



**NORTHERN ARIZONA
UNIVERSITY**
College of Education

Office of the Dean

**Northern Arizona University
PO Box 5774
Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5774**

**928-523-7139
928-523-8700 Fax
www.coe.nau.edu**

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I write to acknowledge receipt of the Board of Examiners' report on their accreditation visit to Northern Arizona University, March 28 through April 1, 2009. Members of the university community were pleased with our interactions with the BOE team: all team members were professional, collaborative, competent and pleasant. Our team chair, Dr. Barbara Nourie, was an exemplary leader, and her guidance was invaluable as we experienced this first NCATE visit.

The findings of the BOE team accurately reflect the conditions at Northern Arizona University, and these findings will enable us to enhance our work in this crucial endeavor. We have already begun to incorporate ideas from the team's report as we press on to create the best possible learning experiences for our candidates. While indicating we had met all conditions for accreditation, the team identified a number of areas for improvement, which we are using to guide our activities in the immediate future.

Our rejoinder is attached. This document is intended to clarify a number of points, as well as to outline our plans to address identified Areas for Improvement and issues that did not rise to that level, but still deserve systematic attention. Given that this was our first NCATE visit, we have learned much both about the process of accreditation and ways to enhance our work. For this, we are grateful.

Thank you for considering the information in our response to the report of the NCATE Board of Examiners team. We look forward to hearing from the Unit Accreditation Board and to the prospect of improving our work in coming years through our relationship with NCATE and the institutions accredited through your work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel L. Kain".

Daniel L. Kain, PhD
Professor and Dean; Head of the Professional Education Unit



NCATE Rejoinder: Northern Arizona University

Introduction

1. Provide a brief overview of the institution and the unit.

Third paragraph:

“The unit offers five advanced programs for teachers (elementary, secondary, science, BME, and ECE); five advanced OSP programs at the master’s level (principalship, one technology, school psychology, school counseling, speech pathology), three advanced programs for OSP as a post-degree certificate (two in educational leadership, one in educational technology), and three doctoral degrees for OSP (one in educational leadership, one in curriculum and instruction, and one in school psychology). The IR does not list the doctoral degrees.”

Rejoinder: This issue is raised again in section 1e, where the report also clarifies that our NCATE coordinator had been informed at various NCATE conferences and workshops that the doctoral degrees did not need to be included in the IR. Upon review of the three programs (Ph.D. in School Psychology, Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, and Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction), it appears the programs vary in the degree to which they would be appropriately included in the PEU. The guidelines we were given involved both the percentage of candidates that pursue work in the P-12 schools after completing the program as well as the focus of the program. It is clear that the School Psychology program meets the criteria and should be included. It was our oversight that it was not, though this program is accredited by NASP. The other two programs are more eclectic in purpose and focus, and serve candidates with a variety of professional goals. After further review and consideration, we now believe that the Educational Leadership program can be separated into two tracks, one that prepares candidates to work in P-12 school settings and one that prepares candidates to work in higher education settings. The P-12 school track currently has courses and key assessments in place that can be used to assess NCATE-related outcomes. We will begin to develop measures to implement these and collect data over the summer and during the fall 2009 semester. Our program in curriculum and instruction is quite broad, and addresses curriculum and instruction in general and not necessarily as it relates to P-12 schools. Our initial assessment of whether enough candidates pursue employment in P-12 settings to include this program under NCATE review was that it did not. We will, however, conduct further analysis of the employment outcomes for candidates who complete the C&I program in order to determine and be able to document whether this is in fact the case or we need to make adjustments in order to include it in the PEU.

3. Indicate the programs offered at a branch campus, at an off-campus site, or via distance learning? Describe how the team collected information about those programs (e.g., visited selected sites, talked to faculty and candidates via two-way video, etc.).

First paragraph:

“... The Office of Extended Campuses/Distance Learning provides a director for each off-campus site and handles faculty hires for those sites, in consultation with the unit. Expenses, including salaries, for off-campus sites are also covered by this office.”

Rejoinder: For clarification, the off-campus area coordinators and program coordinators assist the chairs of academic departments in processing the hiring of part-time faculty members. The responsibility for hiring faculty at distance sites rests with the respective department's chair.

Second paragraph:

“According to the preconditions document, NAU offers professional education programs at these off-site campuses: Apache Junction; Yavapai/Prescott; Bullhead City; ... Whiteriver; and Yuma. Data for off-campus programs other than Tucson and Phoenix are often grouped as ‘rural’.”

Rejoinder: This is correct. For clarification, in consultation with NCATE, we have determined the best way to aggregate data from our several campuses for reporting purposes was into four groups: Flagstaff mountain campus, Tucson campuses, Phoenix campuses and rural campuses. This is due to the fact that many of our campuses have very low enrollments of candidates in a program (often significantly fewer than 10), and courses containing key assessments are not offered every semester at all campuses. It would not be statistically appropriate or meaningful to report key assessment data disaggregated by every individual campus. We do, however, have the capacity to disaggregate data by the individual campuses in order to detect possible program idiosyncrasies that might occur at an individual campus.

Conceptual Framework

1. Provide a brief overview of the unit's conceptual framework and how it is integrated across the unit.

First paragraph:

“In brief, the history of the development of the conceptual framework is that the administrative team learned of the need for a conceptual framework at an NCATE workshop in September 2004. The College of Education Standing Committee on College Priorities (SCCP) agreed, in January 2005, to take a leadership role in assisting with the development of the conceptual framework. On March 20, 2005, the unit's vision, mission, and philosophy statements were distributed as a web-based survey to all secondary education faculty members in the unit. In September 2005 the framework was shared with the NCATE Steering Committee, a university-wide committee appointed by the provost. In June 2006, the framework was submitted to the Arizona State Board of Education as part of materials required for the new state program approval process. Exhibit CF 2 summarizes the development of the framework with some inconsistencies in the timeline; faculty members from across the unit describe the development process as “iterative” and “re-iterative; they feel that their input was sought and considered.”

