

South Dakota
Board of Examiner Report
for Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) approval

SD State Board of Examiners

Team:

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Accreditation Visit to:

Augustana University

Date: October 18-20, 2020

Type of Visit:

- First
- Continuing
- Combination
- Probation
- Focused

Summary for Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)

Standards		Team Findings	
		Initial	Advanced
1	EPP's Mission, Conceptual Framework, and Responsibility	M	
2	Preparation of Candidates in Teacher Education	M	
3	Assessment System and EPP Evaluation	M	
4	Field Experiences and Clinical Practice	M	

M = Standard Met
 NM = Standard Not Met
 NA = Not Applicable

Standard 1

EPP Mission, Conceptual Framework, and Responsibility

Higher education programs for the preparation of education personnel shall operate under a written mission statement. The EPP's statements of goals and program objectives, consistent with the mission statement, shall serve as a basis for decision making regarding policies affecting all of the programs for the preparation of education personnel and shall assure that education graduates are prepared to serve in P-12 schools.

This section sets the context for the visit. It should clearly state the mission of the EPP. It should describe the characteristics of the EPP and identify and describe any branch campuses, off-campus sites, alternate route programs, and distance learning programs for professional school personnel. This section also provides an overview of the EPP's conceptual framework. The overview should include a brief description of the framework and its development.

Information reported in the Self-Study report for Standard 1 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the SSR that are incorrect.)

Yes No

C.1.1 EPP Mission	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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Augustana's Lutheran Scandinavian roots can be traced back to 1835 in Hillsboro, Illinois. A developing nation, political unrest and changes in the church all attributed to its creation. Founded in 1860 as Augustana Seminary, the current university has undergone numerous changes since that time, most recently changing its name from Augustana College to Augustana University in 2015.

Augustana University is a private, selective, comprehensive university with a foundation in liberal arts. Offering more than 100 majors, the university serves a population of over 2100 students. The Divisional organization of the university consists of the Humanities, the Social Sciences, and the Natural Sciences with the Education Department being housed within the Social Sciences Division. Collaborating with other departments, the Education Department currently offers 16 education preparation areas at the initial certification level, all of which were approved by the SD DOE through individual program reports


The mission of the EPP is clearly stated as "to empower students with the tools needed to create learning environments that ensure belonging, mastery, independence and generosity". It is illustrated through the Circle of Courage which promotes the integration of Western educational thought with Native American Culture. This mission aligns with and is driven by the overall university mission statement, "to provide education of enduring worth in times of change by blending the broad learning experiences of the liberal arts with the student's individual professional goals by relating Christian faith to learning".

C.1.2 Conceptual Framework	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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The EPPs Conceptual Framework builds upon the mission through the Circle of Courage and encompasses four core values: Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity.


The EPP incorporates these values into their curriculum while aligning with the professional competencies prescribed by InTASC (Interstate Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium) principles and the performance indicators of the Danielson Framework. There was strong evidence of the conceptual framework represented in their print materials and throughout the online presence (example from EPP webpage below). Interviews across the board confirmed that faculty and students alike had a clear understanding of the conceptual framework. It was also evident that the mission and framework are embedded in the coursework both in curriculum and student assignments. One specific example requires students to relate created lesson plans to one of the four quadrants of the Circle of Courage. The EPP is encouraged to continue documenting evidence of the impact of the Conceptual Framework for candidates and the program.

*Taken from EPP webpage: <http://www.augie.edu/academics/education/circle-courage>




™ Our conceptual framework, the **Circle of Courage**, is based on a model of youth empowerment supported by contemporary research, the heritage of early youth work pioneers and Native American philosophies of child care. The model is encompassed in four core values: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. The central theme of this model is that a set of shared values must exist in any community of learners, including public education and teacher training institutions, to create environments that ultimately benefit society. The term reclaiming is used in this model because reclaiming environments meet the needs of both the individual and society. The Teacher Education Program strives to create a reclaiming environment for its teacher candidates and dispose them to create classrooms and schools that exemplify all four values of the Circle of Courage.

Belonging




Belonging, the first value in the Circle of Courage, recognizes that students need to attach to caring adults in order to begin the process of learning and incorporate basic social values.

Mastery



Mastery, the second value in the Circle of Courage Model, promotes the belief that teacher candidates need to develop social, intellectual, and academic competence if they are to become capable and responsible citizens.

Independence



Independence, the third value in the Circle of Courage model, contends that to develop positive autonomy and interdependence, individuals must be secure in the guidance of caring adults and believe they have some power over their world.



Generosity

Generosity is the fourth value in the Circle of Courage and advocates that a positive learning environment must be characterized by a climate of caring so that all involved support one another and cooperate in making their social and academic experiences meaningful.

