

**Summary of the Case**  
**Southern New Hampshire University**  
**Elementary Education Program**  
**Manchester, NH**  
**March 22 – 24, 2016**

*The Summary of the Case is written by the site visitors and approved by program faculty. The Summary reflects the site visitors' understanding of the case the faculty are making for accreditation.*

**Authorship and approval of the Inquiry Brief:**

The Inquiry Brief was authored by Donna Crook, Raymond McNulty, Mark McQuillan, Audrey Rogers, and Cathy Stavenger. The Inquiry Brief was reviewed and approved as a special meeting agenda item by Denise Benner, David Bresnahan, Nancy Charron, Marilyn Fenton, Margaret Ford, Diane HARRIS, Thomas Higginbotham, Lynn Murray-Chandler, Cara Procek, Mary Westwater, Danial Tanguay. (October 5, 2015)

**Introduction:**

Southern New Hampshire University was founded in 1932 as the New Hampshire School of Accounting and Secretarial Science and then later in 1969 renamed New Hampshire College. Known principally as a business school, the institution was awarded degree-granting authority in 1963 and conferred its first bachelor degrees in 1966. For the next 38 years, New Hampshire College grew steadily, adding new degrees and programs—a Master's degree in Business Administration in 1974, and a Ph.D. in Economic Community Development in 1998—and extended its reach internationally through SNHU Online, an Internet-based distance learning program. In 2001, the college was granted full university status, thereby combining the School of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Continuing Education and Online Learning, and the School of Business into a single comprehensive, campus-based undergraduate and graduate institution. The School of Education came into being in 2002, when, after 52 years of operation, Notre Dame College declared bankruptcy and sought to identify a neighboring institution that would permit students to graduate and complete their programs for teacher certification. Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) stepped in to provide assistance.

In its earliest days, the School of Education (SED) planned only to offer courses long enough to allow students caught in the transition to graduate with their degrees. By 2004, however, the Board of Trustees and new President, Dr. Paul LeBlanc, concluded that the University would be well served if it expanded its program offerings and increased the School's undergraduate and graduate enrollments. In the fall of that year, the School of Education was officially established at Southern NH University.

The Elementary Education certification program has become the flagship degree in the School of Education in terms of the greatest number of students served (See Table 1.0 for multi-year graduation data). In addition to this degree offering are Early Childhood Education, K-12 General Special Education, K-12 Music Education, Middle School Math Education, Middle School Science Education, Social Studies Education (grades 5-12) and English Language Arts Education (grades 5-12). Candidates in Elementary Education take several crossover courses with their peers from other certification areas. This helps to provide students with a full spectrum of understanding of K-12 students. Elementary certification is offered through multiple delivery systems such as undergraduate day students, graduate students who are on campus and online, as well as undergraduate students who are part of the Continuing Education delivery mode.

**Table 1.0**

**Elementary Education Program Options at Bachelor’s and Graduate Levels with Graduates from 2010-2013**

Option Name	Level (UG, grad, post-bacc)	Number of completers in previous academic year	Number of completers in previous academic year	Number of completers in previous academic year
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Elementary Education (K-6)*	UG	26	38	48
	GRAD	38	26	22
TOTAL		64	64	70

PROGRAM	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
BA Elementary Education	12	9	8
M.Ed. Elementary Education	18	30	13
BA Elementary Education COCE	3	7	8
M.Ed. Elementary Education COCE	1	0	0
BA Elementary Education with SPED	0	6	16
M.Ed. Elementary Education with SPED	3	8	13
BA Elementary Education COCE with SPED	0	4	6
Total	37	64	64

## **Program Claims:**

In August 2013, the faculty of the School of Education met and voted to accept the following claims about Southern New Hampshire University's Elementary Education Program (K-8). The faculty agreed that the seven claims were (1) aligned with TEAC's Quality Principles 1.1-4; (2) consistent with the School's philosophy, mission statement, and conceptual frameworks; (3) supported by New Hampshire's 2012 state standards for elementary certification programs; and (4) substantiated through programmatic and assessment data gathered by the faculty since 2010, when the New Hampshire State Board of Education approved the program for the maximum five years allowed by law.

Candidates completing the Elementary Education Program (K-8) at Southern New Hampshire University will:

1. Know and understand the core concepts, structure, and principles of the subjects they teach;
2. Translate content knowledge into meaningful experiences that ensure learning for each student;
3. Design, build, and maintain classroom cultures that are caring and inclusive;
4. Integrate and use tools of inquiry to become reflective, self-directed learners;
5. Identify cultural perspectives, norms, and traditions and see their connections to teaching and learning;
6. Use technology to learn and to support children's access to learning; and
7. Exhibit dispositions showing the potential to become effective, professional educators and leaders.

