



Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

opi.mt.gov

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MEMORANDUM

February 14, 2012

TO: Dr. Carol Reifschneider, Interim Dean
College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing
Montana State University-Northern

FROM: Dr. Linda Vrooman Peterson, Administrator
Montana Educator Preparation Program

SUBJECT: Focused Accreditation Review State Exit Report and Narrative Summaries

The Accreditation On-Site Visitation Team has completed the State Exit Report and Narrative Summaries for January 16-18, 2012, focused on-site accreditation review of the Professional Education Unit (Unit) at the Montana State University-Northern (MSU-Northern). The State Exit Report and Narrative Summaries are attached.

The Unit will review and correct errors and omissions to the State Exit Report and Narrative Summaries. These corrections are due to the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) 30 days following the receipt of the document.

The team recommends to the Superintendent of Public Instruction provisional approval of specific standards designated as being "Met with Weakness." Provisional approval requires further action by the Professional Education Unit at MSU-Northern. Required action includes:

- 1) In May 2012, the Interim Dean, or a designee, of the College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing, will describe to the Board of Public Education (BPE) the Unit's plan for and progress on meeting standards designated as "Met with Weakness."
- 2) If the report to the BPE indicates that the Unit is making progress toward meeting the standards, the BPE will grant provisional approval for these standards.
- 3) By June 22, 2012, the Unit will submit to the Office of Public Instruction a written progress report.
- 4) In July 2012, the progress report will be presented to the BPE by the Interim Dean, or a designee, of the College of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Nursing.
- 5) If the BPE acknowledges that progress is continuing toward meeting the specific standards, the team chairperson and appropriate team members will return to MSU-Northern in September 2012, for an on-site accreditation review focusing only on those standards that were provisional approved.

For more information, contact Linda Vrooman Peterson, (406) 444-5726, or, lvpeterson@mt.gov.

cc: Dr. James Limbaugh, Chancellor
Dr. Rosalyn Templeton, Provost
Audrey Peterson, Review Team Chairperson
Dennis Parman, Deputy Superintendent
Nancy Coopersmith, Assistant Superintendent

Attachments

**Montana State University – Northern Professional Education Unit
State Focused Accreditation Review Exit Report
January 16-18, 2012**

Audrey Peterson, Chairperson

From January 16-18, 2012, a four-person team conducted a focused accreditation review of the Professional Education Unit (Unit) at Montana State University-Northern (MSU-Northern). The purpose of the focused on-site review was to verify that the standards previously receiving provisional approval, listed below, meet the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS).

- 10.58.210 Conceptual Framework (Met with Weakness)
- 10.58.305 Assessment System and Unit Evaluation (Not Met)
- 10.58.308 Faculty Qualifications (Met with Weakness)
- 10.58.512 School Counseling (Met with Weakness)
- 10.58.521 Reading Specialist K-12 (Met with Weakness)
- 10.58.522 Science (7)(a) (Met with Weakness)
- 10.58.601 Program Planning (Met with Weakness)
- 10.58.602 Teaching Areas – Advanced (Met with Weakness)
- 10.58.603 Assessment – Advanced (Met with Weakness)
- 10.58.705 School Principals, Superintendents, Supervisors and Curriculum Directors (Not Met)

During the November 2009, Accreditation Review, the team recommended provisional approval of the Standards designated as being "Met with Weakness" and "Not Met." Provisional approval requires further action by the Unit at MSU-Northern. The MSU-Northern Provost met with the Board of Public Education in May 2010, to describe their plan for and progress on meeting those standards that were designated as "Met with Weakness" and "Not Met."

