

2022 Annual Accreditation Report

CAEP ID:	10326	AACTE SID:	4930
Institution:	The University of Montana Western		
Unit:	School of Education, Business and Technology		

Section 1. EPP Profile Updates in AIMS

Please review the Educator Preparation Provider's (EPP's) profile in AIMS and update the following information for: Contact Persons, EPP Characteristics, Program Listings. [See the Annual Report Technical Guide for additional guidance.]

1.1 Update Contact Information in AIMS:

1.1.1 I confirm that the EPP has listed and updated the contact information for the individual(s) designated as "EPP Head."

[The individual(s) identified as the EPP head should have authority over the EPP. This contact may receive time-sensitive communications related to the accreditation of the EPP.]

Agree Disagree



1.1.2 I confirm that the EPP has listed and updated the contact information for the individual(s) designated as "CAEP Coordinator".

[The individual(s) identified as the CAEP Coordinator should have a role in coordinating accreditation activities. This contact may be carbon copied on communications to the EPP head.]

Agree Disagree



1.1.3 I confirm that the EPP has provided updated contact information for two distinct people for these roles.

[CAEP requires that EPPs provide information for two distinct contact persons to ensure that automatic communications sent from AIMS are received by the EPP in the event of personal turnover.]

Agree Disagree



1.2 Update EPP Information in AIMS:

1.2.1 *Basic Information* - I confirm that the EPP's basic information (including mailing address and EPP name) are up to date and accurately reflected in AIMS.

[The individual(s) identified as the EPP head should have authority over the EPP. This contact may receive time-sensitive communications related to the accreditation of the EPP.]

Agree Disagree



1.2.2 *EPP Characteristics and Affiliations* - I confirm that the EPP characteristics and affiliations (including Carnegie classification, EPP type, religious affiliation, language of instruction, institutional accreditation, and branch campuses/sites) are up to date and accurately reflected in AIMS

[The individual(s) identified as the CAEP Coordinator should have a role in coordinating accreditation activities. This contact may be carbon copied on communications to the EPP head.]

Agree Disagree



1.2.3 *Program Options* - I confirm that EPP's program listings (including program name, program

review level, certificate level, program category, and program review option) are up to date and accurately reflected in AIMS for all EPP programs that fall within CAEP's scope of accreditation; (programs outside of CAEP's scope of accreditation should be archived and not listed in AIMS).

Agree Disagree



Section 2. EPP's Program Completers [Academic Year 2020-2021]

2.1 How many candidates completed programs that prepared them to work in P-12 settings during Academic Year 2020-2021?

Enter a numeric value for each textbox.

2.1.1 Number of completers in programs leading to initial teacher certification or licensure¹

105

2.1.2 Number of completers in advanced programs or programs leading to a degree, endorsement, or some other credential that prepares the holder to serve in P-12 schools (Do not include those completers counted above.)²

0

Total number of program completers 105

¹ For a description of the scope for Initial and Advanced programs, see Policy II in the [CAEP Accreditation Policies and Procedures](#)

Section 3. Substantive Changes

Please report on any substantive changes that have occurred at the EPP/Institution or Organization, as well as the EPP's current regional accreditation status.

Have any of the following substantive changes occurred at your educator preparation provider or institution/organization during the 2020-2021 academic year?

3.1 Has there been any change in the EPP's legal status, form of control, or ownership?

Change No Change / Not Applicable

3.2 Has the EPP entered a contract with other providers for direct instructional services, including any teach out agreements?

Change No Change / Not Applicable

3.3 Since the last reporting cycle, has the EPP seen a change in state program approval?

Change No Change / Not Applicable

3.4. What is the EPP's current regional accreditation status?

Accreditation Agency:

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

Status:

Accredited through 2025

Does this represent a change in status from the prior year?

Change No Change / Not Applicable

3.5 Since the last reporting cycle, does the EPP have any other substantive changes to report to CAEP per CAEP's Accreditation Policy?

Change No Change / Not Applicable

Section 4. CAEP Accreditation Details on EPP's Website

Please update the EPP's public facing website to include: 1) the EPP's current CAEP accreditation status with an accurate listing of the EPP's CAEP (NCATE, or TEAC) reviewed programs, and 2) the EPP's data display of the CAEP Accountability Measures for Academic Year 2020-2021.

