

INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

STANDARD 1

PARTS 1 & 2

I. Overview & Conceptual Framework

1.1. Summarize the institution's mission, historical context and unique characteristics.

Southern Wesleyan University was founded on October 15, 1906 as Wesleyan Methodist Bible Institute and has evolved into a four-year liberal arts institution that has been fully accredited since 1973. Its founders were determined that this new institution would “remain true to its spiritual roots and continue unapologetically Christian in its mission and its operation” (Black, 2006, p. 12). The sponsoring denomination of the institution was identified by the inclusion of “Wesleyan Methodist” in the name of the school. “The Wesleyan Methodists were a branch of the Methodist movement whose origins lay in its opposition to slavery” (Black, 2006, p. 12).

The first catalog stated the mission of the school as “to furnish a distinctively Christian education so far as possible to every student . . . (and to hold up Christ) to every student as the exemplar and pattern of what his or her life should be, in order to stimulate all the powers of the body and mind to proper activity” (Black, 2006. p. 27).

Today, Southern Wesleyan University still seeks to meet the educational needs of its diverse student population through both traditional and innovative approaches, as the demographic information in [Table 4.4.e](#) indicates. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, or handicapping condition. Further, the University admits learners from a variety of religious backgrounds provided there is adherence to the rules and policies of the institution and who demonstrate support for its objectives. The residential campus program provides a campus experience in the context of a strong Christian environment. To provide for the educational needs of working adults, Southern Wesleyan University offers adult evening programs that meet weekly throughout the calendar year ([I.5.a Catalog](#)).

Southern Wesleyan's residential campus program offers a wide variety of undergraduate majors in areas such as business, recreation, teacher education, music, English, communication, religion & ministry, biology, chemistry, math, computer science, forensics, pre-medicine, medical technology, history, psychology, social science and human services.

To serve the needs of the working adult, Southern Wesleyan offers adult and evening courses at learning centers in Greenville, Columbia, North Augusta, Charleston as well as Central.

Institution Mission Statement

Southern Wesleyan University is a Christ-centered, student-focused learning community devoted to transforming lives by challenging students to be dedicated scholars and servant-leaders who impact the world for Christ.

Institutional Core Values

Christ Centered: Purpose, Scholarship, Community, Transformation

- Purpose: A specific calling for a unique role in our world.
- Scholarship: Academic excellence in an innovative faith-centered environment.
- Community: Belonging to a connected and compassionate body of learners.
- Transformation: Christ's redemptive work in individual and corporate life.

We believe that every individual has a God given purpose, brought to fruition by the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit and the challenge of scholarship. As we participate in a consecrated community of learners we are continuously transformed into the image of Christ both individually and corporately.

1.2. Summarize the professional education unit at your institution and what is its relationship to other units at the institution that are involved in the preparation of professional educators?

The Education Unit

Southern Wesleyan's Professional Education Unit functions under the institution's governance system as the School of Education (SOE). The SOE oversees majors in the following areas: early childhood education, elementary education, special education, and physical education. The SOE also oversees teacher education programs from the following departments in the College of Arts and Sciences, music, English, biology, mathematics, and soon to be social studies (fall 2014). Faculty in these departments, who teach professional education courses, and serve as supervisors of clinical experiences, are considered members of the unit and as such are included in meetings and discussion regarding the operation of the unit.

The dean of the School of Education is the head of the unit and has responsibility for its day-to-day operation. The dean is responsible for all personnel and budgetary matters and oversees the long and short term goal planning for the Unit. Each major within the unit is headed by a department chair. And each major has a standing advisory council comprised of public school partners, alumni, and current students which meets twice yearly. The dean of the unit represents the SOE as a member of the Academic Council which deals with broad issues of academic policy and procedure, including the review of proposals and actions from those faculty committees

concerned with the development of academic affairs. The SOE is also represented on the faculty board for new programs. ([Overview and Conceptual Framework](#))

The Mission of the School of Education

The mission of the School of Education is to prepare men and women to become Christian educators by fostering scholarship and a Christian ethic of care in the image and nature of Jesus so as to produce teachers who are leaders and world changers within the education profession.

1.3. Summarize program offered at the initial and advanced preparation levels (including off-campus, distance learning, and alternate route programs), status of state approval, national recognition, and if applicable, findings or other national accreditations associations related to the preparation of education professionals.

Teacher candidates are guided in the acquisition of skills that are necessary to plan and implement instruction in early childhood education, elementary education, special education and physical education. The SOE also oversees teacher education programs from the following departments in the College of Arts and Sciences, music, English, biology, mathematics, and soon to be social studies (fall 2014). Further, students receive instruction in specific aspects of assessment, classroom management, and professionalism that facilitate the improvement of student learning and candidate instruction. This is accomplished through interacting with experienced university faculty in the classroom and with public school partners in the field experiences. Programs at the initial level are offered on the main campus in Central. A coordinator of field studies oversees the practicum and clinical experiences of candidates at the initial level. At the advanced level, the SOE offers programs in administration and supervision for P-12 educators at the learning centers in Greenville, Columbia, North Augusta, Charleston as well as Central. The coordinator of graduate field experiences oversees the clinical for candidates in the advance program. A non-certification program at the advanced level, a master's in classroom leadership for P-12 educators, is offered at all the regional sites. This program will go to a distant learning format in 2014.

