

1. Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

Criterion Statement:

The division/program operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Core Component – 1A. The division/program’s mission is clear and articulates publicly the division/program’s commitments.

The mission statements of the Master of Education (M.Ed.), the Master of Educational Technology (MET), and the Master of Arts in Education with a Concentration in Special Education (MACE) are based on the MidAmerica Nazarene University Teacher Education Unit Conceptual Framework (Appendix A). This is a dynamic document and was initially created by representatives from constituents (academic disciplines, PreK-12 teachers and administrators, university faculty from the Division of Education and the Arts and Sciences, and graduate and initial candidates) and is reviewed on a regular basis. It represents a shared vision that identifies the knowledge, teaching skills, and personal qualities needed for candidates to become teacher-leaders capable of serving learning communities. Program mission statements (Appendix B) appear in the University catalog and in the Graduate Candidate Handbook. Candidates are introduced to the Conceptual Framework at the beginning of the program and are asked to reflect on how courses have helped them develop the skills, knowledge, and dispositions articulated in the Conceptual Framework at specific points in their programs.

Core Component – 1B. In its mission statements, the division/program recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

The missions of each program are designed to help candidates develop strategies for all students to learn (Appendix B). The mission statements reflect our commitment to help candidates develop the ability to respond to change and diversity through the study of best

practices, current research, and professional and Christian values. This commitment to diversity is also reflected in helping candidates develop an understanding of contextual conditions that influence change, and to accept and respond to innovations in the teaching profession so that all students can learn. Each program has a Statement of Purpose which identifies the goals designed to strengthen the personal and professional skills of individual candidates through collaboration and study (Appendix C).

Core Component – 1C. Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the division/program.

The missions of the respective programs and the Conceptual Framework are presented to faculty, staff, and students through a variety of ways including permanent displays in all classrooms, inclusion in the Graduate Candidate Handbook (Appendix D), the Graduate Studies in Education Faculty Handbook (Appendix E), and the Graduate Candidate Blackboard Internet site presented to candidates (GSE Handbook and syllabi). At various points in their programs, candidates are asked to reflect on how coursework has prepared them to meet the mission and goals. The Conceptual Framework remains at the heart of decisions regarding the strategic plans for GSE (Graduate Studies in Education) programs. This includes decisions regarding program and curriculum design, the selection of elective courses, and the training of faculty and staff. There has been administrative and budgetary support for the strategic plan for GSE programs. For example, funds have been provided for online course development and the professional development necessary to implement the MET Blended Online program. University administrators have applied for and been awarded grant money to support GSE programs in western Kansas.

Core Component – 1D. The division/program's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the division/program to fulfill its mission.

The programs and policies document the focus on the GSE mission and Conceptual Framework—to help candidates become “Teacher Leaders Serving Learning Communities.” GSE works with the Division of Education, the GSE Advisory Council (consists of graduates, local school administrators, a full time graduate faculty member, adjunct faculty from each program, the Chair of the Division of Education, the Associate Dean of Graduate and Adult Studies, and the Director of GSE) and GSE adjunct faculty to distribute responsibilities and implement work. These groups meet three times a year (October, January, and June). Programs and policies are first considered or reviewed by the Advisory Council. Work is then assigned to or reviewed by GSE faculty. Recommendations from these groups are brought to the Division of Education and the Graduate and Adult Studies Council. At each stage of review and/or development, policies, procedures, curriculum and program revisions are aligned with the Conceptual Framework (and mission).

The number and types of constituents represented on the GSE Advisory Committee are outlined in the GSE Advisory Committee handbook (Appendix F). Recommendations for GSE Advisory Committee membership are made by faculty, the Chair of the Division of Education and the Director of GSE and are based on perspective member’s qualifications and understanding of the institution and program missions. The committee consists of local and private school administrators, participates from MNU Professional Development Schools, candidates who have demonstrated excellence in course work in the graduate programs, and university faculty and adjunct faculty from each program. Faculty are invited to join subcommittees and/or appointed by the Director based on their expertise and experience (See Appendix G for a list of the tasks and groups responsible for accomplishing those tasks and Appendix H for meeting minutes).

The Director of Graduate Studies in Education and faculty work together to review curriculum, data generated for the purpose of program review, and assessment tools. The purpose of the review process is monitor the quality, consistency, and rigor of the programs and the alignment to the mission and the Conceptual Framework. All members of the faculty are responsible for including the mission, the goals of the Conceptual Framework, and aligning their course outcomes with the Conceptual Framework and the components (specific assignments, projects, tests, etc.) in their syllabi (See Appendix I). All course evaluations are tied to the course outcomes and the components of the Conceptual Framework addressed in the courses. In addition, this fall faculty will participate in a process to assure reader reliability in the assessment of Practicum I and II (capstone pieces of the M.Ed. and MET programs).