Summary of Strengths: The EPP has a strong framework that clearly influences all aspects of the department. There is also strong collaboration with faculty from other divisions as well.

Areas for Improvement: None

Rationale: NA

Recommendation: Standard Met

Corrections to the Self Study Report: None

EPP Rejoinder: None

Standard 2

Preparation of Candidates in Teacher Education

The EPP shall print and distribute a policy with specific admission standards and procedures that govern student recruitment and acceptance into the preparation programs. The EPP shall provide written verification that candidates are informed about state laws and rules that govern the issuance of certificates for educational personnel.

The EPP shall prepare candidates to work in a school as a teacher, administrator or school service specialist. These candidates must know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge and skills necessary to help all students learn. Assessments shall be given to the candidate to ensure the candidate meets professional, state, and EPP standards.

Information reported in the Self-Study report for Standard 2 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the SSR that are incorrect.)

Yes No

C.2.1 Candidate Knowledge and Skills	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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Six key assessments are included to demonstrate teacher candidates' knowledge and skills. The pass rates for the Praxis Content exams are high, with close to 100% pass rates for all exams. These results indicate that teacher candidates possess the content knowledge necessary for their future profession and that they are well-prepared in their specific content areas.

Pass rates for the Praxis pedagogical tests are high, with close to 100% pass rates on all exams. These results indicate that students are able to demonstrate a solid preparation in pedagogy.

Interviews with current and former students indicated that the performance-based assessments were beneficial in furthering students' understanding of important skills and knowledge. Faculty interviews clearly described the use of these assessment results to consider and implement data-driven changes within the program.

The data, along with interviews, indicates that improvement in preparation in the areas of classroom management and assessment are needed. The education department has indicated that these improvements, along with courses to address this need, were implemented in the 2019-2020 academic year and continued to be monitored.

C.2.2 InTASC Standards	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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Assessments and courses are clearly aligned with the InTASC standards. The six key assessments, along with the data, demonstrate persuasive evidence that teacher candidates are well-prepared for their responsibilities as classroom teachers. Assessment results demonstrate scores above the target rating in almost all reported key assessment data as aligned to the InTASC standards.

An Annual Data Retreat was held before the start of each academic year to discuss the past year's data and to evaluate if any data-driven changes need to be implemented. The process included in the data retreat is intensive and involves all education faculty members. A Data Review Worksheet is completed by faculty and used to determine if there are any trends that would warrant changes in the program. This process has moved to a 5-year cycle.

Lower mean ratings on the use of assessment data, as indicated in Key Assessment #5 Student Teaching Assessment Project, have led the department to curriculum mapping in order to address this area.

Summary of Strengths: The EPP demonstrates strong evidence that they are successfully preparing candidates in teacher education. Assessment results and evaluations are evidence of this preparation. Faculty are included in the data evaluation process to ensure that any areas of weakness are addressed.

Areas for Improvement: None

Rationale: NA

Recommendation: Standard Met

Corrections to the Self Study Report: None

EPP Rejoinder:

C.2.2 The EPP Data Retreat will continue to be held annually to look at EPP Data; the Key Assessment Data Review is moving to a 5-year cycle to better inform analysis of trends and patterns in the data and prepare for Program Review.

Standard 3

Assessment System and EPP Evaluation

The EPP shall develop an assessment system with its professional community that reflects its conceptual framework and professional and state standards. The EPP's system shall include a comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures that shall be used to monitor candidate performance and to manage and improve programs. Decisions about candidate performance shall be based on assessments conducted during admission into programs, at appropriate transition points, and at program completion. The EPP shall take effective steps to eliminate sources of bias in performance assessments and work to establish fair, accurate, and consistent assessments.

The EPP shall regularly and systematically compile, summarize, and analyze data, which shall be used to improve applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate proficiency, and program quality.

The EPP shall regularly and systematically use data, including candidate and other school personnel performance information, to evaluate the efficacy of its courses, programs, and clinical experiences. The EPP shall analyze program evaluation and performance assessment data and initiate changes if necessary. The EPP shall regularly share candidate and faculty assessment data with candidates and faculty to help them reflect on and improve their performance.

Information reported in the Self-Study report for Standard 3 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the SSR that are incorrect.)

Yes No

C.3.1 Assessment System	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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The Assessment System at Augustana University, as evidenced in the Self-Study and through interviews with many stakeholders, is used to determine strengths and areas for improvement within courses and across programs to make continuous advancements in the system. The Assessment System is articulated in a formal document entitled the *EPP Assessment System*. The clearly defined system facilitates continuous and multiple evaluations by reviewing data from student surveys regarding advising and governance and then program quality surveys done by program completers and employers. Student Evaluations of Faculty Instruction are scheduled for each individual faculty member to provide data on the quality of instruction. Additionally, Exit Surveys are conducted each semester by Student Teachers, Cooperating Teachers and by the University Supervisor. Program assessment is conducted externally by the South Dakota Department of Education on a seven-year cycle and internally by the University on a five-year cycle.