In January 2012, the team chairperson and appropriate team members, in consultation with the OPI Accreditation staff, returned for an on-site accreditation review of the Unit at MSU – Northern, focusing only on those standards that were provisionally approved. During the focused accreditation review, the four-person team examined the evidence provided by the Unit and interviewed faculty, administrators, and current and graduated



candidates of the specific programs being reviewed. Following are the findings of the January 2012, focused review team for the specific standards under review. The team chairperson will report the team's findings to the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the following standards:

Sub-Chapter 2 – Organization and Administration of Teacher Education

ARM	TITLE	STATUS	NARRATIVE REPORT Page Number
10.58.210	Conceptual Frameworks	Initial Program MET Advanced Program MET	5-6

Sub-Chapter 3 – Curriculum Principles and Standards: Basic Program

ARM	TITLE	STATUS	NARRATIVE REPORT Page Number
10.58.305	Assessment System and Unit Evaluation	Initial Program MET w/Notation Advanced Program MET w/Weakness Provisional Approval	7-8
10.58.308	Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development	MET	9-10

Sub-Chapter 5 – Teaching Areas: Specific Standards Advanced Programs

ARM	TITLE	STATUS	NARRATIVE REPORT Page Number
10.58.512	School Counseling K-12	MET w/Notation	11-12

Sub-Chapter 5 – Teaching Areas: Specific Standards Initial Programs

ARM	TITLE	STATUS	NARRATIVE REPORT Page Number
10.58.521	Reading Specialists K-12	MET	13-14
10.58.522	Science	MET 10.58.522(7) (a)	15



Sub-Chapter 6 – Curriculum Principles and Standards: Advanced Programs

ARM	TITLE	STATUS	NARRATIVE REPORT Page Number
10.58.601	Program Planning and Development	Advanced Graduate Programs MET School Counseling and Learning Development MET w/Weakness Provisional Approval	16
10.58.602	Teaching Areas: Advanced Programs	Advanced Graduate Programs MET School Counseling and Learning Development MET	17
10.58.603	Assessment of Advanced Programs	School Counseling and Learning Development MET w/Weakness Provisional Approval	18

Sub-Chapter 7 – Specializations: Supervisory and Administrative Programs

ARM	TITLE	STATUS	NARRATIVE REPORT Page Number
10.58.705	School Principals, Superintendents, Supervisors and Curriculum Directors	K-12 Principal Endorsement Inactive Status: Not Applicable	19

Commendations

- MSU-Northern is to be commended for the significant progress that has been made since the last review team’s visit. Their process of refining and clarifying the Conceptual Frameworks created clear, thorough, and intentional responses, and appears to have had a unifying effect on the faculty and the MSU-Northern Professional Education Unit (Unit) as a whole. The Unit’s enthusiasm and



dedication to their programs and candidates were very evident during our focused review. The Unit is encouraged to maintain its forward momentum and good progress as they continue to develop and improve programs.

- The review team continues to note a strong investment in student success that is evident throughout the Unit and the institution. It is clear that faculty and administration are dedicated to supporting student development, and this has helped to create a positive culture for student success.
- The Professional Education Unit has done a very good job of recognizing and responding to the unique nature of the geographic area served by MSU-Northern and the distinct needs of their students.
- Members of the Focused Accreditation Review Team extend their appreciation for the gracious hospitality and receptivity of the faculty, staff, and administration during the focused visit.





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**Montana State University – Northern Professional Education Unit
State Focused Accreditation Review Exit Report
January 16-18, 2012**

Audrey Peterson, Chairperson

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dedication to their programs and candidates were very evident during our focused review. The Unit is encouraged to maintain its forward momentum and good progress as they continue to develop and improve programs.

- The review team continues to note a strong investment in student success that is evident throughout the Unit and the institution. It is clear that faculty and administration are dedicated to supporting student development, and this has helped to create a positive culture for student success.
- The Professional Education Unit has done a very good job of recognizing and responding to the unique nature of the geographic area served by MSU-Northern and the distinct needs of their students.
- Members of the Focused Accreditation Review Team extend their appreciation for the gracious hospitality and receptivity of the faculty, staff, and administration during the focused visit.



Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.210 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK(S)

Validating Statement: During the focused visit, reviewers verified that the Unit, after engaging in numerous discussions since the 2009 program review, approved a unit mission statement organized around the theme *Community of Learners* with two conceptual frameworks, one providing foundational clarity and direction for the initial programs and the other articulating organizing themes and more detailed focus areas for the advanced programs.