Core Component – 1E. The division/program upholds and protects its integrity.

GSE has been accredited by the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In order to be accredited, GSE must abide by all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. In addition, all policies regarding acceptance and admittance to programs, transition through programs, procedures for withdrawals and re-admittance, re-imburement of fees, and procedures for filing grievances, are published in the GSE Candidate Handbook (Appendix D) and the GSE Faculty Handbook (Appendix E). All major policies and procedures are regularly reviewed by the GSE Advisory Council, GSE faculty, the Division of Education, and the Graduate and Adult Studies Council. As part of this process, the date of the accreditation visit is published in local papers and on the MNU website. The purpose of this notification is to solicit input from our external constituents regarding the quality, fairness, and integrity of all programs.

“Teacher Leaders Serving Learning Communities” is at the core of the GSE programs and congruent with its mission. Faculty and candidates have the opportunity to assume

leadership roles by serving on committees, presenting professional development sessions at their schools, and implementing teaching strategies that reflect best practices. Members of the faculty have presented at the Practitioner's Conference (serving the Greater Kansas City area), presented workshops (for MNU faculty, Professional Development Schools, and Africa), and presented at state and national conferences (see Appendix J). Faculty members also participate in their local and church communities including mission trips.

If denied admission or advancement at any transition point, candidates may follow the appeals process. If at any point candidates feel mistreated, a grievance may be filed according to the candidate grievance policy. To date, no formal grievances have been filed or processed.

2. Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

Criterion Statement:

The division/program's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Core Component – 2A. The division/program realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

GSE standards (Conceptual Framework, Appendix A), which reflects Kansas State standards, INTASC standards, and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, reflect best practices and address issues of candidate preparation, the assessment system for the program (candidates, faculty, and the program as a whole), clinical practice, diversity, faculty (qualification, performance, and development), and governance and resources. Evaluation of the assessment system, diversity, and governance and resources helps provide a focus for the societal and economic trends that impact development of the programs.

The GSE component of Next Steps (Appendix K) reflects an understanding of the programs' current capacity and areas targeted for growth. Factors that impact current capacity include the need for more classroom space, upgrading technology resources for the METB (blended online program) and attracting highly qualified and diverse faculty (eight new faculty holding doctorate degrees—one minority were hired during the 2005-2006 program year). The GSE goals set forth in Next Steps and survey and assessment data are examined by the GSE Advisory Council, the Division of Education, and GSE faculty annually. These groups understand the history and heritage of the programs and have an interest in improving,

promoting, and continuing them. Changes to programs result from the evaluation of the data. Some significant changes that have resulted from this process include the following: (a) revisions in the structure of the M.Ed. and MET programs (the inclusion of electives), (b) the launch of the MET Blended Online program, and (c) the revision of curriculum (including the addition of an ethics class). Data is collected from employers of program completers, graduates, current candidates, course evaluations, program evaluations, and evidence of program outcomes. In addition, the first annual GSE NCA Focus Group (See Appendix L for meeting minutes) met in May 2006 to discuss how well the programs were addressing the NCA Core Components.

Surveys of employers, graduates, and current candidates have provided vital information regarding elective curriculum. There is agreement among the various constituents that graduate candidate electives should address differentiating curriculum, working with students from various cultures, assessment (tests and measurements), and integrating curriculum (Appendix M). The recent revisions of the M.Ed. and MET programs and the review and development of the elective curriculum are results of this type of environmental scanning and assessment of data from multiple sources.

Core Component – 2B. The division/program’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

For the most part, the resources for M.Ed. and MET have been adequate for the achievement of the educational quality they provide. A new full time faculty member, who teaches in both programs, was added to GSE. With the growth of the programs (six MET and METB cohort groups and three M.Ed. cohort groups), additional full time graduate faculty will be needed—particularly in the specialty area of educational technology. Currently, there is no full time faculty with expertise in this area.

With the change in leadership of the programs, a challenge will be to maintain strong technology expertise (either as full or part time graduate faculty or paid consultant), who can provide support for the MET and METB programs. Because these programs are designed to develop candidates into technology leaders, GSE should be able to document its access to and use of an expert in this area.

The Master of Arts with a Concentration in Special Education (MA) is funded through the consortium. There is a part-time director of that program who reports to a committee consisting of consortium members. Since the beginning of this program, the management of the program at MNU has been assumed by the Unit Head, not the Director of GSE. This has resulted in a lack of communication and the misuse of human resources. For example, the person who was hired as full time GSE faculty has a doctorate in special education, yet the expertise of this individual has not been employed (to counsel current and perspective candidates, advise the consortium, teach in the program (as part of her regular load—overload was offered, or promote the program).

