

## AAQEP Annual Report for 2025

Provider/Program Name:	Grand Canyon University-Initial Programs
End Date of Current AAQEP Accreditation Term (or "n/a" if not yet accredited):	June 30, 2026

### PART I: Publicly Available Program Performance and Candidate Achievement Data

#### 1. Overview and Context

This overview describes the mission and context of the educator preparation provider and the programs included in its AAQEP review.

##### **Grand Canyon University**

Grand Canyon University (GCU) is a private Christian university located in Phoenix, Arizona. GCU has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) since 1968. The most recent HLC reaffirmation of accreditation review was completed in 2021. GCU is also authorized by the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education (AZPPSE).

Grand Canyon College was chartered on August 1, 1949, with 16 faculty and approximately 100 students in Prescott, Arizona. In 1951, the college relocated to a 90-acre tract in West Phoenix, where it remains today, and was first accredited in 1968 by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. Established as a Baptist-affiliated institution with an emphasis on religious studies, the school initially offered bachelor's programs in education. Programs expanded to include the sciences, nursing, business, music

and fine arts. It was during this time when the college started to develop a reputation for producing effective teachers, nurses and healthcare professionals in the Southwest.



The University grew its campus student body from fewer than 1,000 students in 2009 to over 24,600 campus students in 2024. GCU's non-traditional student body increased from approximately 22,000 students at the start of 2009 to over 98,300 online students in Fall 2024. In Fall 2024, GCU had a total enrollment of over 123,000 — with more than 24,600 students on campus and over 98,300 learning online. As of February 2025, GCU has graduated over 311,900 students.

Between 2009 and 2024, the University invested over \$1.9 billion dollars and continues to invest in full-time faculty, improved technology infrastructure, new facilities and programmatic expansion in areas such as engineering, computer science and IT. The university has been able to self-fund these investments with only nominal increases in tuition for non-traditional students, while not increasing campus tuition in 16 years.



### **Grand Canyon University Mission**

GCU is a missional, Christ-centered university with an innovative and adaptive spirit that addresses the world's deep needs by cultivating compassionate Christian community, empowering free and virtuous action, and serving others in ways that promote human flourishing. Through academic excellence, the university equips candidates with knowledge of the Christian worldview, instilling in them a sense of purpose and vocational calling that enables them to be innovative thinkers, effective communicators, global contributors, and transformative leaders who change their communities by placing the interests of others before their own.



### **College of Education**

For over 70 years, GCU's College of Education (COE) has proudly maintained its place as a teaching college by working to ensure that the academic programs meet the dynamic needs of PK-12 educator preparation and providing opportunities that create meaningful learning experiences for education candidates from a Christ-centered perspective.

GCU's total enrollment in the College of Education is over 30,300 candidates, including over 1,300 on campus and over 29,000 online in Fall 2024. Between 2020 and June 2024, GCU graduated nearly 17,000 candidates from initial teacher licensure programs and certificates. Between 1961 and 2024, nearly 100,000 campus and online candidates have graduated from GCU's College of Education.

GCU was highlighted at the Arizona State Board of Education's [December 2023 meeting](#) as the in-state institution with the highest percentage of alumni still teaching in the classroom after five years (78%). Additionally, over 100 GCU alumni have been recognized in the field of education, including as Superintendent, Administrator or Teacher of the Year award recipients as of February 2024. GCU alumni have also been recognized as recipients of the [Milken Educator Awards](#), a national award given to educators that demonstrate excellence in their impact on the field of education.

Although this Annual Report focuses on initial programs leading to licensure, more broadly, GCU offers undergraduate and master's level education programs leading to licensure, as well as certificate pathways, and individual education courses, in online asynchronous, traditional, and cohort modalities. The required courses in each online or nontraditional COE program of study are

delivered via asynchronous online course offerings. Undergraduate online courses are typically eight weeks, and graduate online courses are typically six weeks in length. Undergraduate traditional courses are semester-based and 15-weeks in length. Each initial licensure program requires student teaching coursework. The student teaching course consists of either a 15-week student teaching experience or for candidates in a dual credential program (e.g., Elementary and Special Education program), two separate 8-week student teaching sessions. (e.g., Elementary and Special Education program). Candidates are also required to complete practicum/field experience opportunities throughout their program to fulfill clinical practice requirements, as outlined by state licensing agencies and our institutional program policies.

The College of Education adheres to Arizona State Board of Education, Arizona Department of Education, and the expectations of other regulatory bodies as appropriate to serve candidates' best interests, align programmatic requirements to regulations, support candidates as they work towards educator certification, and continue the University's long-standing tradition of preparing educators. College of Education programs are a planned sequence of courses and field/clinical experiences designed to prepare PreK-12 teachers and other professional school personnel to serve in the profession. The College of Education and the University at large consider the coursework and field/clinical experience requirements an essential component to developing quality educators. The College places importance on the development of authentic partnerships through practicum/field experience, student teaching, and internships. This work extends from embedded partnerships in the greater Phoenix area to affiliation agreements with schools and districts across the United States.

### **College of Education Mission**

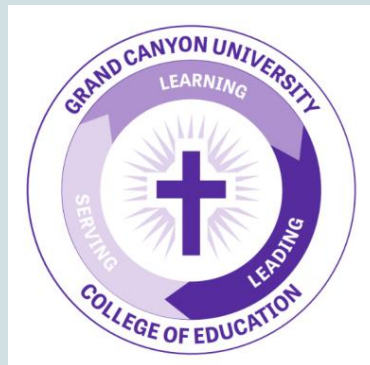
Reflective of the University's mission statement, GCU's College of Education's mission is to inspire excellence in pedagogy and scholarship; advances reflective, innovative, and collaborative teaching practices to maximize student learning and achievement; promotes servant leadership in educational communities and engages a diverse and global community of learners with purpose and passion.

The mission statements for GCU and COE are published in the [University Policy Handbook](#) and can be found on GCU's website which is publicly available at [GCU's Christian Identity and Mission](#) and [GCU's College of Education](#).



### **College of Education Conceptual Framework**

Learning, Leading, and Serving are the foundational components of COE's Conceptual Framework. These words symbolize the College's diverse learning opportunities where faculty and staff diligently work alongside candidates to develop a culture of mutual respect, fellowship, and servant leadership within the educational community. COE's Conceptual Framework directly reflects GCU's commitment to serving educational communities in ways that promote human flourishing.





- **Learning:** We believe that all students can learn and that educators are tasked with engaging in best practices to maximize student learning. Effective educators are knowledgeable and skilled communicators who are dedicated and compassionate, guiding students to learn to the best of their ability.
- **Leading:** We believe education is a powerful tool with which to purposefully transform and uplift communities. As our candidates find their purpose and calling within education, the College aims to support candidates to reach their God-given potential and fulfill their passion in education by helping them lead with a keen focus on addressing the world's deep needs.
- **Serving:** We believe in the spirit of servant leadership and are committed to serving all candidates to enable them to become global contributors who change their communities and the world. As faculty, staff, and candidates, we believe in serving educational communities with an innovative and adaptive spirit and a strong dedication to professional conduct and ethics, respect for the diversity of others, and excellence for all.

### **Systems of Support**

The College of Education at Grand Canyon University provides mission-driven support for candidates through a holistic framework that integrates academic, co-curricular, and community engagement.

#### **1. Academic Support**

Candidates benefit from a specialized graduation team model, offering tailored and regionalized guidance from student services counselors, field experience counselors, teacher placement counselors, as well as faculty site supervisors. High-quality instruction is delivered by committed faculty across modalities. Academic and dispositional alerts, along with improvement action plans and consistent learning opportunities and assessments, ensure timely support.

#### **2. Co-Curricular Support**

The College enriches the candidate experience through professional learning events, educator hiring fairs, resources, and ongoing support. Candidates engage in leadership and learning communities such as Kappa Delta Pi and Educators Rising, and deepen their Christian worldview through chapel, livestreamed services, and the Impact Club.

#### **3. Community Impact**

The College actively involves candidates in outreach and engagement with P–12 schools through intentional partnerships, active affiliation agreements, local and global outreach, and service-learning projects. The College also fosters ongoing connection and impact through social media, alumni engagement, resources, and learning opportunities that uplift the field of education.

Grand Canyon University's College of Education aims to provide experiences for candidates centered on learning, leading, and serving, helping to enable candidates to promote human flourishing in educational communities in Arizona and around the United States.

Appendices A and B, respectively, highlight a standardized glossary of terms used to support candidates and terms used more holistically as an educator preparation provider, as well as the organizational structure for the College of Education.

- Appendix A: Terminology for key terms and acronyms.
- Appendix B: Organizational Structure

### Public Posting URL

Part I of this report is posted at the following web address (accredited members filing this report must post at least Part I):

<https://www.gcu.edu/academics/accreditation/college-of-education>

## 2. Enrollment and Completion Data

Table 1 shows current enrollment and recent completion data for each program included in the AAQEP review.

**Table 1. Program Specification: Enrollment and Completers for Academic Year 2024-2025**

<b>Program Specification: Enrollment and Completers for Academic Year 2024-2025</b>			
<b>Degree or Certificate</b> granted by the institution or organization	<b>State Certificate, License, Endorsement, or Other Credential</b>	<b>Number of Candidates</b> enrolled in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending 06/25)	<b>Number of Completers</b> in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending 06/25)
<b><i>Programs that lead to initial teaching credentials</i></b>			
Bachelor of Arts in Dance Education* (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Dance Education, PreK-12	*	*
Bachelor of Arts in Dance for Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	18	2
Bachelor of Arts in English for Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	689	59
Bachelor of Arts in History for Secondary Education	Secondary Education, 6-12	856	70



(Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)			
Bachelor of Arts in Music Education-Choral: Piano (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Music Education, PreK-12	1	0
Bachelor of Arts in Music Education-Choral: Voice (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Music Education, PreK-12	20	4
Bachelor of Arts in Music Education-Instrumental: Brass, Woodwind, Percussion, or Strings (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Music Education, PreK-12	13	2
Bachelor of Arts in Music Education-Instrumental: Piano (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Music Education, PreK-12	1	0
Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Education* (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Theatre Education, PreK-12	*	*
Bachelor of Arts in Theatre for Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	15	2
Bachelor of Science in Biology for Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	13	7
Bachelor of Science in Business for Secondary Education* (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	*4	*8
Bachelor of Science in Chemistry for Secondary Education* (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	*1	*2
Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Early Childhood Education, Birth -Grade 3	2144	209
Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Early Childhood Education, Birth -Grade 3, Early Childhood Special Education, Birth -Grade 3	1599	149
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Elementary Education, K-8	5529	765

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Special Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Elementary Education, K-8, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, K-12	3966	347
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with an Emphasis in Christian Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Elementary Education, K-8	143	15
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with an Emphasis in English as a Second Language (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Elementary Education, K-8	252	20
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with an Emphasis in STEM (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Elementary Education, K-8	149	1
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with an Emphasis in Teaching Reading (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Elementary Education, K-8	140	13
Bachelor of Science in Mathematics for Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	372	44
Bachelor of Science in Physical Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Physical Education, PreK – 12	46	20
Master of Education in Early Childhood Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Early Childhood Education, Birth -Grade 3	676	183
Master of Education in Early Childhood Education (Nevada ARL)* (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Early Childhood Education, Birth -Grade 2 (Nevada)	*	*1
Master of Education in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education (Leads to Initial Licensure)	Early Childhood Education, Birth -Grade 3, Early Childhood Special Education, Birth -Grade 3	443	106
Master of Education in Elementary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Elementary Education, K-8	1420	525
Master of Education in Elementary Education (Nevada ARL)*	Elementary Education, K-8 (Nevada)	*	*

(Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)			
Master of Education in Elementary Education and Special Education (Leads to Initial Licensure)	Elementary Education, K-8, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, K-12	598	159
Master of Education in Secondary Education* (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	76	*
Master of Education in Secondary Education with an Emphasis in Humanities (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	609	248
Master of Education in Secondary Education with an Emphasis in STEM (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 6-12	406	121
Master of Education in Secondary Humanities Education (Nevada ARL) (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 7-12 (Nevada)	11	5
Master of Education in Secondary STEM Education (Nevada ARL) (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Secondary Education, 7-12 (Nevada)	5	1
Master of Education in Special Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Mild/Moderate Disabilities, K-12	1189	443
Master of Education in Special Education (Nevada ARL) (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Generalist (Mild to Moderate), K-12 (Nevada)	11	7
Master of Education in Special Education: Moderate to Severe (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	Moderate/Severe Disabilities, K-12	171	58
Total for programs that lead to initial credentials		21,586	3,596
TOTAL enrollment and productivity for all programs		21,586	3,596
Unduplicated total of all program candidates and completers		21,586	3,596

### Added or Discontinued Programs

Any programs within the AAQEP review that have been added or discontinued within the past year are listed below. (This list is required only from providers with accredited programs.)

### **Added Programs**

#### **M.Ed. Secondary Education –**

- This new offering became effective May 15, 2025. The aim of this program is to reinstate the single-track secondary education pathway based on data analysis and reviews of national trends. A substantive change form has been submitted to reinstate this pathway through a new program of study.

### **Discontinued Programs**

The programs indicated by and “\*” in the chart above have been retired and will be discontinued once all enrolled candidates have completed the program.

- Bachelor of Arts in Dance Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure) \*: internally retired 2/2022: This program was revised and replaced by the Bachelor of Arts in Dance for Secondary Education program to align with the intended licensure outcomes.
- Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)\*: internally retired 2/2022: This program was revised and replaced by the Bachelor of Arts in Theatre for Secondary Education program to align with the intended licensure outcomes.
- Bachelor of Science in Business for Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure) \*: internally retired 9/2022: This program was retired due to low enrollment numbers. The College, in collaboration with GCU’s Colangelo College of Business, made a strategic decision to discontinue the program in order to better align with evolving student needs and institutional priorities.
- Bachelor of Science in Chemistry for Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure) \*: internally retired 9/2022: This program was retired due to low enrollment numbers. The College, in collaboration with GCU’s College of Science, Engineering, and Technology, made a strategic decision to discontinue the program in order to better align with evolving student needs and institutional priorities.
- Master of Education in Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure) \*: internally retired 1/2019: This program was previously revised and divided into two separate pathways: the Master of Education in Secondary Education with an Emphasis in Humanities and the Master of Education in Secondary Education with an Emphasis in STEM. These changes were intended to guide candidates into more focused cohorts. However, based on program data and stakeholder feedback, the College has decided to consolidate its offerings and return to a single-track M.Ed. in Secondary Education. As of 5/2025, the Humanities and STEM emphasis programs have been retired, and the unified M.Ed. in Secondary Education program is now the sole offering.
- Master of Education in Early Childhood Education (Nevada ARL) (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure) \*: internally retired 2/2022 This program was retired as changes in licensure requirements for Nevada created deficits for the program.

- Master of Education in Elementary Education (Nevada ARL) (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure) \* :internally retired 2/2022 This program was retired as changes in licensure requirements for Nevada created deficits for the program.

*\*A Substantive Change Request form has been submitted for these programs.*

### 3. Program Performance Indicators

The program performance information in Table 2 applies to the academic year indicated in Table 1.

**Table 2. Program Performance Indicators**

<p><b>A. Total enrollment</b> in the educator preparation programs shown in Table 1. This figure is an unduplicated count, i.e., individuals earning more than one credential may be counted in more than one line above but only once here.</p>
<p>During the 2024-2025 year, there were <b>21,586</b> unique candidates enrolled in our AAQEP-accredited initial teacher licensure programs. There has been an increase in enrollment within Initial Teacher Licensure programs compared to the previous academic year.</p>
<p><b>B. Total number of unique completers</b> (across all programs) included in Table 1. This figure is an unduplicated count, i.e., individuals who earned more than one credential may be counted in more than one line above but only once here.</p>
<p>During the 2024-2025 year, there were <b>3,596</b> unique graduates from our AAQEP-accredited initial teacher licensure programs.</p>
<p><b>C. Number of recommendations</b> for certificate, license, or endorsement included in Table 1.</p>
<p>In the 2024-2025 year, there were <b>3,596*</b> initial teacher licensure graduates recommended for certification. Of those graduates, 761* graduates were recommended for certification in more than one area as a result of graduating from a dual licensure program. *Not all states require recommendations, and not all candidates request recommendations.</p>
<p><b>D. Cohort completion rates</b> for candidates who completed the various programs within their respective program's expected timeframe <b>and</b> in 1.5 times the expected timeframe.</p>
<p>The cohort completion rates below reflect cohorts with expected graduates in the year 2024-2025. Newer program versions will have cohort completion rates once cohorts reach their expected graduation dates. Of the programs with cohort completion rates, the expected completion timeframes are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 54 months for undergraduate initial teacher licensure programs.</li> </ul>

- Between 24-34 months for graduate-level initial teacher licensure programs. See the table below for the expected timeframes for each program.

