

# Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at

## National University Professional Services Division June 2022

### Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **National University**. The report of the team presents the findings based upon a thorough review of all available and relevant institutional and program documentation as well as all supporting evidence including interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, a recommendation of **Accreditation with a 7<sup>th</sup> Year Report** is made for the institution.

### Common Standards and Program Standard Decisions For All Commission Approved Programs Offered by the Institution

Common Standards	Status
1) Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	<b>Met</b>
2) Candidate Recruitment and Support	<b>Met</b>
3) Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	<b>Met</b>
4) Continuous Improvement	<b>Met</b>
5) Program Impact	<b>Met</b>

### Program Standards

Programs	Total Program Standards	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject, with Intern	6	5	1	0
Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities, with Intern	22	22	0	0
Preliminary Education Specialist: Moderate/Severe Disabilities, with Intern	24	24	0	0
Preliminary Administrative Services, with Intern	9	9	0	0
Clear Administrative Services	5	3	2	0
Preliminary Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling, with Intern	32	32	0	0
Preliminary Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology, with Intern	27	27	0	0

The site visit was completed in accordance with the procedures approved by the Committee on Accreditation regarding the activities of the site visit:

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Institutional Documentation and Evidence
- Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team
- Intensive Evaluation of Program Data
- Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

**California Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
Committee on Accreditation  
Accreditation Team Report**

**Institution:** National University

**Dates of Visit:** May 15-18, 2022

**Accreditation Team Recommendation:** Accreditation with a 7<sup>th</sup> Year Report

**Previous History of Accreditation Status**

<b>Accreditation Reports</b>	<b>Accreditation Status</b>
<a href="#">03/16/2014</a>	<a href="#">Accreditation with Stipulations</a>
<a href="#">03/10/2015</a>	<a href="#">Accreditation</a>

**Rationale:**

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation with a 7<sup>th</sup> Year Report** was based on a thorough review of all institutional and programmatic information and materials available prior to and during the accreditation site visit including interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, graduates, and local school personnel. The team obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgments about the professional education unit's operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation recommendation of **Accreditation with a 7<sup>th</sup> Year Report** for the institution was based upon the following:

Preconditions

All preconditions have been determined to be aligned.

Program Standards

All program standards for the Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject credential programs were **met** except for Program Standard 3: Clinical Practice which was **met with concerns**.

All program standards for the Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities and Moderate/Severe Disabilities credential programs were **met**.

All program standards for the Preliminary Administrative Services credential program were **met**.

All program standards for the Clear Administrative Services credential program were **met** except for Program Standard 3: Selection and Training of Coaches and Program Standard 4: Professional Learning which were **met with concerns**.

All program standards for the Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling and School Psychology credential programs were **met**.

#### Common Standards

All Common Standards have been found to be **met**.

#### Overall Recommendation

Given the above findings on preconditions, common standards, and program standards, the review team recommends an accreditation status of **Accreditation with a 7th Year report**. The review team recommends that the institution provide a 7th Year report within one year of the date of COA action to provide an update on those standards which were met with concerns.

In addition, staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- National University be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation once the Commission advances the institution from provisional approval to full approval status.
- National University be granted full approval in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to offer the following credential programs and to recommend candidates for the appropriate and related credentials upon satisfactorily completing all requirements.

Preliminary Multiple Subject, with Intern

Preliminary Single Subject, with Intern

Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities, with Intern

Preliminary Education Specialist: Moderate/Severe Disabilities, with Intern

Preliminary Administrative Services, with Intern

Clear Administrative Services

Preliminary Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling, with Intern

Preliminary Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology, with Intern

## Accreditation Team

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### Staff to the Visit:

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## Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Submission  
Program Review Submission  
Common Standards Addendum  
Program Review Addendum  
Course Syllabi and Course of Study  
Candidate Advisement Materials  
Accreditation Website  
Faculty Vitae  
Candidate Files  
Faculty Handbook  
Assessment Forms  
Professional Development Information

Clinical Practice Handbooks  
Assessment Materials  
Candidate Handbooks  
Survey Results  
Performance Expectation Materials  
Precondition Responses  
TPA Results and Analysis  
APA Results and Analysis  
Examination Results  
Accreditation Data Dashboard

### Interviews Conducted

<b>Interviewees</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Candidates	129
Completers	47
Employers	19
Institutional Administration	14
Department Chairs	4
Program Coordinators	7
Faculty	70
Performance Assessment Coordinators	10
Assessment Committee	2
Clinical Practice Coordinators	10
University Support Providers	28
Site Support Providers	22
Credential Analysts and Staff	17
Advisory Board Members	24
Student Success Team	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>412</b>

*Note: In some cases, individuals were interviewed more than once due to multiple roles. Thus, the number of interviews conducted exceeds the actual number of individuals interviewed.*

## Background Information

National University (NU) was founded in 1971 and is dedicated to meeting the needs of adult learners by providing accessible and achievable higher education opportunities. NU educates students in the United States and around the world, and is the largest private nonprofit university based in San Diego. NU is also a top educator of U.S. military personnel. As a pioneer in online education, NU has offered online classes for over 20 years, as well as classes on-site at many locations across California and at select military bases nationwide. Since its founding, National University has grown to over 25,000 students and 180,000 alumni worldwide, many of whom serve in helping industries such as education, health care, cybersecurity, and law and criminal justice. Student demographics are 40% White, 33% Hispanic or Latino, 10% Black or African American, 9% Asian, 1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific islander, <1% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 6% Two or more races. National University is the flagship institution of the National University System. Affiliates include Northcentral University, City University of Seattle, and for pre-college, National University Virtual High School.

## Education Unit

The Sanford College of Education offers programs for educators leading to California teaching and services credentials, as well as bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees, and is the largest unit at NU. The unit is organized into five departments and two centers. The unit currently has 60 full-time faculty and 865 active adjunct faculty. In the past two years the unit hired four full-time faculty, a clinical practice director, and 298 adjunct faculty.

A unique design feature to meet adult learner needs is the almost universal one course per month format employed by NU. Across educator preparation programs, most courses are only offered online. The institution and unit have adopted technologies and processes to deliver programs to every region of California and courses that are coordinated to be consistent across multiple sections. Additionally, an infrastructure is operated to manage large numbers of clinical practice placements and make use of technology to supervise candidates.

**Table 1: Program Review Status**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Number of Program Completers (2020-21)</b>	<b>Number of Candidates Enrolled (2021-22)</b>
Preliminary Multiple Subject, with Intern	531	1928
Preliminary Single Subject, with Intern	598	1759
Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities, with Intern	391	1383
Preliminary Education Specialist: Moderate/Severe Disabilities, with Intern	189	614
Preliminary Administrative Services, with Intern	240	327
Clear Administrative Services	63	84

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2020-21)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2021-22)
Preliminary Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling, with intern	126	660
Preliminary Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology, with intern	88	484

**The Visit**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this site visit was conducted virtually. The team and institutional partners were interviewed via technology.

The visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols.



## **PRECONDITION FINDINGS**

After review of all relevant preconditions for this institution, all have been determined to be **met**.

## **PROGRAM REPORTS**

### **Preliminary Multiple Subject with Intern Preliminary Single Subject with Intern**

#### Program Design

The Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject credential program at NU is the largest in the state and offers multiple pathways as part of the undergraduate program or part of the graduate program. Candidates may enroll in the traditional student teacher pathway starting as an undergraduate or add the credential as a graduate student. Candidates may also enroll in the intern option and serve as the teacher of record. The chair of the Teacher Education department oversees the faculty of teacher education, the program, and collaborates with the College of Letters and Science on the blended bachelor's program.

The Teacher Education department chair works with the dean and associate dean of the Sanford College of Education (SCOE), director of credentials, and the director of clinical practice. The program is supported by the credential office which recommends all candidates to the Commission. The dean works closely with senior leadership of the institution to provide support for all credential programs. The Teacher Education department chair oversees the faculty and program leads for the credential program. Program leads work together with full-time and adjunct faculty to ensure consistency and alignment throughout all the courses.

