

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM REPORT

SECTION I: CONTEXT

Welcome to the NCTE report for English secondary certification at Keene State College. This is a program that the English Department is proud of and fully supports in a variety of ways. We look forward to explaining our program to you and to receiving any advice you will offer to help us improve the way we create the next generation of English Language Arts teachers. Thank you for volunteering your time to be a reviewer.

1. State and Institutional Policies

Our program for English Language Arts Certification 5-12 was reviewed by the State of New Hampshire in 2003-04 and received full approval. The state has seven standards: **State Standard 1** concerning the nature of the English **language**; **Standard 2** concerning **literature**; **Standard 3** concerning **writing**; **Standard 4** concerning **reading**; **Standard 5** concerning **speaking, listening, and viewing**; **Standard 6** concerning **research**; and **Standard 7** concerning **instructional assessment**. Praxis II both Content (0041) and Essays (0042) are required (see data Assessment 1 and 7).

2. Field Experience

Secondary English candidates complete four education courses before Methods. Two of these have service learning components.

ESEC 150: Development, Exceptionality, and Learning I

Candidates complete a general service learning project involving a minimum of 15-20 hours in the field. Candidates must reflect on and write about their experience.

ESEC 250: Development, Exceptionality, and Learning II

Candidates complete a service learning project in the schools involving a minimum 10-20 hours.

ESEC 385 Methods and ESEC 386 Methods Field Experience:

During their senior year, candidates take a field experience course in conjunction with Methods. The Methods field experience means that each student is placed with a middle school language arts or a high school English cooperating teacher. Candidates are required to be in the schools for a minimum of 30 hours (although most do considerably more than that), complete four formal observations, and teach four lessons.

This field experience is candidates' first real teaching in the field and is not a service learning project. They are not in the schools just to "help" the classroom teacher, but to begin their process of becoming the classroom teacher. Candidates must complete four formal observations based on the principles of effective teaching described in their NCTE published Methods textbook, *Making the Journey* by Leila Christenbury. They also must teach four lessons; one of these is observed and evaluated by their Methods teacher based on the unit assessment criteria outlined in Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, which is also used for student teaching. Candidates submit evidence of their fieldwork (observation reports, lesson plans, reflections) in a final Methods portfolio.

ESEC 460 Student Teaching: All candidates complete a full semester (15 weeks) of student teaching at a middle or high school. Candidates are required to be in the school for the full school day and to stay after school whenever necessary for preparation, working with students, attending events, or meeting parents. Candidates are allowed to request a placement, although they are limited to a 60-mile radius from Keene so they can be properly supervised. The requirements and expectations for this experience are explained in our *Student Teaching Handbook* and our *Cooperating Teacher's Handbook*.

Candidates are evaluated based on the criteria outlined in Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (see Assessment #4 for alignment of Danielson with NCTE standards). The college supervisor visits the student teacher four times during the course of the semester. During these visits, she has a conversation with both the student teacher and the cooperating teacher about the progress of the candidate and the success of the placement. The college supervisor completes the Danielson rubric during each visit. The cooperating teachers do a formal midterm and final evaluation based on Danielson and write a letter of recommendation for the candidate (data of final evaluations of the college supervisor and cooperating teachers are included in Assessment #4). The college supervisor has been doing this work at KSC for 15 years and has cultivated a network of reliable and experienced cooperating teachers in the surrounding area on whom she calls each year for this work; a number of these teachers are her own former students. All cooperating teachers were introduced to the Danielson framework when it was first adopted and now all have received the form electronically to facilitate comprehensive commenting.

Ensuring Quality and Consistency

One aspect of our program that helps to ensure quality mentoring and supervision is that candidates are supervised both in Methods and student teaching by the same faculty member who is a tenured full professor in the English Department. Candidates are, therefore, mentored for a full year by this professor who also serves as their academic advisor from the time they first declare their interest in Secondary English certification until they graduate. The presence of this instructor in the English Department also means that English faculty members are apprised of changes and developments in Education courses, that the needs of secondary candidates are brought into any curricular discussions about the major, and that English faculty members participate in gathering materials for accreditation. They see themselves as part of the enterprise of creating secondary teachers and are fully supportive of the English Education instructor, being flexible in terms of her load so that the changing needs of the program are met. This tenure-track position is a department and College commitment, not dependent on the particular person holding the job.