The assessment system bases its assessments on institutional, state, and national standards; the Master Alignment Table was updated during the Fall of 2019. Six key assessments (Praxis scores, GPA, Unit Plan, Student Teaching Evaluation, Assessment Project, and PLT scores) are identified and aligned to the ten InTASC Standards. The EPP uses the Danielson Framework for

Student Teaching Performance and Professionalism. The Danielson Framework, as indicated in interviews, provides students with objective expectations for performance and professionalism. This objective framework is also used if students need to make personal/professional decisions or have to be counseled out of the program. *Table 6 - EPP Assessment System: Transition Point Assessments* clearly articulates the five transition points and the assessment indicators at each transition point.

Data for candidates are monitored continuously by reviewing assessments, such as GPA, professional assessments and ePortfolio reviews. The system is evaluated each fall term by faculty using the Data Review Worksheet which is used to make informed decisions for changes. Through documentation and interviews, it is evident that candidates, not only know their subject matter, but can also move theory to practice in P-12 classrooms.

The Assessment Coordinator is responsible to collect and summarize data, to ensure that assessments are fair, free of bias, accurate in measurement of what is taught, and consistent to produce reliable data. In 2018, a formal project was finalized to establish the validity and reliability of the EPP’s performance or key assessments with results detailed in the Key Assessment Report.

There is evidence in the Self-Study that indicates what is being assessed (advising, governance, program quality, faculty teaching effectiveness, student teaching and program effectiveness); how it is assessed (surveys, student evaluations, and an internal program review and an external review by the SD DOE); and when each is assessed. Through documentation and interviews it was evident that satisfaction with assessment practices exists with candidates, committee and board members.

C.3.2 Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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Evidence from the Self-Study Report and through multiple interviews with a variety of internal and external stakeholders indicates that the EPP gathers, aggregates, objectively summarizes, and analyzes data at a variety of checkpoints to make informed decisions.

The Data Packet is used by faculty to summarize mean scores on assessments and to document recommendations for change at the EPP and program level. Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, the department holds a retreat, and the Teacher Education Committee (TEC) receives this packet of information for analysis. The TEC reviews the roster of potential candidates for program admission and admission to student teaching, and also analyzes assessment data for both fall and spring semesters giving evidence that faculty voices are heard and used for evaluative purposes to ensure continuous improvement. Additionally, the Education Department’s Advisory Board has a role in evaluating data regarding the assessment system and for recommending changes.

Candidates’ ePortfolios are used to collect, analyze, and evaluate academic and professional growth at three specific points: 1) program admission; 2) pre-student teaching; and 3) during student teaching. Data reports are generated and analyzed to provide objective evidence specific to each candidate, the program and to the EPP.

The Student Teaching Handbook provides information regarding steps to take if a student is having personal and/or academic problems. It was evident through interviews that students' voices are heard and that there is a strong personal connection to advisors and administrators. The Education Department Chair maintains records of advising and/or complaints that become part of the candidate's advising folder. The data is analyzed and used to make changes to ensure that students have a successful semester.

C.3.3 Use of Data for Program Improvement	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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At the beginning of each academic year, a data retreat is convened to review data from the Data Packets. These packets provide summarized tables of mean scores of assessments from each program's key assessments. Faculty in the EPP and on the TEC review the provided data and complete the Data Review Worksheet to document recommended changes. Faculty, strongly and consistently, voiced their satisfaction that the established process has allowed them to make changes based upon candidates' performance at multiple levels in their program of study.

An exemplary example of how the use of data resulted in program improvement was evident in written documentation regarding lowered trends on assessment indicators of candidates' classroom management and assessment of student learning skills and from candidates' interviews that voiced their lack of confidence when it came to the same two areas. Upon data review and group discussions, the EPP began the journey to create two new courses: EDUC 401 - Classroom Management, that began in the Fall of 2019, and EDUC 375 - Educational Assessment that will be required of candidates beginning in the Spring of 2020. Due to the recent adoption, no data was available.

Summary of Strengths: The EPP's Assessment System is clearly articulated and is analyzing data to make improvements to strengthen programs. The EPP has strong leadership and a shared sense of responsibility to prepare strong candidates to enter the profession.

