NCATE Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

Standard 1.1 What do candidate assessments tell the unit about candidates’ meeting professional, state, and institutional standards and their impact on P-12 student learning?

The Williams Teacher Education Program primary goal is to prepare candidates that can integrate, care, and communicate, while simultaneously attaining a high level of knowledge and skills. This goal is assessed at the national, state, and institutional levels. Currently, two of the Unit’s programs, P-4 Early Childhood and Middle Level have sought national recognition. The P-4 Early Childhood program was awarded National Recognition, with conditions. The Middle Level program was awarded National Recognition, with probation. Due to low enrollment of candidates and feasibility the remaining Unit programs did not pursue national recognition. For the aforementioned programs, if their program completers are more than six, then a state report is submitted for program approval. For programs that have six or less, then the appropriate data is submitted in the NCATE Institutional Report.

The WTEP Early Childhood Program had 44 candidates take the Praxis II Early Childhood: Content Knowledge assessment from 2009-2012. The pass rate is 100% for this assessment. Data from 2009-2011 reveal that the majority of WTEP Early Childhood candidates who took the assessment scored in the 3rd and 4th quartiles, which are highest quartiles. In 2012, 42% of WTEP Early Childhood candidates scored in the 3rd and 4th quartiles.

The WTEP Middle Level Education Program had 29 candidates take the Praxis II Middle School: Content Knowledge assessment from 2009-2012. The pass rate is 86% for this assessment. It must be stated that a common practice for some of the P-12 WTEP candidates is to take the Praxis II Middle School: Content Knowledge assessment even though they were not formally prepared for the content of the exam.

The WTEP Physical Education Program had 22 candidates take the Praxis II Physical Education: Movement Forms Analysis and Design from 2009-2011. The pass rate is 95% for this assessment. For the same program and years, there was 21 candidates take the Praxis II Physical Education: Content Knowledge. The pass rate was 76% for this assessment. This is an area of concern for the WTEP Physical Education Program. Starting in September 2011 there was a new Praxis II Physical Education: Content Knowledge assessment implemented. The results of the 15 WTEP Physical Education candidates was 5 passed and 10 failed, which is a pass rate of 33%.
Currently, the WTEP Physical Education Program is developing strategies to address this area. The final Praxis II Content assessment for WTEP Physical Education candidates is the Praxis II Health and Physical Education: Content Knowledge. From 2009-2012, there were 36 WTEP Physical Education candidates take this assessment. The pass rate on this assessment is 88%.

The WTEP Art Education Program had 5 candidates take the Praxis II Art: Content Knowledge assessment from 2009-2011. The pass rate is 20% for this assessment. For the Praxis II Art Making assessment, from 2009-2011, the pass rate for WTEP Art Education candidates is 33%. From 2010-2011, the WTEP Art Program had 1 teacher candidate take the Praxis II Art: Content and Analysis, however that particular teacher candidate was unsuccessful in passing the test.

The WTEP Secondary English Education Program had 3 candidates take the Praxis II English Language Literature and Composition: Content Knowledge assessment from 2009-2011. The pass rate is 100% for this assessment. For the Praxis II English Language Literature and Composition: Essays, there has been 3 teacher candidate take the assessment and the pass rate is 66%. In the fall of 2011, a new test was implemented that replaced two of the previous Praxis II assessment for WTEP Secondary English Education Program candidates. So from, 2011-12 there was 1 student take the Praxis II English and Content Analysis assessment. The pass rate is 100% on this assessment. To be eligible for an Arkansas License, English Education candidates are required to take the Praxis II English: Pedagogy assessment. Since 2009, the WTEP Secondary English Education candidates have an 80% pass rate on the Praxis II English: Pedagogy assessment.

From 2009-12, the WTEP Music Education Program had 4 candidates take the Praxis II Music: Analysis, with a 100% pass rate on this assessment. As for the Praxis II Music: Concepts and Process, from 2009-12 there were 4 WTEP Music Education Program candidates take the assessment. The pass rate is 75% on this assessment. The Praxis II Music: Content Knowledge was taken by 5 WTEP Music Education Program candidates, from 2009-12 and the pass rate is 80%.

The WTEP Secondary Social Studies program had 8 teacher education candidates take the Praxis II Social Studies: Content Knowledge from 2009-11. The pass rate is 88% on this assessment. In addition, there were 8 WTEP Secondary Social Studies teacher education students take the Praxis II Social Studies: Analytical Essays and there is a 100% pass rate on this assessment.

