

## **Standard 4**

4.1 How does the unit prepare candidates to work effectively with all students, including individuals of different ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and/or geographical area? [maximum of three pages]

President Richard Davenport has provided leadership toward establishing Minnesota State Mankato as a place where different cultures and perspectives are welcomed, appreciated and incorporated into the fabric of university life. Diversity at MSU is a commitment to create an understanding and appreciation of diverse peoples and diverse perspectives; a commitment to create an academic, cultural, and workplace environment and community that develops mutual respect and celebrates our differences. A key role in supporting the President's vision is the Dean of Institutional Diversity. The Dean of Institutional Diversity reports to the Provost but meets periodically with the President and is a member of the President's Cabinet. He provides regular reports on efforts to implement goals of both the Diversity Plan and the Enrollment Management Plan with regard to underrepresented students.

### **4a. Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences**

In addition to the General Education categories of Human Diversity and Global Perspectives that all undergraduate students fulfill, the university has a new requirement related to diversity. Starting in fall 2009 all undergraduate students must meet the Diverse Cultures Graduation Requirement. Students are required to take one purple and one gold course. Purple courses are designed to prepare students with course content and the analytical and reflective skills to better understand diversity in the United States and other societies across the world. Gold courses are designed to give students learning opportunities to experience diversity with reflection supervised by a faculty member and to assist them in recognizing and responding to conditions of marginalized populations. The review process for these courses involved specific criteria. A report by the Diverse Cultures Committee on the three goals and specific outcomes of the coursework can be found in Exhibit 4.3.b. The description in the undergraduate [General Education and Diverse Cultures bulletin](#) provides more detail.

In addition to the Diverse Cultures Graduation Requirement, all candidates in teacher preparation meet the ten Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice (SEPs), which are based on the INTASC standards. A major portion of the standards is focused on diversity, including understanding cultures; language and communication; exceptionalities; social, emotional and cultural development; and engaging learners. Standards for advanced programs contain standards on diversity. Initial and advanced program faculty have incorporated diversity into their curriculum, with curriculum components based on program standards as well as the diversity proficiencies identified in the conceptual framework. Concepts related to diversity are integrated throughout programs. Departments are in the process of developing a cohesive picture of their curriculum, continuing to refine the emphasis on different components of diversity (See Exhibit 4.3.b for matrices.).

All initial licensure programs have an early course that has been approved as a new university gold course. These courses not only focus on curricular components such as understanding types of diversity, prejudice and oppression; they help candidates' become aware of their own cultural competency. Two of the courses have administered the Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI). (See syllabi for EEC 222W, KSP 220W, SpEd 4/509.) These initial courses provide a foundation for candidates to build on during other coursework and field experiences. Similarly, advanced programs are designed to infuse relevant diversity concepts throughout the coursework and ensure a focus on students from diverse backgrounds during at least a portion of the clinical experience. Dispositions emphasizing a belief that all students can learn are incorporated into programs, starting at admission and continuing throughout. This disposition is stated directly on the *Showing Professionalism* and *Advanced Showing Professionalism* rubrics which are used throughout the programs.

#### **4b. Experiences Working with Diverse Faculty**

At the institutional level 11.7% of faculty are from diverse backgrounds, while 5.3% of faculty in the unit are from diverse backgrounds. In addition to the ten faculty of color in the unit, two African American women were hired in summer 2010 in key staff positions. One is the Student Relations Coordinator (SRC), who represents the College of Education (COE) at university-coordinated admissions events, including National College Fair, open houses and Preview Saturdays. The SRC is also the person who conducts orientation for all undergraduate students admitted to the COE. Her office serves as the admission point for Professional Education and information for licensure testing. Further, the SRC serves as the advisor for all first year and transfer students in Elementary Education. The other position is the Maverick Recruitment Coordinator (MRC), funded through the Network for Excellence in Teaching (NExT) Initiative. The MRC and her office is dedicated to building the pool of possible recruits for teacher preparation. Candidates have opportunities to interact with diverse faculty, including male and female, two faculty members with physical disabilities, one openly gay faculty member and three international faculty—two of whom are non-native speakers of English.

Our conceptual framework identifies diversity issues as central to our work. Increasing faculty, staff, and administrative diversity is essential to these goals. The COE Affirmative Action Plan, part of the comprehensive university plan, outlines specific strategies for searching, hiring and retaining a diverse staff. MSU is an affirmative action institution. Each search and pool has a goal, and is monitored and approved by the Director of Affirmative Action. Search chairs and committees receive training regarding efforts (language, listing, and procedures) to encourage applicants and especially a diverse pool of applicants ([see Search Handbook](#)). Positions are advertised in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and other ethnic and race-specific sites and publications. Committees use personal connections with colleagues, graduate schools, and services to elicit nominations and applications from diverse candidates.

