



News

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SWOSU Department of Education Receives National Accreditation



Southwestern Oklahoma State University Department of Education faculty are all smiles as the university learned the department received full accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

The Department of Education at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford has achieved full accreditation, meeting all requirements from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

CAEP is the national accrediting agency for teacher preparation programs. To achieve accreditation, faculty and partners in the SWOSU Department of Education provided evidence of meeting CAEP's rigorous standards to ensure candidates are highly qualified and competent teachers by utilizing valid data from multiple measures.

A CAEP site-visit team verified all evidence submitted through review of assessments, evidence and interviews with current and former students, faculty, administration and clinical partners in P-12 schools.

Dr. Veronica Aguinaga, accreditation assessment coordinator for the SWOSU Department of Education, said a foundational accreditation requirement is that the Department of Education develop and maintain a continuous improvement, evidence-based model of program assessment. This approach ensures teacher candidates develop a deep understanding of content and pedagogical knowledge; establishes high-quality clinical partnerships and practice; recruits diverse candidates and supports them during preparation and at completion; documents graduates' impact on P-12 student learning and development; surveys satisfaction of their preparation; and maintains a quality assurance system to monitor candidate, graduate, program and unit effectiveness. The accreditation status is granted for seven years.

The SWOSU Department of Education offers a total of 17 nationally accredited programs:11 for initial licensure in the following areas: Art Education, Early Childhood, Elementary Education, Special Education, English Education, History Education, Math Education, Science Education, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, and Health and Physical Education. And, six accredited programs for advanced licensure in the following areas: Education Administration – Building Level, Educational Administration – District Level, Reading Specialist, School Counseling, School Psychology, and School Psychometry.

“Maintaining the success of these programs as a unit depends on high-level communication, trust and collaboration across multiple faculty and program leaders. Such coordination would not be possible without fantastic faculty and administration effort, support and willingness to work toward a singular vision of developing the next generation of professional educators and colleagues,” said SWOSU Department of Education Chair Ed Klein. “The Department of Education vision is to provide the necessary background in professional education for the development of competencies which will contribute to successful teaching, administration and supervision in the elementary and secondary schools in our state, region and nation.”

Aguinaga said this was SWOSU's initial accreditation with CAEP, so the university is extremely pleased with the outcome.

“The accreditation process is quite an arduous journey, so achieving national accreditation demonstrates that the SWOSU Department of Education is committed to continuous improvement and validates the quality and rigor of our undergraduate and graduate programs,” Aguinaga said. “A special thank you is extended to all involved with the site visit, including current and former students, clinical partners, state team members, SWOSU administrators, the Education Advisory Board, SWOSU Assessment Center and the Teacher Education Council.”

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