

**South Dakota**  
**Board of Examiner Report**  
*for Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) approval*

**SD State Board of Examiners**  
**Team:**

Team Chair  
Kathy Riedy, DOE

Team Member  
Mark Halling

Team Member  
Sharon Andrews

Team Member  
Sr Candy Chrystal

Accreditation Visit to:

**Sinte Gleska University**

Dates: October 28-30, 2018

Type of Visit:

- First
- Continuing
- Combination
- Probation
- Focused

## Summary for Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)

<b>Standards</b>		<b>Team Findings</b>	
		<b>Initial</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
1	EPP's Mission, Conceptual Framework, and Responsibility	M	
2	Preparation of Candidates in Teacher Education	M	
3	Assessment System and EPP Evaluation	M	
4	Field Experiences and Clinical Practice	M	

M = Standard Met

NM = Standard Not Met

NA = Not Applicable

## Standard 1

### EPP Mission, Conceptual Framework, and Responsibility

Higher education programs for the preparation of education personnel shall operate under a written mission statement. The EPP's statements of goals and program objectives, consistent with the mission statement, shall serve as a basis for decision making regarding policies affecting all of the programs for the preparation of education personnel and shall assure that education graduates are prepared to serve in P-12 schools.

This section sets the context for the visit. It should clearly state the mission of the EPP. It should describe the characteristics of the EPP and identify and describe any branch campuses, off-campus sites, alternate route programs, and distance learning programs for professional school personnel. This section also provides an overview of the EPP's conceptual framework. The overview should include a brief description of the framework and its development.

*Information reported in the institutional report for Standard 1 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the IR that are incorrect.)*

Yes       No

EPP Mission	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
-------------	--------------	-----------------	--------

In 1968, a committee was formed on the Rosebud Reservation to study the idea of creating a community college, Sicangu people wanted to provide higher education opportunities to tribal members who were not able to leave the reservation for a myriad of reasons. Fifteen years later, in 1983, Sinte Gleska University became the first tribal college to receive national accreditation at the four-year level. Today Sinte Gleska University is a Tribally Chartered institution with land grant status that continues to provide a model for Indian-Controlled education. Their mission encompasses four strands that include: 1) the need for effective facilitators that will deliver pedagogy grounded in the Lakota culture; 2) instilling a commitment to the Lakota wisdom of looking ahead for seven generations and respecting the Lakota traditions and values; 3) teaching to the four Lakota virtues of Woksape (wisdom), Woohitika (bravery); Wowacintanka (fortitude) and Wacantognake (generosity); and 4) producing classroom educators that promote the ideals of tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

The EPP's mission statement reads, "The Education Department of Sinte Gleska University improves the learning process of ALL children through the development of effective facilitators of knowledge, understanding and values. This mission includes planning that relates to understanding of the past, its connections to the present, and the implications for the future. The mission contributes to tribal autonomy and cultural strength. It also contributes to individual development that is characterized by reflective thought, self-development, and a life-long

seeking of wisdom.” The mission of the University and the EPP complement each other and express a desire to work towards the same goals.

The Education department collaborates with three other departments to provide coursework for their education majors. These include the The Arts and Sciences Wounspe Wankatuya, which delivers the core courses (English, Math, History, Science, etc), The Institute for Lakota teaching and Learning, which delivers the Lakota focused courses, and the Human Services Department, which delivers their psychology course. Department chairs have a strong working relationship and meet monthly to evaluate and plan for the needs of their students.

The EPP currently offers two paths to initial certification, a K-8 Elementary Education program and a K-8 Elementary Ed/K-12 Special Education program. There are two full-time faculty and eight adjunct faculty currently serving the education program. While the EPP does offer Master’s programs in education, none of those programs lead to initial teacher certification.

