

*NCA Self Study*  
*Criterion 4 Documents*

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Eastern Illinois University

Year 2014

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First Choice Review Board Feedback  
Master's in Elementary Education

CGS Review Board

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## **First Choice Graduate Program Report**

**Department of Early Childhood, Elementary, and  
Middle Level Education  
Master of Science in Education in Elementary  
Education  
College of Education & Professional Studies**

**January 21, 2014**

# **First Choice Graduate Program Report Master of Science in Education in Elementary Education**

## **Part 1 Program Review Team and CGS First Choice Board**

Master of Science in Education in Elementary Education Program Team  
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Council on Graduate Studies Review Board  
Wesley Allan, Ph.D., Review Board Chair  
Jacquelyn Frank, Ph.D., Review Board Member  
Matthew Gill, Ph.D., Review Board Member  
Bill Elliott, M.S., Assistant Dean of the Graduate School  
Robert M. Augustine, Ph.D. Dean of the Graduate School

## **Part 2 Consultation and Review Summary**

Initial Consultation October 9, 2012  
Consultation Report November 9, 2012  
First Review Report September 15, 2013  
First CGS Review November 5, 2013  
Review Report and Recommendations January 21, 2014

## **Part 3 Report**

**Program Mission:** The Graduate Program in Elementary Education advances scholarly preparation by providing quality teaching and promoting excellence in research/creative activity in order for graduate students to exemplify best teaching practices for children from birth through age fourteen. The graduate curriculum encompasses comprehensive content knowledge and promotes the use of critical thinking and problem solving to cultivate teacher-researchers who are empowered to serve as leaders in the profession. Faculty members challenge students to bridge the gap between theory and practice as they develop the skills required for ethical and effective collaboration and communication within the local school community and a culturally diverse, technologically advanced global environment.

**Overview:** The CGS Review Board considers that the Masters of Science in Education in Elementary Education program meets or exceeds Criteria 2 through 5 as established to achieve the First Choice Designation. Details are provided in the report that follows. The Review Board seeks to confirm that the program's enrollment goals as presented in Criterion 1 remain stable and recommends that the decision for a **First Choice designation be postponed until October 1, 2014**. The Review Board will then examine the official enrollments for Summer 2014 and Fall 2014 in order to verify that enrollment goals have been sustained and Criterion 1 has been achieved. The Review Board applauds the program for its continuous improvements and the achievement of specific areas of strength.

**Criterion 1: The program documents sustained achievements in strengthening the quality, diversity, and internationalization of the University's student body by attracting candidates who have the potential for academic and professional achievement and who complete degrees and succeed as alumni. Rating = 3 to 5.**

The Review Board considers that the Master of Science in Education in Elementary Education met the standards of First Choice Criterion 1 with the exception of Criterion 1ai. In order to verify that enrollments are both achieved and sustained, the Board would like to observe one additional enrollment cycle. Because of the decline in enrollments observed over the sustained period from 2010, 2011, and 2012, the Board also considered the Fall 2013 enrollment data. The program maintained a total degree enrollment

of 60 which was also a slight decline from 62 in 2012. The Review Board seeks to verify that an enrollment of 60 is sustained in 2014 before making a final decision. The Board believes that this is in alignment with the program's expectations as well and would serve as clear evidence that enrollments have been sustained at 60 or above. Table 1 below provides the current data.

Regarding the remaining criteria, the program provided evidence that it implemented a comprehensive recruitment plan that is aligned with best recruitment practices, and in addition is integrating recruitment technologies that distinguish this program from others at EIU and in the state. Standard best practices include the use of a continuum of recruitment tools and correspondence to insure recruitment of desired students. The program's plan begins with a well-focused series of annual recruitment strategies including on-campus networking with undergraduates, off-campus networking with cohorts, faculty interactions during professional meetings, participation in Graduate School Information Day, print brochures distributed through networking activities, presentations to cohorts, personal communication and follow-up with applicants, and integration of information on graduate program options into the undergraduate curriculum. The program's distinguishing feature is the creation of a series of recruitment videos that amplify the program's emphasis on use of action research to improve classroom teaching and the use of integrated learning strategies to help students plan and connect their education in ways that create strong pathways toward a future graduate degree. The program also offers an on-line journal of research that distinguishes it from most other programs in the country and offers a very attractive opportunity to those graduate candidates whom it seeks. The plan also integrates a consistent correspondence cycle for applicants. A consistent correspondence cycle has been identified as one of the most effective ways to match desired applicants with a program. The program demonstrated that it attracts the high quality degree candidates and high quality non-degree candidates. The program provided evidence, detailed in the report, that it meets the diversity expectations required for effective graduate study. It provided evidence that students complete their degrees and succeed as alumni. The Review Board noted that the program met expectations for this criterion.

