2.3.b.2](#)), both internal and external, for candidate advancement at transition points. All required assessments are published in handbooks and used regularly during advising. In order to eliminate bias, decisions for advancement of candidates at transition points are made by a committee, TEAC, rather than by an individual.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation

The assessment of candidate performance, program effectiveness and unit operation requires a highly coordinated and comprehensive system ([Exhibit 2.3.a.1](#)). A tri-fold approach was initiated to ensure that the UAS is maintained and provides information on a regular basis to the candidates and unit. This systematic approach includes: a) the articulation of responsibilities,

mechanisms and schedules in a unit assessment system manual ([Exhibit 2.3.d.1](#)); b) the formation of the position of assessment coordinator and Assessment Committee ([Exhibit 2.3.d.3](#)); and c) the creation of a plan to continually refine the UAS ([Exhibit 2.3.a.9](#)). The assessment coordinator, in conjunction with members of the Assessment Committee and the undergraduate chair or graduate director, provides the unit with notification of the assessment cycle, assessment instrument(s) to be used, and reporting procedures for use of data in decision-making. To finalize the systematization of the assessment cycle, the unit created and adopted the data use report form ([Exhibit 2.3.d.2](#)). This document simultaneously provides the schedules for data collection/review, guidelines for data use that honor the small size of the institution, and standardized questions for review that lead to the creation of decision/action steps.

In order to evaluate applicant and candidate proficiencies, data are collected from internal sources including faculty and candidates, as well as external sources such as P-12 faculty who evaluate field/student teaching experiences (Exhibits [2.3.a.2](#); [2.3.a.3](#)). Scoring guides, particularly rubrics ([Exhibit 1.3.c](#)), are used regularly. TEAC reviews data regarding individual candidate performance to make admissions decisions at key transition points at six regularly scheduled meetings throughout the year. Further, competence of graduates is systematically measured through alumni/employer surveys at the first and fifth years following graduation from the initial programs and at the third year following graduation from advanced programs (Exhibits [2.3.a.7](#); [2.3.a.8](#)).

Candidate assessment data are then aggregated and analyzed to improve program quality and unit operations. The schedule of data review outlines annual review dates at the program level and the unit levels ([Exhibit 2.3.d.2](#)). For example, the data from the Virginia biennial measures of candidate performance are analyzed by program area in May and then in September/October by the unit to make data-driven decisions for improvement. Candidate, program, and unit data are disaggregated to evaluate candidate performance, program quality, and unit operations of the off-campus advanced program at Lancaster ([Exhibit 2.3.h.4](#)). The unit does not offer alternate routes or distance learning programs at either the initial or advanced levels.

The unit's grievance procedures at both the initial and advanced levels are in alignment with institutional grievance policies ([Exhibit 2.3.f.4](#)). All candidates are notified of procedures for complaints and grievance in published handbooks that are also available in electronic format (Exhibits [2.3.f.1](#); [2.3.f.2](#); [2.3.f.3](#)). Expectations are outlined for academic integrity, including an explicit flowchart of restorative procedures for instances of violation ([Exhibit 2.3.f.5](#)).

Although small, the unit uses a combination of technologies that are appropriate for its size. Since the last NCATE review, the unit determined that the reliability of data provided by its former portfolio vendor was unsatisfactory. The unit consulted sister institutions and eventually brought a vendor to campus to be interviewed by the Education Department and a member of the office of institutional research. The unit adopted [Taskstream](#), a web-based system, for collection of the majority of candidate performance data at the initial level. In addition, candidate performance data are electronically stored on the institutional system, [Jenzabar EX](#), as a means of generating standardized data reports for TEAC meetings. Candidate performance data sets at the advanced level are stored on EX as well as in Excel spreadsheets for key assessments. An online learning management system, Moodle, is provided for all initial and advanced courses.

Use of Data for Program Improvement

The Assessment Committee meets and communicates regularly with the undergraduate chair and M.A. in Education director to ensure systematic collection, analysis, and review of data to make decisions. To ensure that data are regularly and systematically used to evaluate courses, programs, clinical experiences and the unit, the unit has established schedules for data review ([Exhibit 2.3.d.2](#)). Multiple sets of data are analyzed to make program and unit level decisions for improvement: aggregated data sets from candidate key assessments ([Exhibit 1.3.c](#)), [the unit operations survey](#), alumni/employer surveys ([Exhibits 2.3.a.7; 2.3.a.8](#)), Virginia biennial measures/SPA data, as well as field experience and student teaching data. Individual candidate performance data ([Exhibit 1.3.d](#)) are aggregated by program for annual analysis. In addition, the unit collects and uses information available from external sources such as licensure exams, evaluations during the 1st year of teaching, alumni/employer reports ([Exhibit 2.3.a.7; 2.3.a.8](#)), and state program reviews ([Exhibit 2.3.h.6](#)).

Faculty members also use the following instruments to improve faculty/program performance: faculty course evaluations ([Exhibit 5.3.f.1](#)), annual faculty review procedures ([Exhibit 5.3.f.5](#)), departmental faculty review for contract renewal ([Exhibit 5.3.f.8](#)), and the university consultant performance in supervising student teaching data ([Exhibit 3.3.d.8](#)).

The UAS manual ([Exhibit 2.3.d.1](#)) outlines procedures and policies that are facilitated by the Assessment Committee to ensure that data are systematically reviewed, analyzed, and used for decision-making and action within programs, clinical experiences, and the unit. In addition, all bodies within the unit use the standardized data use report form, provided as a sample in [exhibit 2.3.h.2](#), to ensure that data are used for program improvement at the course ([Exhibits 2.3.h.3; 2.3.h.4](#)), program ([Exhibits 2.3.h.5; 2.3.h.6](#)) and unit levels ([Exhibits 2.3.h.7; 2.3.h.8](#)).

The unit regularly shares data with candidates for the purpose of candidate growth. The unit demonstrates strong commitment to using data to improve candidate performance through mechanisms that allow individual candidates, and appropriate faculty, to have access to feedback and data. For example, at the initial level, candidates may immediately access evaluations in the Taskstream portfolio ([Exhibit 2.3.d.4](#)). Advising sessions occur at multiple times throughout the year with all candidates. Faculty advisors receive updates from EX on candidate progress in order to allow advisors to regularly review with candidates their progress on all transition point assessments in order to facilitate candidate reflection and growth. Faculty members participate in an annual review process ([Exhibit 5.3.f.5](#)) with a direct supervisor for the purpose of writing annual growth plans. The contract and tenure process provides an oral summary of evaluation data with the faculty member to provide for reflection and growth ([Exhibit 5.3.f.8](#)).

2.2.a Standard on which the unit is moving to the target level

- Describe areas of the standard at which the unit is currently performing at the target level.
- Summarize activities and their impact on candidate performance and program quality that have led to target level performance.
- Discuss plans and timelines for obtaining and/or sustaining target level performance as articulated in the rubrics of unit Standard 2.

Target Level Performance and Activities

The UAS has been in operation since 2001. NCATE re-accreditation was issued in March 2006; no AFIs were issued for standard 2. Based on this affirmation and the significant work achieved on this standard since the last review, the unit decided to select performance at the target level for Standard 2. Target level criteria are noted in italics throughout the text.

Assessment System

The unit, with the involvement of its professional community, is functioning at the *target level in regularly evaluating the capacity and effectiveness of the UAS*. To achieve this goal, the unit is *regularly evaluating the effectiveness and utility of the data*. In 2006-2007, the assessment coordinator and committee conducted an effectiveness and utility study of the unit's assessment instruments to determine the effectiveness of the system in measuring candidate performance and program effectiveness. The study was based on research literature on assessment in higher education and included a process of iterative review for development of the survey instruments used in the study ([Exhibit 2.3.c.2, pp. 2-3, 4-7](#)). Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in the Phase I study ([Exhibit 2.3.c.2, pp. 11-41](#)). The study revealed that several instruments were rated as highly effective while other instruments were rated as having lower utility. Clear trends for making decisions for improving the system did not emerge from this study. Thus, the unit decided to conduct further studies to ensure that clear evidence for change emerged prior to making adjustments to the system ([Exhibit 2.3.c.2, pp. iv-v](#)).

Following the 2008 revision of the NCATE standards, the unit made the decision to utilize recommendations from the Phase I study *to comprehensively evaluate the entire UAS* to determine what steps would need to be taken to meet the target level and to *keep abreast of professional standards for assessment*. The assessment coordinator led the Assessment Committee in a full-scale evaluation using all criteria within standard 2 to measure the capacity and effectiveness of the UAS ([Exhibit 2.3.c.4](#)). To ensure the *target level requirement for involvement of the P-12 professional community*, the Assessment Committee continued to include a P-12 member, and data were reported and discussed at departmental and unit levels including the COTE with representation from the P-12 professional community. During the Phase II study, the unit made several key recommendations ([Exhibit 2.3.c.3](#)), first, the discontinuation of instruments that were not providing useful data or were redundant with other processes. Second, the need for an internal five-year curriculum review cycle became unnecessary as the Virginia Department of Education instituted a revised state approval process that included the submission of program curricular matrices. Third, the unit determined that it was lacking key data on candidates' ability to plan and teach lessons prior to admission to student teaching, and thus recommended the design and implementation of such instruments ([Exhibit 2.3.h.7](#)). This ensured that the unit met the *target level of using multiple assessments at multiple points* throughout program. Fourth, the review of the UAS indicated a need for revising existing tools, such as the admission to teacher education recommendation forms, to increase their reliability in measurement. These recommendations were carried out in subsequent years.

Phase III ([Exhibit 2.3.c.5](#)) of the effectiveness study was conducted in 2008-2009 and resulted in updates to improve the assessment system. Discussions from this phase led to a clarification of the role of the assessment coordinator and committee ([Exhibit 2.3.d.3](#)), the design of a data use report form and schedule for further systematization of data analysis and use ([Exhibit 2.3.d.2](#)),

and the adoption of two new instruments for measuring candidate proficiencies in *further alignment with professional standards*. Thus, the unit is functioning at the *target level* in its regular evaluation of the capacity and effectiveness of the UAS, with feedback from the P-12 community. The thoroughness of these studies led to performance at the *target level* in making changes in practice (Exhibits [2.3.h.2](#); [2.3.h.3](#); [2.3.h.4](#); [2.3.h.5](#); [2.3.h.6](#); [2.3.h.7](#); [2.3.h.8](#); [2.3.h.9](#)) that are consistent with the results of these multiple studies.

As noted previously in the data collection section, the unit is on *target with its efforts to keep abreast of changes in technology*. The unit is also on target to keep abreast of changes in professional standards. In 2007, the Virginia Department of Education adopted biennial measures for program review ([Exhibit 1.3.a.1](#)). In 2010, the [NCATE/Virginia Partnership Protocol for NCATE and State Reviews](#) made submission of SPA reports optional for program approval. The unit continues to align programs with SPA standards.

