



North Carolina Wesleyan University and the Science of Reading Project

A brief description of your EPP:

North Carolina Wesleyan University (NCWU), a private liberal arts college, was established in 1956 in the city of Rocky Mount, North Carolina. The University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award Baccalaureate degrees in the arts and sciences.

The NCWU **Teacher Education Program** is accredited by both the State Board of Education in North Carolina and the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP), a national accrediting body for Teacher Education programs. While the accreditation requirements for the State of North Carolina must be met annually, the accreditation time period for AAQEP is a seven-year obligation and will conclude on June 30, 2029. Students with a degree in the Teacher Education Program are eligible for licensure by the State of North Carolina upon completion of all requirements.

Program Design:

The North Carolina Wesleyan University Teacher Education Program is a licensure program which offers majors in the following areas (Initial License Only):

- Elementary Education (grades K-6)
- Middle Grades Education (grades 6-9) in the areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.
- Special Education General Curriculum K-12



School of Social Sciences & Education

- Licensure in Secondary Education (grades 9-12) in the areas of Biology, English, History, or Mathematics. Students seeking 9-12 certification **minor** in Teacher Education while majoring in a respective content area.
- Residency Pathway for Elementary and Special Education (Adult Students)

Where you were at the beginning of the redesign process.

Beginning in Fall 2022, our three primary reading courses for Elementary Ed (K-6) and Special Education (K-12) were being taught in a manner that used components of balanced and structured literacy. And while the majority of our instruction was based on concepts using structured literacy to teach students how to teach reading in the elementary school setting, we also wanted to make sure that students were aware of some of the balanced literacy concepts that were being used throughout the state. Additionally, we had partnerships with local schools where our students were allowed to watch best reading practices and attempt many of the strategies that they learned in the classroom.

Regarding the LETRS training that many of us are now completing, we only had one person formally trained in the process at the time.

What specific changes have been targeted and how they have been/are being completed?

We have changed the scope and sequence of our three main reading courses. This was implemented after a program review was conducted by the School of Education at Mt. St. Joseph University and the Reading Science Academy. After the review (3 months), we made systemic changes to our curriculum after discussion with all EDU faculty and debriefing with the



consultant. Course changes have been taken to the Curriculum Committee for adoption and implementation beginning Fall 2023.

What challenges have you faced and how have you overcome/are overcoming the challenges?

The major challenge was the time crunch. We needed to get the SOR seamlessly added to our curriculum while waiting for the program review, while also “peppering” the concepts into our courses. Additionally, we worked to add three more faculty to the training list for LETRS, while trying to work around schedules, as two of those to be trained are adjuncts. But, after some planning and discussion within the department and working closely with school administration, we were able to initiate an additional cadre of faculty to become LETRS trained (we have five now) and we were able to formally introduce the SOR concepts to all students in teacher education, regardless of major.

Where you are now in relation to teaching based in the SOR. Please include any impacts of these changes and how those impacts are being/will be assessed?

Not only have SOR learning objectives been added to our three primary reading courses, but we have also added the SOR to eight other courses, with the intent for it to be a part of each course in the teacher education curriculum by Spring 2024. As a result of seamlessly adding the SOR throughout the curriculum, our pre-service teachers are able to easily adjust to the SOR implementation in the schools they visit. Post-semester survey results strongly indicate that the manner by which we added the SOR to our curriculum has worked well for our current students and even our Spring 2023 graduates.