**Table 1.**  
**Graduate Enrollment Data (2009-2013) MSED vs. READING CERTIFICATE**

	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Mean
<b>MSED</b>	64	65	66	51	51	62
<b>READ CERT</b>	N/A	5	7	11	9	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	64	70	73	62	60	67
	Spring 2010	Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	Mean
<b>MSED</b>	59	70	61	52		61
<b>READ CERT</b>	N/A	7	12	12		10
<b>TOTAL</b>	59	77	73	64		68
	Summer 2010	Summer 2011	Summer 2012	Summer 2013	Summer 2014	Mean
<b>MSED</b>	56	62	42	41		50
<b>READ CERT</b>	N/A	3	12	11		9
<b>TOTAL</b>	56	65	54	52		57

**Overall Means: MSED = 57 READ CERT = 9 TOTAL = 64**

*1aiEnrollment Management: Recruitment Plan: A clear plan for meeting application, enrollment, and diversity goals. Rating 3:* The rating of 3 reflected the Review Board's expectation that a minimum of 60 candidates remain enrolled through the Fall of 2014. Because enrollments continued to show a slight but continuous decline during the First Choice sustained period, the Board wanted to confirm that enrollment did not decline further.

As recommended following the initial consultation, the program provided clear evidence that it has implemented an effective recruitment plan that has been in place for the sustained three-year period. The program documented it uses a comprehensive set of recruitment tools and a well-focused plan to achieve its enrollment goals. The program provided examples of electronic recruitment tools including an on-line journal that it uses to amplify the program's research focus and a new video created as part of the IGS-Institute to promote enrollments. In addition, the program also uses print materials and a newsletter to advance recruitment. Other recruitment tools included networking at national, regional, and state conferences and participating in the EIU Graduate School Information Day. These tools are attracting students to the applicant pool. In addition, the program made transparent its goal of enrolling 59 students

each year. The program is attracting candidates that it seeks in its degree and certificate programs to sustain enrollments at 60 or above. The program leaders also noted that the program serves a large number of non-degree students who return to the University to pursue additional teaching endorsements rather than a degree or certificate and this further enhances its enrollments. As recommended during the consultation, the program specified its diversity rates, developed comparison data for how those rates compare to the region of the state that it serves, and determined its own satisfaction with its analysis. Table 2 provides the diversity summary for the program and Table 3 provides the diversity comparison data from regional school districts. The program documented that it achieves diversity based on undergraduate preparation, domestic diversity participation, and a male/female ratio. The current diversity rates documented include 25% of the candidates representing undergraduate institutions other than EIU, 3.7% domestic diversity, and 4.9% male participation. The program compared these rates to the regional schools that it is designed to serve to verify that the programs diversity rates meet or exceed the diversity rates of its region and is satisfied with this achievement as evidence of its commitment to diversity. The Review Team noted that in order to be eligible for the program, candidates must already have at least one teaching certificate; therefore, international students typically are not eligible for this program. The Review Team also reported that it is developing a new graduate certificate in English as a Second Language that will further enhance its offerings. The Review Board noted that the program met expectations for this criterion and exceeded expectations in the visionary use of media as a recruitment tool.