The unit is functioning at the *target level* in making decisions about candidate performance based on multiple assessments made at multiple points before program completion and in practice after completion of program. For example, at the initial level ([Exhibit 2.3.a.2](#); [2.3.b.1](#)) preservice candidates are asked to write a philosophy of education paper as well as reflection papers on the six unit outcomes, for both admission to program and for program exit. In addition, due to the recent revision of the UAS ([Exhibit 2.3.h.7](#)), the assessment of written lesson plans occurs at both the admission to student teaching transition point as well as the transition point of student teaching at program exit. Teaching performance is measured during program on the [assessment of student teaching](#) measure, as well as in practice after program completion through data from the alumni and employer surveys ([Exhibit 2.3.a.7](#)). At the advanced level, assessment occurs at multiple transition points as well ([Exhibits 2.3.a.3](#); [2.3.b.2](#)). For example, recommendations from employers are used at both the admission to program and the admission to candidacy transition points. Further, with the piloting of a new key assessment in EDCC 501 ([Exhibit 2.3.h.4](#)), candidates are now required to document the impact of teaching on P-12 student learning prior to admission to candidacy as well as for program exit in the key assessment in the EDPC 511 Action Research in Educational Settings course. Criteria on the alumni surveys ([Exhibit 2.3.a.8](#)) measure performance in practice after completion of program. The unit uses these multiple assessments to regularly identify trends that demonstrate a *strong relationship of performance in program and later in classrooms and schools*.

In addition to the studies listed in section 2.1, the unit has taken additional measures to meet the *target level of fairness, accuracy and consistency of its assessment procedures and unit operations*. For example, training is a key part of the unit's operation. Training for the use of the Taskstream portfolio system is offered to all candidates and faculty. Orientation and training is provided at the cooperating teachers dinner each semester for all P-12 clinical faculty and university consultants to ensure consistent procedures in using the assessment of student teaching form. The [MidValley Consortium for Teacher Education](#), a partnership of four local universities and seven school divisions, developed the [assessment of student teaching](#), [observation of classroom teaching](#), and [student teaching performance reference guides](#) for each program area to provide standardized, discipline-specific criteria for raters to use. In order to reduce potential bias in decision-making at candidate transition points, decisions for advancement of candidates through the admissions system are made by a committee, TEAC, rather than by an individual.

The unit also adopted a covenant for decision-making ([Exhibit 2.3.c.9](#)) in 2008 and decision-making bodies, such as the department or the COTE, review this and sign a commitment to eliminate bias. After reviewing trends in decision-making, the department decided to adopt a voting protocol ([Exhibit 2.3.c.7](#)) to standardize its process for allowing voice and dissent, to further provide consistent opportunity for all members of a decision-making body to have input. Procedures for accuracy and consistency in analysis of data have been clearly strengthened through the addition of data use guidelines in the data use report form ([Exhibit 2.3.c.8](#)). This is especially necessary for small sample sizes in data sets.

Data Collection, Analysis and Evaluation

The unit is performing at the target level in its *provision of regular and comprehensive data on program quality and unit operations as well as on candidate performance at each stage in program and extending into the years following completion of program*. Program quality is determined not only by analysis of [course evaluations](#), but through aggregation of candidate performance data by program area, biennial measures/SPA data, key assessment data, and alumni/employer surveys. Faculty conduct regular meetings according to the [data use review schedule](#) to monitor data and make decisions over time, thus ensuring that apparent data trends are actually meaningful trends and not simply the result of a small data [sampling](#). Following Phase II of the UAS effectiveness studies, the unit moved to the target level by creating the [unit operations survey](#) to measure unit operations such as the organization of the learning experience, support for licensure exams, facilities and parking, assessment, technology and student services. This survey allows for *disaggregation of data by initial, advanced, and off-campus programs*.

Candidate performance data are collected and analyzed for decision-making at the initial and advanced levels, *from both internal and external sources* (e.g. faculty and P-12 personnel) *during program and into the years following completion of practice*. For example, both alumni (internal) and employer (external) surveys are collected in the years following completion of program ([Exhibit 2.3.a.7](#); [2.3.a.8](#)). All pertinent data sets are disaggregated by program for the unit's off-campus advanced program at Lancaster; disaggregation occurs for the evaluation of candidate-level data presented at the TEAC meeting, as well as for the evaluation of [program-level data](#) for improving the unit's performance.

The unit is at the target level as it *regularly compiles, aggregates, summarizes and analyzes data for the purpose of improving candidate performance* in content knowledge, planning, clinical experience and professional examinations. Data are regularly reported to individual candidates for the purpose of their growth and improvement. Faculty members consistently use rubrics for course assignments and for evaluation of clinical performance to give candidates developmental feedback. In addition, the Taskstream portfolio provides immediate rubric feedback to candidates. The unit subscribes to PLATO ([Exhibit 6.3.i.6](#)), a web-based instructional support and test preparation program to assist candidates in successful completion of Praxis I. Further, the unit employs a Praxis coordinator who utilizes candidate data on practice exams to provide coaching for particular areas of weakness. Data from the admission to teacher education interview are shared with the candidate following the interview for the purpose of reflective growth in the interviewing process. In 2010, the unit adopted the student growth plan ([Exhibit 2.3.c.6](#)), an instrument that may be used by any member of the unit to assist a candidate in identifying areas for growth, creating a plan, and measuring progress as a means of follow-up.

Data are reported publically for the purpose of improving candidate performance. Data regarding candidate performance are published for individual faculty advisors for each of the advising sessions scheduled systematically throughout the year. Advisors use these data systematically along with the forms listing the candidate transition points (Exhibits [2.3.b.1](#); [2.3.b.2](#)). Data regarding candidate performance are electronically published in Taskstream for program faculty and aggregated by program area, stripped of all identifiers for the purpose of analyzing program effectiveness in preparing candidates. These data, along with alumni survey data, are reported publically at COTE, and analyzed for program/unit decision-making. Data are made public through the Virginia biennial measures reporting, along with public release through Title II reports. At the advanced level, data are shared with the Committee on Reflective Practice, a committee of P-12 stakeholders and faculty members who function as a working and advisory group for the Master of Arts in Education program.

The unit utilizes the institutional *procedures for maintaining records of student complaints and provision of a process for resolution* ([Exhibits 2.3.f.4](#)). Healthy relationships, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution are a key focus of institutional culture based on the faith-based mission of the university. These particular institutional policies are published within unit handbooks to ensure fair notice ([Exhibits 2.3.f.1](#); [2.3.f.2](#); [2.3.f.3](#)). Records of candidate complaints are stored electronically in password protected folders in the undergraduate and graduate dean offices. In light of the culture on conflict resolution, the institution revised the academy integrity policy; faculty have the policy, flowchart, and all forms available on the faculty [website](#), and training was provided with the implementation of the policy. To ensure the highest implementation of this standard, the unit developed a [policy](#) for resolving conflicts that may occur when external partners are involved in a problem that may arise in the clinical experience.

In addition, the unit *continues to test and develop different information technologies to improve its assessment system*. The unit evaluated several web-based portfolio platforms when reliability issues were discovered with the originally adopted platform. After consultation with other institutions and a consulting visit from a vendor of choice, the unit made the decision to adopt Taskstream ([Exhibit 2.3.d.4](#)) for its capacity to generate not only mean scores but also frequency scores and aggregation of scores across several years; these latter two statistical methods assist the unit in conducting more meaningful data analysis when considering the small sample sizes generated in any given year. When the university switched to [Jenzabar EX](#), a new centralized database, the unit collaborated with information systems specialists to create the capacity for generating reports specific to teacher education for faculty and TEAC in their evaluation of candidate performance. The unit continues to test new technologies. In spring 2013, the unit will participate in a pilot program sponsored by the faculty senate and office of institutional research in which a faculty member can design course specific questions to add to the standard course evaluation, in order to gather data for course improvement ([Exhibit 2.3.c.10](#)).

Use of Data for Program Improvement

The unit is clearly functioning at the target level in *its development of evaluations and through searches for stronger relationships in the evaluations*, as described in previous sections about the three effectiveness studies. These three studies give *evidence of the revision of both the underlying data systems as well as analytic techniques* (Exhibits [2.3.c.2](#); [2.3.c.3](#); [2.3.c.4](#); [2.3.c.5](#)).

This extensive process is managed over time through the UAS [continual action plan](#), a strategic planning instrument developed in 2005 that is used for: (a) planning for change; (b) implementing change, and (C) maintaining accountability for continual refinement of the UAS over time. This planning instrument has been a vital force in maintaining the vision and continual refinement of the UAS over the last seven years. To ensure that decisions are made effectively and efficiently, the data use [guidelines](#) are provided to reduce common errors in using small data sets; questions in the [data use report form](#) prompt decision-making to triangulate data sets, and decisions are processed at several levels and over time as demonstrated in [Exhibit 2.3.h.2](#). Data is used comprehensively to make well informed decisions for improvement at the course ([Exhibit 2.3.h.3](#); [2.3.h.4](#)), program ([Exhibit 2.3.h.5](#); [2.3.h.6](#)), broader unit levels ([Exhibit 2.3.h.7](#); [2.3.h.8](#)), and with unit operations ([Exhibit 2.3.h.9](#)). *Candidates and faculty review data on their performance regularly and develop plans for improvement based on the data*, as described in the sections above.

Plans and Timelines for Obtaining and/or Sustaining Target Level Performance

The [continual action plan](#), in place since 2005-06, demonstrates the unit's past, present, and future *timelines for maintaining target performance and focusing on those areas where the unit is currently moving toward target*. With the implementation of the [student growth plan](#), in addition to all advising and support systems, the unit is clearly on target with systematic review of data with candidates to create growth for initial level candidates. The unit is moving toward target as it prepares to develop a similar growth plan at the advanced level ([Exhibit 2.3.a.9, item 7, section 2014-15](#)). With the implementation of the data use report form to systemize a schedule for data collection and review, closer coordination between the Assessment Committee's management of the UAS with the undergraduate chair and graduate director, the unit is moving toward target in consistent compilation of all data. The unit intends to fully achieve consistent compilation of data through the exploration of options such as further training of adjuncts or creation of course exit procedures for faculty, including the task of data entry. Processing of this goal is scheduled to begin in fall 2014 ([Exhibit 2.3.a.9, item 2, section 2014-15](#)). The unit is moving toward target in *its systematic study of the effects of changes on programs and candidates*. The unit already systematically reviews data sets, but would like to explore the addition of annual monitoring of recent changes as a new section for the data report form ([Exhibit 2.3.a.9, item 5, section 2014-15](#)).