Consistent opportunities for communication occur within the credential program. Regular meetings are held with the director, program leads, and academic directors. Faculty mentioned regular meetings to discuss program needs and changes, and meetings with adjunct faculty to ensure program alignment. Candidates are encouraged to express any concerns first with their instructor before moving on to the program lead, the program director, and then ultimately the department chair. Regional clinical practice coordinators (RCPCs) hold regular meetings with university supervisors (university support providers or USPs at National) to share information about program updates and changes. USPs then meet regularly with their candidates during their monthly meetings. Interviews with district and community partners indicated their appreciation of NU's collaboration and advocacy to implement and design specific programs to fulfill their regional needs. Interviews with constituency groups illustrated a theme of collaboration and a genuine concern for candidate success. Opportunities for collaboration across and within partnering groups led to the sharing of program information, best practices, and ideas.

Courses in the program are in four groups: bachelor's foundational courses, master's foundational courses, methods courses, and clinical practice/student teaching courses. The final

course sequence is where the TPA is completed. Candidates also complete their student teaching while concurrently enrolled in their clinical practice courses and seminar courses.

Due to the nature of providing coursework online, program delivery did not require changes over the last two years due to the COVID pandemic school closures. Provisions were made however to incorporate the new literacy TPEs. The CalTPA was mapped back into the Inspired Teaching and Learning (ITL) program and the CalTPA elements were embedded in coursework. Innovative features such as SimSchool and GoReact have been added to courses. Diversity, equity, and inclusion practices were embedded into each course instead of being housed in a single course; and social emotional learning (SEL) was embedded into all courses. Interviews with candidates confirmed that they appreciated this approach to SEL and were able to immediately apply it in their student teaching. Candidates felt that the SimSchool simulations were extremely helpful in giving them tools to recognize student needs and student behaviors.

The credential specialist supervisors referred to Covid-19 related emergency waivers that were available to candidates during school closures. The team confirmed that a verification process has been implemented to ensure that only candidates who are eligible for Covid-19 related waivers are receiving them.

#### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

Candidates may enroll in the credential program as undergraduates or at the graduate level. Candidates at the undergraduate level for the Preliminary Multiple Subject credential are enrolled in the B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies program, or the B.A. in Early Childhood Development. These candidates complete five foundation courses that build their knowledge base then move into the rest of the credential program. Candidates wishing to add a credential at the graduate level must hold an undergraduate degree or equivalent and are eligible to enroll in the credential program.

The foundational level courses include topics such as becoming an effective teacher, understanding the teaching performance expectations, becoming familiar with the CalTPA, recognizing the importance of SEL, diversity, equity, and lesson planning. Interviews with candidates indicated that they appreciated the detail to which they were required to collect information about their students in order to write a lesson plan. Faculty spoke about the intentional alignment with fieldwork and clinical practice built into their courses. They mentioned practices that are taught in their courses that can then be implemented in the school placement or clinical practice. Assignments include conducting running records, getting feedback from students, and learning about the school environment. Candidates appreciated the sequence of courses and course assignments. They believed the assignments were meaningful and were immediately applicable to their student teaching.

The Commission's Completer Survey illustrates that over 80% of the single subject program completers believed they were well/very well prepared to meet the instructional needs of English learners, higher than the state average. Among the multiple subject program

completers, over 85% believed they were well/very well prepared to meet the instructional needs of English learners.

Candidates also spoke highly of the preparation they receive to work with students with disabilities. Simulation activities and the preparation for the TPA provided them with the capacity to support these students in their own classrooms. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the multiple subject candidates felt the program prepared them well/very well to identify and address special learning needs with appropriate teaching strategies, higher than the state average; 78% of the single subject candidates felt they were well/very well prepared.

Field placements are selected based on their diversity, location, and availability of qualified mentor teachers. Candidates in the multiple subject program have two school placements in diverse settings as student teachers, at the discretion of each school district. Multiple subject candidates may have two placements in different grade levels and single subject candidates have one placement with multiple preparations. Interns have one classroom assignment.

Regional Clinical Practice Coordinators (RCPCs) develop partnerships with school districts in their region to secure diverse placements with qualified site support provider's (SSP) or mentor teachers. The RCPCs maintain relationships with district personnel, school site administrators, and experienced site support providers. RCPCs also work closely with other RCPCs in different regions to share ideas and practices. The RCPCs oversee a group of USPs who supervise candidates in their student teaching. The intentional connection between fieldwork and coursework is evident through the course matrix, interview with faculty, and candidates. Interviews with faculty indicated extensive collaboration between course leads and adjuncts which resulted in consistency among each section of the course taught. Candidates described appreciating the sequence of courses as they felt it allowed them to build on the skills and knowledge learned in previous courses.

Candidates are assigned a student teaching placement by the RCPC and assigned a USP and SSP. The student teaching placement takes place over two cycles of nine weeks each for a total of 18 weeks. Intern teachers are assigned to their classroom as the teacher of record for the year by the partner district. The USP sets up an initial meeting with the candidate and the site support provider to review expectations of the candidate during the student teaching experience. New site providers complete eight hours of professional development for mentor teachers and all mentor teachers are provided two hours specific to program requirements. Candidates are formally observed by their USP approximately every three weeks. Observations consist of the candidates submitting a lesson plan for feedback then teaching and recording the lesson which is uploaded to GoReact. The candidate tags the video for the TPEs, and the university support provider also tags the video to provide feedback.

Candidates complete their CalTPA during their student teaching placement. They are enrolled in a course to support their progress on the TPA. Course instructors support candidates by reviewing the handbook, the rubrics, and providing formative feedback. Course instructors also

provide remediation for candidates who do not pass. Course instructors are given flexibility to collaborate with each other and are encouraged to share slides, videos, and information.

Toward the end of their student teaching experience, candidates complete the induction development plan (IDP) and attend a conference with their USP and their SSP. This conference consists of discussing the candidates' areas of strength and goals for each TPE. The candidates are aware that the IDP is a portable document to be shared with their future induction program. Candidates are made aware of the IDP requirement at the beginning of their school placement by their USP.

The credential specialist supervisors shared the detailed process that is required for candidates to file for their credential. Information about required assessments such as the RICA or TPA is emailed to candidates along with a detailed checklist. The credential specialist then verifies that these requirements are completed before recommending candidates for their credential. Towards the end of clinical practice, student teachers or interns are sent an email with remaining documentation that needs to be submitted in order to be recommended for a credential. While the majority of candidates shared their satisfaction with the timeliness in which they learned about these requirements, some candidates expressed frustration with response time to their inquiries.

#### Assessment of Candidates

Candidates in the program are regularly assessed on their progress toward the TPEs. During coursework they completed assignments that were aligned to the TPEs and during clinical practice they regularly submitted a running record of their own progress toward the TPEs.

Candidates must also successfully complete both cycles of the CalTPA. Candidates are supported through the TPA process in their clinical practice seminar courses. During the seminar courses candidates are introduced to the handbooks and the rubrics. Candidates mentioned feeling supported and well prepared to complete the required activities. Faculty mentioned designing tasks in their courses to provide formative feedback and experiences toward meeting TPA competencies. While the majority of candidates enthusiastically talked about the support and guidance by their USPs and their SSPs, a small group shared the need for clear communication between the program and supervisors. Some candidates, USPs, and SSPs felt that more information could have been shared about program requirements and assessments, especially regarding the preparation needed to successfully complete the TPA. Staff especially felt the need for more professional development on the TPA requirements, timeline, and elements to support their candidates more effectively, especially with the recent changes to the TPA. Through interviews with staff and students, there is evidence that this is not occurring consistently.

Candidates in the program must complete several assessments to be eligible to apply for their preliminary credential. Prior to Covid-19 emergency flexibility, candidates were required to complete their subject matter and RICA exams prior to enrolling in student teaching. This flexibility was only issued to candidates who could provide evidence of canceled exams or

testing centers. The credential specialists have a thorough procedure for verifying eligibility for interns and candidates who have completed their requirements.

### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, graduates, intern teachers, faculty employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject credential program except for the following:

#### **Standard 3: Clinical Practice** – Met with Concerns

The team was unable to confirm that the program consistently provides orientation to all program and district-employed supervisors related to the program’s expectations, and assures that supervisors are knowledgeable about the CalTPA.

