



## OREGON TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

# Executive Director's Recommendations

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### Accreditation Site Visit to:

## Southern Oregon University Ashland, OREGON

**On-Site Review: April 24-26,  
2023**

This report was issued: October 6, 2023

**5.6a**

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# Summary of Executive Director Findings Southern Oregon University

AAQEP Professional Education Unit Standards/ State-specific Standards		Met/ Not Met	AFI/ Stipulations
	<i>AAQEP Standards:</i>		
1	<b>Candidate / Completer Performance</b>	Standard Met	None
2	<b>Completer Professional Competence and Growth</b>	Standard Met	None
3	<b>Quality Program Practices</b>	Standard Met	None
4	<b>Program Engagement in System Improvement</b>	Standard Met	None
	<i>State Specific Standards: Embedded in AAQEP Standard 4e</i>		
CCE	<b>Cultural Competency and Equity</b>	Standard Met	None
ELL	<b>English Language Learners (ELL)</b>	Standard Met	None
PART	<b>Educator Preparation Provider Partnerships</b>	Standard Met	None
AUDIT	<b>Field Audit</b>	Standard Met	None

**NOTE: Findings include only initial programs; there are no advanced programs.**

**AFI:** Area for Improvement

**N/A** = Not Applicable (Programs not offered at this level)

**None** = The Site Visit Team did not find any Areas for Improvement (AFI) or Strengths.

## Introduction of Institution

Southern Oregon University is a public state university located in Ashland, Oregon. It also includes partnerships with surrounding districts which support local school districts needs and create greater access to continued higher education, including teacher education, for rural

**Southern Oregon University** – Executive Director Recommendations

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areas through two satellite campuses in Coos Bay and Klamath Falls. The major campus is located in the heart of downtown Ashland, Oregon at the far south of the state. Thus, it serves as a regional university with approximately 6000 students with 37 majors. The School of Education includes elementary education major for undergraduates. Graduate students enroll in the Master of Arts including special education (SPED) or administration licensure programs. SOU also offers ESOL, and Reading programs leading to licensure. Historically, SOU has had a central focus on promoting and providing education for the region. This is evidenced by the fact that early in its history, in 1882, the college was renamed Ashland College and Normal school, a teacher’s college.

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## Summary of Accreditation Process

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Timeline of TSPC State Accreditation Process	
February 2020	Commission gives unit approval for <b>Southern Oregon University</b> School of Education to apply for first national accreditation with AAQEP
September 2021	<b>Southern Oregon University</b> Program Reports Approved
February 2022	Commission grants full State Recognition of Programs
October 2022	Quality Assurance (Self Study) Report submitted
April 25-26, 2023	Site Visit by AAQEP Quality Review Team (QRT)
July 2023	AAQEP accreditation for 7 years with notations
October 20, 2023	<b>Executive Director’s Recommendations</b>
October 20, 2023	Commission to consider approval of <b>Southern Oregon University</b>

# Professional Education Unit Standards: Executive Director Recommendations and Comments

The following is a summary of the Executive Director’s recommendation to the Commission related to the TSPC findings on the Professional Education Unit Standards. These recommendations are based on findings outlined in the *Southern Oregon University Quality Assurance Report (QAR) published October 2022*, *AAQEP Quality Review Team Report (QRT) published June 2022*, and *AAQEP Accreditation Action Report (July 2023)*. **(NOTE: The aspects of each of the four AAQEP standards have been placed in italics under each standard below.)**

## Executive Director’s Recommendation on Findings – Southern Oregon University

The Executive Director provides the following recommendations on the Accreditation Site Review Team Findings:

### Southern Oregon University: Standard 1: Candidate/ Completer Performance

Standard 1: Candidate/ Completer Performance	AAQEP Accreditation Team Finding	Executive Director Recommendation
Programs	Standard Met	Accept the Finding
Areas for Improvement/ Stipulations	None	Accept the Finding
Strengths	N/A	Accept the Finding

## **Southern Oregon University: Summary of Findings (Standard 1 from AAQEP Quality Review Team Report)**

Southern Oregon University has provided the AAQEP review team with sufficient evidence in support Standard 1. This evidence comes from NES subject matter exams/ORELA tests. In addition, field observations and evaluation forms, edTPA, OACTE, Program Completer Surveys, Methods courses, GPA, Document Student Teaching, and Program-based assignments and assessments were used.