4.1. EPP's current CAEP (NCATE/TEAC) Accreditation Status & Reviewed Programs

4.1 Provider shares a direct link to the EPP's website where information relevant to the EPP's current accreditation status is provided along with an accurate list of programs included during the most recent CAEP (NCATE or TEAC) accreditation review.

<https://www.umwestern.edu/info/accreditation/>

4.2. CAEP Accountability Measures (for CHEA Requirements) [2020-2021 Academic Year]

Provider shares a direct link to its website where the EPP's display of data for the CAEP Accountability Measures, as gathered during the 2020-2021 academic year, are clearly tagged, explained, and available to the public.

CAEP Accountability Measures (for CHEA Requirements) [2020-2021 Academic Year]

- **Measure 1 (Initial): Completer effectiveness. (R4.1)** Data must address: (a) completer impact in contributing to P-12 student-learning growth **AND** (b) completer effectiveness in applying professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
- **Measure 2 (Initial and Advanced): Satisfaction of employers and stakeholder involvement. (R4.2|R5.3| RA4.1)**
Data provided should be collected on employers' satisfaction with program completers.
- **Measure 3 (Initial and Advanced): Candidate competency at completion. (R3.3)**
Data provided should relate to measures the EPP is using to determine if candidates are meeting program expectations and ready to be recommended for licensure. (E.g.: EPP's Title II report, data that reflect the ability of EPP candidates to meet licensing and state requirements or other measures the EPP uses to determine candidate competency at completion.)
- **Measure 4 (Initial and Advanced): Ability of completers to be hired** (in positions for which they have prepared.)

CAEP Accountability Measures (Initial) [LINK] <https://www.umwestern.edu/info/accreditation/>

CAEP Accountability Measures (Advanced) [LINK] [Not applicable. The EPP does not offer any advanced programs.](#)

Section 5. Areas for Improvement, Weaknesses, and/or Stipulations

Summarize EPP activities and the outcomes of those activities as they relate to correcting the areas cited in the last Accreditation Action/Decision Report. The EPP will continue to report its action and progress on addressing its AFI(s), weaknesses and/or stipulations until the EPP's next CAEP Accreditation Site Review.

CAEP: Areas for Improvement (ITP) 2.1 Partners co-construct mutually beneficial P-12 partnerships

There is a lack of co-constructed policies and procedures surrounding partnerships for clinical preparation.

In its recent submission of a Self-Study Report (SSR) in preparation for a Fall 2022 Site Review, the EPP wrote about this AFI in addressing CAEP Standard R2.1, and again in the section of the SSR template specifically dedicated to addressing AFIs. It should be noted that the EPP lacks a set of partners in a highly-concentrated urban or large-town area, which is the typical context for many other EPPs. Thus, the EPP is challenged to work with all of its far-flung school partners across the large state of Montana. However, the EPP has increased the close work it does with its Teacher Education Advisory Council, in an effort to improve its collaborative partnership efforts. The Teacher Advisory Council Report provided with the SSR addressed these efforts.

Furthermore, the EPP has exemplified excellent co-construction of policies and procedures regarding clinical preparation with one of its most central and influential partnerships, namely the Rural Fridays Program. The report on this unique partnership program for clinical preparation was included with the SSR, providing many details about collaborative work and co-construction of policies.

While it is true that the EPP must work collaboratively with a far-flung set of P-12 partners across the state, the EPP is fortunate to participate in partnerships within an approximately 80-mile radius from the EPP where a large number of candidates receive clinical preparation. Thus, the EPP's closest partners in the design, delivery, and evaluation of field and clinical experiences include the following:

- Dillon School District #10: Parkview Elementary and Dillon Middle School
- Beaverhead County High School (Dillon, Montana)
- Canvas Early Learning Center (Dillon, Montana)
- Butte Public Schools
- Beaverhead County independent rural school districts (six K-8 schools, and one K-12 school)
- Three small rural independent K-8 and K-12 school districts in Madison County
- Helena Public Schools
- Browning Public School District #9 and Browning High School (Browning, MT)
- Hardin Public Schools 17-H&1 (Hardin, MT and Crow Agency Elementary)

The Director of Field Experience, Student Teaching and Licensure communicates regularly and frequently with school partners prior to, during, and after field and clinical experiences. UMW faculty members co-construct a variety of field experiences with the EPP's partners. Additionally, University Supervisors serve an essential role as liaisons and communicators between the EPP and the various school sites they visit. As clinical educators themselves, they are in frequent communication with the mentor teachers who host the student teachers being observed and evaluated by the University Supervisors. In turn, University Supervisors maintain regular contact with the Office of Field Experience, and are often on the frontline regarding advocacy for the student teachers they supervise and/or noting the need for support, remediation, or even disciplinary review, in some instances.

