**KSU Response to NCTQ Ratings of Undergraduate Programs that Fail to Meet the Standard\***

**in Secondary, Elementary and Special Education**

**August 1, 2015**

**\*** (Partly meets standard \*\*; Meets small part of standard \*; Does not meet standard)

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| ***Undergraduate Secondary \*\**** | | | |
| **Standard** | | **NCTQ Criticism** | **KSU Response: The ADED faculty requested that comments be labeled by respondent (Arhar or ADED faculty)** |
| Common Core HS content \*\* | | ***Scorer Comment: Without a thorough grasp of the subject they will teach — typically acquired by a major in an academic discipline — high school teachers will be unable to provide the sophisticated level of instruction that their students will need to progress. All children deserve to have teachers who are well versed in each and every one of the subjects they teach, regardless of teacher shortages that are used to justify preparation shortcuts. The institution only partly meets the standard because the certification pathways that ensure that high school teacher candidates have sufficient content knowledge in every subject they will be qualified to teach include solely:***  ***• Mathematics***  ***• English***  ***• Science***  ***Sufficient content knowledge is not ensured in:***  ***• Social Sciences*** | Joanne Arhar’s Response: Accreditation standards for Social Studies require knowledge in economics, history, sociology, political science…The program requires that students select a concentration in one of those areas.  Note: An Integrated Mathematics major requires more math credits (48) than a Mathematics major (35-36) and more of the courses for Integrated Mathematics are at the upper division level.  ADED faculty response: Beginning with our first methods course (Principles of Teaching Adolescents, ADED 32142), we introduce the Common Core as the prevailing curriculum document for Ohio and the nation.  As our students move into their advanced methods courses, the Common Core is the only document we require the students to use to provide the objectives to plan units and write lesson plans. (This is only for English Education and Math Education, however, because the Common Core does not include social studies and science standards statements. Therefore, in our social studies methods courses, we use the national social studies standards--<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards>—and in our science methods courses, we use the national science standards--<http://www.nextgenscience.org/next-generation-science-standards>). It is ludicrous to suggest that we are not embedding the Core into our methods courses. What other curriculum document would we be using?  There is simply no other document that would be appropriate for us to use in a methods course when 46 states have adopted it.  Furthermore, it may not be evident from examination of syllabi whether or not the Core content is included. A syllabus is only supposed to provide a summary and plan of the course. When lesson plans are discussed in class, of course we reference the Common Core (or relevant standards), but this would be evidenced mainly in support documents that are distributed both online and on hard copy.  It is also worth noting that the syllabi reflect our commitment to Common Core according to the timeframe laid out by the Ohio Department of Education—that is to say that it is only this fall, during the 2013-2014 school year, that the Core has been required to be implemented by Ohio school districts.  Finally, it shouldn’t be forgotten that we, in ADED, have recently passed, with national recognition, all of our NCATE SPA assessments, which closely examine our students’ preparation in terms of content. |
| Classroom Management\*\* | | ***Scorer Comment: Teacher candidates will be better able to establish a productive classroom environment if the evaluations they receive during student teaching speak to specific classroom management strategies that together constitute a coherent management approach. The program only partly meets the standard because feedback provided to student teachers only addresses how well they manage significant student misbehavior and does not address either how well they manage minimally disruptive behavior or their ability to establish a positive learning environment and standards of behavior.*** | Joanne Arhar’s Response: Student teachers enact a coherent management approach only if the cooperating teachers allow them to. Most cooperating teachers have already established a management approach that the student teacher must work within. So the student teaching evaluation addresses specific competencies that are aligned with the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession and the INTASC Standards. The following items are included in the student teaching evaluation under *Standard 5: Learning Environment. Teacher creates learning environments that promote high levels of learning and achievement for all students.*   * Creates a classroom learning environment that is respectful, supportive and caring. * Creates a classroom environment that is physically and emotionally safe. * Motivates students to work productively and assumes responsibility for their own learning. * Creates learning situations in which students work independently, collaboratively and/or as a whole class. * Maintains an environment that is conducive to learning for all students.   Nearly all students during 2011-2012 were rated Agree or Strongly Agree by University supervisor and cooperating teacher on each of the items above items. None of the items refers to managing significant student behavior so apparently the reviewers did not read the items in the student teaching evaluation that are included in the handbook that was sent to NCTQ.  ADED Faculty Response: We provide both specific and general knowledge in principles of classroom management throughout all of our methods courses—the main principles of classroom management we stress are that any effective learning experience must be well organized and engaging to students with clear outcomes and paths to those outcomes.  In our final companion course to student teaching (ADED 49525), we require students to create their own Classroom Management Plans.  To teach “classroom management” in abstract fashion, divorced from both content and context, would take us back to the days of behaviorism.  So we make sure to demonstrate that “classroom management” must be integrated into daily classroom practices, based on everything we know to be true about teaching and learning. |
