STANDARD 5: PROVIDER QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
The provider maintains a quality assurance system comprised of valid data from multiple measures, including evidence of candidates’ and completers’ positive impact on P-12 student learning and development. The provider supports continuous improvement that is sustained and evidence-based, and that evaluates the effectiveness of its completers. The provider uses the results of inquiry and data collection to establish priorities, enhance program elements and capacity, and test innovations to improve completers’ impact on P-12 student learning and development.

The two sources of evidence used to document that the unit meets Standard 5 are Cherwell (5a) and the COE Assessment Timeline (addressed in narrative).

Introduction
The College 2008 visit resulted in an area for improvement related to NCATE Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation. The AFIs relevant to CAEP Standard 1 are
1. The unit has not fully implemented its assessment system.
2. The unit has not implemented procedures to ensure fairness, accuracy, and consistency in the assessment of candidate performance.

In response to the 2008 report, departments began strengthening assessments, requiring or enhancing candidate portfolio requirements, revising Teacher Work Sample (initial teacher preparation), and building or bolstering scoring rubrics for many of the assignments. Although both the quality and quantity of assessments improved, there still was not a College-wide, systemic approach to collecting or analyzing them. The SPA reports reinforce what faculty have already recognized, that programs have developed good assessments, but an assessment system is only in its nascent phase and will serve as the primary focus for the College’s Continuous Improvement Plan. The Assessment and Accreditation Committee has made considerable progress in identifying the need for common collection tools and processes, comparisons across programs, uniform standards and transition points, and implementing changes.

While not an excuse, the flux referenced in the Overview within the Dean’s office, a complete turnover of department chairs, and the hiring of 40% of our faculty since the last accreditation visit meant that there was no one ensuring that a system was created, or that a culture of systemic assessment practices became the norm for the College. One program that has a history of aligning standards to artifacts to assessments is School Counseling. The Department of Counseling and Human Services, which is CACREP accredited, collects and systematically uses candidate data to inform and improve its programs. CACREP requires policies and practices that have facilitated the development of a data assessment system that effectively serves the counseling programs.

Three years ago, the Assessment and Accreditation Committee was enlarged and strengthened through the addition of the department chairs and other strategic members. Under the committee’s guidance, the College stepped up its efforts to create a focused, strategic, and sustainable plan for infusing assessment as a pervasive element of the culture.
The Assessment and Accreditation Committee’s increased focus on assessment was not meant to undermine the quality of the artifacts that were being collected before this effort began. The faculty in every program were thoughtful and deliberate in determining what assignments and assessments would be collected, especially as they were utilized in portfolios; creating rubrics to ensure fairness and consistency; included multiple scorers to improve reliability; and reviewed results frequently to inform their programs, making adjustments based on findings. However, this assessment history is important to understand, as it signifies a shift from data collection to inform programs about candidate quality to a focus on using data for a broader audience (internal departments and external stakeholders), purpose (candidate impact on P-12 students, programmatic changes needed), and degree (value added emphasis). COE’s efforts coincided with Colorado’s implementation of Senate Bill 191 and the state’s efforts to tie K-12 student achievement data to teachers and teachers to their EPPs as well as the assessment evolution we are experiencing at the national level.

A strategic shift in data collection resulted in a difference in what was collected, for whom, and how. This shift initiated a greater emphasis on the process of assessment and less focus on the stand-alone artifacts. The power of an assessment system is in its use of common assessments, when logical, that allow for data comparisons across programs and departments and the ability to routinize the assessment process as much as possible.

**Cherwell**

A shift in the assessment culture meant that the COE needed to change the way it performs as a college. Three years ago, records for individual programs within departments were kept in a variety of formats: Task Stream, Blackboard, Excel, Access. Through the work of the Assessment and Accreditation Committee, the College created a comprehensive list that represented all the data collected. Recognizing the inherent problems of having so many data collection processes, the College decided to create a powerful electronic database that would collect student data in a systematic, formalized manner that uses live data from the university’s enterprise database (ISIS). In May 2012, representatives from the College of Education began meeting with staff from UCCS’s Informational Technology department to build a semi-automated information collection system that would track students from inquiry status through program completion. The vehicle for this system was developed by Cherwell, a local technology company that specializes in data collection. The small COE/IT group spent months defining terminology; identifying data points; determining what data would be collected, when and by whom; examining other databases across campus that needed to interface with Cherwell; and designating where data would be housed (Cherwell, Singularity, DARS, ISIS). The transition to Cherwell meant that COE could go paperless with its student and employee records, eliminating paper files. The program also allowed the College to collect, sort, and analyze data electronically with a degree of accuracy that was never possible when information was hand-entered into a multitude of spreadsheets. Cherwell is capable of tracking student progress for the various transition points and notifying (via email) the candidate or the faculty when there is a problem. COE is the first academic unit on campus (or technically, the country) to use this program.