There are plans for resource develop and allocation. In the spring of 2005, a full time GSE faculty member was hired and six hours of her load is designated for research and grant writing. In addition, applications for federal (Western Initiative for Distance Learning designed to take GSE programs to remote areas of Kansas) and state (Kan-Ed) grants have resulted in awards of over \$185,00.00. Because the grants relate to distance education and taking the M.Ed. and MET programs to teachers online, additional faculty will be needed in this area.

Time and financial resources have been invested in developing faculty and technology to support programs. Faculty development is offered in the fall and spring (Appendix N). Last year, professional development was offered on the topics of Curriculum Design and Assessment

(six week session via Blackboard) and a workshop (a four hour Saturday session and a two hour follow-up session) in the spring on Developing Online Learning Communities. In addition, the GSE full time faculty member participated in The Grant Institute Grants 101: Professional Grant Proposal Writing Workshop (three day workshop) and funding was provided for two adjunct faculty to attend the National Education in Computing Conference.

Classroom facilities are located in Metz, Smith, Osborne, and Maybe Library. The Academic Dean has committed significant funding to insure that classrooms are well-equipped and include the latest in technological advances. Classrooms are equipped with either a Smartboard[®], or interwrite schoolpad[®], a computer, TV, VCR, DVD player, overhead projector, and whiteboards. GSE now has three mobile labs with wireless computers and printers (a total of 54 computers). Initial candidates and candidates enrolled in the M.Ed. and MET programs have accesses to these laptop computers during their classes.

Off-site graduate facilities are well-equipped and program appropriate. Advanced programs are held in state of the art school classrooms, computer labs, and board offices within the local school districts. Candidates have access to current technology, computer labs, equipment, and Smartboards[®]. Off-site facilities are located as follows: M.Ed. in Olathe, KS, MET in Olathe, KS, Kansas City, KS (KCK), and North Kansas City (NKC), MO, and METB on campus for summer sessions and online for the rest of the academic year.

Mabee Library provides adequate resources and professional staff to support GSE programs. Library acquisitions are made considering faculty recommendations, recommendations of national professional organizations and learned societies, and other resources available to the librarian. Candidates in all programs have access to library resources including research databases such as Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). During

convocation, the university reference librarian provides each GSE cohort with information about library resources and services. During EDUC 6302 Research and Designs (taken the first semester) candidates are also shown how to access information from various library resources including the electronic data bases. Materials collections for PreK-12 programs are available in the Teacher Education Resource Center. This center houses videotapes, trade books, big books, text books, teaching guides, planning guides, patterns, math kits, science kits, music books and recordings, and additional materials used in PreK-12 classrooms. A video player for previewing videos is available in the TERC.

An online course delivery system (Blackboard) is used extensively to support MET and METB programs and to a lesser degree in the M.Ed. and MA programs. Although upgrades to Blackboard are available, a lack of technology manpower has delayed their implementation.

The planning processes have shown some flexibility in responding to unanticipated needs for program reallocation, downsizing, and growth. Decline in M.Ed. enrollment was, in part, responsible for the redesign of the program. Allocation of faculty and resources (from on-campus cohorts to online cohorts) were made to adjust to the unanticipated response to the METB program (from the anticipated one cohort to three cohort groups). This adjustment was possible because MET faculty had been provided with appropriate training. Allocations for required on-campus housing were not as flexible, which resulted in turning some students away and housing related problems for those staying on campus (See Survey in Appendix O).

Core Component – 2C. The division/program’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

Improvement in the M.Ed., MET, METB and MA programs is an on-going process. M.Ed. and MET program instructors meet twice each year in professional development sessions to go

over assessment instruments and data gathered from the previous cohort. Past assessment data are reviewed in order to identify weaknesses in evaluation, and instructors discuss ways for making the process more consistent.

Program improvement is assured through evaluations of courses (Appendix N for an example), instructors (See Appendix P for an example), and the overall program. In addition, data are collected from graduates (See Appendix Q for an example), employers of graduates (Appendix R for an example), focus groups (Appendix J for an example), and student work samples. Data regarding the M.Ed., MET, and METB programs are reviewed regularly by Director of GSE and presented to the GSE Advisory Council, Division of Education, and GSE faculty for recommendations. Recommendations for action, based on data, can be made by any of these groups, but must be approved by the Division of Education and in circumstances related to program courses, the Graduate and Adult Studies Council. At this time, data is collected and aggregated through Blackboard.

Master of Arts (M.A.) evaluation forms used for measuring dispositions, performance indicators, performance expectations, research activities, and supervisor evaluations were developed by a committee of faculty with special education backgrounds. These individuals represented the three universities that form the Midwest Associated Colleges Consortium (MACC) as well as public school districts in the area. Evaluation tools using clear criteria are critical in order for these instruments to be used by different instructors teaching the same class. Currently each instructor meets with the chair of the Education Committee to go over expectations, assessments, and data collection.