Rejoinder: We would clarify that there were numerous instances in which faculty and staff members from the College of Education developed and reviewed our conceptual framework. Teams of faculty members wrote sections of the framework, which were widely distributed among faculty members, staff members, members of the COE State Advisory Council, NAU's Council of Deans, candidates and alumni for feedback in Flagstaff and statewide. In August 2006, for example, a half-day COE retreat was dedicated to discussing and providing feedback on the framework. These instances were documented in Exhibit CF2 (please see the highlighted Attachment 1: Exhibit CF2, Development of the Conceptual Framework). Additionally, we thank the team for pointing out inconsistencies in the Exhibit CF2 timeline. We have checked the dates with our records and have corrected them so they are accurate for future reference.

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

1. Information reported in the Institutional Report for Standard 1 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation.) (page 5)

"Information collected through the onsite process was used to correct, update, and supplant information from the institutional report. There were inconsistencies in the numbers of programs as well as in which programs were considered advanced for teachers and which were advanced for other school professionals. ..."

Rejoinder: The bilingual/multicultural education program was submitted as an initial teacher program because that is how TESOL recognizes it. During the site visit, the team recommended this be considered an advanced teacher program, and we agreed. Since all the programs for other school professionals are considered advanced, we are not sure to what the last half of the second sentence is referring.

1a. Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates (page 6)

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation

First paragraph:

"... Feedback in SPA reports suggested a general lack of data to support stated results of candidate performance assessments."

Rejoinder: Although there were instances of limited data presented in some SPA reports, this phenomenon was not as pervasive nor as inappropriate as the SPA reports indicated. In many cases, programs had very few candidates, resulting in few data points (i.e., our science programs, math program, modern languages programs, and all initial MEd programs with the exception of elementary education). Although the comment of limited data was made for many of these programs, this situation could not be avoided due to programs' small numbers. We are looking forward to NCATE's new method to address small programs in future reports. Additionally, there might have been a misunderstanding among some SPA reviewers regarding how much data was required for reports submitted by February 1, 2008. One year of data was required. Even so, the special education SPA reviewers made comments such as, "...only two semesters of data were available for spring and fall 2007 student teachers." (Special education SPA reviewers report, Standard 1 page 3). This statement would contribute to a perception that although the appropriate amount of data was presented, it was insufficient. Another factor that contributed to an overstatement of limited data in SPA reports was the misinterpretation of what

constituted one year's worth of data. Most secondary programs offer courses within their major once a year, but the SPA reviewers were expecting to see data from a course for both fall and spring semesters. The fact that one semesters' worth of data was not sufficient to support standards being met although it represented a year of data was explicitly stated in the physical education programs' review, even though the report stated that the courses in which the assessments were housed were offered only one semester. Clearly it is a goal of the PEU to build substantial and consistent data sets for all programs as we move forward.

1a. Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates (page 6)

First paragraph:

"Finally, the unit provided limited evidence that it is in the process of revising programs in response to conditions and further development requirements cited in SPA reports. ..."

Rejoinder: While the evidence that we are in the process of making program revisions in response to conditions was not explicitly pointed out during the site visit, enough progress toward the remediation of issues cited in the SPA reviews had been made that seven programs receiving "national recognition with conditions" and two programs receiving "further development required" submitted responses to conditions or revised reports in either September 2008 or February 2009. Please see Attachment 2: Program Responses to Conditions or Revised Reports Submitted, for a list of those programs that submitted revised or new reports. In several instances, the recommendations for program improvement cited by the SPA reviewers were also issues that became apparent in the process of faculty reviewing candidate data. Therefore, some program improvements cited in Exhibit 2.10, Examples of changes made to courses, programs, and the unit in response to data gathered from the assessment system, were presented as changes due to data review, but they also were addressing suggestions made by SPA reviewers. Such items are highlighted in Attachment 3 Exhibit 2.10. Also, we included information and data for programs from the perspective of meeting the NCATE standards rather than from the perspective of making changes recommended by the SPA reviewers. Therefore, these changes might have not been specifically mentioned although they were instrumental in programs' contributions to the unit's ability to meet NCATE standards.

Third Paragraph:

This paragraph points out that according to SPA reports, some BSEd and MEd programs offered at the initial level in the same area were exactly the same, and that no differences in program requirements or assessments for the initial BSEd and MEd candidates were included in several SPA reports, particularly for elementary education, modern languages, and physical education.

Rejoinder: While differences do exist in programs of study for BSEd and MEd initial candidates, as well as in the co-convened courses these candidates are required to take, these were not made explicit in the SPA reports. The programs mentioned above used the same or very similar key assessments for candidates in both the BSEd and initial MEd programs. Assignments that had differentiating components for BSEd and MEd candidates were not identified by these programs as key assessments, and therefore were not presented in the SPA reports. The SPA reports did not provide for syllabi to be submitted, so the only differences the reviewers of these programs could have seen were in different courses in the programs of study. The programs of study for the undergraduate and graduate initial elementary education programs are attached (attachments 4 & 5). Although the courses taken by physical education or modern language