Since their last review in 2010, the EPP has streamlined the programs it offers. They did eliminate the Secondary Education program due to limited demand and low enrollment. In addition, the Education Department went through an intensive internal review process that led to new Program Learning Outcomes being established and the redesigning of a curriculum map for both programs (K-8 Elementary Ed and the dual-major K-8 Elementary Ed/K-12 Special Ed) that better defines where concepts are introduced, reinforced, mastered and assessed. Through this process, all course learning outcomes were also rewritten to include alignment with Bloom’s Taxonomy and to be aligned with applicable standards such as InTASC, ACEI and CEC.

<b>Conceptual Framework</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable X</b>	<b>Target</b>
-----------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------	---------------

The EPP’s conceptual framework is made up of five basic components. The **student** is at the center, honoring the knowledge, skills and beliefs they bring with them and building on them. **Culture** is the second component and is respected by the programs modeling of culturally relevant pedagogy. The **Process** seeks to incorporate Lakota culture and values. The **Content** is expected to be culturally relevant while merging with western European thought. All of this is driven by the use of the **Constructivist model**, building on what the candidate brings to the table and encouraging them to use their strengths in developing their teaching style. Interviewees spoke specifically in appreciation of the constructivist model.

Testimonials and anecdotal evidence provided in interviews suggests that this framework and the mission of the EPP continue to be at the forefront of program development. Minimal changes have been made in this area in that regard.

**Summary of Strengths:** The EPP’s strength is a clear and strong connection and integration of cultural relevance in their program. Because of their small size the EPP is able to assess and counsel candidates on an individual basis offering a more personalized experience. Faculty work closely together to make decisions regarding candidate admission, program content and assessments. Sinte has a good relationship with surrounding K-12 districts allowing their candidates opportunities for classroom experiences prior to student teaching.

**Areas for Improvement: None**

**Rationale: NA**

**Recommendation: Standard Met**

**Corrections to the Self Study: None**

## Standard 2

### Preparation of Candidates in Teacher Education

The EPP shall print and distribute a policy with specific admission standards and procedures that govern student recruitment and acceptance into the preparation programs. The EPP shall provide written verification that candidates are informed about state laws and rules that govern the issuance of certificates for educational personnel.

The EPP shall prepare candidates to work in a school as a teacher, administrator or school service specialist. These candidates must know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge and skills necessary to help all students learn. Assessments shall be given to the candidate to ensure the candidate meets professional, state, and EPP standards.

*Information reported in the institutional report for Standard 2 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the IR that are incorrect.)*

**Yes**      **No**

Candidate Knowledge and Skills	Unacceptable	Acceptable X	Target
--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------	--------

All candidates must apply and be accepted to the teacher education programs prior to taking most upper level division courses (300-400 numbered) unless otherwise advised by their academic advisor. Application to the Teacher Education programs should be made at the end of the sophomore year or at the beginning of the junior year. Requirements for admission are as follows:

**Criteria for admission includes:**

- A cumulative grade point average of 2.5 at the time of admission;
- A minimum GPA of 2.6 in the major area of study must be maintained throughout the remainder of the program;
- Completion of the “*Application for Admission to Teacher Education*” form;
- Completion of the *Applicant Conduct Review Statement*, which serves as a background check;
- Signature of acceptance by the Education Department Chairperson and the candidate.
- At least 3 letters of recommendation for entrance into the Teacher Ed Program
- Satisfactory course completion record based on the number of Drop/Add/Withdrawal/Incompletes on transcript

- Signature of acceptance by the Education Department Chairperson and signature of the candidate.
- (as of Summer 2018) Complete the Praxis Content Area Practice test with Dean of Education or Department Chairperson
- Successful completion of the following courses with a grade of “C” or better:

EN 101	English I
EN 102	English II
SP 100	Speech Communications
HI 251	American History I
MA 120	Math Essentials (as of F18)
	Approved Humanities Elective
MA 150	College Algebra
SC 201	Integrated Science I
SC 202	Integrated Science II
LL 101	Lakota Language I
LS 253	Lakota History and Culture
ED 201	Computers in Education
ED 206	Introduction & Foundations of Education
ED 210	Educational Psychology
EE 200	Child Growth and Development