*1a: Content, pedagogical, and/or professional knowledge relevant to the credential or degree sought*

This evidence comes from NES subject matter exams/ORELA tests. In addition, field observations and evaluation forms, edTPA, OACTE, Program Completer Surveys, Methods courses, GPA, Document Student Teaching, and Program-based assignments and assessments were used.

Onsite interviews noted the strength of the student teaching component with high level coaching.

*1b: Learners; learning theory (including social, emotional, and academic dimensions); and application of learning theory*

Again, the university validated the sufficiency of learning by candidates.

Evidence was presented from NES subject matter exams/ORELA tests. In addition, field observations and evaluation forms, edTPA, OACTE, Program Completer Surveys, Methods courses, GPA, Document Student Teaching, and Program-based assignments and assessments were used.

*1c: Culturally responsive practice, including intersectionality of race, ethnicity, class, gender identity and expression, sexual identity, and the impact of language acquisition and literacy development on learning*

As noted in 1a-b, evidence was noted from a variety of sources. (QRT, 27).

*1d: Assessment of and for student learning; assessment and data literacy; use of data to inform practice*

As with previous components, evidence was drawn from a variety of sources including candidate and completer field observation drawn from field observations and evaluations. (QRT, 27).

*1e: Creation and development of positive learning and work environments*

This component evidence was taken from candidate and completer field observation rubrics and Performance assessments as noted with the previous aspects, utilizing a variety of measures across all the programs (QRT, 28).

*1f: Dispositions and behaviors required for successful professional practice.*

As the QRT notes, “a variety of measures across programs” addressed Aspect 1F. “During onsite interviews with program leaders and faculty and in provided responses to clarification questions evidence was verified.” (QRT, 28.)

**Southern Oregon University: Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth**

<b>Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth</b>	<b>AAQEP Accreditation Team Finding</b>	<b>Executive Director Recommendation</b>
<b>Programs</b>	<b>Standard Met</b>	<b>Accept the Finding</b>
<b>Areas for Improvement</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Accept the Finding</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Accept the Finding</b>

## **Southern Oregon University: Summary of Findings (Standard 2 from AAQEP QRT)**

All six aspects of standard two were addressed in the evidence provided for the standard. The evidence shows that completers have the capacity to:

*2a: Understand and engage local school and cultural communities; communicate and foster relationships with families/guardians/caregivers in a variety of communities*

Evidence for this aspect was drawn from candidate and completer field evaluation rubrics, portfolios, and various survey data (including Program Completer/alumni surveys, edTPA, and OACTE surveys (QRT, 29).

*2b: Engage in culturally responsive educational practices with diverse learners and do so in diverse cultural and socioeconomic community contexts.*

Like 2a, evidence was drawn from candidate and completer field evaluation rubrics and surveys (QRT, 29).

Onsite interviews consistently reinforced SOU's emphasis on "being a culturally responsive practitioner" (QRT, 29).

*2c: Create productive learning environments and use strategies to develop productive learning environments in a variety of school contexts*

Again, evidence for this aspect was drawn from various measures across the programs, including OACTE Surveys, SOU Completer/Alumni Surveys, edTPA, Field observations and Evaluation Forms, Focus Groups, Program-based assignments/assessments" (QRT, 30).

*2d: Support student's growth in international and global perspectives*

The same evidence as noted in Aspects 2a-c, was marshalled in support of 2d (QRT, 30).