| Assessment Data\*\* | | ***Scorer Comments: Using data on student performance has always been central to good instruction. Teachers should know how to prepare and draw information from an array of assessments, and work individually and in teams to adjust and extend their lessons to promote learning. The program only partly meets the standard. It requires that teacher candidates prepare both formative and summative classroom assessments. However, there are virtually no requirements that candidates, individually and in teams, interpret and apply data from both standardized and classroom assessments. Although this did not affect the rating, the program adequately addresses the instructional role of standardized tests, particularly the program state's standardized tests.*** | ADED Faculty Response: Again, our SPA NCATE criteria have required us for years to assign students to look at the contexts in which they are writing their units during student teaching, and, of course, assessment data must be examined to thoroughly understand the contexts in which they teach.  Examination of assessment data is built into our rubrics.  It is simply untrue to suggest that looking at assessment data is not part of the process that we teach.  We also introduce the students to the concepts of “value-added assessment” as well as the various metrics that they will have to understand as classroom teachers in Ohio.  We introduce these terms specific to Ohio primarily in the companion course to student teaching (ADED 49525) during our students’ last semester with us, partly because the specifics of Ohio’s plans are so fluid and poorly organized and communicated.  We want our students to have the latest information, because it is so frequently changed at the last minute.  But certainly the concept of “data-driven decision making” is explored (and deconstructed) throughout the entire brief time our students are with us. |
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| ***Elementary Education \**** | | | |
| Standard | | NCTQ Criticism | KSU Response |
| Early Reading: (no stars)  and  Struggling Readers (no stars) | | ***Early Reading Scoring Comment: The research-based content proven to be necessary for teaching all children to read should be clearly evident in course materials such as lecture topics, assignments and textbooks. All of a program's required reading courses — not just some courses — should impart what is necessary to teach reading. The program does not meet the standard. Looking at a full range of course materials, there is little or no evidence of adequate instruction on the components of effective reading instruction.***  ***Struggling Readers Scoring Comment: Because reading failure presages a host of difficulties in schooling, all elementary teachers*** *need* ***to have a working knowledge of appropriate interventions when early readers lag their peers. The program fails to meet the standard because there is no required reading course that delivers instructional strategies necessary for teaching struggling readers and requires candidates to practice such strategies.*** | ECED provides 12 credit hours in Reading and Writing at the early childhood level including 4 clinical field experiences (2 preschool, 2 primary) with early readers which include reading tutoring, early reading and early writing instruction:   * Language and literacy Development * Appropriate Phonics (tutoring, running records, phonics instruction) * Developmental Reading and Writing in Early Years (adapting to ranges of learners and learning styles). * Developing a Balanced Literacy Program (classroom instruction using scientifically based practices)   These are in concert with ODE’s Prek-3 initial licensure standards.  All reading courses include strategies for reaching struggling readers. |
| Common Core Elementary Content (no stars)  and | | ***Common Core Elementary Content Scoring Comment: Because they cannot teach what they do not know, elementary teacher candidates need to have a solid grasp of literature and composition, American and world history, geography and science. Teacher candidates should also develop some expertise outside of their professional studies, not only to enrich their own academic experience, but also to serve as a fallback major in the event that the student teaching experience is unsuccessful. The program fails to meet this standard because the combination of institution and program requirements provides no coverage of the content elementary teachers need in:***  ***• History***  ***• Science***  ***There is coverage with some deficiencies in:***  ***• Literature and composition*** | Ohio does not license in Elementary Education so the content is selected for preK-grade 3 and meets accreditation requirements.  The program requires:   * 7 credits in basic sciences (including a lab) 3 credits Science for ECED; 3 credits Teach Math & Science Early Years= 13 credits in science. * History is not required but students can select it from the social sciences category. History is embedded in several early childhood education methods courses which is appropriate for an integrated approach to curriculum. * 6 credits of composition; 3 credits Balanced Literacy; 3 credits Language and Literacy for Preschool Child= 12 credits in language and composition. |