#### **Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities with Intern Preliminary Education Specialist: Moderate/Severe Disabilities with Intern**

### Program Design

A Preliminary Education Specialist credential with options in Mild/Moderate Disabilities and Moderate/Severe Disabilities is offered and both options include a traditional student teaching and intern pathway. The programs are led by a team that includes the department chair and a Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Severe academic program director (APD). There are regular monthly and weekly meetings between the chair and APDs, and the APDs and course leads, to discuss such topics as course assignments, coordination issues, course problems, and how to improve courses. A major focus of discussions between the chair and APDs is program improvement and program and assessment data. They are currently discussing student dispositions and how to integrate topics such as professionalism, ethical behavior, and decision-making into coursework.

Evidence from interviews with students and completers confirmed that students’ progress through the program is both self-monitored and monitored by credential advisors. All candidates begin with enrollment in a four-week course to orient candidates to specific program requirements and components. Once candidates submit evidence of their basic skills and subject matter competencies, they matriculate and enroll in core coursework and then advanced coursework including clinical practice.

The structure of coursework consists of a prescribed sequence of 14 courses including two clinical practice experiences as a traditional student teacher or intern. The orientation class is followed by six courses that address universal TPEs and are shared with candidates in the general education programs. Another three courses address special education requirements that candidates in both options take together to learn about special education law, behavioral and social emotional supports, and language/literacy. Candidates in each option separately take two specialized methods courses that address program specific standards unique to their

credential. All courses include four hours of field experience that expose candidates to student diversity (i.e., ability, grade, cultural, and socio-economic diversity.) All course assignments have a rubric to guide the grading process and provide evidence of candidate progress and development. After required coursework is completed, student teachers enroll in 16 weeks of clinical practice through two supervised placements in their program area. Interns complete 120 hours of pre-service coursework and enroll in eight months of clinical practice through two supervised placements of 16 weeks each in their program area. Interns complete required coursework concurrently with their clinical practice.

Program leadership reported that the language and literacy classes were revised to be more aligned with the RICA exam and increase the rate of students passing the exam. Additionally, faculty have worked together to integrate the California Dyslexia Guidelines into program courses and reviewed courses to align with the Education Specialist CalTPA proposed essential questions. Candidates participated in the initial piloting of the Education Specialist CalTPA in preparation for its requirement by the Commission in the new education specialist credentials programs beginning fall 2022.

The Education Specialist program has an advisory board that meets quarterly. Those involved include representatives from school districts, county offices of education, SELPAs, University Support Providers (USPs), and current and former candidates who can speak with administrators and faculty from the SCOE. Advisory board members indicated that at meetings, their active involvement is solicited through questions geared to improve the program. One board member indicated communication lines are open and board members can email administrators between meetings when they have questions. At a recent meeting, they had the opportunity to review grading data on GoReact from supervisors. Since GoReact only recently has been adopted, this was their first opportunity to look at the data. They also reviewed a document on professional dispositions and discussed how the document might be revised. One member stated, "As a supervisor I've seen that input comes full circle into the forms or guidance we've gotten later." Another source of input comes from adjunct faculty who are encouraged to provide feedback to course leads to ensure instructional rigor and fidelity. Interview comments from adjunct faculty were somewhat inconsistent, however; some reported frustration that their voices were not always heard. Student feedback is gathered through course evaluation surveys that are emailed to students toward the end of each class to hear about their experiences. One student indicated the survey includes an open-ended question where they can share anything else they would like to offer.

#### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

Documentation and evidence presented showed candidates in both the Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Severe credential options complete the same sequence of 14 courses but differ with regard to the program specific methods courses and their clinical experiences. All courses include four hours of initial field experience that exposes candidates to student diversity and provide opportunities for observations in varied classroom settings, interviews with constituency groups (i.e., teachers, administrators, parents, itinerant district personnel), and work with small groups of students. Evidence confirmed that the teacher education and special

education departments worked together to conduct a gap analysis to align fieldwork experiences with courses focused on universal TPEs. The special education department then used this model to ensure that diverse fieldwork experiences were aligned with specialized methods courses and included course assignments and activities such as case study analysis, learning maps, infographics, IRIS modules, asset identity activities, readings, class discussions, SimSchool simulations with partners, etc.

Interviews with candidates and completers confirmed that while enrolled in the special education law class, they learned to write IEPs and then during student teaching and clinical experiences, candidates have opportunities to practice writing IEP goals and participate in IEP meetings. In addition, candidate interviews confirmed that during clinical practice, they participated in assessing students, and planning and teaching lessons, managing classroom behavior, and supporting English learners. Evidence was provided that candidates complete several assignments to specifically address standards related to supporting English learners across various classes. For example, candidates complete a learning map in which they gather info on students' English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) levels, present levels, proficiency areas and prior knowledge. They also complete an assessment in a weekly language/literacy grid that examines academic language, vocabulary, and writing.

Student teacher placements are made by regional clinical practice coordinators (RCPCs), but interns do their clinical practice in a school site that has hired them. RCPCs must approve the site according to Commission parameters. Some student teachers reported having difficulty getting a school site assigned due to a lack of available placement sites. RCPCs are located across the state and reported to be a very collaborative group. They meet monthly and even share placements when one is having difficulty finding a site for a student.

A USP is assigned to candidates from both pathways – student teachers and interns – and provides candidates with evaluative feedback related to their performance in the classroom. For interns, the USP conducts at least two formal observations every four months and provides feedback and ongoing support related to their performance in the classroom. A district employed site support provider (SSP) also provides supervision and support. Traditional candidates are formally observed by the USP at least two times during each of their eight-week fieldwork experiences (four times over 16 weeks) and receive formal feedback after each observation as well as ongoing support. Student teachers are placed with a mentor teacher and a district SSP who also observes student teachers at least two times during each of their two eight-week fieldwork experiences and provides feedback to candidates after each observation as well as ongoing support. When interviewed, both student teachers and interns confirmed that they are in contact with their SSP and USP as often as needed. They email and call whenever a question or problem arises, and their supervisors respond quickly. The Fresno Residency program in which NU is a partner is especially responsive to queries by residents and provides an intensive system of support for candidates assigned to the Fresno Unified School District. During interviews, SSPs indicated that they wanted more information as to what content and assessments candidates are learning about in their courses so they could provide

opportunities in the classroom setting for the interns and student teachers to implement the practices.

During the first or second month of clinical practice, the candidate and USP develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) using the candidate's self-assessment and observations. Within 48 hours after each observation, the USP completes a clinical practice video observation rubric and reviews it with the candidate. The first rubric serves as formative assessment; the second rubric serves as a summative assessment. After the second observation, the USP meets with the candidate in collaboration with the SSP and reviews progress toward the goals of the IDP, classroom teaching performance, and professional responsibilities. At the end of the first clinical practice course, the USP reviews the candidate's initial self-evaluation using NU's professional disposition form. During interviews with student teachers and interns, they reported that USPs conferred with the SSPs regularly about student performance in the classroom as part of the summative and formative assessments. In addition to formal feedback based on the observations/rubric, student teachers and interns emphasized the responsiveness of USPs to return emails, texts, and calls when questions or problems arose. From interviews with RCPCs and SSPs, several from both groups stated that they could use additional training from the program.

#### Assessment of Candidates

Candidates learn in coursework at the start of the program how to self-monitor their progress using the Blackboard learning management system where they can view their grades and see specific feedback from instructors. Faculty described surrounding candidates with a system of support if they are found to be at risk. Adjunct faculty are trained to be proactive in identifying students who are struggling even after the first week (e.g., if assignments are not turned in, attendance is lacking). They contact students to ascertain what the problem is and issue a candidate progress alert to notify the Student Support Team (SST). The team meets bimonthly and reviews student performance. Each team member is assigned a set of students to follow and if identified at risk, the student is linked to relevant university resources (e.g., writing center, wellness center). Most candidates interviewed noted that their advisors were easily accessible and responded to emails; however, feedback from some candidates was inconsistent and several candidates and completers reported problems communicating with a consistent advisor.

Each content and clinical practice course within the program is designed with course learning outcomes (CLO) that are aligned to the program learning outcomes (PLO) and Teacher Performance Expectations (TPE). Interviewed faculty reported that the CLOs are aligned to assignments in courses and each assignment has a rubric that evaluates mastery of the assignment/competencies. All instructors have been trained to use the course grading rubrics which comprise data for program assessment. SCOE has a highly developed assessment program in which student and program performance is assessed annually and summarized in a Program Assessment Report (PAR) that is compiled by the academic program directors and submitted each May. Faculty from different departments review the annual PAR to validate the



analysis and findings/recommendations and program funding is derived from program improvement based on the data.

## Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, graduates, intern teachers, faculty, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities and Moderate/Severe Disabilities Programs.

### **Preliminary Administrative Services with Intern**

#### Program Design

Document review and site visit interviews confirmed that the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential Program (PASC) meets Commission program standards. Candidates are systematically prepared and supported to meet the California Administrator Content Expectations (CACE) and California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPE). Specifically, the PASC program prepares administrators with “the goal of conveying a comprehensive, developmental and collaborative approach to educational leadership and organizational theory, research, and practice focused on current educational leadership and management infrastructure concepts and studies.”

The PASC Program is housed in the Department of Educational Leadership within SCOE and led by an academic program director who reports to the department chair. Course leads maintain consistency across multiple sections of each course. Full-time faculty and many adjunct faculty work in the program. Faculty can recommend veteran and experienced administrators from the field for consideration for future faculty positions. An interview with program leaders relayed that there is continuing focus and effort on bringing diverse representation to the faculty and staff.

Documents and interviews confirmed that there is an open two-way system of communication providing a consistent pathway for all participating groups to have opportunities for dialog and feedback. Recorded faculty meetings and links for participant orientations are examples of accessibility to information. Candidates are provided with detailed directions in the handbook for ways to contact faculty and the program director. Candidates and faculty, as well as employers and advisory board members, relayed that communication and support from program directors has been exemplary. Regular monthly and quarterly meetings and weekly emails consistently share information and seek feedback for program improvement. All interviewees expressed that there is an open communication environment and responses to any inquiry are made within a day. Faculty and the program director attend multiple regularly scheduled meetings each month to discuss program updates, CalAPA support, and candidate meetings. All interviewees expressed the appreciation and gratitude for the availability of the program director and faculty, and the direct support they provide.

PASC program courses integrate learning and fieldwork and are offered online. The internship option requires two additional 2.25 quarter unit courses that provide extra support for the administrative intern. No significant changes have been made over the past two years as the virtual (online) structure was established before the COVID pandemic.

The PASC program has multiple ways to collect input. Interviews confirmed that input is gathered regularly. Candidates complete end of course and end of program surveys as well as the Commission's Completer Survey. Results impact the adaptations and differentiation for candidates, and program improvements. The program also reviews data from candidate formative and summative assessments and uses the university's program assessment review process for improving. Additionally, candidates said they were able to contact faculty or the program director to provide input.

The program has an advisory board made up of community members outside of the institution. Advisory members reported that they meet quarterly and focus on topics such as equity and diversity, equity capacity building, and recruitment of diverse candidates. Advisory members told the interviewer that they are included in conversations about, and actively working on program developments. They are highly satisfied with communications, quick response time to questions and data inquiries, and input to the agenda. The program director is highly accessible, collaborative, and supportive of the advisory board and their participation. Advisory members report they have ample opportunity to provide feedback through surveys, emails, and meetings. A review of the Commission Completer Survey showed the PASC program received an overall very positive response to program components. In interviews, faculty and employers identified support for candidates, faculty, and partners as a program strength.

#### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

A review of program documents, course materials, resources, and interviews with the program director and faculty showed that the CACE and CAPE are the foundational knowledge and skills for coursework, fieldwork, collaboration, and support. The sequence of courses is designed to move candidates from theory to practice with the goal of preparing tomorrow's administrators for TK-12 settings. Fieldwork, including the CalAPA and end of course assessment provide opportunities to demonstrate understanding and competency on each CAPE. Interviews with program leadership confirmed that the program focuses on an equity lens for candidate development. Introduction of the CalAPA Cycle 1 near the beginning of the program lends itself to establishing this lens so that candidates view data and understand needs in the learning environment. The program is part of a Wallace Foundation funded project that is affording an opportunity to increase the ribbon of equity throughout courses. Throughout the program the fieldwork log drives further discussion, promotes more investigation, and fosters reflection as candidates develop their leadership and equity lens.

Program documents, faculty, and candidates confirmed intentional connections between courses and the CalAPA. CalAPA requirements are embedded in coursework. Preparation for the CalAPA cycles is assessed formatively through peer review, skills practice, and instructor support. Weekly CalAPA support sessions are offered for candidates to ask questions and receive help. Candidates indicated they can schedule office hour meetings with faculty and the program director for feedback on submissions. Candidates reported that program content and delivery were meaningful and practical.

### Assessment of Candidates

The PASC program utilizes a multifaceted assessment plan that yields formative and summative data on individual candidate progress and program efficacy. Course learning objectives are assessed on assignments, quizzes, term papers, class presentations, discussion board threads, and written reports. Course syllabi show that formative assessment is woven through the program with interactive content, the CAPE fieldwork log, and the personal leadership portfolio created by each candidate. Candidates also complete the candidate disposition self-assessment of their leadership skills and development. It fosters self-reflection of current practice and future application.

In interviews candidates confirmed they were assessed through fieldwork assignments and end-of-course signature assignments. Candidates also complete the three cycles of the CalAPA, demonstrating abilities in data analysis for equity learning environments, facilitation of professional learning communities through a defined problem of practice, implementation of a research-based strategy, and instructional leadership and coaching support of teachers.

On completion of all program and Commission requirements, the candidate and a credential department specialist complete an exit checklist. The credential specialist verifies completion of all requirements through a final audit and an online recommendation is submitted to the Commission.

### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, graduates, faculty, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Preliminary Administrative Services credential program.

## **Clear Administrative Services**

### Program Design

A thorough review of the Clear Administrative Services Credential Program (CASC) confirmed it is a program designed to support new administrators beginning their careers. Program exhibits showed that activities and requirements are designed to advance candidate knowledge and skills related to the CPSEL and to help them become effective administrators.

The CASC Program is housed in the Department of Educational Leadership within SCOE and led by an academic program director who reports to the department chair. Interviews confirmed that the program director provides course instruction for a candidate cohort during each year of the program. Additionally, there is one full-time faculty, one associate faculty, and approximately twenty adjunct faculty who serve as course instructors.

Documents and interviews with the program director and other faculty noted that there are five one-hour online meetings for course instructors each year. Meetings use an open input structure so that all may add to the agenda for discussion topics. Course instructors maintain

open lines of communication with site-based coaches for review of weekly coaching notes that are submitted at the end of each month/course. This allows instructors to keep informed on coaching sessions between candidates and coaches. The program director is also available to meet with coaches and candidates, as needed.

Candidates interviewed confirmed that communication occurs frequently, is timely and very supportive. Coaches, course instructors and other faculty are easily accessible and respond quickly when candidates have questions or concerns. Several CASC candidates communicated that getting started in the program was a little unorganized, but once fully enrolled, the communication has been effective. Candidates were asked about communication on, and their understanding of, the program requirements. Responses varied, showing inconsistencies with understanding of program requirements. Some candidates reported that at the beginning of their program they were unclear of items and evidence that they needed to continually gather. However, later in the program they became more aware of how to complete the digital portfolio and collection of evidence made more sense. Candidates and coaches confirmed that there is an expectation to meet on a regular basis of once a week for at least an hour, throughout the program.

Throughout the program, the candidate is supported by two types of coaches – a site-based coach who provides local coaching of the candidate and a course instructor who meets with the coach and candidate about once a month for an additional hour. The site-based coach is responsible for providing 30 to 40 hours of one-to-one coaching annually based on candidate needs. The course instructor provides 1-2 hours monthly. Site coaches indicated that they meet in-person or virtually once a week with candidates and are available for additional calls, texts, and emails as needed. Coaching sessions are tracked through the submission of coaching logs that are submitted at the end of each course.

Candidates stated that coaching sessions were supportive and helpful. Many indicated that interactions were comfortable and created safe environments for sharing. Coach and mentor were used interchangeably throughout the interview. Candidates also expressed that coaches helped them align activities and projects to specific California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSEL). Candidates commented that through reflection they could see their own growth as it applied to their job responsibilities.

Interviews with candidates, completers, and coaches indicated there are multiple opportunities to provide input on curriculum and program operations. This is accomplished through end of course surveys, regular communication via email, and an online platform. Candidates relayed that open lines of communication were available, especially through their NU instructor.