Understanding the history of Cherwell is a critical component of ensuring that accurate, accessible, and mutually agreed upon data is being collected for the College. Cherwell tracks student data for five different categories: Inquiring, Applying, Matriculated, Deferred/Inactive,
and Field Experience. Program completer data is available at the student level, but aggregate data rolls up to inform departments and the College (http://youtu.be/kFOtISMSgl). Cherwell also informs the College’s Student Resource Office (SRO) on matters related to staff productivity, how students contact the SRO (72% by email), and student appointment traffic during the semester.

Moving to paperless student files required that faculty and staff become trained on FERPA, ISIS (the CU system’s data enterprise system), Cherwell, the university’s Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS), and Singularity (a campus-based document imaging system). The majority of faculty completed their trainings by January 2014, not coincidentally when the last of the paper student files were shredded. Besides inquiry data, Cherwell tracks interview results, reference letters, application completion, and admission decisions, thus improving the accuracy of the enrollment process and the College’s ability to track and utilize data to inform SRO, departmental, and college-level decisions.

**COE Assessment and Continuous Improvement Timeline**

The best way to illustrate the College’s progress in meeting Standard 5 demonstrating Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement is through a timeline of the practices and progress achieved in the past six years (see Electronic Exhibits 5b. Some of the items listed reflect assessment advances in an obvious way, but others are included as they represent the establishment of a framework to support the other changes or future expansions. Many of the points will be expanded upon in the College’s Continuous Improvement Plan.

**Standard 5: Summary**

The introduction of Cherwell has served as a game changer for the College (and subsequently the University, since it will soon be used for tracking General Education requirements). In the past, files were occasionally borrowed by employees and lost in offices for weeks at a time. This has been corrected by having a secure, web-accessible site where faculty can share student files from campus or home, enter comments, send student emails, make advising appointments, or check admission applications, all using real-time data. More importantly, departments and the College are able to track students from initial inquiry to program completion. Programs are able to project enrollment numbers through the use of consistent, current, and accurate student data and generate reports based on that information. Cherwell has created a cultural shift in data collection, student communication, faculty advising, and how the College uses the platform to determine necessary and relevant data collection to inform resource distribution, planning, and recruitment initiatives. The data available allow the College and departments to monitor student progress in a systematic way that was previously unavailable. The future gains will be fully realized as departments utilize this new data in the coming years. The results will be used to drive further program improvement.

Several of the initiatives outlined in the timeline are reflective of the College’s many efforts to address diversity through recruitment, successful program completion metrics, candidate effectiveness with P-12 students, and faculty outreach (Q2). More importantly, the timeline reflects the College’s efforts to make continuous improvements across a wide swath of themes and specifically it endeavors to create a system of assessment (Q5).
STANDARD 5: PROVIDER QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

1. Summary of preliminary findings

a. Narrative summary of preliminary findings

Since the 2008 accreditation visit, the EPP has attempted to update and maintain a quality assurance system that includes data from multiple measures. Specifically, the EPP enhanced candidate portfolio requirements, Teacher Work Samples, and internal scoring rubrics. Focused efforts to prepare SPA reports resulted in the EPP recognizing the need for common data collection methods, uniform standards and transition points, and a means for the EPP to systematically compare data across programs. While the EPP has experienced considerable attrition since the previous visit, the Assessment and Accreditation Committee has been utilized to step up “efforts to create a focused, strategic, and sustainable plan for infusing assessment as a pervasive element” of the EPP’s assessment system. Using data as a means to gauge candidate quality halted as the EPP began using data to review candidate impact on P-12 learning, specifically attending to a value added emphasis. Colorado’s Senate Bill 191 as well as the state’s emphasis on achievement data as it relates to candidate preparation necessitated a shift in “what was collected, for whom, and how.” The EPP currently uses gathered data as a means to inform external stakeholders of candidate progress as well as impact on P-12 student learning. Stakeholders serving on the College Advisory Board (CAB) regularly review assessment data as part of the EPP’s integrated assessment framework, paying particular attention to how candidates are assessed instead of the artifacts they submit. The EPP has discontinued the use of multiple electronic databases and now employs an enterprise database referred to as “Cherwell.” The development of this singular database is the result of a combined EPP and Information Technology (IT) effort on campus, allows the EPP to be paperless, and provides a means to collect, sort, and analyze data in a manner not previously possible with hand-entered assessment data. Data may now be collected and reported for program completers as well as being presented in aggregate form for program area review. Cherwell houses all collected assessment data as well as interview results, reference letters, applications, and admission decisions.