BSEd and MEd initial candidates within their respective program offerings might have been the same, most of those would have been pre-requisites to 400 level courses, from which a maximum of 6 credit hours may count toward a master's degree. Graduate level courses taken within the College of Education, although parallel or co-convened with initial undergraduate program courses, were different or had different requirements for undergraduate and graduate candidates. These courses for initial BSEd candidates and MEd candidates offered through the College of Education are required of candidates in all secondary programs. Attachment 6: Required Secondary Undergraduate and Graduate COE Courses, lists these courses for both degree levels. Syllabi for these courses housed within the College of Education can be found at: http://www2.nau.edu/~cee-p/faculty_resources/syllabi/teach_learn.php. Syllabi for required courses of all programs were available for the BOE team to review (Exhibit Overview 5). Because other secondary programs offer graduate level courses within the content department for initial master's candidates, their submitted programs of study reflected differences between BSEd and initial MEd candidate requirements. Because the other content areas have graduate level courses for their MEd initial candidates, and the respective SPAs for physical education and modern languages perceived the lack of graduate rigor in the content to be problematic for these programs, these two programs are in the process of addressing the issue. The physical education program is adding graduate level co-convened courses within the physical education initial MEd program of study which will contain key assessments that are more rigorous than those used in the BSEd program. These program changes will be included in the revised physical education MEd SPA report, which will be submitted in September, 2009 (please refer to documentation provided in Attachment 7: Response to NASPE Areas for Improvement). The Modern Languages MEd lead program faculty member will be addressing their program's SPA concerns in their revised report due September 15, resulting in either development of graduate-level courses and coursework or a withdrawal of the Modern Languages MEd with certification program. Nevertheless, the report has alerted us to the potential danger of diluting the rigor of our MEd programs. This was discussed during the April PEU Steering Committee meeting, and is scheduled for the committee to address early in the fall 2009 semester. We will review the course syllabi, key assessments, culminating experiences, and programs of study for all programs offering BSEd and initial MEd degrees, in order to make changes where necessary to ensure and document the MEd programs have appropriate rigor.

End of Third Paragraph:

"...For Assessment #1 in physical education, there is an open book exam consisting of 23 questions; only 75 percent of candidates passed on their initial attempt. ..."

Rejoinder: The physical education program has discontinued the use of this assessment and has substituted a portion in the unit project to measure candidates' content knowledge (documented in Attachment 7). Although this was not highlighted in the institutional report, this statement was made in the physical education program data for content displayed in the exhibit room (Exhibit 1.2a10, Physical Education Content and Pedagogy, first tab, pedagogy). According to the SPA reviewers' report of 1/24/2009, the Content Knowledge standard was met with the revised assessments.

Fourth Paragraph:

"The unit presented data from the Arizona Educational Proficiency Assessment (presented in Table 4 on page 15 of the IR) for initial candidates The pass rates for all programs except business education were above 80 percent; the business education pass rate was 67 percent."

Rejoinder: Between fall 2006 and spring 2008, six programs had fewer than 10 candidates take the Arizona Educational Proficiency Assessment (AEPA) exam. Although we were not required to present data for programs with fewer than 10 test takers, we chose to do so in order to represent all programs having AEPA exams. During the period under review, there were only three candidates who took the business AEPA exam and two passed, resulting in the 67% pass rate.

Summary of Findings for Advanced Teacher Preparation (page 7):

First paragraph:

“The IR states that the unit offers advanced teacher preparation programs in elementary education, secondary education, and science teaching. Information gained onsite through interviews and documents suggest that there are also advanced programs in bilingual/multicultural education and early childhood education.”

Rejoinder: As mentioned previously, the bilingual/multicultural education program was considered by TESOL as an initial program, and was therefore originally submitted in the institutional report as such. The BOE team suggested it be considered an advanced teacher program, and we have reclassified it as such. The advanced early childhood education program is in transition from a program that serves a broad constituency including a large percentage of candidates who are not interested in P-3 education, to developing two strands: one for these “non-school professionals” and a separate strand that will focus on advancing the preparation for those working in P-3 school situations. A SPA report for this program will be submitted when two years’ data have been collected.

Summary of Findings for Advanced Teacher Preparation (page 7): Second Paragraph;

and

Summary of Findings for Advanced Teacher Preparation (page 7): Fourth Paragraph:

“Data from the 2008 teacher alumni survey (presented in table 1A.6.1) indicate ... However, these data were not disaggregated, and the response rate was only 8.7 percent.”

Rejoinder: Although the response rate was low, we do not know the exact response rate and suspect it was higher than stated. This is due to the fact that while several mailed invitations to participate in the survey were returned as undeliverable, there may have been numerous surveys that went to incorrect addresses and were not returned. Therefore, we are not confident in the number of alumni who received invitations to participate in the survey. This was explained in the institutional report the first time the alumni survey and response rate were discussed (Standard 1A.6, second paragraph pages 18 - 19), and referred to each subsequent time results from this survey were presented. We are seeking ways to enhance the university's capacity to retain accurate contact information for alumni.

1b. Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Skills for Teacher Candidates

Summary of Findings for Advanced Teacher Preparation (page 8)

First paragraph:

“...Feedback from SPA reports indicates, however, a general lack of data to illustrate results of assessments of candidate performance.”

Rejoinder: Please refer to the rejoinder for 1a. Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates (page 6), First paragraph

First paragraph:

“... Candidates in initial programs which do not have national recognition (i.e., art, family and consumer science, and career and technical education) are assessed by measures similar to those listed above. For example, the family and consumer sciences and career and technical education faculty member presented an extensive 2006 – 2008 program evaluation report during a faculty interview (labeled Additional Exhibit 1).”

Rejoinder: The four initial programs that did not undergo national review submitted reports similar to the SPA reports to the unit and to the University Office of Academic Assessment for review by the University Assessment Committee. These were included as hard copy reports in the physical exhibit room. We understand the tremendous challenge for team members to study all the exhibits. The “Additional Exhibit 1” given to the team by a career and technical education faculty member, however, was a duplication of the materials already housed in the exhibit room for family and consumer sciences, industrial technology education and business education, and should not be considered an additional exhibit.

Third paragraph:

“...Among the teacher alumni surveyed, 81 percent believed they were adequately or well prepared to plan and instruct; no N was provided (Exhibit 1B.4.2). ...”

Rejoinder: This survey was first discussed under Standard 1A.6 (pages 18 - 19, and Exhibit 1A.6.1) and the subsequent discussions of the survey results directed the reader to that section specifically for response rate and rating scale information. The first table cited from the survey (Exhibit 1A.6.1) included the N, which was 582. We should have also included it in Exhibit 1B.4.2.

Summary of Findings for Advanced Teacher Preparation (page 7): Second Paragraph, for a detailed explanation.)

Fourth paragraph:

“Candidates in elementary education, special education, and secondary education demonstrate their ability to integrate technology through educational technology courses. ... No information was listed for candidates in other initial programs.”