Areas for Improvement: None

Rationale: NA

Recommendation: Standard Met

Corrections to the Self-Study Report: None

EPP Rejoinder:

C.3.2 There are 2 data packets, the EPP Data Packet which is reviewed by EPP faculty at the annual retreat and the Key Assessment Data Packet which is reviewed by TEC (data on 6 key assessments) who receives the Key Assessment Data Packet at its fall meeting.

C.3.3 The EPP Data Packet is reviewed by EPP faculty at the annual data retreat; TEC reviews the Key Assessment Data Packet which they receive at the fall meeting.

Standard 4

Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The EPP and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school personnel develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills, necessary to help all students learn.

In this section the EPP must include (1) initial and advanced programs for teachers, (2) programs for other school professionals, and (3) off-campus, distance learning, and alternate route programs, noting differences when they exist.

Information reported in the Self-Study report for Standard 4 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the SSR that are incorrect.)

Yes No

C.4.1 Collaboration Between EPP and School Partners	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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The EPP's primary partners are the Sioux Falls School District (SFSD) as well as the faith-based schools in Sioux Falls. Other area schools listed as partners for the field and clinical experiences include Harrisburg, Brandon Valley, Tea, and Baltic.

At the end of each academic term, cooperating teachers, student teachers, and student teacher supervisors complete an Exit Survey. The feedback is used to inform changes to field and clinical experiences. The Education Department Advisory Board also provides input for consideration of recommended changes.

The EPP has an active advisory board that offers feedback, gives suggestions, and is heavily invested in the EPP's mission. Many of those interviewed graduated from the EPP and have a good understanding of the goals and objectives of the unit. Interviews indicate the EPP takes suggestions from the school partners and advisory board members to ensure quality field experiences.

A close working relationship between the EPP and partner schools was evidenced through interviews with current school administrators and teachers. Interviews confirmed the university supervisors and administration of the EPP stay in close contact with the cooperating teachers and administrators during the student teaching experience. Evidence suggests cooperating teachers evaluate student performance in early field experiences as well as student teaching. Concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

The EPP uses a Cooperating Teacher Background form to assist in determining qualifications of the cooperating teacher. Information is gathered on the cooperating teacher's gender, race, contact information, professional training, teaching experience, other professional experience, and experience as a cooperating teacher. The Student Teaching Handbook clearly states the

responsibilities of all involved in the student teacher experience: Cooperating teachers, university supervisors, student teachers, and others associated with ensuring a quality experience.

The EPP utilizes a Student Teaching Agreement that includes the placement information of the student teacher, grade level/ The document is signed by a representative of the district and a representative of the EPP. It also notes the EPP will provide personal information completed by the student teacher, pay for the cooperating teacher stipend, and confer with the student teacher and cooperating teacher on a regular basis.

Based on the evidence provided, it was proven that the EPP collaborates with partner school districts, the Advisory Board, faculty, and other stakeholders to ensure student progression through the programs and overall program success.

C 4.2 Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
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Candidates are evaluated at various points using a Student Teaching Performance and Professionalism Evaluation and Professionalism Evaluation and a Candidate Professionalism Evaluation. Data suggests students are successful and are coached in areas exhibiting any concerns. The cooperating teachers interviewed expressed confidence in using the evaluation tools and felt any issues associated with a field experience (either embedded in courses or during student teaching) were addressed quickly and efficiently in a manner that uplifts the student and helps them rise to a new level of competence.

Candidates complete embedded field experiences with the grade reflecting their performance in both the academic course and field experience. Table 7 on pages 40-43 of the self-study report is a detailed account of field experiences and clinical practice. The capstone experience of student teaching is completed in the last semester of a student’s academic career and encompasses a placement for each major and is 7-8 weeks in length for each placement.

A formal admission process is maintained and students are monitored for successful progression. Candidates submit their intention to student teach a year prior to student teaching; this practice allows the EPP to monitor status and review student information. Students apply and are accepted into student teaching the semester prior to the field experience start date.

The EPP, its school partners, and other members of the professional community design, deliver, and assess pre-student teaching and student teaching experiences to help the candidate develop the necessary skills for successful program completion. Pre-student teaching field experiences are adequate to support student progression and give multiple opportunities for faculty, cooperating teachers, and other stakeholders to evaluate the student. Emphasis seems to be placed on reflecting on best practices and performance in the field with course embedded experiences as well as the mentoring of a K-12 student field experience.

Based on the evidence presented, it was proven the EPP and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school personnel develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to help all students learn.

Summary of Strengths:

- K-12 partnerships
- Well-organized system of embedded and stand-alone field experiences to determine teacher candidate preparedness and progression
- Student teaching in at least two settings
- Well-known and strongly embedded conceptual framework

Areas for Improvement: None

Rationale: NA

Recommendation: Standard Met

Corrections to the Self-Study Report: None

EPP Rejoinder: None