#### AAQEP Accredited Initial Teacher Licensure Programs:

Program	Expected Timeframe (Months)	100% Expected Timeframe	100-150% Expected Timeframe	Total Completion Within 150%
Bachelor of Arts in Dance Education**	54	21.43%	0.00%	21.43%
Bachelor of Arts in English for Secondary Education	54	18.08%	4.62%	22.69%
Bachelor of Arts in History for Secondary Education	54	9.54%	6.25%	15.79%
Bachelor of Arts in Music Education-Choral: Piano	54	*	*	*
Bachelor of Arts in Music Education-Choral: Voice	54	20.00%	0.00%	20.00%
Bachelor of Arts in Music Education-Instrumental: Brass, Woodwind, Percussion, or Strings	54	10.00%	0.00%	10.00%
Bachelor of Arts in Music Education-Instrumental: Piano	54	*	*	*
Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Education**	54	18.75%	0.00%	18.75%
Bachelor of Arts in Theatre for Secondary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	54	*	*	*
Bachelor of Science in Biology for Secondary Education	54	29.63%	0.00%	29.63%
Bachelor of Science in Business for Secondary Education**	54	7.41%	0.00%	7.41%
Bachelor of Science in Chemistry for Secondary Education**	54	66.67%	0.00%	66.67%
Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education	54	17.09%	5.88%	22.97%
Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education	54	19.91%	7.08%	26.99%
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education	54	33.87%	4.04%	37.91%
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Special Education	54	19.20%	8.50%	27.69%
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with an Emphasis in Christian Education	54	21.15%	3.85%	25.00%
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with an Emphasis in English as a Second Language	54	20.79%	7.92%	28.71%
Bachelor of Science in Mathematics for Secondary Education	54	14.48%	4.07%	18.55%



Bachelor of Science in Physical Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	54	20.00%	0.00%	20.00%
Master of Education in Early Childhood Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	29	48.37%	7.07%	55.43%
Master of Education in Early Childhood Education (Nevada ARL)**	30	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Master of Education in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education (Leads to Initial Licensure)	25	12.27%	24.09%	36.36%
Master of Education in Elementary Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	30	46.66%	7.49%	54.15%
Master of Education in Elementary Education (Nevada ARL)**	34	25.00%	25.00%	50.00%
Master of Education in Secondary Education with an Emphasis in Humanities (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	27	37.07%	7.32%	44.39%
Master of Education in Secondary Education with an Emphasis in STEM (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	27	40.80%	4.68%	45.48%
Master of Education in Secondary STEM Education (Nevada ARL)*	29	42.86%	14.29%	57.14%
Master of Education in Secondary Humanities Education (Nevada ARL)	29	40.00%	0.00%	40.00%
Master of Education in Special Education (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)**	29	51.11%	7.47%	58.58%
Master of Education in Special Education (Nevada ARL)	31	60.00%	20.00%	80.00%
Master of Education in Special Education: Moderate to Severe (Leads to Initial Teacher Licensure)	24	24.14%	22.99%	47.13%
<b>Total:</b>		<b>30.53%</b>	<b>6.80%</b>	<b>37.33%</b>
<p>*No cohort completion rate. Completion rates are only calculated for programs with 10 or more candidates in the cohort.</p> <p>** Program retired; however, programs will be on a Teach Out Plan for all candidates enrolled. Once all candidates have completed, the program(s) will be discontinued.</p>				
<p><b>E. Summary of state license examination results</b>, including teacher performance assessments, and specification of any examinations on which the pass rate (cumulative at time of reporting) was below 80%.</p>				
<p>All College of Education (COE) initial teacher licensure programs are approved by the Arizona State Board of Education. Since 2013, the State of Arizona has utilized the Pearson National Evaluation Series (NES) for educator certification exams, with the</p>				

exception of early childhood education, which continues to use the Pearson Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessments (AEPA). Exams offered by NES and AEPA assess both content knowledge and professional competencies required for teacher certification.

Within Grand Canyon University's College of Education (COE), state-required basic skills and content knowledge exams have been a programmatic requirement since 2011. In August 2017, following the Arizona Department of Education's implementation of Arizona Senate Bill (SB) 1042, which introduced alternative pathways to certification, the COE reevaluated its certification exam policies. As a result, the College established clear processes and pathways to determine student teaching eligibility, ensuring consistent expectations, documentation, and support for candidates pursuing educator licensure.

While Arizona and other states permit multiple pathways to certification, including options that do not require passing content exam scores, GCU's state-approved programs continue to require certification exams as evidence of content preparedness. This distinction reflects the College's commitment to maintaining rigorous academic and professional standards.

Additionally, the data collected regarding certification exams is self-reported by candidates. Arizona's certification landscape is notably complex, with a wide array of exams and exam combinations required depending on the candidate's intended certification area. This variability differs significantly from other professional industries, where standardized testing requirements are typically more uniform.

Historically, candidates in initial licensure educator programs typically perform more successfully on professional knowledge exams than on content knowledge exams. GCU's College of Education candidates demonstrate strong performance on Professional Knowledge Exams, with pass rates consistently above 94% for both Elementary and Secondary Professional Knowledge Exams over the past two academic years (2022-2023 and 2023-2024). This trend highlights a stronger foundation in pedagogical skills than in specific subject-area expertise. Armed with that knowledge, GCU COE programs have been recently revised to embed additional content practice within coursework. Simultaneously, revisions have also centered on deepening the rigor of pedagogical practices, to create more authentic learning experiences, and to further equip candidates with the professional knowledge required to support student learning effectively in the content areas. To increase preparation for educator certification examinations, the College continues to work on multiple exam preparation initiatives focused on two major components: exam content in coursework and exam support outside coursework, detailed below and explicated further in Section 5.

For instance, the COE has provided a wide range of exam support resources to assist candidates in preparing for certification exams. Some of the resources include internally developed materials such as those found on the [Student Success Center](#) and a variety of live and recorded webinars. In addition, COE partnered with external providers like McGraw Hill for Teacher Certification Prep (Fall 2021 - July 31, 2023) and currently offers Embedded Test Application Platform (TAP) practice quizzes within courses (from March 28, 2024 - current), as well as the newest implemented educator certification exam preparation support with external partner 240 Tutoring (from May 1, 2024 - current).

The College maintains official COE and GCU pass rates, measured on a “best attempt” basis. Data is sourced from Pearson’s NES and AEPA databases, with all GCU-attributed attempts processed accordingly. Pass rates are reported approximately 18 months after the close of each calendar year to allow candidates adequate time to test (e.g., 2025 data will be published in June 2026). Rates reflect candidates who have achieved “completer” or “graduate” status. As the EPP spans all 50 states (each with its own certification requirements and varying testing thresholds), passing scores, beyond Arizona's NES or AEPA passing scores, vary depending on the specific standards set by each state. For AAQEP purposes, COE utilized the following established criteria for success: aggregate pass rates above the 80% threshold for content and professional knowledge exams.

Currently, COE does not have access to all state-specific exam results, such as Georgia’s GACE, unless voluntarily reported by candidates with the exception of Nevada as the College has approved alternative programs within the state. Praxis pass rate data is limited, as the Educational Testing Service (ETS) does not disclose the state designated for score reporting, and cut scores vary by state and test.

Data below is based on program completers from the 2023-2024 year, where lingering effects on the shifts in educator certification requirements and the COVID-19 pandemic remain evident. Since the 2023-2024 year, represented in the data set below, the College of Education has implemented various strategies to support candidates in passing their initial licensure examinations. These supports are regularly reviewed as part of the College’s commitment to continuous improvement (note: the low ‘n’ in some content areas).

<b>AZ Trad Pass Rates</b>		<b>2023-2024*</b>		
<b>Assessment Code</b>	<b>Assessment Name</b>	<b>Passers</b>	<b>Takers</b>	<b>Pass Rate</b>
<b>30</b>	Special Ed.: Sev. & Prof. Disabled	18	15	<b>83%</b>
<b>36</b>	Early Childhood Education	173	124	<b>72%</b>
<b>83</b>	Special Ed.: Early Childhood	73	55	<b>75%</b>
<b>93</b>	Professional Knowledge-Early Childhood	162	141	<b>87%</b>
<b>NT051</b>	APK Elementary	696	663	<b>95%</b>
<b>NT052</b>	APK Secondary	248	241	<b>97%</b>
<b>NT102</b>	Elementary Education (Subtests I)	737	549	<b>74%</b>
<b>NT103</b>	Elementary Education (Subtests II)	732	517	<b>71%</b>

<b>NT301</b>	English Language Arts	40	39	<b>98%</b>
<b>NT302</b>	History	48	29	<b>60%</b>
<b>NT304</b>	Mathematics	31	19	<b>61%</b>
<b>NT506</b>	Physical Education	14	13	<b>93%</b>
<b>NT601</b>	Special Education	294	258	<b>88%</b>

*\*Pass rates are not calculated for exams with less than 10 test takers.*

The College has implemented a variety of approaches to increase candidate preparedness for licensure examinations. In addition to materials embedded in the initial licensure programs, resources are available to candidates through the Student Success Center, webinars, and the library. The College has collaborated with internal and external relevant parties to increase the rigor of assignments to promote candidates' critical thinking and content application. One of our key external partnerships is with 240 Tutoring, a comprehensive educator licensure exam preparation platform that offers high-quality study modules and full-length practice assessments designed to support teacher candidates in successfully passing their licensure exams. These initiatives have contributed to increases in pass rates for a number of programs. For example, two of the largest content area exams, Elementary Education (Subtest I) increased by 4% and Elementary Education (Subtest II) increased by 8%. In addition, content area exams in the area of Mathematics increased by 23% and English Language Arts increased by 16%.

Finally, programs for early childhood, early childhood special education, elementary, secondary, and special education areas have undergone a full revision based on the results from recent Program Reviews and data analysis. During the revision of these programs, the rigor of assignments was increased to prompt a depth of knowledge that activates critical thinking skills for candidates as they prepare to take certification exams. In addition, examination practice, resources, and planning assignments were added to address the specific licensure examinations.

F. Narrative explanation of **evidence available from program completers**, with a characterization of findings.

Evidence available from program completers is compiled using highlighted information from the *GCU End of Program (EOP) Survey* and the *College of Education Alumni Survey*. The GCU End of Program Survey results from 2024 program completers indicate our initial teacher licensure program completers rate their program satisfaction above 88%. The program satisfaction rates emerge from indicators, including whether program completers are (a) likely to recommend GCU programs to friends, family, and peers, (b) the educational program met the completer's expectations, and (c) the completer was satisfied with their GCU experience. As such, an End of Program Survey program satisfaction rate of % indicates overall satisfaction with GCU and their educational program.

GCU End of Program Survey - Overall Satisfaction		
Modality	N	Percentage
<b>Trad</b>	293	85.26%
<b>NonTrad</b>	669	90.47%
<b>Total</b>	962	88.86%

An annual alumni survey that includes AAQEP and program-aligned questions was deployed in 2024 to gather additional information from 2023 initial program completers. Selected responses from the College of Education Alumni Survey demonstrate the degree to which program completers rate their overall preparedness to lead a classroom following program completion and how their program prepared them to be culturally responsive, utilize data to differentiate instruction, and more generally impact student learning. The COE alumni survey will be combined with the GCU Alumni Survey which will be deployed by the GCU Office of Assessment in Spring 2026 which will be sent out to 2024 program completers.

Regarding the impact on student learning, 88.9%\* of initial teacher licensure respondents report that their program prepared them to positively impact student learning, with another 9.9% feeling somewhat prepared. When asked how their program prepared them to become culturally inclusive and responsive educators, 86.4%\* of initial teacher licensure graduates felt their program prepared them, with another 11.9% feeling somewhat prepared. Alumni survey responses are used to inform program improvements throughout the year and during the university's Program Review process.

<b>Positively Impact Student Learning</b>	<b>Total</b>
Highly Prepared and Prepared *	88.83%
Somewhat Prepared	9.93%
Unprepared	1.24%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Be a culturally inclusive and responsive educator able to address diverse learner's needs</b>	<b>Total</b>
Highly Prepared and Prepared *	86.42%
Somewhat Prepared	11.85%
Unprepared	1.73%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*\*Total combines Highly Prepared and Prepared responses as we feel this designation shows that our programs have efficiently prepared our alumni with the various attributes surveyed.*

G. Narrative explanation of **evidence available from employers of program completers**, with a characterization of findings.

The College of Education gathers formal and informal data on program completers from three primary sources: (1) a biannual survey/interviews with local and Arizona principals and district officials, (2) ongoing feedback and information from partnership projects, and (3) targeted employer survey on a biennial cycle. Currently, the State of Arizona does not survey principals or districts for any information on candidates or graduates. The results and findings from these sources demonstrate that the GCU graduates in general are in high demand for jobs, are prepared for the demands of teaching, are professionals with good character and values, and are responsive to student needs. The findings are similar from both local and national perspectives. While the College of Education is always on a path of continuous improvement, we take note that our graduates appear to be actualizing our conceptual framework of learning, leading, and serving in their school communities.

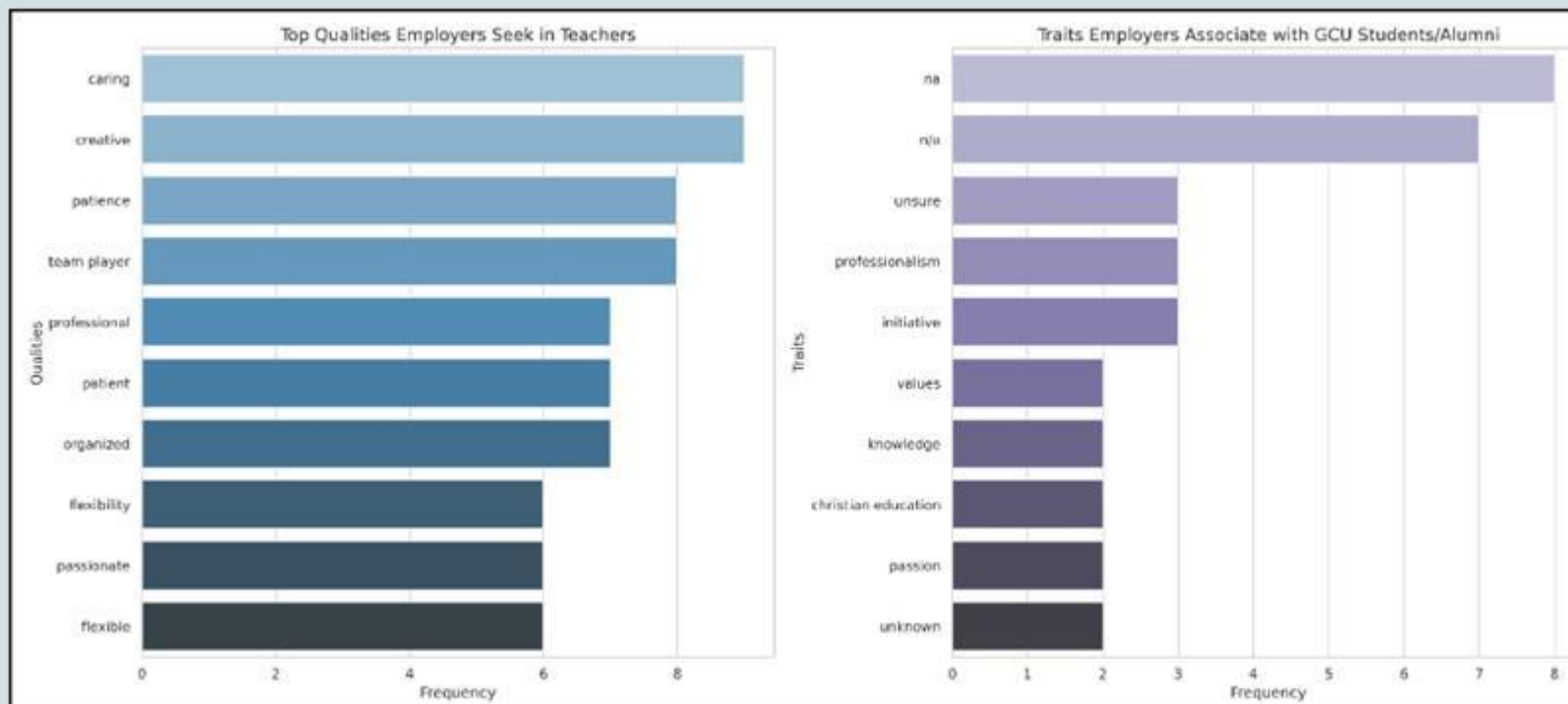
**Examples of Evidence Available from Employers of Program Completers:**

**Lopes Leap to Teach and Lead Career and Networking Event:** The Lopes Leap to Teach and Lead career and hiring initiative, launched by Grand Canyon University's College of Education in 2014, serves as a strategic bridge between the university and Arizona's P–12 school districts, directly supporting various aspects, including but not limited to 3c, through the intentional engagement of multiple key parties in both relationship-building and program improvement. By inviting districts and schools to GCU's campus to showcase their unique educational environments, this program allows candidates to explore a wide range of practicum, student teaching, and employment opportunities. These events not only help schools connect with well-prepared candidates but also foster an open dialogue between local educators and COE faculty regarding shared goals, district-specific needs, and workforce readiness.

The College of Education began administering a bi-annual survey in Spring 2023 to Arizona school districts and educational partners. This survey asks relevant parties to provide feedback on their experiences with GCU candidates and completers, including insights into employment trends, workforce gaps, and the performance and preparedness of new teachers. The data collected is used to inform the College's strategic planning and curricular improvements, ensuring that COE programs continue to align with the evolving needs of the local educational community. Through this process, district partners become active collaborators in data collection, analysis, and innovation, reinforcing the university's commitment to responsive educator preparation and continuous improvement—core elements of aspect 3c.

The Fall 2024 event was held on November 19, 2024, and the Spring 2025 event took place on March 5, 2025. Each event welcomed approximately 60 employers, with approximately 200 candidates attending in the fall and over 50 candidates participating in the spring. In total 115 district and school representatives in Arizona responded to survey questions. Please see the chart showcasing the top qualities employers seek in teachers and traits employers associate with GCU candidates and alumni below:





Please see the [GCU College of Education Survey](#).