Rejoinder: The only initial program not included under the categories of elementary education, special education and secondary education is early childhood education. Because the recently developed programs at NAU were held to 120 credit hours, and there are several state

requirements for this program, the early childhood program faculty members were not able to require a course specific to technology. They do, however, realize the importance of teaching their candidates to incorporate technology in their teaching, and integrate the instruction and use of technology skills throughout the courses in the program. A list of such experiences is noted in Attachment 8: Early Childhood Technology Experiences. The early childhood faculty is aware that the technology competencies they teach should be made more apparent and standardized, and it is in the process of including specific technology competencies in syllabi.

1c. Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills for Teacher Candidates

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 9)

First paragraph:

“... However, descriptions of assessments for secondary, elementary, special, bilingual/multicultural, and early childhood education programs were presented; evidence for physical education was aggregated within secondary education statistics.”

Rejoinder: The data for all secondary programs were aggregated for key assessments housed in College of Education secondary courses, as candidates from all secondary programs take those courses together. Additionally, data from student teaching assessments were aggregated for all secondary education majors in the report. Therefore, it seems unnecessary to mention that physical education data were aggregated with other secondary education data. Tables displaying disaggregated data from key assessments for every program (including physical education) were in the electronic exhibit room (Exhibit 1.2a01 – 1.2a14). These included student teaching data disaggregated by program.

First paragraph:

“The unit assesses candidates’ professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills through course-based assignments and experiences. ... The family and consumer sciences and career and technical education faculty member presented an extensive 2006 – 2008 program evaluation report during a faculty interview (labeled Additional Exhibit 1).”

Rejoinder: Please refer to the rejoinder for 1b. Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Skills for Teacher Candidates (page 8), Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation: First paragraph.

Second Paragraph:

“In the other initial programs, candidates demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a "signature assignment" using key assessments in their educational psychology course. ...”

Rejoinder: All initial teacher candidates are required to take the educational psychology course and complete the key assessments. Therefore, candidates in the career and technical education programs: family and consumer science, industrial technology, and business education would be included in the data presented for the key assessments housed in that course.

Summary of Findings for Advanced Teacher Preparation:

First paragraph:

“... Candidates’ knowledge and skills relevant to these (NBPTS) propositions are evaluated through a curricular unit plan project and a culminating presentation project. These projects require that the candidates demonstrate competency in selected NBPTS components. No specific data were presented to explain the outcomes of these key assessments. However, the IR reports that 85 candidates were assessed using NBPTS propositions aligned to “signature assignments” across all programs.”

Rejoinder: Data for these assignments were included in the electronic exhibit room under Exhibits 1.2b01 – 1.2b04. These data were presented in rubrics organized in multiple spreadsheets by assessment for both elementary and secondary advanced teacher programs. Each spreadsheet included the data from one assessment by semester and site presented in rubric format. Each rubric referred to the NBPTS standard measured. In order to comply with the allowable number of pages for attachments in the rejoinder, one representative page from the data tables for pedagogical and professional knowledge that were included as exhibits for elementary advanced programs and secondary advanced programs are in Attachment 9, Advanced Elementary Pedagogical Data and Attachment 10, Advanced Secondary Pedagogical Data.

1e. Knowledge and Skills for Other School Professionals

Summary of Findings for the Preparation of Other School Professionals (Page 12)

Second Paragraph:

“The unit offers a program leading to the principal certificate in educational leadership. This program is to respond to a conditions report to ELCC by February 2010. Concerns included lack of disaggregated data by delivery site and lack of information on how candidates who are not doing well are remediated. In addition, inter-rater reliability for the 24 different sites at which the program is offered was not addressed in the initial report submission.”

Rejoinder: In the response to conditions report submitted in February 2009, the data were disaggregated by the site groupings agreed upon with NCATE: Phoenix, Tucson, and rural. The data were reported as such in the electronic exhibit room in Exhibit 1.2b05 and Exhibit 1.2b06. In order to comply with the allowable number of pages in the rejoinder, one representative page from these exhibits for the principal certification and MEd programs are found in Attachment 11: Principal Certification Data and Attachment 12: Principal MEd Data. Most of the concern in the SPA review was focused on better alignment with ELCC standards and the disaggregation of data. The EDL faculty has been refining their assessments and data collection methods (submitted in the response to conditions in February). Once the changes have been implemented and the faculty discovers areas in which candidates need remediation, a plan can be developed for this. Also, a mentoring system has been implemented within the educational leadership department by which full-time faculty mentor part-time faculty in evaluating key assessments and use the rubrics appropriately (also addressed in the revised SPA report).

Second Paragraph:

“... The program has an 80 percent pass rate on the state licensure test.”

Rejoinder: The pass rate for the state licensure test included in the exhibit room for 2007-2008 was 83.5% (Exhibit 1.3b State Licensure Scores by Program Advanced Programs).

Second Paragraph:

“... data for the principal certificate program were not disaggregated from data for this master’s program.”

Rejoinder: Although data for these two programs were not disaggregated in the initial SPA report, they were disaggregated for the response to conditions report and disaggregated data were included in the electronic exhibit room during the site visit (Exhibit 1.2b05 and Exhibit 1.2b06). These are found in Attachment 11: Principal Certification Data and Attachment 12: Principal MEd Data.

Second Paragraph:

“Finally, the unit offers a master’s degree in educational leadership for district-level administrators.”

Rejoinder: The unit actually offers a certificate in educational leadership at the district level for school superintendents, not a master's degree. This error probably should have been caught in the factual error review.

Second Paragraph:

“Concerns expressed by the reviewers included that data were unclear and that assignments and assessments were the same for those in the building-level program in some instances. Data for building-level program candidates were not disaggregated from data for district-level candidates.”

