

NCTQ's standards for rating teacher prep: The nuts and bolts of building better teachers

Drawing on seven years of research, NCTQ has developed a set of comprehensive standards covering the most important aspects of teacher preparation. These "nuts and bolts" represent the knowledge and skills new teachers need in order to be successful in the classroom. By examining evidence—admissions standards, required course syllabi, textbooks, student teaching policy handbooks, and data showing program outcomes—of what teacher preparation programs are demanding of their teacher candidates, our review will reveal which programs are truly preparing their future teachers for tomorrow's classrooms.

THE TALENT TEACHERS NEED

Standard 1: Selection Criteria

NCTQ	NWOSU
<p><i>The program screens for academic caliber in selecting teacher candidates.</i> Standard applies to: Elementary, Secondary and Special Education programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU Admission requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least 30 hours completed • a Retention Graduation GPA of 2.50 or higher • a passing Oklahoma General Education Test score • a grade of "A" or "B" in Grammar & Comp I or II and • successfully complete Benchmark 1 in the portfolio • successfully complete Benchmark 2 in the portfolio • successfully complete the Teacher Education Interview

WHAT TEACHERS SHOULD KNOW

Standard 2: Early Reading

NCTQ	NWOSU
<p><i>The program trains teacher candidates to teach reading as prescribed by the Common Core</i></p>	<p>NWOSU requires implementation of Common Core State Standards in all lesson plans created</p>

<p><i>State Standards.</i> Standard applies to: Elementary and Special Education programs.</p>	<p>by teacher education candidates. (See Lesson Plan Outline in Standard 11)</p>
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Standard 3: English Language Learners

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program prepares elementary teacher candidates to teach reading to English-language learners.</i> Standard applies to: Elementary programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU requires implementation of meeting the needs of all diverse learners, including English-language learners in all lesson plans created by teacher education candidates. (See Lesson Plan Outline in Standard 11)</p>

Standard 4: Struggling Readers

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program prepares elementary teacher candidates to teach reading skills to students at risk of reading failure.</i> Standard applies to: Elementary programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU requires Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education candidates to successfully complete coursework related to reading. In EDUC 4413 Diagnosing and Correcting Reading Problems, candidates complete an in-depth study of various reading problems and procedures for diagnosing specific reading disabilities, including: use of informal and formal measures; analysis of results; determination of strengths and weaknesses, determination of functional reading levels. Overview of planning developmentally appropriate instruction based upon data gathered in diagnosis and specific techniques and strategies to address strengths and weaknesses. Includes 20 (twenty) field experience hours.</p>

Standard 5: Common Core Elementary Mathematics

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program prepares teacher candidates to successfully teach to the Common Core State Standards for elementary math.</i> Standard applies to: Elementary and Special Education programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU requires implementation of Common Core State Standards in all lesson plans created by teacher education candidates. (See Lesson Plan Outline in Standard 11). Elementary and Special Education program candidates complete EDUC 3043 Foundations of Math which specifically utilizes Common Core State Standards for elementary math.</p>

Standard 6: Common Core Elementary Content

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program ensures that teacher candidates have the broad content preparation necessary to successfully teach to the Common Core State Standards.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Elementary programs.</p>	<p><i>NWOSU requires implementation of Common Core State Standards in all lesson plans created by teacher education candidates. (See Lesson Plan Outline in Standard 11)</i></p>

Standard 7: Common Core Middle School Content

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program ensures that teacher candidates have the content preparation necessary to successfully teach to the Common Core State Standards.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Secondary programs.</p>	<p><i>NWOSU requires implementation of Common Core State Standards in all lesson plans created by secondary teacher education candidates. These candidates have a minimum of 40 hours of course work in their specific academic content area. (See Lesson Plan Outline in Standard 11)</i></p>

Standard 8: Common Core High School Content

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program ensures that teacher candidates have the content preparation necessary to successfully teach to the Common Core State Standards.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Secondary programs.</p>	<p><i>NWOSU requires implementation of Common Core State Standards in all lesson plans created by secondary teacher education candidates. These candidates have a minimum of 40 hours of course work in their specific academic content area. (See Lesson Plan Outline in Standard 11)</i></p>

Standard 9: Common Core Content for Special Education

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program ensures that teacher candidates' content preparation aligns with the Common Core State Standards in the grades they are certified to teach.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Special Education</p>	<p><i>NWOSU requires implementation of Common Core State Standards in all lesson plans created by special education candidates as well as specific objectives to meet the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). These</i></p>

programs.	candidates also have a minimum of 30 hours of course work in a specific academic content area. (See Lesson Plan Outline in Standard 11)
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WHAT TEACHERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

Standard 10: Classroom Management

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program trains teacher candidates to successfully manage classrooms.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Elementary and Secondary programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU requires all teacher education candidates to complete an analysis of behavior management through exploration of the concerns for school discipline, by examining human behavior, needs, motives, and controls. The study of several models of classroom control will demonstrate techniques to create a positive, respectful environment are also included in EDUC 4122 Behavior Intervention and EDUC 4131 Aggressive & Disruptive Behavior.</p>

Standard 11: Lesson Planning

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program trains teacher candidates how to plan lessons.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Elementary and Secondary programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU requires all teacher education candidates to create lesson plans in a minimum of three courses. See format below.</p>

Lesson plans must include the following categories:

I. **Objectives**

Gives statements in specific terms of the learning you expect from students.