The EPP provided an Assessment and Continuous Improvement Timeline (Exhibit 5b) that outlines currently implemented, piloted, and planned assessment measures through the 2016-2017 academic year. Multiple measures of candidate performance and candidate impact on P-12 learners are referenced but have yet to be fully developed. By the Fall 2014 Onsite, edTPA and CLASS assessments will have been piloted and prepped for full implementation. Student perception surveys and employer surveys will be piloted during the semester of the onsite visit. The EPP reports that candidates may be tracked from initial inquiry to program completion but does not provide detailed information relating to the multiple measures of candidate performance mentioned in the SSR. Further, the Continuous Improvement Timeline identifies implemented and planned assessments but does not indicate how the EPP uses results to improve program elements and processes.

b. Evidence that is consistent with meeting the standard
The EPP identifies both fully implemented and planned multiple measures of candidate progress and completer achievement as evidenced in Exhibit 5b. The EPP, in preparation for SPA reports, utilizes relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative, and actionable measures. The EPP plans to utilize assessment data to review candidate performance against its goals and relevant standards. Exhibit 5b outlines how these data will be collected and tracked over time. The EPP’s state agency now requires P-12 learner data to be reviewed in relation to candidate preparation. The EPP utilizes internal and external stakeholders in program evaluation and improvement through the CAB.

c. Evidence that is inconsistent with meeting the standard
The SSR does not provide evidence related to the quality assurance system measuring provider operational effectiveness.

Here are examples of initiatives the College has taken related to quality assurance related to positive impact on P-12 students:

- Hiring of an Assessment and Operations Manager
- Establishment of three-year cycle of course offerings for all departments
- Implementation of Bachelor of Innovation: Inclusive Early Childhood Education
- Development of Bachelor of Arts: Inclusive Elementary Education
- Creation of Masters in Curriculum and Instruction: Literacy
- edTPA, CLASS, CLASS S, SPS, portfolio

Initiatives related to continuous improvement include

- Creation of Student Resource Office, which provides one-stop advising for all students
- Adoption of Cherwell to track student admissions, enrollments, interviews, eligibility, etc.
- Strengthening of A&A Committee so that assessments, standards, key assignments, etc. are identified, aligned with and incorporated into courses and programs
- Adoption of common admissions standards and application process
- Hiring of an Assessment and Operations Manager
- Digitalization of all student, staff, and historical files
- Training of all COE personnel on ISIS, FERPA, DARS, Singularity, File Locker, and Cherwell to prepare them for e-advising
- COE Conversations to establish priorities, direction for College
- Creation and revision of Continuous Improvement Plan
- Establishment of three-year cycle of course offerings for all departments
- Creation of an Office of Assessment and Accreditation
- Adoption of two approved syllabi templates, including one that is ADA compliant
• Efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of its completers include
  • Creation of the College Advisory Board, determined charge
    • CAB Mission and Function
    • CAB Members
    • CAB Meeting Agendas
    • CAB Meeting Minutes
  • Hiring of an Assessment and Operations Manager
  • Implementation of on-line orientation course for clinical faculty
  • edTPA, CLASS, CLASS S, SPS, portfolio, TWS

Initiatives to use data to establish priorities, increase capacity and monitor impact on P-12 learning include
  • Hiring of an Assessment and Operations Manager
  • Hiring of a Director for the BI:IECE program
  • Creation of an Office of Assessment and Accreditation
  • edTPA, CLASS, CLASS S, SPS, portfolio

The EPP does not provide evidence that interpretations of data are valid and consistent per CAEP component 5.2.

The TELP program has attempted to address this by implementing local scoring of edTPA, the results of which have been compared and analyzed with national results.

The EPP does not provide evidence that completer impact data have been acted upon in decision-making related to programs, resource allocation, and future direction as detailed in CAEP component 5.4.

The unit is working with the Colorado Departments of Education and Higher Education to determine indicators the state will be collecting to assist EPPs as evidence of post-program completer impact on p-12 learning, and UCCS will follow their recommendations. This process is in its nascent stage.