Rejoinder: Assessments for building level and district level candidates were similar or the same and the data were not disaggregated in the original SPA report. Different courses and assessments were developed for the district level program, which were included in the revised district level SPA report. These new assessments were also included in the electronic exhibit room (Exhibits 1.1b01 - 1.1b13 for the principal programs, and Exhibits 1.1b14 - 1.1b22 for the superintendent programs). Because many of the district level assessments were new this semester, few data have been available to report for the district level candidates. In the response to conditions and revised SPA reports (and in the electronic exhibit room), data for the district level candidates, MEd principal candidates and certificate principal candidates were all disaggregated.

Second Paragraph:

“while responses were generally positive, the response rate was 6.6%.” (This is also mentioned under Standard 1f, Student Learning for Other School Professionals, Summary of Findings for the Preparation of Other School Professionals, Third paragraph.)

Rejoinder: the same scenario for the teacher alumni survey applies to the administrator alumni survey. We are not confident in the response rate because we do not know how many alumni received invitations to participate. As with the teachers’ alumni survey, this was explained in the report. We do acknowledge, however, that even with an adjustment for undelivered survey

invitations, the percentage of alumni that participated in the survey was lower than we would like, and we will work with the NAU alumni office to better track contact information of our graduates.

Fourth paragraph:

“... Reviewers suggested that it was unclear how candidates in the technology facilitator program assist teachers in using technology to improve learning.”

Rejoinder: This comment was taken from the review of ISTE Standard IV. Since the assessments used for this were taken from assignments in two foundations courses, these may not be appropriate to measure facilitators' effect on teachers in using technology to improve learning. The program faculty has been alerted to this issue, and has scheduled to address this during their first area meeting in fall 2009.

Fifth paragraph:

“The School Psychologist program is nationally recognized by NASP. The NASP report in Spring 2006 categorizes this as a Specialist program, but the department website clearly states that this is a master's program with certification.”

Rejoinder: The state of Arizona does not require a specialist certificate in order to practice school psychology. Several years ago, the College of Education began eliminating specialist certifications, developing them into master's degrees. Therefore, the school psychology faculty chose to offer a master's program. NASP, however, only allowed two choices for type of program to be selected in their reporting form: “specialist” and “doctoral”. The master's program was clearly not a doctoral program. So although the requirements surpassed those required of a specialist program, this option was chosen. The master's degree is comprised of 72 credit hours, which is greater than the minimum of 60 hours required for a specialist certificate. The specialist qualifications are met within the master's requirements, and NASP approved the program as such.

Fifth paragraph:

“... A summary of areas for improvement included: “The program appears to prepare school psychologists for a more ‘traditional’ role... The practicum and internship evaluation measures are too generic to ensure that the broad range of skills required by the NASP domains is assessed adequately... If a course in diversity issues is not required, then infusion of content and training throughout the curriculum is all-the-more important... The program is encouraged to make the modifications in the curriculum in areas of intervention, family systems, and crisis intervention.”

Rejoinder: These recommendations, from the NASP report, have been reviewed by the faculty and curricular changes have been put in place to remedy the issues. For example, new practicum and internship evaluation forms that are more comprehensive and are aligned with the NASP standards have been developed and in use for three years. The specific components of these field experiences were documented in Exhibit 3.5b2, Description of Field Experiences School Psychology. The infusion of diversity is included in all courses in the program, and is articulated in the syllabi. The EPS 599 School-Based Interventions course addresses the areas of interventions, family systems, and crisis intervention. This course has been taught for two years as a “special topics” course. The faculty will take the course to the graduate curriculum

committee in fall of 2009 to make it a required course in the program of studies for the MA degree and give it a permanent number. Additionally, the program co-sponsored PrePARE crisis intervention training (NASP approved) for candidates last year and plans to offer this on two-year cycles. A certified trainer from Flagstaff Unified School district has agreed to provide it. This would allow all candidates to have the training as they come through each cycle of the program.

Sixth paragraph:

“CACREP accredits the School Counselor program. The on-site visitation for accreditation took place June 5-8, 2005. One concern for the reviewers regarded group counseling. Another concern was that “in emphasizing ‘service provider’ rather than ‘program delivery,’ faculty do not provide students with the opportunity to acquire both knowledge and skills in the areas of program development.” All other standards were met.

Rejoinder: These concerns have been addressed by the school counseling faculty, and acknowledged by CACREP. Attachment 13: School Counseling CACREP Response contains copies of sections submitted to CACREP as a result of their review.

1f. Student Learning for Other School Professionals

Summary of Findings for the Preparation of Other School Professionals (page 14)

Third paragraph:

“For this element, the IR states that “all of our other school professionals programs have undergone national review,” referring to school psychology, school counseling, and speech pathology (p. 34). No additional information regarding “student learning for other school professionals” was available.”

Rejoinder: Perhaps we misunderstood the intent of the directions in the institutional report instructions. When the instructions directed us to address certain sections of Standard 1 for only those programs not having undergone national review, we understood that because NCATE was accepting the national recognition of NASP, CACREP, and ASHA, that programs accredited by these national agencies need not be addressed in those sections. As a result of going through the NCATE process, however, these three clinical programs have begun to consider ways of assessing their candidates’ impact on student learning, and preliminary measures have been put into place. This is an area that we will continue to explore and strengthen.

1g. Professional Dispositions for All Candidates

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 14)

First paragraph, last sentence:

“Some programs are piloting assessment instruments at transition points prior to student teaching, but there is no evidence that dispositions are consistently and regularly assessed prior to student teaching.”

Rejoinder: The unit has made great progress in operationalizing its dispositions, and will continue to move forward in its assessment of them. Consistent assessment of candidate dispositions will be one of the major foci of the professional education unit steering committee and program faculty this coming fall semester.

Second paragraph:

“... Data were presented for art, physical education, family and consumer sciences, and career and technical education in the aggregate, combined with secondary programs.”

Rejoinder: The disposition data presented came from the indicators on the student teaching evaluation form. For the purposes of the unit level institutional report, the data for all secondary education programs were aggregated for BSEd candidates and for initial MEd candidates (Table 3.9a). Since the individual secondary programs have very small numbers of student teachers each semester, it made statistical sense to present them in aggregate. Given that all secondary programs were combined in reporting, we are unsure of the reason for calling attention to the art, physical education, family and consumer sciences, and career and technical education programs.