II. **Materials**

Identifies the textbook, reference materials, manipulatives, supplies, technology, and any other pertinent resources that the teacher and students will need for the lesson.

III. **Vocabulary**

Words or terms that will be introduced. Vocabulary is integrated into the lesson as they become applicable and addressed several times as the teacher or students apply them in models, demonstrations, illustrations, etc. Student concept understanding of vocabulary also needs to be addressed in questioning during closure.

IV. **Procedures**

A. **Introduction/Motivation**

Creates anticipation and enthusiasm for the lesson to be taught by gaining student attention in creative ways. This may be done with brainstorming, a simple question, discussion, exploration, pictures, problem solving activities, objects to manipulate, children's literature, a video tape, etc. This creates a desire to be involved in learning something new. As the teacher guides the

participation in these activities, he/she is engaged in the initial form of evaluation of student understanding.

B. Exploration/Demonstration/Explanation of Concepts

The lesson concepts are modeled by the teacher through an explanation that incorporates demonstration through the use of experiments, the manipulation of objects, or technology. This may be followed by student opportunity to explore hands-on materials as a way of discovering concepts and skills or reinforcing those already learned. This section includes a sequential list and elaboration of the variety of teaching activities and teacher directed questions that you plan for initiating an understanding of the concept or skill.

C. Guided Individual/Independent/Cooperative Involvement

Activities for student involvement may be provided to apply, extend, or enrich the concepts that have been demonstrated by the teacher. Through these activities the students may practice skills and concept acquisition. Students may work as individuals or in small cooperative groups as it is appropriate to the activity. These activities may include experiments, games, problem solving activities, projects, integration of subject matter, discussion questions, research, worksheets, etc. As the teacher monitors the participation in these activities, he/she is engaged in another form of evaluation of student understanding. Based on this evaluation, the teacher can determine the need for re-teaching for individuals, groups, extend or provide enrichment activities, and make curricular decisions.

D. Closure

Draws a lesson to close by guiding the questioning and discussion of what students experienced and learned during the lesson. Teacher directed questioning lets the teacher know if objectives were met.

V. Adaptations for Student Diversity and Individual Needs:

Identify student unique needs relative to the classroom or subject area, and design lessons that teach to the different needs and allow for individual success.

VI. Evaluation/Assessment of Student Achievement (Teacher and Student)

At this point in the lesson, the teacher may provide an activity or an instrument for assessing whether or not the students have met the lesson objectives. Assessment may be accomplished through conferences, journals, designing projects (individually or group), oral discussion, check lists, individual or team interviews, oral presentations, descriptive reports, writing prompts, self-assessments, role-playing, surveys, dialogue diaries, collages, songs, mini-investigations, position papers, reports based on reflective/critical thinking, dances, problem-solving tasks, concept mapping, panels, dramatic enactments, computer simulations, creating charts, plays, and tests.

VII. Reflective Evaluation of Lesson (Cooperating Teacher and Teacher Candidate)

As the lesson closes, it is beneficial for the teacher to reflect upon the lesson format and content with regard to its level of difficulty, enjoyment, time management, and the interpersonal relationships that affected the lesson positively or negatively. Addressing questions such as these might be asked:

- (1) Were the needs of the students met?
- (2) Were the objectives met? If not, what curricular changes need to be done?
- (3) What went well? What didn't go well?
- (4) What could have been done differently?
- (5) What might I add to enhance the lesson?

Student reflection upon the lesson is also beneficial. They can express how they learned a specific concept, how it relates to their prior knowledge, the level of difficulty, strategies they incorporated, if specific steps were needed, new questions they now have, enjoyment, attitudes, and peer interactions.

Standard 12: Assessment and Data

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program trains teacher candidates how to assess learning and use student performance data to inform instruction.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Elementary and Secondary programs.</p>	<p><i>NWOSU requires all teacher education candidates in elementary and secondary programs to complete a Student Learning Unit EDUC 3032 Measurement and Evaluation where each teacher candidate independently completes a performance project in which they (a) develop objectives for a lesson; (b) design assessments to assess the objectives; (c) administer the assessments to actual class of students, and (d) calculate statistics related to the administering of the exam. An in-depth reflection is expected throughout the process. To accomplish this, teacher candidates create a developmentally appropriate assessment for a 2-week unit to be taught during the student teaching experience. The candidates will then administer the assessment, analyze it, and create a minimum of 10 lessons of instruction to better the students' knowledge of the chosen topic. With each lesson and formative assessment, candidates will reflect on the results for possible modifications of the teaching/learning process to insure maximum student success. At the end of the unit of instruction, candidates will administer a final assessment to determine the amount of knowledge gained by students. Finally, candidates will analyze the data to gain personal knowledge regarding the effects of their work and plan for future teaching skills.</i></p>