A culture of continual use of data to inform decision-making about candidates, programs, and the unit assessment system has been firmly established within the unit. Several key mechanisms and factors will continue to push the unit toward maintenance of its target level: the dedication of a small unit to maintain the highest standards of quality, leadership of the assessment coordinator, the UAS instrument charts ([Exhibit 2.3.a.2](#); [2.3.a.3](#)), the data use report form and schedule ([Exhibit 2.3.d.2](#)), and the UAS continual action plan ([Exhibit 2.3.a.9](#)).

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.

- 3.1 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?

Collaboration between Unit and School Partners

Since 1989, the [MidValley Consortium for Teacher Education](#), a nationally recognized partnership among EMU, Bridgewater College, James Madison University, and Mary Baldwin College and seven local school divisions, provides the unit with a strong framework for collaboration in the design, delivery and evaluation of field and clinical experiences at both the initial and advanced level. The Consortium jointly developed the [assessment of student teaching](#), [observation of classroom teaching](#), and [student teaching performance reference guides](#) used by all consortium institutions. The Consortium Steering Committee provides training for approximately 96 new clinical faculty teachers from the seven school divisions each year, and refresher workshops for current clinical faculty teachers. The two-day training session for new clinical faculty teachers includes training on the student teaching experience, observation and conferencing techniques, co-teaching strategies, and giving meaningful feedback through assessments ([Exhibit 3.3.d.1](#)). The focus of the clinical faculty refresher workshops changes each year ([Exhibit 3.3.d.2](#)). Cooperating teacher and clinical faculty expectations are outlined in the Student Teaching Handbook ([Exhibit 3.3.c.1](#)).

At the beginning of each semester EMU hosts a cooperating teachers dinner for student teachers, cooperating teachers/clinical faculty, and university consultants to become acquainted and to provide training for cooperating teachers ([Exhibits 3.3.d.3; 3.3.d.4; 3.3.e.5](#)). Prior to the dinner the field experience coordinator meets with university consultants to provide and update training for supervision of student teachers ([Exhibit 3.3.d.5](#)).

Officials representing the school districts and EMU sign a memo of understanding titled, *Standard Candidate Practicum/Internship/Placement Agreement for Undergraduate and Graduate Candidates*, for all initial and advanced teacher education programs. These partnership contracts identify responsibilities of the school district, the university, and specific terms of the agreement. Currently EMU holds eight partnerships with public and private school divisions in Virginia, and 10 partnerships with public and private school districts in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania ([Exhibits 3.3.a.3; 3.3.a.4; 3.3.a.5](#)).

Each spring a representative from each of the four colleges and universities in the Consortium participates in the “Clinical Faculty Draft” to assign student teaching placements and ensure equitable distribution of P-12 clinical faculty teachers among the member institutions. In preparation for the draft the field experience coordinator selects potential cooperating teachers and clinical faculty matches based upon candidate needs and the qualifications of available teachers ([Exhibits 3.3.c.2; 3.3.c.3](#)). After the draft the EMU field experience coordinator in conjunction with the administrative assistant formally requests student teaching placements with each school division ([Exhibit 3.3.b.1](#)). University consultants are matched to student teachers by

the undergraduate chair or graduate director based upon qualifications of the university consultants (Exhibits [3.3.c.4](#); [3.3.c.5](#)).

School partners serve on the Committee on Teacher Education (COTE), the governing body of the unit, and its subcommittees ([Exhibit 3.3.a.6](#)), and participate in the annual teacher education interviews ([Exhibit 3.3.a.7](#)).

Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The professional education curriculum is grounded in the unit's conceptual framework that embraces an ethic of care, constructivism, reflective practice, and expanding literacies for the 21st century. The Field Experience Handbook ([Exhibit 3.3.e.1](#)) contains information about the design, implementation and evaluation of field experiences and clinical practice for all initial programs, including a process for withdrawal from field experiences ([Exhibit 3.3.e.3](#)). A long-standing strength of the unit's initial teacher education program is the early and continuous field experiences beginning in the fifth week of ED 101 Exploring Teaching in the undergraduate's first semester of college and culminating with student teaching in the senior year ([Exhibit 3.3.b.2](#)). Each program has a specific number of practica hours attached to courses in a prearranged sequence to enhance the growth and development of candidates ([Exhibit 3.3.b.3](#)). Prescribed activities for each practica provide candidates with opportunities to apply knowledge, skills, and dispositions in P-12 classroom settings and to engage in the practice of reflection that is central to the unit's conceptual framework ([Exhibit 3.3.e.6](#)).

The field experience coordinator requests information following registration in November and April according to the placement request procedures ([Exhibit 3.3.b.4](#)) to arrange practicum placements with the school divisions. After the practicum is confirmed, placement information is communicated to the course instructor who is responsible for communication with candidates and practicum teachers to ensure implementation of practica expectations and evaluation of candidates ([Exhibit 3.3.b.5](#)).

Prior to admission to student teaching each initial candidate completes a student teaching interview ([Exhibit 3.3.b.6](#)) with the field experience coordinator to discuss his or her student teaching and internship placement needs. Placement requests are based upon candidates' prior field experience placements with careful attention given to ensure candidates have experience in diverse settings, appropriate grade levels, and content (Exhibits [3.3.b.7](#); [3.3.b.8](#); [3.3.b.9](#)).

Cooperating teachers and university consultants assess candidate performance via the assessment of student teaching form, based on subject-specific reference guides, and the observation of classroom teaching form at multiple times throughout the student teaching experience. Practicum evaluations are based upon the assessment of student teaching. Each individual program uses indicators from sections A to D of the assessment of student teaching that are assessed by practicum teachers and university instructors for that particular practicum. The indicators in Section E: Professionalism appear on all initial level practicum evaluations ([Exhibit 3.3.f.4](#)). The assessment of student teaching and practica evaluations assess candidate performance in meeting professional, state and institutional standards. Indicators A1, B4 and C5 of the assessment of student teaching data indicate that candidates facilitate student learning of the content through presentation of the content in clear and meaningful ways, and through the

integration of technology that is clearly linked to state and professional standards (Exhibits [3.3.g.3](#); [3.3.g.4](#)).

During the first student teaching placement initial candidates complete the documentation of student learning project (DOSL) ([Exhibit 3.3.f.5](#)) to demonstrate their ability to plan, collect data on student learning, analyze results, reflect, and develop strategies to improve student learning. Each criterion on the rubric must reach the Competent level to receive a passing grade in ED 411 Reflective Teaching Seminar. The DOSL is submitted into the Taskstream student teaching portfolio and the unit and individual programs use the data from the DOSL ([Exhibits 1.3.d.18](#)) to identify areas for program improvement.

Course instructors, candidates, and P-12 teachers evaluate the design and delivery of all field and clinical experiences prior to student teaching. Candidates provide feedback on the practicum teacher and placement as part of the field experience report ([Exhibit 3.3.f.6](#)). P-12 practicum teachers complete an online survey at the conclusion of each practicum experience ([Exhibit 3.3.f.7](#)). The field experience coordinator reviews the reports and the administrative assistant places candidate comments expressing concern about a teacher or placement site in a secure file on the network for future placement considerations.

Candidates' Development and Demonstration of Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions to Help All Students Learn

Initial undergraduate candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency in lesson planning and in practica performance as criteria for admission to student teaching. Candidates must demonstrate the ability to plan for student learning by achieving a minimum requirement of a 2.0 rating on all four lesson plan criteria: lesson outcome/objectives, aligned assessment, planning for instruction, and differentiation on the lesson plan evaluation ([Exhibit 3.3.b.10](#)). Initial undergraduate candidates are assessed during all practica at EMU using Section E: Professionalism from the assessment of student teaching form ([Exhibit 3.3.f.1](#)). Candidates must achieve a score of Acceptable for each criterion on at least one of the two evaluations for admission to student teaching ([Exhibit 3.3.b.11](#)). Data indicate that candidates demonstrate professionalism prior to entering student teaching by achieving the Competent level of planning lesson outcome/objectives, aligned assessment, planning for instruction, and differentiation (Exhibits [3.3.g.1](#); [3.3.g.2](#)).

All advanced candidates are required to complete an extensive and culminating action research project in which they must apply coursework in classroom settings, analyze P-12 learning, and reflect on their practice within the context of their educational settings using contemporary theories on teaching and learning. As a result of coursework taken in the core curriculum or in their respective concentration areas of study, candidates identify a problem or question to study in a major action research project which is implemented as a field experience within the teacher practitioner's own classroom during EDCC 551 Action Research in Educational Settings ([Exhibit 3.3.b.12](#)) and EDPC 611 Action Research Project: Elementary, Middle or High School ([Exhibit 3.3.b.13](#)). Data are gathered, analyzed, and discussed regarding the impact on student learning (Exhibit [1.3.d.10](#); [1.3.d.11](#)). Field experiences and clinical practice related to the roles for which they are preparing are required of all candidates pursuing certificate programs in teaching English as a second language (TESL) or as a reading specialist ([Exhibit 3.3.b.14](#)).

3.2.b Continuous Improvement

- Summarize activities and changes based on data that have led to continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.
- Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in unit Standard 3.

Continuous Improvement

Feedback from cooperating teachers led to the creation of online evaluation forms in fall 2011, in conjunction with the institutional research office who creates the survey and collects the data for the evaluation of university consultants (Exhibits [3.3.d.6](#); [3.3.d.8](#)), cooperating teachers ([Exhibit 3.3.d.7](#)), and programs ([Exhibit 3.3.f.8](#)). The administrative assistant receives the data in an Excel spreadsheet which has created a more systematic review of data by the chair of undergraduate teacher education and the field experience coordinator for continuous program improvement (Exhibits [3.3.d.9](#); [3.3.f.9](#)). The unit has received rich and more in depth qualitative data than previously received from paper and pencil evaluations.

Upon implementing the data management system for online evaluation of university consultants, the administrative assistant identified that there were no procedures for managing data in the event that the chair is a university consultant. As the person who manages the data, the administrative assistant is privy to data on the performance of her supervisor without clear instructions on how to handle the data. Consequently, the unit revised the procedures for data management of clinical performance evaluations of university consultants and cooperating teachers to instruct the administrative assistant to forward the chair's performance data to the dean ([Exhibit 3.3.d.10](#)).

The field experience report ([Exhibit 3.3.f.6](#)) has been revised multiple times to reflect the most current demographic descriptors of diversity, most recently in spring 2012 ([Exhibit 3.3.b.15](#)). The field experience report is introduced in ED 101 Exploring Teaching and completion of the first report is connected to the observation report focused on the diversity of P-12 students in the candidate's first practicum placement. Candidates at the initial level complete a field experience report for each practicum and student teaching placement. Advanced candidates complete the advanced documentation of diversity form three times throughout their program: admission interview, candidacy application, and at the exit interview. Data are collected to track the diversity within each candidate's classroom/field experience setting to ensure experiences with diverse students ([Exhibit 3.3.b.16](#)).