The EPP describes the employment of the CAB to review and evaluate program and unit data but does not provide evidence related to the identification of models of excellence (CAEP component 5.5)

Models of excellence within the College include
  • Counseling’s use of the Developmental Assessment Matrix to monitor candidate dispositions and performance
  • The use of cohort models in a majority of its programs
  • Year-long field experience in TELP
  • UCCSTeach co-teaching model and inquiry-based early field teaching experiences
  • Creation of two inclusive degree programs
  • Agreement amongst programs on admissions criteria, transition points, and the need
for key assignments cross-walked with relevant standards

- Innovative programming tailored to student need and incorporating best practices
- Creation of online cooperating teacher training and student teaching overview for TELP program
- Transition of portfolio repository to Blackboard
- Creation of SRO and its provision of one-stop support for students
- Implementation of edTPA and CLASS
- A more systematic approach to administration of program surveys
- The digitalization of all paper files and move to e-advising
- Becoming the first academic unit on campus to implement Cherwell
- Research labs, developmental lab sequence
- Clinical coaching

There is a growing understanding of what must occur within the College to improve its ability to achieve excellence:

- Consolidate all teacher education programs (including UCCSTeach) under a single director in the College who serves as the primary point of contact for placement sites
- Work across programs to develop and implement common observation and assessment instruments, rubrics, and processes.
- Establish formalized, contractual relationships with all placement sites
- Director works with Office of Assessment and Accreditation in tracking placements, conducting candidate/employer/supervisor surveys; ensuring placement diversity; determining new and continuing high quality placements; tracking program completer data; etc.
- A disposition instrument with some commonalities that can serve all programs needs to be developed to allow for collecting and comparing data, which would inform decisions, related to admissions, retention, completion, etc.
- A college-wide employer survey is currently in development that allows for unique programmatic questions
- Empower the Director of the OAA to collect, analyze and track relevant data to better inform programs.

2. **List of onsite tasks to be completed.** Use the following three prompts for each task. Add additional tasks as needed.

*Standard 5 Task 1*: Interview members of the Assessment and Accreditation Committee to determine how data are used to review the operational effectiveness of the EPP.

a. **Evidence in need of verification or corroboration**

Measures of operational effectiveness and their use by the EPP.

b. **Excerpt from SSR to be clarified or confirmed**

“Under the committee’s guidance, the College stepped up its efforts to create a focused, strategic, and sustainable plan for infusing assessment as a pervasive element of the culture.”
c. Questions for EPP concerning additional evidence, data, and/or interviews, including follow up on response to 1.c.

- Does the EPP assess operational effectiveness? If so, which measures are used and how?
  
- Quarterly meetings with our CAB is one way to assess operational effectiveness
- Deep analysis of budget and enrollment data
  - Transition points
  - Admissions standards
  - Interview processes
  - Cross-walking standards and objectives, assignments
- Creation of SRO, use of Cherwell, electronic files, e-advising, training for ISIS/DARS/File locker/Singularity/FERPA/FRPA/Blackboard/Calendaring
- Prioritization process
- COE conversations
- Accreditation process
- Cross-departmental and cross-campus collaborations

- Can the EPP provide examples of how assessment has become a pervasive element of the EPP’s culture as stated in the SSR?

*Standard 5 Task 2: Interview members of the Assessment and Accreditation Committee to determine how data are valid and consistent.*

a. Evidence in need of verification or corroboration

Information related to the validity and reliability of assessment measures and collected data.

b. Excerpt from SSR to be clarified or confirmed

“The power of an assessment system is in its use of common assessments, when logical, that allow for data comparisons across programs and departments and the ability to routinize the assessment process as much as possible.” (p. 55)

c. Questions for EPP concerning additional evidence, data, and/or interviews, including follow up on response to 1.c.

- Does the EPP review the validity and reliability of assessments?

*Standard 5 Task 3: Interview members of the Assessment and Accreditation Committee and/or the College Advisory Board to determine ways completer data have been acted upon in an effort to improve programs, resource allocation, and future direction.*

a. Evidence in need of verification or corroboration
Examples of how data have been used by the EPP to improve programs, resource allocation, and EPP direction.

b. Excerpt from SSR to be clarified or confirmed

“Besides inquiry data, Cherwell tracks interview results, reference letters, application completion, and admission decisions, thus improving the accuracy of the enrollment process and the College’s ability to track and utilize data to inform SRO, departmental, and college-level decisions” (p. 56)

c. Questions for EPP concerning additional evidence, data, and/or interviews, including follow up on response to 1.c.

• Can the EPP provide examples of program improvements as a result of assessment data?

Program changes have occurred based on SPA feedback, as well as edTPA and DAM results.