*2e: Establish goals for their own professional growth, engage in self-assessment, goal setting, and reflection*

Evidence was drawn from candidate and completer field evaluation rubrics, portfolios and surveys, across the programs (QRT, 33-34).

*2f: Collaborate with colleagues to support professional learning*

The same lines of evidence were noted, including evidence drawn from candidate and completer field evaluation rubrics, portfolios and surveys, across the programs (QRT, 30).

### Southern Oregon University Standard 3: Quality Program Practices

Standard 3: Quality Program Practices	AAQEP Accreditation Team Finding	Executive Director Recommendation
Programs	Standard Met	Accept the Finding
Areas for Improvement	None	Accept the Finding
Strengths	N/A	Accept the Finding

### Southern Oregon University: Summary of Findings (Standard 3 from AAQEP QRT)

Evidence was marshalled from the QAR as well as Appendices A, C, D, and E:

*3a: Offers coherent curricula with clear expectations that are aligned with state and national standards, as applicable (See Appendix C)*

Evidence came from curriculum maps and course syllabi (QRT, 36-37).

Faculty and university supervisors corroborated the evidence in interviews (QRT, 37).

*3b: Develops and implements quality clinical experiences, where appropriate, in the context of documented and effective partnerships with P-12 schools and districts*

Evidence supporting quality clinical experiences at Portland State University include the interviews of university supervisors, clinical placement partners and administrators (QRT, 39).

*3c: Engages multiple stakeholders, including completers, local educators, schools, and districts, in data collection, analysis, planning, improvement, and innovation*

Evidence from this aspect comes from various partnerships including the COE Consortium Advisory Body, and surveys (QRT, 40).

*3d: Enacts admission and monitoring processes linked to candidate success as part of a quality assurance system aligned to state requirements and professional standards*

Evidence was drawn from various program descriptions. Evidence also was drawn from admission and monitoring processes (QRT, 42-43).

*3e: Engages in continuous improvement of programs and program components, and investigates opportunities for innovation, through an effective quality assurance system*

Evidence was drawn from the COE quality assurance system (See QAR, 132) evidencing continuous improvement (QRT, 43-44).

*3f: Maintains capacity for quality reflected in staffing, resources, operational processes, and institutional commitment*

Evidence was drawn from state reports and program descriptions. See also report was provided entitled EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STATE RECOGNITION OF PROGRAMS, RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMMISSIONERS for Portland State University. Dated October 29, 2021 (QRT, 44).

### Southern Oregon University Standard 4: Program Engagement in System Management

<b>Standard 4: Program Engagement in System Management</b>	<b>AAQEP Accreditation Team Finding</b>	<b>Executive Director Recommendation</b>
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<b>Programs</b>	<b>Standard Met</b>	<b>Accept the Finding</b>
<b>Areas for Improvement</b>	<b>AFI 4b State-specific Standards: The EPP must ensure that its digitized permanent files include fingerprint and background check records.</b>	<b>Accept the finding</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>N/A</b>	

## **Southern Oregon University: Summary of Findings (Standard 4)**

Evidence for Standard 4 is found in the main body of the QAR and the following appendices B, Completer Support and Follow-up Practices.

The program provides evidence that it:

*4a: Engages with local partners and stakeholders to support high-need schools and participates in efforts to reduce disparities in educational outcomes*

Evidence for this aspect comes from the QAR. SOU teacher program staff converse with local partners and stakeholders to understand the district partner needs. A good example of this is the inauguration of the Summer Institute for Advanced Professional Development for Teachers (QRT, 35). Onsite interviews reinforced the evidence that there are continual informal communications with school districts to track on needs (QRT, 35).

*4b: Seeks to meet state and local educator workforce needs and to diversify participation in the educator workforce through candidate recruitment and support*

The SOU QAR records that the EPP historically and regularly used informal efforts, such as word of mouth and communication pieces such as flyers (QRT, 35). An example of this is the Red Raider Education Day focusing on recruitment of students and school district employees (QRT, 35).

