

April 26, 2010

TO: Board of Public Education
FROM: Montana State University-Northern

10.58.210 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (Met with Weakness)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

The conceptual framework is complicated and complex. Its five principles, five beliefs, and 20 student outcomes create confusion about the Unit's purposes and priorities, and individuals interviewed were generally unable to explain the framework, other than to say that it is in the process of being revised. At the initial level, unit programs have generally reduced the conceptual framework to a collection of checklists that don't clearly connect to the framework or each other, and the data collected do not appear logically or systematically to align with the conceptual framework. Although the conceptual framework is included in all syllabi at the initial level, the current format is so complex and wordy that it tends to confuse the reader rather than to communicate purposes or make clear connections to the course objectives.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

Initial program conceptual framework status report April 13, 2010

When a subcommittee was reconvened this spring to work on the initial program conceptual framework, the group took as its starting point the draft for a new conceptual framework developed one year ago. The earlier planning effort had incorporated feedback from members of the professional education unit at several stages, but not from teachers and administrators in the schools. In mid March, the subcommittee sent an electronic survey to teachers and administrators, as well as to the full Professional Education Unit (PEU) to gain additional feedback. At this point, members are directly contacting teachers and administrators to seek additional feedback on the draft. The subcommittee membership recognizes several additional steps will be necessary to complete development of a new conceptual framework, including additional revision in response to feedback, and alignment of assessment measures with the conceptual framework; it will be necessary to continue work into Fall 2010 to complete these steps.

Advanced programs are currently engaged in re-evaluation of the original conceptual framework to renew focus and clarify alignment of the conceptual framework to the programs' assessments. The review includes (1) updating the research supporting the constructivist emphasis adopted by advanced programs, (2) revising the narratives summarizing the key guiding theoretical concepts of the conceptual framework for publication to candidates and the professional communities represented in the graduate programs, and (3) aligning the outcomes to PEPPS and current national standards for each advanced program.

10.58.305 ASSESSMENT SYSTEM AND UNIT EVALUATION (Not Met)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

This standard is *not met* because the planned system has not been implemented, is not directly reflective of the conceptual framework, and data have not been analyzed by the faculty to inform program content and process.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

The assessment committee has met to address the items identified by the OPI review which found that the assessment of the education candidates was deficient. One of the main items identified as deficient was lack of data on graduate surveys and employer surveys. The committee asked the director of the Career Center, Ms. Tracey Jette, to a meeting where we asked how students were surveyed and how employers were surveyed. The assessment committee asked if a few additional questions specifically for education students could be added to the upcoming graduate survey. Ms. Jette agreed to this and questions are being developed for that purpose. The assessment committee also discussed the use of survey monkey as a tool to survey employers. The committee agreed to a general survey that will commence in fall 2010.

The second area where the OPI review indicated deficiency was in the assessment of the teacher education candidates. The consensus was that the teacher education program has a large number of items that it is attempting to assess, moreover, doing so in a meaningful and timely fashion was not evident. The assessment committee is working in conjunction with the conceptual framework committee to identify key assessment tools that are currently being utilized, that provide meaningful data and assess the key outcomes identified in the new conceptual framework. In addition, the assessment committee is committed to developing a plan for the timely data entry of these key assessment tools so that data can be regularly presented to the Professional Education Unit and our partners for assessment of the overall effectiveness of the Teacher Education Program.

A third area of deficiency was the utilization by program faculty of assessment data to make program changes. To address this, the assessment committee developed a survey for faculty concerning the use of assessment data. The survey was passed along to the Unit Head, the Provost, for distribution to the Professional Education Unit at the next meeting.

10.58.308 FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS, PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT (Met with Weakness)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

Faculty resignations/retirements combined with declining budgets have caused faculty lines to remain open, necessitating the increased use of temporary, part-time faculty and adjuncts. Adjunct faculty are screened/selected by the chair and dean of the College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing.

In graduate programs, the program faculty recommend recruitment and retention of all adjuncts to the Provost. Evidence of the qualifications of active adjunct faculty was not found. Currently there is minimal support for faculty professional development. There is no existing plan for regular upgrades of technology for the Unit or professors. The use of adjunct faculty on a more or less permanent basis is a problem. There is loss of coherence and lack of consistency when an overwhelming majority of courses in a program are taught by adjunct instructors.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

The report on faculty qualifications indicated a deficiency concerning the hiring of adjuncts to teach the professional education core courses. The Professional Education Unit has recognized this deficiency and is working to develop minimum criteria for adjunct faculty. In addition, the institution

recognizes that the Great Falls site requires a full-time, tenure track faculty position to be the point person to direct students and be the contact person for the adjunct faculty in Great Falls. To that end, the College is undergoing a search to fill this position. Further, the Unit will be seeking a Dean of the College administrative position for overall coordination of all hiring in concert with the College Chair.

10.58.512 SCHOOL COUNSELING K-12 (Met with Weakness)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

Evidence was lacking for a majority of substandards and, therefore, these substandards were not met.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

The school counseling program is currently engaged in developing rubrics for each course to illustrate the link among the course objectives, assignments, and assessments to program outcomes and specific PEPPS. School counseling faculty are creating a rubric to align candidate competencies with PEPPS and advanced programs' conceptual framework. In addition, education philosophies (1)(d) and knowledge of the role of ethnic and cultural heritage of Montana American Indians (1)(e) are explicit in outcome competencies for two of the program's courses (CNSL 610 K-12 Counseling Program Development and Administration and CNSL 652 Multi-cultural Counseling). Key assessments are identified and collected for aggregation. A timeline has been established for review of aggregated data on candidate performance to inform instructional and programmatic decisions.