**Once accepted to the Teacher Education Program, candidates are required to meet the following requirements:**

- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 and a 2.6 in their major of study
- Conduct themselves in accordance with the Student Handbook and Lakota values

**In order to participate in the Student Teaching Internship, candidates in the Teacher Education Program must:**

- Complete program coursework with a GPA of 2.6
- Take the appropriate Praxis PLT Practice Test under University supervision and participate in a post-test consultation with a department faculty member
- Consult with academic advisor or Department Chair about student-teaching placement and expectations

**Pass Rates on Content Licensure Tests for Initial and Advanced Educator Preparation**

Overview: The chart below includes *all* candidates that were enrolled in *either* the K-8 Elementary Ed degree or the K-8 Elementary Ed/K-12 Special Ed degree.

Program	Name of Licensure Test	# of Test Takers	% Passing State Licensure Test
K-8 Elementary Ed	Praxis II Elementary Education: Content	29	65.5%
K-8 Elementary Ed/K-12 Special Ed	Praxis II Special Education Content Knowledge and Application	7	100%

Below is a detailed chart showing the number of test takers and passers over the past six years.

**Data for All Candidates (both degrees)  
Praxis II Scores- Elementary Education: Content Knowledge**

Academic Year	Number of Passing Scores	
	Passed	Failed
2017-2018	<i>data not yet available</i>	
2016-2017	2	2
2015-2016	5	3
2014-2015	1	4
2013-2014	5	0
2012-2013	6	1

Passing Rate 2012-2018	19	10
	65.5% Passing	

**Candidate Data - Specific to K-12 Sped Candidates  
Praxis II Scores- Special Ed Content Knowledge and Application**

Academic Year	Number of Passing Scores	
	Passed	Failed
2017-2018	<i>data not yet available</i>	
2016-2017	0	0
2015-2016	1	0
2014-2015	0	0
2013-2014	4	0
2012-2013	2	0

Passing Rate 2012-2018	7	0
	100% Passing	

In the past five years, the Elementary Education program has shown mixed results on the content test, only being successful on the test 65% of the time. A possible conclusion is that having such little data leads to unreliable conclusions. In 2013-2014, one might conclude that because of the 100% pass rate, SGU graduates were consistently successful on this test. In 2014-2015, one might conclude that because of a 25% pass rate, SGU graduates are usually unsuccessful on the test. A closer analysis would indicate that SGU had multiple students fail the exam more than one time and because of the low numbers of students taking the test from the institution the EPP saw a large impact on its passing scores.

Another conclusion is that since the department did not use passing scores on this test for filtering out candidates, they often end up working with teachers that struggle with certain areas of the exam after they have already taken their basic classes.

The department indicated they still have an opportunity to do the following: a) increase the rigor of upper level, content-focused education courses to reinforce weaknesses candidates may have (MA 310, Math for Teachers I, for example); b) train and support faculty to integrate more Praxis prep into their courses; and c) increase intentionality around preparing candidates for the exam, including adding a practice Praxis II Content Test as an entry requirement for candidates into the program.

### **Pass Rates on Pedagogical Tests for Initial and Advanced Teacher Preparation**

Overview: The chart below includes all candidates that were enrolled in *both* the K-8 Elementary Ed degree and the K-8 Elementary Ed/K-12 Special Ed degree because they all must take the Praxis II PLT test.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Name of Licensure Test</b>	<b># of Test Takers</b>	<b>% Passing State Licensure Test</b>
K-8 Elementary Education and K-8 Elementary Education/K-12 Special Ed	Praxis II - Principles of Learning and Teaching	14	85.7%



Below is a detailed chart showing the number of test takers and passers over the past six years.