The English Education faculty member is also a member of the Secondary Education Committee, a group of faculty from other secondary certification areas. This group meets bi-weekly to coordinate curriculum, determine policies, and share ideas.

3. Admission, Retention, Exit Criteria

Stage One: All Secondary English Education candidates are admitted to the program after completing ESEC 100 Introduction to Teaching; ESEC 150 Development, Exceptionality, and Learning I; and ESEC 250 Development, Exceptionality, and Learning II and before taking ESEC 320 Educational Environments and Practices. To be admitted, candidates must

- fill out an application for admission
- submit one reference
- have a 2.5 grade point average overall, within Education (with no grade lower than a C in 100, 150, or 250), and within English
- pass Praxis I
- complete 36 credits

Stage Two: Once candidates are admitted, they must take ESEC 320 Educational Environments and Practices and ESEC 385-86 Methods and Field Experience. Before being allowed to student teach, candidates' records are checked again to make sure they have the required 2.5 grade point average in Education (with no grade lower than a C), in English, and overall.

Stage Three: Candidates must complete an application for student teaching which includes

- an application form
- a personal and professional identity statement
- a transcript
- a program planning sheet
- a resume

Stage Four: Except in rare circumstances, candidates complete all of their English requirements before student teaching (see Context Attachment for program of study). All candidates must also maintain a 2.5 overall grade point average. There are two special requirements for English certification candidates: ENG 312 Descriptive Grammar and a second writing course.

Stage Five: In their final semester, candidates take ESEC 460 Student Teaching. This course is pass/fail. Whether the student passes is determined by the college supervisor and cooperating teacher, based on the unit criteria outlined in Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. Candidates must also pass ESEC 450 Seminar: Educational Principles. Requirements for this seminar are:

- attendance at and participation in the three all-day, on-campus seminars
- preparation of a professional teaching portfolio
- presentation of this portfolio to colleagues
- participation in a mock interview session
- submission of six reflections on the Danielson framework
- completion of an Assessment of Student Learning Project

After completing Student Teaching and the required work for the Seminar, candidates are eligible to apply for New Hampshire State Certification. To receive New Hampshire certification, candidates must also pass two Praxis tests: Content Knowledge (0041) and Essays (0042).

4. Relationship of the Program to the Unit's Conceptual Framework

Unit Conceptual Framework

Our unit's conceptual framework is based on four goals. First, we strive to create teachers who are not provincial. Most of our candidates are from small, mostly white, New England communities. Their experience with different perspectives and diverse populations is limited. We strive to help them develop a broader view of the world and the educational system and to help them think beyond their own personal experience by seeing the world from **multiple perspectives**.

Second, we strive to create teachers who can be dynamic change agents within the schools. This means we want candidates to see themselves as life-long learners who are continually engaged in the process of self-assessment and improvement and who base reform on the ever-changing needs of their students. We want to create teachers who use creative methods, thoughtful planning, and authentic assessment to engage students in their learning process. We want our future teachers to understand that learning occurs at the intersection of subject matter, student, and teacher when the teacher understands **the dynamic nature of the teaching and learning process**.

Third, we strive to produce teachers who understand the **professional and ethical behaviors** they need to serve as role models for their colleagues and students, as well as within their communities. Those of us who train these future teachers must also, of course, be held to these same high standards.

Fourth, we have a commitment to public education as an opportunity open to everyone. However, we want our candidates to realize that the quality of that opportunity varies from school to school. We want candidates to be aware of the inequities inherent in the system and to envision themselves as advocates for change and improvement. We also want them to see how enormous these inequities become when examined from a global perspective. We would like our candidates to be aware that their approach to teaching and the way in which they interact with their students, their colleagues, and the larger community can contribute to creating a more **just and equitable world**.