The ED 361 Special Methods Professional Field Experience was moved from an all day Tuesday to all day Thursday practicum in the schools based upon feedback from candidates on course evaluations over a couple of semesters. ED 361 is taken as part of the secondary education block that meets on Monday evening from 7:00-9:50 p.m. and candidates indicated that they were unable to incorporate the feedback they received in class on Monday evening into the lesson that often needed to be taught on a Tuesday during their practicum ([Exhibit 3.3.b.17](#)).

Review of data indicated that the unit did not have a formal process to measure candidate's demonstration of proficiencies in early field experiences. During 2010-11, the Education Department developed the practicum evaluation of professionalism instrument, based on the

descriptors in Section E: Professionalism of the assessment of student teaching, which measures the candidate's ability to demonstrate the professionalism necessary for entry into student teaching. ([Exhibit 3.3.b.11](#)). The practicum evaluation, piloted during the 2011-12 academic year, is administered during two sequential methods courses to allow for multiple reviewers and to allow candidates the opportunity to demonstrate growth over time. Revisions were made to the original form during the COTE meeting based upon data from the pilot study and official data collection began in fall 2012. As of 2012-13, the practicum evaluation requirement for admission to student teaching was stated in the [Teacher Education Handbook](#), in course syllabi for courses using the practicum evaluation, and in all parallel documents. The practicum evaluation will be used for admission to student teaching decisions beginning May 2013. To ensure fair notice to candidates, the practicum evaluation data will only be used for student teaching decisions if at least two sets of data have been collected by the time the candidate is ready to be admitted to student teaching. By fall 2014, all candidates applying for admission to student teaching will have at least two sets of data to be used for admission decisions.

Upon review of the documentation of student learning ([Exhibit 1.3.d.18](#)) and assessment of student teaching final evaluation data (Exhibits [3.3.g.3](#); [3.3.g.4](#)), it was noted that the unit was not measuring a candidate's ability to demonstrate lesson planning in field experiences prior to student teaching. The lesson plan evaluation for admission to student teaching ([Exhibit 3.3.b.10](#)) reflects the Education Department's emphasis on the candidate's ability to demonstrate the professional knowledge necessary for admission into student teaching. The lesson plan evaluation standardized the measure of four aspects of lesson planning over the unit's programs: lesson outcome/objectives, aligned assessment, planning for instruction, and differentiation. The lesson plan evaluation is administered in two sequential methods courses to allow for multiple reviewers and for the candidate to have opportunity to demonstrate growth over time. Data collection officially began in fall 2011 for admission to student teaching decisions beginning May 2012. To ensure fair notice to candidates, the lesson plan evaluation data will only be used for student teaching decision-making if at least two sets of data have been collected by the time the candidate is ready to be admitted to student teaching. By fall 2012 all candidates applying for admission to student teaching will have data from two courses to be used for admission decisions. Candidates must achieve a score of at least 2.0 on each criterion in at least one out of two lesson plan evaluations completed throughout their program. A score of less than 2.0 will result in the development of a student growth plan ([Exhibit 3.3.b.18](#)) to ensure that the candidate is given opportunity and support for professional growth.

Periodically school divisions change their procedures for handling requests for practica placements. Recently a school division requested that the unit provide more information than we had traditionally provided with each practicum request. In an effort to accommodate the needs of P-12 schools, and to facilitate effective and efficient communication between schools and the unit, the field experience coordinator now systematically submits the exact starting and ending dates of the practicum, the grade level that the practicum should occur, a description of what the candidates will be doing in the practicum, and a list of candidates in the class.

EMU hosted the National Education Association Residency Task Force on August 23, 2012 ([Exhibit 3.3.a.8](#)). This one-day visit provided the unit an in-depth opportunity to review our beliefs, policies, and practices of field experiences.

Starting in spring 2010, the M.A. in Education candidates in Harrisonburg seeking initial TESL licensure are interviewed by the field experience coordinator to ensure that internship placements are made in conjunction with other student teaching placements in the Consortium. The TESL internship also began including opening school experience and their cooperating teachers/clinical faculty teachers and university consultants participate in the cooperating teachers dinner.

The advanced programs completed a major revision of all practicum evaluation forms to provide consistent data across programs. The forms are based upon the MidValley Consortium for Teacher Education assessment of student teaching used at the initial level. The reading specialist ([Exhibit 3.3.f.10](#)) and ESL certificate ([Exhibit 3.3.f.11](#)) practicum evaluation forms for Virginia have been modified to meet the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) licensure requirements (Exhibits [3.3.f.12](#); [3.3.f.13](#)).

Prior to July 2011, candidates completing a reading specialist degree ([Exhibit 3.3.a.9](#)) at the Lancaster site in Pennsylvania were granted a Virginia reading specialist degree that was then transferred back to Pennsylvania. EMU has been able to grant the reading specialist degree through the PDE since July 2011. Starting in July 2012, EMU Lancaster has been able to grant a TESL certificate through the PDE ([Exhibit 3.3.a.10](#)).

A majority of advanced candidates in the M.A. in Education program are inservice teachers and therefore complete their field experiences in their own classroom. As a result, the department created an assessment of student learning project that could be completed in either a candidate's own classroom or during a practicum experience for initial licensure candidates. Starting in fall 2011, candidates in the core course EDCC 501 Creating Cultures of Change: Constructivist Environments piloted the assessment of student learning assignment ([Exhibit 1.3.d.7](#)) as a revision of the previous assessment of student learning that was not providing quality data.

The unit remains committed to a cycle of continuous improvement that is inherent in the culture and practice of the unit's work in preparing candidates for P-12 classrooms. The data use report form ([Exhibit 3.3.f.14](#)) was created in 2010 and revised in 2013 to schedule the review of data and document the decisions made by specific groups within the unit. EMU Lancaster has established the M.A. in Education Lancaster Curriculum and Instruction Advisory Council composed of members from the P-12 education community and M.A. in Education faculty to provide a systematic process for program feedback and development.

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.

- 4.1 How does the unit prepare candidates to work effectively with all students, including individuals of different ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and/or geographical area?

Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences

As an Anabaptist [Mennonite](#) community, the university has a rich history of working with and among cultures around the world responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice. The commitment to honor and value diversity is a natural outgrowth of beliefs deeply rooted in our faith, and in the university's mission, which embraces the biblical text of Micah 6:8 to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God."

In preparing teachers to teach within a diverse and changing world, candidates are expected to develop proficiencies related to a broad definition of diversity. The [teacher education outcomes](#) within the conceptual framework articulate a commitment to diversity, for example:

- demonstrate awareness and apply meaningful connections across disciplines and cultures
- adapt and/or create a variety of instruction to provide equitable opportunities for all learners including those from diverse cultural backgrounds and with exceptionalities
- promote restorative approaches to peacebuilding in learning communities
- model caring by treating students fairly and respectfully, promoting student feelings of self-worth, and creating a climate that allows access to appropriate learning opportunities for each student

Candidates are prepared to work effectively with all students through numerous and varied practicum experiences, beginning in their first year as part of ED 101 Exploring Teaching and culminating with the student teaching experience at the undergraduate level ([Exhibit 3.3.b.3](#)). Practicum placements are integrated within courses and are selected based upon a predetermined plan to provide candidates field experiences with English language learners, socioeconomic diversity, and students with diverse needs ([Exhibit 3.3.b.7](#)).

Learning objectives for each education course syllabus provide support for, and experience with, diversity in the teacher education outcomes (Exhibits [4.3.b.1](#); [4.3.b.2](#)). ED 232/251 Learning, Motivation and Assessment is the foundational educational psychology course that introduces candidates to the wide variety of learning styles of students. Methods courses are designed to provide practical application of instruction in lesson plans that build upon students' background experiences and cultures in order to meet the individual needs of each student. ED 301 Needs of Diverse Learners requires candidates to provide evidence of their ability to differentiate lesson plans according to qualities of cultural, linguistic and exceptionalities that may be represented in the classroom. ED 301 course objectives prepare students to: determine understandings, skills and dispositions required to effectively teach in a diverse society; distinguish how schools can provide effective culturally responsive curriculum for students; differentiate instructional strategies and create adaptations, accommodations, and modifications for students with mild

disabilities, and those who are culturally and linguistically diverse; and develop a differentiated lesson plan to meet the educational needs of diverse learners.

Candidates communicate with students and families to demonstrate their sensitivity to cultural and gender differences via the completion of a caregiver communication assignment once near the beginning of program and again during student teaching ([Exhibit 4.3.a.1](#)). In the admission to teacher education interview, one of three questions focuses on “diversity of needs” which shows the importance and value of diversity as a developing construct in the unit’s expectations of candidates’ early professional growth ([Exhibits 4.3.c.1; 4.3.c.2](#)).

Candidate dispositions focus on behavioral attributes that are consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn. While the philosophy of education assignment requires that candidates write about the belief that all students can learn, the dispositions assessment translates these beliefs into observable behaviors that are measured throughout program, for example: demonstrates compassion and empathy towards others, promotes justice in relationships, willingly works with persons from a variety of perspectives and cultural/ethnic groups, and considers issues from multiple perspectives ([Exhibits 4.3.a.2; 4.3.a.3](#)).

During student teaching initial candidates are assessed using the assessment of student teaching document that includes key indicators related to diversity: B.2, B. 3, B.4, C.1, C.2, C.7, and C. 9 ([Exhibit 4.3.a.4](#)). The documentation of student learning (DOSL) project ([Exhibit 1.3.d.18](#)) provides evidence that candidates are able to prepare and implement lessons that meet the individual needs of each student.

Diverse needs proficiencies addressed in the four M.A. in Education core courses are identified in the outcomes, activities, assessments, readings or reference lists of these courses ([Exhibit 4.3.b.3](#)). Advanced candidates are practicing teachers and complete their field experiences within their own classroom as part of EDCC 501 Creating Cultures of Change and EDCC 551 Action Research in Educational Settings. Candidates complete the advanced documentation of diversity form ([Exhibit 3.3.b.15](#)) three times throughout their program: admission interview, candidacy application, and at the exit interview. Data are collected to track the diversity within each candidate’s classroom/field experience setting to ensure experiences with diverse students ([Exhibit 3.3.b.16](#)).

Experiences Working With Diverse Faculty

Although racial diversity among the professional education faculty is underrepresented, initial candidates have greater opportunity to interact with faculty who represent a variety of racial backgrounds in general education and major courses across the university and in P-12 schools in 2013 than in the 2005 review. Candidates have opportunities to interact with both male and female faculty ([Exhibit 4.3.d.1](#)). Advanced candidates have opportunities to interact with racially diverse faculty. Faculty who teach the initial ED 301 Needs of Diverse Learners and the advanced EDDA 511 Teaching Diverse Learners courses both hold special education qualifications.