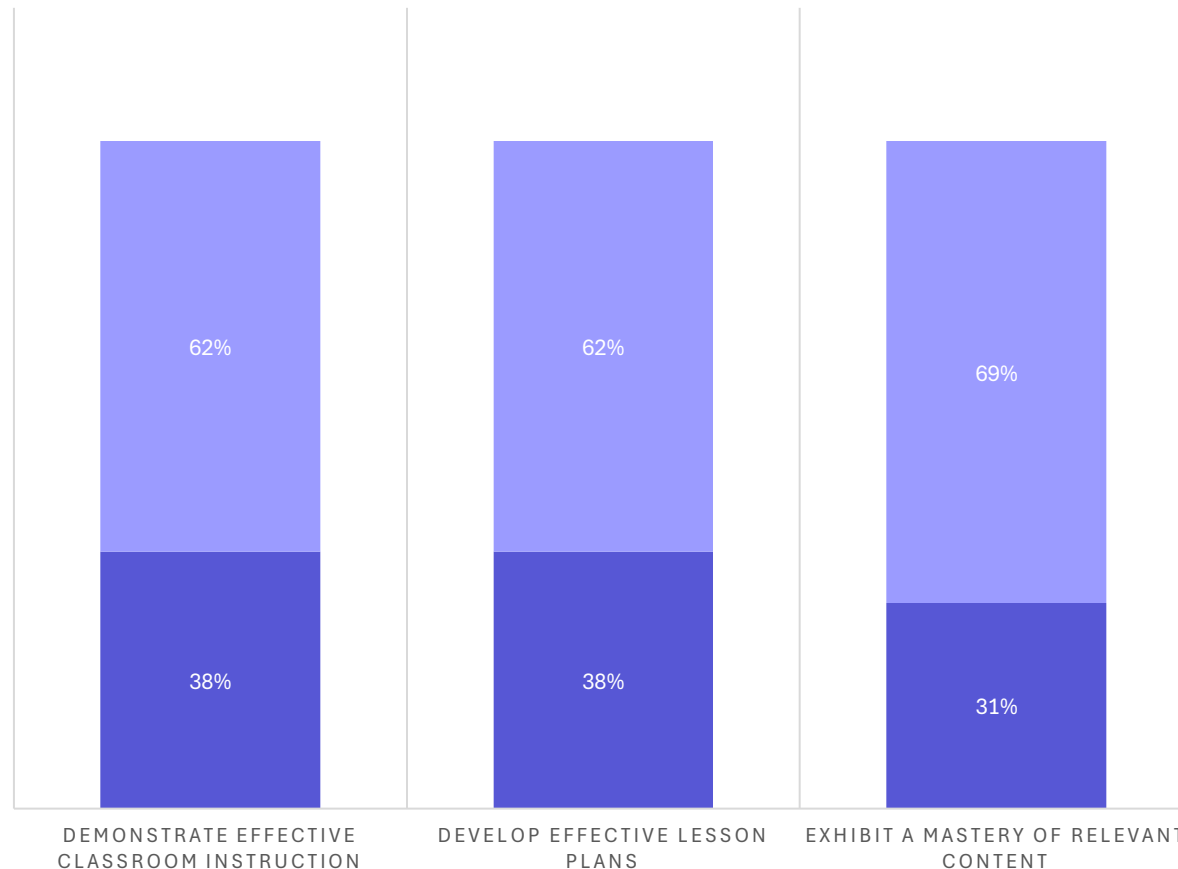
**2025 Employer Survey:** The most recent Employer Survey was administered via SurveyMonkey in collaboration with the GCU Office of Assessment. A 5-point Likert scale survey was designed to align with accreditation requirements and professional standards. Participants included principals, superintendents, human resources personnel, and other school administrators from local Arizona school districts. They were asked to provide feedback on recent graduates (i.e., those who completed their programs within the past five years) using institution-specific questions aligned with the College of Education's Conceptual Framework. The survey was distributed in October 2025 and remained open for two weeks. The response rate was approximately 15%, which reflects a significant improvement over the previous Employer Survey conducted in 2023 through a third-party site, SkyFactor Benchworks, where the response rate was only 5%. Recognizing the need for a different approach, the College implemented new strategies to engage participants, resulting in a notable increase in responses. Distributing the survey directly from the College likely enhanced trust and added a personal touch, contributing to the improved participation.

Overall survey results were positive, demonstrating that employers are satisfied with GCU alumni. The feedback below indicates strong performance across multiple domains. Employers reported high levels of satisfaction with graduates' content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and ability to integrate technology into instruction, with technology integration receiving the highest "Very Satisfied" rating among learning outcomes (46%). Professional dispositions such as commitment to their current role and work ethic were particularly noteworthy, each earning 69% "Very Satisfied" ratings, while professionalism also scored highly. Additionally, graduates were rated positively for their ability to apply assessment knowledge (38% Very Satisfied, 62% Satisfied), demonstrating alignment with accreditation standards and professional expectations. These results affirm that GCU programs are effectively preparing educators to meet the demands of today's classrooms while maintaining strong professional values.

For AAQEP Standard 1a, most respondents indicated they are *Strongly (4)* and *Extremely Satisfied (5)* with recent *graduates (i.e., graduated five or fewer years ago)*: content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge.

## GRADUATE ABILITIES 1.1A

■ Very Satisfied   ■ Satisfied   ■ Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied   ■ Dissatisfied   ■ Very Dissatisfied

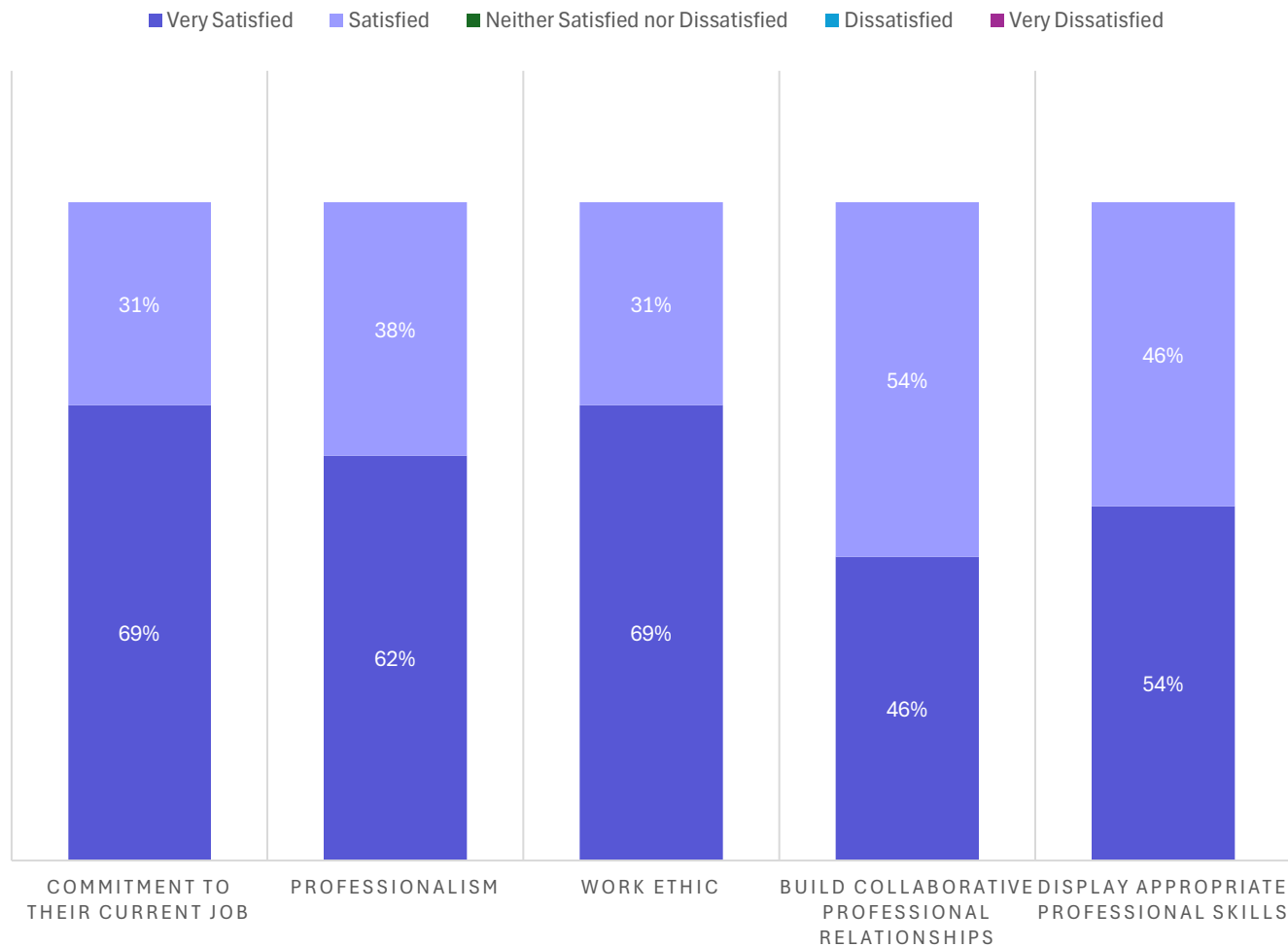


Employers expressed strong satisfaction with graduates' instructional *abilities* (i.e.: *Demonstrate Effective Classroom Instruction*, *Develop Effective Lesson Plans*, and *Exhibit A Mastery of Relevant Content*). Ratings for classroom management and lesson planning were highly positive, with 38% of respondents indicating "Very Satisfied" and 62% "Satisfied" for both areas (100% in total). Similarly, graduates' mastery of relevant content was rated favorably, with 31% "Very Satisfied" and 69% "Satisfied" (100% in total).

total). These results demonstrate that GCU alumni are well prepared to design effective lessons, manage classrooms successfully, and apply content knowledge in practice, which are key competencies aligned with professional standards and accreditation expectations.

For AAQEP Standard 1f, all of the respondents have indicated they are *Strongly (4) and Extremely Satisfied (5)* with recent *graduates (i.e., graduated five or fewer years ago)* when asked about the following traits: *Work Ethic, Professionalism, and Commitment to their current job*. In addition, all of the employers demonstrated satisfaction in the areas of building professional relationships and displaying appropriate professional skills.

## EMPLOYEE TRAITS 1.1F



Employers reported exceptionally high satisfaction with graduates' professional dispositions. Commitment to their current role and work ethic were the strongest areas, each receiving 69% "Very Satisfied" and 31% "Satisfied." Professionalism also scored highly, with 62% "Very Satisfied" and 38% "Satisfied." These results indicate that GCU alumni demonstrate strong dedication, reliability,

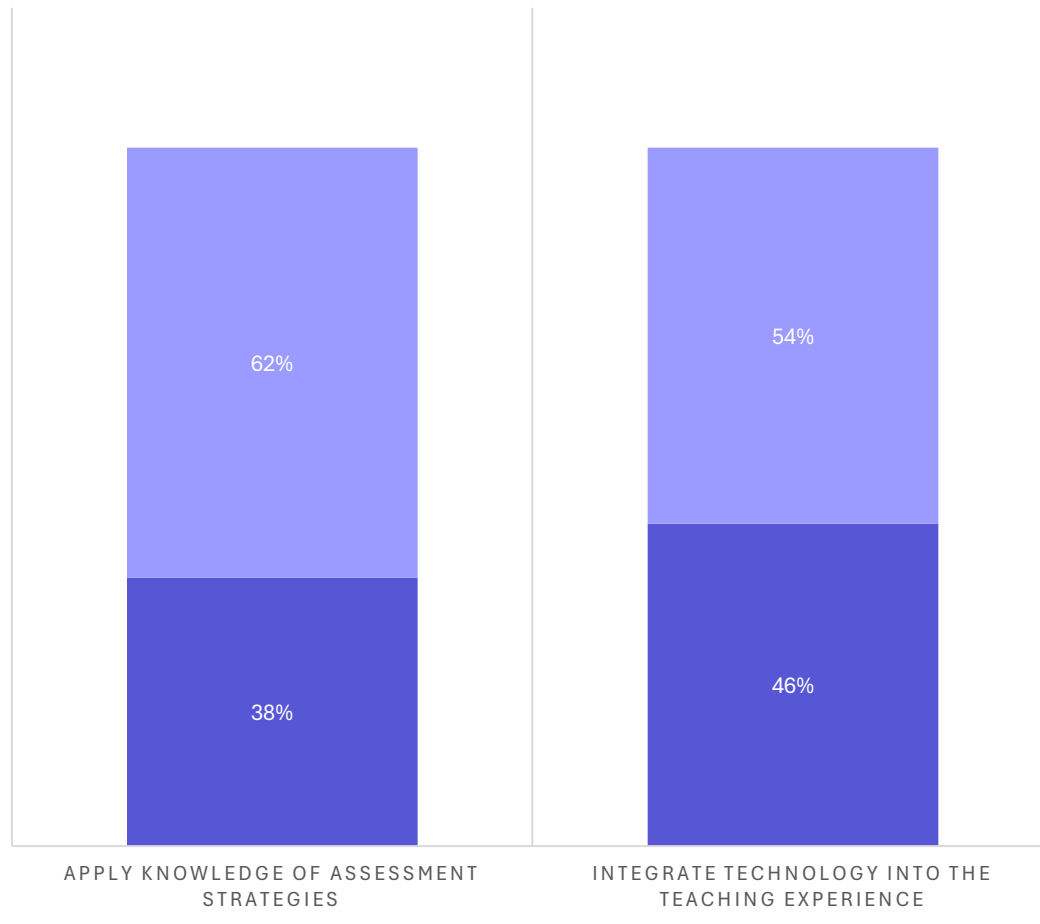
and professional conduct in their roles, which are essential qualities for success in educational settings and align with the College of Education's conceptual framework.

In the area of assessment, all of the employers are *Strongly (4) and Extremely Satisfied (5)* with GCU Alumni and their ability to apply knowledge of assessment strategies and 100% indicated strong satisfaction with GCU Alumni and their ability to integrate technology. All employers reported being satisfied with GCU alumni and their ability to apply knowledge of assessment strategies, with 38% indicating "Very Satisfied" and 62% "Satisfied." Similarly, 100% of respondents expressed satisfaction with graduates' ability to integrate technology into instruction, including 46% "Very Satisfied" and 54% "Satisfied." These findings affirm that graduates are effectively applying assessment practices and leveraging technology to enhance learning.



## LEARNING OUTCOMES 1.1D

■ Very Satisfied ■ Satisfied ■ Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied ■ Dissatisfied ■ Very Dissatisfied



These results affirm that GCU programs are effectively preparing educators to meet the demands of today's classrooms while maintaining strong professional values. The College is actively investigating ways to expand the scale of the survey to reach additional partners across the nation and to increase survey response rates.

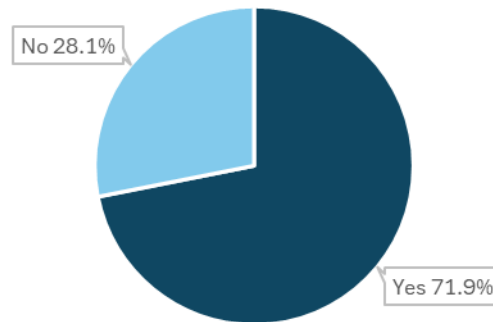
Employers provided positive feedback overall, praising the College of Education's program completers as exceptional and encouraging the College to continue its strong work, noting, "Honestly, students from GCU are exceptional. We just need more." Suggestions for improvement focused on preparing candidates for urban school contexts, strengthening professionalism for early-career teachers, expanding internship opportunities, and offering guidance on teacher certification. Respondents also recommended equipping program completers with a clearer understanding of school systems and organizational structures. These insights will inform ongoing program enhancements to ensure program completers are prepared for diverse educational settings.

The College continues to prioritize these areas by revising courses to provide candidates with opportunities to make informed decisions about instruction, planning, and assessment, as well as strategies to support individual students with exceptionalities such as those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), English learners, and gifted students.

H. Narrative explanation of how the program investigates **employment rates for program completers**, with a characterization of findings. This section may also indicate rates of completers' ongoing education, e.g., graduate study.

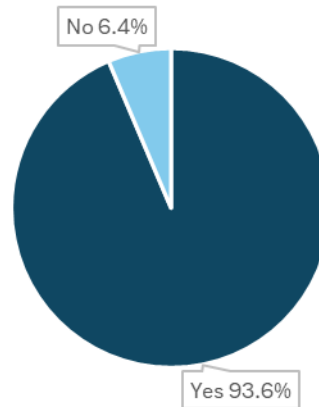
The College of Education investigates employment rates through GCU End of Program (EOP) and Alumni Surveys. The GCU EOP Survey is presented to all GCU candidates near completion of a program of study to assess overall satisfaction, career preparation, and employment outlook. Based on respondents from GCU Initial Teacher Licensure programs from the 2024 graduation year, 71.9% reported employment or graduate school acceptance near the time of program completion. This number has slightly decreased from last year, which was 74.2%.

### Reported Employment or Graduate School acceptance near the time of program completion



In addition to the End of Program Survey, a GCU Alumni Survey is sent to alumni at 1- and 5-years post-graduation. At the time when the GCU survey is deployed, it's sent to all Traditional GCU candidates at 16 or fewer remaining credit hours, and all Non-Traditional candidates with 4 or fewer remaining credit hours. The survey prompts responses related to program and academic satisfaction, career readiness and advancement, and value-add of the degree of completion. Based on respondents from GCU Initial Teacher Licensure programs from the 2023 graduation year, 93.6% of alumni reported employment which has increased slightly year-over-year from 91.4%.

Alumni Reported Employment 1 and 5 years  
post-graduation



I. Explanation of how the **staffing capacity** for program delivery and administration and quality assurance system monitoring have changed during the reporting year, if at all, and how capacity matches the current size of the program.

During the reporting year, the College of Education at Grand Canyon University has maintained a strong staffing capacity to support program delivery, administration, and quality assurance system monitoring, with strategic adjustments to align with program growth and evolving needs.

**Program Delivery and Administration:**

The COE continues to employ a robust team of full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and administrative staff to ensure high-quality instruction and student support. While overall staffing levels have remained stable, targeted hires were made in key areas such as the hiring of a Student Success Director to enhance candidate experiences, support state certification testing, and meet accreditation standards. These additions reflect our commitment to personalized support and rigorous academic preparation across all educator preparation programs.

**Quality Assurance System Monitoring:**

The College of Education assessment and accreditation department has expanded its capacity through the integration of advanced data analytics tools, including a centralized Academic Affairs survey process and key metric dashboard (in progress), as well as the addition of part-time assessment-focused personnel focused on continuous improvement processes. This includes a dedicated staff member for assessment and compliance monitoring, ensuring timely collection, analysis, and reporting of candidate performance data, program outcomes, and stakeholder feedback. These enhancements have strengthened our ability to identify trends, implement evidence-based improvements, and maintain alignment with AAQEP standards.

**Capacity Alignment with Program Size:**

Current staffing levels are well-matched to the size and complexity of our programs. With enrollment growing steadily and program offerings consistent, the COE has ensured that faculty-to-student ratios support effective instruction and mentoring, meeting and exceeding, where possible, the Higher Learning Commission's guidelines. Administrative and quality assurance resources are proportionate to program scale, enabling efficient operations and sustained excellence in candidate preparation. College leadership consistently meets with Executive Leadership to review staffing needs and ensure capacity match scale.

Overall, these strategic adjustments have reinforced the College's ability to deliver high-quality programs and maintain a robust quality assurance system, positioning us to meet the needs of our candidates and the profession effectively.

## 4. Candidate Academic Performance Indicators

Tables 3 and 4 report on select measures of candidate/completer performance related to AAQEP Standards 1 and 2, including the program's expectations for successful performance and indicators of the degree to which those expectations are met.