**Praxis II Scores - Principles of Learning and Teaching**

Academic Year	Number of Passing Scores	
	Passed	Failed
2017-2018	<i>data not yet available</i>	
2016-2017	1	1
2015-2016	4	0
2014-2015	0	1
2013-2014	3	0
2012-2013	4	0
Passing Rate 2012-2018	12	2
	85.7% Passing Rate	

**Score Distribution by Specific Population Group - Principles of Learning and Teaching 2012-2018**

	Native American, American	White
<b>Total Number of Examinees</b>	10	4
<b>Percentage Passing</b>	90% (9/10)	75% (3/4)
<b>Percentage Failing</b>	10% (1/10)	25% (1/4)

When compared to the passing rate on the Praxis II Content Test, the data is consistently higher on the PLT. This could be due to a number of factors, including the emphasis the upper level courses have on rigorous theory, case studies, and methodology and real-world application. Another consideration may be that many candidates in the program have experience working in schools as paraprofessionals, substitute teachers or Head Start teachers, which could contribute to their understanding of topics covered on the PLT, as well as the level of rigorous discussion and interaction that happens in methods courses in the department. The department recently began requiring that all candidates for the Student Teaching Internship take a practice PLT exam with an instructor and go through a consultation to understand the areas of strengths and weaknesses so they can focus on those areas of growth during their internship and after.

	Name of Assessment <sup>9</sup>	Type or Form of Assessment	When the Assessment <sup>10</sup> Is Administered
1	<b>Praxis II Content Exam</b>	State Licensure Test	A monitored Practice Test is taken as part of the admission process into the Teacher Ed program. The formal test is taken post-graduation

2	<b>Content-course Grades of Comprehensive Exam</b>	Grades	Mid-term and Final: EN 101, EN 102, SP 100, HI 251, Approved Math Elective, Approved Humanities Elective, MA 150, SC 201, SC 202, LL 101, LS 253, ED 201, ED 206, ED 210, EE 200
3	<b>Student Portfolio aligned with INTASC standards</b>	Rubrics	All education courses, including the Student Teaching Internship, require student portfolios
4	<b>Student Teaching Evaluation</b> a. Cooperating Teacher Evaluation b. Institution Supervisor Evaluation (optional)	Evaluation Rubric	Throughout the Student Teaching Internship, cooperating teachers, the University supervisor and (optional) the building principal will conduct a series of observations. At the completion of the Internship, the same parties will complete a comprehensive evaluation scored on a rubric aligned with INTASC standards.
5	<b>Principles of Learning and Teaching</b>	State Licensure Test	A monitored Practice Test is taken as part of admission to the Student Teaching Internship. The formal, scored exam is taken post-graduation.
6	<b>Employer Surveys</b>	Survey	1st, 2nd, and 3rd year graduates currently working in the education field
7	<b>Cultural Assessments</b> a. University required courses	a. Grades b. Outcomes	LL 100 or LL 101, LS 253

**Summary of Strengths: None**

**Areas for Improvement: None**

**Rationale: N/A**

**Recommendation: Standard Met**

**Corrections to the Self Study: None**

### Standard 3

#### Assessment System and EPP Evaluation

*Information reported in the institutional report for Standard 3 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the IR that are incorrect.)*

**Yes**      **No**

<b>Assessment System</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable</b> <b>X</b>	<b>Target</b>
--------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------------	---------------

The EPP has a set of evaluation tools, aligned to outcomes, which are used to assess candidate performance throughout their program of study. No stand-alone document articulating a formal EPP Assessment System was available for review; this was confirmed during interviews with EPP faculty. Interviews with EPP faculty reflected a strong, shared awareness and understanding of the EPPs approach to evaluating candidate performance. Institutional protocols such as the Internal Program Review process evidence how the EPPs assessment approach is reflected at the institutional level.