Standard 13: Equity

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program ensures that teacher candidates experience schools that are successful serving students who have been traditionally underserved.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Elementary, Secondary and Special Education programs.</p>	<p><i>NWOSU requires all teacher education candidates to have a variety of diverse field experiences. Our candidates visit schools of various sizes (urban schools = 100,000+ students, suburban schools = 50 mile radius of urban, and rural (all others), schools with large minority populations and high and low socioeconomic status (as per federal program of free and reduced lunches), and observe quality teachers in each experience.</i></p>

Standard 14: Student Teaching

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program ensures that teacher candidates have a strong student teaching experience.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Elementary, Secondary and Special Education programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU requires all teacher education candidates to have numerous field experiences. Clinical field experiences occur in methods courses for secondary majors, clinical experiences for elementary majors, Practicum for Special Education majors, and Student Teaching for all majors. The methods courses and clinical experiences are recommended to be taken the semester before the student teaching semester. Student Teaching begins during the professional semester when candidates are in the field for 12 weeks. After input from the candidates, the Director of Student Teaching and the site administrator or district personnel director agree on the proper placement of each candidate. Cooperating teachers must have at least three years of teaching experience, be highly qualified, and be recommended by either the candidate, Director of Student Teaching, or school administrator. Candidates are encouraged to search for diverse opportunities when selecting choices of clinicals. If possible, the candidates are assigned placement within these choices. The placement is agreed upon by the Director of Student Teaching, the principal, and the cooperating teacher. The unit assigns university supervisors to observe and evaluate the candidates four times during the semester. The supervisors are chosen according to their content specific certification areas and backgrounds in education. Supervision of student teachers counts toward faculty members' teaching loads. Supervisors evaluate a total of four times for each teacher candidate throughout the clinical. The cooperating teacher observes and evaluates each candidate two times during the semester. Northwestern has a large pool of qualified cooperating teachers. The cooperating teachers help assess the candidates through a written evaluation form, a narrative evaluation, and a disposition form. Packets and letters of explanation are sent to all cooperating and supervising teachers. A close connection is maintained throughout the semester between and among the cooperating and supervising</p>

	<p>teachers and teacher candidates with the Director of Student Teaching. The student teaching semester is a valuable professional clinical experience in teacher preparation since it represents the bridge between professional preparation and professional practice. Clinical experiences are designed to provide opportunities for students to observe, plan, implement, and evaluate instructional materials and techniques in order to meet the varied learning needs of students from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Since student teaching is the culminating experience in the teacher education program at Northwestern Oklahoma State University, it requires one to display the knowledge, skills, and dispositions about teaching and learning that have accrued throughout the initial certification preparation. It is both the aim and expectation of Northwestern's Student Teaching Program that all participants be reflective professional educators who facilitate successful student learning. It is intended that the students, the schools, the University, and the Teacher Candidates all benefit from this cooperative experience.</p>
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Standard 15: Secondary Methods

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program requires teacher candidates to practice instructional techniques specific to their content area.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Secondary programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU requires all secondary teacher education candidates to complete a Teacher's Course in his/her academic major. This course includes the preparation of lesson plans, teaching units, assessments and behavior management plans. In addition, candidates in secondary programs complete EDUC 3913 Principles and Methods of Teaching. This course enhances the role of the teacher as a learning facilitator and development of the skills in planning and in the use of various styles or methods of educational activity. Finally, secondary teacher education candidates complete EDUC 3422 Teaching Reading Skills in the Content Area, a course designed for content-area teaching. In this course they identify reading and study skills needed to achieve a higher level in specific subject areas.</p>

	Consideration of typical classroom problems, such as: how to help individuals and groups read more successfully in specific content areas, how to cope with a wide range of reading abilities; what to do with the student who cannot “read from the textbook” are included.
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Standard 16: Instructional Design for Special Education

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program trains candidates to design instruction for teaching students with special needs.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Special Education programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU requires all teacher education candidates to incorporate adaptation for any students, including those with special needs, as seen in the lesson plan outline earlier. Special Education majors also complete four classes specifically designed to construct instructional strategies for students with special needs.</p>

OUTCOMES

Standard 17: Outcomes

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program and institution collect and monitor data on their graduates.</i></p> <p>Standard applies to: Elementary, Secondary and Special Education programs.</p>	<p>NWOSU has received National and/or State Recognition for all its teacher education programs including Agricultural Education, Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, English Education, Health & Sports Science Education, Math Education, Music Education, Science Education, Social Science Education, Special Education, School Counseling, Reading Specialist and Educational Leadership. This recognition includes data on the performance of candidates and graduates.</p>

Standard 18: Evidence of Effectiveness

<i>NCTQ</i>	<i>NWOSU</i>
<p><i>The program's graduates have a positive impact</i></p>	<p>NWOSU's conceptual framework highlights the</p>

on student learning.

Standard applies to: Elementary and Secondary programs.

importance of effective teachers. In the 2011-2012 data ninety-three percent (93%) scored acceptable or above on the student learning project and one hundred percent (100%) of candidates scored acceptable or above in five of the six categories. A description of the student learning project can be found in Standard 12.