• How has the EPP utilized the assessment system to shape resource allocation?

The College has added an Office of Assessment and Accreditation and has directed resources toward having faculty analyze data and recommend changes.

Standard 5 Task 4: Interview members of the EPP and/or the CAB to determine whether models of excellence have been identified.

a. Evidence in need of verification or corroboration

Identified models of excellence.

b. Excerpt from SSR to be clarified or confirmed

“The data available allows the College and departments to monitor student progress in a systematic way that was previously unavailable. The future gains will be fully realized as departments utilize this new data in the coming years. The results will be used to drive further program improvement.” (p. 56)

c. Questions for EPP concerning additional evidence, data, and/or interviews, including follow up on response to 1.c.

• Have models of excellence been identified by reviewing assessment data?
• Are stakeholders involved in the use of assessment data and the identification of models of excellence?

The College of Education has undergone substantial shifts in terms of how we ensure program quality; that shift is most easily seen in the creation of new programs in the College. In addition to the programs themselves, the unit works cross departmentally as well as across colleges at UCCS to create innovative, quality programs that draw on the models of excellence that we have identified and shared in new degree and program offerings.
**UCCSTeach**

UCCSTeach is a collaborative program between the College of Education and the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences. UCCSTeach is one of nearly 40 replication sites across the country and is predicated upon the original UTeach Program from the University of Texas at Austin. While the UCCSTeach program replicated based on the national UTeach model in terms of the education curriculum, managerial and faculty structure, and degree plan requirements, the program has also integrated many elements from the Teacher Education & Licensing Program (TELP). For example, the UCCSTeach offers weekly seminars for student teaching candidates at partner schools, employs a similar formal observation protocol based on the Colorado Teacher Quality Standards, shared professional dispositions, a similar student teaching portfolio assignment, and requires teacher candidates to complete the edTPA as a capstone assessment. All UCCSTeach courses and experiences are designed to align with Colorado State Standards and secondary mathematics (NCTM) and science (NSTA) SPA standards. Key assignments and experiences throughout the program are strategically aligned with appropriate rubrics to measure teacher candidate growth and performance.

**Bachelor of Innovations in Inclusive Early Childhood Education**

The BI: IECE is a program in its infancy, but was designed from the start to encompass quality teacher preparation that meets state standards for both Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education. In addition, national standards (NAEYC and CEC) are addressed. The course design, practica, key assignments, and rubrics are completely aligned so that all experiences in the courses and field are intentional. This program draws on strengths from other programs, such as the use of the CLASS observation tool (used by UCCSTeach), which is a research-based model of excellence that works well for the BI. The BI has multiple newly designed courses that infuse special needs throughout the coursework as opposed to a model that includes one or a few courses addressing special education. The frequent practica built into the model grew from conversations with UCCSTeach and how their early field experience proves useful for affirming (and sometimes not affirming) students’ desire to pursue education as a career as well as building multiple opportunities for candidates to gain P-3 experience with learners.

**Bachelor of Arts in Inclusive Elementary Education**

The BA: IEE is most likely the best illustration of how our unit in COE has embraced the desire to improve beyond what is acceptable to what is absolutely best practice for children in our schools. The current model (reflective of the state’s requirement for elementary teachers to have a major in a content area) has future teachers with majors in Biology, History, English, Spanish, and Math. They take licensure coursework with the College of Education and complete student teaching under our watch. Recent changes in legislation have allowed for a Bachelors in Education, so our departments have joined our efforts and areas of expertise to create a Bachelor of Arts in Inclusive Elementary Education which will lead not only to K-6 Elementary Education licensure, but will meet requirements for added endorsements in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLD) as well as Special Education. The program design consists of courses from existing programs like UCCSTeach and the BI:IECE as well as courses from other programs. Perhaps most invigorating is reconceptualizing how our methods courses and related practica will all include a focus on children with diverse needs. From courses addressing art and...
music to courses focused on collaboration and communication, this is a unique program, built with standards as its framework and featuring content, fieldwork, and experiences that intentionally shape teachers who will be prepared for all children and challenges in the schools. We feel that the program is innovative and has a great deal of potential. Most importantly from an accreditation standpoint it represents continuous program improvement: we have evolved from a program that worked well to one that we envision will prepare teachers even more effectively. At the time of this writing, faculty are working cross-departmentally to create new courses in STEM, Integrated Science, Math for All Children, etc. Each course will be reviewed by English as a Second Language faculty and Special Education faculty to be certain that standards are met and coursework, assignments, and experiences are carefully constructed and meaningful.