With the input of the Professional Education Unit initial program faculty and the goal of clearly articulating the purposes of their teacher preparation program, a subcommittee crafted a refocused initial program conceptual framework (IPCF). Stakeholders in the larger professional community were surveyed and invited to comment, and after several drafts they collectively reached agreement that candidates for initial licensure will demonstrate a **Commitment to Content Knowledge**, a **Commitment to Pedagogy**, and a **Commitment to Diversity**. The conceptual framework appears in program syllabi, is well understood by students and is supported and used by faculty, both at MSU-N and in the larger professional community.

The advanced program conceptual framework (APCF) has been well developed over time. It was updated and refined by the graduate faculty to emphasize a Reflective Practitioner focus for programs and candidates, articulating more detailed organizing themes of **Purposeful Reflection, Facilitated Learning, Assessment, Diversity and Technology**. Evidence supports the role of the conceptual framework in providing the basis for coherence throughout the advanced programs, particularly among students in the Learning and Development program and in assessment of competencies in that program.

Sources of Evidence: Montana State University-Northern Focused Visit Summary Report, Meetings and Interviews with Administrators, Faculty, and Students, Course Syllabi, and Exhibits

Assessment Aligned to Standard: At the initial level, assessments and standards are clearly aligned with the conceptual framework and revision of new handbooks is underway. At the advanced level, the program outcomes and candidate performances are aligned with the Montana PEPP Standards and the Society for Technology in Education National Educational Technology (ISTE NET) Standards.



Evaluation: The conceptual framework at the initial level is now focused such that it is being clearly communicated and can be efficiently and meaningfully assessed for candidate and program improvement.

At the advanced level, the conceptual framework is well understood and referenced in the Learning Development (*Instruction and Learning*) program. However, the conceptual framework is so deeply embedded in the School Counseling program that it is not transparent and does not appear to be recognized, understood or easily articulated by students.

Commendations: The initial level undergraduate program is to be commended for responding to recommendations made by the November 2009 review team to refocus and simplify the previous conceptual framework. Revisions have been effective in communicating program goals to students and stakeholders, and are central to the processes of assessing candidate and program performance and collating and disseminating meaningful data.

At the initial level, program faculty have been intentional about inviting involvement from the larger academic community on campus and professionals in the Havre educational community in development and communication of their conceptual framework.

Improvements: At the initial level, program faculty are urged to carry out their plan for extending and improving the Indian Education for All element of the conceptual framework throughout the secondary programs.

In the School Counseling program, faculty members are urged to communicate the conceptual framework to School Counseling candidates.

Accreditation Recommendation

- Meets standard – Initial conceptual framework
- Meets standard – Advanced conceptual framework



Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.305 ASSESSMENT SYSTEM AND UNIT EVALUATION

Validating Statement: During the focused site visit, reviewers verified significant progress in the initial undergraduate program in its documentation of candidate outcome performance and accountability of the Unit through implementation of an assessment system. The assessment system involves collecting, aggregating, analyzing, reporting and sharing data both within the Unit and with stakeholders. New written evaluation forms have been developed and implemented. While there is a schedule for regular reviews, the details of the review schedule are not yet realized.

The advanced graduate programs have made progress with development of a data warehouse and some data collection. However, the reviewers could not verify implementation of an assessment system. Connections from the Conceptual Framework through candidate outcome performance are weak. While individual candidate data are strong, it does not appear that aggregation of data for informing overall program evaluation is occurring.

Sources of Evidence: MSU-Northern Summary Report, electronic exhibits, overview PowerPoint presentation, initial and advanced faculty presentations, interviews with advanced program faculty and students

Assessment Aligned to Standard: The initial undergraduate program meets the PEPPS assessment standard.

The advanced graduate programs have not developed a system. As required by ARM 10.58.305 (1)(a), the professional community has not been involved in development of a system. Nor as required by ARM 10.58.305 (1)(b), is there regular comprehensive information ... regularly and systematically compiled or summarized for analyses to improve performance, program quality or unit operations. Evidence does not demonstrate that the advanced graduate programs in the Unit are regularly and systematically using data to evaluate the efficacy of courses, program or clinical experiences as required by ARM 10.58.305 (1)(c).