Effectively partnering with P-12 schools is a complex process. The EPP is strongly supported in that process through its reliance on the Teacher Education Advisory Council. Members of this council meet at least once a year (on campus, or through Zoom videoconferencing). A report on the activities of this Council was included with the SSR. Again, because the EPP must partner with such a broad range of schools and districts, the longstanding relationships it has with the Advisory Council, and the work it does with that group is invaluable. Of particular note for AY 2020-21 was the work the EPP did with the Advisory Council in May of 2021 to address COVID-19 impacts on clinical partnerships and candidates' experiences.

Overall, the EPP's partnerships give its candidates the opportunity to work with economically and academically diverse students. The EPP's partners generally reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the state of Montana, as well. In particular, candidates who are engaged in the partnerships (listed above) located in Browning, Hardin, and Crow Agency, Montana, are also fully immersed in the Indigenous-Centered Education Project (ICEP) which involves a 2+2 partnership with two tribal colleges: Blackfeet Community College (BCC) and Little Big Horn College (LBHC). This grant-funded project is also known as the "Tribal Futures Project," and was explained in the Tribal Futures Report, included as evidence with the SSR.

The ICEP is overseen by an executive director who is a faculty member of the EPP, and who collaboratively developed the project with BCC and LBHC, using grant funds from the Office of Indian Education (OIE), which falls under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Education's (USDOE) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). Thus, since 2016, UMW has partnered with Blackfeet Community College (BCC) and the public schools in Browning, Montana to co-deliver educator preparation courses on the Blackfeet Reservation. Indigenous teacher candidates earn their degrees by simultaneously taking BCC/UMW courses and while also serving as paraprofessionals—or even as teachers—in reservation schools. In 2019, UMW

extended its ICEP 2+2 partnerships to include Little Big Horn College (LBHC) and the public schools in Hardin, Montana, Crow Agency, and other reservation schools to co-deliver educator preparation courses on the Crow Reservation.

Rural Fridays Program: This program is sometimes referred to as the “crown jewel” of the EPP’s clinical partnerships. A report on this exceptional partnership and program was included with the SSR. The Rural Fridays Program Coordinator meets with the Beaverhead County Superintendent and the teachers from the independent one- and two-room K-8 schools (which participate in this program) each fall and spring to prepare for the Rural Fridays program. A report on this partnership program was attached to the SSR.

CAEP: Areas for Improvement (ITP) 2.3 Partners design high-quality clinical experiences

Field experiences, particularly in secondary education, do not consistently prepare candidates to demonstrate a positive impact on all P-12 students learning and development.

Again, the EPP submitted its self-study report (SSR) very recently--in April of 2022, in preparation for its Fall 2022 site review. In that document, the EPP addressed this AFI extensively in its narrative and in the accompanying evidence it provided. The EPP has made a concerted effort to address this AFI since the time it was rendered. One important way in which the EPP addressed this issue was through the formation of the University-wide Teacher Education Committee (UTEC), which was documented in the body of the self-study report. This committee consists of representatives from across the departments on campus which join together to offer content-related general education and upper-division courses which help to prepare candidates. In particular, this committee supports better preparation of secondary education and K-12 candidates, since the faculty in those departments are responsible for so much of the coursework taken by those individuals. Of particular note for AY 2020-21 was a meeting of the UTEC where the EPP’s self-study report on Praxis Subject Assessment data was shared. Faculty members from across campus departments responded to this report, and considered ways to strengthen candidate success in taking the Praxis.

Another extremely important step taken by the EPP in addressing this AFI is the fact that the programs of study for both secondary and K-12 degree-seekers have been changed. Candidates in those programs are now required to take a course which was not required of them when the AFI was written. This change was instituted in AY 2020-21. The courses which was added is EDU 352 Field Experience in Integrated Planning, Instruction, and Positive Classroom Management, P-12. This class contains a 14-day field experience embedded within the course, similar to a “junior field experience” offered by many other EPPs. Moreover, the course was recently re-worked and improved, in an effort to address that portion of the AFI which states that the EPP’s field experiences do not consistently prepare candidates to make an impact on P-12 learning. The course includes a Teacher Work Sample (TWS) which is a performance-based assessment of a candidate’s impact on learning. The course also includes the EPP’s new Dispositions Tool as a critical assessment. The inclusion of this new requirement for secondary and K-12 majors should make a significant difference in terms of field experiences which help to prepare that group of candidates for making a positive impact on P-12 learning. It should also improve the experiences of the remainder of the candidates who move through the EPP, since the course is required for all candidates.