The EPP uses a variety of evaluation tools to assess candidate performance. The tools are aligned to state standards for programs such as CEC and ACEI and to national sets of standards such as InTASC and Danielson. The tools are not directly aligned to the four main strands of the EPPs mission. These assessment measures are documented in various evidence files, are used to inform the SD DOE Program Review Reports, and are used to monitor candidate matriculation through the program from admission to completion such as course grades, portfolio reviews and student teaching evaluation as well as beyond graduation such as surveys and PRAXIS content and pedagogy tests. Evidence files included the timeline for data collection. The Dean of Education is responsible to gather and summarize the data. Data is typically reviewed in an informal ongoing manner during weekly department meetings and other informal conversations. There is no annual data retreat. Stakeholders become aware of evaluation expectations when enrolled in particular courses and via handbooks. Candidates work with their academic advisors to keep informed of their status in the program. A review of academic advising files reflected that EPP faculty are documenting advising sessions by keeping a written record of the meetings.

Decisions about candidate matriculation through the program are guided by adherence to established timelines. Documents include summary tables that detail assessments at transition points including the timelines for administration. EPP faculty meet to consider each candidate’s movement through each transition point.

Candidates receive information about assessments when enrolled in each course and via documents such as the Student Teaching Handbook. Cooperating Teachers report that they are trained to use the evaluation tools via a face-to-face or individual orientation.

<b>Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable X</b>	<b>Target</b>
--	---------------------	-------------------------	---------------

The Dean of the EPP is responsible to gather and summarize candidate performance data and program feedback. The EPP makes use of a variety of technologies to manage the data including Jenzabar, GoogleForms, GoogleDocs, and SurveyMonkey. Data are gathered according to the timeline and reported in tables, charts, and graphs. Weekly department meetings provide the formal context for faculty to consider data and suggest changes. Data included in evidence files and in the Program Review Reports did not consistently present three cycles of data for all evaluation measures.

<b>Use of Data for Program Improvement</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable X</b>	<b>Target</b>
--	---------------------	-------------------------	---------------

The EPP is disposed to use data to inform change. Data is used to inform each candidate's matriculation through the program. Faculty use course evaluation feedback to reflect upon their teaching effectiveness. Changes made then impact the program. A recent example of change at the programmatic level occurred when informal feedback prompted the EPP to offer a summer topics course related to culturally responsive classrooms. Moving forward, the EPP will work within the institution's protocol and established system for making curricular change to make this a required course. Other examples of changes relate to the EPPs review of candidate performance on PRAXIS content exams.

**Summary of Strengths:** Use of candidate performance data by the EPP allows them to carefully advise and monitor candidates through their program of study.

**Areas for Improvement:** The EPP does not have a formal document articulating its assessment system.

**Rationale:** A formal articulation of the EPPs approach to assessment will ensure its ongoing and systematic implementation.

**Recommendation: Standard Met**

**Corrections to the Self Study: None**

#### Standard 4

##### Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The EPP and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school personnel develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills, necessary to help all students learn.

In this section the EPP must include (1) initial and advanced programs for teachers, (2) programs for other school professionals, and (3) off-campus, distance learning, and alternate route programs, noting differences when they exist.

*Information reported in the institutional report for Standard 4 was validated in the exhibits and interviews. (If not, provide an explanation and indicate the pages of the IR that are incorrect.)*

Yes

No

Collaboration Between EPP and School Partners	Unacceptable	Acceptable x	Target
---	--------------	-----------------	--------

The EPP partners with many of the schools within the area. Among those schools are the Todd County system, St. Francis, White River, Crazy Horse, and Winner. School administrators, cooperating teachers, and the students in those school districts are partners in the field experience component of the teacher education program. Formal agreements are entered into with the

school districts. The Todd County Elementary School, in particular, works closely with the university. The principal meets with the EPP faculty during the year. The EPP took the suggestions of the schools to provide professional development to their teachers in the area of cultural responsiveness.