| Lesson planning (no stars) | | ***Lesson Planning Scoring Comment: Regardless of the scope of instructional design projects assigned earlier in preparation, teacher candidates should be required to demonstrate at the conclusion of their preparation that they are competent in designing instruction. The institution does not meet the standard because it does not demand that candidates satisfy a full range of instructional design requirements. All candidates do demonstrate through project or portfolio assignments associated with either student teaching, or an exit or licensing requirement that they can meet challenges of instructional design in the following areas:***  ***• Anchoring instruction in the state's K-12 learning standards***  ***• Accommodating students with special needs.***  ***However, the institution does not require that candidates demonstrate that they can meet the challenges of instructional design in:***  ***• Identifying technology applications that will boost instruction***  ***• Addressing the needs of English language learners***  ***• Extending instruction for students who have demonstrated proficiency in relevant standards***  ***Moreover:***  ***• The program's instructional planning assignments unfortunately encourage candidates to use pseudo-scientific methods of instruction. Although this did not affect the rating, the program does not require that throughout their student teaching experience, teacher candidates develop written instructional plans whose content follows explicit instructional guidelines.*** | ECED provides 15 credit hours of Pre K and Elementary Mathematics, Science, and Social studies which includes 4 field experiences (2 preschool, 2 in primary grades K-3) in which ***Lesson planning and direct experience*** is highlighted.   * Early Experiences in Math & Science * Teaching Math in the early years (I) * Teaching Math in the early years (II) * Teaching Science in the early years * Integrated Curriculum Social Studies   In addition, students are required to a unit plan and supporting lesson plans during student teaching as a part of the edTPA portfolio.  Lesson plans are evaluated using standards from NAEYC (National Association of Early Childhood Education), edTPA, and Ohio Content Standards and Common Core. |
| Classroom Management \*\* | | ***Teacher candidates will be better able to establish a productive classroom environment if the evaluations they receive during student teaching speak to specific classroom management strategies that together constitute a coherent management approach. The program only partly meets the standard because feedback provided to student teachers only addresses how well they manage significant student misbehavior and does not address either how well they manage minimally disruptive behavior or their ability to establish a positive learning***  ***environment and standards of behavior.*** | Student teachers enact a coherent management approach only if the cooperating teachers allow them to. Most cooperating teachers have already established a management approach that the student teacher must work within. So the student teaching evaluation addresses specific competencies that are aligned with the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession and the INTASC Standards. The following items are included in the student teaching evaluation under *Standard 5: Learning Environment. Teacher creates learning environments that promote high levels of learning and achievement for all students.*   * Creates a classroom learning environment that is respectful, supportive and caring. * Creates a classroom environment that is physically and emotionally safe. * Motivates students to work productively and assumes responsibility for their own learning. * Creates learning situations in which students work independently, collaboratively and/or as a whole class. * Maintains an environment that is conducive to learning for all students.   Nearly all students during 2011-2012 were rated Agree or Strongly Agree by University supervisor and cooperating teacher on each of the items above items. None of the items refers to managing significant student behavior so apparently the reviewers did not read the items in the student teaching evaluation that are included in the handbook that was sent to NCTQ. |
| English Language Learners (no stars) | | ***Teachers must be prepared for classroom settings that are likely to include diverse populations speaking several different languages. The program fails to meet the standard because there is no required course that delivers instructional strategies addressing the specific early reading needs of English language learners***  ***and requires candidates to practice such strategies.*** | No separate courses address specific early reading needs of English language learners. Rather, best practice indicates that this content and pedagogy be integrated into the existing reading courses required by the State of Ohio. These strategies are “practiced” in multiple field experiences in a variety of settings including setting in which include a high number of English language learners. |
| Assessment and Data \*\* | |  | No ECED response |
