I. Overview and Conceptual Framework

I.1. What are the institution’s historical context and unique characteristics?

Williams Baptist College is a private, co-educational, four-year liberal arts college, founded in 1941 by H.E. Williams. The College is governed by a twenty-four member board, whose members are elected by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. The enrollment of the College is around six hundred students with approximately 82% from Arkansas and 18% from other states and countries.

Baptist education has a century-long history in the region, including several previous attempts to establish Baptist colleges, beginning in 1899. H. E. Williams, the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Pocahontas, led in the establishment of Williams (originally Southern Baptist College) in that town in 1941. On June 10, 1941, several hundred people from Northeast Arkansas and Southeast Missouri gathered in Pocahontas to formally establish a college. The new college, which opened on September 10, 1941, was in a very real sense the descendant of the earlier educational efforts (by Baptists) in the region. From the first, H. E. Williams asserted that the college was a “child of Providence,” called to the ministry of providing an affordable Christian-based liberal arts -- collegiate -- education in a region with limited higher education opportunities. Sermons, press releases, denominational presentations, and autobiography confirm the centrality of this powerful animating ideal.

For five years, the College experienced steady growth at Pocahontas, but on December 26, 1946, the administration building was destroyed by fire. The College was then moved to the Marine Corps Air Base, near Walnut Ridge, and classes resumed on January 6, 1947. Across the decades, the College has transformed the airbase into a beautiful, highly efficient campus, while preserving two historic, vintage structures from the war years. Notably, in 2011, the Commandant’s House was renovated and added to the National Register of Historic Places.

I.2 What is the institution’s mission?

Williams’ mission is to recruit actively, admit responsibly, instruct effectively, and influence positively both traditional and non-traditional students seeking intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth within the philosophical orientation of a conservative Christian world view, the Judeo-Christian heritage, and Western culture. Fulfilling its mission to educate, equip, and enrich students to be articulate and contributing members of a global society, Williams requires a general curriculum of arts and sciences with opportunities to pursue liberal arts and professional degrees. Williams accomplishes its mission through a wide range of student services, a qualified faculty and staff, athletic programs, an aesthetically-pleasing campus, appropriate facilities, current
technological support, opportunities for cultural encounters, and a spiritual atmosphere which emphasizes faith and family values.

I.3 *What is the professional education unit at your institution, what is its relationship to other units at the institution that are involved in the preparation of professional educators, and what are the significant changes since the last NCATE review?*

The Unit refers to the Williams Teacher Education Program at Williams Baptist College. The Early Childhood Education and Middle Level Education programs are housed in the Department of Education, while the Art Education, Secondary English Education, Health and Physical Education, Music Education, and Secondary Social Studies Education programs are housed within their respective departments.

I.4 *Summarize basic tenets of the conceptual framework, institutional standards and candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions as well as significant changes made to the conceptual framework since the last NCATE review.*

The WTEP has adopted the following **conceptual framework** statement: The Williams Teacher Education Program is committed to preparing professional educators to be effective communicators who integrate and care. The conceptual framework provides both direction and vision for the Unit, its programs, the faculty, and students. It communicates values for decision-making and brings cohesion to the Unit with its many partnerships. The framework also provides vision for academic planning, program revision, and program innovation.

**The basic tenets of the Conceptual Framework are communication, integration, and caring.** Teacher candidates will competently communicate their respective specialization and professional content; their knowledge of the learning processes, especially the stages and characteristics of physical, cognitive, affective, and communicative growth and development; and their understanding of professionalism with regard to appearance, verbal and written expressions, and civility.

Teacher candidates will integrate content, resources, and methods of instruction with assessment in response to students’ abilities and exceptional needs. Moreover, they will integrate content with character education for the advantage of all learners; methods of classroom in instruction by using multimedia, technology, and community resources; and content, character education, and methods of instruction through classroom experiences by which students will be encouraged to inquire, receive, and construct knowledge.

Teacher candidates will demonstrate that they care in the following ways: by exemplifying values of sharing and altruism in local, national, and global communities; by exhibiting commitment to all aspects of the students’ academic, social, emotional, and moral well-being; by involving themselves in activities and events that expand and explore their aesthetic appreciation, academic betterment, and refinement of character; and by reflecting the attitudes of life-long learners.
Institutional Standards and Candidate Proficiencies

Candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions are assessed at numerous points throughout the program: program entry, continuation in the program, student teaching, and program exit. To apply for WTEP entry, potential teacher candidates must meet the following requirements: completion of a minimum of 45 credit hours with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 on a 4.00 scale; completion of certain specified courses with a minimum grade of C including EN1113 English Composition I, EN 1123 English Composition II, SP2183 Speech & Communication, MT1113 College Algebra or MT1153 Contemporary Math, and ED2203 Introduction to Teaching; passing Praxis I scores; recommendations from two WBC faculty; and professional verbal and written communication skills. To provide evidence of having met these requirements, applicants submit these documents to the WTEP Education Office by the designated semester deadline: current WBC transcript and degree plan, official passing Praxis I scores, two letters of recommendation, and an autobiographical sketch. Respective department chairs also submit a disposition form for each applicant. After all of these documents are received in the Education Office by the specified semester deadline, the WTEP Coordinator schedules an interview for each potential teacher candidate, whereby the candidate’s communication skills and dispositions related to professional appearance and professional communication are further evaluated. Those involved in the interviews of applicants include WTEP faculty from all education degree programs. Each potential candidate is expected to dress professionally for the interview and to bring a portfolio of work in education classes. After the teacher candidate has submitted all the required supporting documents and has met all the criteria, including successful completion of the interview, the WTEP Admission Committee will inform the applicant in writing about whether or not WTEP admission has been granted.

Once admitted to the program, teacher candidates maintain GPA and grade requirements, adhere to WTEP and institutional policies, and consult with advisors on a regular basis. Disposition forms have been developed and implemented to document proficiencies in intellectual curiosity, in-class performance, communication skills, responsibility, respect for rules and policies, appearance, personal integrity, and group work. Candidates’ proficiencies are assessed in courses through multiple evaluations such as papers, presentations, portfolios, projects and activities, exams, field experiences, and capstone projects. Other examples of assessments include curriculum development, use of manipulatives, integration of technology, and case studies. Candidates must also take required Praxis II content area tests. Department chairs complete recommendation forms for candidates preparing to enter Directed Student Teaching (DST).

Evaluations from both cooperating teachers and clinical supervisors, self-rating evaluations, videos of teacher candidates providing instruction, and candidates’ journals assess candidates’ proficiencies during DST. The Praxis II: Principles of Learning and Teaching testing requirements is taken during DST. In addition, candidates participate in exit interviews and surveys upon completion of DST. They must also pass the English
Proficiency Exam (EPE), developed and administered by the College as a graduation requirement. All of these assessments are intended to assure that WTEP candidates value and embrace the ideals and objectives of the conceptual framework.