**Table 2.**  
**Diversity Profile of Admitted Students 2010 – 2012**  
**MSED in Elementary Education**

Year	Number Admitted	Undergraduate University		Graduate Student Ethnicity/Race					Gender	
		EIU (%)	Non-EIU (%)	White (%)	Black (%)	Hispanic (%)	Other (%)	Unknown (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
2010	31	77.4	22.6	93.5	6.5	0	0	0	0	100
2011	30	70	30	100	0	0	0	0	10	90
2012	20	75	25	95	0	5	0	0	5	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>74.1</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>96.3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>95.1</b>

**Table 3.**  
**Diversity Profile of Regional Schools – 2012 Illinois School Report Card Data**  
**Small Unit School Districts**

District	Student Enrollment	Teacher Ethnicity/Race					Teacher Gender	
		White (%)	Black (%)	Hispanic (%)	Other (%)	Unknown (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Kansas	250	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.4	84.6
Oakland	302	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	75.0
Paris (CUSD #4)	720	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.9	89.1

**Medium Unit School Districts**

District	Student Enrollment	Teacher Ethnicity/Race					Teacher Gender	
		White (%)	Black (%)	Hispanic (%)	Other (%)	Unknown (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Arcola	790	96.6	1.7	1.7	0.0	0.0	15.4	84.6
Neoga	766	98.2	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	22.8	77.2
Paris - Union	1,274	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.2	89.8
Sullivan	1,213	98.7	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	25.1	74.9
Tuscola	1,009	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.7	78.3

**Large Unit School Districts**

District	Student Enrollment	Teacher Ethnicity/Race				Teacher Gender		
		White (%)	Black (%)	Hispanic (%)	Other (%)	Unknown (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Charleston	2,795	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.5	84.5
Effingham	2,737	98.8	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	15.0	85.0
Mattoon	3,439	86.0	0.9	0.0	1.8	11.2	18.3	81.7

*1aii-Enrollment Management/Selection Criteria: A rationale for selection decisions; fulfilling its expectations for quality. **Rating = 4.*** The program’s selection criteria include a) 3.0 GPA, b) current teaching certificate, c) 2 letters of recommendation, d) professional resume, e) formal letter of application, f) completion of the “Advanced Candidate Self-Assessment.” The Review Team explained that the Entry Level Data Committee, composed of members of the graduate faculty, review the application materials and rate the candidates using the Advanced Candidate Assessment #1 Entry Level Rubric in order to derive admission decisions. The Review Team provided a rationale for using the established criteria by stating the criteria ensures that candidates have the required background in the teaching profession and the foundation in education required to successfully pursue an advanced degree. The Review Board noted that use of the graduate faculty and a rubric reflect best practices in admission of graduate candidates and provide the guidance necessary to insure that well-qualified candidates who match the desired criteria are admitted. The Review Board noted that the program met expectations for this criterion.

*1aiii-Enrollment Management/Acceptance Rate: Desired applicants accept admission offers. **Rating = 4.*** Table 4 provides the application, admission, and yield rates for the sustained period. The Review Team noted that it makes, on average, admission offers to 64% of the applicants who apply and that 77% accept these offers. The Team felt that this level of selectivity and yield contributed to the completion success of candidates and met their expectations. The Review Board acknowledged that the admission rubric allowed the program to achieve the level of selectivity appropriate to the program’s mission and that the 77% yield rate was strong evidence that the program is a first choice among those who are admitted. The Team noted that the primary deterrent to yield is financial and insuring that the candidates have the waivers or related financial support required to begin impacts when the candidates begin their graduate studies. The program further noted it will offer provisional admission for students whose GPA falls below 3.00 and offer degree candidacy only if the students earn the required 3.00 on 12 hours of study. The Review Board noted that the program met expectations for this criterion

*1b-Assistantship/Scholarship Management: **Rating = 4.*** The program documented the availability of 7 Graduate School Awards and 2 philanthropic awards to support its candidates and that all of these awards were allocated to degree candidates in the program during the sustained period. The Review Team noted that it uses a Graduate Awards Committee and an interview process to make the selection. The philanthropic awards include the Helwig Award that begin about 2005 and the McNutt Award that began about 2012. The Program Team provided a summary that the awards attract top candidates to the program. The Team also provided a summary of the teaching (ELE 200 and GST 1000), research, university service (Reading Center Support, Gateway Program Support, Basic Skills/Tap Testing Support), and service to local/regional schools (Carl Sandburg School) to support primary school reading programs. The Team provided survey data to verify that graduate assistants find their experiences contribute significantly to their overall graduate studies and that employers acknowledge that the experience gained through the awards contributed to the attractiveness of the candidate for positions in the school in which they were employed. The Team noted that an area of need for the program is scholarship support for part-time candidates. They were able to make this change to the McNutt Award recently but noted that many of the candidates are practicing teachers and having more part-time support would further enhance the quality of the program. The Review Board reported that this criterion was achieved.