The Praxis II: PLT is designed to determine if the teacher candidate is prepared to practice in the field of education. Knowledge of instructional strategies and the candidates appropriate use is a major component of this assessment. For the Praxis II PLT Early Childhood, from 2009-2012 the WTEP had 43 candidates take the assessment. The pass rate is 93%. Data reveal the
majority of WTEP candidates scored in the 1st and 2nd quartiles, which are the lowest quartiles. These data highlight a potential area of concern for the WTEP Program. As for the Praxis II PLT 5-9, from 2009-2012 there were 31 candidates take the assessment. The pass rate is 64%. Data from 2009-2012 reveal that the majority of WTEP candidates who took the assessment scored in the 1st and 2nd quartiles, which are the lowest quartiles. Since this assessment is taken by P-12, 4-8, and 7-12 WTEP candidates it is a serious Unit concern. Relating to the Praxis II PLT 7-12, from 2009-2012 there were 28 WTEP candidates take the assessment. The pass rate is 78%.

Prior to Fall 2012, the Arkansas Department of Education required all “degree completers” from Colleges of Education to successfully pass a Praxis III assessment, before a standard license was awarded. Once candidates have graduated, completed their respective program, and begun teaching, they undergo the Praxis III assessment. The Praxis III assessment is based upon written documentation, pre and post interviews, and classroom observation. The content and curriculum of Praxis III is based on the work of Charlotte Danielson.

The Praxis III evaluation was based upon the teacher’s performance in the following domains:

**Domain A:** Organizing Content Knowledge for Student Learning  
**Domain B:** Creating an Environment for Student Learning  
**Domain C:** Teaching for Student Learning  
**Domain D:** Teacher Professionalism

The maximum score on the Praxis III was 57. The minimum passing score was 45. Scores were assigned by the State Certified Assessor for each of the four domains. The rubric used to assign scores during the evaluation has been provided following this narrative.

As for the actual Praxis III assessment, the content of the assessment is closely related to the WTEP Direct Student Teaching Evaluations. Therefore, all (100%) WTEP program completers who have undergone the Praxis III assessment have been successful. The WTEP degree completers’ pass rates and scores for the Praxis III are provided in Exhibit 1.3.c. The Praxis III data are presented in aggregate and disaggregate form in Exhibit 1.3.c.

As a Unit, in 2008-09 the WTEP degree completers had an overall average of 51.4 on the Praxis III assessment, which was higher than the state average in Arkansas. However, in Domains B and C the WTEP averages were slightly less than the state averages. For 2009-10, the WTEP cohort’s overall average of 51.7 on the Praxis III was higher than the state average. Domain B was the only area where the WTEP degree completers scored below the state average. In 2010-11, the WTEP degree completers averaged 51.0 which nearly meet the overall state average of 51.1. In summary, WTEP degree completers received their highest scores in Domain A and D,
which highlight their ability to organize content knowledge for student learning and to utilize teacher professionalism.

The *Praxis III* assessment has been removed by the Arkansas Department of Education as a required assessment to gain any level of licensure.

Candidates demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and skills most clearly through Directed Student Teaching (DST). DST provides the candidates an opportunity to move from theory to practice under the supervision of an experienced, certified teacher. The cooperating teachers evaluate candidates at specific stages throughout the DST assignments. The WTEP strategically aligned the DST with Praxis III, so the teacher candidate could be aware of research based teaching practices and more easily transition into the next educational process for licensure.

A teacher candidate’s Directed Student Teaching is formally evaluated by the respective P-12 cooperating teacher. Using the following scoring system,

1= Unsatisfactory, does not meet minimum performance standards
2= Needs improvement, is inconsistent in meeting minimum performance standards
3= Acceptable/Adequate, meets the average performance standards
4= Exceptional, consistently exceeds performance standards
NA = If a component is not observed or not applicable

For the Fall 2011 semester, WTEP candidates scored an overall average of 3.7. The data reveal that the vast majority of the WTEP candidates are “acceptable” and moving toward “exceptional”. Data from the Spring 2012 semester for WTEP candidates, provide an overall average of 3.73. An examination of the data reveals that the WTEP candidates are successful in their teaching practices. For the Fall 2012 semester, the Education Coordinator of the WTEP simplified the data collection process for DST Evaluations, therefore the data set is more complete for this semester. Along with an improved return rate in DST Evaluation scores, the WTEP candidates received outstanding scores, with an overall average of 3.9. These data provide confirmation to the quality of the WTEP.

Candidates’ dispositions are assessed through the screening interview process for entry into the program and throughout candidates’ progression in the program. This form provides a formal evaluation of these dispositions: intellectual curiosity, in-class performance, communication skills, responsibility, respect for rules and procedures, appearance, personal integrity, and group work. Candidates are screened early in their college careers and the disposition forms are then used as formative evaluations. The WTEP faculty review forms periodically to check for patterns of behavior inconsistent with the WTEP conceptual framework and philosophy. Any problems are addressed with the individual candidates to provide feedback and to allow for improvement.
Candidates are made aware of the disposition form at the beginning of each specialization, pre-professional, and professional course. Dispositions are informally assessed through journal writing and field experiences during individual courses. Candidates’ dispositions are formally evaluated through DST and case study evaluations. All of these evaluations reflect dispositions as candidates work with students, families, and communities.