Core Component – 2D. All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

The Director of Graduate Studies in Education and faculty work together to review curriculum, data generated for the purpose of program review, and assessment tools. The purpose of the review process is to monitor the quality, consistency, and rigor of the programs and their alignment to the mission of the Division of Education and the Conceptual Framework. This process has resulted in revisions of the M.Ed. and MET programs and the initiation of the METB program. Proposed changes resulted in the creation of a separate budget for the METB program and funding for the adaptation of courses from a traditional delivery model to an online delivery model. Budgets for the M.Ed. and MET programs have had to respond to the additional costs of elective course development.

Program planning is initiated by the Director and is reviewed by the Division of Education, the GSE Advisory Council, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, the Graduate and Adult Studies Council, the Academic Council, President's Cabinet, and the Board of Trustees. Program initiatives have been implemented as outlined in the Next Steps documents and the M.Ed./MET strategic plans (Appendix K). These include identifying faculty to develop and manage online courses, adapting courses for online delivery, preparing for KDSE/NCATE accreditation, developing Kansas City, Kansas and North Kansas City cohorts, moving the Olathe MET on campus, and developing the METB Blended program. Evidence of a responsive long-range strategic plan is that all of these initiatives have been realized except the M.Ed. Blended program. Although the development of the M.Ed. Blended program has not been realized due to funding, a recently awarded grand should help revive that effort.

3. **Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching**

Criterion Statement:

The Division/program provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Core Component – 3A. The division/program’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

The purpose of all graduate programs at MNU is to develop master teachers who, through study, research, the development of technology skills, self-reflection, and critical thinking, strengthen their professional competencies to meet the needs of all learners. The Conceptual Framework identifies the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that support this mission to prepare teacher-leaders who serve learning communities. Program evaluation data is collected for advanced programs at each transition point for the various programs. In addition to program assessment data, admissions and program completion data are also compiled and presented to the GSE Advisory Council, Division of Education, and GSE faculty. Program assessment, candidate performance, and program completion data for the Master of Arts program are reviewed by the Director of the Midwest Associated Colleges Consortium (MACC) and presented to a committee composed of consortium members.

A primary goal of the Master of Arts in Education with a Concentration in Special Education licensure program is to prepare candidates who are responsive to the needs of special education students and skilled in developing safe, positive, and supportive learning environments

and in implementing effective learning and assessment strategies. Candidates must successfully complete coursework, research, and practicum placement with a mean score of 80% on all performance indicators. Program course work is designed to demonstrate candidates' performances as facilitators of effective instruction, developers of supportive learning environments, assessors of students' learning, and promoters of social skills that demonstrate professional, ethical, and collaborative and effective communication. Candidates demonstrate student learning through successful completion of *SPED 716* action research activities with a mean score of 80% on all performance indicators.

The M.Ed. Program has the following goals: 1) To strengthen the professional competencies of the individual through the study and application of educational innovations that are shown in the research to be effective; 2) To support work-embedded standards-based professional development that is grounded in coaching, mentoring, and other forms of peer and professional support; and 3) To provide structures in which teachers can develop as leaders in professional learning communities. Through coursework, class discussions, presentations, research, writing and presenting the Action Research Practicum, and field experiences, candidates are able to demonstrate their knowledge of the learning process, problem solving, critical thinking, and leadership affecting student learning.

The Creative Project was revised to during the 2005-2006 academic year as part of the overall M.Ed. program revision. The purpose of the Action Research Practicum and presentation is to provide candidates with opportunities to conduct in-depth research in critical areas of education, and to share this knowledge with colleagues in the extended learning community. The planning and implementation of these professional development sessions affect thinking and practice in learning communities which is of unquestionable benefit to all stakeholders.

The mission of the Master of Educational Technology program is to develop master teachers who are able to use technology as a transparent, dynamic educational tool to engage all students, and to model the appropriate use of technology as a tool for transforming learning.

During the 2003-2004 academic year, an examination by the Division of Education faculty of the practicum process resulted in a shift from a focus on professional development in Practicum I to action research, which focused on identifying strategies that directly affect student learning.

Now both programs use an action research model as part of the overall assessment of candidate knowledge, skill, and dispositions. This change has resulted in more consistent assessment and data collection. Criteria and scoring guides have been developed, tested, and revised, writing guides for both programs have been developed, and a writing workshop for all GSE candidates has been taught. Guides to the Practicum Process (written guide and Power Point), Guide to Practicum Writing, scoring guides and criteria, and examples of exemplary work are available to faculty, candidates, the GSE Advisory Council and the Division of Education in printed and electronic form. Reader reliability will be measured during the Fall 2006 Semester. It is expected that, as a result of these efforts, better, more accurate data will be collected and analyzed.