**Table 3. Expectations and Performance on Standard 1: Candidate and Completer Performance**

Provider-Selected Measures	Explanation of Performance Expectation	Level or Extent of Success in Meeting the Expectation																								
Content and Professional Knowledge Exams	The College of Education uses an average pass rate of 80% as the benchmark for the two types of tests, which matches the industry pass rate standard.	Since the 2022-2023 year, the College of Education has implemented a variety of strategies to support candidates with passing their initial licensure examinations. These supports are regularly reviewed and compared with student data as part of the College’s commitment to continuous improvement. In the most recent Title II year, the aggregate pass rate for all exams for AZ Traditional programs is <b>77%</b> . The most recent content knowledge and professional knowledge summary pass rates from the IPRC Title II Report (Spring 2025) are listed below. Data below is based on program completers from the 2023-2024 academic year, where pass rates were impacted by the shifts in educator certification requirements. Please see additional information and a contextual summary around certification exam requirements and initiatives in section 3.E.																								
		<table><tr><th colspan="4">Summary Pass Rates</th></tr><tr><th>All Program Completers</th><th>Passers</th><th>Takers</th><th>Pass Rate</th></tr><tr><td>2023-2024</td><td>1,193</td><td>1,552</td><td>77%</td></tr><tr><td>2022-2023</td><td>1,262</td><td>1,738</td><td>73%</td></tr><tr><td>2021-2022</td><td>1,457</td><td>1,782</td><td>82%</td></tr><tr><td>2020-2021</td><td>1,551</td><td>2,032</td><td>76%</td></tr></table>	Summary Pass Rates				All Program Completers	Passers	Takers	Pass Rate	2023-2024	1,193	1,552	77%	2022-2023	1,262	1,738	73%	2021-2022	1,457	1,782	82%	2020-2021	1,551	2,032	76%
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		The tables below disaggregate the exams further by both content and professional knowledge.																								
		<table><tr><th colspan="6">2023-2024 Title II Pass Rates - AZ Traditional</th></tr><tr><th>EXAM TYPE</th><th>ASSESSMENT CODE</th><th>ASSESSMENT NAME</th><th>PASSERS</th><th>TAKERS</th><th>PASS RATE</th></tr></table>	2023-2024 Title II Pass Rates - AZ Traditional						EXAM TYPE	ASSESSMENT CODE	ASSESSMENT NAME	PASSERS	TAKERS	PASS RATE												
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		Content Knowledge	01	Elementary Education	-	0	*
			036	Early Childhood Education	124	173	72%
			048	Dance	-	1	*
			049	Theater	-	3	*
			NT102	Elementary Education (Subtests I)	549	737	74%
			NT103	Elementary Education (Subtests II)	517	732	71%
			NT301	English Language Arts	39	40	98%
			NT302	History	29	48	60%
			NT304	Mathematics	19	31	61%
			NT305	Biology	-	1	*
			NT306	Chemistry	-	0	*
			NT309	Business Education	-	1	*
			NT504	Music	-	2	*
			NT506	Physical Education	13	14	93%
		Content Knowledge Total			1,290	1,783	72%
		2023-2024 Title II Pass Rates - AZ Traditional					
		EXAM TYPE	ASSESSMENT CODE	ASSESSMENT NAME	PASSERS	TAKERS	PASS RATE
		Professional Knowledge	030	Special Ed.: Sev. & Prof. Disabled	15	18	83%
			083	Special Ed.: Early Childhood	55	73	75%
			093	Professional Knowledge Early Childhood	141	162	87%
			NT051	APK Elementary	663	696	95%
			NT052	APK Secondary	241	248	97%
			NT601	Special Education	258	294	88%
		Professional Knowledge Total			1,373	1,491	92%
		*Pass rates are not calculated for exams with less than 10 test takers.					

		<p>Programs for early childhood, early childhood special education, elementary, secondary, and special education areas have undergone a full revision based on the results from recent Program Reviews and data analysis. During the revision of these programs, the rigor of assignments was increased to prompt a depth of knowledge that activates critical thinking skills for candidates as they prepare to take certification exams. In addition, examination practice, resources, and planning assignments were added to address the specific licensure examinations.</p> <p>Overall, the College has implemented a variety of approaches to increase candidate preparedness for licensure examinations. In addition to materials embedded in the initial licensure programs, resources are available to candidates through the Student Success Center, webinars, and the library. The College has collaborated with internal and external relevant parties to increase the rigor of assignments to promote candidates' critical thinking and content application.</p>
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<p>Student Teaching Evaluation of Performance (STEP)</p>	<p>The College of Education expects 80% of candidates to meet or exceed the target level of achievement for the Student Teaching Evaluation of Performance. To meet or exceed competency within each STEP standard, candidates must earn a 4 or 5 on a 5-point Likert scale. The 80% expectation is a standard target amongst GCU assessments and is consistent with the industry-standard for evidence of competency</p>	<p>GCU's Student Teaching Evaluation of Performance (STEP) assignment is utilized during the student teaching course at the culmination of the initial licensure program. The STEP serves as a work sample that is aligned to standards and acts as a demonstration of teaching performance by the candidate. Evaluation of each standard within the STEP is completed by the course instructor. In the 2024-2025 academic year, 93.3% of candidates met or exceeded the expected competency level on the Student Teaching Evaluation of Performance. This far exceeds the assessment thresholds we have set for our candidates. The table below illustrates candidate performance on each standard within the STEP.</p> <p>In August 2024, the College updated the student teaching courses within licensure programs. As part of these revisions, adjustments were made to the STEP template. Previously, the STEP template included a STEP 7 (Reflection on Instruction to Improve Student Progress), which served as a reflection component. To enhance the focus on classroom teaching, this reflection piece was reallocated to other areas of the student teaching course. The updated STEP includes Sections 1-6. The data pulled for this review (July 2024 through June 2025) still partially includes STEP 7.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="590 716 1373 808" rowspan="2">Student Teaching Evaluation of Performance (STEP)</th><th colspan="2" data-bbox="1373 716 1665 753">Fall 2024 – Spring 2025</th></tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="1373 753 1665 808">Acceptable % Met / Exceeded</th><th data-bbox="1665 753 1892 808">Ideal % Met / Exceeded</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 808 1373 846">STEP Standard 1 - Contextual Factors: Knowing Your School and Community</td><td data-bbox="1373 808 1665 846">97.6%</td><td data-bbox="1665 808 1892 846">93.5%</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 846 1373 899">STEP Standard 2 - Writing Standards-Based Measurable Objectives and the Learning Goal</td><td data-bbox="1373 846 1665 899">90.3%</td><td data-bbox="1665 846 1892 899">85.4%</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 899 1373 937">STEP Standard 3 - Assessment and Data Literacy</td><td data-bbox="1373 899 1665 937">92.0%</td><td data-bbox="1665 899 1892 937">89.4%</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 937 1373 974">STEP Standard 4 - Unit and Lesson Planning</td><td data-bbox="1373 937 1665 974">91.2%</td><td data-bbox="1665 937 1892 974">86.7%</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 974 1373 1011">STEP Standard 5 - Implementation of Instructional Unit</td><td data-bbox="1373 974 1665 1011">88.9%</td><td data-bbox="1665 974 1892 1011">84.9%</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 1011 1373 1049">STEP Standard 6 - Analysis of Student Learning</td><td data-bbox="1373 1011 1665 1049">95.2%</td><td data-bbox="1665 1011 1892 1049">94.0%</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 1049 1373 1086">STEP Standard 7 – Analysis and Reflection to Improve Planning and Practice</td><td data-bbox="1373 1049 1665 1086">97.8%</td><td data-bbox="1665 1049 1892 1086">94.5%</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 1086 1373 1123"><b>Grand Total</b></td><td data-bbox="1373 1086 1665 1123"><b>93.3%</b></td><td data-bbox="1665 1086 1892 1123"><b>89.8%</b></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Student Teaching Evaluation of Performance (STEP)	Fall 2024 – Spring 2025		Acceptable % Met / Exceeded	Ideal % Met / Exceeded	STEP Standard 1 - Contextual Factors: Knowing Your School and Community	97.6%	93.5%	STEP Standard 2 - Writing Standards-Based Measurable Objectives and the Learning Goal	90.3%	85.4%	STEP Standard 3 - Assessment and Data Literacy	92.0%	89.4%	STEP Standard 4 - Unit and Lesson Planning	91.2%	86.7%	STEP Standard 5 - Implementation of Instructional Unit	88.9%	84.9%	STEP Standard 6 - Analysis of Student Learning	95.2%	94.0%	STEP Standard 7 – Analysis and Reflection to Improve Planning and Practice	97.8%	94.5%	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>93.3%</b>	<b>89.8%</b>
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STEP Standard 7 – Analysis and Reflection to Improve Planning and Practice	97.8%	94.5%																													
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>93.3%</b>	<b>89.8%</b>																													

Clinical Practice Evaluations	<p>The College of Education expects 80% of candidates to meet or exceed the target level of achievement on the final student teaching evaluation. To meet or exceed competency, candidates must earn a score within the “Target” or “Distinguished” categories on the rubric.</p>	<p>The Clinical Practice Evaluations assess teacher candidates' performance in their student teaching experience, measuring their proficiency in meeting GCU's professional dispositions and InTASC standards. The student teaching evaluations, aligned to InTASC standards, are another measure of teacher candidate content, pedagogy, and professionalism. During the fourth and final Clinical Practice Evaluation during the student teaching experience, the GCU faculty supervisor evaluates the teacher candidate on the College’s professional dispositions and the InTASC standards. This allows for better understanding of teacher candidate performance in the field directly correlated to key areas needed for effective teaching.</p> <p>These evaluations, aligned to InTASC standards, are another measure of teacher candidate content, pedagogy, and professionalism. Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 provides a summative measure of candidate performance on the InTASC standards. During the fourth and final Clinical Practice Evaluation during the student teaching experience, the GCU Faculty Supervisor evaluates the teacher candidate on the InTASC standards. This allows for better understanding of teacher candidate performance in the field directly correlated to key areas needed for effective teaching.</p> <p><b>AAQEP 1.a. Content, pedagogical, and/or professional knowledge relevant to the credential or degree sought.</b></p> <p>InTASC Standards 4 and 5 (Content Knowledge and Application of Content) within the Clinical Practice Evaluation provide one measure of candidates’ content and pedagogical knowledge, specifically candidates’ understanding and ability to apply the central concepts and structures of the content area or areas. The College of Education closely assesses the performance of its teacher candidates with these standards. Data in the table below shows the percentage of teacher candidates who have met the college expectation by earning a score within the “Target” or “Distinguished” categories. College of Education teacher candidates continue to exceed expectations in these areas.</p> <p><b>Clinical Practice Evaluation – InTASC Standards 4 and 5</b></p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 InTASC Standards 4 &amp; 5</th><th colspan="3">Content Knowledge</th><th colspan="2">Application of Content</th></tr><tr><th>Semester</th><th>Total N</th><th>InTASC 4.1</th><th>InTASC 4.2</th><th>InTASC 4.3</th><th>InTASC 5.1</th><th>InTASC 5.2</th></tr><tr><td>Fall 2024</td><td>1,707</td><td>99.4%</td><td>99.1%</td><td>99.1%</td><td>98.9%</td><td>99.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Spring 2025</td><td>1,861</td><td>98.1%</td><td>98.6%</td><td>98.5%</td><td>98.4%</td><td>98.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Grand Total</td><td>3,568</td><td>98.75%</td><td>98.85%</td><td>98.8%</td><td>98.65%</td><td>98.75%</td></tr></table>	Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 InTASC Standards 4 & 5		Content Knowledge			Application of Content		Semester	Total N	InTASC 4.1	InTASC 4.2	InTASC 4.3	InTASC 5.1	InTASC 5.2	Fall 2024	1,707	99.4%	99.1%	99.1%	98.9%	99.1%	Spring 2025	1,861	98.1%	98.6%	98.5%	98.4%	98.4%	Grand Total	3,568	98.75%	98.85%	98.8%	98.65%	98.75%
Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 InTASC Standards 4 & 5		Content Knowledge			Application of Content																																
Semester	Total N	InTASC 4.1	InTASC 4.2	InTASC 4.3	InTASC 5.1	InTASC 5.2																															
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Grand Total	3,568	98.75%	98.85%	98.8%	98.65%	98.75%																															

**AAQEP 1.b. Learners; learning theory, including social, emotional, and academic dimensions; and application of learning theory.**

A central way the College of Education measures learners' knowledge, learning theory, and the application of learning theory in teacher candidates is through the assessment of InTASC Standards 1 and 2 (Student Development and Learning Differences) within the Clinical Practice Evaluation, specifically examining candidates' understanding of unique developmental processes and social, emotional, and academic needs. Data in the table below shows the average performance of our teacher candidate related to Student Development and Learning Differences by semester. The minimum threshold for these standards is set at 80% and candidates continue to meet expectations for these standards.

**Clinical Practice Evaluation – InTASC Standards 1 and 2**

Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 InTASC Standards 1 & 2		Student Development		Learning Differences		
Semester	Total N	InTASC 1.1	InTASC 1.2	InTASC 2.1	InTASC 2.2	InTASC 2.3
Fall 2024	1,707	99.4%	99.2%	99.1%	99.1%	99.2%
Spring 2025	1,861	98.6%	99.0%	98.7%	98.5%	98.7%
Grand Total	3,568	99.0%	99.1%	98.9%	98.8%	98.95%

**AAQEP 1.d. Assessment of and for student learning, assessment and data literacy, and use of data to inform practice.**

The College of Education measures its teacher candidates' understanding of assessment of and for student learning, data literacy, and the use of data to inform practice. In the Clinical Practice Evaluation, InTASC Standard 6 focuses on multiple means of assessing student learning, monitoring growth, and adjusting instruction as a result of assessment data.

Data shown in the table below shows the average performance of our teacher candidate related to Assessment by semester. The minimum threshold for these standards is set at 90% and candidates continue to meet expectations for Standard 6

**Clinical Practice Evaluation – InTASC Standard 6**

Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 InTASC Standard 6		Assessment		
Semester	Total N	InTASC 6.1	InTASC 6.2	InTASC 6.3
Fall 2024	1,707	99.2%	99.3%	99.1%

		<table><tr><td>Spring 2025</td><td>1,861</td><td>98.5%</td><td>98.7%</td><td>98.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Grand Total</td><td>3,568</td><td>98.85%</td><td>99.0%</td><td>98.7%</td></tr></table>	Spring 2025	1,861	98.5%	98.7%	98.3%	Grand Total	3,568	98.85%	99.0%	98.7%										
Spring 2025	1,861	98.5%	98.7%	98.3%																		
Grand Total	3,568	98.85%	99.0%	98.7%																		
		<p><b>AAQEP 1.e. Creation and development of positive learning and work environments.</b> InTASC Standard 3 emphasizes building learning environments that are engaging, positive, and focused on self-motivation. Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 specifically asks the GCU Faculty Supervisor to evaluate the teacher candidate on Learning Environments via InTASC Standard 3, including both subsets in Standard 3. The following summarizes assessment results for InTASC Standard 3 for both semesters of academic year 2023-2024. The results are consistently above our expectation.</p> <p><b>Clinical Practice Evaluation – InTASC Standards 3</b></p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 InTASC Standard 3</th><th colspan="2">Learning Environments</th></tr><tr><th>Semester</th><th>Total N</th><th>InTASC 3.1</th><th>InTASC 3.2</th></tr><tr><td>Fall 2024</td><td>1,707</td><td>99.3%</td><td>99.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Spring 2025</td><td>1,861</td><td>98.8%</td><td>98.8%</td></tr><tr><td>Grand Total</td><td>3,568</td><td>99.05%</td><td>99.05%</td></tr></table>	Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 InTASC Standard 3		Learning Environments		Semester	Total N	InTASC 3.1	InTASC 3.2	Fall 2024	1,707	99.3%	99.3%	Spring 2025	1,861	98.8%	98.8%	Grand Total	3,568	99.05%	99.05%
Clinical Practice Evaluation 4 InTASC Standard 3		Learning Environments																				
Semester	Total N	InTASC 3.1	InTASC 3.2																			
Fall 2024	1,707	99.3%	99.3%																			
Spring 2025	1,861	98.8%	98.8%																			
Grand Total	3,568	99.05%	99.05%																			

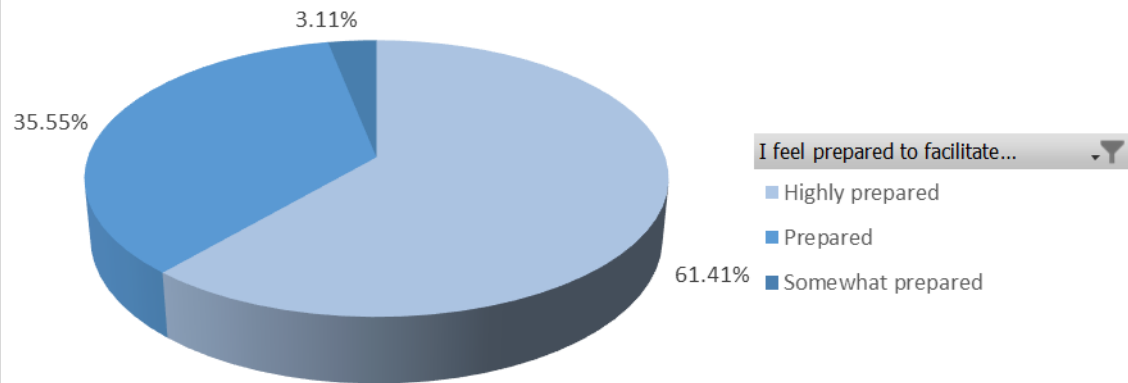
**Table 4. Expectations and Performance on Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth**

Provider-Selected Measures	Explanation of Performance Expectation	Level or Extent of Success in Meeting the Expectation
GCU College of Education Teacher Preparation Programs Questionnaire	By the end of program completion, the College of Education	The College of Education Teacher Preparation Program Questionnaire seeks to gather data on teacher candidate perceived level of preparedness upon completing the student teaching experience and entering the classroom. This survey is administered during the final week of the student teaching experience. In alignment with AAQEP standard 2.d, and in an effort to understand how our teacher candidates, influence international and

