

REVIEW TEAM REPORT

PROGRAM APPROVAL VISIT TO:

Colby College
Educator Preparation Programs
Waterville, Maine
November 29 – December 2, 2009

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I. Introduction

This report is based upon a review of the self-study developed by the Education Program faculty from Colby College and from data collected and reviewed during the on-site visit that occurred November 29-December 2, 2009. During the review, interviews were conducted with current students, faculty, staff, administrators, cooperating teachers, cooperating principals, and alumni. In addition, most campus facilities were visited and all documentation in the Exhibit Room was reviewed.

Founded in 1813, Colby College is a small, private, highly selective college whose primary goal is to provide its graduates with a well-rounded education in the liberal arts and sciences. Throughout its history, Colby has maintained its commitment to the preparation of educators. As stated in the self-study, Colby strongly believes that the best preparation for a teaching career in secondary education results from a “strong background in the liberal arts, including intensive and concentrated study of the subject to be taught, and appropriate coursework and clinical experience in education.”

Although Colby has never offered an Education major, it has long offered coursework and field experience enabling students to become certified in secondary education in the following content areas: English, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. In 1990, Colby instituted minors consisting of 6-7 courses that would complement student majors. At that point, the professional certification minor, an interdisciplinary minor, was approved. In 1991, significant student interest in educational theories and practices led to the development of an “open” minor in education. Additional minors in Human Development and Environmental Education were added in 1992 and 2003 respectively. The four minors remain under the purview of the Education program.

The State Team’s visit focuses on the Professional Certification minor which enables students to earn secondary certification in Mathematics, Physical Science, Life Science, English Language Arts and Foreign Language. Five students graduated with the minor in 2005, 3 students in 2008, 8 students in 2009, and 4 are expected to graduate in 2010. Although the number of students completing the minor appears to be small, Education program faculty often have to turn students away from courses because they have reached the maximum enrollment size of twenty students.

II. Summary of the Unit's Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework(s) establishes the shared vision for a unit's efforts in preparing educators to work effectively in P-12 schools. It provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service, and unit accountability. The conceptual framework(s) is knowledge-based, articulated, shared, coherent, consistent with the unit and/or institutional mission, and continuously evaluated. The conceptual framework(s) provides the bases that describe the unit's intellectual philosophy, which distinguishes graduates of one unit from those of another.

Level: Initial

Findings:

The conceptual framework of Colby College's Education Program is encapsulated in the phrase "teaching for social justice." This framework is informed by John Dewey's distinction between "education as a function of society" versus "society as a function of education." In other words, the shared vision for the Education Program graduates is to be change agents in the field of teaching by being "committed to promoting social justice, both in schools and in society at large." The conceptual framework is prominent in the college catalogue under the Education section, the Education Program brochure, and the webpage.

This focused vision is congruent with several of the educational precepts identified by the college, specifically,

- To learn how people different from oneself have contributed to the richness of society, how prejudice limits such enrichment, and how each individual can confront intolerance
- To understand one's values and the values of others
- To explore one's responsibility to contribute to the world beyond the campus (Colby College Catalogue, 2009-2010, page 3)

Faculty, students, and alumni clearly articulate that social justice is the central ideology of the Education Program. When asked to define what social justice means, faculty and students reference an informed effort and commitment to counteract inequality involving civic engagement in meaningful and mutually productive ways. A multi-dimensional perspective exploring race; ethnicity; class; gender; gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender questioning (GLBTQ) voices is encouraged and embraced with theory, inquiry and practice being emphasized. While meeting with current students, a student indicated that the program accentuates being "not just a teacher, but a teacher who is conscientious." Another student responded that "social justice is a lens" that completely shifted how she saw students when she went into the classroom. For instance, she related that if a child was misbehaving in the classroom, instead of thinking solely about how to get that child to behave, she would look critically at the forces outside of the moment that could be affecting that child.

Even though students readily identify how social justice is woven throughout the professional certification minor, the faculty are conducting a curricular review to identify course learning objectives that link to the conceptual framework and then have a “loop back” to inform the conceptual framework. One example of this already being instituted is at the end of the program when a professional conversation occurs between faculty and candidates. A question is posed regarding what social justice means to the candidate and how it will inform his/her future. Feedback from this conversation is then used to reflect on the efficacy of the conceptual framework.

Clearly, teaching social justice is the linchpin of the Education Program at Colby College and its impact has been powerful as underscored by the students and alumni. However, one important component of the conceptual framework is that it includes the knowledge base that is used to support the conceptual framework. In an interview with the faculty, an inquiry was made as to the knowledge base that informed the social justice emphasis beyond John Dewey who was the sole reference in the Status Report. Readily, faculty shared theorists and researchers within their areas of class, gender, race or GLBTQ; however, the Status Report did not reflect that the Education Program had integrated these theoretical underpinnings that have informed their collective commitment to teach for social justice. At this time, it is a mosaic of implicit understanding rather than an explicitly stated integration of research that contributes to the shared vision of the importance of teaching for social justice.

In summary, the Colby College Education Program’s Conceptual Framework is clearly expressed and representative of what is taught and valued. Theorists and researchers within the varied areas of faculty expertise have informed this commitment, but a shared, cohesive knowledge base has not been articulated.

Commendation

The Education Program’s mission of “teaching for social justice” is known and articulated by faculty, students, and administrators across the institution and area school partners.

Recommendations

The theories and research that support the tenets of the Conceptual Framework need to be identified and described, thereby providing evidence of a solid knowledge base as is required by Chapter 114.