*1c-Matriculation Management: A targeted graduation rate; candidates consistently meet the program’s degree completion expectations. **Rating = 4.*** The program provided the required evidence that during the sustained period its matriculation goals were achieved, but more importantly it provided the most

thorough assessment of matriculation rates of its graduates than any other program. The study of matriculation rate by year was an example of a best practice that should be shared and adopted by other programs. The study appears in Table 4 and provides the average time to degree data for all candidates admitted during the sustained period. This analysis helped the program verify that full-time candidates complete the program within 2 years but part-time working professionals often require the full 6 years to complete. The study offers good guidance on when to intervene and can guide future decisions regarding graduation expectations. Based on the study of 50 candidates enrolled between 2010 and 2012, 48% completed in 2 or fewer years while 52% required more than 2 years. The Team noted that it is the program's desire to matriculate 100% of the candidates that it admits, but noted that a small number of candidates do stop or drop the program primarily when family or finance issues prevent continuation. The Review Board determined that this criterion was an area of exemplary performance.

**Table 4.**  
**MSED in Elementary Education Program Graduates 2010 - 2012**

	2010			2011			2012		
	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall
<b>Number of Graduates</b>	6	3	2	4	17*	2	11	4	1
<b>Average Number of Semesters to Degree Completion</b>	7.17	6.33	8.0	10.0	6.47*	8.0	7.91	8.75	7.0
<b>Average Number of Years to Degree Completion</b>	3.22	3.0	4.67	4.17	1.85*	3.67	3.45	3.75	6.0

*1d-Graduate Placement: The program can document sustained placements; earning of required credentials; making important contributions to society; pursuing an advanced degree. **Rating = 4.*** The program provided evidence that it uses an on-line survey to track graduate placements. The results of the most recent survey revealed that 80% of the respondents were employed as full-time educators, 40% were considering pursuing another advanced degree and 95% reported that the program had a positive impact on their classroom teaching performance. The survey amplified that these graduate candidates return to their classrooms as highly educated teachers who use the research experience that they gained to improve student learning. The survey was an example of a best practice for verifying that the program is fulfilling its mission of bridging the gap between theory and practice. Another important finding from the survey included that 50% of the respondents had presented their research findings to their school boards or school administration which offered evidence of achieving the mission of cultivating teacher-researchers who are leaders. The Review Board determined that this criterion was met.

**Criterion 2: The program documents sustained achievements in fostering advanced scholarship through a depth of knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving, oral and written communication, application of technology, research/creative activity, and commitment to professional ethics. Rating = 5.**

*2a-Center for Academic Support and Achievement documents that assessment data are used to improve student learning, to guide improvements to the curriculum and to achieve academic excellence. **Rating = 5.*** The program offered a summary of its formative assessment program that samples student behaviors at the beginning, mid-point, and end of their graduate studies. The assessment data guides support for candidates throughout the program. The program documented indirect and direct measures to sample student learning outcomes. The Review Team noted the assessments are aligned with state standards in addition to program and Graduate School standards. The presenters explained the data is shared at an annual program retreat. Following the retreat a plan is developed to address curricular changes driven by the assessment data. The Review Team also shared data to show how they are meeting their assessment expectations. An impressive part of the program's documentation was evidence of the many ways it has used its data to advance the quality of student. The well-focused plan earned the 2013 Provost's Assessment Award. The report verified the program has a sustained record of using its assessment to advance its student learning and determined that this approach to assessment was exemplary and earned the highest rating.

*2b-Graduate School documents that assessment data are used to improve student learning based on CGS Criteria. **Rating = 5.*** Graduate School Reviews documented the program meets assessment across all of the areas approved by the Council on Graduate Studies. In addition, the program uses its data to inform and advance curricular changes. Examples include elimination of a “phases” approach to the curriculum and implementing a core and area of emphasis approach. The program added new courses to strengthen the program, revised the research components of the program and developed a Handbook for Action Research. The program has sustained evaluations of excellence from the Dean of the Graduate School who subsequently nominated the program for the Provost’s Award for Exemplary Assessment which, as noted earlier, the program earned in 2013. Again, assessment was considered exemplary and earned the highest rating.

