Southeastern Louisiana University

2014 Institutional Report

***Continuing Accreditation Visit for Initial and Advanced Programs***



Submitted for review by the

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

August 19, 2014

**Overview and Conceptual Framework**

**Institutional Mission, Historical Context, and Unique Characteristics**

Southeastern Louisiana University (Southeastern) is located in Hammond, Louisiana, a suburban area approximately 50 miles north of New Orleans and about 45 miles southeast of Baton Rouge. Hammond is considered the crossroads of the Gulf South and the cultural and business center of Tangipahoa Parish. Bordering parishes include Washington, St. Helena, St. John, St.Tammany, and Livingston.

Southeastern began as a grass-roots movement by the people of Hammond and the surrounding area who recognized the need for an institution of higher education in order to further the educational, economic and cultural development of southeast Louisiana. What began as a junior College supported by local taxes developed into a major University. Southeastern is the outgrowth of the Hammond Junior College established in 1925 with the main objective to provide a two-year curriculum in teacher education and the basic undergraduate work in arts and sciences. Act 136 of the 1928 State Legislature made Southeastern part of the state educational system and granted the College the right to establish a four-year curriculum and grant baccalaureate degrees. The first baccalaureate degrees were conferred in 1939.

By 1946, the campus expanded to 365 acres and was organized into Divisions of Liberal Arts, Education, and Applied Sciences. That same year, Southeastern was accepted into full membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on Colleges (SACSCC). Currently, Southeastern is accredited by SACSCC to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees. In 1954, Southeastern was granted accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) but chose to withdraw in 1960. Southeastern then reapplied for accreditation in 1974 and has been continuously accredited by NCATE to the present.

The mission of Southeastern is to lead the educational, economic, and cultural development of southeast Louisiana. As primarily a teaching institution, Southeastern serves residents of the region who are seeking either a College degree or continuing professional education; transfer students; regional employers seeking technical assistance and applied research; entrepreneurs; and local citizens through academic and cultural activities. Programs include baccalaureate of arts and science programs, as well as masters and doctoral programs. The University also provides support to area K-12 schools and others services specifically designed to meet the needs of regional economics.

 The University's Vision 2017 strategic plan was developed by the University Planning Council in 2012. Core Values are the underpinning of a University’s culture and character and serve as the foundation on which everything else is built.

Southeastern’s core values are excellence and caring. Excellence is continually striving for the highest level of achievement and overcoming challenges with reflection, improvement, innovation and reinvention. Caring is serving the needs of others with respect, understanding and compassion and affirming the differences among individuals, values and ideas.

Guided by its core values, Southeastern creates engaging learning opportunities such as residential, distance education and international experiences that extend knowledge and its application beyond the classroom. Southeastern uses technology to provide access to global ideas and information, an interactive world of knowledge creation and sharing, and a wealth of online collaboration and communication.

The Strategic Priorities for Southeastern include engaging a diverse population of learners; spearheading collaborative efforts with business, community, and educational groups; fostering a climate that nurtures relationships and engages people in the University; preparing the University to thrive in a global society; increasing, diversifying, and managing funds; and communicating the University’s identity and value.

**Professional Education Unit and Preparation of Professional Educators**

The College of Education (COE) is committed to providing a student friendly community; to help students gain knowledge and skills by active involvement in the learning process; to empower students to continue learning and to improve the lives of individuals, families, communities and the workplace throughout their lifetime. The Vision of the COE is to set the standard for excellence through best practices. The Mission of the COE is to serve the regional, state, national, and global communities by developing effective professionals through implementing innovative and progressive programs.

The COE administratively is composed of the Departments of Educational Leadership & Technology (ELT) and Teaching and Learning (T&L). Only faculty teaching professional education courses in degree programs and areas of concentration in partner Colleges are included as part of the Unit. The professional education Unit includes the Departments of Teaching & Learning, Educational Leadership & Technology; Visual Arts, Mathematics, Biological Sciences, English, Foreign Languages and Communication, History and Political Science, Kinesiology and Health Studies, and Fine and Performing Arts ([I.5.a 1](https://www.southeastern.edu/acad_research/colleges/edu_hd/about/overviewandconceptualframework.html)).