Summary of Findings for the Preparation of Other School Professionals

“There were no data to show use of dispositional assessment tools for other school professionals. If Exhibit 1G2.1 applies not only to advanced programs for teachers but also to advanced programs for other school professionals, a tool is in development.”

Rejoinder: Exhibit 1G2.1 is the initiation of a form that can be adapted to use universally by advanced teacher and other school professionals programs. With the exception of the first descriptor, which will be modified for other school professionals, all others can be interpreted in light of any advanced programs' outcomes. The dispositional data presented for other school professionals were not consistent between programs, as some programs were further along than others in their development of assessment instruments. We will continue to work to apply our dispositions appropriately to a variety of advanced programs and assess them accordingly.

Standard 1 AFIs (page 16)

“(Initial) The modern languages program and the physical education program are insufficiently developed at the master’s level.”

Rejoinder: We concur with this evaluation. The initial physical education MEd program faculty has made revisions to their program to include graduate level courses and differentiated coursework in co-convened courses in their content area (this was already in place for courses their candidates took from the College of Education). This is documented in Attachment 7: Response to NASPE Areas for Improvement, which will be submitted to NASPE by September 15, 2009. The modern languages faculty is aware of these issues relative to their initial MEd programs, and will be in the process of evaluating their capacity to address the concerns. By September 15, 2009, depending on the analysis, the faculty will either submit a plan to ACTFL or discontinue the programs. Please refer to the rejoinder for 1a. Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates, Third paragraph for more specific information regarding how we are addressing this concern.

“(Advanced) The unit does not assess dispositions for candidates in advanced programs for teachers and for candidates in other school personnel programs.”

Rejoinder: We also concur with this evaluation. This issue was discussed at the April meeting of the PEU Steering Committee. The committee has placed the assessment of dispositions of candidates in advanced programs on the agenda of the first meeting in fall 2009. A generic template for advanced programs has been developed which can be modified to accommodate individual programs (please refer to the rejoinder for Summary of Findings for the Preparation of Other School Professionals). Advanced program faculty will be working to modify this form to their respective programs and developing implementation plans beginning in the fall 2009 semester.

2a. Assessment System

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 17)

First paragraph

“... There was little evidence that the P-12 partners were involved in the creation of the assessment system or included in the revision/improvement of the unit assessment system.”

Rejoinder: Participation of our K-12 partners included involvement of the assistant school superintendent for Flagstaff Unified School District’s membership on and participation in the PEU Steering Committee. This committee is charged with oversight of the conceptual framework and the overarching assessment system, which included the development of these in prior years. Additionally, the State Advisory Council to the PEU is comprised of representatives from P-12 schools, educational organizations, and businesses from across the state. Currently, our advisory board includes practicing teachers, a counselor, a school board member, representatives from teachers associations, and numerous retired teachers and administrators. This advisory board was actively involved in developing the Conceptual Framework.

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 17)

Second paragraph:

“...There is little evidence showing that P-12 partners receive any data, with the exception of their participation in the student teaching evaluations.”

Rejoinder: The same representation of P-12 partners as discussed earlier share in data analyses and discussions. This comes through mechanisms of data discussions during the PEU Steering Committee meetings and through presentations of data and discussions at State Advisory Council meetings, held twice a year. Data presentations made during these meetings were included in the exhibit room, under assessment minutes, in Exhibit 2.4a04 (Advisory Council Meeting minutes) and Exhibits 2.4d07-2.4d10 (PEU Steering Committee meeting minutes), and in the institutional report under Exhibit 2C5.1, Steering Committee Presentation. Licensure exam scores are shared with these groups by program, and commonly aggregate secondary programs because of small numbers of candidates completing each year in several programs. Additionally, this information is shared in alumni newsletters. As a unit, we take the recommendation from our visiting team as guidance to extend the sharing of data with partners

through additional venues, and we will be establishing such venues in the coming academic year.

Second paragraph:

“There was little evidence in interviews that candidates know the conceptual framework and how it informs evaluations and assessments.”

Rejoinder: Unfortunately, there was limited interaction between the BOE team and our candidates after the initial candidate poster session. We believe that the degree to which our candidates are familiar with the conceptual framework and how it informs assessments varies. While some of our candidates are not very familiar with these, others could explain many details of the framework and assessments. This is an area we have been working to improve and will continue to pursue. We involve those staff members who recruit candidates, our advisors, our faculty members, staff and administrators in outreach efforts concerning the conceptual framework. The PEU Steering Committee discussed this in the May meeting, and decided to attend to developing means by which the conceptual framework can be further integrated and “lived” in what we do in the fall 2009 meetings.

Fifth paragraph:

“It was unclear how evaluation measures assess unit operations.”

Rejoinder: See Standard 2 AFIs.

Sixth paragraph:

“The unit assessment system and the steps for maintaining and improving the assessment system for initial teacher preparation programs are limited to the COE main campus and do not include the extended campuses or distance learning programs.”

Rejoinder: While involving faculty at extended campuses (previously referred to as distance learning programs) in any aspect of governance to the same degree as those on the Flagstaff campus is challenging, the faculty at extended campuses are involved in implementing the assessment system as well as in maintaining and improving it. The initial teacher preparation programs that are offered either partially or exclusively at extended sites are elementary education, science education, the three programs included in “career and technical education,” and history education. The program faculty at the extended sites were required to be involved in the development and implementation of the assessment system at the program level, by participating in both full and departmental mandatory faculty meetings during which the assessment system was discussed via telephone conferencing, interactive television, and/or face-to-face meetings. Distance faculty participation was documented in the BOE report under Standard 6c, Summary of Findings for All Levels, at the end of the third paragraph. Additionally, the career and technical education faculty member housed at an extended campus is a member of the PEU steering committee.

