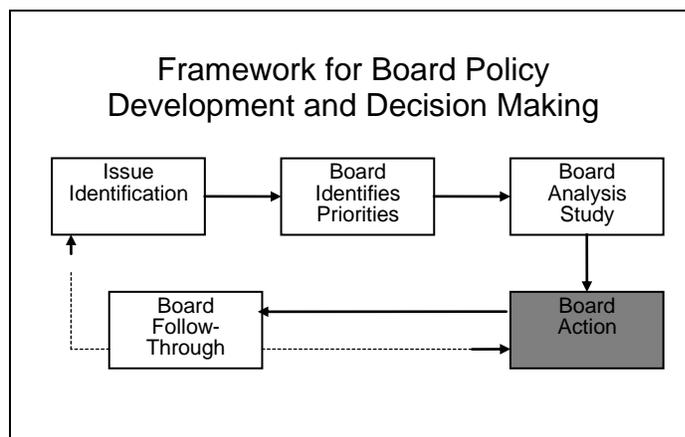


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

January 26, 2012



Agenda Item: Clarke University Teacher Education Program

Iowa Goal: All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.

Equity Impact Statement: Practitioner preparation programs support the improvement of instructional practices and strengthen the quality of educator preparation and professional development programs to give educators at all levels the skills they need to improve teaching and learning.

Presenter: Kris Crabtree-Groff, Consultant
Practitioner Preparation
Bureau of Accreditation and Improvement Services

Attachments: 1

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board issue continuing approval to Clarke University Teacher Education Program through the next state visit cycle scheduled for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Background: Iowa Code 281—79.5(256) grants authority to the State Board of Education to set standards and approve practitioner preparation programs based on those standards. The Clarke University Teacher Education Program has met all of the program approval standards as approved by the State Board.

Recommendation for Continuing Approval of Clarke University Teacher Education Program

January 26, 2012

A Catholic, coeducational, liberal arts university, Clarke University traces its foundation to 1843 when Mary Frances Clarke and the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary opened St. Mary's Academy in Dubuque, Iowa three years before Iowa became a state. Clarke was the first college for women in Iowa and one of the first colleges for women west of the Mississippi River. On August 1, 2010, the institution was renamed from Clarke College to Clarke University. To this day, Clarke's founding values of charity, education, freedom, and justice are promoted through the mission statement, implemented in program expectations, and lived in the everyday lives of the Clarke community.

The University serves approximately 1,255 students from twenty-nine (29) states, Puerto Rico, and twelve (12) other countries. Undergraduate programs include: thirty-one (31) undergraduate majors; two (2) masters degrees in education, plus business administration, management, physical therapy, family nurse practitioner, and nurse educator; as well as doctorates in physical therapy and nursing practice. The teacher education program (TEP) recommended forty (40) candidates for licensure in 2009-2010.

The teacher education program has a long history of accreditation. The institution received its first accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in 1918 and has maintained that status. The University is also accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (formerly the North Central Association) as recent as 2003-2004.

In order to bridge the gap between research and practice, the TEP launched a formal professional development school model (PDS) with local Dubuque schools in 1999. Each PDS partnership meets the unique needs of the local school, the TEP, and the local community as candidates. In addition, the Clarke TEP are leaders in the national PDS movement with a sitting board member who helped define the *Nine Essentials* which encompass the PDS model. The University has invested in the PDS model by creating financial aid packages to cover ten (10) semesters rather than a traditional eight (8) semesters and accommodating faculty load so they are present in PDS sites a majority of the work week. Because of the PDS model, Clarke teacher education candidates graduate with the clinical hours and experiences of a second year teacher.

A day-long preliminary review of the Teacher Education Program at Clarke University was conducted on July 25, 2011, by the State Review Panel and the State Review Team. Comments and questions from the preliminary review were sent to Clarke University program to prepare for the site visit.

The site visit occurred October 9-12, 2011. During that time, team members reviewed documents and interviewed faculty, staff, administrators, students, and practitioners affiliated with the Clarke University Teacher Education Program. The visiting team examined six (6) standard areas: (1) Governance and Resources; (2) Diversity; (3) Faculty; (4) Program Assessment; (5) Clinical Practice; and (6) Candidate Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions. The following report is a summary of the team's findings.