| Student Teaching (no stars) | |  | ***See also Student Teaching Response for all KSU programs.***  Early Childhood Education at KSU has a strong reputation among local principals and hiring committees—at the end of the student teaching semester Kent State Students have over 1200 clinical field hours. Every semester students have clinical experiences associated with their content courses; seminar experiences in which lesson planning, assessment and guidance are practiced are not well understood in the NCTQ reporting and evaluation process.  Noting that the evaluation produced ***no stars*** in this area, NCTQ has failed to account for the extensive clinical supervision associated with the KSU ECED program. Students are clinically supported by professors for 3 of their 5 semesters and professional supervision is conducted by the Office of Clinical Experience for two semesters. Standards of several learned societies like NAEYC (National Association for the Educational of Young Children) and NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) are followed in constructing courses and course work and associated assessments. Final student teaching is evaluated by both in class and field based assessment and takes 15 weeks for completion. The state minimum requirement is 12 weeks—KSU ECED students graduate with 15 weeks of final student teaching netting a strong regional and national reputation.    ECED has moved beyond minimum standards of practice with a preschool lab school boasting higher levels of practice than state preschool requirements and the ECED program has earned recognition from the International Baccalaureate (the first UG institution to do so in the U.S.). ECED has been nationally recognized by NCATE. |
| ***Undergraduate Special Education \**** | | | |
| NCTQ Standard | NCTQ Criticism | | KSU Response |
| Common Core Elementary Mathematics (no stars) | ***Teacher candidates, even those who excel in math, generally require three semesters of***  ***coursework, complemented by adequate field practice in order to progress from a procedural to a conceptual understanding of the essential mathematics topics taught in the elementary grades. The institution does not meet this standard because it requires that teacher candidates take little or no coursework designed to develop their conceptual understanding of elementary mathematics topics. It thus fails to ensure that all essential topics are adequately covered, regardless of the design of the instruction.*** | | Students in Kent State’s undergraduate special education licensure programs complete at least three semesters of mathematics coursework. During the first two semesters, students take a series of courses that are designed to develop understanding of mathematical concepts. These courses, Math Concepts I and II, cover topics ranging from the number system to probability, statistics and geometry. In the third semester, students complete an upper-division mathematics instruction course, which addresses pedagogical content knowledge, aligned with state and national standards, for the teaching and learning of mathematics at the elementary and secondary levels. Additionally, students who choose mathematics as a content focus area are required to take three additional semesters of mathematics courses: Algebra for Calculus, Trigonometry and Analytic Geometry and Calculus I. |
| Common Core content for Special Education  (no stars) | ***Special education teacher preparation programs and state licensing must distinguish between elementary and secondary levels, as they do for general education. This program's state offers only an overly broad PK-12 special education certification, a "generic" certification for which it is almost impossible to conceive of adequate content preparation for special education teachers. Because it can offer only PK-12 special education certification, it is no surprise that this program fails to satisfy the standard. In fact, the program fails to adequately prepare teacher candidates in both elementary content and secondary content.*** | | Kent State University and Bowling Green State University are the only two institutions from Ohio with rankings for undergraduate special education programs, and NCTQ’s Scoring Comments for Common Core Content for Special Education for these institutions are identical. The Council offered no institution-specific criticisms, and provided no institution-specific evidence for KSU’s alleged failure to adequately prepare teacher candidates in both elementary and secondary content. In Ohio, special education teachers can be licensed at the early childhood level (pk-3) and at the elementary/secondary levels (k-12). Kent State University follows this practice. At the undergraduate level, KSU students are prepared for licensure at the k-12 level; graduate students also have the opportunity to pursue licensure in special education at the early childhood level. |
| Instructional Design for Special Education\* | ***The central feature of accommodations for students with high-incidence special needs is the design of instruction that allows them to access the general education curriculum. Preparation for special education teacher candidates must contain sufficient instruction and practice on the minor modifications, major adaptations or major enhancements to the curriculum that will allow students with special needs to access content in English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. The program satisfies only a small part of this standard because while it requires one or more courses (or the equivalent) with a strong focus on instructional design in a particular content area or in multiple content areas, this coursework requires very few assignments requiring teacher candidates to design instruction that can meet a range of student needs. We note a substantial number of relevant assignments in additional required coursework for special education candidates that is not offered by the special education department and/or has a clinical focus but nonetheless clearly addresses instructional design in content instruction.*** | | All special education students are required to six take methods courses offered by the general education faculty. The focus of these courses is teaching general education students. The courses include:  Teaching Math in Early/Middle Childhood  Teaching Science in Early/Middle Childhood  Teaching Social Studies in Early/Middle Childhood  Teaching Reading/Writing in Middle Childhood  Appropriate Phonics Instruction  Teaching Reading with Literature in Middle Childhood |

