



Early Childhood Higher Education Programs

Written Response to Peer Review Report

The purpose of the Written Response is to correct any inaccuracies in the Peer Review Report or to provide clarifying information related to the team’s findings. Please check the report carefully as you complete this response. Check report cover letter for due date.

✓ Yes, the name of our institution is spelled correctly on the cover page

□ No, the correct name of our institution is:

Weber State University
Name of Institution

✓ Yes, each degree program(s) submitted for accreditation is listed correctly on the cover page

□ No, the correct degree program name(s) are:

A.A.S. Early Childhood
Name of degree program (e.g. A.A.T. Early Childhood Education)

B.S. Early Childhood
Name of degree program (e.g. A.S. Early Childhood)

B.S. Early Childhood Education
Name of degree program (e.g. B.S. Child Development)

✓ We would like to correct the following inaccuracies in the Peer Review Report or provide clarifying information related to the team’s findings. (Continue with additional pages if needed. Your response must reference page numbers of the Peer Review Report. Reference page numbers of your Self-Study Report or other evidence to support your corrections as appropriate.)

□ No corrections

Wei Qiu
Name of Primary Contact

Wei Qiu
Signature of Primary Contact

December 20, 2017
Date

Please return as a PDF to: highered@naeyc.org
Or fax to: 202-350-8799 Attention: Higher Education Accreditation
Or mail to: NAEYC Higher Education Accreditation, 1313 L Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005-4101



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Coursework Flexibility

An overall area of concern identified by the peer review team was “in relation to the flexibility that students have to take coursework out of sequence from what is recommended on the department’s course map” (Peer Review Report BS, p. 2). For candidates in AAS Program, learning opportunities for students may not happen in coursework prior to the key assessment (Self-Study Report AAS, p. 16-17).

We appreciate the concern expressed by the peer review team regarding the flexibility of candidates taking course work out of sequence which might impact learning opportunities that ideally lay a greater foundation for a specific key assessment. Weber State University (WSU) is an open enrollment university with a large number of alternative students. The majority of candidates in our programs (AAS Early Childhood, BS Early Childhood, and BS Early Childhood Education) work full- or part-time jobs. They are generally married with or without children, single parents, or returning students (Self-Study Report AAS, p. 36-37; Self-Study Report BS, p. 42-43). It is a perceived strength to have flexibility in working with candidates to meet their individual needs as they progress through our programs. Each key assessment is designed to fully teach the specific criteria linked with each standard in the given key assessment so candidates can demonstrate their learning for each key element of the designated standard. Other learning opportunities that link with key elements of each standard may prepare candidates for key assessments or reinforce previous learning. We are continuing to improve the advising of candidates. As indicated in the Self-Study Report (AAS, p. 39-41; BS, p. 46-47), the Child and Family Studies Academic Advisor has been involved in program meetings and we are discussing ways to assign a Faculty Advisor earlier in each candidate’s program to ensure a logical progression in the sequence of courses as designed.

Candidate Field Experience

Another overall area of concern pointed out by the peer review team was that “students may not have experience with the different age groups or learning environments outlined in Criterion 5” (Peer Review Report BS, p. 2). Specifically, candidates did not have field experience working with children 0-2 years due to the fact that Weber State University Melba S. Lehner (MSL) Children’s School and Charter Academy kindergarten only enroll children beginning at 24 months (Peer Review Report BS, p. 4). Several measures have been taken to address this concern.

- The MSL Children’s School has set up a timeline to open a young toddler lab to serve children 12-24 months in fall 2019.
- In Spring 2018 before the change becomes official in the university catalogue, a practicum is added to CHF 3570 Infant and Toddler Development and Practice class that used to require no field experience (Self-Study Report BS, p. 32). Candidates are being required to complete 12 hours of lab in the MSL Children’s School toddler classroom serving children 2-3 years.
- Starting from Fall 2018 when the catalogue change is official, all Early Childhood BS candidates will be required to complete a total of 24 hours of field experience in CHF 3570 Infant and Toddler Development class. Half of the lab time will be working in the MSL Children’s School toddler classroom. The other half will be working in community based programs serving infants younger than 12 months, such as Early Head Start, home visiting programs, Early Intervention Services, and private child care.