Evaluation: The initial undergraduate program has put the parts of its assessment system together under a revised and simplified conceptual framework. Data from key assessments are entered into an electronic database. Faculty have reviewed and analyzed the minimal data currently available to them. These analyses have provided insights into the program and possible areas for improvement. There is a schedule outlined for



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review; however, the details of “how to” review the totality of available data has not yet been fully developed.

The advanced programs are at different places in terms of meeting the standard. The school counseling program has ample disaggregated data providing the ability for detailed evaluation of individual student progress. However, the review team could not verify a plan for data aggregation to inform necessary programmatic changes. Individual assessment and resulting data are not obviously linked to the conceptual framework or to stated program student outcomes.

The Learning Development (Instruction and Learning) program has a well-defined linkage from the conceptual framework through the final portfolio evaluation. However, the review team could not verify a plan to aggregate individual candidate data or to use these aggregated data for program review and improvement.

Commendations: The initial undergraduate program responded to address recommendations made by the November 2009 review team with resulting positive initial steps toward implementation of a comprehensive assessment system.

Improvements: The initial undergraduate program must maintain momentum toward full implementation of its assessment system.

The advanced programs must design, develop and implement a comprehensive assessment system that includes aggregation of data in addition to the existing array of disaggregated individual student data.

Accreditation Recommendation

- Meets Standard with Notation—Initial Undergraduate Programs
- Meets Standard with Weakness—Advanced Graduate Programs



Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.308 FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS, PERFORMANCE, AND DEVELOPMENT

Validating Statement: Supporting materials were reviewed and interviews conducted with students, faculty, the Professional Education Unit, and administration. In all of these contexts, it was made clear that the process for selecting and hiring adjunct faculty has been formalized, and these faculty have been involved in program development in multiple ways. There is evidence that processes to support continued professional development, including technology support, are operationalized.

Sources of Evidence: Evidence gathered from Unit presentations, and interviews with administration, department faculty, Professional Education Unit members, students, and others

Assessment Aligned to Standard: The assessment in this area appears to align to the standard.

Evaluation: As noted in previous reviews, it is quite apparent that MSU-N faculty are committed to both student success and program integrity. Due to circumstances relating to faculty turnover, geography, funding constraints, and other influences, the Unit has continued to rely on part time and adjunct instructors to address course needs. Based on multiple interviews with various instructional and administrative staff, it is clear that a sound process for faculty selection is in place. This process requires thorough analysis of qualifications for all teaching positions and involves review by the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost. This helps to ensure consistent and informed evaluations of faculty qualifications.

Additionally, evidence was provided to suggest that part-time and adjunct faculty are regularly informed of changes to program standards, assessments, procedures, and policies, and where possible have been included in various levels of programmatic decision-making. At the Great Falls campus, where adjuncts have been used more extensively, permanent full-time personnel have been effective in meeting regularly with faculty to review program changes and incorporate input. Multiple adjunct faculty communicated with the review team that their work with the Unit has been rewarding and effective, and that they have felt adequately valued and informed.

The previous review also articulated a need for a system that supports faculty professional development (PD). Evidence was provided that suggests improvements have been made in this regard. Proposals for professional development experiences are



submitted, reviewed, and evaluated alongside their relevance to the Unit's Conceptual Framework and Mission. Further, successful applicants must return from PD experiences and actively disseminate their findings/learnings among other Unit staff in addition to incorporating new information into course work. Administration has committed to supporting PD with funds. In certain instances, faculty course loads have been reduced to 12 credits, allowing more opportunities for pursuing PD. Based on the above examples; it appears that the climate for supporting PD has improved within the Unit.

Another topic under review from this standard is technology upgrades to support best practice among faculty. In this regard, several positive developments are noted to have occurred since the last review. Faculty and lab workstations have been upgraded and/or replaced, and this was done across the board, rather than a few instructors at a time. The development of an institutional Technology Plan, currently underway, will help to promote a shared and consistent vision of how appropriate technology integration can support student success. Education students reported feeling very well prepared in the area of educational technology.