The CASC program assesses the quality of its services through several data collection activities, including Commission Completer Surveys, local satisfaction surveys of all groups, retention surveys of past participants, and candidate portfolios with evidence of the CPSEL. Responses to the Commission Completer Survey were very positive. The interview with the advisory board included a description of how results of these data sets are reviewed to determine what is

working and how recommendations are made for further reflection and discussion. Candidates also confirmed these structures offer opportunities to provide feedback on the program and their coaches. Several candidates commented that the program requested authentic feedback frequently.

Documents and interviews with site-based coaches and course instructors revealed some recent modifications. Obstacles to attending group meetings with course instructors and coaches have been rectified by some course instructors observing coaching sessions with candidates, thereby creating open conversations about all aspects of the program. To increase communication and professional development for candidates, course instructors and the program lead have developed modules of specific coaching topics for site coaches to review and discuss with course instructors during their one-to-one sessions during each course. Adjustments to the curriculum content are made as needed. For example, recent state education funding formula changes required modifications to reference materials.

#### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

The CASC course of study is based on theories supported by research described in program materials and confirmed in interviews conducted during the site visit. The schedule of four courses, each four months in duration, integrates individualized coaching and professional development assignments. Each candidate develops a unique Individualized Induction Plan (IIP) for each CPSEL. Candidates experience a sequence of activities that help them process new ideas through dialogue with others, examine unique contexts of their job assignment, apply learning to their leadership practice, and reflect on results. The coach and candidate use the IIP for discussion, further growth, and reflection in their development of the six CPSEL. The IIPs are used for ongoing assessment.

In interviews candidates described developing their IIPs. Goals are job embedded and then CPSEL elements are chosen by candidates for deeper investigation with identified criteria on implementation results. The IIP is a living document, reviewed at scheduled times throughout the program so candidates may make needed changes for their individual growth. Interviews verified the ongoing collaborative approach to developing and adjusting the IIP over the course of the program to support the candidate's growth and development through weekly work with the candidate's assigned coach. Participants shared they were allowed to develop their own plan with support from their coach which allows them to make the program about their own growth and development.

Professional learning is also self-selected and aligned to candidate's current needs related to their roles. The program director indicated that several opportunities for professional learning are offered through free webinars, lectures, and an array of articles and videos. Course instructors and the program director communicate these offerings in class and via email. Course instructors clarified and documentation confirmed that professional learning is a focus of two of the courses, and completion of those professional learning assignments are aligned with the professional learning hours standard.

Coach selection criteria and minimum qualifications are listed in the candidate handbook and coaching guidebook. Coaches are recruited with input from candidates who are encouraged to recommend a potential coach with whom they are familiar, have respect for, and who is a veteran administrator. The program director stated that training and professional learning for coaches is part of the structure of the program. Induction coaches confirmed that they are given access to ongoing professional learning through coaching meetings, scheduled five times throughout the year. Coaches reported that they find the professional learning opportunities very useful. Meetings are recorded for later viewing by coaches unable to attend. However, coaches were not able to confirm that an initial standard coaching training opportunity was offered or required of them. Coaches indicated that they had years of experience as administrators, and this was considered part of their training. Coaches indicated that materials and resources for professional learning are provided via email. Some expressed that it would be helpful to have a coach hub or resource portal where coaching materials and information could be accessed and revisited when needed.

### Assessment of Candidates

A review of the Clear Credential Candidate handbook showed that candidate competency and program completion are assessed throughout the program. Assessment is centered in candidate portfolios through a series of induction activities, current work activities, and self-assessments. Candidates indicated that they saw their IIP as a tool for self-assessment, but there was no evidence through interviews or documentation that candidates are asked to complete an initial induction assessment of the CPSEL upon entering the program. Candidates stated that they did not complete an initial induction assessment but did receive a CPSEL document to review with their coach. Candidates relayed that the completion of the benchmark assessment is an assignment in one of the four courses.

Candidates participate in an end-of-program CPSEL reflection and the digital reflective portfolio presentation to demonstrate their growth and learning to the course instructor and the site coach. Candidates select activities and develop products and research procedures to successfully address each of the six CPSEL. According to program leadership interviews, all these elements are interconnected, designed to ensure that candidates leave the program with an understanding of their past growth as well as areas for continuing growth in the future. A credential checklist is used for each candidate to ensure that all program requirements have been met. Application for the credential is processed through the Credentialing Department by a credential analyst once all requirements are fulfilled.

### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, graduates, intern teachers, faculty employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Clear Administrative Services credential program except for the following:

**Standard 3: Selection and Training of Coaches** – Met with Concerns

The team was unable to confirm that the induction program selects coaches using well-defined criteria and that they receive initial training prior to being assigned to a candidate.

**Standard 4D: Assessment** – Met with Concerns

The team found no evidence of candidates completing an initial induction assessment designed to measure a candidate’s entry level competence in each of the program selected outcomes from Standard 5 as baseline information that can be compared in future assessments to determine the candidate’s growth over time and overall competency.

**Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling with Intern**  
**Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology with Intern**

**Program Design**

The Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) School Counseling and School Psychology programs at National University are also housed in the SCOE. Beginning in the summer of 2020, these two programs and the Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) program became their own department. This statewide program is primarily offered using an online platform with the exception of the practicum and field experience. Leadership within the program includes a department chair and two program directors. Program responsibilities include gathering program data, ensuring alignment with state and national standards, enabling multiple channels of communication between students, faculty, program leads, administrators, university-based supervisors, field-based supervisors, credential specialists, partners, employers, and advisory board members. There was overwhelming evidence across each group interviewed that the communication system is working well, and each feels knowledgeable about the operational factors embedded within and across the university. This is largely due to the multiple channels through which communication flows. These channels include the dean’s newsletter, committees, adjunct meetings, open forum sessions in town halls, the use of the Brightspace system, and meetings between and within each constituent group.

Based on evidence from interviews with students, program directors and credential specialists, there are multiple pathways available for students to pursue. The school counseling and school psychology programs are offered as either a Master of Science degree with PPS credential, or a PPS credential only (for those already in possession of a discipline-related master’s degree). In other examples, students reported that they previously earned a teaching credential, taught for many years, and have returned to NU to complete the requirements for the PPS credential. The majority of students who enter these programs pursue the combined M.S. degree and the PPS credential. Program standards for both the school counseling and school psychology programs are extensive. To ensure integrity with the standards, evidence supports the narrative that courses in each program are aligned and scaffolded across the entirety of the program.

Communication is key in this statewide program and the credential specialists have an essential role in communicating with students from their entry and at various points throughout the program. For example, it was reported that students receive a welcome letter informing them



of the orientation to the program. Evidence revealed that following an audit of the students' file, those approaching program completion are notified of any missing documentation that must be received before they can be recommended for the credential. Credential specialists are also available to respond to student questions of greater specificity than is usually answered by the academic advisor. It was reported that credential specialists engage in continuous improvement based on student indicators of what is needed to stay informed of the subtleties around the meeting of program objectives.

#### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

The programs have rolling admissions and use a cohort model. The structure of coursework includes the completion of 81.5 quarter units for the school counseling students, 90 quarter units for the school psychology students (well within the guidelines established by the Commission for PPS programs), offered in a four-week class session format for most courses. Evidence demonstrated that there are exceptions to this formatting when students are enrolled in their active research courses, assessment courses, as well as practicum, and field experience internships. Based on feedback from students, faculty, program supervisors, and site supervisors, these courses require eight-week sessions to satisfactorily complete all requirements.

#### **School Counseling**

As reported during interviews with program directors, students, faculty members, university supervisors, and site supervisors, students in the school counseling program who are seeking the Master of Science degree in School Counseling and the PPS credential, are prepared to meet the needs of PK-12<sup>th</sup> grade pupils in public schools by providing comprehensive school counseling practices across the three domains of school counseling, as referenced in the California Education Code 49600 as academic development, career development, and social/emotional development of the child. Students progress through 12 "core" counseling courses, engage in foundational coursework followed by research, and 100 hours of practicum, which is completed prior to beginning the 600 hours of supervised (university supervisors and site supervisors) field experience at two PK-12<sup>th</sup> grade levels. Interviews confirm that students must pass the CBEST exam prior to beginning the field experience.