III. Summary of Findings for Each Standard

Standard One: Initial Teacher Candidate Performance

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other professional school personnel know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

Level: Initial

Findings:

The Education Program's Professional Certification Program enables Colby students to earn secondary certification teaching certificates (grades 7-12) in Language Arts, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Life Science, Physical Science, and Social Studies. Standard One of this program review focuses on the candidates, ensuring that the program meets professional, state, and institutional standards. To this end, an examination must be made of the degree requirements as well as the particular certification program requirements that must be aligned with *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards*.

Colby College highlights the importance of a liberal arts and sciences background for all of their graduates. To support this commitment, distribution requirements span the arts, historical studies, literature, quantitative reasoning, natural sciences, social sciences, with a course in English composition, two 3- or 4- credit-hour courses in diversity and a foreign language requirement. An academic major is required and typically ranges from 10 to 12 courses that are 3- to 4-credits each. Hence, this requirement far exceeds Maine Department of Education's 24-credit subject content requirement for secondary certification. All certification students must complete an academic major within the area in which they are pursuing certification. Candidates must maintain a 3.0 grade point average (B) in order to continue in the Professional Certification Program or submit a letter of support from faculty in their major. Arts and sciences faculty felt strongly that the breadth and depth of their majors provided the certification candidates with extensive background so that as future grade 7 to 12 teachers they would be prepared to address questions that would go beyond the middle school or high school textbook.

The Professional Certification Program curriculum is composed of seven core courses and two electives. The seven core courses are as follows:

ED 231	Teaching for Social Justice
ED 215	Children and Adolescents in Schools and Society
ED 374	Teaching Students with Special Needs
ED 351	Practicum in Education
ED 431	Curriculum and Methods
ED 433	Senior Student Teaching Practicum (fall semester)
ED 437	Senior Student Teaching Practicum (Jan Plan)

The Education Program's ideological framework of teaching for social justice is clearly present throughout the core requirements and also present in the following sampling of electives:

ED 217	Boys to Men
ED 235	Multiculturalism and the Political Project
ED 322	Social Class and Schooling
ED 332	Women, Girls, and the Culture of Education

This thread of social justice continues through to the culminating project that incorporates the professional portfolio and a professional conversation conducted with two faculty members who have reviewed the candidate's portfolio. This conversation in particular allows a candidate to explain further how he/she has met the standards and also, as mentioned in the Conceptual Framework section of this report, what social justice means to the candidate and how it will inform his/her future.

The *Maine Learning Results* and *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* are introduced in ED 231, Teaching for Social Justice, and are examined more fully within their subject area within the Curriculum and Methods course. Candidates also are asked to observe how the standards are reflected in a teacher's curriculum. Moreover, a unit plan is developed with linkages to the *Maine Learning Results* and is implemented during the final student teaching practicum. In reviewing course syllabi, most of the core courses and one of the elective courses mention *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* and cue the students to start working on the culminating project of the portfolio. Last year during a retreat, the faculty committed to having all syllabi include such a statement about the portfolio with suggested connections between state teacher certification standards and course assignments. As each class is offered, this addition will be made.

Candidates during student teaching are assessed by the Director of Student Teaching utilizing a new form that is aligned with *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards*. This form is open-ended involving anecdotal evidence and "dis-evidence." Cooperating teachers do not use this form but instead complete bi-weekly reviews of student teachers in which they check attendance, punctuality, reliability/dependability; self-initiative/independence; interaction with students; response to students' needs; ability to reflect and improve performance; and responsible for school materials and procedures. These criteria are neither aligned with *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* nor do they appear to be inclusive of the content found in *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards*. Hence, there is limited ongoing and continuous feedback with respect to the state teacher certification standards from a central person who is overseeing this significant field experience.

The culminating project in the Professional Certification Program is "a professional portfolio and professional conversation." All portfolios that were provided by the Education Program were reviewed and this entailed candidates who graduated from 2006 to 2009. Artifacts were organized according to *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification*

Standards providing ample documentation for each standard, although a few concerns emerged. First, while a good percentage of the documentation was papers that provided substantial and impressive knowledge, the next step of demonstrating application would be helpful to show full proficiency. Second, unit plans identified the applicable *Maine Learning Results*, yet no lesson plan objectives were aligned explicitly with these standards. Another concern revolved around an indicator from Standard Three of *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* involving the ability to make appropriate provisions and adaptations for individual students who have particular learning differences or needs. Although an ability to differentiate curriculum was shown through papers, journal entries and specific techniques, a mindset of considering "appropriate provisions and adaptations" as an automatic part of a lesson plan was not found. Finally, the incorporation of technology was demonstrated at a rudimentary level incorporating PowerPoint, video clips, and Internet sites but lacked the sophistication possible at the middle school level with the Maine Learning Technology Initiative. At the high school level this may be due to limited availability of technology in the schools, but regardless, Standard Five of *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* specifies the use of educational technology to broaden student knowledge about technology as well as to deliver instruction, encouraging all students to use technology and helping them to access that technology, and providing students with strategies for evaluating the content encountered via technology. Faculty mentioned in interviews that the students already were sophisticated in technology, and the Academic Information Technology Services indicate that workshops and one-on-one training is available for students; yet that translation to incorporate new media and other technology into their instruction is at a basic level.

In summary, evidence was found that the Education Program's Professional Certification Program ensures candidates' demonstration of the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to help all students learn. Nevertheless, some attention to detailing explicitly the alignment with *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* and the *Maine Learning Results* would be beneficial as would documenting performance outcomes in clarifying requirements to meet state standards.

Overall Assessment of Standard

A. Commendation

The fact that candidates must maintain a 3.0 grade point average in order to continue in the Professional Certification Program is admirable.

B. Recommendations

1. Continue including *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* in all syllabi along with identifying how the standards align to the course assignments.
2. Performance outcomes would enhance documentation of meeting *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* and aid candidates in demonstrating proficiency.