Commendations

- Available evidence confirmed that members of the Professional Education Unit implemented the previous reviewers' recommendations relevant to faculty qualifications, performance, and development.
- The reduction of course load and establishment of funds to support professional development are important steps that help augment the expertise and teaching efficacy of faculty, as well as build an improved climate for excellence and assist in faculty retention.
- The establishment of a full-time faculty position at the Great Falls site will continue to ensure consistency and program alignment among the other faculty at the site.
- The inclusion of part-time and adjunct faculty in ongoing program development and evaluation is a critical element to the Unit's program fidelity and consistency.

Improvements

- Continue to be mindful that part-time and adjunct faculty should be appointed to supplement – not supplant – terminally degreed tenure-track faculty.
- As mentioned in previous review, consider pursuing opportunities for faculty professional development through applied research with K-12 school partners.

Accreditation Recommendation

- Meets Standard



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Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.512 SCHOOL COUNSELING K-12

Validating Statement: During the focused review, reviewers verified that content standards are being met. There is evidence for individual candidate assessment; however, evidence of a programmatic system of evaluation was not available to the team.

Sources of Evidence: Interviews, Course Syllabi, Program Documents, MSU-Northern Summary Report

Assessment Aligned to Standard: Syllabi are aligned with PEPP Standards and candidate competencies are assessed at the course level. Individual candidate assessment data continue to be collected and analyzed. However, programmatic assessment data collection and analysis were not evident.

Evaluation: The Counselor Education program prepares candidates for work as K-12 school counselors as well as for community and agency work. Candidates have the option to be dually licensed as a Licensed School Counselor and/or a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor. School counselors are required to complete a 45-credit master's degree; the MSU-Northern degree program exceeds the minimal requirement for school counselors. The Unit's decision to prepare the school counselors at the same requirement level as the mental health counseling candidates was in response to the rural needs of Montana, as often the school counselor is the only person in some rural communities in Montana with mental health background and education.

Documentation requirements for substandards were met. Specifically identified were standards ARM 10.58.512 (1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c), (1)(d), (1)(e), (1)(f), (1)(g), (1)(h), and (1)(i). Educational philosophies, substandard ARM 10.58.512 (1)(d) are addressed in CNSL 610 and CNSL 671. Knowledge and role of ethnic and cultural heritage of Montana American Indians is addressed in CNSL 652. Evidence was provided for completion of supervised counseling practicum and internship experiences.

Commendations: There has been a great effort to produce documentation to address issues needing improvement. Dr. Darlene Sellers is a dedicated professional and committed to the success of the program and to preparing Reflective Practitioners. She reports that the program gets positive feedback regarding the performance of their graduates and interns. She reports positive rapport with the communities in which they work and they get student referrals based on these positive associations.



Improvements: A stronger program identity for K-12 school counseling is recommended, with caution against having the larger clinical/agency focus eclipse the school counseling focus. Candidates are encouraged to join state and national professional associations and to attend conferences to promote professional “educator” identity and to stay current on trends in contemporary K-12 School Counseling Profession.

Program faculty are urged to continue work in developing measures of student competency and connecting those to state standards. Measurements of performance should be directly related to state standards for candidate competency. Faculty must also collect and aggregate data, including feedback from employers and site supervisors, to help in program evaluation and improvement efforts.

Accreditation Recommendation

- Meets Standard with Notation



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Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.521 READING SPECIALIST K-12

Validating Statement: Supporting materials were reviewed and interviews were conducted with faculty and administration. The standard is met.

Sources of Evidence: Evidence gathered from MSU-N Institutional Report, MSU-N 2011-2012 Catalog, Course Syllabi, Unit presentations, student work samples, and interviews with administration, department faculty, and others

Assessment Aligned to Standard: The assessment in this area appears to align to the standard.