	<p>expects that 80% of candidates will perceive themselves to be prepared or highly prepared in this area.</p>	<p>global perspectives in their classrooms, one of the questions asks, <i>“I feel prepared to facilitate students’ ability to develop diverse social and cultural perspectives.”</i></p> <p>In the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 semesters, completers were asked to provide information on how prepared they were to facilitate their students’ ability to develop diverse social and cultural perspectives.</p> <table><tr><th>Response</th><th>Fall 2024</th><th>Spring 2025</th></tr><tr><td>Highly prepared</td><td>61.41%</td><td>63.24%</td></tr><tr><td>Prepared</td><td>35.55%</td><td>34.09%</td></tr><tr><td>Somewhat prepared</td><td>3.11%</td><td>2.72%</td></tr><tr><td>Unprepared</td><td>0.00%</td><td>0.06%</td></tr></table> <p>In the Fall 2024, 96.96% of respondents felt highly prepared or prepared in this area.</p> <p>One example of qualitative feedback from an Early Childhood candidate stated, “Most of my professors were prompt in responding to messages and participated in class discussions. This allowed me to see different perspectives of others and learn from my professor’s experience and wisdom.” The candidate noted feeling “highly prepared” as a result.</p>	Response	Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Highly prepared	61.41%	63.24%	Prepared	35.55%	34.09%	Somewhat prepared	3.11%	2.72%	Unprepared	0.00%	0.06%
Response	Fall 2024	Spring 2025															
Highly prepared	61.41%	63.24%															
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Somewhat prepared	3.11%	2.72%															
Unprepared	0.00%	0.06%															

Distinct Count of Email Distinct Count of Email2

Fall 2024

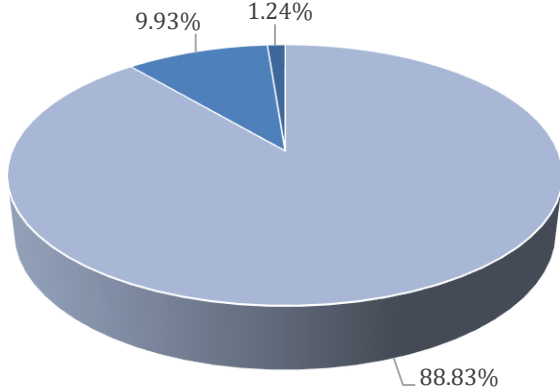


In Spring 2025, 97.33% of respondents felt prepared or highly prepared. Results met and exceeded the minimum expectation that 80% of candidates perceive themselves to be prepared or highly prepared in this area. This outcome reflects strong program alignment with preparation goals. One candidate from the Master of Education in Elementary Education and Special Education program shared the following qualitative feedback:

“I would recommend GCU’s College of Education to others for several reasons. The program is thoughtfully designed to equip future educators with a solid foundation in both pedagogy and hands-on experience. The coursework offers a thorough understanding of instructional strategies, classroom management, differentiated instruction, and approaches to meeting the diverse needs of learners, including those with special needs. Additionally, the integration of faith-



		<p>based values throughout the curriculum promotes a holistic approach to teaching, emphasizing character, empathy, and service.”</p> <div><div>Distinct Count of Email</div><div>Distinct Count of Email2</div><div>Spring 2025</div><table><thead><tr><th>I feel prepared to facilitate...</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Highly prepared</td><td>63.24%</td></tr><tr><td>Prepared</td><td>34.09%</td></tr><tr><td>Somewhat prepared</td><td>2.72%</td></tr><tr><td>Unprepared</td><td>0.06%</td></tr></tbody></table><div>Semester</div><div>Values</div></div> <p>The College of Education continues to look for ways to prepare candidates in this area questionnaire during the upcoming semesters to evaluate additional action steps needed to broaden teacher candidates’ international and global perspectives.</p>	I feel prepared to facilitate...	Percentage	Highly prepared	63.24%	Prepared	34.09%	Somewhat prepared	2.72%	Unprepared	0.06%
I feel prepared to facilitate...	Percentage											
Highly prepared	63.24%											
Prepared	34.09%											
Somewhat prepared	2.72%											
Unprepared	0.06%											
College of Education Alumni Survey	The College of Education expects that 80% of alumni will report that their instruction	<p>The College of Education surveys alumni on an annual basis to gather data on how their teacher preparation program has impacted various aspects of their instruction and preparedness to teach.</p> <p>In alignment with AAQEP Standard 2.c, creating productive learning environments, the College of Education gathered alumni survey data to see how candidates were</p>										

	<p>had an impact on student learning.</p>	<p>impacting student learning in the field. Completers were questioned on a range of topics, but the survey concluded with <b><i>“Did your program prepare you to positively impact student learning?”</i></b></p> <p>Of the respondents to the 2023 College of Education Alumni Survey, 88.9% reported a positive impact on student learning citing evidence such as learning effective teaching strategies, strategies and interventions for both student and family support, setting expectations in the classroom, building relationships with their students, etc. Specific feedback includes: <i>“The values and material learned made me an effective teacher. I was able to deliver lessons to encourage students to grasp and learn, even while having fun...”</i> and <i>“I teach in a self-contained classroom where my students can learn as long as I adjust the teaching to their style of learning. I also set the tone of the room with my attitude and mood for the day.”</i></p> <div><p>Positively Impact Student Learning</p><table><tr><th>Preparedness Level</th><th>Percentage</th></tr><tr><td>Highly Prepared and Prepared</td><td>88.83%</td></tr><tr><td>Somewhat Prepared</td><td>9.93%</td></tr><tr><td>Unprepared</td><td>1.24%</td></tr></table></div> <p>Completer feedback from alumni surveys is used within our annual program revision and review processes to inform program improvements.</p>	Preparedness Level	Percentage	Highly Prepared and Prepared	88.83%	Somewhat Prepared	9.93%	Unprepared	1.24%
Preparedness Level	Percentage									
Highly Prepared and Prepared	88.83%									
Somewhat Prepared	9.93%									
Unprepared	1.24%									

## 5. Notes on Progress, Accomplishment, and Innovation

This section describes program accomplishments, efforts, and innovations (strengths and outcomes) to address challenges and priorities over the past year.

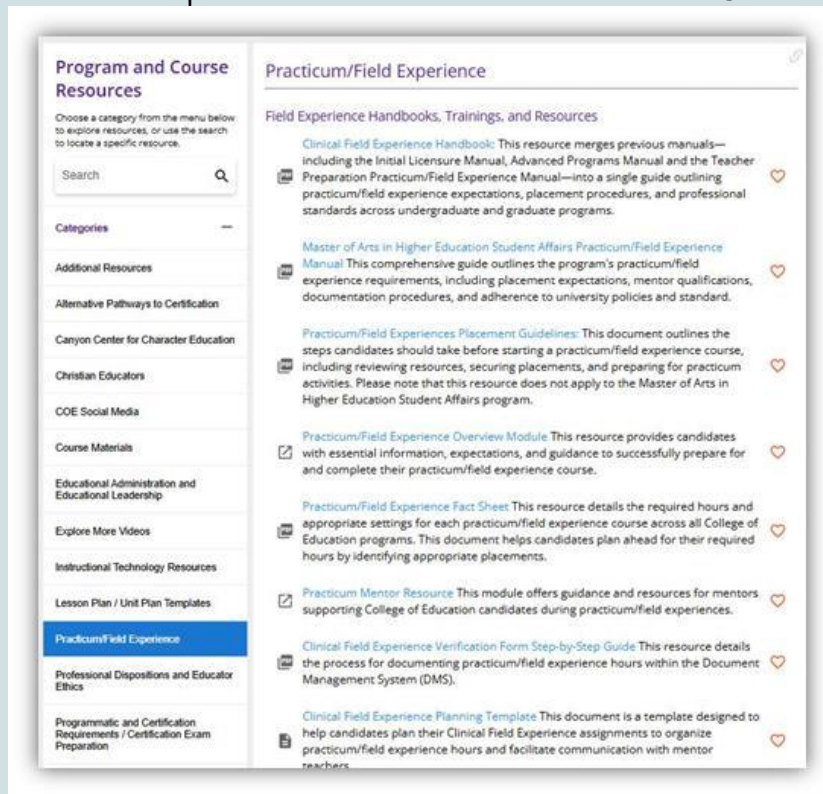
The College of Education is committed to learning and continuous improvement by providing (1) academic, (2) co-curricular, and (3) community outreach opportunities to strategically impact candidates. These three elements are critical to the College's conceptual framework. The College works to ensure all candidates, completers, and partners are engaged in quality experiences. This includes having strong systems of support for all levels of practicum/field experience and student teaching, documented partnerships, and affiliation agreements with schools and Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and an operating partnership statement that guides this work. Consequently, these are the progress, accomplishments, and innovations that address COE's spirit of continuous improvement. In addition, the College of Education provides a variety of supports and services to online and ground/traditional populations. The College aims to understand and meet the needs of each modality of learner. The below will outline the progress, accomplishments, and innovations for such supports and services for initial programs.

### Progress

#### Academic Progress:

- **Office of Clinical Practice Support:** The College of Education's Office of Clinical Practice oversees both the early practicum/field experiences and the culminating student teaching experience which provide professional growth opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be effective practitioners. Working in collaboration with other university departments (i.e., Office of Field Experience, State Compliance, etc.), the Office of Clinical Practice establishes partnerships with local education agencies to co-construct mutually beneficial arrangements and agree to shared responsibilities for candidate preparation and continuous improvement. Candidate preparation is strengthened by a variety of clinical practice support resources including, but not limited to, handbooks, orientations, webinars, and trainings. Along with candidate preparation, the Office of Clinical Practice supports the GCU faculty supervisors and cooperating teachers/mentors who guide, assist, and evaluate candidates in the field. COE utilized the following established criteria for success: 100% of teacher candidates are assigned a field experience counselor by the end of their first course. 100% of teacher candidates are assigned a teacher placement counselor upon meeting student teaching clearance requirements. 100% of teacher candidates are assigned a qualified GCU faculty supervisor within two weeks of the student teaching start date. To best prepare relevant parties with consistent information around the practicum/field experiences, the College provides the following supports:
  - **Student Success Center:** The Practicum/Field Experience and Student Teaching/Clinical Practice sections of the Student Success Center provide essential resources for candidates preparing for or currently engaged in classroom-based experiences. These sections includes supports such as manuals, guidelines, trainings, etc. These resources are updated on a regular basis and designed to ensure that candidates are well-prepared,

professionally supported, and aligned with GCU's standards for excellence in education. For example, the Clinical Field Experience Handbook from Grand Canyon University's College of Education provides a comprehensive framework for designing and supporting high-quality practicum/field experiences across initial and advanced educator preparation programs. These experiences are embedded throughout coursework and structured to promote observation, application, and reflection in diverse educational settings. The handbook outlines clear expectations for candidates, mentors, and faculty, ensuring that experiences are aligned with professional standards and program outcomes. Please see below a screenshot of the Practicum/Field Experience section of the Student Success Center:



- **Field Experience Orientation:** The Field Experience Orientation is a comprehensive resource designed to provide candidates with essential information and resources related to their field experiences, particularly in the context of teacher certification programs. Here's a breakdown of what the orientation entails:
  - Teacher Certification and Resources Explained
  - Your Path to Certification and Testing

- Fingerprint Clearance(s) and Background Checks
  - Practicum/Field Experience Placements (Process and Procedures)
  - Certification Exams
  - Student Teaching Placement(s) and Requirements
  - The COE Promise
- **Quarterly Practicum/Field Experience Communications:** Each quarter, the College of Education sends out practicum/field experience emails to both candidates and faculty. These communications provide timely reminders, key deadlines, and updates related to practicum/field experience, documentation requirements, and professional expectations. They also highlight available resources, support contacts, and any changes to procedures or policies. The goal is to ensure alignment, transparency, and readiness across all parties involved in the practicum and student teaching process.
  - **Student Teaching Orientation:** All candidates enrolled in initial teacher licensure programs are invited to join a live Student Teaching Orientation webinar approximately one to two months prior to commencement into the experience. All candidates also receive access to the online self-paced [Student Teaching Orientation Module](#) so they can review important information, expectations and resources any time before, during, or after student teaching. Please see an example of a recorded Student Teaching Orientation.
  - **Cooperating Teacher Orientation:** The Cooperating Teacher Orientation aims to establish a seamless student teaching experience by preparing cooperating teachers to effectively integrate GCU teacher candidates into their classrooms. Scheduled as a Zoom session, this orientation provides essential program details, clarifies the cooperating teachers' roles, and offers effective mentoring strategies. A recorded version is available for those unable to attend. Additionally, the Cooperating Teacher Self-Paced Training Module is accessible for ongoing guidance. For further assistance or inquiries, cooperating teachers can reach out to the Clinical Field Experience Specialist assigned to their region. This structured approach ensures that all cooperating teachers are well-informed and prepared to support the development of teacher candidates. Please see an example of a recorded webinar from the spring 2024 semester.
  - **GCU Faculty Supervisor Kick Off Webinar:** The Faculty Supervisor Kick-Off Webinar serves as an essential preparation each semester by equipping GCU faculty supervisors with the necessary tools and information to support their roles effectively. The webinars provide a platform for GCU faculty supervisors to receive updates, refresh understanding and training, and access to resources. Following registration, GCU faculty supervisors receive joining instructions. GCU faculty supervisors are encouraged to review the GCU Faculty Supervisor Training materials, accessible with their GCU credentials through the CIRT website, to ensure readiness. Technical support is available for login assistance to GCU faculty supervisors. This kickoff event ensures GCU faculty supervisors are well-prepared to guide and evaluate teacher candidates, maintaining a high standard of education and support. Please see an example of a recorded webinar from the spring 2025 semester.
  - **Student Teaching Faculty Cadre Kick Off Webinar:** The Student Teaching Faculty Cadre Webinar is an essential initiative designed to bring together faculty members who teach the student teaching course to share

updates and important initiatives for the upcoming semester. The webinar aims to equip participants with the necessary information to ensure a successful and seamless semester for student teachers. The session will cover various key topics and provide a platform for a question-and-answer session, fostering a collaborative environment where insights and expertise are valued. This kickoff event plays a crucial role in setting a supportive and productive tone for the semester, underlining the importance of faculty collaboration and continuous improvement in the student teaching experience.

- **Teacher Candidate Student Teaching Email Series:** As part of the College's commitment to continuous improvement and effective communication with candidates, the College of Education developed a targeted student teaching email series. This series delivers timely, structured guidance to candidates prior to and during their student teaching experience. Topics include student teaching expectations, professional conduct, and reflection opportunities. Each email is strategically aligned to be sent at key points in the candidate's progression to student teaching to ensure candidates are informed, supported, and prepared for a successful student teaching experience and program completion.
- **GCU Faculty Supervisor Email Series:** To ensure consistent support and communication with GCU faculty supervisors, the College of Education implemented a faculty supervisor email series. This series provides timely reminders, resources, and guidance aligned with key checkpoints in the student teaching experience. Topics include observation expectations, evaluation procedures, and best practices for supervising teacher candidates. The series promotes clarity, compliance, and collaboration, supporting supervisors in their critical role within the student teaching experience.
- **Cooperating Teacher Email Series:** The cooperating teacher email series is designed to provide structured and timely guidance to facilitate the support of cooperating teachers as they guide student teachers throughout the student teaching experience. This series focuses on delivering key information on student teaching expectations, professional conduct, and opportunities for reflection. Each email is strategically timed to correspond with important phases of the student teaching journey, ensuring cooperating teachers are equipped with necessary insights and resources to effectively mentor and guide their candidates. This targeted communication approach aims to enhance the preparation and success of student teachers, fostering an environment of continuous improvement and effective mentorship.
- **Educator Certification Exam Content and Support:** Over the past few years, the College of Education has implemented significant updates to better prepare its teaching candidates for the CKE and PKE exams. Through a partnership with 240 Tutoring, COE provides candidates with targeted, high-quality test preparation resources. This initiative reflects GCU's ongoing commitment to excellence. The College tracks and monitors testing pass rates from Pearson as part of the monthly Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) process. In collaboration with their GCE business partners, the goal is to develop a dashboard or report that streamlines this review and eliminates the need for manual monitoring. This will allow the College to identify and address testing concerns much more quickly, rather than relying solely on Title II pass rate data, which tends to be at least a year and a half behind the current academic year data.



COE candidates in initial teacher licensure programs engage with discussion questions and assignments that align with the College's exam policy, providing opportunities to research licensure requirements, reflect on test preparation strategies, and practice questions relevant to their certification area. Particularly, Checkpoint 2 assignments are aligned with InTASC Standards 4 and 5, focusing on the importance of content knowledge and its practical application in teaching. Candidates in elementary and special education programs benefit from practice exams tailored to the content knowledge they will teach, ensuring focused preparation.

Since January 2025, three checkpoint assignments have been implemented, and COE continues to gather data on course performance and student-reported licensure exam pass rates. This data will be used to assess the efficacy of these checkpoints alongside other exam preparation supports in enhancing licensure exam pass rates.

(See Section 3.E for further information around COE's exam history.)

- **Educator Certification Exam Support Outside Coursework:** In the 2024-2025 year, the College has implemented a variety of strategies aimed at supporting candidates in their journey towards licensure exam success. Some strategies include:
  - **Academic and Career Excellence (ACE) Support:** The College works alongside the Academic and Career Excellence (ACE) center to offer certification exam preparation sessions for candidates. The first session for candidates is a "Test Prep Roadshow" in which ACE leaders visit classrooms to offer a beginner certification exam preparation session to help candidates determine which test they should be preparing for, locate study resources, and make a timeline to test completion. Courses were identified by the College as early in candidates' course walks. In this way, educator certification exam preparation support is offered towards the start of candidates' programs of study. The second ACE session for candidates was an "after dark" series in which candidates attend a session in the evening. This session allowed candidates to prepare for their content knowledge exams, which included an overview of exam structure, location of resources, and practice questions.
  - **Explore More Sessions:** The College of Education's Explore More sessions are on-demand videos, as well as in-person sessions, designed to help teacher candidates garner academic experience by providing support from faculty and staff on a variety of topics related to the field of education. Exam preparation Explore More topics include general exam preparation and content area preparation in the areas of early childhood education, elementary education, and special education.
  - **240 Tutoring:** In addition to the resources Grand Canyon University provides, the College collaboratively worked towards enhanced opportunities with educator certification exam preparation organization, 240 Tutoring. The resources this external party provides are robust, state-specific and the structure mirrors that of the state certification exams. 240 Tutoring is an external online-based resource providing self-paced, comprehensive digital study guides, diagnostic tests, instructional content, quizzes, and more for over 14 exam series and 250 study guides. Candidates who are enrolled in an initial teacher licensure program in the College of Education will

- receive one-year of access to 240 Tutoring's test preparation materials that will help candidates prepare for their educator certification exams.
- **Library Guides:** The College of Education worked in collaboration with the GCU Library to uncover key resources around educator certification exam preparation. The curated resources were compiled into "Library Guides" specific to educator certification exam preparation, practice exams, texts, etc. for key content/grade range bands. The Library Guides are housed within the GCU Library and also referenced via link within the Student Success Center.
  - **Student Success Center:** This virtual resource hub hosts a wide variety of resources for candidates. To support candidates in successfully preparing and passing educator certification exams, the College has curated, updated, and created robust digital educator certification exam preparation resources that are available to candidates at any time of the day. Resources include, but are not limited to, flyers that include important reminders, infographics, links to outside sources, video series, digital flashcards, library guides, etc.
  - **Classroom Assessment Techniques:** To encourage candidates to access resources and begin their preparation for passing educator certification exams, faculty have developed and shared posts to share in the discussion forum with candidates. Discussion questions include exploring college resources, utilizing the 240 Tutoring platform, and making personal preparation plans. These techniques are shared widely among faculty through collaboration platforms, email communications, etc. to ensure wide access to materials.
  - **AI Educator Exam Preparation Tool – Bloom:** The College of Education, in collaboration with Academic Web Services (AWS), has developed an artificial intelligence (AI) tool designed to support teacher candidates in preparing for their licensure examinations. This innovative tool provides targeted preparation for Basic Skills, Content, and Professional Knowledge (PLT) exams. Currently, the tool is being piloted among select groups of online and traditional students. Upon completion of the pilot phase, a survey will be distributed to gather user feedback and evaluate the overall experience. Insights from this data will be used to enhance the tool prior to its full launch. The anticipated implementation date for university-wide access is January 2026.
- **EDU-330 Revision:** The College offers EDU-330: Social Justice for Educators in all undergraduate programs, providing teacher candidates with content on ethical practices, culturally competent teaching, service learning, and education history. In collaboration with the Canyon Center for Character Education and College of Theology, the course has been revised to emphasize culturally responsive teaching, valuing diversity, and advocating for equity. Reflecting its updated focus, the course is now titled EDU-330: Ethics and Advocacy in Education. The revised course offering has been in effect since September 2024. The College has reviewed data from both candidate and faculty perspectives as well as considered anecdotal feedback during this implementation. Based on this review, the College has noted positive responses for the recent revisions and is now planning to develop a custom course textbook as a next phase in course enhancements.