3. Aligning lessons to the *Maine Learning Results*, with clearly identified differentiation strategies, will help candidates focus on continuing to meet the needs of all children.
4. The cooperating teacher's culminating review of a student teacher's performance should be aligned with *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards*.
5. Fully incorporating technological advances that improve instruction would enhance the candidates' ability to build upon and demonstrate proficiency in the effective uses of technology.

C. Review Team Decision

Standard One is Met.

Standard Two: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on the qualifications of applicants, the performance of candidates and graduates, and on unit operations to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

Level: Initial

Findings:

With the small number of students in the Colby College Teacher Certification Minor, the current systems of collecting and reviewing data to assess the qualifications of applicants and to evaluate the program appear generally effective. Multiple formats of assessment are used for students throughout the duration of their academic program as well as for program review. However, little progress has been made in recent years to collect and augment data on program graduates, in order to better assess the impact of the Teacher Certification Program on students' future career success and choices, ideologies, and continuing interests in the field of education.

Performance of Candidates and Graduates

Colby College has a competitive admissions process that ensures a high caliber of student on campus. In their sophomore year, Colby students declare their intended majors and minors, but it is not until their junior spring that they apply for entrance into the Professional Certification Program.

To be considered candidates for the Professional Certification Minor in Education, all candidates must submit an application in their junior year, meet with the Director of Student Teaching, and have a GPA of at least 3.0 in their major and in the Education minor courses. Any student who does not meet this GPA cut off must, alternatively, submit a letter verifying good academic standing in their major. The application serves more as an indicator of commitment from the student than a selectivity tool. Students are

monitored carefully throughout their coursework and faculty members get to know students well. Because of this rapport, faculty can assess student dispositions, academic strengths and challenges, and readiness for the senior practicum experience, counseling students and directing them in new directions if necessary.

At some point during their senior year, although not as a prerequisite into, or checkpoint within, the program, the candidates are expected to take and pass both Praxis I and Praxis II exams. These Praxis exams are required in order for the candidate to be considered a “program completer” and to be submitted specifically to Maine’s Certification Department.

Candidates are assessed formally and informally by their cooperating teachers during their senior Practicum experience. Throughout the fall semester and Jan Plan, cooperating teachers provide bi-weekly check-off reports that focus primarily on dispositions. At the end of fall semester and Jan Plan, the cooperating teacher sends a more comprehensive evaluation of the student teacher’s performance for the term. These evaluations are not aligned with *Maine’s Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards* at this time.

The Director of Teacher Education maintains ongoing communication with the student teachers, assessing their progress throughout their senior year. Beginning in the junior year, the Director holds meetings, talks with students one on one, sends out notices, and assists with the application process. The Director observes each student teacher at least twice per semester, evaluating the candidate according to a rubric aligned to the *Maine’s Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards*.

In the spring of senior year, candidates submit a Professional Teaching Portfolio documenting proficiency with *Maine’s Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards*. Artifacts may include such items as unit plans, class papers, evaluations and other evidence of the standards. While some artifacts and rationales align well with certain standards, one area to continue to improve upon, as mentioned in Standard One, is to better ensure that the artifacts for practice-based standards demonstrate clear practice outcomes, rather than, for example, a course paper presenting a theoretical construct or understanding. The distinction here is that the Portfolio should demonstrate the ability to perform the outcome, not simply a theoretical underpinning.

The Portfolio is read by at least two faculty members, followed by a “Professional Conversation” with the candidate and a formal letter to the candidate summarizing the outcome of the review. This year, the Education Department has worked on a rubric to use as a standardized assessment tool for the portfolios.

By the end of their senior year, candidates will have completed the requisite 450 hours of classroom hours, accumulated over the sequence of courses in the minor. Specifically, these hours break down to comprise: 60 placement hours in ED231; 120 hours in ED351; 20 hours in ED374; 130 hours in ED433 during Senior Fall; and 120 hours in ED437 during Jan Plan of senior year. Although the practicum for ED351 during Junior Jan Plan

term may be completed at a distance, thus compromising the supervision, assessment and consistency across these experiences, the placements for ED433 and 437 are stable, with the same cooperating teacher, providing a continuous experience in a local school system that can be easily monitored by both cooperating teachers and college supervisors.

Although there is little substantive and systematic data on graduates of the Teacher Certification Program, Colby College has ongoing initiatives to track graduates as they transition from Colby. However, it is difficult to see how the current data collection and analysis of the College assists the Education program specifically in its analysis in the absence of a concerted alumni outreach effort. While faculty maintain informal ties to program graduates, it is vital that the Education Department work to systematically gather and review data on graduates in order to better track outcomes and impact on their students. One possibility that emerged during an interview is that of utilizing the easily-accessible Colby Alumni Network (“CAN”) available to all faculty and students. This database collects a wide range of information on graduates that might provide a starting point for the Education Department for their own tracking and data collection system.

At this time, the Facebook page for the Department does not indicate active usage. At present, nothing corroborates its value or use toward a viable future as an assessment tool beyond that of, potentially, social networking.

Program Evaluation

Professional Certification Program evaluation appears to be conducted via two primary means: the college course evaluations done uniformly across the campus using a standard tool of assessment, and the more informal “Professional Conversation” that occurs individually with each candidate and two faculty members at the end of their senior year. In addition, the Education Program faculty has a one-day retreat each semester in which to reflect on, review, and evaluate their programming. The new portfolio rubric was a recent outcome of a retreat session.

There is no systematic means of program evaluation from the cooperating teachers at this time. Instead, open communication is maintained, and cooperating teachers converse with the Director of Teacher Education via email, phone and in person about issues and concerns, both about student teachers and about the program in general. The Director meets with cooperating teachers in the fall and touches base as needed throughout the practicum experience. The greatest concern from cooperating teachers was the lack of immersion and continuity due to the Jan Plan coinciding with Midterm Exam schedules.