Evaluation: The Professional Education Unit (PEU) was in the process of revising and re-designing the Reading Specialist K-12 minor at the time of the last Office of Public Instruction (OPI) review in November 2009. Since that time considerable progress has been made to address the concerns articulated in that review. One significant issue prior to this revision was the need for a true K-12 focus in the Reading Specialist (RS) program. The previous scope and sequence was clearly oriented to K-5 only. Since that time the PEU has rebuilt the RS minor to include course work specific to the needs of adolescent readers. A review of the syllabi for added courses EDUC 328, 345, 335, and 356 clearly shows that this revision addresses reading considerations in grades 6-12, including diagnostics, motivation, youth literature, reading instructional strategies, and numerous other topics necessary for a program that truly meets the needs of all K-12 learners.

The revised RS scope and sequence incorporates research-based reading strategies as evidenced by the addition of course work in phonics and word identification, media literacy, and a special writing exploratory course that focuses on a holistic approach to literacy development. In 2012-2013, faculty and key adjunct faculty will be involved in systematic review of the RS minor to continue to ensure its alignment with standards, institutional mission, and the initial conceptual framework.

Commendations

- It is evident that members of the Professional Education Unit responded to the recommendations relevant to the Reading Specialist minor from previous reviewers. The revised RS program became operational soon after the last visit by the review team.



- The addition of Ms. Virginia Braithwaite will very likely add great depth and experience to the Education Department on several levels, especially given her expertise and credentials relative to Reading instruction.
- The inclusion of the newly created “Integrating Indian Education for All across the Curriculum” course to the Reading Specialist minor course sequence adds an important curricular connection, both in terms of relevance to Native and non-Native students in the program, and also in regard to the presence of IEFA related topics throughout the PEPPS. Students may be able to act as ambassadors for the inclusion of these curricular elements as they interact with teachers in local schools.

Accreditation Recommendation

- Meets Standard



Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.522 7(a) SCIENCE

Validating Statement: Supporting materials were reviewed and interviews were conducted with faculty and administration. The standard is met.

Sources of Evidence: Evidence gathered from MSU-N Institutional Report, MSU-N 2011-2012 Catalog, Course Syllabi, Unit presentations, student work samples, and interviews with administration, department faculty, and others

Assessment Aligned to Standard: The assessment in this area appears to align to the standard.

Evaluation: It was determined in the previous accreditation review that the topic of evolution as the unifying concept for all biology was not represented adequately in education science content courses. Since that time the Professional Education Unit has taken clear steps to correct this through the establishment of a specific course, EDUC 420 Evolution, as well as to infuse these concepts effectively and thoroughly in other course work. Evidence was provided that showed the breadth of content in this course work, including a comprehensive syllabus for EDUC 420 and student samples, including evolutionary biology portfolios. The instructor for this course provided clear explanations of student outcomes and projects, and explained that students are initially introduced to evolutionary biology through the general BIOL 101 course. There was clear evidence that the PEU recognized the need to provide a coherent and well-developed system for inclusion of evolution in the science core, and implemented it effectively.

It was pointed out by the interim dean that the Evolution course's initial designation as a "special topics course" was necessary in order to offer it immediately. The course now has an assigned number as a component in the regular science core.

Commendation

- The Professional Education Unit implemented the inclusion of evolutionary theory across the general science sequence.

Accreditation Recommendation

- Meets Standard



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Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.601 PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Validating Statement: The focused review team verified carefully planned advanced graduate degree programs. Because the K-12 school principal endorsement has been discontinued, concerns of the previous on-site review team are not applicable for this review.

Sources of Evidence: MSU Northern Summary Report, electronic exhibits, overview PowerPoint presentation, initial and advanced faculty presentations, interviews with advanced program faculty and students

Assessment Aligned to Standard: With the exception of ARM 601 1 (e), this standard meets the PEPPS standards. However, because there is not a comprehensive assessment system at the advanced level, it is not possible to make information and data on program evaluation accessible.

Evaluation: The school counseling and learning development (Instruction and Learning) programs meet the program planning standard.

Improvements: The advanced graduate programs must develop and implement a comprehensive assessment system connecting the conceptual framework and program objectives with student outcome performances. Resulting data must be aggregated and shared with internal and external constituencies.