**Standard 1 Selection Criteria (NCTQ June 2013) \*\* for ECED, ADED, SPED (Mild Moderate)**

**NCTQ Scoring Comment: *The standards for admission into either the institution or its teacher preparation program should select teacher candidates from only the top half of the college population. The program only partly meets the standard because while it is housed in an institution that is relatively selective, the level of selectivity is not sufficient to ensure that candidates have the requisite academic talent. The program also does not require that all candidates have a high enough grade point average and take an appropriate entrance exam.***

From NCTQ methodology: Undergraduate programs can also be deemed to be selecting from the upper half of the college population if they are housed in sufficiently selective IHEs, or if they utilize an appropriate standardized test (Indicator 1.2). The threshold set for “sufficient selectivity” of the IHE to ensure that education school candidates are likely to be in the upper half is a mean combined SAT mathematics and verbal score of 1120 or above, or a mean ACT composite score of 24 or above.

KSU Response: KSU does not require a specific GPA or ACT/SAT for admission but rather uses a holistic approach to selection. Education requires at least a 2.75 and ACT of 21 or SAT of 980. (OR 2.75 and 16 college prep units). Thus we do not meet the selectivity criteria either at the program or University level as neither programs nor University as a whole select from the upper ½ of the entire population of test takers. However, the following table shows all students admitted as freshman into education are in the top half of the KSU population.

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| Freshman Cohort Admitted and Enrolled 2011-2012 | | | |
|  | ACT Avg | SAT Avg | HS GPA Avg |
| ECED | 21.6 n=97 | 1006.6 n=21 | 3.34 n=98 |
| Mild Moderate SPED | 21.9 n=16 | 992.5 n=4 | 3.28 n=16 |
| MCED | 23.3 n=35 | 1022.2 n=9 | 3.40 n=35 |
| ADED | 23.9 n=93 | 1117.9 n=24 | 3.43 n=94 |
| All KSU Kent Campus | 21.3 n=4080 | 1032.0 n=1110 | 3.18 n=4196 |

**Standard 14 Student Teaching 0 stars for ECED, ADED, SPED (Mild Moderate)**

**NCTQ Scoring Comment: *A high-quality student teaching experience depends on: 1) sufficient feedback as defined by five or more observations with written feedback provided at regular intervals, 2) clear communication to school districts that cooperating teachers must be both strong mentors of adults and highly effective instructors, and 3) the capacity of the program to play an active role in the selection of cooperating teachers, as evidenced by its solicitation of substantive nominating information. The program fails to meet this standard because it does not provide student teachers with sufficient feedback after observations, does not clearly communicate to school districts the***