Faculty evaluation happens as part of the college protocols for personnel actions, and the Chair of the Education Department submits an annual report from the department to the Dean of Faculty each spring.

Institutionally, the academic program reports and overseer reviews provide some feedback and data for the Education Department as a whole.

Overall Assessment of Standard

A. Rationale for Decision/Recommendations

The Colby College Department of Education maintains a strong rapport and ongoing communication with both its current students and its graduates. It also has a highly qualified pool of cooperating teachers who are generally satisfied with the program. However, while a number of informal assessment systems exist for evaluating the candidates within the Professional Certification Program as well as the program itself, the State Review Team could find no evidence of working toward a comprehensive system of assessment as cited in the 2004 report.

B. Commendation

The Department's faculty retreat each semester permits time to reflect on programming strengths and needs.

C. Recommendations

1. If Praxis I and Praxis II are benchmarks for program completers, better mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that candidates meet these requirements.
2. Given the assessment expertise of the new program director, the unit's existing data collection system should more formally document program processes and outcomes from students, graduates, and school partners.

D. Review Team Decision

Standard Two is Met.

Standard Three: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

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

Level: Initial

Findings:

Colby's field experiences and clinical practice, referred to as civic engagement and student teaching, respond to the academic needs of candidates while also providing early and on-going experiences with youth in classrooms, schools, and community organizations. The unit's faculty design these civic engagement and student-teaching (CE/ST) experiences to facilitate the development of the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to help all students learn. There is a clear and strong emphasis on the social justice framework throughout these experiences.

Collaboration Between Unit and School Partners

The Director of Student Teaching (DST)¹, who supervises anywhere from four to ten student-teachers per year, works with school personnel to identify placements that match the candidate's interests in terms of level and subject matter. The expectations for cooperating teachers are that they are highly qualified, have successfully taught for a minimum of two years, and have expressed interest and willingness to work with a Colby student-teacher.

Both school personnel and unit faculty described similarly the ways the program designs, delivers, and evaluates CE/ST experiences. School personnel do not participate in the design of field experiences. However, all expressed a clear understanding of expectations of the program and its candidates as well as appreciation for the openness and responsiveness of program faculty to suggestions and concerns regarding the design and delivery of CE/ST. Program faculty design CE/ST experiences that complement coursework and academic requirements. They then communicate to school administrators or directly with school-based faculty the course requirements and expectations as well as their students' interests in a school placement. School administrators forward these requests to department chairs or to their faculty. Cooperating teachers self-select based on their own interest, willingness, and ability to make a match with a candidate's interests. If there are enough teachers interested in a student placement to require a selection, the administrator may confer with the DST and the candidate to make the best match.

¹ The DST is an accomplished school professional. She has extensive experience in Maine schools, beginning with four years as a sixth grade teacher, three years as a special educator, one year as special education department chair, and four years as a special education director. She has taught at Colby for almost twenty years and anticipates completing her doctorate in May, 2010.

Cooperating teachers and the DST collaborate in providing the candidate with feedback and conducting evaluations of candidate performance. Roughly every other week (depending on the teacher, context, and need), cooperating teachers provide feedback to candidates on a two-page evaluation form that asks cooperating teachers to assess attendance, punctuality, reliability/dependability, self-initiative/independence, interaction with students, response to students' needs, ability to reflect and improve performance, and responsibility for school materials and procedures. At the end of the fall semester and January student-teaching placements, the cooperating teacher evaluates the candidate on several characteristics: 1) command of the subject matter; 2) ability to identify, assess, and evaluate individual needs of students; 3) clarity of presentation of subject matter; 4) command and variety of teaching methods; 5) command and variety of AV equipment/materials; 6) command and variety of questions and ability to generate student response; 7) enthusiasm, energy, initiative; 8) professional behavior; 9) rapport with students; 10) classroom management skills; 11) communication skills; 12) rapport with adults. These evaluations also prompt the cooperating teacher to identify strengths and areas to improve, as well as to recommend whether or not the candidate should receive course credit.

The DST typically observes the student-teacher two to four times per course depending on individual student need for support. The DST's visits include pre- and post-observation conferences. The DST documents these visits with a one-page memo describing the candidate's performance, acknowledging successful performance elements and identifying challenges. This letter also poses questions and provides suggestions to the candidate for improvement. Starting with the second observation, the DST begins to document evidence or "dis-evidence" that the candidate has met each of the *Maine's Ten Initial Teacher Certification Standards*. This documentation and feedback continues throughout the remainder of the student-teaching experience. Students also provide evidence from their field experiences and clinical practice in their portfolios, which are reviewed by the Director of Student Teaching and another member of the program faculty in a Professional Conversation. All candidates successfully complete student-teaching, although some choose not to pursue Maine teaching certification.

Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences

Candidates, program completers, program faculty, and school personnel were all familiar with the program's conceptual framework, although they varied in the degree to which they could speak to how the field experiences reflect this conceptual framework. In their descriptions of their field experiences and student-teaching, school personnel and candidates described how teaching for social justice helps them to understand the broader context that influences how prepared a student might be to learn. This understanding in turn facilitates a more compassionate and responsive interaction with the secondary student that justifies the need to be versatile in their use of multiple teaching and assessment strategies.