M.Ed. and the MET instructors meet twice each year in professional development sessions to go over assessment instruments and data gathered from the previous cohort. Past assessment data is reviewed in order to identify weaknesses in evaluation, and instructors discuss ways for making the process more consistent. Evaluation tools using clear criteria are critical in order for these instruments to be used by different instructors teaching the same class. Currently

each instructor meets with the Chair of the MACC Education Committee to go over expectations, assessments, and data collection.

Advanced level program data are taken to the GSE Advisory Council, GSE Faculty, and the Division of Education at the fall meeting for analysis and recommendations for program changes. Annual advanced program reports are submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and the MNU Assessment Coordinator.

Core Component – 3B. The division/program values and supports effective teaching.

Members of the GSE faculty are well qualified and all have doctorates or master's degrees as well as a wealth of PreK-12 teaching experience. Courses are taught by adjunct PreK-12 practitioners and by MNU faculty who have demonstrated expertise in course content. They meet regularly to review and revise curriculum to make sure that it reflects best and current practices in the field. Members of the faculty are responsible for aligning their course work and assessments with the outcomes of the program and the Conceptual Framework.

Adjunct PreK-12 practitioners teaching in the master level programs teach on a continuing basis and are provided with advanced level faculty development sessions designed to keep them current on procedures and policies, and give guidance in meeting objectives, goals, and the requirements mandated by the Conceptual Framework. Recent faculty develop sessions have included the following topics: Curricula and Performance Assessment, Rubrics, Designing Consistent Performance Outcomes, Technology, Action Research Writing, Building Online Learning Communities, and Teaching Online (Appendices H and N).

Hiring policies at MNU require that faculty, both graduate and undergraduate, have at least a master's degree and experience and/or advanced training in the area taught. Currently, about 79% of the M.Ed. faculty and 67% of the MET faculty have earned doctorate degree

degrees. The percentage is lower in MET programs because of the need for instructors who have the expertise and experience in K-12 application of technology and technology integration.

Core Component – 3C. The division/program creates effective learning environments.

Instructor evaluations (See Appendix P) are conducted by the graduate program director and are copied to the graduate instructors and to the Associate Academic Dean for Graduate Studies. Each graduate instructor is evaluated at the end of each course by candidates using a standard form from the Office of Graduate Studies in Education (Appendix N). Instructors receive feedback for each course in the form of charts, graphs, and a summary of students' comments via Blackboard. In addition, the program director conducts an in-class evaluation for each instructor once during the program cycle. In the spring of each academic year, prior to contracts being issued, the directors meet with each instructor and review the course evaluations as well as the in-class evaluation. Decisions related to rehiring are based on both sets of data. If either set of documents reveal a problem, the director and instructor construct an improvement plan for implementation in the next class taught.

Instructors use a variety of teaching and assessment methods. Lecture, inquiry-based and project-based learning activities, and cooperative learning activities are among some of the strategies used. All GSE programs assess candidates in multiple ways including presentations, projects, essays, and tests. The assessment of authentic learning tasks reflects the desire to model best practices and to determine whether candidates can demonstrate knowledge and skills in a work setting (practicum work).

Candidates entering MACC receive advising upon entering the program by the Chair of the Division of Education. The M.Ed. and MET programs are cohort programs with a predetermined course sequence. Candidates in both programs select electives that most meet their professional needs.

All three programs use technology. The MET program frequently utilizes technology as a teaching and learning tool. Because of the very nature of the program, instructors use and teach about all types of technology. Candidates in the M.Ed. program have opportunities to learn in technology-rich classrooms and to take online electives on Blackboard. All instructors are required to use Blackboard to post their syllabi, conduct course evaluations and post grades. This year, instructors have been urged to use Blackboard to deliver course work, list resources, and communicate with candidates.

Core Component – 3D. The division/program’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Candidates are introduced to campus services and facilities during convocation. Specific presentations and information are provided relating to library services, career services, parking, and financial aid. The Graduate Candidate Handbook (Appendix D) and catalog provide additional information on how to access campus resources including the Kresge Center, online library services, police reports, and computer labs. These services along with other campus services, program structure, curriculum, and perceived value are evaluated yearly as each group exits the program. In addition, each course is evaluated by candidates on the following: (a) how well the course content reflected course outcomes and the conceptual framework, (b) the effectiveness of instruction, and (c) the value of assignments (Appendix N). Data from the course evaluations is reviewed by the Director who works with instructors to set goals for improvement in instruction or the design of course assignments. Course evaluations and program surveys are also evaluated annually for trends in the quality and meaningfulness of assignments, course outcomes and scoring guides.

