Standard 6. Unit Governance and Resources

The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

6.1 Unit Governance and Resources

How do the unit’s governance system and resources contribute to adequately preparing candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards?

Unit Leadership and Authority

The responsibility for professional teacher education programs of study at UNO resides in the Unit, namely, the College of Education and Human Development (COEHD). The Unit has the leadership and authority to plan, deliver, and operate effective programs of study for the preparation of teacher education candidates and other professionals including educational leaders, human performance and health promotion professionals, as well as counselor educators (6.4.b1). Authority and leadership of the Unit is located in the Office of the Dean together with the support of the assistant dean in conjunction with the admissions office centrally (6.4.d1 6.4.d2). The dean reports to the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The dean represents the Unit as a member of the President's Cabinet and the University Council, and chairs the Chairs Council and the COEHD Administrative Council. Since the last NCATE accreditation visit the COEHD has had three different deans.

The Unit is organized into three departments: Curriculum and Instruction (EDCI), Education Leadership, Counseling and Foundations (ELCF), and Special Education and Habilitative Services (SEHS). Department chairs and coordinators provide leadership for academic programs guided by the COEHD and UNO strategic plans (6.4.a2 6.4.a3). The Dean's Office is comprised of the following support staff: an academic coordinator, academic counselor, assessment coordinator, and special assistant to the dean (6.4.b2). Teacher candidates have access to university and Unit calendars, catalogs, and grading policies (6.4.e1 6.4.e2 6.4.e3 6.4.e4).
Information is regularly and frequently shared within the Unit. The dean schedules meetings on a consistent basis with academic department chairs, the assistant dean, special assistant to the dean, assessment coordinator, and NCATE faculty data liaison. Department chairs hold department meetings regularly. All teacher education program faculties meet for program improvement meetings every fortnight. One COEHD Administrative Council meeting is scheduled each month. The Chairs Council, College Administrative Council, Department and College Curriculum Committees, Review and Retention Committee, Teacher Education Council, Graduate Council, Louisiana Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (LACTE), South Central Louisiana Association of School Superintendents (SCLASS), College Advisory Committee, and Program Advisory Committees serve as advisory groups to the Unit.

The Unit programs are owned by the faculty (6.4.a1). Therefore curriculum decisions are initiated by faculty and decisions are submitted to the College Curriculum Committee through Departmental Curriculum Committees. The dean submits the recommendations to the University Curriculum Committee and/or the Graduate Council. Unit faculty and staff collaborate with the College of Liberal Arts and College of Science faculty. This collaboration ensures particular content courses needed by education majors are taught and the Unit receives support in developing the content curriculum. The provost and vice president for academic affairs are responsible for final approval.

Faculty play a pivotal role in the academic program decision-making process through active involvement in the various departmental and college level committees, faculty meetings, and advisory groups (6.4.e2). The Unit seeks participation of the larger professional community in program design, implementation, and evaluation. For example, program faculty in Special Education and Habilitative Services meet twice annually with Orleans Parish special education officials and thought leaders to solicit information for program modification and improvement. The SCLASS meets monthly during the academic year to discuss pertinent state policy issues and to offer program suggestions. The dean participates in these meetings. Members of the Unit’s Leadership Team interact with graduating teacher education candidates twice annually at the Teacher Work Sample Open House to solicit feedback on program strengths and
areas of improvement. Other on-campus venues for student input on programs occur through the annual "Dine with the Dean" and regular attendance at the KDE meetings. Teacher candidates have access to a plethora of services to ensure their success (6.4.c1 6.4.c2 6.4.c3 6.4.c4 6.4.c5). The Teacher Education Council (TEC), chaired by the assistant dean, provides oversight for all curriculum, policy, and procedural matters pertaining to our programs.

The Unit receives budgetary allocations through a student-generated fee designated for student teacher clinical experiences (6.4.f1 6.4.g1). The budget is sufficient to support on campus (printing of a Clinical Experience Handbook) and off campus (faculty travel and cooperating teacher remuneration) educational activities for effective candidate preparation. The Unit's budget supports a full-time director of clinical experiences together with centralized staff support. Each academic department within the Unit has a separate personnel and operating budget. Funds from these budgets are used to support instruction. Sufficient funds are available to hire adjunct faculty needed for particular courses within the program array. The majority of adjunct faculties are practitioners who teach annually providing for continuity of program quality.