Though not always immediately successful, good-faith efforts have been made to increase faculty diversity within the unit and throughout the institution as evidenced in the revised faculty

[contract policy](#) and the institutional strategic plan ([Exhibit 4.3.g.1](#)). A recent unsuccessful pursuit to hire a highly qualified African-American education professor resulted in a change in university hiring policy that created a new level of pay specifically to attract candidates of diversity. Although the racial/ethnic diversity among faculty is an area of concern to the university, faculty within the unit and across the institution share extensive and varied experiences working with diverse populations. More than 75% of university faculty have lived and worked internationally and draw from their knowledge and experience in preparing candidates to work with diverse student populations ([Exhibit 4.3.d.2](#)).

Experiences Working With Diverse Candidates

Institutional initiatives to increase racial and ethnic diversity have been successful in recent years. The percentage of non-white undergraduate students has increased from 15% in 2005 to 26.7% in 2012 ([Exhibit 4.3.e.1](#)). In 2005, only 2% of initial program candidates were non-white, and in fall 2012 the number increased to 11.4% non-white ([Exhibit 4.3.e.2](#)). Candidates in advanced programs have increased from 8% non-white in 2005 to 13.8% non-white in fall 2012. Good-faith efforts have also yielded results in the pool of candidates from socioeconomic and racial diversity as demonstrated by the increase from zero initial program completers of diversity in 2009-10 to six in 2011-12. Continued initiatives to recruit, admit and support ethnically diverse students within the unit include increased tuition assistance making it possible for more students representing varied socioeconomic groups to enroll in the university. The [local Hispanic grant](#) is awarded to Latino students with financial need from Augusta, Page, Rockingham and Shenandoah counties and several candidates have benefitted from this grant. [Third culture kids](#) who have spent a significant portion of their formative years living in another culture add to the diversity on campus.

Experiences Working With Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

Initial candidate field experiences rotate between city and county schools with the majority of the experiences in the Harrisonburg City Public Schools (HCPS) and Rockingham County Public Schools (RCPS) ([Exhibit 4.3.f.1](#), [4.3.i.1](#)). In HCPS, 70% of students receive free or reduced lunches, 57% of students are non-white, 36% of students are identified as English language learners (ELL) with more than 50 language groups represented, and 11% have an identified disability. In RCPS, 34.5% of students receive free or reduced lunches, 17% of students are non-white, 36% of students are identified as ELL, and 11% have an identified disability. Candidates complete the field experience report during every practicum experience providing data regarding the demographics of the P-12 students with whom they are working ([Exhibit 3.3.f.6](#)). Completion of the documentation of student learning, dialogue during ED 411 Reflective Teaching Seminar about the effectiveness of instruction during student teaching, and final student teaching evaluations ([Exhibit 4.3.a.4](#)) are ways that candidates provide evidence of the ability to enhance student learning. Advanced candidates complete field experiences within their own classrooms, the majority of whom teach in the same partner school divisions as initial licensure candidates ([Exhibit 4.3.f.1](#)).

4.2.b Continuous Improvement

- Summarize activities and changes based on data that have led to continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.
- Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in unit Standard 4.

Continuous Improvement

In May 2012, the unit's mission statement was revised to better reflect emerging beliefs of the teacher education program, and the phrase, "to teach boldly in a changing world through an ethic of care and critical reflection," was added. Revision of the conceptual framework and dispositions places a more intentional emphasis on preparing candidates who listen actively to others, work collaboratively with others, represent a variety of perspectives and cultural groups, demonstrate compassion and empathy towards others, promote justice in relationships, and seek to create equitable learning opportunities for each of their students.

Continuous review of data collected from student teacher evaluations (Exhibits [4.3.c.1](#); [4.3.c.2](#)), caregiver communication letters ([Exhibit 1.3.d.13](#)), and the documentation of student learning ([Exhibit 1.3.d.18](#)), provide evidence of how candidates are demonstrating mastery of skills and dispositions, and areas for improvement in meeting the needs of each learner. Creating classroom environments that value diversity and preparing lessons that consider varied learning styles are areas where candidates have been particularly successful. Feedback is provided to candidates for improving the ability to plan differentiated instruction, document student learning and communicate effectively with caregivers. During student teaching, candidates revise the DOSL until they achieve Competent on the rubric (Exhibits [4.3.a.1](#); [3.3.f.5](#)).

With an increase in sensitivity to the amount of school violence and bullying which victimizes many students of diverse backgrounds (race, class, disability, and sexual orientation), increased efforts within the unit and across the institution have helped candidates understand the potential impact of such discrimination and injustice, as well as engage them in dialogue about appropriate responses as educators. Organized events on campus and in the community have provided valuable learning experiences to address these concerns. Unit faculty members and candidates participated in the planning of chapel services on campus, classroom conversations, viewings of the *Bully* and *Won't Back Down* movies, and [MLK Day](#). Such events challenge candidates to personally apply the university's [mission statement](#) that calls students to serve with compassion, walk boldly in the way of nonviolence and peace, and do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly. Candidates are encouraged to pay attention to injustices, and to find peaceful and restorative ways to address these concerns within schools and communities.

The unit has prioritized field experiences with P-12 students and faculty of racial diversity by creating at least one practicum experience for each program area in the Harrisonburg City Public Schools ([Exhibit 3.3.b.7](#)). Advanced candidates recently began reporting information regarding the diversity of the students within their classrooms at the three transition points in the M.A. in Education program. The data is collected on the revised advanced documentation of diversity form and recorded in a spreadsheet ([Exhibit 3.3.b.15](#); [3.3.b.16](#)).

In recent years, the unit has experienced an increase in the number of international students enrolled in advanced programs, many of whom are English language learners. This has presented opportunities to examine how we assess students in both content knowledge and language development, as well as how we more effectively support these students as they move through program. The key assessment in EDCC 501 Creating Cultures of Change is an assessment of student learning project. Data from the past two years suggest that English language learners struggle to perform in ways that are commiserate with native English-speaking students.

Although this is a small sample size, it warrants further examination of ways in which we provide necessary scaffolding for the success of each of our advanced students.

Areas for Improvement Cited from the Previous Accreditation Review

Standard 4: Candidates have limited opportunities to interact with diverse peers.

In 2005, only 2% of initial program candidates and 8% of advanced program candidates were non-white, and as an institution, only 15% were non-white. By 2010, those numbers increased to 16% among initial program candidates, and in fall 2012 it was 10.4% with six program completers in spring 2012. In fall 2012, 13.8% of advanced program candidates were non-white and more than 26% of the total EMU student population reported as non-white ([Exhibit 4.3.e.1](#)). Increasingly, students are choosing to attend university close to home and EMU is no exception in seeing higher enrollments from within the state. Many candidates in our teacher education classrooms are first generation college students, and significant numbers come from lower socio-economic households. Our mission as a unit is to welcome candidates who aspire to become teachers and to work with them to achieve their dream of becoming teachers.

One goal of the diversity plan ([Exhibit 4.3.h.1](#)) is to increase the percentage of diverse candidates in the initial teacher program to 20% by fall 2014. Actions to meet this goal include working with [Multicultural Services](#) to invite racially diverse students to the ED 101 Calling to Teach panel, engaging candidates early in program in an activity to draw upon their personal experiences with diversity, and supporting campus initiatives with admissions counselors and the director of retention in recruitment and retention of candidates of diversity. Another goal is to pursue the hire of a professor of racial or ethnic diversity in our next candidate search process.

At the advanced level, candidates interact with diverse peers within the advanced classroom or at the teacher practitioner's school. In one recent core advanced class, 25% of the class represented ethnic diversity. Approximately 10% of candidates at the advanced level are from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.

With the hire of a director of retention in 2012, the university examined retention trends and found that the retention rate is lowest among racially diverse students. As a unit, the graduation rates for students of diversity are higher than they are in other programs across the institution. This increases the amount of diverse peer interaction in education classes at all levels. In order to promote continued success for diverse candidates and increase candidates' opportunities to interact with diverse peers at the initial level, the unit is committed to ongoing supports for success on licensure tests, linking candidates to tutoring and writing services in the [Academic Support Center](#), and to provide candidates and their academic advisors with an early graded report ([Exhibit 6.3.e.5](#)). Candidates participate in prejudice reduction studies and a dialogue on race education, and interact with peers of ethnic and racial diversity in ED 301 Needs of Diverse Learners ([Exhibit 4.3.b.2](#)). Candidates also engage in pedagogical practices such as [role plays](#) to provide opportunity to reflect on meeting the needs of diverse learners, differentiated practice, and reflective practice. Organizations on campus serve to encourage interactions among candidates within the unit and throughout the institution. Programs and celebrations planned by Multicultural Services for the benefit of African, Hispanic, Asian and Native American descent (AHANA) candidates and their relationship with the larger campus community, include

[Dialogue on Race and Diversity Week](#), [Latino Heritage Month](#), [Black History Month](#), and [Horror House of Oppression](#). Additionally, the goal of the [Safe Space](#) group on campus is to raise awareness of the discrimination against members of the community based on sexual orientation.

Standard 4: Candidates have limited opportunities to interact with faculty in the unit and P-12 schools from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.

In an effort to increase opportunities to interact with faculty from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, the unit made a good-faith effort to hire an African-American professor in 2009. Following persistent appeals to sweeten the offer, the candidate declined. This unfortunate outcome initiated a change in the institutional [faculty compensation and contract policy](#) which now provides a separate pay category to justify higher compensation when hiring faculty to meet diversity goals. The university implemented the policy for the first time in fall 2012. To attract a candidate of diversity, the unit advertised in publications and professional associations designed for racially and ethnically diverse professionals ([Exhibit 4.3.g.2](#)).

At the advanced level, an adjunct faculty member of diverse racial background is employed to teach the diverse needs course and two adjunct faculty of diversity teach in the ESL program. Approximately 90% of advanced candidates have taken coursework from these three faculty members. The M.A. in Education director and the undergraduate chair of teacher education maintain a database of qualified diverse adjunct faculty.

The concept of cross-cultural engagement embedded in EMU's mission is apparent in the undergraduate core curriculum requirement of nine semester hours of cross-cultural designates and three semester hours of foreign language. Many students select a semester-long experience of living and studying abroad in locations such as Guatemala, India, China, Spain, South Africa, and the Middle East. Under the leadership of professors from within the university, candidates receive tutelage and training from qualified instructors that are native to these countries. Study focuses on language, history of the area, and current events that affect their citizens, including local and global concerns. For some candidates, this provides a first-time experience to learn what it is like to live as a minority in a culture very different from their own. [Alli](#), a 2013 graduate, credits her EMU cross-cultural experience in Spain and Morocco as an experience that expanded her world-view and helped her "take the knowledge and experience that I had from my cross-cultural and use it with the children I'm working with." The cross-cultural requirement heightens the opportunity for candidates to interact with faculty from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds because a language requirement is now embedded in the cross-cultural semester requirements.