All programs at the initial preparation level have received both state and national recognition status ([Table I.5.d](#)). The unit is currently collecting data on the advance program in administration and supervision for submission for state and national recognition. Social studies at the initial level will seek state for 2014 and national recognition in the next cycle. Music has been state and nationally recognized by the National Association of School Music (NASM).

1.4. Summarize the basic tenants of the conceptual framework, institutional standards, and candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills and professional dispositions.

The conceptual framework for the initial and advanced programs establishes the shared vision for the unit's efforts in preparing “**educators who demonstrate scholarship within a Christian ethic of care**” for service in P-12 schools. It is the basis upon which programs, courses, teaching,

candidate performance, scholarship, service, and unit accountability are established and sustained. The conceptual framework is knowledge-based, articulated, shared, coherent, and consistent with the institution and unit mission statements. The mission statement of the unit is subsumed under the institutional mission statement so that both work in concert in the preparation of teacher candidates. Both statements are established on a commitment to develop leaders who are academically and professionally informed from a biblical perspective in order to influence the global society for the benefit of all humankind. In keeping with the ultimate mission of the University to integrate faith, learning, and living, the School of Education seeks to instill principles related to faith, living, learning, and professionalism within those pursuing education degrees with the intention of obtaining initial teacher certification or enhancing professional growth. The SOE mission was re-examined in 2013 when the university mission statement was reviewed and reconstituted and found to be in line with the institutions.

It is the mission of the School of Education to develop “educators who demonstrate scholarship within a Christian ethic of care.” This theme embraces the basic goals that facilitate the success of the candidate engaged in the pre-professional experience, as well as experienced teachers in the field. Within this context, the SOE seeks to instill within its candidates competency in scholarship, a Christian ethic of care, service, sensitivity to diversity, reflective practice, technology competency, and leadership. These goals, which are described in the narrative of the conceptual framework, are foundational to the mission of the university and the School of Education.

All teacher candidates are expected to reflect a level of scholarship that is commensurate with their level of expertise and experience. Not only is the teacher candidate expected to demonstrate scholarship, but is also expected to demonstrate a disposition of a “Christian ethic of care” as basic ideas related to faith, living, learning, and professionalism are presented throughout the academic experience. Therefore, teacher candidates are expected to demonstrate the following dispositions:

- Demonstrate a Christian ethic of care towards self by exhibiting a biblical approach to life that is demonstrated by a passion for learning;
- Demonstrate a Christian ethic care towards learners by being enthusiastic about teaching as demonstrated by compassionate and respectful interactions with learners;
- Demonstrate a Christian ethic of care towards colleagues by engaging in compassionate and respectful interactions with colleagues; and
- Demonstrate a Christian ethic of care towards the community by recognizing it as an integral part of the learning process by valuing its pluralistic nature.

II. Scholarship

Scholarship is an element critical to an educational institution, so it is an essential part of the mission statements of both the university and the School of Education. Specifically, the School

of Education sought consensus among its faculty, students, and constituents regarding a definition of scholarship as it applies to its mission statement.

A. Content and Methodology

Scholarship is defined in terms of teacher competence in content and pedagogy.

B. Technology

The impact of technology on classroom practice requires teacher candidates to be proficient in the use of and cognizant of the means by which judicious use of technology can enhance classroom practice and positively impact learner outcomes.

C. Sensitivity to Issues of Diversity

Individuals who conduct their interactions with others on the basis of a Christian ethic of care are sensitive to the needs of others. An ethic of care shapes the social, emotional, and academic conditions in classrooms (Noddings, 1992). Teachers see children as individuals and not just a part of the collective whole. As caring and sensitive influences in children's lives, teachers help fulfill the social and moral purposes of schooling.

D. Reflection on Teacher Impact on Student Learning

Thinking about students – what they already know, what they need to know, how they learn – is at the core of teachers' practice (Kroll, et al., 2005). Teachers understand that good decision making coupled with the other skills gained in the study of content and pedagogy can make effective teaching occur.

E. Leadership through Professional Competence

As scholars who demonstrate a Christian ethic of care through their actions, teachers should exhibit a professional demeanor. As professional educators, they clarify objectives, ideas, and thoughts. They define the values that give direction to their lives and teaching. Individuals define themselves and their surroundings according to their attitudes, beliefs, and values (Rubin, 1985).

III. Christian Ethic of Care

A. Dispositions

A "Christian ethic of care" is the other element that is an essential part of the mission statements of both the University and the School of Education. The term "Christian" means "like Christ." Christ-like teachers are caring and intuitive, as well as empathetic and nurturing. They are models of integrity who show respect and equity toward others, while demonstrating a positive attitude and work ethic.

B. Service

Service to others is complementary to the idea of a Christian ethic of care because it is thought to be a natural by-product of caring. Both the University and the School of Education embrace the concept of service to others as part of their missions. ([Table I.5.c](#))

I.5 Exhibits

See AIMS or Link

<http://swuncate.pbworks.com/w/page/62560116/Overview%20and%20Conceptual%20Framework>