CHAPTER 79

STANDARDS FOR PRACTITIONER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

General Comments:

- The values put forth by Mary Frances Clark and the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) of freedom, education, justice, and charity are present in Clarke University's atmosphere in and out of the classroom and are practiced and demonstrated by faculty, administration, and students.
- The attention to assessment by the institution and the unit should be recognized as an outstanding model of continuous improvement, self-study, and strategic planning. The Assessment Day held every semester by the institution allows for the all programs to not only receive on-going professional development in the area of assessment, but also to plan and to evaluate their goals for the upcoming semester.
- Adding an additional special education endorsement, a shortage area, causes many teacher education candidates to take more than four years to graduate. The University has made a commitment to offering ten (10) semesters of financial aid instead of the traditional eight (8) semesters. Approximately seventy-five (75%) of elementary education candidates add the special education endorsement.
- The unit focuses on the strengths of faculty and resources and condenses program offerings rather than spreading the program too thin. The shortage area of reading has seen a dramatic increase in recommendations for licensure. The middle school endorsement has also increased in recommendations for licensure. Although not a shortage area, the commitment to this unique age group is admirable.
- Clarke and the Teacher Education Program (TEP) are to be commended for the dedication and the leadership to the Professional Development School (PDS) model. The unit deserves state-wide acknowledgement as a leader in teacher preparation. The University is committed to the PDS model as a vital part of the Clarke experience.
- Partnerships exist with public, non-public, elementary, middle school, and special education programs. The partnerships go beyond traditional clinical placements. The unit outreach is through best practice workshops twice per year and through hosting a one-day conference. The Reach for the Stars conference on a Saturday was well-attended (300 people from 31 institutions) and provided important, relevant information to pre-service and in-service teachers. The Partners for Professionals program nurtures the leadership capabilities of the local teaching population.
- Other departments at Clarke University provide a great deal of local outreach that impact teachers and schools including: the Human Body Bee, STEM day, and Riverquest, a Federal Mathematics and Science Partnership grant that provides funding for science materials and training.

SECTION A: GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES

Team Finding: Exceeds

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions Noted Below	Not Met
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Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action: None

Strengths:

- A key strength in the TEP is the strong Conceptual Framework (CF). The visual representation and the narrative demonstrated how all components (Nine Essentials, Standards, Best Practice, and BVM Core Values) are interconnected. The CF includes the mission of the university and the unit, the CF is aligned across the standards and criteria. Competencies spiral several times across program and receive emphasis as appropriate. The CF provides a clear picture of best practices in action.
- The hiring of a full-time instructional designer shows evidence of impact and change in program and instructional practices in the growing area of online learning.
- Definitions of service, professional development, and teaching are clearly outlined aspects of faculty responsibilities. The unique nature of PDS work is represented in the three prongs of tenure: teaching, scholarship, and service.
- The comparable programs table shows division of students, faculty and funding (p. 46). The percent of Clarke students in TEP aligns directly with percent of Clarke’s budget for TEP. Table 16 summarizes and cross-references for personnel and equipment. Title III funding in the amount of \$2000 funding for creating hybrid courses is impressive.
- One faculty member mentioned, “This is the most collaborative place I’ve ever worked. It’s stressful, it’s a ton of work, and I love it.”

Concerns / Recommendations:

- The unit and the University are interested in recruiting more math and science teachers. The visiting team believes the unit is poised to formally plan for this initiative.

SECTION B: DIVERSITY

Team Finding: Meets

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions Noted Below	Not Met
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Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action: None

Strengths:

- Initiatives and actions demonstrate a concerted effort to reach beyond the limitation of the institution's geographic location to recruit and to retain students and faculty from diverse backgrounds. The University has hired faculty, administrators, and staff from several countries. The University has hired two Spanish-speaking admissions counselors and has created a manual for international students.
- The Multicultural Issues Committee serves as a resource to the campus community on issues related to diversity, specifically advocating for persons from underrepresented groups.
- The multicultural student services office promotes and supports diversity, working to implement programs celebrating diversity within the campus community.
- There are endowed scholarships designated for minority students. The SmartStart program provides support for first-generation students or struggling students.
- The Coordinator of Disability Services works with students with disabilities to complete a summary of their accommodations and to ease their transition to college.
- There is a long-term plan for diverse clinical experiences and all clinical experiences are monitored and documented. An organized tracking database is in place to ensure that all candidates have diverse clinical experiences. Demographic data for schools are used as part of the clinical placement process.
- EDUC 119, Multicultural Education, offers a wide array of exposure and experiences to students, including field trips to the Presentation Lantern Center (teaches free English lessons to non-English speakers), the Teresa Shelter (homeless), and the Multicultural Family Center and speakers from the Dubuque Human Rights Commission Speakers' Bureau addressing disabilities, immigration, Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender, and race. Additionally, students must complete 8 hours of service work in this class relating to diversity issues.
- The unit has formed a PDS partnership with a Spanish immersion school which offers yet another experience for students to work with diverse populations.

Concerns / Recommendations:

- 1) Clarke is encouraged to continue its efforts to promote and increase diversity of the student body and faculty to better reflect area demographics.
- 2) The visiting team recommends the TEP take advantage of technology to bring alumni who teach in more diverse settings in contact with candidates to broaden their experience from the local community.