The School Counseling program has made several significant changes over the recent two years. Interviews revealed that the hiring of additional adjunct professors and a statewide clinical practice coordinator has made the greatest impact on program efficiency. The clinical practice coordinator is now able to oversee all clinical practice activities of the students in the counseling program. Although NU offered many online courses pre-pandemic, it was reported that courses that had been offered in-person were shifted to accommodate the change from a synchronous to an asynchronous learning environment. Evidence supports the revision of the School Counseling Handbook, field experience forms, creation of rubrics as a means of assessing student progress, as well as embedding practicum requirements in multiple courses. To facilitate the increased autonomy of students' ability to stay aware of their progress through the course, the unit implemented the use of Time2Track, a system that students use to log their field experience hours. Interviews also indicate that the unit has developed a new program to

align with the Commission’s new School Counseling preconditions, program standards, and performance expectations.

### **School Psychology**

As reported during interviews with program directors, students, faculty members, university supervisors, and site supervisors, students in the school psychology program, who are seeking the Master of Science in School Psychology degree and the PPS Credential, are preparing to meet the needs of PK-12<sup>th</sup> grade pupils in public education with a robust preparation in areas that promote mental health, academic and social emotional development, and work with a diverse student body. Interviews confirm that students progress through 15 “core” school psychology courses and two research courses plus seminar and field experience/internship requirements. Students begin their preparation in foundational coursework followed by practicum, research, and 1200 hours of field experience at two PK-12<sup>th</sup> grade levels.

The School Psychology program has made several changes over the past two years. Interviews indicated that they have hired one full-time faculty member and additional adjunct faculty members. When the need presented itself as Covid-19 struck, the unit re-wrote courses to accommodate the change from a synchronous to an asynchronous format to adapt to an online modality as well as developed professional development opportunities while observing the Commission modifications affecting program candidates. Evidence based upon interviews with students and faculty support the change that created a School Psychology community using the Learning Management System platform to increase communication with all candidates as well as created a National University NASP student leader group. Additionally, courses were updated to match current content in the field. Electronic forms were created for the practicum and internship portions of the program, and they re-wrote the School Psychology Handbook. Interviews confirmed that the unit implemented the use of Time2Track, a system that students use to log their field experience hours. Interviews also indicated that they are in the process of developing a new program to meet the Commission’s new School Psychology preconditions, program standards, and performance expectations.

Interviews with constituency groups reveal that each program seeks input from of advisory board members who have an interest in ensuring success of the programs and the students it prepares for service in school communities statewide. There was a diversity among the board members from recent graduates to long-time practitioners. There was a consensus of opinion that National University is appreciative of the participation of its board members and welcomes any insights they provide during the multiple meetings they hold each year.

### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

Once admitted, School Counseling and School Psychology candidates are assigned a Lead Advisor with whom they work throughout the program. This relationship is developed early to establish clear lines of communication for the benefit of the candidate in these well-structured, intensive programs. Interviewees reported that they meet with the Program Leads several times throughout the program and are encouraged to contact them at any time questions arise. Interviewees also confirm feeling empowered through the use of program Handbooks, online

platforms including Brightspace, the Academic Advisement Report tab, and My Academic. Each is a resource that provides substantive program information and allows students to check their enrollment summary to remain aware of program requirements and monitor their progress toward program completion.

Students in the 81.5 quarter units School Counseling program is designed to grant its candidates the Master of Science in Educational Counseling and the Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Counseling from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). Evidence reviewed indicate that students must be admitted as a credential seeking candidate, successfully complete all coursework while maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA, Advancement to Candidacy, complete 100 hours of Practicum, seminar coursework, pass the CBEST, complete 600 hours of site-based field experience/internship at two grades levels between elementary, middle, and high school, and pass the PRAXIS exam. The course of study for school counseling students includes engaging in a curriculum aligned with the CTC 16 Generic Program Standards and the 17 School Counseling Specialization Standards. Inclusive of the field experience portion of those standards, students are supervised in the field experience by the site supervisor and the university supervisor. Students are expected to become increasingly involved in the field experience and directly engage with the delivery of services to P-12th grade students when perceived ready by the site supervisor and university supervisor, thereby demonstrating the application of knowledge and skills learned throughout the program.

The School Psychology program is designed to grant its candidates the Master of Science degree in School Psychology and supporting their application for PPS credential in School Psychology from the CTC. The course of study for School Psychology candidates includes the completion of 90 quarter units over a three-year program while engaged in curriculum designed by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

Students are also engaged in a curriculum aligned with the 16 CTC generic standards and the 11 School Psychology specialization standards. Interviews with students and site supervisors indicate that the practicum experience is largely observational at first with opportunities for increased involvement when perceived ready by the site supervisor. The 450-hour practicum experience exposes students to school site culture and responsibilities of the school psychologist and serves as preparation for the 1200 field experience/internship hours to follow. Students are to complete field experience hours at two different grade levels (primary and secondary).

During the field experience/internship, students perform the duties of the school psychologist and delivery of services to the P-12th grade students with increasing independence from the site supervisor. Interviews with program completers overwhelmingly confirmed that the coursework and instruction on how to administer assessments, helped prepared them for the internship, improving their competence and confidence. Interviewees also concur that the NU School Psychology program portfolio they developed to demonstrate work completed during practicum and field experience/internship, served two purposes. It improved their marketability for employment as they were hired immediately after graduation and allowed

them to submit the portfolio when applying to become a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSPP).

### Assessment of Candidates

Interviews with site supervisors, university support providers, students, and faculty affirm the layers of assessments central to the school counseling and school psychology program design. The programs each offer formative and summative assessments for the students in the form of course assignments, research projects, signature assignments, discussion boards, GoReact videos, psychoeducational reports, presentations, portfolios, quizzes, and PRAXIS exams. Program summary documents confirmed that new rubrics to improve assessment of the school counseling candidate's student progress have been developed over the past two years. These documents also confirm that school psychology students receive a performance assessment evaluation written by the site supervisor then provided to the university supervisor. Interviews with program directors also indicate that 90-plus percent of all students taking the PRAXIS exam pass it on the first attempt.

Students receive feedback on their assignments from faculty in each class they attend. Evidence received from students indicate that field experience/internship supervisors and university supervisors provide feedback to students based upon their performance during fieldwork and log sheets they submit with the compendium of field experience/internship hours listed. Interviews with faculty indicate that students are able to access their grades at any time using the Brightspace tool.

### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, graduates, intern teachers, faculty, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling and School Psychology credential programs.

### INSTITUTION SUMMARY

National University through its Sanford College of Education offers eight programs leading to California teaching and services credentials. The almost universal one-course-a-month structure employed by the university with most credential preparation courses online makes it possible to prepare candidates in all California counties. The education unit is the largest at National University and has a high level of institutional support that is directed at resourcing programs at sustainable levels and additionally supporting strategic moves to meet future needs and opportunities.

National University has the distinction of preparing more credential candidates than any other institution in the state. This is accomplished by a large faculty and staff within the unit, as well as through application of advanced technologies for delivering instruction, supervision, and candidate support. The unit has an extensive system of coordination to maintain consistency and quality. Areas of concern focus on adequacy of communication within two programs and clarity in determining candidate initial needs in one program. The unit is clearly responsive to feedback, and it is expected that they will respond within their typical value of collaboration with the Commission.

The education unit is well connected to school districts, and it partners with other institutions of higher education on important work in educator preparation through residency programs, social and emotional learning, and educational leadership. Innovative and successful grant writing supports some of these initiatives. Altogether, the unit is helping National University meet institutional goals of serving California well, increasing access to underserved populations, and transforming student outcomes that contribute to personal success.

### COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

<b>Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
Each Commission-approved institution has the infrastructure in place to operate effective educator preparation programs. Within this overall infrastructure:	<i>No response needed</i>
The institution and education unit create and articulate a research-based vision of teaching and learning that fosters coherence among, and is clearly represented in all educator preparation programs. This vision is consistent with preparing educators for California public schools and the effective implementation of California’s adopted standards and curricular frameworks.	<b>Consistently</b>
The institution actively involves faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs.	<b>Consistently</b>

<b>Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
The education unit ensures that faculty and instructional personnel regularly and systematically collaborate with colleagues in P-12 settings, college and university units and members of the broader educational community to improve educator preparation.	<b>Consistently</b>
The institution provides the unit with sufficient resources for the effective operation of each educator preparation program, including, but not limited to, coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum, professional development/instruction, field based supervision and clinical experiences.	<b>Consistently</b>
The Unit Leadership has the authority and institutional support required to address the needs of all educator preparation programs and considers the interests of each program within the institution.	<b>Consistently</b>
Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence.	<b>Consistently</b>
The institution employs, assigns and retains only qualified persons to teach courses, provide professional development, and supervise field-based and clinical experiences. Qualifications of faculty and other instructional personnel must include, but are not limited to: a) current knowledge of the content; b) knowledge of the current context of public schooling including the California adopted P-12 content standards, frameworks, and accountability systems; c) knowledge of diversity in society, including diverse abilities, culture, language, ethnicity, and gender orientation; and d) demonstration of effective professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service.	<b>Consistently</b>
The education unit monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements.	<b>Consistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 1: Met**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard**

Based on review of documents and interviews with leadership, faculty, staff, candidates, and completers, the team finds that National University and its Sanford College of Education (SCOE) have the infrastructure to support effective educator preparation programs that result in many individuals earning California teaching and services credentials. The design of SCOE credential preparation programs emerges from a research-based vision of teaching and learning represented by the acronym, “STARS” -- faculty, staff, and candidates are encouraged to be lifelong learners committed to Scholarship, Teamwork, Active reflection, Responsible citizenship, and Standards of exemplary practice so that all will make a positive difference in the learning and lives of diverse PK-12 students.

The unit involves faculty and its many constituencies in decision making through the college assessment committee, advisory boards for each program, and multiple program meetings for faculty and support providers. Advisory board members include SCOE faculty and representatives of partner school districts from around California, and current and former candidates. Members interviewed indicated that they meet regularly, are informed of program successes and issues, inspect data, and make recommendations. One advisory board reported that recently they worked on updating candidate dispositions and methods for measuring them. Candidates have opportunities to give feedback through end of course and end of program surveys, as well as by talking with faculty and university support providers.

Faculty collaborate with many schools, districts, and educators. The 2019-20 Annual College Report described several partnerships such as the SEL professional development website and resources used by schools across the country, a research partnership with Johns Hopkins University, and the teacher residency program with Fresno Unified School District currently operating, as well as a proposed Teacher Quality Partnership Grant with Chula Vista Elementary School District. An additional document listed the many instances of individual faculty collaborating with PK-12 and higher education partners around California.

Unit leaders indicated that resources are sufficient to support programs and services for the number of credential candidates, and that they have the authority and support of university administration to make improvements. The dean explained some of the directions he wants to move SCOE, including better candidate support through faculty advising, increased positions in the credentials department to reduce caseload (he has secured funding for and completed hiring of four out of six new positions), and building deeper multi-year relationships with district partners they serve. Institutional leaders described several ways that NU actively supports the education unit. Staff of the institution's educational effectiveness unit described the evaluation research and curriculum assistance that is provided by the university to help ensure quality programs and courses.

Institutional policies and procedures support non-discrimination across all areas of employment. Documents show, and interviews confirmed that the education unit employs a diverse full-time and adjunct faculty. The university president highlighted the institution's commitment to serving a diverse population of students, faculty, and staff by referring to the work of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council whose members are responsible for advising, assessing, and developing efforts to achieve diversity and access. Several faculty from SCOE are members.

The faculty credentials list shows that faculty are well qualified and experienced to teach in credential preparation programs. Processes are in place for systematic faculty evaluation. Professional development is supported through financial allocations for full-time faculty as well as an annual calendar of learning opportunities for all faculty. Faculty interviewed by the team reported that the quality and amount of professional development provided was valuable to their improvement as instructors.

The credentials department overseen by the director of credentials and staffed by credential processing technicians who specialize by program monitor candidates starting at matriculation through completion and recommendation. Each program has a documented specific credential processing workflow. As candidates approach completion they are notified of remaining requirements. Candidates meet with their credential specialist when requirements are completed. A final audit is made prior to recommending the candidate for the credential.

<b>Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
Candidates are recruited and supported in all educator preparation programs to ensure their success.	<i>No response needed</i>
The education unit accepts applicants for its educator preparation programs based on clear criteria that include multiple measures of candidate qualifications.	<b>Consistently</b>
The education unit purposefully recruits and admits candidates to diversify the educator pool in California and provides the support, advice, and assistance to promote their successful entry and retention in the profession.	<b>Consistently</b>
Appropriate information and personnel are clearly identified and accessible to guide each candidate’s attainment of program requirements.	<b>Consistently</b>
Evidence regarding progress in meeting competency and performance expectations is consistently used to guide advisement and candidate support efforts. A clearly defined process is in place to identify and support candidates who need additional assistance to meet competencies.	<b>Consistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 2: Met**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard**

Ample evidence gathered during the accreditation review indicates that SCOE educator preparation programs offer multiple support systems to ensure candidate success. After a thorough review of the institution’s documents and interviews with various university faculty and staff, PK-12 educational partners and candidates, the accreditation team determined that the SCOE has a well-defined candidate recruitment and admissions process in place. SCOE utilizes a variety of recruiting strategies and protocols that include outreach to local county offices of education, word of mouth in neighboring districts, referrals from alumni, and SCOE information sessions. The recruitment and admissions processes yield a diverse student population reflecting the demographics of the state of California. According to SCOE administration, alumni and candidates, the credential programs are particularly attractive to second-career applicants. One of the department chairs described SCOE as “welcoming to non-traditional student populations.”



SCOE develops aspiring educators to hold a vision of equity as they prepare to teach, lead, and/or provide service throughout the state of California in urban, suburban, and rural settings. According to documents and interviews with faculty and deans, the programs are grounded in a research-based constructivist approach through a culturally responsive lens. Through a review of institutional documents and interviews with credentialing staff, there is evidence of a clear and concise advising process in place to guide candidates toward successful completion of program requirements. However, during interviews with candidates, several candidates expressed some difficulty in obtaining correct information about fulfilling requirements in a timely manner in order to obtain credentials.

For such a geographically expansive and large-scale program, current candidates and alumni spoke of the power of personal attention given to support their progress throughout the program. The program leadership is readily accessible and develops strong relationships with candidates to meet their individual needs. There are formal and informal processes in place to support struggling candidates headed by the members of the student success team. Candidates, faculty, and administration stated that SCOE has a school-wide focus on creating a culture of care and on social and emotional learning. The relational support is a major strength of the program. These support services were elaborately described by candidates and faculty and staff and supported through document reviews. Candidates often said that the faculty and instructors shared their cell phone numbers and were readily available to answer questions and concerns about their assignments.

<b>Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
The unit designs and implements a planned sequence of coursework and clinical experiences for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills to educate and support P-12 students in meeting state-adopted content standards.	<b>Consistently</b>
The unit and its programs offer a high-quality course of study focused on the knowledge and skills expected of beginning educators and grounded in current research on effective practice. Coursework is integrated closely with field experiences to provide candidates with a cohesive and comprehensive program that allows candidates to learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies required of the credential they seek.	<b>Consistently</b>
The unit and all programs collaborate with their partners regarding the criteria and selection of clinical personnel, site-based supervisors and school sites, as appropriate to the program.	<b>Consistently</b>

<b>Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
Through site-based work and clinical experiences, programs offered by the unit provide candidates with opportunities to both experience issues of diversity that affect school climate and to effectively implement research-based strategies for improving teaching and student learning.	<b>Consistently</b>
Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential.	<b>Consistently</b>
The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates.	<b>Consistently</b>
Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.	<b>Inconsistently</b>
All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice.	<b>Consistently</b>
For each program the unit offers, candidates have significant experience in school settings where the curriculum aligns with California’s adopted content standards and frameworks, and the school reflects the diversity of California’s student and the opportunity to work with the range of students identified in the program standards.	<b>Consistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 3: Met**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard**

SCOE credential units have designed and implemented courses and clinical experiences that address the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the state-adopted standards. A review of documents and interviews with SCOE faculty, staff, and candidates verify the presence of well-organized credential-specific curriculum integrating culturally responsive pedagogy that addresses the diversity of the PK-12 student populations throughout the state of California. Candidates take a sequence of four-week courses to fulfill the content requirements and apply the course concepts in their clinical fieldwork or intern experiences. Each credential program is led by a faculty chair who oversees and guides the specific components of the credentialing process.