Blackboard orientation is scheduled as part of convocation activities. This introduction is often insufficient, so instructors reintroduce it again during the first class. One of the first classes

that M.Ed. and MET candidates take is EDUC 6302 Research and Designs. During this class, candidates tour the library and practice using library and technology resources including the online data bases, the technology lab, and Blackboard. Candidates are also instructed in the use of email and email lists because faculty, staff, and other campus services use this as the primary mode of communication.

Blackboard is used to house important information for candidates such as digital copies of Practicum Handbooks, Graduate Candidate Handbooks, Guides to APA, Guide to the Practicum Process (Power Point), the Conceptual Framework, severe weather closing information, and scoring guides for practicum work. The virtual classroom component of Blackboard is used to communicate with instructors and facilitate work for candidates who wish to work on projects during the week, but cannot meet.

GSE has developed partnerships with the Kansas City, Kansas School District (KCK), the North Kansas City School District (NKC), and Prince of Peace Catholic School. These partnerships have been very important in helping develop and revise programs that meet the needs of their teachers and districts. Administrators, teachers, and graduates from each of these groups serve on the GSE Advisory Council and representatives teach as adjunct faculty (See Appendix S for a list of GSE Advisory Council members). Partner districts also provide facilities and technology for cohort groups at no cost to MNU.

Currently, staffing is adequate to support programs except during the months of May, June, and December. During that time, additional staffing is needed to process application, input data, and prepare for convocation. If additional programs, such as a M.Ed. blended program, or added or current programs are expanded, additional staffing will be required.

Overall, budgeting has been adequate for our needs; however, the amount of pay per credit hour has not increased in several years and does not reflect the importance of teaching and learning. In order to attract and maintain highly qualified faculty, an increase will be needed.

4. **Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge**

Criterion Statement:

The division/program promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

Core Component – 4A. The division/program demonstrates, through the actions of its administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

Funding for professional development is included in the GSE budgets. This includes travel to professional conferences by full and adjunct faculty, books for book studies, resource materials, and speakers (and supporting materials).

Professional development is offered to all full time and adjunct faculty on a regular basis on campus and online (See Appendix N). In addition, part of the faculty load of an assistant professor in the Division of Education is dedicated to assisting full time and adjunct faculty in learning technology skills. Topics for professional development sessions include the following: (a) course development, (b) assessment, (c) technology training, and (d) Teacher Education philosophy and Conceptual Framework. At this time no faculty development for the M.A. program is provided by Midwest Associated Colleges Consortium.

Faculty and students, in keeping with the organization's mission, produce scholarship and create knowledge through basic and applied research. The purpose of MET Practicum I and II, the Action Research Practicum, and presentations is to provide candidates with opportunities to

conduct in-depth research in critical areas of education and to share this knowledge with colleagues in the extended learning community. The planning and implementation of research and the resulting professional development simulate organization and educational improvements and affect thinking and practice in learning communities (candidates, university faculty, public school educators, and initial education candidates).

Members of the faculty have also contributed to programs and educational improvements. For example, the focus of one faculty member's doctoral work has resulted in GSE faculty development sessions. GSE faculty have also presented to university faculty, and at local, state, and national conferences (Appendix J). Expertise gained at workshops has been shared with faculty and students. For example, the scholarship and research derived from the grant process, which focused on the development of a graduate level ethics course, resulted in overall educational improvement for GSE programs.

Core Component – 4B. The division/program demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

GSE programs integrate advanced curricular and experiential offerings to develop the attitudes and skills requisite for a life of learning in a diverse society. By its very nature, the MA program provides extensive offerings related to the diverse needs of special education students. In addition, candidates enrolled in the M.Ed. and MET programs have an opportunity to develop skills in multicultural communication (EDUC 6222 Cross-Cultural Communications) and differentiation (EDCI 6413 The Power of Engaged Learning). They are able to explore best practices and demonstrate their knowledge through planning curriculum and implementation of performance-based assessments (EDUC 6214 Educational Practice and Trends, EDTC 6313 Curriculum Design, EDCI 6413 The Power of Engaged Learning, EDTC 6212 Practicum I and

EDTC 6312 Practicum II, and EDUC 6511 Action Research Practicum I and EDUC 6511 Action Research Practicum II).

The knowledge base on which students develop depth of expertise in the graduate programs is based on the Conceptual Framework (Appendix A), which is aligned with the Teaching Standards for Professional Educators (KSDE), INTASC, and National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (Appendix T). The Conceptual Framework and the concept of “Teacher Leaders Serving Learning Communities” are at the heart of GSE programs. The focus on developing knowledge, skills, and dispositions of service and leadership demonstrate the linkages between curricular and co-curricular activities that support inquiry, practice, creativity, and social responsibility. Candidates serve their learning communities by conducting surveys, classroom and school building research projects, and reporting the results. They develop curriculum and technology plans, write grants, and provide professional development for faculty and staff in their schools. Over \$65,000 of grant money (grants that were written as part of graduate work) have been awarded to candidates and their schools.