SECTION C: FACULTY

Team Finding: Exceeds

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions Noted Below	Not Met
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Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action: None

Strengths:

- All education faculty are dedicated to the Professional Development School Model. Multiple interviewees expressed the Clarke TEP vision for PDS involves learning for four distinct groups – candidates, faculty, in-service teachers, and elementary / secondary candidates.
- The education faculty and staff are well-respected across campus among the other liberal arts content faculty, support staff, and administration. Comments like “I want to be a better teacher because of them...” were common among interviews with other faculty, staff and in the community schools.
- As members of university committees, faculty take on leadership roles. Their knowledge and community-building skills are valued by their colleagues. They are known as collaborators, negotiators, listeners, innovators, and are responsive to student and campus needs.
- The faculty members are always talking “school” and are willing to share their new learning with others. They are asked to mentor faculty in other disciplines. The faculty have strong teaching backgrounds as well as content backgrounds.
- Faculty are experts in their specialty areas, an authentic PDS model, and quality teaching and learning practices. “We must be the teachers we want our candidates to be.” The faculty model what they want a teacher to be and are great role models.
- Transparency exists among the Clarke faculty, their students, and the teachers they work with in the schools. “Enthusiastic,” “dedicated,” “accommodating,” “lively,” “energetic,” and “helpful” were some of the adjectives teacher candidates offered to describe their professors.
- Candidates spoke of their desire to be the teachers they see modeled by the Clarke TEP professors. There’s a holistic definition expressed by candidates in what it means to be a good teacher: *knowledge, skills, dispositions...role model, change agent, advocate, etc.* Evidence of faculty strength is apparent when comparing student evaluation of faculty and other programs in the University.
- The evaluation process is developmental, comprehensive, clearly defined, and includes multiple data points. Faculty may choose the areas of emphasis for their evaluations and set professional goals. Adjunct faculty are included in the comprehensive evaluation process. There exists a comprehensive evaluation process of faculty, adjunct, and part-time staff, with multiple measurements and opportunities for input.
- Faculty go above and beyond the 60-hour co-teaching requirement. Faculty see value to and are members of professional organizations related to specialty and they attend conferences and workshops.

- The faculty demonstrates leadership in their teaching, service, and scholarship activities. They initiated the national PDS Association, have supported quality teaching and learning at the local level, and continue to provide state-wide in-service opportunities.

Concerns / Recommendations:

- 1) There is a shared commitment to the PDS model by faculty and the university. Flexibility has been built into the tenure, evaluation, and credit load formulas. A common concern was introduced by multiple interviewees that student teaching supervision counts for only one-half (½) credit. In order to maintain program integrity and to recruit quality faculty, the visiting team recommends discussing a more competitive formula for load should be discussed. Using the existing formula for nursing and physical therapy contact hours to determine credit load could serve as a starting point.

SECTION D: ASSESSMENT

Team Finding: Exceeds

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions Noted Below	Not Met
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Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action: None

Strengths:

- The institutional commitment to assessment is admirable. The University has devoted time and resources for programs to discuss data and set goals. Experts brought to campus set the stage for data collection and analysis. Programs submit annual reports and five-year program reviews to the University Assessment Committee. A half-time assessment director has been appointed. Information is regularly communicated to stakeholders.
- The unit instituted a self-study process in preparation for the accreditation visit. The leadership and participation of faculty is a democratic model for other programs and institutions. Conversations were focused and continuous, the requirements were divided across multiple meetings. All faculty participated in the process.
- Direct alignment exists between the assessment system with identified outcomes (Clarke Competencies) and institution expectations. Alignment also exists with the institutional outcomes as well as the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Principles. A clear outline of the competencies and assessment checkpoints is communicated regularly in writing and on the website. Assessment data are shared with candidates throughout the four-part portfolio review process.
- Assessments are regular through multiple checkpoints and are developmental across the program. Progress through the program is documented in file folders as well as on databases. Method of formative feedback is outlined across three levels (foundations, methods, student teaching). Every education class assesses dispositions.

- Activity logs are developmental in nature and aligned to each block’s outcomes. Templates guide candidates through experiences to record: room preparation, observation, personnel to meet, instructional activities, planning, attending meetings, etc. The activity logs not only serve as an assessment artifact, they delineate the expectations of each clinical experience.
- Portfolios demonstrate candidate learning throughout the program. The work is authentic and professional. The new website development initiative for candidates compliments the portfolio to prepare candidates for the job search.
- A response rate of eighty percent (80%) for graduate and administrator surveys is admirable and demonstrates a level of loyalty as well as feeling their feedback is valued by the program.
- Basic skills testing is required of all candidates prior to admission to the program. Passing cut scores are established. An appeals process is communicated to candidates orally and in writing.
- The self-reflection process is part of feedback and formative assessment and the self-study process is actively incorporated into program review discussions. Self-reflection is an essential a part of the Clarke experience. Candidates joked that they are so immersed in self-reflection they struggle “to turn it off.”