In an effort to provide increased interaction with diverse faculty in P-12 schools, the field experience coordinator developed a spreadsheet of diverse P-12 faculty and is more intentional about placing candidates with ethnically/racially diverse P-12 teachers.

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.

- 5.1 How does the unit ensure that its professional education faculty contributes to the preparation of effective educators through scholarship, service, teaching, collaboration and assessment of their performance?

Qualified Faculty

Professional education faculty are defined as administrators, coordinators, and faculty, including full-time, part-time, and adjunct, who teach or administer any of the professional teacher education courses in which they advise, supervise student teaching, or issue grades to candidates in undergraduate or graduate teacher education programs ([Exhibit 5.3.a.2](#)). Unit faculty maintain high levels of expertise through formal education and contemporary experience with P-12 education. Of the eight full-time, tenure-track faculty, six have doctorate degrees in the field where they do their primary teaching, with the remaining two faculty members currently in pursuit of their doctorate. Six of the eight full-time faculty members maintain a current P-12 teaching license. In addition to full time faculty, there are 37 part-time and adjunct faculty members who make up the unit, totaling 45 faculty members. Fourteen of those teach exclusively in initial teacher preparation programs; 23 work exclusively with advanced programs and eight work with both the initial and advanced programs ([Exhibit 5.3.b.1](#)). Over 95% of unit faculty either have terminal degrees or extensive P-12 experience of five years or more, and 76% maintain a current teaching license in their content area ([Exhibit 5.3.b.2](#)). Of the 45 unit faculty, 27 have a terminal degree in their field; five are currently enrolled in a doctoral program with four considered ABD. Those who do not have an earned doctorate have been selected due to extensive experience in P-12 settings and/or content expertise. When university supervisors are selected for content expertise, they share supervision with an education department supervisor to ensure that candidates have at least one university supervisor with pedagogical knowledge.

The unit maintains relationships with P-12 teachers who serve as clinical faculty in both initial and advanced programs. All 155 clinical faculty are licensed teachers and have extensive teaching experience. Over 88% of P-12 clinical faculty who supervise initial licensure candidates have five years of teaching experience or more and 42% hold at least a master's degree ([Exhibit 5.3.b.3](#)). The unit has outlined expectations for cooperating P-12 teachers to ensure that they have sufficient experience as teachers and that they are teaching in the field in which they are licensed ([Exhibit 5.3.c.1](#)). Further, unit faculty who serve as university consultants are also held to specific requirements to ensure they are supervising in areas of experience and expertise ([Exhibit 5.3.c.2](#)). These qualifications were developed in collaboration with the [MidValley Consortium for Teacher Education](#) ([Exhibit 3.3.c.3](#)).

Modeling Best Professional Practices in Teaching

Professional education faculty demonstrate a thorough knowledge of their content, with 98% holding licensure and/or doctorates in the content in which they are assigned to teach. Beyond content knowledge, unit faculty are knowledgeable about pedagogy, participating in ongoing professional development ([Exhibit 5.3.g.1](#)). Consistent with the unit's [conceptual framework](#), faculty not only teach, but practice constructivist approaches to pedagogy, modeling those

practices in ways that facilitate the development of candidates' pedagogical knowledge. These constructivist practices encourage candidates to think critically and reflectively about their own teaching and about the broader social context in which teaching occurs. In addition, education classrooms are equipped with SMART Board technology and candidates are given opportunities to engage with technology, both as candidates and as practicing teachers ([Exhibit 5.3.b.4](#)). Teaching strategies include assessments that are aligned with course objectives and that encourage candidates to think critically about their role as educators who work collaboratively to solve problems related to educational issues. Faculty utilize formative and summative assessments to evaluate candidate performance and to determine developmentally appropriate learning outcomes. Further, faculty members infuse their teaching and planning with visible connections to the Virginia Standards of Learning, which are outlined in course syllabi ([Exhibits I.5.b.1; I.5.b.2; I.5.b.3](#)). As noted in the [conceptual framework](#), EMU faculty hold a strong commitment to educational equity; candidates are challenged to not only work with students who come from various diverse backgrounds, but in keeping with the expected dispositions, to celebrate such diversity. This commitment is modeled in each of the education courses by education faculty and upheld as a core belief throughout the program. Unit faculty are engaged in ongoing self-assessment, seeking ways to improve their practice. Candidate evaluations, peer feedback, and ongoing reflective practice are utilized as tools for self-evaluation ([Exhibits 5.3.f.1; 5.3.f.2](#)). University consultants, cooperating teachers, and practica teachers are routinely evaluated by peers and candidates to ensure effectiveness ([Exhibits 5.3.c.3; 5.3.c.4; 5.3.c.5](#)), and expectations for both are articulated clearly ([Exhibit 5.3.c.6](#)).

Modeling Best Professional Practices in Scholarship

Professional education faculty are active in scholarship, with members of the unit engaged in scholarly writing ([Exhibit 5.3.d.1](#)) and conference presentations ([Exhibit 5.3.d.2](#)) as members of professional organizations ([Exhibit 5.3.d.3](#)). Such scholarship is expected as part of the university's tenure and promotion process ([Exhibit 5.3.d.4](#)) and is also defined as part of the unit expectations for scholarship ([Exhibit 5.3.d.5](#)). For advanced faculty, the scholarship-practice policy provides release time for scholarly activity expected of graduate faculty ([Exhibit 5.3.d.10](#)).

In our 2005 NCATE review, scholarship was noted as an area for improvement; thus, we have strategically addressed this area and have shown significant increases in scholarly publications and professional presentations at the local, regional, national, and international levels ([Exhibit 5.3.d.6](#)). We address these changes in detail in the Continuous Improvement section below. Consistent with our [conceptual framework](#), samples of presentations and publications demonstrate a focus on our mission to address diversity and equity and improve the educational quality for each P-12 student ([Exhibit 5.3.d.7](#)).

Modeling Best Professional Practices in Service

Consistent with university and unit missions, faculty engage in extensive professional service through P-12 collaboration, university service, community service, and service within professional organizations ([Exhibit 5.3.e.1](#)). Unit faculty frequently offer professional development for local P-12 schools, work with P-12 after-school activities, and provide consultation. Several faculty members are currently engaged in ongoing partnerships with P-12 schools. These partnerships not only provide professional development for P-12 educators, but

also promote scholarship, teaching, and community service for education faculty ([Exhibit 5.3.e.2](#)). In addition to P-12 collaborative activities, unit faculty serve on various university committees, volunteer to speak in other classes, and sponsor EMU student support organizations. All full-time unit faculty and many part-time faculty are involved in professional service through membership and leadership in various professional associations at the local, state, and national level ([Exhibit 5.3.d.3](#)). Active membership in these professional associations promotes service and scholarship for faculty members, as well as systematic collaboration with colleagues from other universities. Unit faculty are also active in community service, many through community organizations and/or church-related activities that are consistent with the [university mission](#) to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.”

Unit Evaluation of Professional Education Faculty Performance

Professional education faculty engage in systematic and comprehensive evaluations in the form of online course evaluations, reflective practice and self-assessment, and annual reviews to assess scholarship, teaching, and service. For each course, candidates provide both quantitative and qualitative feedback about the course, the instructor, and the teaching methods utilized ([Exhibits 5.3.f.1; 5.3.f.2](#)). Historically, quantitative data has reflected positive student ratings; individual mean scores and department mean scores generally exceed institutional mean scores ([Exhibit 5.3.f.3](#)). Qualitative data collected through course evaluations are analyzed and discussed for the purpose of course review and program improvement ([Exhibits 2.3.h.3; 2.3.h.4](#)). Annual meetings with the chair or director are held with tenure-track faculty in the first two years to conduct a review based on the departmental domains for faculty performance ([Exhibit 5.3.d.5; 5.3.f.4; 5.3.f.5](#)), and with adjunct faculty to review teaching performance ([Exhibit 5.3.f.6](#)). Tenure-track faculty annually set goals related to teaching, service, and scholarship and meet annually with the chair or director to discuss these goals ([Exhibit 5.3.f.7](#)). Summary reports for all faculty reviews are placed in the faculty member’s personnel file in the provost office. These discussions inform individual growth decisions for faculty and are a key component of the promotion and tenure process ([Exhibit 5.3.f.8](#)).

Unit Facilitation of Professional Development

Professional education faculty improve their professional practice through ongoing professional development in the form of conferences, workshops, and collaboration with other teacher educators. Since 2010, unit faculty have attended over 100 conferences, internationally, nationally, regionally, and locally, in order to develop new knowledge and skills. Faculty have taken over 75 courses and attended workshops in order to address areas for growth identified in their annual evaluations ([Exhibit 5.3.g.1](#)). Unit faculty are actively engaged in professional organizations, not only for the purpose of service to their fields, but also for the purpose of staying abreast of current research ([Exhibit 5.3.d.3](#)). Furthermore, as noted earlier, unit faculty are involved in ongoing collaborative relationships with P-12 educators and other teacher educators that promote professional growth ([Exhibits 5.3.e.1; 5.3.e.2](#)). The university provides ongoing support for professional development by allowing time off-campus and providing financial assistance to cover professional memberships, conference attendance, research/teaching grants, and release time for scholarship ([Exhibit 5.3.g.2](#)). The Jesse T. Byler Endowed Chair provides funding for full-time department faculty to support professional development and conference attendance ([Exhibit 5.3.g.3](#)).

5.2.b Continuous Improvement

- Summarize activities and changes based on data that have led to continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.
- Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in unit Standard 5

Continuous Improvement

As a small, liberal arts teaching institution, the university as a whole and the unit in particular work to maintain high expectations for teaching faculty. Since the last NCATE review, we have held searches for several full-time education faculty members and in each case were committed to filling those positions with individuals who held terminal degrees, maintained high levels of expertise in their field, and demonstrated the capacity for scholarship and service. In one case, we opted to keep a position open for another year rather than hire someone who did not meet those criteria. We continue to hold high expectations for part-time and adjunct educational faculty as well, insisting that those who work with candidates either hold a doctorate degree or have extensive experience as P-12 teachers. Although we insist on a minimum of three years of experience to be considered clinical faculty, many unit faculty and clinical faculty have more than 15 years of experience teaching in P-12 settings. One of the ways we aim to sustain our relationships with high caliber P-12 teachers is by fostering collaborative partnerships with Rockingham County Public Schools and Harrisonburg City Schools for the purpose of scholarly inquiry.