GSE program’s learning outcomes have demonstrated effective preparation for continued learning. Several GSE candidates have continued their education through additional graduate work and in advanced degree programs. Three graduates are currently enrolled in doctoral studies and several more enrolled in second master degree programs. Many offer re-licensure classes through Learning and Teaching Innovations.

Core Component – 4C. The division/program assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

GSE academic programs are reviewed regularly to assure the currency and relevance of courses and the overall programs. The GSE Advisory Council, GSE faculty, the Division of

Education graduates, and employers of graduates through surveys (Appendices N, P, Q, R, and J for example) provide guidance and feedback regarding the relevance of courses and the overall program.

In keeping with its mission, the programs' learning goals and outcomes include skills and professional competence essential to a diverse workforce. The Kansas Teaching Standards for Professional Educators and NCATE standards require programs meet standards in the curricula, assessment of candidates, and faculty qualifications (Appendix T).

GSE programs document that graduates have gained the skills and knowledge they need to function in diverse local, national, and global societies through the results of course and practicum work (Appendix U). This work includes applied research as part of the action research practicum process and presentations to school faculty and colleagues. Results generated from these activities are designed to impact K-12 student learning. Often this includes researching, developing, and applying strategies for the differentiation of instruction and/or faculty development.

Curricular evaluation involves alumni, employers, and other external constituents who understand the relationships among the courses of study, the currency of the curriculum, and the utility of the knowledge and skills gained. This includes the members of the GSE Advisory Council, GSE faculty, Division of Education, employers, candidates, and graduates. Data is collected through surveys of employers, exit surveys, focus groups, program evaluation (course evaluations and performance data from candidates).

GSE supports creation and use of scholarship by candidates through the content and application of program outcomes. Action research and the presentation of results (at school and district meetings, in-service days, and at the university action research forum) promote

scholarship of candidates. In addition, candidates research topics and present the results in literature reviews and annotated bibliographies, which are shared via Blackboard with faculty and colleagues.

Members of the faculty expect students to master the knowledge and skills necessary for independent learning in programs of applied practice. Program and course outcomes are clearly identified in syllabi and the MNU Catalog. These outcomes are designed to be applied in professional settings and include: (a) presentations of best practices, (b) results of research, (c) leadership, (d) instructional strategies, and (e) curriculum design.

GSE programs promote social responsibility through curricular and co-curricular activities. These include chairing or serving on university, school and district level committees, presentations to faculty, grant writing, and technology leadership. Graduates of the programs have assumed leadership roles in these areas and have contributed to the educational, social, and financial health of their schools and school districts (Appendix V).

Core Component – 4D. The division/program provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

GSE programs provide academic and student support which contribute to the development of candidate skills and attitudes fundamental to responsible use of knowledge. The overall academic curricula of the programs challenge and help develop leadership, instructional, and technology skills. All M.Ed. and MET candidates learn about and participate in professional learning communities, which support the development of skills and attitudes. In addition, all candidates are required to develop the skills and attitudes of reflective practice. Additional support is provided through the Kresge Center and APA workshops.

Procedures and guidelines for the course work and the practicum process are published in practicum handbooks for each program (Appendices W and X). Candidates are supervised by

GSE faculty and observed by administrators. Beginning in January, M.Ed. and MET candidates are required to enroll in an ethics course. In this course and in Research Designs, the APA workshop, Practicum I and II (MET), and Action Research Practicum I and II (M.Ed.), REAL Internet, REAL Publishing, REAL Interactive Projects, and Technology Leadership candidates receive instruction about intellectual property rights.

5. Criterion Five: Engagement and Service

Criterion Statement:

As called for by its mission, the division/program identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

Graduate faculty are expected to model best professional practices of service to others at MNU, their respective schools, community organizations, and churches. Through self-reporting, graduate faculty presented the following representative examples of service: (a) M.Ed. Advisory Council, (b) Boy Scout leader, (c) MNU Dean's Council, (d) Kansas City School District Leadership Council, (e) Kansas Professional Development Council, (f) Johnson County Library Board, (g) Superintendent's Management Team, , and (h) Kansas City Kansas District Task Force.