Leadership for ensuring that professional education and clinical faculty have knowledge and experiences related to preparing candidates to work with diverse student populations comes from the dean and chairs as well as the Diversity/International Committee. The dean is a member of the Greater Mankato Diversity Council Board and is a member of its Education Committee. The COE established a Diversity Committee in 2004; the charge of the committee was extended to include international experiences as our college goal of expanding candidates' cultural competency has advanced. The committee's charge this past year has been to frame and begin implementation of processes, procedures, and professional development that increases students and faculty intercultural and global awareness and increase their abilities to meet the needs of all student learners. The committee has organized professional development sessions for the COE, ranging from shared reading of a book to panels of speakers and examination of curriculum.

#### **4c. Experience working with diverse candidates**

The Office of Institutional Diversity (<http://www.mnsu.edu/cultdiv/>), with a dean reporting directly to the provost and president, coordinates diversity activities at the University, including student support, faculty and staff training, conferences, and student organizations. Housed within Institutional Diversity, the [College Access Program](#) (CAP) identifies, recruits and supports underrepresented students who show promise of success. CAP provides an intense transition from high school to college. The program assists students in mastering subject matter, building and improving basic skills for college success while still in high school. A summer residential program supplements the CAP regular school year. CAP provides a good model of helping diverse students feel supported and at home once on campus as well. Institutional Diversity is also providing specific

support to each college by funding a Graduate Assistant for purposes of recruiting and serving diversity students.

In 2009, 2.9% of our students enrolled in teacher preparation were from diverse backgrounds. In 2011, 6.9% of initial teacher candidates in the unit were from diverse backgrounds. (See Exhibit 4.3.h for NExT Milestone Review Recruitment and Enrollment.) As of spring 2012, 6.38% of our initial teacher candidates were from diverse backgrounds. As of spring 2012, 5.85% of advanced candidates were from diverse backgrounds. (See Appendix B.) While the progress is slow, the concerted efforts of the Maverick Recruitment Coordinator (MRC) are beginning to show results.

The introductory education courses that have been approved for the university's gold diversity requirement also provide opportunities for cultural partnership experiences with other students on campus whose culture differs from their own. These may be international students. In order to qualify as a gold course, experiences and content need to be present along with reflection guided by faculty.

#### **4d. Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P–12 Schools**

Initial licensure candidates in KSP and Elementary Education gain experience tutoring English Language Learners as a requirement in their introductory courses (KSP 220W and EEC 222W). Our Professional Development Schools (PDS) districts are the placement sites for all field experiences for undergraduate programs. Although the unit monitors the demographic changes that occur in all of the districts which are sites for clinical and field experiences, we examine demographics on a building level for our PDS partners. The unit faculty have set criteria that describes three levels of district and/or school diversity to inform faculty about whether a school would be an appropriate placement. Ethnicity of students is considered in the criteria along with language, exceptionalities and poverty. Information about placement sites for all initial and advanced programs is collected each term by the Office of Field and International Experiences (OFIE). The reports along with the state demographic data for districts and/or schools are sent annually to faculty for review and decision-making about future placements (Exhibit 4.3.i have criteria, state demographic information and placement reports). In 2011 data showed that 51 PDS schools were highly diverse excluding ethnic criteria, while 34 PDS schools were highly diverse after including ethnic criteria. Advanced programs place candidates on an individual basis, but the unit criteria is part of the planning in determining placements.

Candidates receive feedback and evaluation related to their proficiency in working with diverse P-12 students. The *Teacher Credential* evaluations, based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching and described in the standard 3 narrative, include components that address these proficiencies. The rubrics are used across initial licensure field experiences and completed by the mentoring (cooperating) teacher and university supervisor. Those include planning based on knowledge of students' background, skills, culture and language proficiencies (1b), creating an environment of respect and rapport (2a), flexibility and responsiveness (3e), respectful relationships including respecting diversity among groups of people and individuals (4f) (Exhibit 3.3. f). (Exhibit 3.3.f for *Teacher Credential* evaluations and 1.3.d and 1.3.f for evaluation data.)

#### **Continuous improvement**

4.2.b Continuous Improvement [maximum of three pages]

Summarize activities and changes based on data that have led to continuous improvement of candidate performance and program quality.

Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in unit Standard 4.

Membership on the Diversity/International Committee has changed over the last two years and resulted in a strong group with a serious commitment to this issue. (See Exhibit 6.3.a for Committee description and membership.) The evolving philosophy of the College of Education Diversity/International Committee is that excellence in education cannot be achieved without educational equity for all who enter our schools. With the support of the dean the committee has asked departments to develop their own Diversity Action Plans. The first round of plans were developed in winter 2011 and completed by fall 2011. The process has been repeated in winter 2012 with a two-year plan established by each department. These plans are designed to meet the distinct needs of each department. Elementary and Early Childhood faculty, for instance, performed a curriculum review of the Elementary Education major courses and then took the IDI themselves, examining the results with the guidance of a Qualified IDI Administrator who is a faculty member in the department. (The unit has six Qualified IDI Administrators plus two additional faculty and staff on campus.) University supervisors read *The Middle of Everywhere* by Mary Pipher and participated in structured dialogues. Surveys of supervisors showed the powerful impact of the reading and discussion.