Through a review of documents and interviews with faculty, candidates, university supervisors, and district-employed supervisors, there is ample evidence that SCOE programs offer robust virtual and hybrid programs. University supervisors spoke of their collaboration to design appropriate curriculum, assignments, and assessments for candidates. Consequently, there are a number of common practices across credential programs. For example, candidates videotape their student teaching for feedback and reflection. These videos serve to fulfill required observations and are used to provide candidates with a continuous improvement process through feedback, reflection, and next steps to be implemented. All programs offer a theory to

practice approach by implementing course content assignments into student teaching or internships. For example, in an assessment course, candidates developed their own reading assessment tool which was implemented with groups of students in their student teaching placements. To ensure that candidates have knowledge of the diverse student populations in the state of California, they participate in asynchronous sessions to learn best practices to address specific populations that might not exist in their current student teaching or intern assignments. The limitation of virtual student teaching/intern observation experiences arose as a topic in a couple of the candidate and university supervisor interviews. Although most faculty and candidates expressed appreciation for virtual observations, for several supervisors the video observations were not extensive enough to provide students with adequate feedback.

A majority of program candidates surveyed and interviewed expressed satisfaction with the qualifications, support and instructional practices of their instructors and supervisors. According to program documentation, the faculty, adjuncts, and supervisors possess the appropriate credentials, clinical experiences and/or degrees to serve in their credential program roles.

In interview discussions, it was noted that many of the district employed supervisors and course instructors hired are alumni of the SCOE credential programs and have long-standing relationships with the directors and university supervisors. The university and district mentors/supervisors are often recommended by their colleagues who work in the SCOE programs. They felt a high level of support from program leadership; however, they expressed a desire to know more about the standards and expectations each candidate needed for success in the programs. A review of documents indicated that the site supervisors and coaches are engaged in professional learning opportunities to grow and develop their expertise, but some of those interviewed were not able to describe and verify that they received ongoing professional learning on a continuous and systematic basis.

SCOE, a statewide complex organization, utilizes several strategies to appropriately select mentor teachers to oversee the fieldwork and clinical practice components. University supervisors and district and school administrators confirmed there is a collaborative effort to select and match site-supervisors with candidates. These site supervisors are evaluated by candidates at the end of the program.

Overall, the credential programs, according to the majority of interviews and the documentation provided, validates that candidates have much appreciation for the support and care, as well as the academic experience, they receive at SCOE.

<b>Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
The education unit develops and implements a comprehensive continuous improvement process at both the unit level and within each of its programs that identifies program and unit effectiveness and makes appropriate modifications based on findings.	<b>Consistently</b>
The education unit and its programs regularly assess their effectiveness in relation to the course of study offered, fieldwork and clinical practice, and support services for candidates.	<b>Consistently</b>
Both the unit and its programs regularly and systematically collect, analyze, and use candidate and program completer data as well as data reflecting the effectiveness of unit operations to improve programs and their services.	<b>Consistently</b>
The continuous improvement process includes multiple sources of data including 1) the extent to which candidates are prepared to enter professional practice; and 2) feedback from key stakeholders such as employers and community partners about the quality of the preparation.	<b>Consistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 4: Met**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard**

In her opening remarks the associate dean stated, “*Our focus is continuous improvement.*” After conversations with multiple constituents including the director and assistant director of credentials, various credential specialists, the clinical practice director and clinical practice leads, department chairs, the assessment committee and members of the university education effectiveness committee, adjunct faculty, community partners, completers, and candidates it is clear that continuous improvement is not just a catch phrase but is part of NU’s DNA. Both the institution and the unit are not only committed to continuous improvement but also have a comprehensive, robust, and systematic continuous improvement process in place that identifies program and unit effectiveness across the university and uses the findings to make appropriate modifications to programs and processes.

Further, based on an in-depth review of both the Common Standard 4 initial submission and the evidence submitted in the addendum, it is clear that the unit and programs regularly assess the effectiveness of the course of study, the fieldwork and clinical practice and support services for candidates.

The institution has invested significant financial resources in Taskstream, an online web-based software used for the preparation of various reports including the PAR (Program Annual Review) which is the primary method for collecting, analyzing, and sharing results of the various assessments. Assessments presented in PAR include but are not limited to CalTPA and APA test scores, signature assignment assessments, completer survey data, and clinical practice GoReact assessments. Program, clinical practice, and unit leadership personnel review and discuss the various assessments, analyzing trends and noting areas of concern. Recommendations for

resources and budgetary items are discussed and determined as part of the process. Modifications based on the findings are carried out on an ongoing basis and are addressed in the following year's report.

The team was especially impressed with the work of the assessment committee which oversees the assessment process for the SCOE. The two co-chairs of the assessment committee also sit on the university Education Effectiveness Committee (EEC).

In addition to systematic program reviews, the programs review Commission Completer, Master Teacher, and Employer survey data as well as their own in-house survey which asks more focused questions regarding perceived impact (see CS 5). The ACE Survey Report consists of three surveys for each program: Alumni, Completers and Employer. One of the questions on the survey asks if respondents are willing to participate in a focus group. At the time of this visit at least one program had already begun hosting focus groups.

Finally, the SCOE regularly engages in a process of active introspection constantly looking for ways to improve systems and processes. This is especially evident in the credentials department which, as the programs have grown and changed, has been very responsive, continuously assessing and adapting their processes to meet the unique and complex needs of the individual programs. The assistant director of credentials is especially adept at problem solving, troubleshooting, and creating solutions to resolve the specific issues that arise in the clinical practice areas. The development of the Sharepoint website and the use of sophisticated electronic forms are two examples of problem solving in action.

It is also clear that the unit and programs have a system in place to support the candidates and to assist them in meeting both school and program requirements particularly in relation to performance on the CalTPA and CalAPA.

The continuous improvement process is multidirectional and includes multiple sources of data, both formal and informal, which show the extent to which candidates are prepared to enter professional practice and facilitates feedback from key constituency groups on the quality of candidate preparation. By all accounts the SCOE unit is highly collaborative, teams meet regularly, and there is space for open, safe, and honest communication which nurtures the climate of continuous improvement.

<b>Common Standard 5: Program Impact</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
The institution ensures that candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting state adopted academic standards. Assessments indicate that candidates meet the Commission adopted competency requirements as specified in the program standards.	<b>Consistently</b>

<b>Common Standard 5: Program Impact</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
The unit and its programs evaluate and demonstrate that they are having a positive impact on candidate learning and competence and on teaching and learning in schools that serve California’s students.	<b>Consistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 5: Met**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard.**

Conversations with community partners across the state confirmed that the SCOE is a good partner, one that understands the needs of its various communities and responds accordingly. Interviews with multiple constituents along with a thorough review of the evidence submitted in the Common Standard 5 addendum confirm that the unit and its programs do indeed evaluate and demonstrate that they are having a positive impact both on candidates and on students in California schools. Further, the institution has invested financial and human resources in the multiple systems which are in place to track student progress and to ensure that the candidates recommended for credentials are fully prepared to educate and support all students in meeting the state adopted standards.

By virtue of sheer volume alone, the SCOE has an impact on the teacher supply in California. The SCOE reported that it prepares 11% of teachers and administrators credentialed in the state of California, making it by far the largest single provider in the state. But well beyond volume there is much evidence to support the fact that the SCOE continually strives to make a positive impact on the teaching and learning in schools that serve California students. The Annual College report details the myriad ways the SCOE is impacting teaching and learning in the state. The SCOE Fresno Unified Residency Grant, partnerships with Teach for America and Rocketship as well as the Wallace Grant provide further solid evidence of this claim. Through CIDER (Center for Innovation, Development, Evaluation and Research) the SCOE administers various programs funded by a generous grant from the Sanford Foundation which has extended its reach even further with the innovative Sanford Harmony Learning Portal which provides access to the Harmony social-emotional learning program as well as Inspire modules which are free on-demand professional development modules and resources to help teachers worldwide improve their practice. The Sanford Harmony Showcase project, The Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching and Learning, and the Master of Arts in Social Emotional Learning (MASEL) were also birthed from CIDER and positively impact students throughout the state.

When asked how she knows her students are prepared to enter the teaching profession, one of the support providers said it beautifully, “The proof is in the pudding.” Through the ACE survey completers, candidates, partners, and employers concurred. One employer summed it up this way: “We always know National graduates will be prepared and successful in the classroom.”