Program Goals in Relation to Unit's Conceptual Framework:

The English Department is particularly committed to creating teachers who have **multiple perspectives** and can contribute to creating a more **just and equitable world**. In 1997, the English Department revised its major so that all candidates were required to complete two American and two British courses for their major. However, all candidates were also required to complete two courses in literature outside of these two traditional

categories. The department offers courses in Black American, American Indian, Holocaust, Continental, and World literature, as well as a feminist focused Women Writers course. These courses are invaluable in laying the groundwork for helping our candidates understand educational issues from a global perspective.

The multicultural and equity strands of the conceptual framework are both reinforced in English Methods. The very first unit of Methods is focused on short stories; candidates read Sandra Cisneros, Kate Chopin, Langston Hughes, and Leslie Marmon Silko. Drawing on knowledge and experience gained in prior literature and multicultural perspectives courses, candidates are asked to develop prereading activities that will help students find their way into these stories. They become “resident experts” as they explain these techniques to the rest of the class. In addition, issues of justice and equity are addressed in the two weeks of Methods focused on diversity issues, particularly gender, race, and sexual identity. Candidates are asked to do serious reflection on their own biases and to create ways in which they will address issues of inequality and injustice in their own classrooms and schools.

Of course, the entire Methods course is devoted to having candidates understand the **dynamic nature of teaching and learning**. To ensure this understanding, candidates must:

- Read *Making the Journey* by Leila Christenbury, an excellent introduction to the profession published by NCTE, and complete 11 reflective responses on the topics she covers including reading, discussions, adolescent literature, poetry, assessment, writing, grammar, and classroom management.
- Write five lesson plans and create one unit plan demonstrating principles of good teaching.
- Prepare and teach a 45-minute lesson, which the student and the class reflect on and critique.
- Complete their 30 hours of fieldwork including a log of their hours, 4 formal observations, 4 lessons and critiques of those lessons, and a reflection on this experience.
- Complete a Methods portfolio containing all their work for the course and a reflective essay about their professional development.

The final unit of the Methods course focuses on **professional issues**, which are addressed in various ways: reading responses to chapters in Christenbury and articles in *Voices from the Middle* and the *English Journal*, reading *Nothing But the Truth* by Avi (an adolescent novel about a student who manages to get an excellent veteran English teacher fired); analyzing whatever the latest controversial teacher story is in the local paper; and analyzing the pop song “Don’t Stand So Close to Me” by the Police. By this time in the semester, candidates are able to engage in lively and practical discussions about these issues and to envision themselves as professionals and problem-solvers.

In addition to Methods, issues of professionalism, particularly in relation to cultural sensitivity, are addressed in the required ENG 312 Descriptive Grammar course. One

unit of that course focuses on teaching grammar to students from minority groups, and issues, such as the role of dialects in teaching students Standard American English, are addressed.

5. Unit and Program Assessments

English Department has been conducting its own writing assessment to discover how to improve our writing instruction. In May 2003, we collected student essays from our introduction to the major course, ENG 209 Literary Analysis. This was our first attempt at data gathering, and we discovered that the assessment instrument needed to be revised. Working with Institutional Research, we did this revision, and collected and assessed another set of essays from ENG 209 in 2004-05. Unfortunately, staff changes have made Institutional Research work very slow, and they are still in the process of compiling that data for us. Our concern about the writing ability of our English Education candidates is based on their PRAXIS II scores for the Essay test (0042), which we monitor every year (see Assessment #7) in order to meet NCTE **Standard 3.4** concerning composing effectively for a specific audience.

In terms of unit assessment, the Methods instructor and college supervisor for the English Education Program uses the same Danielson-based rubric as the unit does for its Methods and Student Teaching fieldwork assessments and for the final portfolio assessment for student teaching.

Candidates in this Report

The program report presents data for all assessments that has been aggregated and presented for candidates who were enrolled in ESEC 385 Methods and 386 Field Experience in fall 2005 and in ESEC 460 Student Teaching and 450 Seminar in Spring 2006 and who were part of the undergraduate education program. There were 15 candidates in Methods and 10 candidates in student teaching.

For Assessment #2 concerning grades in the content area, only 8 of these candidates' records were used because 2 had not yet finished their coursework.