As per university work-load policy, "UNO requires all full-time faculty members, whether instructional or in rank, to fulfill the equivalent of a 24 semester hour load per academic year. The balance of duties between teaching, research/scholarship/creativity, administration, service, and other duties shall be defined and enforced by each academic department with the approval of the respective dean and the Provost" (5.4.d2). The Unit's three departments have collaborated to develop consistent work-load policies (6.4.h1 6.4.h2). For example, the ELCF programs are graduate-only programs in contrast to the teacher education programs which are undergraduate and graduate programs. Approximately half of all COEHD teacher education faculty are professional practice faculty and teach 24 semester hours each academic year. Tenured and tenure-track faculty typically teach 18 hours per academic year with the remaining six hours devoted to program coordination, scholarship, and significant college or university service activities. For undergraduate teacher education programs all advising is done centrally through an academic counselor. Adjunct faculties are
active participants in academic programs. Within the last year an adjunct orientation meeting was held for all adjunct faculties. Faculties are encouraged to participate in professional development activities both on- and off-campus. Professional development funds come from departmental budgets and summer "profits." Faculty work is spotlighted on the Unit's webpage and in display cases in the lobby of the education building.

In the last few years, the Unit has been actively engaged with the Louisiana Board of Regents and other institutions in professional development for faculty with regard to Unit readiness to prepare teacher candidates for the Common Core State Standards Initiative and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Through the Louisiana Board of Regents "Core to College" funding, the Unit faculty and faculty in English and Mathematics have engaged in professional development workshops (6.4.f2). This UNO leadership group has disseminated resources and knowledge to the larger teacher preparation entities on campus.

The Unit currently has $3 million dollars in external resources through sponsored projects funded by the federal government and private foundations (6.4.f2). These resources are not specifically needed for the Unit to carry out its core programs. Rather these resources enable the Unit to increase its reach to meet district needs in the area of special education into school systems within the five parish area. Through these resources, the Unit significantly impacts teacher preparation at the initial, masters, and doctoral levels in areas of early intervention and mild/moderate disabilities. The Capital One Bank "Distinguished Urban Educator Lecture Series" enabled the Unit to host three nationally known urban educators. Each scholar delivered an open public lecture and conducted professional development workshops with PK-12 partners. Teacher preparation courses were revised to integrate materials from these workshops and lectures.

The Unit has two computer labs (PC and Mac) equipped with instructional technology and computer software for instructional purposes on-campus. Distance education students also have the requisite access (6.4.j1 6.4.j2) The Mac Lab, Resource Center (6.4.c6), and two other classrooms are equipped with Promethean Boards. Faculty and
students have access to 24 IPads for classroom instruction. These were purchased from student generated technology fees that directly benefit student instruction.

Additional instructional and computer technology is available in the library (6.4.j2). Over 100 computers are available along with research and technical assistance. The library provides a variety of learning environments and is open seven days a week, with extended hours during exam periods. Students and faculty may access library resources and services 24/7 through the library's website, and through the Interlibrary Loan service and other Louisiana colleges through the LALINC program. A liaison librarian serves the Unit through collection development and instructional services. This person collaborates with COEHD faculty to offer classroom instruction sessions to provide students with information literacy skills necessary to achieve academic success.

6.2 Moving Toward Target or Continuous Improvement

Please respond to 6.2.a if this is the standard on which the unit is moving to the target level. If it is not the standard on which you are moving to the target level, respond to 6.2.b.

6.2.b Continuous Improvement

- 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 this standard.

Deliberate and focused data-driven conversations occurred from July 2013-December 2014 that included faculty, program coordinators, and the leadership team in the COEHD. As a result, in December 2014, the Unit reduced academic programs from 15 to 11. Previously, PK-12 teacher education and leadership programs accounted for 11 of 15 programs. The number of PK-12 programs was reduced from 11 to 6. These decisions were reached after an analysis of 5-year longitudinal program data including enrollment and graduation trends and the cost of delivering programs by academic department using responsibility-centered management (RCM) as a tool. The Unit also
consulted with external stakeholders including representatives from school boards and student groups. The larger context that drove program reduction included four external factors: (a) Hurricane Katrina natural disaster in August 2005 and loss of students and faculty that followed for the last decade; (b) a significant reduction in state funding over the last 7 years; (c) changing governance systems from the Louisiana State University to the University of Louisiana System; and (d) the Louisiana Board of Regents raising student admission standards. The net result of these external factors has been a significant loss of students and faculty/staff at the University and within the Unit. The Unit had over 2,000 students pre-Katrina in 2005; in Fall 2014 the Unit had just over 900 students. From Fall 2010 to Fall 2014 the Unit lost nearly one-third of all students. In 2002 the COEHD had 59 faculties, then 38 in 2007. The Unit presently has 24 full-time faculty and 13 are teacher education faculty.