Students have extensive, intensive, multiple, and varied opportunities to work with youth and gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to teach all students. There appear to be three avenues with progressive stages through which they work toward the Teaching

Standards. First, there are opportunities both through and beyond the program to interact with area youth informally and outside schools. For example, through volunteering with the Mentoring program or other volunteer programs coordinated by the Goldfarb Center for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement, candidates come to understand the social context within which their future students live, learn, and grow. Second, early and ongoing experiences through civic engagement assignments in required education courses such as Teaching for Social Justice (60 hours) and Teaching Students with Special Needs (20 hours) require all candidates to fulfill a field experience requirement in an area school. Some of these placements might be in elementary schools, gifted and talented programs, or with a high school literacy coach, giving candidates extensive early exposure to school culture and opportunities to apply theoretical learning about social justice as well as developmental psychology. Third, candidates gain intensive experiences through the four-week, 120-hour January practica (one typically in the third year and the last one during their senior year) as well as concurrently enrolling in the student teaching seminar, Curriculum Methods, during which they spend ten hours a week in area high school classrooms for thirteen weeks. In these placements, they develop an understanding of the lives of children and adolescents within a socioeconomic context that supports the success of some while limiting opportunities for others.

In spite, or because, of these varied opportunities, school personnel raised a couple of concerns. First, several school personnel expressed concern that the non-consecutive student-teaching resulting from the mismatch between the school and college academic calendars was “not ideal” and did not provide candidates with a full immersion experience in which they would develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be successful educators who could adapt readily to the daily exigencies of school life. Second, one school personnel suggested greater focus on middle-level education and its unique needs. It is worth noting, however, that candidates and recent program completers did not consider the discontinuity of field experiences or the calendar mismatch as problematic. One candidate and program faculty member considered that the opportunity to review, proctor, and evaluate exams during the month of January presented a valid learning opportunity for student-teachers.

Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes to Help All Students Learn. The unit communicates to candidates and cooperating teachers the entry and exit criteria for student teaching in course materials (such as the “Civic Engagement Expectations and Policies” for Teaching for Social Justice) and the student-teacher handbook, in which Appendix IV outlines the “Goals, Requirements, & Expectations of Student Teachers.” Depending on the course associated with the CE/ST, cooperating teachers receive a letter and/or information packet that includes evaluation forms, course syllabus, and student-teacher handbook. Candidates apply for student-teaching, demonstrate that they have a 3.0 GPA in their major (or a letter of support from a faculty member from their major department) and the prerequisite coursework and practica.

All candidates are exposed to diverse students, primarily in terms of socioeconomic background and ability, but also in terms of race, ethnicity, and sexual identity. Cooperating teachers, program faculty, candidates, and program completers identified, in

particular, the pervasive challenges presented by the often wide-range of student learning abilities as well as the extent or lack of educational support and resources at home. Candidates in Teaching Students with Special Needs may work with special educators, speech and language clinicians, or, in rare instances, with the Gifted and Talented coordinator.

A couple of observations on candidates' opportunities to work with diverse learners: First, one program completer wondered whether the program should better prepare candidates for the specific kinds of diversity found in Maine schools such as information about recent immigrants from Southeast Asia or North Africa and how to work with students who may lack literacy skills in their first language. Second, portfolios presented as exhibits did not include any lesson or unit plans that differentiated instruction for different learners.

Candidates, program completers, program faculty, and school personnel expressed common expectations and experiences with information technology. School personnel described candidates as well prepared to use technology to its "full potential," meaning that a SmartBoard was not merely used as a whiteboard, but also used to project and rotate three-dimensional mathematical models, for example. Administrators reported that the degree of technology use that candidates observed differed depending on the cooperating teacher's use. However, all those interviewed unanimously agreed that the candidates' proficiency with technologies often exceeded that of their cooperating teachers. Technologies available in cooperating schools include: SmartBoards, LCD, document and overhead projectors, laptops, and various applications including PowerPoint, NoteShare, and Moodle. Although candidates do not have access to laptops loaded with the applications that K-12 students use, when they needed support, they were able to use the school tech support person for a brief overview to bring them up to speed. One program completer interviewed is a technology leader after only a few years at his school.

Time for reflection and feedback accompanies all of these field experiences and clinical practice. Program faculty require candidates to keep journals reflecting on their CE/ST experiences. Student-teachers receive extensive and on-going feedback from their cooperating teacher, their peers (who are required to observe them teach at their site twice during the final fall practicum), and the DST.

Overall Assessment of Standard

A. Commendations

1. The conceptual framework of social justice provides a very applicable lens that helps candidates understand and respond effectively to the diverse learning needs of their students in their field experiences and clinical practice—particularly in the context of the socioeconomic diversity represented among students in area schools.

2. The field experiences and clinical practice closely align with academic program requirements, with a strong emphasis on reflection and application of theory to practice.

B. Review Team Decision

Standard Three is Met.

Standard Four: Diversity

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge and skills necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates, and diverse students in P-12 schools.

Level: Initial

Findings:

The unit's greatest strength in the area of diversity is the high level of professional expertise faculty members have in this field of research, broadly construed. Faculty members consistently engage in research relating to issues of gender, race, and social class as well as psychological and socio-cultural forms of oppression. This research appears in books produced by highly regarded publishers as well as peer-reviewed publications that are respected in the field of educational research, such as *Teachers College Record*. This research infuses and is woven through syllabi of courses required of Professional Certification minors, especially ED 231: Teaching for Social Justice, ED 215: Children and Adolescents in Schools and Society, ED 374: Teaching Students with Special Needs.

The unit provides opportunities for Professional Certification minors to develop and teach lessons that highlight the significance of diversity in a number of ways. First, through their courses candidates examine the diversity of special needs that public school students bring to classrooms. This is especially true in ED 374: Teaching Students with Special Needs, where students study, among other scholarship, Onosko and Jergensen's "Unit and Lesson Planning in an Inclusive Classroom" and complete a variety of written assignments, including a culminating writing assignment that focuses on student dis/abilities and strategies for meeting students' needs (including the use of technology to differentiate instruction). Moreover, in their lesson planning, candidates demonstrate practices that:

1. allow them to become familiar with their students' educational/personal backgrounds (such as asking students to create timelines that include what they consider to be the most important events of their lives)

2. differentiate instruction to meet a variety of student learning needs (such as modifying a vocabulary assignment to support learning disabled students in mainstream classes)
3. signify their ability to identify students who require additional support through IEPs.