## **Evidence Supporting the Claims:**

### **Licensure Exam Scores (Claims 1, 7)**

Scores attained on New Hampshire's mandated Praxis II Elementary Education examinations for 2011-2013. Praxis II Elementary Education Multiple Subject test scores show students scoring above the qualifying score in Reading, Social Studies and Science but having difficulty with the Mathematics subtest. This information has led to changes in curriculum (addition of content courses) and Praxis tutoring.

### **Overall and Content GPAs (Claims 1, 2, 3, 5, 6)**

Overall GPAs for all courses taken within the Elementary Education major; subject-specific courses taken by all students as part of the university General Education requirement; methods courses required for the Elementary certificate; and specific courses, whose content and learning outcomes closely match one or more of the seven claims. These courses constitute a uniform set of course grades to be used for creating an overall GPA related to subject area expertise. The mean GPA (3.31) in required general

education subject courses show students scoring above the 3.0 standard determined by faculty. The mean GPA (3.76) calculated from the methods courses is one of the highest of all means reported in the Inquiry Brief supporting the claim that students can translate content knowledge into meaningful experiences for each student.

### **Lesson Plan Observations (Claims 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)**

Lesson Plan observational data for this claim was assessed using 12 indicators showing how candidates plan and prepare for their lessons using specific objectives written in terms of student performance with reference to GLE's or Curriculum Frameworks. Indicators also evaluated if candidates include assessments which provide evidence of individual student progress. Candidates were also evaluated on instructional delivery while actively engaging all students in learning. The mean score of 2.90 (ALL) shows candidates meeting the SED cut score of 2.89 determined by faculty.

These scores, finally, are strongly correlated with candidates' GPAs for PDK courses in general and EDU 490/571 in particular, where candidates were required to create and present an acceptable ePortfolio to the members of their Student Teaching Seminar. This capstone project is the gateway to being recommended for certification.

### **Monthly Progress Reports (Claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)**

Monthly progress reports demonstrate understanding of all content areas being taught. Mean scores on the performance indicator from student teaching monthly progress reports show students meet or exceed expectations for knowing and understanding the core concepts, structure and principles of the subjects they teach. Mean scores of 3.30 supports that candidates have master subject matter. Mean scores on the performance indicators from student teaching monthly progress reports and lesson plan observations show students meet or exceed the requirements determined by faculty.

### **Cooperating and Supervising Teachers' Ratings (Claims 2, 3, 4, 7)**

Cooperating and Supervising Teachers ratings from multiple assessments used to judge candidates' performance while student teaching (EDU 490/571). These ratings were based on:

- a. Monthly Progress Reports completed every month by Cooperating Teachers over the course of 16 weeks;
- b. Lesson Observations: Scores from the rating scale assigned to multiple criteria used to observe and evaluate lesson design and lesson delivery. These rating sheets were developed in large part using Danielson's framework (2007) for evaluating teachers' performance;

### **Rubric Scores (Claims 3, 4, 5, 7)**

Rubric scores assigned to selected “critical tasks” or assignments (e.g., a portfolio or a student’s self-evaluations of their performance while teaching a specific lesson, and videotaped by a Cooperating Teacher).

### **Survey Data (Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7)**

Survey data of program completers between 2011 and 2013, used to measure candidates’ perceptions of the program’s effectiveness. Responses from questions 1-4 of the Alumni Survey show graduates felt “well prepared” in content knowledge. Responses from questions 5, 8, & 10 of the Alumni Survey showed graduates felt they had been “well prepared” to translate content knowledge into meaningful experiences that ensure learning. Responses from question 6 of the Alumni Survey show graduates felt “well prepared” to create and maintain caring and inclusive classroom cultures. Responses from question 9 of the Alumni Survey show graduates felt “prepared” to address cultural, linguistic, or ethnic differences in their instruction. SEC policy requires students engage in field experiences in a minimum of three different school districts to ensure variety of school cultures and populations. The mean GPA (3.48) from the Global Markers courses shows most candidates meet or exceed the 3.0 standard supporting the Claim 5 that students identify cultural perspectives and see their connections to teaching and learning. Responses from question 7 of the Alumni Survey show graduates felt “well prepared” to use technology in the classroom. The mean GPA (3.49) from the required technology courses shows candidates exceed the 3.0 standard supporting the Claim 6 that students can use technology to learn and support children’s access to learning.