- **AI Integration:** In response to advancing technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), the College has explored ways to meaningfully leverage such tools, creating new expectations for learning and preparing teacher candidates for the modern classroom. Within the College, teams are exploring the functionality of different AI tools to assist in the creation of curriculum, candidate resources, and instructor materials. This exploration has allowed the College to identify opportunities for innovative candidate learning as well as K-12 learning. Select courses spanning all initial teacher licensure programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels have been revised to include guided opportunities for teacher candidates to utilize AI tools as an initial brainstorming resource. Additionally, as the College revises programs, assignments and discussion questions are considered to guide candidates in using AI as a first-draft or simulation tool. Assignment examples include using AI to evaluate trends in a sample class profile to inform lesson planning and hold a mock family conference to discuss student challenges and responsive strategies. Emphasis is placed on the appropriate usage and citation of AI tools as well as the need to review all generated content for bias and accuracy.
- **Terminology Updates:** The College frequently revisits and revises terminologies, especially when referring to student populations, to ensure that language remains inclusive, accurate, and reflective of current understanding. This practice includes review of relevant standards, research, and findings from academic conferences, as well as monitoring national trends with the purpose of identifying language that is both respectful and aligned with the College's commitment to inclusivity and student success. Beginning in 2023, the College has included a shift from the use of English Language Learners (ELLs) to English Learners (EL) throughout program revisions. The College is continuing to address these changes as programs and resources are being revised.
- **Student Teaching Course Revisions:** The College invited recent graduates from various initial licensure programs to engage in a focus group discussion regarding the student teaching course. Based on the results from this focus group, the College has revised all student teaching courses to enhance the teacher candidate experience. The revisions included a removal of extraneous assignments to allow more focus on the teaching takeover and completion of the Student Teacher Evaluation of Performance (STEP) and/or IEP Performance templates as these are key data sources for a teacher candidate's ability to plan, implement, and assess effective lesson planning following standards of effective teaching. The updated STEP includes Sections 1-6. The data pulled for this review (July 2024 through June 2025) still partially includes STEP 7. Additionally, the College of Education successfully piloted GoReact, an external video recording and feedback platform that enables instructors to provide time-stamped, embedded feedback on candidate teaching videos. The yearlong pilot included integration within a 15-week student teaching course and an 8-week methods course (EDU-330), spanning all undergraduate licensure programs and delivered across both online and in-person modalities. Following a comprehensive analysis of pilot data and positive feedback from faculty and candidates, the College is fully implementing GoReact across all student teaching courses beginning in Fall 2025. This expansion reflects our commitment to enhancing candidate support and instructional feedback during clinical experiences. The

College will continue to monitor usage and gather input from all parties to identify additional opportunities to integrate GoReact into other licensure courses.

- **Partnerships for Program Revisions:** In Fall 2024-Spring 2025, the College of Education, working in partnership with Grand Canyon Education's Curriculum Design and Development department, created and/or revised 230 courses. In addition, 28 programs were created, revised, or implemented within that timeframe. This work included the collaborative partnership with 107 contracted subject matter experts.
- **Program Reviews:** All COE programs complete a three-year or five-year review cycle to analyze assessment data, program success, and future actions needed for the programs. The University's Office of Assessment oversees the program review process. In 2024, COE completed 12 program reviews, which included 4 Initial Teacher Licensure (ITL) programs. Reviewed programs included: Master of Education in Early Childhood Education, Master of Education in Secondary Education with an emphasis in Humanities, Master of Education in Secondary Education with an emphasis in STEM, and the Master of Education in Special Education Moderate to Severe. The College has been working collaboratively with other internal teams to align the programmatic lifecycles as determined by the Arizona Department of Education with the internally driven program review cycles to improve the effectiveness of the review process.
- **Professional Practices Committee (PPC)/Personal Improvement Plan (PIP) Process and Training Resource Development:** The College of Education reviews cases of unsuccessful student teaching to determine necessary support for candidates.
  - Approximately 96% of student teachers have a successful attempt at student teaching.
  - Unsuccessful attempts include:
    - Cancellation of placement within 30 days of start
    - Self-termination
    - Termination by the placement
    - Failure of the online student teaching course
  - The PPC reviews these cases to deliberate on the best course of action, considering:
    - Severity of the offense
    - Teacher candidate's academic history
  - The PPC may require a Personal Improvement Plan (PIP) for additional support, aimed at preparing candidates for a future attempt.
  - A 4-week PIP must be successfully completed to be eligible for a second and final student teaching attempt.
  - The College continues to monitor PIP data to identify trends in requirements and completions, helping to ensure timely interventions and support for candidates:
    - In Fall 2024 and Spring 2025, 136 candidates had an unsuccessful attempt, with 73 in Fall 2024 and 63 in Spring 2025.

- 22 students completed a PIP in Fall 2024 and 27 in Spring 2025.
  - Starting in Spring 2024, a new Lead PIP Facilitator role was introduced to enhance collaboration and coaching effectiveness, ensuring that candidates receive high-quality guidance from experienced facilitators. The College has utilized these Lead PIP Facilitators successfully in both the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 semesters.
    - Our PIP and PIP Facilitators consistently receive positive feedback from teacher candidates, with 93% of survey respondents indicating they felt the PIP Facilitator helped them prepare for the next attempt at student teaching.
    - The College will continue to collaborate with relevant parties to refine and improve the PPC and PIP processes, with the goal of streamlining support for candidates and enhancing their overall success in the program.
- **Model Code of Ethics:** The College of Education (COE), in collaboration with the Canyon Center for Character Education (CCCE), continues its commitment to strengthening how educator preparation programs assess candidates' understanding of professional ethics, including the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCOE), COE Academic Program Competencies, the COE Conceptual Framework, professional dispositions, and the professional responsibilities inherent in the field of education. This initiative reflects the college's mission to elevate the standards of the education profession and to prepare graduates who uphold the highest levels of ethical conduct, ensure the safety and well-being of the students and communities they serve, and demonstrate leadership as servant-leaders in PK–12 educational settings.
- **Phase One Completion:**

The initial phase of this work, focused on the Master of Education in Educational Administration and Leadership programs, was successfully completed in the previous academic year. This stage established foundational revisions to the ethics assessment process and provided key insights into how candidate understanding of ethical principles develops throughout a program of study. Data collected from candidate performance and faculty feedback during Phase One indicated that while early exposure to ethics was beneficial, additional opportunities for applied decision-making and reflection were needed to support deeper competency development. These findings directly informed the design and scope of the next phase.
- **Phase Two Implementation:**

Phase Two is now underway and expands the work to encompass all undergraduate and graduate-level programs, including both licensure and non-licensure pathways. The college recognized the critical importance of ensuring that all candidates, regardless of program, gain a consistent and comprehensive foundation in ethical principles and professional expectations. This phase prioritizes integration of ethics assessment across all programs in which candidates are preparing to work within PK–12 educational settings.

To accomplish this, the COE is partnering with the Curriculum Design and Development (CDD) team and designated faculty subject matter experts (SMEs) to revise the existing professional ethics quiz and develop

a more comprehensive Professional Ethics Assessment. This revised assessment is designed to deepen candidate understanding of the MCOE and its alignment with essential professional frameworks, including InTASC Standards, professional dispositions, the Canyon Center for Character Education (CCCE) framework, Integration of Faith and Work, and the Integration of Free Market Concepts. The assessment will be administered at two critical points within the curriculum, in the initial course and again in a later program course, to measure both baseline knowledge and growth over time.

Each assessment will now include a scoring rubric, which will allow faculty to establish a baseline for candidate performance and track progress longitudinally. Assessment data will be collected, disaggregated by program and pathway, and analyzed to identify trends, inform curriculum refinements, and guide faculty professional development. This systematic use of evidence will support continuous improvement across all educator preparation programs.

- **Future Planning – Phase Three:**

Upon completion of Phase Two, most COE programs will integrate this enhanced ethics content. A subsequent Phase Three will focus on determining how to implement similar assessments within programs jointly offered with other colleges, such as the B.S. in Educational Studies, which require additional cross-college coordination due to shared ownership and governance structures.

**Continuous Improvement and Commitment:**

This multi-phase initiative exemplifies the college's commitment to continuous improvement and its mission to prepare educators who embody ethical practice and leadership. As Phase Two progresses, COE will continue to analyze assessment outcomes, incorporate stakeholder feedback, and refine both curriculum and assessment strategies to ensure that ethical leadership and professional responsibility remain central to candidate preparation.

**Co-Curricular Progress:**

- **Clubs**

- **Lopes for Literacy Committee:** The Lopes for Literacy Committee, comprised of passionate faculty and staff from the College of Education, is deeply committed to advancing teacher candidates' expertise in reading instruction. In direct response to Arizona's recent Science of Reading legislation, the committee has prioritized the development and dissemination of resources grounded firmly in the Science of Reading. These resources, rooted in the latest evidence-based literacy research, include engaging blog posts, in-depth instructional YouTube videos, and interactive webinars. Notably, the committee's YouTube playlist features over 27 videos with more than 57,460 views, each one focusing on key Science of Reading concepts such as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. These practical resources equip teacher candidates with actionable strategies that can be immediately applied in classrooms to boost students' literacy outcomes. In addition, the committee has continued its revitalization efforts with the Lopes for Literacy Facebook page. Membership in the last year alone has grown from 900 to over 1,200 members. Through this platform, members

actively share high-quality fiction and nonfiction literature, as well as supplemental materials that are thoughtfully aligned with current events and holidays. This thriving professional community provides teacher candidates with a rich variety of classroom resources, collaborative opportunities, and ongoing support in implementing Science of Reading principles. By offering a multi-faceted array of research-based content and fostering a vibrant, interactive community, the Lopes for Literacy Committee empowers future educators with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to promote effective literacy development grounded in the Science of Reading.

- **Kappa Delta Pi:** The GCU chapter of the Kappa Delta Pi (KDP) honors society is dedicated to building the professional skills educators need to be effective in the field. Candidates are invited to join KDP twice per year based on grade point average. The GCU KDP chapter sent bimonthly newsletters to members to share professional development opportunities, scholarship opportunities, and important college updates. The KDP social media accounts for Instagram and LinkedIn were also created this year. KDP officers were selected in May and met to plan the 25-26 academic year. The leaders will be incorporating monthly virtual meetings to increase reach for the online student population.
- **Impact Club:** The Impact Club is a service-oriented initiative within the College of Education that empowers faculty and students to live out their faith through meaningful acts of service. In partnership with local organizations and schools, the club organizes projects that address real community needs while fostering a spirit of compassion, leadership, and collaboration. Members have the opportunity to grow personally and professionally by engaging in purposeful service that reflects Christian values. The Impact Club ultimately helps bridge the gap between faith, learning, and action. This year, the impact club expanded its reach and invited online students to meetings, as well as established their social media presence on Instagram. The Impact Club promoted and attended monthly virtual huddles titled “Teachers Praying Together.”
- **Ed Tech Club:** The Ed Tech Club is an online club with the focus on sharing educational technology. This club is open to all teacher candidates and is hosted on the Ed Tech Club Instagram account. In the last year, the Ed Tech club membership has grown from 1,607- 2,000.
- **CCCE – Lopes Lead with Character:** Lopes Lead with Character is the only monthly, synchronous group designed specifically for online GCU students. Over the past quarter, more than 150 students have participated in three themed Zoom sessions focused on character development and community engagement. Each session provided structured opportunities for reflection, dialogue, and the practical application of core virtues relevant to academic, personal, and professional growth:
  - Harvesting Character: Virtues for Growth and Renewal – Explored gratitude, resilience, balance, and community, encouraging students to reflect on life transitions and personal strengths.
  - Summer Carnival of Character – Focused on joy, fairness, and responsibility through interactive activities and guided discussions.
  - Campfire Conversations: Stories That Shape Us – Emphasized integrity, humility, forgiveness, and authenticity by creating space for participants to share personal stories and examine guiding principles.

These sessions reinforce the group's mission to foster character growth, create inclusive and engaging dialogue, and cultivate a culture of belonging and reflection within the online learning community.

### **Community Support Progress**

- **Affiliation Agreements:** Grand Canyon University's College of Education (COE) prioritizes the development of documented and effective partnerships with P–12 schools and districts to ensure the implementation of high-quality clinical experiences, aligning directly with aspect 3b. These partnerships span across the country and are supported through over 2,200 formal affiliation agreements with schools and districts across the United States that outline mutual expectations and responsibilities between the College of Education and school/district sites in which field experiences are completed.

COE utilized the following established criteria for success: 100% of affiliation agreements are reviewed at least once every three years. Note: Area of improvement to obtain completed affiliation agreements for 100% for student teaching placements.

Whether through practicum, student teaching, or internship placements, the College's commitment to collaborative, field-based preparation is evident in its intentional work with schools to align clinical experiences with district needs and program outcomes. GCU's Teacher Placement Counselors (TPCs) work closely with school leaders and administrators to identify appropriate placements for candidates enrolled in initial licensure programs. Candidates utilize the Practicum/Field Experience Fact Sheet, the Clinical Field Experience Handbook, and the Student Teaching/Clinical Practice Manual to review required time and setting requirements. Candidates work alongside the Office of Field Experience to select placements sites in alignment with course and program requirements.

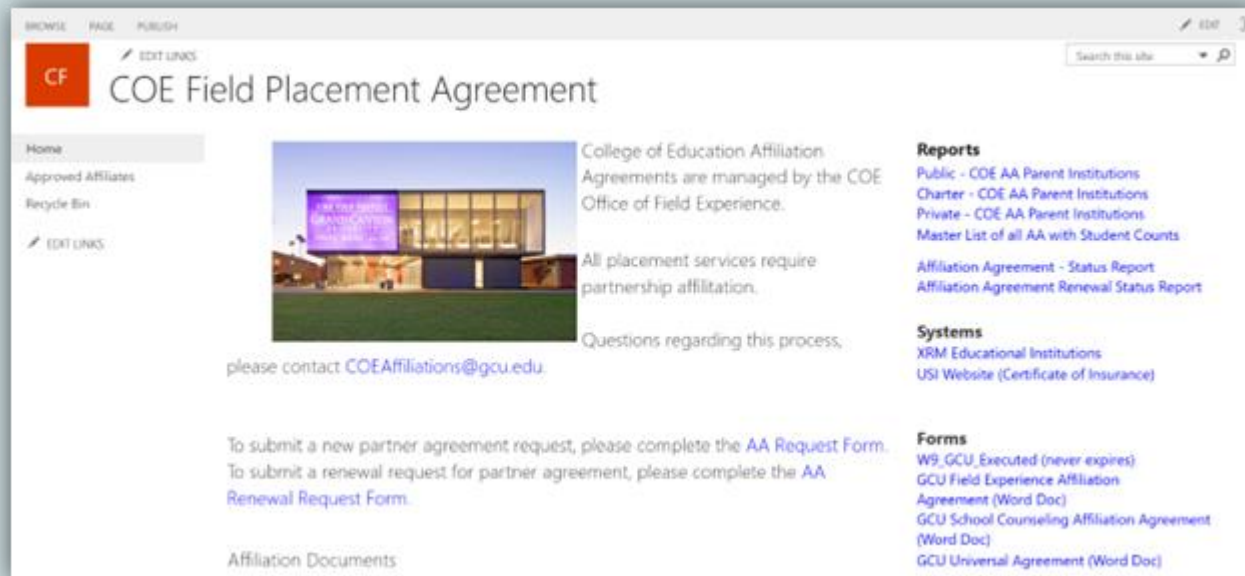
The College and the Office of Field Experience work alongside schools/districts to meet placement requirements. Some school/district sites may allow for candidates to self-place for practicum/field experiences. However, many schools/districts require University placement. In addition, there are key experiences, such as student teaching, that require University placement. The field experience placement process guidelines can be reviewed in further detail on the [Student Success Center](#).

The College of Education continues to work alongside several university departments and colleges, such as those related to compliance, legal, site placement, and technology, to address the affiliation agreement processes between outside placement sites across the United States and Grand Canyon University. Progress includes several items as follows. First, the College's service provider, the Office of Field Experience, designated and hired three Affiliation Agreement Coordinators to assist in systematic organization and daily maintenance involved in tracking, completing, and organizing affiliation agreements. One of the first action items completed by the newly hired Affiliation Agreement Coordinators included a thorough review and audit of all agreement documents on file. This process allowed the College to have access to an up-to-date repository of agreements. Second, the College worked



alongside key parties to update the current affiliation agreement to provide more robust and thorough details outlining key elements for both the district/school site, college candidates, and the university. Some of these elements included, but are not limited to, more clarity around digital privacy and protection, FERPA, and additional appendices. Third, the College continued to work alongside technology teams to update system tracking and potential student-facing information.