In 2012, the university re-instated the tenure track system accompanied by rigorous post-tenure review. In an attempt to attract faculty with specific qualifications to fulfill teaching needs, the university adopted a new faculty title, affiliate faculty, which includes remuneration commensurate with experience for faculty who are not eligible for tenure-track. Several advanced program faculty hold an affiliate title to provide specific curricular qualifications not available in the current complement of tenure-track faculty ([Exhibit 5.3.f.9](#)).

In the current complement of full-time Education Department faculty, we have three members who began in fall 2011. As a way to promote departmental unity around our collective mission, we worked together to revise the department's conceptual framework in ways that reflected the commitments of each of the unit's members. This process has led to discussions about teaching practices that reflect the unit's mission to a greater degree; these discussions have also promoted scholarship and service opportunities that align with our overall commitments. For example, one commitment held by the department was to promote restorative justice in schools. The discussion that ensued around this commitment led to two of the department faculty working together on a research and development grant to explore the possibility of beginning a master's degree in restorative justice in education. In addition, more emphasis on restorative practices has been added to existing courses. With the addition of new faculty also comes an increase in energy related to teaching and scholarship. New conversations, new perspectives on old conversations, and the process of melding as a department have led to renewed commitment to addressing critical issues in education.

Our assessment committee continues to seek strategies for improving the way we evaluate unit faculty and clinical faculty; the unit assessment system continues to be revised based on feedback, experience, and ongoing evaluation of the unit. Based on identified areas for growth,

the unit continues to promote and support professional development for all unit and clinical faculty.

Unit faculty are deeply engaged in service; indeed, it is a core value of the university and the Education Department. One member of faculty currently serves on the board of directors for a national teacher education organization and others are in various leadership positions in both professional and community organizations.

Areas for Improvement Cited from the Previous Accreditation Review

Standard 5. Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Teacher education faculty have very limited scholarly productivity, especially in national/international professional presentations and professional publications.

Since 2005, the unit has worked diligently and strategically to foster scholarly productivity on the part of education faculty. One faculty member completed a doctorate in 2008 and another faculty member has taken a reduced teaching load since 2010 in order to accelerate progress toward a doctoral degree. Another will be working on a reduced teaching load beginning in 2013 in order to dedicate time towards a doctoral program. In addition, new policies have been written, more funding has been secured, and an increase in collaboration has been emphasized.

With the arrival of a new provost in fall 2009, there has been a heightened emphasis on faculty scholarship. A recent revision of the institution's promotion and contract renewal process places more emphasis on scholarly productivity of faculty members ([Exhibit 5.3.d.4](#)). Individual departments developed discipline-specific criteria in scholarship, teaching, and service that are now used to assess faculty performance in the contract renewal process ([Exhibit 5.3.d.5](#)).

The unit's expectations for scholarship have also been revised, emphasizing scholarship as inquiry among a community of learners. Further, as Anabaptists, our scholarship must combine theory and practice and promote collaboration for the purpose of pursuing peace and justice ([Exhibit 5.3.d.5](#)).

As a part of these policy revisions, there have also been changes in funding that support scholarly inquiry ([Exhibit 5.3.g.4](#)). Within the Education Department, full-time faculty are eligible to apply for release time, releasing them from undergraduate teaching responsibilities for up to six semester hours per year in order to increase faculty potential for publications. In order to secure release time, proposals are submitted through a competitive process of consideration by the faculty scholarship committee. The department is committed to the submission of one proposal per year and has been highly successful in receiving 6 semester hours of release time per year in recent years. Six unit faculty, from both initial and advanced programs, have been granted release time since 2006 and this support will continue to be a practice that promotes scholarship. On a smaller basis, the faculty scholarship committee awards mini-grants available to support scholarly endeavors. These grants of up to \$500 serve to support research, teaching, or collaborative service with P-12 schools. Four unit faculty have applied for and received funding through mini-grants since 2006. In addition to release time and mini-grants, education faculty may apply for a semester-long sabbatical where they are released from 12 semester hours of teaching and on-campus responsibilities in order to focus on research and writing. A highly-

competitive university-wide policy awards a sabbatical to up to six EMU faculty per year ([Exhibit 5.3.d.8](#)). Teacher education faculty are further supported with institutional and endowment funds to present/attend conferences ([Exhibit 5.3.g.3](#)). To date, these funds have not been cut. These funding sources continue to support the unit's expectations for scholarly activity.

The unit has also worked to promote collaborative inquiry among unit faculty and with P-12 teachers. As noted, there has been an increase in P-12 partnerships since 2005, where such partnerships serve to foster a sense of scholarly inquiry. In addition, EMU's writing program has begun hosting [Kairos Place](#), two weeks set aside in May to support faculty research, writing, and creative projects ([Exhibit 5.3.d.9](#)).

The emphasis on improving scholarship has resulted in a significant increase in publications by unit faculty since the 2005 visit. In the previous visit, we reported three scholarly publications from 2000-2005; in the years 2005-2013, we have over 100 publications, with 33 of those in peer reviewed journals ([Exhibits 5.3.d.1; 5.3.d.6](#)). Faculty have applied for and received external funding, written state-level curriculum, and published books and book chapters. Many of these publications have been written independently; however, a large percentage have been written collaboratively with colleagues at EMU, within and outside of the unit, as well as with colleagues from other institutions. For example, two unit faculty, in collaboration with faculty from the science department, are currently engaged in a [National Science Foundation](#) grant examining the development and implementation of a science rubric bank for formative and summative assessment. Three of our unit faculty are currently writing books about restorative justice within educational contexts. Five unit faculty currently have peer reviewed journal articles under review.

In addition, we have more than doubled the number of presentations at professional conferences since the 2005 report. This includes 30 presentations at international conferences, 74 presentations at national conferences, 39 at state and regional conferences, and 35 at local conferences ([Exhibits 5.3.d.2; 5.3.d.6](#)). These presentations have taken place at international conferences in countries such as Pakistan, Indonesia, and Colombia; at prestigious national conferences such as the American Educational Research Association, the Association for Teacher Educators, and the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education; and at state and local conferences that have a direct impact on our own community, such as the Shenandoah Valley Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa and the Virginia State Reading Conference.

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.

- 6.1 How do the unit's governance system and resources contribute to adequately preparing candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards?

Unit leadership and authority

The professional education unit is responsible for managing and coordinating all programs affiliated with the preparation of teachers and other school professionals. Leadership, authority and responsibility for the administration and operation of the unit is designated to the chair of undergraduate teacher education for initial programs and to the director of the Master of Arts in Education for advanced programs in Harrisonburg and Lancaster. The chair reports to the undergraduate dean and represents the unit on the Undergraduate Council. The director reports to the graduate dean and represents the unit on the Graduate Council ([Exhibit 6.3.b.1](#)). Four program coordinators provide curriculum leadership for the PreK-3, PreK-6, special education, and secondary programs, one person serves as assessment coordinator, and another as field experience coordinator ([Exhibit 6.3.b.2](#)).

The Committee on Teacher Education (COTE), co-chaired by the undergraduate chair and the graduate director, is an interdisciplinary council that meets four times a year as an advisory and policy making body to coordinate design, implementation, review and evaluation of the unit and its programs, and to provide a mechanism for collaboration between unit faculty. Unit data is systematically reviewed by COTE and recommendations for revision to curricular and admission policies and procedures are vetted and approved. Four subcommittees support the work of COTE: Teacher Education Admissions Committee, Assessment Committee, Curriculum Materials Center Committee, and Committee on Reflective Practice ([Exhibits 6.3.b.2; 6.3.b.3](#)), and ad hoc advisory groups of P-12 teachers and administrators form for purposes of program consultation, revision, and evaluation. Membership consists of representatives from each of the academic departments in the university that lead to teacher licensure and the Master of Arts in Education-Harrisonburg and Lancaster, field experience coordinator, all education faculty, three persons from area public and private schools, two undergraduate students, and one graduate student. The associate dean for curriculum holds a liaison role to maintain communication between the unit and the core curriculum.

Requirements for admission to the university and to teacher education are communicated to candidates via the [Undergraduate Catalog](#), [Graduate Catalog](#), [Teacher Education Handbook](#), [Student Teaching Handbook](#), and [Master of Arts in Education Handbook](#). The unit collaborates with the university's marketing and communications department to maintain current and accurate print and web-based communications.

The [Academic Support Center](#) provides academic support in study skills, time management, test-taking skills, course specific remediation, reading and comprehension skills, writing and basic math skills, and services candidates with documented learning disabilities to assist them in their transition into college and in meeting their academic goals. The coordinator of student success coordinates undergraduate academic advising and is responsible for communicating advising philosophy, developing and distributing information about advising, orienting new faculty to

advising, and evaluating advising services. Each candidate is assigned an education academic advisor, and a major advisor for 6-12 and PreK-12 candidates. [Career Services](#) is available to assist candidates with job related skills and graduate school information. Free [personal counseling](#) is available to assist candidates in achieving optimal academic performance.

Unit budget

The unit receives sufficient budgetary allocations proportional to units on campus, such as nursing and social work with clinical components, to prepare candidates to meet standards ([Exhibit 6.3.g.1](#)). In fall 2011, there were [165 education majors](#), 147 nursing majors, and 41 social work majors. Graduate budgets are built solely on the costs of running each program and return net profits back to the university budget ([Exhibit 6.3.g.2](#)). The Jesse T. Byler endowment provides income of approximately \$3,000 each year to the unit to support faculty scholarship and travel to professional conferences. A [professional development fund](#) managed through the provost office provides faculty with money for professional memberships and conference attendance. The unit's budget supports stipend payments for P-12 clinical faculty, practica supervisors, and P-12 practitioners as guest lecturers. The unit allocates money to purchase technology assistance, for example, laptops rather than desktop computers for faculty, and Flip cameras. The unit subscribes to PLATO ([Exhibit 6.3.i.6](#)), a web-based instructional support and test preparation program to assist candidates in successful completion of Praxis I.

Personnel

The unit abides by institutional and accreditation standards to ensure that workload policies allow faculty members to effectively engage in teaching, scholarship, assessment, and advising. collaborative work in P-12 schools, and service. All tenured, full-time faculty loads follow [university policy](#) of 12 semester hours per semester, or 24 semester hours per academic year which include undergraduate and graduate teaching, practica supervision, department administration, program, assessment, and field experience coordination, and scholarship/practice for graduate faculty ([Exhibits 6.3.h.2; 6.3.h.3](#)). Part-time adjunct faculty work primarily in the role of student teaching supervision in the initial program, and provide content and experience expertise to enrich the courses offered in the advanced program. Student teaching supervision is assigned on a ratio of one semester hour load per student teacher. Each faculty mentor who supervises an advanced research project receives one semester hour for two mentees. Undergraduate [academic advising](#) does not typically exceed 25 advisees per faculty person and is not calculated in the semester hour load. University policy establishes criteria for appropriate educational activities when teaching in a [non-traditional and distance learning](#) context.