2b. Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 18)

Third paragraph:

“Candidate progression data for the initial early childhood, elementary, and special education programs are entered by hand into an older version of Filemaker Pro used only by and managed by the Office of Student Services. The secondary programs do not use this system as they are not housed in the COE. When a candidate is ready to student teach, he/she submits a paper application to the director of field experiences, who monitors all initial candidates’ admission to student teaching regardless of program and hand-enters the paper application information into Filemaker Pro. This system is not compatible with TaskStream or other databases.”

Rejoinder: We have long recognized the need for an upgraded system to manage candidate data, and began working on such as system during the spring of 2007. Although we met with obstacles along the way, we can now say that we are well on our way to the completion of an electronic assessment system that will manage all candidate records from application through completion. This system will have the capacity to take data from central databases on campus (such as course grades) and will interact with data from our TaskStream portfolio system. We plan on beginning to use this system with initial program applicants fall 2009, and extending its use to advanced teacher and other school professional programs the following year. An outline of this upgraded assessment system component was given to the Standard 2 team member during the site visit and is attached (see Attachment 14: Professional Education Unit Assessment System).

Fourth paragraph:

“Scores on licensure exams are also analyzed and reported annually in aggregate and disaggregate form to the faculty. There is no evidence that the P-12 partners receive these reports.”

Rejoinder: Please refer to the rejoinder for 2a. Assessment System, Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 17), Second paragraph.

Fifth paragraph:

“Faculty performance data include feedback from candidates as well as reflections from faculty members regarding their teaching effectiveness, scholarly activity, etc. This information is collected in portfolio form and submitted to the appropriate department chair. It is unclear as to whether these portfolios are paper or electronic.”

Rejoinder: We are in the process of moving from paper portfolios to electronic portfolios within the College of Education. Currently, almost all portfolios are in paper form, with some faculty members volunteering to submit electronic portfolios. The university system, however, works through paper portfolios and routing forms.

Summary of Findings for Advanced Teacher Preparation and/or the Preparation of Other School Professionals (page 19)

First paragraph:

“The content area advisor in which the program resides is responsible for ensuring these candidates demonstrate appropriate skills and dispositions as required by their respective professional associations. A faculty member is responsible for ensuring candidates meet transition point criteria. There are no checks and balances among advising faculty members, no central place where these progression data are housed, and no measure of consistency among faculty advisors to ensure candidates are meeting the same criteria at these transition points.”

Rejoinder: Please refer to Standard 2 AFI #1.

2c. Use of Data for Program Improvement

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 20)

First paragraph (last sentence):

“...There is no evidence of a standardized program improvement plan for initial or advanced programs.”

Rejoinder: We realize the need for this and will begin investigating methods through which this can be accomplished beginning fall 2009. While the various programs do use data to enhance and alter their programs, the standardization of reporting and monitoring this process will be a positive addition to our system.

Third paragraph (last sentence):

“There is no evidence to support ‘clearer articulation of the relationship to courses’ as stated in the IR (p. 56).

Rejoinder: The articulation of relationships among methods courses and field experiences has been improving steadily. The evidence of this “clearer articulation” is found in comparing a full set of course syllabi from several years ago with those in place now (too many attachments for a rejoinder). Still, we recognize that this documentation and articulation will be important practices to enhance in future reports.

Overall Assessment of Standard (page 20)

“The unit does not currently have a mechanism by which to assess unit operations. While the unit is chiefly housed in the College of Education, programs outside the COE are less likely to be viewed as essential to a comprehensive review of unit operations. The unit relies on national accreditation for one initial and several advanced/other school professionals programs and does not capture candidate data to include in an overall review of the unit.”

Rejoinder: Please refer to Standard 2 AFI #2.

Standard 2 AFIs

“(Advanced) The unit does not effectively utilize the assessment system to monitor candidate progress in advanced teacher programs and other school personnel programs.”

Rejoinder: Although measures are in place within a program to ensure key assessment data (housed in TaskStream) are acceptable to allow advanced candidates to progress through transition points, we understand that the system we use to manage our advanced program candidate information needs to be improved. The same electronic assessment system that was discussed under initial programs will be expanded to include all advanced programs as well. Plans for this are included in the master assessment system database outline, formerly presented in Attachment 14: Professional Education Unit Assessment System.

“(Initial and Advanced) There is not a mechanism by which unit operations are systematically and regularly assessed.”

Rejoinder: Our understanding of "unit operations" is that this is a broad category. Some components of our operations are regularly assessed, such as the performance of faculty members or the performance of candidates at transition points. We realize the need for expanding this system, and especially for drawing in programs that have not progressed as far in such assessment. This is a high-priority matter for our PEU Steering Committee, and the committee will begin investigating methods through which this can be accomplished beginning fall 2009, with a mandate to establish such a system within the next academic year.

Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

3a. Collaboration between Unit and School Partners

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 22)

First paragraph:

“Review of documentation and interviews provided evidence that the elementary program is required to document field experience placement in TaskStream in regard to diversity. Evidence to support this in the other initial programs was not found.”

Rejoinder: This is correct, although the special education BSEd program is a dual major with elementary education, meaning that candidates in the special education program would also have diversity in their fieldwork experiences tracked in their elementary placements. We recognize we need to use this system for all initial programs, and will initiate this throughout the system this beginning fall 2009.

3b. Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 23)

First paragraph:

This paragraph referred to the inefficiency of our current candidate management system. This was addressed under 2b. Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation, Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation, Third paragraph.

Rejoinder: We have developed a system that will electronically manage candidate data from the point of application to the program through program completion. This system will interact with other electronic databases and the university data warehouse (please refer to Attachment 14: Professional Education Unit Assessment System). Initial implementation of this system will begin fall 2009, with expansions made in spring 2010. Advanced programs will then be added to this system.

Standard 4: Diversity

4d. Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation (page 29)

First paragraph:

“Most candidates in the traditional and the distance learning program are provided opportunities to work with students of diverse backgrounds, including English language learners and students with disabilities. ... At this point, only the Elementary Education program has a system for tracking placements to ensure that each candidate has had experiences with diversity in the classroom.”