Accreditation Recommendation

- Meets Standard—Advanced Graduate Programs
- Meets Standard with Weakness—ARM 601 (1)(e) School Counseling and Learning Development (Instruction and Learning)



Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
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Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.602 TEACHING AREAS:
ADVANCED PROGRAMS

Validating Statement: The focused on-site team validated that the Advanced Graduate Programs met this standard.

Sources of Evidence: MSU-Northern Summary Report, electronic exhibits, overview PowerPoint presentation, initial and advanced faculty presentations, interviews with advanced program faculty and students

Assessment Aligned to Standard: The Advanced Graduate Programs meet PEPP Standard on advanced Teaching Areas.

Evaluation: The focused on-site team verified that previous concerns regarding ARM 10.58.602 3 (c) have been addressed. Breadth, specialized aspects and research/developments in the fields of study are present in both school counseling and learning development (Instruction and Learning).

Accreditation Recommendation

- Meets Standard—Advanced Graduate Programs
School Counseling and Learning Development (Instruction and Learning)



Montana State University-Northern
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January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.603 ASSESSMENT OF ADVANCED PROGRAMS

Validating Statement: The focused on-site team verified assessment of individual progress in the school counseling program. The review team could not find evidence that these assessments have been aggregated to inform decisions about program modifications or improvements.

The Learning Development (Instruction and Learning) program has outcome assessments aligned with the conceptual framework; however, the team could not verify that individual candidate outcome data are aggregated and reported in order to inform decisions about the program.

Sources of Evidence: MSU-Northern Summary Report, electronic exhibits, overview PowerPoint presentation, initial and advanced faculty presentations, interviews with advanced program faculty and students

Assessment Aligned to Standard: Evidence of meeting the individual standard indicators with regard to individual student progress is well documented.

Evaluation: ARM 10.58.603 indicates that "... programs shall meet or exceed standards of performance equivalent to those established for national professional education accreditation for candidate competence and program quality." Without an assessment system that aggregates disaggregated individual student data to determine trends, themes and an overarching perspective of the program, meeting this expectation is not possible.

Commendations: Both Advanced Graduate programs do an excellent job of assessing individual student progress and outcome performance.

Improvements: To meet the standard, programs must demonstrate their value through aggregations of program data demonstrating alignment with expected program student performance outcomes and changes in the programs based upon these aggregated data.

Accreditation Recommendation:

- Meets Standard with Weakness—School Counseling and Learning Development (Instruction and Learning)



Montana State University-Northern
Professional Education Unit Focused Accreditation Review
January 16-18, 2012

Narrative Summary Report

Number and Name of Standard: ARM 10.58.705 SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, SUPERINTENDENTS, SUPERVISORS, AND CURRICULUM DIRECTORS

Validating Statement: The K-12 Principal Endorsement program was marked “Not Met” as a result of the 2009 Accreditation Review. During the Focused Accreditation Review in January 2012, MSU-Northern provided no evidence that the program is in compliance with ARM 10.58.705. The K-12 Principal Endorsement Program at MSU-Northern is inactive, and therefore, an accreditation recommendation is not applicable.

Sources of Evidence: Summary Report from Montana State University – Northern, January 9, 2012; 2009 Narrative Report from On-Site Accreditation Review; Presentation by MSU-N Leadership Team, January 17, 2012

Assessment Aligned to Standard: Because the program is suspended and inactive, there were no assessment data to review.

Evaluation: In the 2012 MSU-Northern Summary Report, the Unit provides an explanation of a “number of possible options” to reactivate the K-12 principal endorsement program: revise the curriculum and hire qualified faculty; participate in the Montana University System’s graduate school consortium; or to partner with another four year institution to share faculty and course work. To determine the “next step,” the MSU-Northern Professional Education Unit plans to conduct a feasibility study.

The program is inactive. If the MSU-N Professional Education Unit wishes to restore the K-12 Principal Endorsement Program it must begin the Montana University System New Program Proposal at Level 2. Following approval of the MUS process, the Unit must request a new program, using the Board of Public Education process. The requirements for this process are located in ARM 10.58.802 New Programs.

Accreditation Recommendation

- Not Applicable