**Initial and Advanced Preparation Programs**

Southeastern offers 24 programs and/or concentrations to prepare candidates to work with students in PK-12 schools. Twenty-two of the programs were submitted to Specialized Program Associations (SPA) or accrediting bodies for review, of which 15 are nationally recognized/accredited, and seven have been revised and re-submitted with an expected decision date of September 2014. Two will be resubmitted September 2014. Two programs, the Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction and the Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership, have state approval, and two programs, School Counseling and Speech Pathology, are accredited by other accrediting agencies. School Counseling and Speech Pathology programs will only be included in Standards 1 and 6, since NCATE does not require reporting and evidence for Standards 2, 3, 4, and 5 for these two programs ([I.5.a 2, I.5.d 1 & 2](https://www.southeastern.edu/acad_research/colleges/edu_hd/about/overviewandconceptualframework.html)).

Southeastern offers a variety of courses 50% and 100% online, but no programs in the COE are offered in their entirety as off-campus or greater than 50% online with the exception of the Master of Education in Educational Leadership and the Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership. Courses are offered at the St. Tammany Center and the Livingston Literacy & Technology Center as well as at other SACS-approved sites (Bogalusa, East Baton Rouge Parish, Lafourche Parish, and St. Charles Parish).

Southeastern also participates in the State of Louisiana Alternative Post Baccalaureate Certification Program. This program is substantially shorter than a second bachelor's degree. A complete explanation of the current non-degree alternative program, including curriculum sheets, is located on the website for Alternative Certification. Admission requirements are a bachelor's degree with a 2.5 GPA and successful completion of PRAXIS I and PRAXIS II content area tests. The program requires supervised student teaching or a year-long internship in a state approved school ([I.5.a 3](https://www.southeastern.edu/acad_research/colleges/edu_hd/about/overviewandconceptualframework.html)).

**Tenets of the Conceptual Framework**

The College of Education's Conceptual Framework (CF) provides direction for the development of effective professionals ([I.5.c](https://www.southeastern.edu/acad_research/colleges/edu_hd/about/overviewandconceptualframework.html)). It is a living document that continuously evolves as opportunities and challenges emerge. The four components of the CF are the standards used for candidate assessment in undergraduate and graduate programs. They are Knowledge of the Learner (KL), Strategies and Methods (SM), Content Knowledge (CK), and Professional Standards (PS). Diversity, Technology, and Professional Dispositions are included in the assessment process as themes that are integrated throughout all programs in the educational Unit.

The following definitions are offered to help the reader understand the conceptual framework:

* Mission Statement: The College of Education exists to serve communities, develop effective professionals, and implement innovative programs.
* Vision Statement: The faculty of the College of Education sets the standard for excellence through best practices.
* Diversity: All forms of differences among all levels of learners.
* Technology: Access and delivery for assessment, problem solving, and productivity.
* Dispositions: Values, beliefs, attitudes the foundation of the profession.
* Knowledge of the Learner: The cognitive, physical, emotional, social development of the learner.
* Strategies and Methods: The tools and processes for effective pedagogical practice.
* Content Knowledge: The core concepts, ideas, and theories of the specific content area being taught.
* Professional Standards: The valued goals and outcomes in a specific content area to be mastered by the learner
* Learner: A broad meaning of the term "learner" is intended to include all levels and types of learning.

Knowledge of the Learner is the candidates' understanding of the learner, which is necessary to provide effective and equitable instruction. The educational Unit prepares candidates to demonstrate and value sensitivity to the needs of all learners. Candidates acquire an understanding of learners as individuals and incorporate this knowledge as they progress through their educational experiences at Southeastern as evidenced by such examples as portfolio reflections and assessment plans. The use of appropriate technology is integrated in lessons to address the needs of learners and enhance the lesson. As effective professionals, they continue that practice throughout their careers.

Strategies and Methods appropriate to each program within the educational Unit are necessary to develop effective professionals. The effective professional demonstrates best practices through inquiry, creativity, and reflective thinking. Constructive and reflective problem-solving processes require the effective professional to consider and integrate complex information as evidenced by the examples of implemented lesson plans as well as personal self-assessment. Students are assessed during methods courses and student teaching on their questioning skills, lesson activities, and presentation and communication skills.

Content Knowledge is gained by candidates' thorough understanding of the content appropriate to the area of specialization. Candidates exhibit depth of knowledge in their area of specialization and breadth of understanding of general subjects within the educational Unit. Students are required to successfully complete all PRAXIS II content area tests appropriate for the content they plan to teach prior to student teaching. Students are also assessed on their knowledge of the content on evaluations during methods courses and student teaching.

Professional Standards are established criteria that guide effective professionals in each discipline area. The educational Unit is based on professional standards that enable candidates to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become effective professionals. University course objectives and learner outcomes are aligned with national, state, and institutional standards as indicated in portfolio artifacts. Candidates incorporate professional standards as they progress through their educational experiences at Southeastern and continue that practice throughout their careers.