The below image showcases a section of the internal shared website used between the College of Education and the Office of Field Experience to document and share processes, templates, resources, and affiliation agreement tracking.



## **Accomplishments**

### **Academic Accomplishments:**

- **Scholarship:** The College of Education faculty and staff participate in scholarship work through research, presentations, and publications. These include scholarship and work within GCU, but also to outside organizations and education relevant parties.
  - **Presentations:** In 2024-2025, the College continued to participate in presentations to share scholarship and best practices with other educator preparation programs. More than 20 presentations were completed by faculty and staff. Presentations of note include:
    - 2025 AAQEP Quality Assurance Symposium: The College of Education faculty and staff presented 5 sessions at the 2025 AAQEP Quality Assurance Symposium. Presentations included:
      - Farkas, E., Brandon, A., & Blair, J. (2025). *Fostering Ethics: Integrating and Measuring an Ethics Assessment in Teacher Preparation*. Presented at the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) 2025 Quality Assurance Symposium, Tempe, AZ.
      - Farkas, E. & Brandon, A. (2025). *Navigating Ethical Dilemmas: A Framework for Faculty in Student Communal Engagement*. Presented at the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) 2025 Quality Assurance Symposium, Tempe, AZ.
      - Kozimor, A. (2025). *From Recruitment to Retention: Comprehensive Approaches for Sustaining Future Educators*. Presented at the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) 2025 Quality Assurance Symposium, Tempe, AZ.
      - Pottinger, E., Critchfield, M., & Gaudiano, L. (2025). *Steering the future: Policy and Advocacy for transforming educator preparation*. Presented at the AAQEP Quality Assurance Symposium. Tempe, AZ.
      - Critchfield, C., Pottinger, E., & Gaudiano, L., (2025). Education Policy and Advocacy in an Era of Inequity. AACTE Annual Meeting, Long Beach, CA.
      - Kozimor, A. (2025). From Recruitment to Retention: Comprehensive Approaches for Sustaining Future Educators. AACTE Annual Meeting, Long Beach, CA.
      - Pottinger, E., & Brett, J., (2025). Setting Sail for Success: Educator Dispositions as the Captain's Compass. AACTE Annual Meeting, Long Beach, CA.
      - Sprute, K., & Damiani, S. (2025). Building Virtual Bridges: Fostering Community in Remote Higher Education. AACTE Annual Meeting, Long Beach, CA.
    - *Association of Teacher Educators National Conference*. New Orleans, LA.
      - Damiani, S., McCabe, C., & Basko, L. (2025). Fueling our future: Advocating Well-Being and Growth. *Association of Teacher Educators National Conference*. New Orleans, LA.
      - Damiani S., Basko, L., & McCabe, C. (2025). Advocacy in action: Transforming classrooms with gratitude, student voices, and teacher leadership. *Association of Teacher Educators National Conference*. New Orleans, LA.



- McCabe, M. & Underdown, K. (2025). Creative strategies to meet students where they are. *Association of Teacher Educators National Conference*. New Orleans, LA.
  - McCabe, C. & McCabe M. (2025) Redefining advocacy in education: Shattering myths to inspire change. *Association of Teacher Educators National Conference*. New Orleans, LA.
- *CEEDAR Center Cross State Convening (CCSC), 2025*
  - Blair, J., Cihak, D., & Johnson, J. (2025, June). *Messaging That Matters: Strategic Outreach for Effective Education*. [Conference presentation]. CEEDAR Center Cross State Convening (CCSC) 2025, Virtual. Florida State University, CEEDAR Center.
- *Institute for Human Development (IHD): Evidence for Success Disability Conference 2025, Phoenix, AZ.*
  - Blair, J. & Remy-Tauaese, D. (2025, June). *Integrating High-Leverage Practices into Teacher Preparation: Advancing Inclusive Education*. [Conference presentation]. Institute for Human Development (IHD): Evidence for Success Disability Conference 2025, Phoenix, AZ.
- *International Conference:*
  - Swan, M. (2024, October 12-14). *Sustainable practices: Integrating SEL strategies in literacy instruction*. 2024 Global Research Education Association Annual Conference, Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China
- **Publications:** The College faculty and staff was published widely in 2024 and 2025. Several full-time faculty and staff contributed chapters to the upcoming book *Exploring Online Student Psychology*, edited by Dr. Katie Sprute (Senior Faculty Chair and Assistant Professor). Contributors from the College of Education include:
  - Jennifer Jakobi (traditional faculty):  
“From Access to Engagement: AI-Enhanced UDL Practices in Online Higher Education”
  - Dr. Ashley Brandon and Emily Farkas (Canyon Center for Character Education):  
“Cultivating Character and Virtue in Virtual Classrooms: Ethical Formation in Online Higher Education”
  - Kimber Underdown, Dr. Crystal McCabe, and Dr. Mike McCabe (Online Full-time Faculty):  
“A Call to Humanize Online Learning”
  - Dr. Sheila Damiani and Dr. Lynn Basko (Senior Faculty Chair/Online Full-time Faculty):  
“Psychological Foundations of Online Learning”
- Other publications of note are:

- Clark, B.A. & Basko, L.M. (2025). The influence of faith-based motivational functions on motivation to volunteer: A qualitative descriptive study. *Journal of Scholarly Engagement*. 8(1), 64-71.  
<https://doi.org/10.9743/jse.2025.8.1.7>
- Dyer, T.D. & Dyer, R.D. (2024). Enhancing Access, Engagement, and Inclusion in Online Education. *Faculty Focus*.

These publications demonstrate the College's ongoing leadership in advancing research and best practices in online education.

- **Committee Involvement:** College faculty and staff have a robust involvement in local, state, and national committees with the goal of supporting current and future educators and leaders.
  - *Examples of Local Service*
    - Arizona Association of Mid-Level Educators Member, Dr. Paul Danuser
    - Arizona Education Foundation Board of Directors, Dr. Lindy Gaudiano
    - Arizona State Board of Education Professional Practices Advisory Committee, Dr. Lindy Gaudiano
    - Teacher of the Year Selection Committee, Dr. Lindy Gaudiano
    - First Things First AZ, Phoenix North Regional Partnership Council-Vice Chair, Dr. Katie Sprute
    - AZ CTE Education and Training and Family and Consumer Sciences Advisory Council, Virginia Murray
    - First Things First AZ, Phoenix Central Regional Partnership Council, Chesa Mendez
    - Arizona Mathematics Leaders, Dr. Katy Long
  - *Examples of National Service*
    - AACTE Programmatic Advisory Committee on Government Relations and Advocacy, Dr. Meredith Critchfield
    - AAQEP Events Committee Chair, Dr. Alicia Kozimor
    - AACTE Programmatic Advisory Committee on Membership Engagement and Outreach, Dr. Lindy Gaudiano
    - The National Teacher Project (TNTP)/AZ Teacher Talent Convening Advisory Board, Dr. Emily Pottinger, Dr. Sheila Damiani, Dr. Alicia Kozimor
    - International Dyslexia Association Board Member, Chair of Branch Council Executive Committee, Dr. Rebekah Dyer
    - Association of Teacher Educators Classroom Management SIG Chair, Dr. Brandon Juarez

- EDUCAUSE Ambassador, Dr. Sheila Damiani

- **Arizona Department of Education's Recently Approved Programs:** In partnership with the Arizona Department of Education, members of the College of Education at Grand Canyon University, along with external committee members, developed a streamlined submission process for academic programs from AAQEP-approved institutions. This abbreviated process provides an alternative to the previous submission system, recognizing the comprehensive programmatic information already submitted to AAQEP, which reflects key program processes and procedures. Since the rollout of this AAQEP-based process, Grand Canyon University has submitted four renewal applications for current program offerings.
- **Arizona Department of Education's (ADE) New Program Pilot Submission:** During the 2024–2025 academic year, the College of Education developed a new program offering: the Bachelor of Science in Special Education. As the program has not yet received AAQEP accreditation, the College submitted a program proposal to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). ADE selected Grand Canyon University to pilot its newly updated submission documents, and through this collaboration, GCU became the second educator preparation provider to complete the revised approval process. The program has since been recommended for approval by the State Board of Education. Once all required external approvals are secured, the College will pursue AAQEP accreditation for the B.S. in Special Education program.
- **New Practicum/Field Experience Process:** The College continues to strategically update and revise current practicum/field experience requirements within programs as the revision cycle occurs. As stated in the 2024 annual report, the College adopted a shift from assigning field experience hours to specific courses to a practicum/field experience “block” approach. This flexible model offers candidates greater autonomy in fulfilling requirements for their specific content areas, allowing for a more tailored and comprehensive field experience. This new approach has been implemented in 19 initial teacher licensure programs in addition to advanced programs.  
As programs are revised and released, the College develops practicum/field experience visuals and resources to outline and engage candidates in diverse settings and experiences. The suggested activities build on course concepts to guide candidates to relevant classroom experiences where they might observe or apply their understanding of culturally responsive practices. Examples include: Research the demographics of the school community and discuss with administration how diversity within the classroom and school are celebrated; Implement differentiation strategies for students with exceptionalities, English learners, and gifted and early finishers; and Collaborate with the mentor teacher to identify different forms of communication and documentation for parent engagement and relationship building. To see additional practicum/field experience related data see the *Innovations* section below.
- **Relevant Resources on Student Success Center (SSC):** The College continues to update material and resources located on the Student Success Center on monthly basis. These updates included, but are not limited to, resources on Canyon Center for Character Education (CCCE), practicum/field experience, student teaching, certification exam preparation, and expectations around educator professionalism.

- **Policy Updates:** To improve transparency and candidate experience, COE revised vital policies in the University Policy Handbook. The revisions followed the University process but also included several relevant parties to ensure updates were clear and helpful for all key relevant parties, such as State Compliance, the Office of Field Experience, and faculty. The following policies were updated to align with the most current practices and processes:
  - COE Candidate Fingerprint Clearance
  - COE Educational Administration and Educational Leadership Admissions
  - COE Educational Administration
  - COE Paid Practicum/Field Experience Opportunities
  - Eligibility for Student Teaching
  - Requirements for Institutional Recommendation
  - Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies to Master of Arts in Curriculum & Instruction Fast Track
  - Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies to Master of Arts in Reading Education Fast Track
  - Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies to Master of Science in Instructional Technology Fast Track
  - COE LBS1 Admissions
  - TEACH Grant
  - College of Education Certification/Licensure Pathway

The College continues to review University policies and is currently in review of updates to the following policies: COE Candidate Fingerprint Clearance, practicum/field experience and student teaching policies.

**GCU Faculty Supervisor Evaluation, Survey, and Feedback Process:** To collect and review feedback for continuous improvement, the College has implemented supervisor evaluations and surveys. The College continues to conduct regular evaluations to provide further support, consistency, and feedback with GCU faculty supervisors. Additionally, the College continues to send a survey at the end of each semester to all cooperating teachers/mentors to gather feedback on the student teaching experience, including their involvement and feedback with the faculty site supervisor. Additionally, the College has created and launched a survey that is sent out at the end of each semester to GCU faculty supervisors to gain their perspective on their role and experience as a supervisor.

- **Training Support:**
  - **Office of Field Experience Counselor Training:** The College of Education held specialized training sessions on various topics, such as edTPA and alternative pathways, with the Field Experience and Teacher Placement Counselors discussing policies, expectations, requirements, and resources. Trainings were designed to improve consistency, provide opportunity for college and operations team collaboration, and to ensure counselors are equipped with college resources and understanding of key topics and expectations to better assist education candidates in successful experiences in the field.

- **College of Education All-Counselor Training:** The College of Education hosted multiple training sessions for all counselors in July 2024 and February 2025 with the Employee Learning and Development team to train over 1,000 university counselors, university development counselors, student services counselors, field experience counselors, teacher placement counselors, and all managers/leadership of each counseling team. The trainings included in-depth discussion on new resources, Canyon Center for Character Education updates, paid opportunities and professional, program updates, technology updates, federal and state updates, certification readiness, certification exam preparation and process norming. The trainings were designed to improve consistency, provide an opportunity for college and operations team collaboration, and ensure counselors are equipped with college resources and understanding of university policy, as well as programmatic/state certification expectations. This not only assists counselors in informing potential candidates and providing guidance to those to enter programs that best fit their future goals but also allows for counselors to better assist candidates in successful field experiences during their program and continuing on to certification in candidates' states of residence.
- **Canyon L.E.A.P. to Teach Touchpoints:** While not directly associated with the initial licensure programs identified in this annual report, in response to the nationwide teacher shortages, the College of Education has invested in opportunities to uplift the field and bolster the educator pipeline. One initiative that is in alignment with this initiative is the Canyon L.E.A.P. to Teach program. Although this program is not included within the College's AAQEP approvals, it is an Arizona state approved program that assists educators with earning certification through an alternative pathway. This unique pathway is an example of innovative thinking to directly support local schools and current educators maintain positions in the classroom while completing programmatic coursework that can lead to teacher certification. Alongside this program, the College supported counseling teams in understanding requirements, expectations, and opportunities for upcoming cohorts for the alternative pathway program-Canyon L.E.A.P. to Teach. Continued college guidance on this unique program enhances counselor knowledge on certification, programmatic, licensure examination, and other requirements for the alternative route to teacher licensure to address teacher shortages in Arizona.
- **Enrollment and Training Materials:** The College, in collaboration with the Employee Learning and Development department, has completed training materials for enrollment counselors. This material consists of brief overviews and slide decks differentiating between the various program offerings. Enrollment training is important for the College to ensure candidates are adequately informed about their program choices and accurately placed in a program that aligns with their professional goals.
- **Monthly COE Adjunct Meetings:** This year, the College of Education worked to increase supports for adjunct faculty. Each month, Dr. Alicia Kozimor led monthly virtual meetings for adjunct faculty. The meetings were used to provide college updates, lead professional development and training sessions, and create a strong community among all faculty. Topics for training included time management for faculty, having difficult conversations with

students, and increasing engagement in the online classroom. The average number of attendees to meetings this year was ~80 attendees.

- **1<sup>st</sup> Annual COE Adjunct Conference:** This year, the College of Education hosted its inaugural Fall Adjunct Conference. This conference was held both online and virtually to encourage attendance from adjunct faculty across the nation. Over 45 attended in person, and over 70 attended virtually. Topics for the conference included using videos for engagement in the online classroom, identifying resources and policies to uphold high expectations, and incorporating the Christian Worldview into instruction.
- **Collaborative Communities:** The College of Education developed a virtual space for faculty and other support roles (i.e., GCU Faculty Supervisors) to collaborate. These communities are grouped by program and allow faculty opportunities to collaborate with other faculty regarding specific courses within programs. Each community has a content lead who is either an adjunct, full-time faculty or college staff member serving to promote engagement and increased access to, support, information, and resources. Content leads share College of Education updates, host virtual meetings and initiate discussions regarding topics such as student engagement, integration of faith, instructional strategies, student teaching, practicum/field experience, holistic feedback, and much more. These facilitators also serve as a point of contact for all faculty with questions pertaining to course content.

#### **Co-Curricular Accomplishments:**

- **Student Teaching Celebration:** To recognize teacher candidate accomplishments and uplift teaching as a profession, the College hosts a semi-annual student teaching celebration and pinning ceremony for traditional campus candidates. The celebration welcomes over 50 student teachers each semester who successfully complete their student teaching experience and will be entering the field of education as professionals. The event includes sharing the post-graduation plans and opportunities for candidates, a celebration of the work done in classrooms over the semester, and inspirational words from COE graduates and relevant parties. This initiative honors and supports future educators and allows networking opportunities with current education leaders and recently graduated student teachers. The event concludes with a pinning ceremony in which each teacher candidate is given a COE branded pin and renews their dedication through the COE pledge.
- **Lopes Leap to Teach and Lead Career Fair:** The College hosts a biannual Career and Networking Event to connect educator candidates with current districts and sites for career and field experience opportunities. See Part I, section 3.G. under the Program Performance Indicators portion above for additional information on the Lopes Leap to Teach and Lead Career and Networking event.
- **Dean's Speaker Series:** The College hosts a semi-annual Dean's Speakers Series in both the fall and spring semesters. The purpose of the Dean's Speakers Series is to shine a light on the work done by educators both as classroom teachers,



but also in other areas of education. This is a virtual event open to both online and traditional ground candidates, as well as faculty, staff, and COE relevant parties. Over one hundred candidates attended each of the Fall and Spring events, heading from industry experts including administrators, new teachers, experienced and recognized teachers, and advocates for education shared their career journey and how to succeed as educators. In addition, participants hear panelists speak on topics such as Christian education, character education, and tips for first-year teachers and administrators.

- Fall: Teaching Beyond Boundaries: Stories of Resilience, Passion, and Purpose, Panelists included: Dr. George Barnes (Balsz School District Superintendent), Nick Schuerman (CEO of Victory Schools), and Leisha Ritchie (COE Alum and Teacher)
- Spring: The Power of the Journey: From Paras and Subs to Passionate Educators, Panelists included three COE alumni and individuals who started their teaching careers as paraprofessionals and substitute teachers while working through their programs, including Jena Brue, Theresa Jones, and Natalie Scudder

#### **Community Outreach Accomplishments:**

- **College of Education Advisory Board:** Since 2022, the College expanded the Advisory Board to include an additional 40+ members. Board members are key relevant parties in the local and national education field, comprised of alumni, local and national educators, and leaders. The College has continued to expand the opportunity to serve members outside of Arizona who choose to participate and contribute. This year, the college plans to refine the Advisory Board participant list and target more inclusion of current students.
- **GCU's Day of Giving:** The Day of Giving event is centered around philanthropy and showing GCU students the power of supporting the ideas and organizations relevant parties believe in. This year, the donation option for the College of Education was focused on increasing GCU student scholarships. All donations to the Day of Giving empowered the College of Education candidates to take part in critical initiatives, allowing them to go into communities and make a difference while helping to uplift the education profession.
- **Canyon Global Educators:** The Canyon Global Educators team traveled to Spain in May 2023, 2024 and 2025. College faculty and candidates from College of Education programs helped prepare for work with second language learner immigrant students and adults. This opportunity not only served the greater global community but also provided College of Education candidates with ample experiences in teaching speakers of other languages, gaining cultural and diverse experiences.
- **Canyon Center for Character Education:** During the 2024–2025 academic year, the Canyon Center for Character Education (CCCE) created and disseminated several core value resources to COE personnel as a follow up to collaborative meetings to define five core values that reflect the college's mission and identity that took place the previous academic year. The core values serve as a moral compass for the college, shaping its Christian character and identity while fostering a shared sense of purpose, unity, and ethical behavior in the field of education. These values are not only foundational to

the COE's internal culture but also reflect a commitment to preparing educators who are globally minded, culturally responsive, and ethically grounded.