Concerns / Recommendations:

- 1) Currently, evaluation of Clarke candidates in the PDS does not involve the classroom teachers. A recommendation would be for Clarke to determine how feedback from the classroom teachers could be formalized and used for candidate and program improvement.

SECTION E: CLINICAL

Team Finding: Exceeds

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions Noted Below	Not Met
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Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action: None

Strengths:

- Clinical hours and experiences gleaned in the PDS sites are commendable. The number of hours in “a real” classroom setting benefits teacher candidates as they learn how to teach and to develop the dispositions needed for effective teaching. In addition, professional development provided by the Clarke faculty for current teachers is another profitable advantage of the PDS.
- Middle school and high school candidates felt that teaching outside of their content area in the middle school PDS was a valuable learning experience and recommended that the practice continue.

- Responsibilities of candidates, faculty, teachers, and supervisors are detailed and explained.
- The unit has a formal plan for choosing mentor / cooperating teachers. Quality control measures ensure quality placements for candidates.
- Attendance at cooperating teacher workshop is impressive and reflects the value of the information for teachers.
- Contracts with all clinical placement sites are in place.

Student Teachers:

- Teacher candidates are encouraged to develop their own style of teaching, both in the PDS and in the student teacher internship, and are encouraged to ‘try their own things’ to develop their personal philosophy of teaching.
- Student teachers begin their student teaching internship with a balance of theory and practice as evidenced by a cooperating teacher’s comment: “Clarke’s student teachers come with a blend of theory and practice; they are prepared and aware.”
- Student teachers have a solid grasp of how to implement assessment data to inform instructional decision-making and day-to-day planning. Also, prior to student teaching, the student teachers felt competent in using differentiation strategies and formative assessment.
- Both current candidates and recent graduates commented that they were taught to take risks and to develop their own teaching style.

Cooperating Teachers:

- Cooperating teachers commented that Clarke’s interns are adept at communicating with teachers, parents, and students.
- Cooperating teachers spoke favorably about the professional development received in Cooperating Teachers Workshop. In particular, one teacher commented, “This fall’s workshop was proactive, challenging and thought-provoking. I left the meeting feeling inspired and empowered.”
- One cooperating teacher commented, “Clarke prepares teachers to understand the diverse needs of learners and how those learner needs are constantly changing; therefore, teachers need to continually change. Clarke is not complacent.”

Administrators:

- “The PDS is a strong partnership and a win-win situation for the teacher candidates, students, and me as a principal.”
- “The PDS is a collaborative, open, safe, authentic environment for the teacher candidates and my teachers, too. We all learn together.”
- Administrators commented that they know when they hire a Clarke graduate, they know they will have a well-prepared teacher.

Concerns / Recommendations:

- Secondary candidates consistently asked for more PDS opportunities. The team recommends investigating a mechanism for mini-cohorts in high school sites for a shortened time frame (a mini-block). Although this structure might deviate from the rest of the PDS model, it would afford more PDS hours for secondary candidates.

SECTION F: CURRICULUM (Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

Team Finding: Exceeds

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions Noted Below	Not Met
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Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action: None

Strengths:

- Content, pedagogical knowledge, and dispositions are infused throughout the program and in the different checkpoints of the portfolio. The professional core is outlined across courses and for each endorsement: diverse learners, reading, Iowa core, and professional content standards.
- Student handbooks offer very clearly stated expectations and processes. Students have copies and sign off that they have received the information. Program requirements in all endorsement areas are outlined clearly. Students can see exactly what courses are needed in general education, education core, and endorsement areas.
- All candidates take a literacy / reading course. A “Reading in the Content Areas” course specific to art, music and physical education is offered for those disciplines.
- The TEP incorporates many state initiatives in preparing 21st Century teachers: Response to Intervention, differentiation, using technology as a teaching tool, increased clinical hours in school settings, and teaching diverse learners.
- Curriculum exhibits have been approved.

Concerns / Recommendations:

- 1) The PDS model may limit the opportunity to study abroad. The visiting team recommends the TEP look for international partnerships for clinical hours or half of the student teaching semester.
- 2) Students may be limited in their use of technology or teaching experiences to that which is available in the PDS sites. The team recommends faculty discuss what consistent experiences all candidates should have and then look to ways to provide those common experiences across all PDS sites.

All standards have been met. The Clarke University Teacher Education Preparation Program is recommended for continuing approval. The site team commends the program for the focus on on-going, authentic clinical experiences for candidates and the national leadership role in the professional development school movement.