The unit gathers data through assessments of candidate proficiencies in a number of ways. The unit, for instance, requires candidates to conduct journal writing and reflections on their experience working with diverse groups of students. The unit also requests that Supervising Teachers, during the “Practicum in Education,” assess candidates on the degree to which they demonstrate “concern for individual children’s needs.” Moreover, the unit requires that, during the “Senior Student Teaching Practicum,” Cooperating Teachers evaluate candidates:

1. on a bi-weekly basis on regarding candidates’ “response to students’ needs”
2. twice during the Practicum regarding the candidates’ “ability to identify, assess, and evaluate individual needs of students.”

A faculty member meets with candidates during and following the Senior Student Teaching Practicum to provide feedback to the candidates on improving the knowledge and skills relating to diversity and students with special needs.

The unit has taken a lead role at the College in fostering an awareness of diversity issues for students as they relate to both the campus community and the campus’ relationship with the local community (and especially local public schools). The College President stated that increasing diversity among faculty and students and learning to live in a more diverse campus community were institutional priorities and he credited Education faculty with being “on the leading edge” of these concerns. The President also emphasized that the Education Program, and students enrolled in Education courses, were “the most dynamic points of contact” with the local community.

The unit’s efforts to diversify its faculty have included job announcements that highlight the College’s commitment to excellence through diversity and strongly encourage application and nominations of persons of color, women, and members of other under-represented groups. Through the unit’s active involvement and leadership in campus-wide diversity efforts, moreover, faculty members are able to foster interest among students in Education program offerings, including the minor in Professional Certification.

The unit’s candidates interact with fellow-candidates from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, and socio-economic groups in a variety of ways and in a variety of settings. Candidates participate in diversity training through their first-year orientation experience; candidates take classes in which they work on group projects with fellow-candidates (such as in ED 374: Teaching Students with Special Needs); many candidates participate in the Colby Cares About Kids Mentoring Program, through which they receive six hours of training to work with diverse groups of children and youth in the local community; many

candidates participate in or lead on-campus discussions as part of the College's "Conversations on Race" program (for which the Education program offers academic credit); and candidates often serve on the college-wide Race and Racism Committee.

Either through field experiences or clinical practice, all of the unit's candidates spend time observing and/or teaching in local public schools. These schools are socio-economically diverse and, especially in the case of the City of Waterville, serve a significant number of special education students (25 percent of Waterville Senior High School students receive special education services) as well as students who qualify to receive free and reduced lunch. Cooperating teachers report that candidates are "strong in seeing students as individuals with individual needs," while the Waterville Senior High School principal describes the candidates as "adaptable" in working with students from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The principal also reports that candidates use a variety of different teaching methods/pedagogical approaches in working with students from diverse backgrounds.

Given the racial and ethnic homogeneity of the State of Maine, it is challenging to provide candidates with experiences working with students of color. Nevertheless, the unit has taken full advantage of the four-week Jan Plan experience to provide candidates with a practicum opportunity to work with predominantly disadvantaged African-American students in a North Carolina charter school established by a Colby graduate. The unit also hopes to establish, in the near future, an additional field placement opportunity in a school in Arkansas where, again, candidates will have the opportunity to work with students of color.

Overall Assessment of Standard

A. Commendation

The unit is to be commended for both infusing the concept of social justice throughout its program and intentionally using that concept to prepare candidates to understand and respond to the ways in which poverty, gender, sexual identity, and ability can impact student learning.

B. Review Team Decision

Standard Four is Met.

Standard Five: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance; they also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.

Level: Initial

Findings:

The Education program is staffed by four highly qualified faculty members who are committed to “promoting social justice, both in schools and in society at large.” This commitment is seen through a review of course syllabi and learning activities, faculty scholarship, and faculty service/professional activities. Three of the faculty hold a terminal degree, with the fourth anticipating the completion of her doctorate in May 2010. While four individuals comprise the teaching faculty, two of the faculty share a position so there is the equivalent of three full-time faculty positions. One adjunct faculty member teaches a course annually during Jan Plan. Cooperating teachers are all certified, highly qualified in their content area, have a minimum of two years of teaching experience, are highly recommended by their principals, and are excited to serve as mentors to pre-service teachers.

A review of course syllabi indicates that faculty are committed to challenging students to think critically about issues of power, privilege, and oppression in education and society. Faculty employ a variety of pedagogical and instructional strategies including small group work, lectures, group discussion, simulation, role-play, reflective writing, observation, and field work. Technology is modeled through the use of PowerPoint, video clips, graphic design, Moodle, internet searches, and web page development.

Faculty members are extremely productive scholars whose extensive publications include books, book chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles, monographs, and curricular materials. Faculty have presented a number of invited papers and presentations, as well as given a number of peer-reviewed conference presentations at annual meetings of organizations such as the American Educational Research Association, the Association of Moral Education, the American Psychological Association, International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies, the American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies, and the American Men’s Studies Association. The foci of the faculty’s scholarly activities are directly related to courses taught within the Education program.

Faculty service is reflective of the commitment to diversity, civic engagement, and social justice. On campus, service has included membership on the Race and Racism Committee, the Multicultural Literacy Working Group, the Diversity Oversight Team,

Faculty Allies, the Civic Engagement Coordinating Committee, and Colby Cares About Kids Steering Committee. Faculty have also served the larger community and state with their service as advisors to school Civil Rights teams, membership on area school boards and local community coalitions, and membership on committees formed by the State Department of Education and the Governor's office.