Core Component – 5A. The division/program learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

GSE programs are shaped by the Conceptual Framework (Appendix A) and the missions of each of the programs (Appendix B). Each course outcome and the assessment of that outcome are aligned with the Conceptual Framework and programs' missions. Data collected from program transition points, candidate performances related to outcomes, employer surveys, course evaluations, program completion surveys, and focus groups are reviewed annually by the Director of GSE, the Advisory Council, GSE faculty, and the Division of Education. This annual review provides a systematic approach to understanding the changing needs of our constituencies and their communities.

GSE programs are able to address the diversity of their constituencies by offering programs on campus and on site in Kansas City, Kansas, and North Kansas City, Missouri. In addition, the MET Blended online program (METB) program began serving candidates across the Midwest and overseas (currently, two candidates who live and work in Korea) in June 2006. Clearly, the METB has become a program that reaches out to a variety of candidates who are interested in a blended online graduate program in educational technology.

GSE graduates who are interested in continuing education are able to enroll in courses offered by Learning and Teaching Innovations (LTI). Several GSE graduates have taught LTI classes (often using curriculum developed while they were enrolled in the M.Ed. and MET programs).

Core Component – 5B. The division/program has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

Systematic review of GSE program structures and processes enables effective communication with constituents. This systematic approach include yearly surveys of the employers of graduates and regular communication with local and partner school districts, including KCK School District, North Kansas City School District, Olathe School District, and Excelsior Springs School Districts. This communication has contributed to the development of program outcomes, course offerings, and program design.

GSE programs provide various opportunities for co-curricular activities that engage students, staff, administrators, and faculty with their learning communities. Members of the GSE faculty and the program director have provided professional development for MNU Professional Development Schools, and attended and presented at professional conferences such as the Practitioner's Conference, KAPCOTE, KAMLE, AACTE (Appendix J). The Action Research Forum planned for April and June of 2007 will provide candidates the opportunity to

present research to undergraduate candidates, colleagues, university faculty, school administrators, and teachers. As part of program requirements, M.Ed. and MET candidates conduct research related to school and district goals. This information often results in professional development or grants for local schools.

GSE program resources (physical, financial, and human-support) currently support effective programs of engagement and service. Candidates are provided with appropriate support from faculty and staff to plan and implement professional development in their learning communities, which is a free service designed to address school/district goals. Because these goals are often linked to the requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), this research and application of knowledge is engaging for learners and a service to local school districts. By the very definition of action research, these projects are responsive to the ongoing and changing needs of candidates and the districts they serve.

Core Component – 5C. The division/program demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

GSE programs rely on collaboration with partner school districts (KCK, North Kansas City, Olathe School District, and Prince of Peace) and higher education institutions (Baker and St. Mary University). Partner school districts provide locations and technology resources for GSE programs (free of charge), feedback on overall program design, and support for marketing. They have helped disseminate information about our programs and graduates to teachers and administrators in their districts through newsletters, email, electronic announcements, educational fairs, and faculty meetings. Several administrators from Olathe, KCK, and North Kansas City School Districts teach as adjunct faculty. They help provide candidates with authentic learning experiences that relate to their district's needs and provide MNU with highly

qualified practitioners. The partnership with the University of St. Mary and Baker University (MACC) enable MNU to offer the Master of Arts with a Concentration in Special Education.

Graduates of GSE programs have served local school districts well. M.Ed and MET candidates have provided many hours of professional development and funding as a result of grants written as part of the practicum process. The Kansas City, Kansas School District, one of the most diverse school districts in the area, benefited from a grant which was written by one of the MET candidates are part of his graduate work.

In an effort to create an environment of support of the mobility of learners, policies and procedures for transferring credit and re-admittance to GSE programs are defined and published in the Graduate Candidate Handbook. Candidates may transfer up to six hours of graduate credit work providing the course work transferred has been completed within the last four years and the outcomes of transfer courses align with existing program course objectives.

Core Component – 5D. Internal and external constituencies value the services the division/program provides.

An evaluation GSE services is part of a systematic program evaluation. Data is collected in May and July regarding a wide range of campus services (Appendix Q). It is reviewed by the program director and presented to the Division of Education each fall.

Over the past year, GSE has invited faculty and graduate students from other graduate programs to a writing workshop and a workshop designed to facilitate online teaching. In addition, an Action Research Forum is scheduled for April and June. Invitations will be issued to MNU faculty, undergraduates, local school administrators, and local teachers.

GSE shares facilities with the Division of Education and off-campus locations are shared with Kansas City School District and North Kansas City School District. The two mobile

computer labs, for which GSE is responsible, are shared by the students and faculty in the Division of Education and are often used for SOAR, testing, and registration.

Currently, the only GSE program that leads to licensure is the MA. This program, which MNU offers as part of a consortium, was developed in response to a strong need for special educators in the greater Kansas City area. The funding for initial planning was provided in the form of a grant from the Kansas Department of Education.