The unit provides an adequate number of support personnel to prepare candidates to meet standards. Administrative support consists of one full-time administrative assistant, one three-fourths time office assistant, and two workstudy positions in Harrisonburg, and an assistant director in Lancaster. Three semester hours of load is allocated to program coordination to ensure oversight of curricular and program needs of the initial PreK-3/6, special education, and secondary education programs, two semester hours is given to coordinate the unit assessment system, and four semester hours is assigned to field experience coordination. The unit hires a part-time Praxis support and curriculum library coordinator to provide one-on-one assistance for candidates preparing for Praxis I and II exams. The Early Learning Center is operated by a director, teacher and teacher assistant. The institution's information systems division, faculty,

and P-12 personnel provide individual and group professional development sessions to faculty in the use of Moodle, SMART Board, and Senteo presentation clickers.

Unit Facilities and Resources including Technology

The main campus in Harrisonburg and the Lancaster site have adequate campus and school facilities and resources to support candidates in meeting standards. In Harrisonburg, the Education Department is located on the second floor of the campus center and contains a reception area, offices for eight faculty members, and a small conference room. Nearby is the iMac lab with 24 iMac computers, a scanner, printer, SMART Board, document camera, and projection system, a Windows computer lab, and four classrooms where most education courses are taught. Each classroom is equipped with a technology station consisting of a computer, video/audio capabilities, document camera, and projection system. Three classrooms have SMART Boards. The unit supports a laboratory school, the [Early Learning Center](#), that provides PreK-3 and PreK-6 candidates with field experiences with two, three and four year old children.

The facilities support faculty and candidate use of information technology in instruction. The unit provides each education faculty member with a MacBook Pro laptop. Faculty and candidates have access to up to date technology to enhance learning and teaching: digital and Flip cameras, iPads, SWIVL, and Senteo presentation clickers through [Media Services](#). Computer labs are available around the clock for candidate use. [Information Systems](#) provides faculty and candidates with extensive technological online and in-person support. [Moodle](#), an online learning management system, facilitates instruction for on-campus and online courses and ensures confidential assignment submission and grade reporting. The university uses the [Jenzabar EX](#) administrative computer system as its student information system software. [Taskstream](#) is the data management system for initial candidates' admission and student teaching portfolios.

The EMU Lancaster site, located in a corporate center in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, contains offices for the assistant director, adjuncts and administrative support, shared common spaces, small computer lab, two CLEP testing rooms, and four classrooms each equipped with a technology station consisting of a computer, video/audio capabilities, document camera, and projection system. Two classrooms have SMART Boards.

The [Sadie A. Hartzler Library](#) provides sufficient and current library and curricular resources needed by the unit ([Exhibit 6.3.i.7](#)). The library houses the main library, the Menno Simons Historical Library and institutional archives, the curriculum library, Academic Support Center, and office spaces for the Praxis support and curriculum library coordinator, information systems personnel, and various learning resources and library staff. Facilities include areas designated for quiet study and group work, 18 computers for individual use, wireless access throughout, and several classrooms each equipped with a technology station consisting of a computer, video/audio capabilities, document camera, and projection system. Candidates have access to seminal and current educational research, pedagogical and curriculum resources, and an extensive children's book collection. The library budget uses a formula based on student numbers, usage and cost to allocate monies annually among all programs. In 2012-13, from a total of \$42,170 allocated to departments, \$4,220 is allocated to education programs, \$1000 to the juvenile collection, and \$2,500 to the curriculum collection ([Exhibits 6.3.i.8; 6.3.i.9](#)).

6.2.b Continuous Improvement

- Summarize activities and changes based on data that have led to continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.
- Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in unit Standard 6.

Continuous Improvement

The recent Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) program approval process resulted in a recommendation to incorporate an advisory council comprised of P-12 representatives into the unit governance system. In fall 2013, the M.A. in Education Lancaster Curriculum and Instruction Advisory Council will become a subcommittee of the COTE structure.

The university's recruiting efforts have historically been the responsibility of the vice-president for enrollment. Following a resignation in 2005, a decision to not fill the position was made and retention responsibilities were dispersed to different entities across campus. In 2011, President's Cabinet decided to hire a vice-president for enrollment to centralize and focus the agenda of recruitment and retention across campus. In the interim, each department and division developed their own focus and the university discovered there was no campus-wide goal to consolidate efforts or to examine why students were leaving and what could occur to keep them enrolled at the university. The current vice-president for enrollment decided to restructure enrollment efforts and reallocate resources toward retention agenda. Beginning in 2012-13, the institution appointed a director of retention to develop, implement, and oversee all retention efforts across campus including efforts within financial assistance, academic support services, athletics, the business office, multicultural student services, international student services, the registrar's office, academics, admissions, housing, [CoachLink](#), and counseling services. Already in the first year of a systematic retention strategy, the university is experiencing positive gains.

The development and implementation of the unit's assessment system comes from within the total unit budget. Beginning in 2005, two semester hours of load has been allocated for the assessment coordinator to chair the Assessment Committee and coordinate the unit assessment system. In fall 2012, a new assessment coordinator was appointed following the service of the previous coordinator from 2005-2012.

In 2012, the unit upgraded its subscription to the PLATO system to assist candidates in successful completion of Praxis I. The unit contributes approximately \$3,000 annually to provide PLATO access to candidates and the remaining expense is collected from a fee of \$25 per user.

Upon the arrival of a new director in 2007, the office of institutional research and effectiveness increased staff to two full-time positions to improve the financial and human resources devoted to program effectiveness. The director now sits on the unit's Assessment Committee and significantly enhances the emphasis on data collection, analysis, and program improvement.

The implementation of the Jenzabar EX integrated administrative computer system as the university's student information system software in spring of 2009 entailed a major overhaul of the teacher education database. With only one staff person allocated to assist the unit in the design and implementation of an efficient and effective database for teacher education, the implementation process was slow and cumbersome as a data management system for teacher

education. With the hire of an additional staff person in information systems to fill the role of student information systems project specialist in early 2012, the unit has experienced the degree of support needed for EX to fully meet our data management needs. Currently, this staff person is re-designing the EX system for enhanced compatibility with Excel to improve the readability of admissions data used by the Teacher Education Admissions Committee.

In 2008, a renovation of the south end of the campus center converted one large education classroom into two more suitable teaching spaces, now known as campus center rooms 201 and 203. Located close to the Education Department suite, most education courses are taught in these classrooms.

The university remains committed to currency in technology to prepare candidates for teaching in P-12 classrooms. The information systems strategic plan includes increased wireless access across campus and in classrooms with phase one implemented in 2012-13. From 2009-11, SMART Boards replaced the SMART Podium systems in three classrooms used primarily for education courses on campus, and two of the four classrooms in Lancaster. Eight SMART Boards or Podiums have since been added to classrooms across campus. From 2009-11 the department purchased a total of six Flip cameras for candidates to videotape and reflect on their own teaching to enhance student learning. In 2010 the department purchased a new LCD projector for faculty use in professional conference or inservice presentations.

In 2011-12, the library allocation policy was revised to allocate monies to departments and programs for books and audiovisual materials based on a formula that considers the number of student hours, usage, cost and history. Each of these factors determines the percentage of available dollars allocated to each department to purchase print and electronic materials with the curriculum and juvenile collections receiving a set amount from the overall budget. The revised allocation provides adequate resources to prepare candidates to meet the standards in their fields.

With increased interest across the university in distance learning offerings, the university updated the [non-traditional and distance learning policy](#) in 2013 to establish criteria for appropriate educational activities in non-traditional and distance learning contexts, and to establish equivalencies between activities in the traditional classroom and activities in the non-traditional and distance learning contexts. The non-traditional learning context includes intensive courses, accelerated learning in the cohort model, and other delivery modes that differ from the traditional face-to-face classroom context. Distance learning refers to online course delivery.

Areas for Improvement Cited from the Previous Accreditation Review

Standard 6. Unit Governance and Resources

Heavy faculty workloads adversely affect faculty involvement and productivity in scholarly activities.

The unit continues to explore avenues for increasing scholarly involvement and productivity given the teaching loads faculty carry. Workload concerns permeate university and unit conversations and regularly influence decisions regarding faculty assignments. To facilitate scholarly productivity, faculty embed their research with their teaching practice.

In 2005, unit governance consisted of one person holding the position of director of teacher education with responsibility for administration of all initial and advanced education programs. Often the university's governance system posed conflicting schedules for an administrator in both undergraduate and graduate divisions. In 2007, the undergraduate and graduate dean proposed that the positions of chair of undergraduate teacher education and the director of the Master of Arts in Education be held by two individuals. The chair and the director now co-direct the unit under a shared leadership model. In part this governance model was incorporated to address the workload of one person administering both initial and advanced programs, and has become the model for administration of all academic departments that house undergraduate and graduate programs.

In 2006, the unit reviewed the number of COTE subcommittees and took action to reduce the number of internal committees to adjust for workload and decrease the expectation of education faculty service on this committee without an adverse impact on curricular decisions.

In 2007, the unit reviewed the electronic portfolio requirements and significantly reduced the number of assignments required which reduced the assessment workload of unit faculty without negatively impacting the assessment system or candidate performance.

Beginning in 2009, the undergraduate chair load increased from 12 to 15 semester hours annually to align more closely with the remuneration of another professional program in the institution. The nursing department was the comparable unit with similarity in the number of faculty and students, clinical components, and external accreditation.

Since the NCATE/Virginia partnership protocol satisfies the SPA process, the unit decided to not require both systems, in part to reduce faculty workload, and work toward more efficiency while still adhering to outcomes of the SPA process.

When determining teaching loads, the unit streamlines teaching responsibilities by assigning courses of similar content to the same person to allow overlap of content expertise and reduce workload.

Alongside concern about faculty workload, the institution has enhanced resources to support faculty scholarship through internal and external sources. The university revised the professional development support policy to allow faculty greater flexibility in applying unused professional membership funds toward professional conference expenses. The university graduate council awards faculty with [release time](#) based upon graduate hours taught. Beginning in 2008, the department annually supports one faculty proposal for the competitive undergraduate release time awarded for research and publication by the Faculty Scholarship Committee, and has received 6 semester hours of release-time in five of the last six years. Additionally, two unit faculty have received mini-grant funding from the Faculty Scholarship Committee in the last three years for scholarly work that extends beyond the normal scope of teaching responsibilities ([Exhibit 5.3.g.4](#)). All unit faculty eligible for sabbatical release have applied and been awarded a sabbatical to engage in scholarly activities. Exhibits in Standard 5 demonstrate extensive scholarly productivity since the last review—confirming our commitments to employ critical reflection and research in our community and to improve teaching and learning.