10.58.521 READING SPECIALIST K-12 (Met with Weakness)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

A thorough review of the program revealed gaps in knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary for candidates to be well prepared to step into a K-12 Reading Specialist program. The former Reading Specialist Minor program of study focused primarily at the elementary level (K-5) to the exclusion of the adolescent learner. The former program did not address phonics or the specific research-based elements of reading processes (phonemic awareness, word identification and phonics, vocabulary and background knowledge, fluency, comprehension strategies, and motivation).

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

The review of the Reading Specialist K-12 minor has been in progress for over a year. A committee met in the spring of 2009 and compared the program at that time to the revised PEPP standards. The committee found gaps in the areas of phonics instruction, writing at the elementary school level, adolescent literacy, and the integration of Indian Education for All. Once these areas were identified, the committee looked at creating new courses as well as removing or combining others. The changes are in the process of receiving approval from the appropriate Senate committees. It is our intention to have this program implemented by the fall of 2010.

10.58.522 SCIENCE (522 (7a) (Met with Weakness)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

The topic of evolution must be addressed as the unifying concept for all biology.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

To remedy this deficiency, the science faculty have made a curricular proposal to incorporate as part of the required general science core a class, which has been taught as a special topics course, called Evolution.

10.58.601 PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (Met with Weakness)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

No evidence was found for meeting substandards(1)(d) and (1)(e), no evidence of program evaluation; (5)(b) and 5(c), majority of required course syllabi not provided for K-12 Principal Endorsement Program; (5)(f), no evidence provided; (6)(a) (iii), no evidence provided, (6)(d), program evaluation procedures not provided; (6)(f), no evidence for the K-12 Principal Endorsement Program. The advanced program's governing body must consider either (1) recreating the K-12 Principal Endorsement program to meet the standards or assigning qualified full-time faculty to teach the majority of the courses or (2) discontinue the K-12 Principal Endorsement Program. In its current form, the K-12 Principal Endorsement Program negatively skews the evaluation of the Program Planning and Development Standards for the advanced programs.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

What was done?

Advanced Programs recognizes that the K-12 Principal Endorsement Program was the culprit in negatively impacting the program planning and development standard as reviewed by the accreditation team. Advanced programs data was lost (Access software error) during the fall semester prior to accreditation and therefore no data was available for reviewers. Advanced program support personnel is acquiring the skill set to utilize Access software and develop an assessment database for all advanced programs to inform continuous improvement efforts. In addition, senior administrators have supported the revitalization of the K-12 Principal Endorsement as it provides the Hi-Line region accessibility for certification to small rural schools. This includes regular meetings of the newly formed advisory committee devoted to supporting and aligning curriculum to national standards for principals.

What is planned to be accomplished?

The K-12 Principal Endorsement advisory committee will continue to meet and support MSU Northern in meeting standards of the endorsement program. In addition, a review of program curriculum and program outcomes will be reviewed based upon state standards and Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) standards. Also, instructors will be meeting each semester to ensure constituent application and fidelity to the program as redesigned by advisory committee.

10.58.602 TEACHING AREAS: ADVANCED PROGRAMS (Met with Weakness)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

Course content objectives need to be clearly tied to standards, Conceptual Framework, critical assignments, and assessments.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

What was done?

Based upon the accreditation report faculty have discussed and are currently reviewing the alignment of course content objectives to standards and the connection to the advanced programs' conceptual framework. In addition, assignments, objectives, and assessments for each course will be reviewed and aligned with state and national standards to ensure appropriate alignment.

What is planned to be accomplished?

Faculty (full-time and adjunct) will meet on a regular basis to address deficiencies as identified to ensure compliance with standards and expectations of state standards.

10.58.603 ASSESSMENT OF ADVANCED PROGRAMS (Met with Weakness)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

A comprehensive assessment system must be developed that is driven by the standards requiring the collection and analysis of individual, course, and program evaluation data. These data must then be used to inform decisions at each level on a consistent basis.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

What was done?

Assessment is recognized as a critical component for the success of advanced programs. All course and key program assessments will be reviewed along with candidate, course, and program outcomes for alignment and coherence with the conceptual framework, state and national standards. In addition, the advanced program support is being provided with professional development (Access software) to ensure an electronic assessment system that is viable and useful in utilizing aggregated candidate and program data.

What is planned to be accomplished?

Faculty will work in conjunction with advanced program support person to ensure an enabled data assessment system that will enhance program improvement and decision-making. In addition, senior administration will provide adequate resources for the maintaining an electronic assessment system.

10.58.705 SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, SUPERINTENDENTS, SUPERVISORS, AND CURRICULUM DIRECTORS (Not Met)

SUMMARY OF THE DEFICIENCY:

The K-12 Principal Endorsement Program needs to be addressed at a variety of levels. Special attention needs to be given ensuring that the program is designed so that its courses provide a coherent program with specific objectives and assessments linked to the standards. Consistency of qualified faculty teaching the courses should be established.

PLANS AND PROGRESS TO CORRECT THE DEFICIENCY:

What was done?

A K-12 Principal Endorsement Advisory Committee was organized to support the re-vitalization of the program. Upon consultation with the school districts along the Hi-Line, the Unit affirmed the program meets the need of schools in the region served by MSU-Northern. Curriculum review has been conducted with assistance from the advisory committee; the delivery schedule was enhanced to support a more compact and vibrant program. A commitment within the professional community and supported by administration has been made to support the revival and ensure the program outcomes of the endorsement.

What is planned to be accomplished?

Semester meetings will be scheduled with all instructors and the advisory committee to ensure a harmonious and focused continued review of the endorsement program. This will ensure that all course and program outcomes are aligned with both state and national standards. An enhanced marketing campaign has been developed for potential candidates who are interested in becoming rural school principals.