### **Internal Audit:**

The structure and components of the School of Education Quality Control System (QCS) were first discussed in a series of meetings held in the spring semester of AY 2012-2013. Drafts of the conceptual model and the processes for an audit were presented to the TEAC Steering Committee and then the entire faculty. After input and discussion of objectives, the faculty voted preliminary approval on June 28, 2013 for the conceptual model of the Quality Control System and the audit processes that would follow. Following this vote, the internal audit was conducted throughout the summer of 2013. Audit Committee members included Associate Professor Cathy Stavenger, Associate Professor Audrey Rogers, Donna Crook, Director of Accountability and Assessment, SED Dean Mark McQuillan; the team was supported by Susan Whitney, Office Specialist for the Office of Teacher Certification and Carole Donovan, Administrative Assistant.

The audit is divided into three sections: Candidate Quality, Faculty Quality, and Institutional Capacity. A discussion and analysis of what was learned in all SED programs and the in particular the Elementary Education program followed.

Based on the evidence described in Sections 1, 2, and 3, the audit lead to the following conclusions for areas of improvement. Based on the evidence described in Sections 1, 2, and 3, most if not all of the

components of the School of Education's Quality Control System are in place and functioning well, given the size and the substantial number of courses and programs delivered.

1. The faculty survey data strongly suggests that many of the adjuncts working for UC are not being properly inducted into SED. The survey showed high numbers not receiving adequate training in BlackBoard, Chalk and Wire and/or SED's Faculty Handbook. Many full-time faculty have suggested that, even with training, these management tools are not routinely incorporated into weekly instructional practice.
2. SED's Assessment System is stronger now that it is fully embedded in Chalk and Wire and accessible through the School's portal. But the data on how faithfully all faculty--adjuncts and full-time professors alike— post "critical tasks" or "developmental captures" onto Chalk and Wire were substandard making it all the more difficult to produce the data needed to support claims and spot trends.
3. SED has built and continues to build strong relationships among the entities and agencies external to the University. While these relationships have done much to improve the School's communication with the schools and districts in the Manchester region, there is still much work to be done to strengthen the bonds between all of the partners the SED has acquired over the past three years.

Additional Information related to #1 above:

A new system for shared responsibility has been implemented as of January 1, 2016. Program Coordinators have been established for each of our programs. They report directly to the Chair of Certification Programs. The responsibilities of a Program Coordinator are as follows:

#### Curriculum and Standards

- Ensure that the program in its entirety meets the NH DOE rules for certification in that area, including the 609s, 610s, and relevant 612s. (Programs offered only at the graduate level have not been assigned to date. A new position of Director of Graduate programs has been approved and this individual will assume these responsibilities.)
- Keep aware of the national professional standards set forth by the relevant professional organization (NAEYC, ACEI, CEC, NCTM, NSTA, NCSS, NCTE, NAFME). Be familiar with the national standards, how we meet those standards and how we differ from those standards.
- Oversee Program Review and Program Evaluation processes.

#### Enrollment and Scheduling

- Consult with Chairs regarding the enrollment and the schedule for each semester to determine the number of sections that should be offered and to verify the accuracy and viability of the schedule.

#### Adjuncts

- Keep a list of adjuncts teaching in the program and be aware of the adjunct's teaching effectiveness. (Active adjuncts will be listed on the semester/term CSAR.)
  - Provide course syllabi to new adjuncts.
  - Review all syllabi each semester. (See SED Protocols for syllabi.)
  - Submit reviewed syllabi to the Academic Operations Manager, who will post current syllabi on the VPAA site.
  - Contact adjuncts at the beginning of each semester and provide mentoring as necessary.
  - Make sure adjuncts are aware of and understand Chalk & Wire requirements.
- Meet with adjuncts as necessary to assist with course-related and student-related matters.
- Participate in new adjunct interviews.

Outfacing Website: [www.snhu.edu](http://www.snhu.edu)

- Review the outfacing website- the one prospective students will see- and make sure it is accurate and remains accurate and appealing.

Program Coordinators will share any concerns or information about their programs with the full faculty at the monthly Curriculum meeting.

Additional Information related to #2 above:

The Director of Accountability and Research now regularly monitors submissions and assessments in Chalk and Wire.

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### **Acceptance of the Summary of the Case**

The faculty accepted the Summary of the Case as accurate on March 15, 2016