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Tracking of Field Experience

The peer review team pointed out that “at both degree levels, the department does not track the age groups with which students are completing field experience with” (Peer Review Report BS, p. 4). A master sheet has been created to track each candidate’s field experiences in all program courses with practicum requirements. Information documented in the master sheet includes: age groups of the candidate’s field experience classrooms, field experience settings, candidate’s mentor teachers, semesters, and lab times.

Lack of a Documentation and Assessment Course

The peer review team identified the program’s “lack of a course specifically focused on early childhood documentation and assessment” at both degree levels (Peer Review Report BS, p. 4). This is an issue that we have been aware of and acknowledged in the self-study process (Self-Study Report AAS, p. 18). We are making an intentional effort to address this issue by embedding the teaching of documentation and assessment methods in multiple courses and preparing candidates for using data to inform their teaching practices.

Culturally Relevant Adult Learning

The peer review team expressed “an increasing need for faculty knowledge and implementation of culturally relevant adult learning strategies” (Peer Review Report BS, p. 4). This issue was not discussed in the exit report session. As referenced in the peer review report, three courses are offered in our programs for a Utah Coaching Credential (Self-Study Report BS, p. 22). The adoption of a coaching model throughout our programs indicates our efforts to continue to grow in adult teaching and learning strategies. In addition, our program vision and mission (Self-Study Report BS, p. 7) demonstrate our commitment to implementing culturally relevant adult learning strategies in our teaching.

Accreditation Standards

Inconsistencies pointed out by peer reviewers between the Overview Chart and Key Assessment Rubrics (Peer Review Report AAS, p. 9) have been fixed.

Standard 1: For Early Childhood AAS Program, Key Element 1c will be removed from Key Assessment 1 Child Development Observation based on peer reviewer feedback (Peer Review Report AAS, p. 9). However, Key Element 1c still remains aligned with Key Assessment 3 STEM Family Activities.

For Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education BS Programs, Key Element 1c will be removed from Key Assessment 1 Child Development Observation based on peer reviewer feedback (Peer Review Report BS, p. 9). There is potential to link Key Element 1c with Key Assessment 3 Weekly Lesson Plan Content Reflection. The current rubric of Key Assessment 3 has an **Integration Overview** criterion aligned with Key Element 5b. *Exceeds Expectations* rating of the criterion is described as “details specific content and skills are integrated across domains and other content areas through child-directed and teacher-directed learning experiences. Includes at least 4 other content areas and 2 domains” (Self-Study Report BS, p. 113). We propose that this **Integration Overview** criterion be aligned



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with Key Element 1c instead of Key Element 5b. To conform with the alignment change, rubric description of the criterion will be changed to “Details an understanding of child development in content areas in an integrated way that demonstrates creating healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments.”

Standard 4: There is a mistake about Key Elements 4a and 4c. The peer review team indicated that “in CHF 2610 learning opportunities are embedded in a Webbing Observation” (Peer Review Report BS, p. 18). Key Assessment 2 from CHF 2610 is Reflective Log 10. The Webbing Observation, however, is used to assess Standards 3 and 5 instead of Standard 4. It serves as a learning opportunity in CHF 2620 for the BS Programs (Self-Study Report BS, p. 76-80), and Key Assessment 5 for the AAS Program (Self-Study Report AAS, p. 110).

Standard 5: For Key Assessment 3 STEM Family Activities, the peer review team believed that “there is a partial alignment of Key Element 5c because student may not have involvement with families for this project” (Peer Review Report AAS, p. 19). We feel this is inaccurate. Even though the activity in this key assessment is not implemented with children, candidates will be expected to use their own knowledge, appropriate learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate developmentally meaningful, and challenging curriculum for each child.