- The integration of core values into coursework began with the dissemination of curated resources to instructors, aimed at prompting meaningful discussions, supporting independent exploration, and fostering candidate self-reflection. Faculty have been encouraged to incorporate the core values in diverse and authentic ways to enrich learning and spark thoughtful conversation.
- To strengthen the integration of character education within educator preparation, the Canyon Center for Character Education (CCCE) utilized a comprehensive set of competencies that guide candidates from foundational learning to practical application. These competencies were designed in alignment with [Grand Canyon University's Mission](#), [the Statement on the Integration of Faith, Learning, and Work](#), [the College of Education \(COE\) Conceptual Framework](#), and the [COE Professional Dispositions of Learners](#). In collaboration with the Curriculum Design and Development (CDD) team, the College of Education has begun integrating these competencies into academic programs. This integration is systematically documented by the CDD team and shared with CCCE leadership to ensure consistency and transparency. This model has been adopted by other colleges within GCU, expanding the reach of character education across disciplines. Currently, there are over 300 courses at Grand Canyon University with documented integration of character education. COE utilized the following established criteria for success: Character education integrated in 30% of the courses in every academic program University-wide.
- **National Education Policy and Advocacy:** College leaders, Dr. Meredith Critchfield, Dr. Emily Pottinger, Dr. Lindy Gaudiano, Dr. Katie Sprute, and Dr. Alicia Kozimor attended the AACTE Washington Week in Washington D.C. July 2025. Dr. Meredith Critchfield also participated in a Q&A panel to prepare attendees for participating in education policy and advocacy. The COE leaders visited the offices of Arizona representatives and senators to share about the work being done at GCU and in the College of Education.
- **Local Education Policy and Advocacy:** This year, the College visited the Arizona state capitol and testified at committee meetings several times. In October, Dr. Meredith Critchfield testified at the House Education Committee and House Appropriations Committee for House Bill 2018 to speak on behalf of the inclusion of private institutions in the state's Arizona Teachers Academy. In November, over 12 College faculty and staff joined Dr. Emily Pottinger as Grand Canyon University was honored on the Senate floor and Dr. Pottinger testified for GCU's inclusion in the Arizona Teachers Academy bill at the Senate Education Committee.

## Innovation



### **Academic Innovation:**

- **Practicum/Field Experience Updates:** The College continues to revise practicum/field experience requirements within all initial licensure programs. To provide additional application opportunities within the field, the transition in practicum/field experience discussion includes a three-block approach to practicum/field experience in all initial licensure programs. Block One focuses on foundational teaching knowledge, such as interviews, classroom learning observations, school-wide events, and more. Block Two includes collaboration with mentors to start applying foundational information in the classroom environment through activities in the categories of collaborative teaching, lesson planning, small group activities, and more. Finally, in Block Three, teacher candidates independently apply knowledge to the learning environment through teaching practices. Furthermore, this restructuring of practicum/clinical field experience includes a shift from ten or more courses with 5–10-hour requirements to an average of six courses with 15–20-hour requirements. This change has been a result of feedback from various external partners emphasizing the benefits of substantial hours in a single setting for the mentor, teacher candidate, and K-12 students. The College has been able to apply these revisions and implement the new structure in the B.S. Early Childhood, B.S. Elementary and emphases, B.S. Elementary and Special Education, B.A. and B.S. Secondary, M.Ed. Early Childhood, M.Ed. Elementary, M.Ed. Secondary, and M.Ed. Special Education programs, with the remaining initial teacher licensure programs scheduled for revision. With these updates to the practicum/field experience structure, the College has maintained an emphasis on guiding candidates to diverse settings to complete their hours.
- **GoReact Technology:** The College of Education piloted the GoReact tool, an external video recording platform that allows instructors to review and share embedded feedback on candidate video assignments. The yearlong pilot was included in a 15-week student teaching course and one additional 8-week course spanning all undergraduate licensure programs, EDU-330. During this pilot, the Go React tool was included in multiple course sections for both the online and in-person modalities. Based on analysis of the data, COE expanded the use of GoReact through implementation in additional methods and all student teaching courses. The College continues to monitor feedback from candidates and faculty to determine additional areas to scaffold this technology into licensure programs, particularly in courses where candidate teaching can be observed.  
Based upon instructor and district/school site feedback, the College expanding the initiative to enhance consistency and security around video recording in the classroom. During the Fall 2025 semester, the College of Education implemented full integration of GoReact into all student teaching courses as the designated platform for secure video-based performance assessment. This integration supports both instructional consistency and compliance with data privacy standards. To ensure proper functionality, the College developed support resources and communications for course instructors. Instructional resources are available in the Instructor Only section of Halo, and additional GoReact support materials are accessible via the GoReact Support and Resources site.
- **Multimedia Content Integration:** The development and integration of multimedia content in courses is intended to enrich the learning experience by offering candidates dynamic and interactive ways to engage with course material. By utilizing various forms of multimedia, such as videos, podcasts, interactive modules, and checks for understanding, concepts are

presented in more accessible and engaging formats. This approach allows candidates to explore and understand topics at a deeper level, emphasizing the application of knowledge over mere recitation of facts. Through multimedia, candidates are provided opportunities to apply theoretical concepts in practical scenarios, facilitating critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for their academic and professional development. Additional platforms are being explored to continue advancing the multimedia offerings within programs, including interactive video simulations and educator focused AI-tools.

- **Pathways to Licensure:** In response to the national teacher shortage crisis, the College continues exploring alternative pathways to licensure. Using feedback from relevant parties and partnerships with K-12 educational agencies across the country, the College continues exploring opportunities to support candidates in understanding various routes to licensure, including opportunities to earn while learning. The College strives to provide high-quality and affordable educator preparation that is accessible to a diverse population of future or current educators.
- **Field Experience Technology Innovations:**
  - **Document Management System (DMS):** The College is continuing to work collaboratively alongside technology teams to further improve the current technology tools used for documentation and tracking of field experience requirements. The practicum tracker, launched in Spring 2024, provides candidates with a clear visual representation of their progress in meeting the required practicum hours for their program of study. Additionally, the Document Management System tracker has been integrated into GCU's CRM system allowing counselors the ability to view a candidate's practicum/field experience progress. While not pertinent to initial licensure, the College has worked alongside the technology teams to include the real-time electronic tracking of educational administration time requirements and plans to mirror this same time tracking process for initial teacher licensure programs.
  - **Alternative Pathway Reporting:** With assistance from the technology department, the College utilizes a real-time web report showcasing data to proactively monitor and support candidates in alternative pathway programs, including the Arizona Alternative Teaching, Arizona Student Teaching Interns, Arizona Canyon L.E.A.P. to Teach and Nevada ARL programs. This innovation allows the College and counselors to better track and utilize consistent information and data regarding these candidates.
- **Alternative Pathways to Educator Licensure:**
  - **Arizona Student Teaching Intern Certificate:** GCU worked with local districts and other state entities to meet the needs of the local teacher shortage to develop a Student Teaching Intern Certificate that allows candidates to fill open positions in local schools, provided they meet specific requirements as outlined by AZ Department of Education and fulfill the requirements of their institution of higher education. Since Fall 2022, over 100 GCU Student Teaching Intern candidates have filled these positions in local schools. This includes 32 candidates in the 2024-2025 school year.
  - **Canyon L.E.A.P. to Teach:** To fill gaps in the field of education, GCU partnered with local districts and Arizona Department of Education to create a local alternative pathway to teaching for GCU candidates. Since Fall 2020,

over 30 local districts/charter schools have partnered with the College of Education to support candidates through the Canyon Local Education Agency Pathway (L.E.A.P.) to Teach graduate certificate program pathways. Since 2022, over 23 candidates have now completed these pathways, which includes 5 candidates in the 2024-2025 school year.

- **Arizona Alternative Pathway:** GCU's longest-running alternative pathway to teacher certification was created to align with the AZ Department of Education's Alternative Teaching Certificate (previously called the Arizona Intern Certificate). Candidates going through eligible GCU graduate licensure programs are approved to teach full-time in Arizona classrooms on this certificate while completing their programs. Since 2022, nearly 700 candidates have taught on this certificate. This includes 237 candidates in the 2024-2025 school year.
- **Arizona Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (AZTRAP):** The College of Education (COE) was approved by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) as an apprenticeship educator preparation program (EPP) provider for the AZTRAP pilot. The COE was selected by the Phoenix Union High School District (PXU) as its EPP partner to offer and coordinate the licensure program for their selected pilot apprentice. The pilot apprenticeship program will follow a two-year pathway leading to a master's degree.
- **Nevada ARL Programs:** The College of Education (COE) continues to advance its mission of addressing critical teacher shortages in high-needs areas through the development and delivery of alternative pathways to licensure in Nevada. The *Master of Education in Special Education (K–12, Mild to Moderate Disabilities)* and the *Master of Education in Secondary Education (with emphases in STEM and Humanities)* are approved ARL programs that provide an accelerated, high-quality preparation route for individuals seeking to enter the teaching profession. These programs are intentionally designed to support Nevada's urgent workforce needs while maintaining rigorous standards of quality and alignment with state and national expectations for educator preparation.
- **Program Approval and Collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NV DOE):** The COE has maintained an ongoing collaborative relationship with the Nevada Department of Education to ensure the ARL programs remain current and responsive to state licensure requirements. The programs were successfully renewed through this partnership, and planning is now underway for the next phase of development. Over the coming year, the college will continue working closely with NV DOE to design a more market-responsive and flexible pathway that aligns even more closely with state needs and candidate goals.
- **Planned Enhancements – Graduate Certificate Pathways:** A significant component of this next phase involves the development of three new Nevada-specific graduate certificates in the areas of Elementary Education (ELM), Special Education (SPD), and Secondary Education (SEC). These certificate programs are being designed to provide targeted preparation in high demand teaching areas and will seamlessly stack into the existing Non-Initial Teacher Licensure (NITL) master's programs. This approach offers candidates greater flexibility, creates clearer entry points into the profession, and supports Nevada districts in recruiting and retaining qualified educators.
- **Program Outcomes and Impact:** Since the launch of these ARL programs in 2022, more than 40 candidates have successfully completed their preparation and entered classrooms in Nevada schools, directly contributing

to filling critical teaching vacancies. During the 2024–2025 academic year, 14 candidates completed the program, further demonstrating the program’s ongoing relevance and impact on the state’s educator workforce. Feedback from district partners and the NV DOE indicates that these programs have been instrumental in addressing teacher shortages, particularly in special education and secondary content areas.

- **Continuous Improvement and Future Planning:** The COE remains committed to using program data, stakeholder feedback, and workforce demand analyses to guide future enhancements. Efforts in the coming year will focus on finalizing the design and approval of the new graduate certificates, strengthening alignment with Nevada licensure competencies, and deepening partnerships with school districts to ensure program graduates are well-prepared to meet the diverse needs of PK–12 learners. These ongoing initiatives reflect the college’s dedication to continuous improvement, workforce responsiveness, and its broader mission to prepare highly qualified educators for high-needs classrooms.
- **Local School Embedded Partnerships:** The College of Education’s conceptual framework heralds learning, leading, and serving. As such, intentional partnerships with local schools and districts are critical. These partnerships are typically grown from a need that local schools or districts have that they believe the College of Education programs and their graduates could help fill. The embedded partnership model the College established many years ago continues to be a successful addition to local school communities.
  - **Instructional Assistants/Paraprofessionals:** Dr. Jim Mostofo has partnered with three local charter schools, Empower College Prep, Glenview Preparatory Academy, and Bourgade Catholic School to support candidates who are working in classrooms as instructional assistants/paraprofessionals. About 14 candidates are observed and coached by Dr. Mostofo as they work with small groups and/or implement lessons to provide real-time coaching and support.
  - **Embedded Partnerships:** In another example, faculty member Professor Jena Akard has partnered with a local elementary school, Westwood School, to embed candidates in classrooms. GCU candidates meet at Westwood once per week for their class period and implement lessons either small group or whole group. They work with the classroom teacher of record to identify standards to be taught as well as modify and implement school curriculum. Professor Akard guides candidates as they navigate planning lessons and analyzing student data, and coaches’ candidates as they implement lessons.
  - **BALSZ School District:** Dr. Nydia Palomino and Professor Nathan Hollis II have partnered with Brunson-Lee elementary school in the Balsz School District to provide after-school tutoring and Conflict Resolution training. Monday through Thursday, the 35 GCU candidates meet at Brunson-Lee school to offer tutoring to students that have been selected as part of this program by their teachers. The candidates also received Restorative Justice training that they enact with students to guide them through conflict resolution and creating positive mindsets about learning.
  - **STEM Methods Courses:** Dr. Katy Long has partnered with the Laveen and Washington Elementary School Districts to implement an embedded partnership for candidates in their STEM methods courses. Candidates meet in

a GCU classroom on campus once per week to receive instruction. On the second day, candidates meet at a school site to implement lessons and work with mentor teachers. Dr. Long visits the school sites and observes candidates as they implement lessons to offer feedback and coaching.

- **Emergency Substitute Teacher Partnership:** The Emergency Substitute Cohort is offered to eligible candidates who have completed the necessary courses to effectively enter the classroom as a substitute teacher. Candidates are paired with a faculty advisor and assigned to a school district where they will serve as a substitute. Candidates receive their emergency substitute certification through the Arizona Department of Education. Candidates participating in this residency serve schools as paid substitute teachers while also completing field experience hours required for coursework. Candidates are supported by regular check-ins and coaching from their faculty advisor and school administrators. In Spring 2025, over 170 candidates participated in this residency, partnering with 10 school districts, serving Pre-K-12 populations.
- **Swivel Cam:** Dr. Brandon Juarez works with a College of Education alum, Sarah Plaum, to implement an innovative classroom observation technique. Dr. Juarez set up a camera in Ms. Plaum's classroom that tracks her movements and follows her around the classroom. The camera live-streams Ms. Plaum's instruction and methods into the College classroom so Dr. Juarez can give real-time instruction based on what teacher candidates are viewing. Dr. Juarez also coaches Ms. Plaum and asks her to implement strategies so candidates can see the results of a strategy being used.

#### **Co-curricular Innovation:**

- **CEEDAR Partnership:** The College of Education remains actively engaged in the Arizona Coalition for Educator Preparation and Practice (ACEPP), the state chapter of the national CEEDAR Center. CEEDAR focuses on improving the preparation and retention of special education teachers and leaders, with growing emphasis on roles such as directors, administrators, and superintendents. Through ACEPP, our faculty and staff collaborate with Arizona IHEs to share best practices and address challenges in special education programming, field experiences, and assessment. These discussions also reflect national and state policy shifts and emerging trends. Partnerships with organizations like the Council for Exceptional Children and the IRIS Center further enhance CEEDAR's reach and resources. College representatives participate in CEEDAR-led Affinity Groups and national convenings, contributing to broader conversations on PK–20 education. CEEDAR priorities, including High-Leverage Practices (HLPs), are embedded across our special education, administrator preparation, and initial licensure programs. These collaborations support innovation, scholarship, and reform efforts to better serve all students.
- **Strategic Goal Setting:** Each year, from May to early August, the College of Education engages in a strategic planning process that involves collaboration among key college leadership, faculty, and staff. This process is vital in shaping the College's direction for the upcoming academic year. It includes three full-day workshops where participants review the previous year's successes and challenges, including the analysis of prior year outcomes, metrics, and data sets. After an intensive review of previous year's goals, new college goals are established to align with the broader academic affairs



objectives. Subsequently, department goals are set to align with the college goals, and individual goals are organized to support departmental objectives.

The areas of focus for these goals fall into four categories: Faculty and Staff Culture; Our Story; Healthy Growth; Systems and Processes; and Institutional Effectiveness. These strategic goals are shared and refined during the annual Fall Faculty Conference, where they are discussed and socialized, and individuals are given the opportunity to provide feedback. Once finalized, the goals are communicated across the College, and each department prioritizes these goals during team meetings throughout the year to ensure continuous advancement and alignment with the College's mission.

### **Community Outreach Innovations:**

- **Kern Grant/Impact on Initial Programs:** The Robert D. and Patricia E. Kern Family Foundation, Inc. awarded Grand Canyon University a three-year grant of \$2,271,000 to support the development of the Canyon Center for Character Education. Grand Canyon University's College of Education (COE) is working collaboratively with the Canyon Center for Character Education to train college faculty and staff on topics related to virtue formation, including practical wisdom and practices to effectively embed character education and virtue development in PK-12 education. These training opportunities will have exponential impact on our initial licensure programs as the faculty and staff develop innovative ways to incorporate these concepts into educator preparation programs. In January 2026, the Canyon Center for Character Education will expand its mission to lead a university-wide initiative focused on Christian Character Education. This expansion is made possible by a \$10.6 million grant awarded to Grand Canyon University in September 2025, enabling the Center to broaden its impact across the institution.
- **@Social Media (COE Blog, Top of the Class Podcast, Instagram):** The College of Education continues to grow its social media presence through blog posts, Instagram, Facebook, Linked In, webinars, and podcasts. Content is developed collaboratively with COE faculty, staff, students, and professionals in the field to highlight the unique strengths of the College and share insights on educational trends and practices. Social media metrics are regularly reviewed to guide future content and platform strategies. Notably, Instagram followers have increased by 22.5% thanks to intentional efforts to connect with the education community.
- **@National Center for Teacher Preparation:** The National Center for Teacher Preparation (NCTP) is an initiative that aims to address the national teacher shortage by providing targeted pathways for paraprofessionals and other aspiring educators to become certified teachers. NCTP places a strong emphasis on meeting the workforce needs of school districts, particularly in high-need and underserved areas. In fact, GCU awarded \$14,129,088 in National Center for Teacher Preparation (NCTP) scholarships in 2024. NCTP combines community outreach and innovation by developing embedded partnerships with local school districts. Partnerships are formed through various long-standing relationships with schools/districts around the United States and offers scholarships, academic advising, mentorship, accessible online

programs, and professional development to these candidates to support their journey towards becoming a licensed teacher.