**Criterion 3: The program documents sustained achievements in expanding the curriculum with rigorous advanced courses and options offered through lectures, laboratories, seminars, forums, practicum field experiences, internships, and partnerships with education, business, and industry. Rating = 4 to 5.** The evidence demonstrated sustained achievements in expanding the curriculum.

*3a-Sustained Mission and Planning Leadership: Articulates a clear mission; aligned with current and future trends in the discipline; states the program’s strengths. **Rating = 4.*** The program explained the process it uses to review and advance its mission as part of its annual program retreat. The mission review section also explained how discussion of the mission is then translated into departmental committee goals that address discipline changes. The program most recently updated its mission in 2012. The Review Board agreed with its earlier conclusion during the consultation that the program met the mission criteria and felt the program uses many best practices for reviewing and advancing its mission.

*3bi-Administrative Leadership: Documents how its administrative structure and leadership advance the quality of its curriculum. **Rating = 5.*** The report provided an effective summary of how administrative duties are organized so that program leaders effectively collaborate to achieve and advance program quality. The chair reported that a Graduate Coordinator position was added in 2008 upon the advice of the Dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies and the Graduate Dean. The addition of a Graduate Coordinator for the program has contributed substantially to advancing the quality of the program because the Coordinator maintains a focus on issues of graduate education as a priority. The chair and coordinator hold weekly meetings to review duties and responsibilities and ensure that issues of graduate education are prioritized and addressed. The chair explained the coordinator’s role in advancing graduate assessment, advancing graduate student research, and developing the new reading certificate program. The collaboration between the chair, coordinator and faculty have produced the Action Research Journal, research and related videos, the new Certificate in Reading and emerging Certificate in English Language Instruction. Based on these achievements, the program leaders earned a 2013 Graduate School Leadership Award. The examples documented the program’s sustained ability to advance the quality of graduate study and indicate that this criterion exceeded expectations and serves as an example of excellence for other programs.

*3bii-Graduate Faculty Leadership: Documents the significant role of the graduate faculty with advancing the curriculum through curriculum committees or appropriate curriculum processes. **Rating = 5.*** The report described an exemplary Graduate Studies Committee structure. This structure includes 7 committees: 1) Graduate Assessment Committee, 2) Graduate Awards Committee, 3) Graduate Entry Level Data Committee, 4) Graduate Mid-point Data Committee, 5) Action Research/Thesis Committee, 6) Graduate Research Courses Committee, and 7) Graduate Online Journal Committee. This comprehensive committee structure amplifies the strong integration of the members of the graduate faculty into the decision making and leadership of graduate study. The Review Team offered an impressive list of achievements during the sustained period of the faculty. These included: development of the Assessment Plan, creation of generic course syllabi, revision of the research sequence, adoption of the policy that all faculty compete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), development of the Action Research Handbook, budgeting for support of travel and research, creating the on-line journal, creating a faculty research agenda, and launching of the new certificate program. The examples confirmed evidence of strong and sustained involvement of the graduate faculty in guiding the graduate



program and confirm that this criterion was exceeded. The program offers an example of best practices for engaging the faculty in a graduate program and was given the highest rating for this achievement.

*3c-Sustained Curricular Leadership by External Review: Sustained excellence based on external reviews as appropriate to the mission/discipline. **Rating = 4.*** The program documented 4 types of external review used to guide the program. These included accreditation through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, use of an Advisory Committee of alumni to advance the program, use of the annual Illinois Board of Higher Education Review, and also input from the Reading Practicum. Each of these external reviewers assist the program with maintaining currency, maintaining high standards, and remaining connected with teaching professionals. The examples confirmed evidence of strong and sustained involvement of the external groups in guiding the graduate program.

*3d-Sustained Capstone Leadership: Requires a rigorous capstone appropriate to the mission and documents the impact of each of its capstones on the quality of learning in the degree program. **Rating = 4.*** The Review Team provided evidence of implementation of the capstones over the sustained period. The capstones include the action research project in ELE 5900, the thesis via ELE 5990, capstones related to specific options in the program such as the theory-to-practice assignments incorporated in language arts and social studies methods, and the Illinois Reading Teacher Content Test. These multiple capstones offer evidence that the candidates successfully integrate the content of their various courses into an integrated whole as they conclude their study. The expectation that every candidate will complete one or more capstones confirmed use of capstones to enhance program rigor. The Review Board verified that the capstones have been in place for the sustained period and met the criterion.