Rejoinder: Please refer to the rejoinder for Standard 4 AFI.

Standard 4 AFI:

“(Initial) The unit does not have a system in place to insure all candidates have diverse field placements, other than for the elementary education program.”

Rejoinder: This issue was addressed under 3a. Collaboration between Unit and School Partners, Summary of Findings for Initial Teacher Preparation, First paragraph. We agree that all programs need to use a common system to track diversity of fieldwork placements, and will begin the process to address this issue in fall 2009.

Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Information reported in the Institutional Report for Standard 5 was validated in the exhibits and interviews (page 31). This was also referred to in Standard 5, “Corrections to the Institutional Report”

“The number of faculty members as reported by the unit varied within the IR tables, and numbers were not the same as those that had been previously reported on the NCATE

institutional report. After many attempts to justify the figures, the team decided to use the numbers that had been reported to NCATE in the FY 2008 annual report. Subsequently, the team was unable to use some of the data that were provided by the unit regarding location of faculty and other demographics.”

Rejoinder: There were different types of information needed when reporting faculty in the institutional report and required exhibits. For example, Table 1 asked for numbers of faculty in various ranks and status within the PEU. These data were reported for two academic years (2007/2008 and 2008/2009). Table 8 asked for faculty demographic information by status by faculty teaching in initial and advanced programs within the PEU. If faculty members teach in both levels of programs, they were to be reported in both columns. We reported these data for the same time periods as for Table 1, but almost all of our tenure/tenure track faculty members teach courses in both initial and advanced programs, so the number should not have equated to those in Table 1. Table 11, on the other hand, asks for much more extensive data on faculty productivity, including individual members’ scholarship and service contributions. Because we have a large faculty within the PEU, it would have been quite unwieldy to report two years’ data on every faculty member reported in Tables 1 and 8. Upon recommendation from the BOE team chair, we reported this information for the current semester only, as it served as a good representation of prior semesters. Because this current semester was not the same semester as any included in Tables 1 and 8, and Tables 1 and 8 represented fall, spring and summer semester faculty as opposed to only those teaching during a single spring semester, the faculty numbers were different. Additionally, some programs offer several courses during the summer semester, which often involve part-time faculty members who did not teach during the previous academic year, making comparisons of faculty numbers by semester problematic. Considering the fact that these three tables were designed to demonstrate unique faculty information, and not necessarily faculty numbers, the numbers presented in each should not have been expected to match. These discrepancies, however, have caused us to realize that we do not have an efficient mechanism by which to collect data centrally on faculty members across the PEU both on a semester and yearly basis. We have met with administrators in the office of Planning and Institutional Research to begin to develop ways to address this dilemma.

5a. Qualified Faculty

Summary of Findings for ALL Levels (page 31)

Second paragraph:

“... The SPA report on physical education, offered at the initial level in both undergraduate and graduate programs, also noted that only two faculty cite experience at the K-12 level and that eight of the faculty mentioned have doctorates in a variety of specialties other than physical education, including computer education, English, and educational psychology.”

Rejoinder: We understood that faculty included the SPA reports should be any faculty members who taught education-related courses in the program candidates take. This would include faculty who taught courses that program candidates take within the College of Education. We were also instructed to include administrators of these programs. So while the physical education program listed their program faculty members, they also listed faculty members who taught general pedagogy courses in the College of Education and administrators both within their department and the College of Education. The faculty members whose doctorates were in areas not related to physical education are those who taught education courses or who are

administrators in the College of Education. The one exception to this is a faculty member whose doctorate was in education, but his emphasis within his degree was physical education.

5b. Modeling Best Professional Practices in Teaching

Summary of Findings for ALL Levels (page 32)

First paragraph:

“Most syllabi include a statement of the conceptual framework, but candidates do not know the relationship of the framework to their study and field experiences.”

Rejoinder: As discussed under Standard 2b, the interaction between the BOE team and our candidates was limited, so there was little opportunity to discuss this issue with candidates. We believe the degree to which candidates understand the relationship between the conceptual framework and their study and fieldwork experiences varies. We do, however, agree that this is an area that we need to continually strive to improve, and the PEU Steering Committee welcomes the opportunity to address this concern.

Standard 5 Corrections to the Institutional Report (page 37)

“Table 1 - inconsistent with information provided in other reports. As noted in Element 5.1, the most consistent faculty data provided came from the NCATE institutional report FY2008. Data reported in Table 1 of the IR was not consistent with that reported in Standards 4 and 5, nor with additional information provided during the on-site visit.”

Rejoinder: Please refer to the rejoinder for “Information Reported in the Institutional Report for Standard 5 was Validated in the Exhibits and Interviews” section.

Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

6a. Unit Leadership and Authority

Summary of Findings for ALL Levels (page 37)

Last Paragraph:

“...The team understood that membership of USTEC included COE faculty who teach secondary education coursework, but the set of factual corrections from the unit suggests that the USTEC “only involves secondary education faculty from across the university.””

Rejoinder: A point of clarification – USTEC (the university secondary teacher education council) includes representation from all secondary education programs across the campus, as opposed to representation from all teacher preparation programs in the PEU (which appeared to us to be the intent of the statement made in the first BOE report). USTEC also includes representation from the faculty who teach courses common to all secondary initial programs in the PEU who are housed in the college of education. The statement in the original draft of the report led us to believe this group was cited to represent a larger contingency than it actually does.

Standard 6 AFI:

“The unit lacks the authority and structure to approve and manage curriculum decisions for all of its programs. “

Rejoinder: This statement is correct. The unit has mechanisms in place to manage curricular decisions within the College of Education, but for programs housed in other colleges, there has not been a requirement for curricular decisions to be approved by the PEU. The PEU Steering Committee discussed this in its May (2009) meeting. The committee members believe a mechanism can be developed by which all curricular changes would be approved through this committee. The committee will consider and recommend a revision to the curricular process in the fall of 2009 to ensure that the PEU has oversight of all curricular decisions affecting professional education programs.