***desired characteristics of cooperating teachers, and fails to assert its critical role in the selection***

***of cooperating teachers.***

**KSU Response:**

*(NCTQ 14.1) The program fails to meet this standard because it does not provide student teachers with sufficient feedback provided at regular intervals.*

* The students are observed by the university supervisor between four and six times depending on the length of the placement. This process encompasses an annotated observation form being completed and a follow up conference where the goals of the lesson are reviewed and goals for improvement are set. The cooperating teacher, student teacher and supervisor each have a copy of this and student teacher and supervisor sign it. Samples of all of these were provided.
* Student teachers also complete the ed TPA as in the first 8 weeks of the placement which is a comprehensive overview of their performance as a teacher. This assessment includes a video lesson, other artifacts, and narrative descriptions of the educational setting. Student and faculty receive reports on the student’s performance. This was all clearly spelled out in the handbook provided to NCTQ.
* The cooperating teacher and supervisor independently complete a midterm and summative assessment based on the Ohio Educator standards and cooperatively complete a 19 item Professional Disposition Statement at the midterm or at any time it is warranted during the placement. Again, all of this feedback is reviewed with the student. If something is in need of improvement on the Disposition, a Professional Disposition Plan is developed by the student and the supervisor. Samples of all of these documents were provided to NCTQ.

*(NCTQ 14.2) The program fails to meet this standard because it does not provide clear communication to school districts that cooperating teachers must be both strong mentors of adults and highly effective instructors.*

* In our initial placement request letter to each district we state that the cooperating teacher must have three years teaching experience with at least one year on the current setting and licensure area. We also note when a faculty member or supervisor has found that cooperating teacher to be unsatisfactory and then we code that person as a *do not use.*

*(NCTQ 14.2) The program fails to meet this standard because it does not have the capacity to play an active role in the selection of cooperating teachers as evidenced by its solicitation of substantive nominating information.*

* Kent State is large, multi- campus regional university with a teacher preparation program in 17 different teaching areas. Students are placed in over 100 districts throughout NE Ohio. Under the terms of our agreement with schools we are guests in the schools and school districts, and as guests, we are not in the position to dictate what schools choose to do. Ohio law prevents us from employing, or even paying a stipend directly to cooperating teachers, while they are under contract to a school or district. They are doing us a service by taking our student teachers. If we would like to have a certain teacher, and that teacher does not want to do it, we can’t force that teacher nor would we want to do that. In the same way if a teacher wants to be a cooperating teacher and the district does not want that to happen, it does not happen. We are fortunate at KSU to have a long standing and mutually beneficial relationship with our over 200 districts and independent schools that allows us to have candid discussions if a cooperating teacher does not do a good job with our students as discerned by our faculty or university supervisor.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NOT INLCUDED IN REQUESTED DOCUMENTATION**

* In the interest of maintaining partnerships and having policies and procedures in place that are beneficial to both school sites and the College of Education, we review and ask for input on student teaching related policies and issues from our Clinical Experience Advisory Committee once each semester. The ten largest placement sites each have a seat at the table, along with select faculty and the Associate Dean to help our partnerships remain strong by discussing items of mutual interest.
* Ohio has a strong public employee’s collective bargaining law and, as such, the terms and conditions of employment are negotiated between the Board of Education and the teachers. Allowing the university to unilaterally set the terms and conditions of selecting a cooperating teacher *could b*e considered an unfair labor practice since the teacher is not working for the university but remains a district employee. This practice would have to be negotiated.
* Districts have identified selected teachers on their staff to be trained as mentors of adults to work with their newly employed teachers who possess a Resident Educator license. This is a four year commitment. Due to their district obligations, these people are not available to be cooperating teachers for student teachers.