*3e-Sustained Student Leadership: Fosters participation of its graduate candidates on student advisory boards. **Rating = 4.*** The program documented a history of student leadership through the Graduate Student Advisory Council and further noted that a candidate from the MSED in Elementary Education has been selected as Student Dean of the Graduate School in 2010. The program's graduate candidates are active members of GSAC. In addition, Dr. Carrie Dale, a member of the graduate faculty and representative on the Graduate Student Advisory Council served as faculty liaison to GSAC. These achievements indicate sustained commitment to student leadership.

*3f-Sustained Alumni Leadership: The program documents how it fosters participation in alumni programs sponsored by the Graduate School Alumni Advisory Board. **Rating = 5.*** This was an area of exemplary leadership. The program's alumni are fully engaged with the program. The program has initiated its own annual alumni awards program; it hosts a program newsletter, and an annual meeting with alumni at the state conference to retain strong alumni connections. Program alumni have been recognized with Outstanding Graduate Alumni Awards in 2008, 2009, 2012, and 2013. In addition, several impressive scholarships funded by alumni donations are available. The program also noted that alumni were responsible for funding the program's new facilities. Alumni also serve the program by participating in its study abroad program, by serving as course instructors, by participating in accreditation reports, and by hiring new graduates. Alumni relations were considered an impressive strength of the program. Finally, program alumni contribute to the program via an Alumni Advisory Board. The many opportunities for alumni to engage with the program confirmed sustained achievement in this area and exemplary integration of alumni as a means of program enhancement and advancement.

*3g-Sustained External Partnerships: Sustained external partnerships appropriate to its mission; assets of partners advance the program's quality. **Rating = 4.*** The report provided a list of the program's external partners who contribute to the program. Examples included the Department of Educational Leadership, the Charleston School District, the Department of Secondary Education and Foundations, Regional Offices of Education and the East Central - EIU Reading Council. These examples verify sustained achievement using partnerships to advance the program.

**Criterion 4: The program documents sustained achievements in research/creative activity with graduate students and faculty. **Rating = 4.** The evidence demonstrated sustained achievements in research/creative activity with graduate students and faculty.**

*4ai-Research Productivity: Has an annual research productivity goal and documents that its candidates meet or exceed the completion of those products. **Rating = 4.*** As part of the discipline's research

commitment, students experience a culture of research across the graduate curriculum by producing research through one of two capstone projects; the thesis or the action research project. The Review Team noted that it uses the metaphor of a teaching hospital to guide its research mission by asking its graduate candidates to consider what works in their classroom and what methods of data collection can be integrated into classroom instruction to verify the effectiveness of these teaching strategies. The program documented that during the sustained period, students produced a yearly average of 15 capstone projects and a range of 6-23 capstone projects. In addition, students also produced 7 publications/presentations with faculty and 4 independent projects. The program noted that it strives to have students produce two theses, ten action research, and three non-capstone projects (publications, presentations) annually. The Program Team provided evidence that it is achieving its goals and met this criterion.

*4a-Research Engagement: Graduate candidates achieve a sustained record of scholarships through presentations, performances, or exhibits. Rating = 4 to 5.* The program has developed and sustained a culture of research as evidenced by the new Handbook for Action Research and requirements to produce research as part of the program's capstone. Students know they are expected to engage in research. The program requires that projects must be submitted and meet expectations to complete the degree program. The program provided evidence that its students are research active as presenters and publishers and met this criterion.

*4b-Research and Travel Grants: Rating = 4.* The Program Team provided evidence that its candidates have successfully earned Williams Travel Award and have earned recognition through the College of Education and Professional Studies Research Fair. A list of the awards and presentation documented that this criterion was met.

*4c-Showcasing Scholarship/Creative Activity: Rating = 5.* The program's on-line research journal is one of the most innovative approaches for showcasing student scholarship. This visionary approach provides easy access to educators who seek information about tested teaching tools and offers an impressive way to share and showcase student work. In addition, the program's students participate in the College's Research Fair, the Graduate Student Expo and Video Programs. The program noted that students are presenting their work at regional and national conferences as noted previously in this report. Examples included the Midwest ATE and International Reading Conference. This was considered an area of achievement that should be shared with other programs.