Tenure-track faculty who are not awarded credit for previous teaching experience are reviewed at the end of their first year, at the end of the sixth semester, and again at the end of their sixth year for promotion and tenure. As part of the review process, the Director of the Education Program observes the tenure-track faculty member's teaching and writes a formal report. The entire Education program and one outside faculty member, typically an affiliated faculty member from Psychology, then meet to review the course syllabi, discuss the tenure candidate's credentials, and write a recommendation which is forwarded to the nine-member, faculty-elected Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Dean of Faculty convenes a meeting of the committee during which time extensive discussion ensues and a vote of "yes" or "no" takes place. Each committee member writes a letter to the President justifying his/her vote(s). The Dean of Faculty, who also serves as the non-voting chair of the Committee on Promotion and Tenure, transmits the vote of the committee members, their written rationales, and his own evaluations and recommendations to the President. The Dean of Faculty and the President review the recommendations and forward their recommendations to the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) of the Board of Trustees. The EPC and the full Board have the authority to make their own decisions in each tenure case.

Student evaluations are a critical part of the faculty evaluation process and are completed at the conclusion of each course. Evaluation data is tabulated and sent to the Program Director for review. Evaluations are then distributed to each faculty member who can choose to prepare a written response to items within the evaluations. Student evaluations are included in the dossiers of faculty who are under review during the probationary period, during merit raise reviews which occur every three years, and during reviews for tenure and/or promotion.

Resources to support faculty are extremely generous. Each faculty member is awarded \$2,000 for travel. In addition, until earning tenure, each faculty member receives \$5,000 per year in start-up funds to support faculty development and research activities. All faculty can apply for Divisional Grant Funds worth up to \$3500. These funds are available annually to faculty and awards are voted upon by department and division chairs. Faculty can also make individual requests to the Dean for additional funding to meet unique needs.

Overall Assessment of Standard

A. Commendations

1. The quality of faculty scholarship is exemplary.

2. Faculty teaching, scholarship, and professional service reflect a longstanding, passionate commitment to social justice as stated in the Conceptual Framework and all program documentation.

B. Review Team Decision

Standard Five is Met.

Standard Six: Unit Governance and Resources

The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

Level: Initial

Findings:

The Education Program exists as a stand alone program within the academic structure of Colby. Leadership for the program is provided by the program director who regularly convenes program faculty to discuss the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum. The program faculty who have the authority to “plan, deliver, and operate coherent programs of study within the program” oversee the following four minors: the **Education minor**, the **Environmental Education** minor, the **Human Development** minor, and the **Professional Certification** minor. Between 2004 and 2008, 109 students completed one of the four education minors with 30 of those students completing the minor in Professional Certification. Faculty and student interviews indicate that Education courses are so popular that sometimes students are unable to register for over-enrolled courses.

The Education Program is a member of the Interdisciplinary Studies Division, one of four academic divisions at Colby. Faculty from all programs within the Division meet monthly to discuss issues, share information and concerns, and plan for the future. Faculty-elected Division chairs meet regularly with the Dean of Faculty regarding all academic matters.

The Education program is staffed by four faculty members. Two faculty members share an appointment and another is employed in a 4/5 continuing contract position. Ultimately, the program is staffed with the equivalent of three full-time faculty. Administrative support is provided by an administrative assistant and three student workers. Full-time faculty are expected to carry a load of five courses per year with most choosing to teach two courses each semester and one during Jan Plan. Senior student teaching is capped at ten students, although there are only four students currently enrolled in the course.

Exhibits and faculty interviews indicate faculty believe they have adequate time for advising, scholarly activity, professional development, and collaborative work in schools with the assigned teaching load.

Evidence suggests that the budget adequately supports the needs of the Education program. Each year, the Dean of Faculty, invites program directors to submit requests, with associated justifications, for the following year's budget. These requests are reviewed by the Dean and the financial administrators. Compensation for cooperating teachers is included in the budget and is broken down as follows: \$100 for a 60 hour semester-long placement; \$200 for a 120 hour Jan Plan placement; and \$350 for a 250 hour senior student teaching placement. Funds are available to support student transportation for student teaching and civic engagement. Although not included in the Education budget, faculty are each allocated \$2,000 for professional development and travel, and they can also apply for up to \$3500 in Divisional Grant Funds. Tenure track-faculty receive \$5,000 in start up funds until they are awarded tenure.

Education faculty offices, a dedicated seminar room, and a student research office are all housed in the new Diamond Building. The Colby campus is wireless and Diamond offers classrooms with state-of-the-art technology.

Colby offers significant instructional technology support for students, staff, and faculty. In addition to numerous professional staff members, Colby employs approximately 90 students to answer technology-related questions, serve as student tutors, provide training, and monitor labs. Technology support is available six days a week across a wide range of daytime and evening hours. Assistance can be accessed by calling the Help Desk, stopping in to one of the support areas, using insta-chat, visiting the wiki, or by making an appointment. Over 600 Colby community members, including approximately 300 students, were assisted through one-on-one sessions last year. Mini-workshops focusing on "new" things are offered at the start of each semester, although attendance across workshops last year totaled approximately 30 participants. Computer labs exist in Lovejoy, Miller Library, Olin, and Diamond. Both Mac and PC platforms are supported and both types of computers are available in the labs.

Colby houses the Miller Library, an Art and Music library, and a Science library. Each department is assigned a librarian whose website includes contact information, guides created by him/her, core data bases, and access to handouts from library sessions offered in Education courses. The Miller Library is open Sunday through Saturday 8:00 A.M. to 1:00 A.M. when the College is in session. Librarian assistance is available through the on-line Miller Help Desk, one-on-one meetings, e-mails, and by phone. Extensive holdings in Education and related fields are available. The annual Education allocation for individual books, DVDs, and non-periodical series is \$6,825, while the annual budget for periodicals in Education is \$1,266. The inter-library loan service provides students, faculty, and staff with complete access to the library holdings of the Maine State Library, the University of Maine System, Bates, and Bowdoin.