CAEP: Areas for Improvement (ITP) 4.1 Completer impact on student growth and learning

The EPP’s Plan for Documenting Impact on Student Learning, as presented, only partially addresses the components of Standard 4.

In collaboration with the EPPs across Montana, and with the Montana Council of Deans of Education and the Montana Office of Public Instruction, the EPP completely revised its plan for CAEP Standard 4, adopting the Montana Education Preparation Program (MEPP) Continuous Improvement Collaborative (CIC) protocol for documenting program impact. This is thoroughly discussed within the EPP’s self-study report (SSR), which was submitted recently, in preparation for a Fall 2022 site review. The MEPP CIC complete protocol was included as a supporting document for the SSR.

In accordance with the MEPP CIC Protocol, the EPP conducted a case study to address CAEP R4.1, assessing completer effectiveness. Design of the case study was based on the results of the EPP’s data analysis of the Employer Satisfaction Survey (discussed below) and the Completer Satisfaction Survey (also discussed below). The EPP noted that the strongest area of dissatisfaction expressed by both employers and completers alike was the level of preparation received in relation to classroom management. Thus, the EPP decided to focus on this aspect of completer effectiveness.

Development of the Employer Satisfaction Survey was described in the SSR. This survey is part of the MEPP CIC protocol, and it addresses CAEP Standard R4.2 Satisfaction of Employers. The data from this survey were triangulated with the EPP’s findings as a result of meetings with the EPP’s Teacher Education Advisory Council. Results across both sectors are similar. The survey results are presented on the EPP’s accreditation page, as part of its CAEP accreditation public reporting.

Development of the Completer Satisfaction Survey was described in the SSR. The data from this survey are triangulated with the EPP’s case study, and with the EPP’s analysis of results from the Exit Survey and Focus Groups conducted by the EPP with candidates who are about to graduate. The EPP realizes, of course, that participants in those two data-collection tools are not actually completers. They are, however, “adjacent” to completers, since they will soon be graduating and entering the field. Furthermore, their memories of their experiences with the preparation program are far fresher than completers who have been in the field for some time. The Completer Survey is administered in accordance with the timeline of the MEPP CIC protocol, i.e., every three years. The survey results are presented on the EPP’s accreditation page, as part of its CAEP accreditation public reporting.

The Completer Survey consists of the same 20 items used in the Employer Survey, which were carefully aligned with CAEP, State, and InTASC standards. The rationale for using an identical set of indicators in the Completer Survey as compared to the Employer Survey is this: It allows cross-comparisons of findings from the two constituencies. In fact, that is exactly what the EPP did in order to make decisions regarding the inquiry it wished to pursue, regarding the case study. A cross comparison of item #5, which asks about completers' ability "to respond productively to negative behavior," was an impetus for the EPP to dig deeper into that question. Both completers and employers found this to be a significant area of concern with regard to their satisfaction with their educator preparation programs.

CAEP: Areas for Improvement (ITP)

5.3 Results for continuous program improvement are used

The EPP's data-driven decision-making process for continuous improvement is not consistent across programs.

Once again, the EPP submitted its self-study report (SSR) very recently--in April of 2022, in preparation for its Fall 2022 site review. The narrative provided throughout the portion of the self-study report dedicated to CAEP Standard 5 addressed this AFI. The EPP has dedicated considerable time, effort, and re-design of its work to address this AFI. Two documents deserve particular note here: the QAS (Quality Assurance System) Overview Crosswalk and the QAS Flowchart, both of which were included as evidence items for the SSR. These documents attest to the EPP's efforts to make its Quality Assurance System clear, accessible, and generative. The documents detail the changes implemented by the EPP since the issuance of this particular AFI.

The narrative in the SSR which addressed CAEP Standard R5 demonstrated what the QAS Flowchart depicts, namely that the EPP truly engages in the collection of data from multiple sources, and it analyzes those data in a variety of ways, sharing the data with stakeholders and using the data to make decisions about program improvement. This is the essence of self-study. The EPP engages with internal and external stakeholders, and that engagement is documented throughout the SSR. The QAS flowchart illustrates the various ways in which data-driven momentum for the EPP is generated, noting also that there is always a feedback loop involved as the cycle of continuous improvement re-starts itself in an ongoing manner.