The Academic Program Review process commenced in May 2014 and was led by the Faculty Governance Committee (FGC). The Unit had representation on the FGC. Phase I of the FGC work concluded in December 2014. The FGC is preparing to embark on Phase II and III respectively.

Based upon needs assessment of external stakeholders that include the five school districts the Unit serves, the COEHD decided to merge the initial two M.Ed. degrees in general education and special education respectively. A sub-group of teacher education faculty from both Departments of Curriculum and Instruction and Special Education have revised and developed a single M.Ed. with five focus areas determined by the needs of K-12 stakeholders.

Similarly teacher education faculties who teach in the elementary education program reviewed and are revising the bachelor's degree in elementary education to strengthen and streamline the largest undergraduate teacher education program in the Unit. Programmatic decisions are being made based upon feedback from written student faculty teaching evaluations, conversations with teacher candidates, faculty program meeting conversations, and Louisiana Department of Education program degree requirements.
The secondary teacher education program was the third and final program that faculty are revising given the same data inputs enumerated previously. The ongoing revisions of the M.Ed., elementary education, and secondary education degree programs are part and parcel of the continuous program improvement philosophy to better serve our students and the needs of external stakeholders.

In December 2014, the Unit made the difficult decision to discontinue two of the four Ph.D. degree programs - the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction and Special Education. This decision was informed by three interrelated data points: (1) relatively low enrollment and completer data over a five-year period; (2) external stakeholder demand based upon a needs assessment; and (3) mixed faculty perspectives and opinions.

In December 2013, following a semester-long longitudinal data-driven conversation with faculty the Unit decided to terminate the early childhood education undergraduate program because of insufficient faculty resources to staff the program and provide coursework in a predictable sequence. The Unit stopped admitting students effective January 2014 and is working with remaining students on a teach-out plan over a two-year period.

The Unit hired an assessment coordinator in June 2013. The assessment coordinator is the liaison between our LiveText repository of teacher education program data and program coordinators and faculty. This enables a data feedback loop for program leaders from semester-to-semester as well as data for Specialized Professional Associations (SPA) reports and the NCATE Institutional Report. The assessment coordinator also coordinates LiveText training for faculty and students.

The assessment coordinator and NCATE faculty data liaison meet each week with the dean to debrief about continuous data improvement progress, challenges, and discussion of proposed initiatives to ensure the smooth functioning and improvement of Unit teacher education programs. This meeting is also a venue for discussing and planning completion of annual accountability reports including Title 2, PEDS, and the NCATE/CAEP report. The Unit found the cross-fertilization of these data, as well as LiveText program data and the State of Louisiana Board of Regents data dashboard
and value-added data points invaluable for holistic data driven program improvement purposes.

Teacher education faculties hold program improvement meetings each fortnight throughout the academic year with the overarching goal to improve programs. Topics might include discussion of: student dispositions review; individual course content analysis to gauge redundancy; SPA reports and specifically aligning Unit and program assessments with current professional standards; and the NCATE/CAEP standards.

The dean and assistant dean participate in the monthly meeting of the LACTE in Baton Rouge. The purpose of these meetings is a combination of information exchange amongst public and private colleges of education; the Louisiana Board of Regents; and the Louisiana Department of Education. The dean and assistant dean communicate informational and action items to chairs and other stakeholders in the Unit and these are discussed and implemented.

The dean participates in the monthly meeting of the SCLASS in Thibodeaux, Louisiana. The goal of these meetings is to learn about school district professional development needs and to align these with our current programs and add-on certificates. Information from these meetings is shared with stakeholders in the Unit and integrated into program revisions (i.e. M.Ed.) and add-on certification course offerings.

Teacher Education faculty in the Departments of Curriculum and Instruction and Special Education developed the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in general and special education respectively. These programs were launched in fall 2010. Our MAT teachers with less than two years of teaching experience are highly successful using the state of Louisiana performance on the State Compass evaluation system. For example, in 2012-2013 88% were "Effective Proficient" and/or "Highly Effective." Moreover, using state value added scores for teachers in grades 4 through 8, 62% were rated "Effective Proficient" and/or "Highly Effective." Entry and persistence of our teacher candidates is another measure we use to gauge our continuous improvement. For example, the Unit had a persistence rate of 59% for teachers who were teaching in public schools in 2012-
2013 (they were tracked from 2007-2008). The Unit continues to look at these data points and integrate into the continuous program improvement plans.

### 6.4 Exhibits for Standard 6

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