Overall Assessment of Standard

A. Commendations

Resources available to support faculty development, particularly for tenure-track faculty, are outstanding.

B. Review Team Decision

Standard Six is Met.

IV. Recommendation to the State Board of Education

The Review Team recommends that the Colby College Education Program be granted full five-year approval by the Maine State Board of Education from fall 2009 through fall 2014.

V. List of Individuals Interviewed and Sources of Evidence

A. INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

Adam Howard, Associate Professor of Education and Chair
Karen Kusiak, Assistant Professor of Education
Alice Elliott, Director of Civic Engagement
Robert Gastaldo, Professor of Geology
Mark Tappan, Professor of Education
Lyn Mikel-Brown, Professor of Education
William Adams, President
Ed Yeterian, VP for Academic Affairs & Dean of Faculty
Joe Atkins, Assistant Dean of Students/Posse Advisor
Marilyn Pukkila, Reference Librarian
Ellen Freeman, Academic Information Technology Services
Michael Donihue, Associate VP for Academic Affairs
Bill Wilson, Director Institutional Research
Jan Holly, Associate Professor of Mathematics
Sui Kim Chea, Associate Director of Admissions
Tarja Raag, Associate Professor of Psychology
Diana Avella, Career Services
Darla Linville, Faculty Fellow in Education

Students

Karlyn Adler
Tim McCarthy
Alyssa Kavanagh
Sameera Anwar
Alea Starr
Sarajane Blair
Sonia Mahabir
Hayley Didriksen
Fran Gentile
Emily Warmington

Alumni

Zach Brown
Ben Hamptman

Public School Partners

Kristen Gilbert, Asst. Principal, Waterville Junior High School
Julie Letourneau, English, Waterville Senior High School
Ted Brown, Math, Waterville Senior High School
Don Reiter Principal, Waterville Senior High School
Andy Dumont, Social Studies, Waterville Senior High School
Paul Barnes, English, Waterville Junior High School

B. SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Exhibit Folder 1: Initial Teacher Candidate Performance

- **Colby College Catalogue**
- **Education Program Brochure**
- Copies of Education Program Web Pages <www.colby.edu/education >
- *Colby Viewbook* and application for admission
- Education Program Lobby Sheet (used by Admissions Office)
- Colby Statement on Diversity
- Student Teaching Application
- *Student Teaching Handbook*
- Information packet for cooperating teachers
- *How to Develop a Professional Portfolio*
- Student Teacher observation forms—Colby’s and cooperating teachers’ (see Folder 3)
- List of Professional Certification Candidates, 2005-2010.
- New portfolio assessment rubric (Fall 2009)
- Student Portfolios (on table in Diamond 110):
 - Tyler Hales ‘06
 - Chris Hoffman ‘06
 - Jan Weidner ‘07
 - Lauren Duval ‘09 (includes application, info sheet, Kusiak observations and memo, and Professional Conversation/Portfolio Review letter)
 - Ben Hauptman ‘09 (includes application, info sheet, Kusiak observations and memo, and Professional Conversation/Portfolio Review letter)

Exhibit Folder 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

- Office of Institutional Research and Assessment 2008 Factbook
- Overseer Visiting Committee Self-Study, October 2004 and Report
- Student Teaching Application (see Folder 1)
- *Title II Reports*
- New portfolio assessment rubric (Fall 2009) (see Folder 1)
- Colby NEASC reaccreditation reports and documents
- ED program report from Institutional Research, Fall 2009
- Curricular review documents—College wide, program, and course
- Education Program annual reports 05-09
- Education Program Faculty Meeting and Retreat Minutes (see Folder 6)
- Colby Education and Human Development Alumni Facebook Page

Exhibit Folder 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

- Student Teacher observation forms—Colby’s and cooperating teachers’
- Teacher letter, policies, and evaluation form for civic engagement placements (ED 231)
- Teacher letter, policies, and evaluation form for practicum placements (ED 351j)
- *Student Teaching Handbook*
- Information packet for cooperating teachers
- ED 351 Practicum in Education Final Project example (on table in Diamond 110)

Exhibit Folder 4: Diversity

- *2004-2008 Statistical Abstracts for the Greater Waterville Area*
- Waterville Schools demographic summaries
- Colby Statement on Diversity (see Folder 1)
- ED program report from Institutional Research, Fall 2009 (see Folder 2)
- Colby Echo and Colby Magazine articles on faculty and diversity
- Copies of job ads
- KIPP Gaston College Prep information
- ED 235: Multiculturalism and the Political Project class project Fall 2009

Exhibit Folder 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

- Office of Institutional Research and Assessment 2008 Factbook—faculty demographics
- Education Program Faculty *curriculum vitae*, personal statements, and annual reports
- Selected faculty publications (Brown, Howard, Kusiak, Linville, and Tappan)—on tables in Diamond 110
- Colby course evaluation forms (hard copy and on-line)
- *Colby Faculty Handbook*
- *Chairs and Directors Handbook* (see Folder 6)

Exhibit Folder 6: Unit Governance and Resources

- *Colby College Catalogue*
- Chairs and Directors of Divisions, Departments, and Programs, 2009-2010
- Colby College Audited Financial Report
- *Annual Reports of the President, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008*
- Education Program Annual Budgets, 2005-2006 through 2009-2010
- Education Program Faculty Meeting and Retreat Minutes
- *Colby Faculty Handbook* (see Folder 5)
- *Chairs and Directors Handbook*

Exhibit Folder 7: Course Syllabi

- Brown (ED 332)
- Howard (ED 235, ED242, ED 322, ED 351)
- Kusiak (ED 374, ED 431, ED 433)
- Tappan (ED 215, ED 217, ED 231)