In addition, the university is found to meet most state-specific standards in the execution of its educator preparation programs. However, SOU is in the midst of digitizing its educator candidate permanent files. The current files do not include fingerprint and background records. As the EPP digitizes, it should recover the fingerprint files to include in the digitized files.

*4c: Supports completers' entry into and/or continuation in their professional role, as appropriate to the credential or degree being earned*

Evidence was marshalled from the induction sessions for completers who work in the Phoenix/Talent school district, called the Teacher Leadership and Induction Series. In addition, Appendix B noted support of completers through the Summer Institute for Advanced Professional Development for Teachers, Teach from your Best Self Institute, and Alumni Mentor Nights (QRT, 35).

*4d: Investigates available and trustworthy evidence regarding completer placement, effectiveness, and retention in the profession and uses that information to improve programs*

According to the QAR, administrators and staff study data regarding completer effectiveness and retention in order to understand how to best prepare completers. (QRT, 36).

*4e: Meets obligations and mandates established by the state, states, or jurisdiction within which it operates:*

The SOU QAR reported that it is regionally accredited with NWCCU and AAQEP.

*4f: Investigates its own effectiveness relative to its institutional and/or programmatic mission and commitments*

Every academic program participates in a 3 year cycle of academic program review to evaluate effectiveness relative to the institutional mission and commitments (QRT 36). SOU also expressed commitment to the Oregon Equity Lens as articulated in their published Equity Plan (QRT, 36). Additionally interviews stressed examples such as the Red Raider Day as efforts to diversify the teaching workforce (QRT, 37).

# Accreditation Decision:

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## Final Recommendation – Southern Oregon University

March 31, 2022

The Executive Director recommends: **Approval for the full term of seven years to Southern Oregon University Education Program.** (See AAQEP Accreditation Action Report, April 2023). The term of accreditation lasts through June 2030, or until Southern Oregon University ceases to be a member in good standing of AAQEP or TSPC, whichever comes first.

The Executive Director commends the EPP for its development of partner stakeholders. This is intentional and results in formative as well as summative evidence that “promotes data-informed decision making that drives continuous improvement, innovation and growth, particularly targeting contextual challenges in keeping with the institution’s mission and values” (Accreditation Action Report, 3).

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## Commission Accreditation Actions to Date

### Previous Accreditation:

NA

### Program Approval:

June 2020 (State Recognition of Programs)

## Commission Accreditation Procedure

### Executive Director's Recommendations

As part of the recommendation process, the Executive Director must consider all the elements outlined in OAR 584-010-0010 (4):

**OAR 584-010-0010 (4)** The Commission shall determine compliance with the standards on the basis of:

- (a) Information and evidence submitted by the unit;
- (b) The findings and recommendations of the on-site review team;
- (c) The results of staff audits of selected elements of the program conducted pursuant to OAR 584-010-0090; and
- (d) Information obtained through any surveys administered by the Commission.

### For Commission's Accreditation Resolutions

As part of the resolution process, the Executive Director must prepare proposed resolutions for the Commission's consideration following a site visit review as required by **OAR 584-010-0025**. The rule states:

- (1) The Executive Director will consider all the elements outlined in OAR 584-010-0010 (4) and make recommendations to the Commission regarding unit accreditation.
- (2) The Executive Director may prepare resolutions proposing any combination of the following:

- (a) Unconditional approval;
  - (b) Approval with conditions. The unit will present plans for removal of the conditions and correction of areas for improvement as designated by the Commission;
  - (c) Probationary approval and designation as an “at-risk institution.” The unit must correct the conditions and areas for improvement within two years; and
  - (d) Non-approval and designation as a “low-performing institution.”
- (3) The Executive Director will submit the proposed recommendations and resolutions to the unit prior to the Commission meeting at which the final review team report will be considered.