Section 6. EPP's Continuous Improvement & Progress on (advanced level) Phase-in Plans and (initial-level) Transition Plans

Please share any continuous improvement initiatives at the EPP, AND (if applicable) provide CAEP with an update on the EPP's progress on its advanced level phase-in plans and/or initial level transition plans.

6.1 Summarize any data-driven EPP-wide or programmatic modifications, innovations, or changes planned, worked on, or completed in the last academic year.

This is an opportunity to share targeted continuous improvement efforts your EPP is proud of. Focus on one to two major efforts the EPP made and the relationship among data examined, changes, and studying the results of those changes.

The ability to write effectively is an essential skill for all teacher candidates, in all areas. This is especially true when it comes to designing instruction and writing lesson plans, unit plans, and teacher work samples. The EPP has held a longstanding concern regarding the writing skills of its candidates. Much of this concern has been difficult to quantify, however. In 2017, the EPP made a decision to do just that—to be more data-driven in the realm of supporting candidates with their professional writing skills. A set of writing prompts/tasks was developed and housed in several core courses. Using the Writing Rubric (2017), data were collected to measure and track the development of candidates' writing skills over time. Unfortunately, implementation of the writing prompts in the courses where they were intended to reside was not always consistent. Moreover, the data which were collected run counter to the prevailing notion that the EPP's candidates struggle with writing. In the EPP's recent submission of a self-study report (SSR) in preparation for a Fall 2022 Site Review, the 2017 writing assessment data analysis report was included as evidence. As noted in the SSR, though, the EPP is relatively certain that the Writing Assessment was affected by underlying problems with reliability, with assigning authentic ratings to writing samples, and possibly with validity of the tool itself—although validity was not formally assessed. A new approach to the assessment of writing was decided upon by the EPP, one which focuses on writing about the EPP's mission/vision statement known as "Our Promise." Candidates are assessed, using this new tool, in EDU 201 Introduction to Education with Field Experience. Later in candidates' progressions, they are asked to submit a second "Our Promise" writing exercise to their education advisors, this time grounded in the topic of service learning. (Completing 30 hours or more of service learning is a requirement of TEP Gateway 2.) Adoption of this new approach to writing assessment occurred in AY 2020-21, but the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic intruded negatively upon using this new tool. The adoption of this new approach continues to be in early stages, even at the time of this writing. The EPP will make every effort to improve data collection and to continue its work on improving candidates' writing skills.

6.1.2 Would the provider be willing to share highlights, new initiatives, assessments, research, scholarship, or other activities during a CAEP Conference or in other CAEP Communications?





Yes No

6.1.3 Optional Comments

The EPP has no optional or additional comments to offer at this point.

R1.3 Instructional Practice
R1.4 Professional Responsibility
R5.1 Quality Assurance System
R5.4 Continuous Improvement

Upload data results or documentation of data-driven changes.

-  **Our_Promise_final_EDU_201_writing_task.pdf**
-  **Our_Promise_EDU_201_rubric.pdf**
-  **Our_Promise_final_Service_Learning_writing_task.pdf**
-  **Our_Promise_Service_Learning_Essay_rubric.pdf**

Section 8: Feedback for CAEP & Report Preparer's Authorization

8.1 . [OPTIONAL] Just as CAEP asks EPPs to reflect on their work towards continuous improvement, CAEP endeavors to improve its own practices. To this end, CAEP asks for the following information to identify areas of priority in assisting EPPs.

8.1.1 What semester is your next accreditation visit?

Fall 2022

8.1.2 Does the EPP have any questions about CAEP Standards, CAEP sufficiency criteria, or the CAEP accreditation process generally?

None at this time.

8.2 Preparer's authorization. *By checking the box below, I indicate that I am authorized by the EPP to complete the 2022 EPP Annual Report, and that the details provided in this report and linked webpages are up to date and accurate at the time of submission..*

I am authorized to complete this report.

Report Preparer's Information

Name: Laura Straus

Position: Professor of Education and Accreditation Officer

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I understand that all the information that is provided to CAEP from EPPs seeking initial accreditation, continuing accreditation or having completed the accreditation process is considered the property of CAEP and may be used for training, research and data review. CAEP reserves the right to compile and issue data derived from accreditation documents.

Acknowledge