Academic Affairs and the Office of Institutional Diversity are intent on heightening the diversity of faculty. A [pre-doctorate fellowship program](#) has been established to allow MSU to develop emerging scholars and professionals while promoting diversity within the campus community. Through the fellowship program, doctoral students who enhance the diversity of the faculty, staff, and/or student body are employed as fixed-term or probationary faculty or staff members in academic and administrative departments at the university, in accordance with the terms of the respective collective bargaining agreement. In addition to financial compensation and the opportunity to develop academic and professional skills, each pre-doctoral fellow benefits from a supportive and intentional mentoring relationship with a member of the hiring department. The COE has supported this program and five pre-doctoral fellows, including one fellow currently.

The Maverick Recruitment Coordinator and her office lead the efforts in recruitment and retention of candidates of color, focusing on strategies to help students in middle and high schools consider a career in teaching as well as supporting students once on campus. Schools from the metropolitan area as well as rural Minnesota have been targeted. Potential candidates are also recruited through community colleges. A major part of the support for candidates once admitted is a group called Teachers of Tomorrow. Teachers of Tomorrow acts as a support group for diverse student candidates (freshman through student teaching); provides workshops on time management, test taking, stress management and personal success; arranges social events for potential students, current students and graduates involving faculty and staff interactions; and assists with Minnesota Teacher's Licensure Exam (MTLE) preparation. Scholarship dollars were secured through our Development Director and were matched by a Dean's Foundation account to recruit and retain promising candidates of color. Student scholarships up to \$3000 are available for incoming students with qualifying GPA's of 3.00 or better. (See Exhibit 4.3.h for more on these recruitment efforts.) More about the Teachers of Tomorrow, including a video and efforts on recruitment can be found at [Teachers of Tomorrow](#). The goals of the MRC and her office are increasing the level of students of color within our teacher preparation program, intentionally targeting students to pursue high-need licensure areas, heightening our candidates' level of cultural competency, and enhancing the quality of our teacher candidates (Exhibit 4.3.h for Milestone Review 2011-2012.)

In addition to the dedicated efforts of the MRC, our Student Relations Coordinator has taken steps to extend beyond the recruitment events coordinated by University Admissions. She has established collaborations with the MSU Institutional Diversity program; set a website of volunteer opportunities for students (freshman through senior year) to get hands on experience working with children in a supervised setting; and established a Student Advisory Board. The SRC has developed the MTLE preparation workshops as part of her work.

With the addition of *Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA)* as a major assessment for all initial licensure candidates, the unit has developed an active, more focused lens on diversity both in the curriculum and in the requirements during field experiences. TPA consists of four tasks. The Context of Learning component is incorporated throughout the four tasks. Understanding the Context of Learning is the first critical understanding for candidates. From the introductory level field experiences, candidates are required to complete a Context of Learning assignment. In past years candidates used a checklist to determine the diversity of members of a particular class. Candidates submitted the checklist and moved on. The Context of Learning assignment requires candidates to develop a comprehensive understanding of the class. Candidates are guided in their understanding of what they are observing by faculty and TOSAs.

Because of TPA the unit has focused on helping candidates understand the concept of academic language and how to help all learners in their development. University supervisors, TOSAs and faculty have participated in professional development sessions on the topic. The topic of academic language is incorporated into methods courses and used as a subject for feedback and reflection by supervisors. In Task 3, Assessing student learning, candidates select three student work samples. At least one of the students must have identified learning needs, such as an English language learner or a student with an IEP. The unit has incorporated portions of TPA, often by task, into the field experiences that occur prior to student teaching.

Candidates are assessed on 12 rubrics for the four tasks of TPA. Six of those rubrics are linked to diversity. The first full implementation in the pilot of TPA occurred in spring 2011. Data by candidate and student work samples stored on DVDs for analysis. Cross scoring verification by the state has not yet been returned because we are accelerated pilot state in this date. Spring is the first field test with the revised 5 point rubric.

## **Plans**

The General Education and Diversity Committee, Undergraduate Curriculum and Policy Committee, IFO President, and Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Studies and International Education have been charged by President Davenport with developing a cultural requirement for undergraduate students that would involve and intense experience. Open forums to discussion of pathways for this new cultural requirement are currently underway.

In addition to active recruitment efforts that are part of the faculty search process and the pre-doctoral fellowship program, a proposal is being vetted through the university that would provide opportunities to heighten the diversity of faculty. While the proposal is in draft stages, it is moving forward with discussion in Deans' Council and review by Affirmative Action and Human Resources.