*4d-Awards Participation: Rating = 4.* The program has a sustained record of earning awards that confirm the criteria were met. Examples include Distinguished Graduate Students (2008 – 2012), King-Mertz Research/Creative Activity Award in CEPS (2011), and Master's Thesis Award in CEPS (2011), Graduate Showcase Series (2013). This criterion was met.

**Criterion 5: The program documents a sustained record of developing opportunities for the discovery and application of knowledge with graduate faculty members who reflect the University's teaching and mentoring priority and who have a record of research/creative activity and professional service. Rating = 5.** The evidence demonstrated sustained achievements in a sustained record of developing opportunities for the discovery and application of knowledge.

*5a-Coordinator Leadership: Rating = 5.* The report documented the leadership at the department, University, regional, state, and national levels. The Graduate Coordinator's contributions include service as a member of the Council on Graduate Studies, service on numerous CGS Awards Committees, and service on a CGS leadership committee titled the Enrollment Quality and Diversity Board. In addition, the Coordinator serves across numerous departmental committees including assessment and syllabi development. Finally, the Graduate Coordinator was instrumental in developing the Reading Certificate and advancing the Assessment Plan.

*5b-Graduate Faculty Scholarship: Rating = 5.* The report provided a summary of the scholarly contributions of the faculty, the grant success, and awards earned for scholarly work. The report provided a summary of 22 articles published, one book chapter, 17 grants earned, 110 conference presentations, 12 in-services to teachers, and 11 pre-services presentations. The faculty members are active on key committees, boards and councils including the International Education Council, Institutional Review

Board, Council on Faculty Research, Council on Graduate Studies, and Integrative Graduate Studies Institute. The report documented the productivity and leadership contributions of the faculty.

### Exemplary Achievements Exceeding Criteria Expectations

The Review Board's analysis of Criteria 2 through 5 indicated that these criteria appeared to have been met. The Review Board noted several exemplary achievements.

- Criterion 2a and 2b CASA Assessment and Graduate School Assessment: The development of assessment rubrics was considered exemplary and served as a model of best practices for other graduate programs. The rubrics are being used effectively to guide program development.
- Criterion 3bi Administrative Leadership: The collaboration between the chair, coordinator and faculty have produced the Action Research Journal, research and related videos, the new Certificate in Reading and emerging Certificate in English Language Instruction. This synergy and collaboration has advanced the program and been recognized with a Graduate School Leadership Award. The approach is considered exemplary.
- 3bii Graduate Faculty Leadership: The report described an exemplary Graduate Studies Committee structure. This structure includes 7 committees that result in strong integration of the members of the graduate faculty into the decision making and leadership of graduate study. This approach was considered exemplary.
- 3f Alumni Leadership: The program has initiated its own annual alumni awards program; it hosts a program newsletter, and an annual meeting with alumni at the state conference to retain strong alumni connections. Program alumni have been recognized with Outstanding Graduate Alumni Awards in 2008, 2009, 2012, and 2013.
- 4c-Showcasing Scholarship/Creative Activity. The program's on-line research journal is one of the most innovative approaches for showcasing student scholarship. This visionary approach provides easy access to educators who seek information about tested teaching tools and offers an impressive way to share and showcase student work.

### Part 4 Recommendations

Based on the Evidence Presented, the Review Board determined that the program meets or exceeds Criteria 2 through 5 as established to achieve the First Choice Designation and seeks to confirm that the program's enrollment goals as presented in Criterion 1 remain stable. The Board recommends that the decision for a **First Choice designation be postponed until October 1, 2014** in order to examine the official enrollments for the Summer 2014 and Fall 2014.

### Part 5 Period of Designation

The Period of Designation will be determined after October 1, 2014.

### Part 6 Benefits

Until the final decision is confirmed, the MSE in Elementary Education is granted a 2015 Presidential Graduate Assistantship, two Summer 2014 Research Graduate Assistantships; and two 2015 Williams Travel Awards to support student travel. Any additional or continuing benefits will be determined after October 1, 2014.



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Robert M. Augustine, Dean

January 21, 2014

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Date

C: College of Education and Professional Studies  
Office of the Provost