<b>Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable x</b>	<b>Target</b>
--	---------------------	-------------------------	---------------

Acceptance to the Teacher Education Program is not automatic. Students must meet the following requirements and apply and be accepted to the teacher education at the end of the sophomore year or at the beginning of the junior year. Requirements for admission are as follows:

- A cumulative grade point average of 2.5 at the time of admission;
- A minimum GPA of 2.6 in the major area of study must be maintained throughout the remainder of the program;
- Completion of the “*Application for Admission to Teacher Education*” form;
- Completion of the *Applicant Conduct Review Statement*, which serves as a background check;
- Signature of acceptance by the Education Department Chairperson and the student.
- At least 3 letters of recommendation for entrance into the Teacher Ed Program
- Satisfactory course completion record based on the number of Drop/Add/Withdrawal/Incompletes on transcript
- Signature of acceptance by the Education Department Chairperson and signature of the student(as of Summer 2018) Complete the Praxis Content Area Practice test with Dean of Education or Department Chairperson
- Successful completion of the following courses with a grade of “C” or better:

**Once accepted to the Teacher Education Program, students are required to meet the following requirements:**

- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 and a 2.6 in their major of study
- Conduct themselves in accordance with the Student Handbook and Lakota values

**In order to participate in the Student Teaching Internship, students in the Teacher Education Program must:**

- Complete program coursework with a GPA of 2.6
- Take the appropriate Praxis PLT Practice Test under University supervision and participate in a post-test consultation with a department faculty member

For the most part, student teaching is the only formal field placement/clinical experience in the education programs. The majority of the students have experience as school employees. Other field experiences are not required by the program. Anecdotally, students who do not have employment experience in schools tend to find employment working with students and, therefore, gain that experience. One of the teachers interviewed indicated that the student teachers suggested more experience: either a longer student teaching or required experience prior to student teaching. Experience with school-aged children as one of the criteria for student teaching would assure all candidates enter the student teaching semester more prepared.

Student teacher placement decisions are made by the education faculty in collaboration with the school partners. Many student teachers are placed where they live and have worked. The EPP requests placements from the principals. This involves describing the candidate in a way that helps the principal match the student teacher to a good mentor. The cooperating teachers must be state certified and have three years of teaching experience with at least one of those years in the current grade level. Preference is given to a teacher who has completed coursework in the supervision of student teachers.

Cooperating teachers are required to give three formal written evaluations of the student teacher's performance. The building principal completes an evaluation of the student teacher, using the district's form. These evaluations are able to track the progress of the student teacher across the 4-week, 8-week, and 12-week experience. The cooperating teachers are trained on the use of the evaluation tools. This was verified in interviews. The mentoring and guidance that student teachers receive from their cooperating teachers during the student teaching experience is enhanced by the SGU supervisors.

The student teaching experience is graded by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. These two grades, along with the student teaching portfolio, are used to determine the grade for the whole experience. The evaluation tools for the student teaching experience are thorough in their alignment to the InTASC and ACEI standards. The evaluation tool is not, however, aligned to the conceptual framework and the four main strands of the program.

**Summary of Strengths:** It is very evident that much of the program's success is due to its relationships among students, faculty, and partner schools/professionals. The delivery of the program is student centered (mentioned by many alums and associated personnel) and advising is person oriented and inclusive. There is a positive sense of "family" between Sinte Gleske University and Todd County Elementary School.

**Areas for Improvement:**

1. Requiring school experience prior to student teaching of all candidates would assure a minimum level of experience prior to the student teaching semester.
2. The mission and conceptual framework of the EPP are strengths of the program yet, nowhere on the student teaching evaluation is there any indication of its value.

**Rationale:**

1. Many of the candidates have been school employees and have the necessary experience for student teaching. A minimum requirement of hours in the field would assure that those candidates who have not worked in a school setting are prepared for their student teaching experience.
2. Assessment indicates what is valuable. The student teaching evaluation addresses the state requirements of student teaching. Evaluating the four strands of the Education Department Mission would strengthen the overall assessment of both student teacher and program.

**Recommendation: Standard Met**  
**Corrections to the Self Study: None**