

**College of Saint Mary**  
**Rule 24 Section 3:**  
**Use of Related Data and Information for**  
**Continuous Program Improvement of Endorsement Program**

**Endorsement Program: Religious Education K-12**

**Discuss changes or improvements made to the specific endorsement program in the last three to four years.**

1. Beginning in 2014-2015, faculty collected papers written by Theology majors in all of their THL courses, and subjected them to a primary traits analysis of critical theological skills. The goal is for students to score 7/9 on the primary traits analysis for every paper by the senior year.
2. Program assessment goals continue to inform attending in every THL course to women's and multicultural content and sources, and to teaching students critical theological analysis.
3. Faculty developed and taught the following new courses: THL 260 Spirituality and Peacebuilding; THL 330 Faith, Politics and Social Concerns; THL 290 Finding God in Daily Life.
4. The program received Global and Cultural Diversity (GCD) designation for the following courses: THL 260 Spirituality and Peacebuilding; THL 330 Faith, Politics and Social Concerns; THL 320 Church and Social Justice.
5. Program faculty crafted a method to ensure that all THL majors possess a broad background to prepare them to teach a wide range of courses in THL. Each major must take a 3-credit course in each of the 5 areas of Theology: Moral, Systematics, Spirituality, Scripture: Old Testament, and Scripture: New Testament. This ensures that 15 hours cover a range of background, and that the student can focus on her particular theological interests for the remaining 21 credits in Theology (for a total of 36 credits).

**What did the data indicate and what endorsement program changes were made as a result of assessment data analysis?**

There were fewer than five completers for the Religious Education endorsement program during the years reported; to ensure candidate privacy, data are not provided.

**How were decisions made and by whom?**

The decisions are primarily led by the Religious Education Program Director in collaboration with Teacher Education faculty who have expertise in the content and skill areas. The curriculum redesign was shared with and supported by the Teacher Education Program Director and submitted for review through the university-wide curriculum review process. Detailed Curriculum Proposals are prepared, presented to the Curriculum Committee, shared at Division Meeting and approved by the Faculty Assembly. Final approval is granted by the College of Saint Mary Board of Directors.

**What has been the effect of these program changes?**

There were fewer than five completers for the Religious Education endorsement program during the years reported; to ensure candidate privacy, data are not provided. Portions of the narrative that apply to all CSM completers reported. This made it impossible to evaluate effects of the program changes.

**What future endorsement program changes are planned?**

In addition to implementing program assessment measures and aggregating data from the small sample of majors, faculty plan to make more robust the goal of inter-rater reliability for the primary traits analysis of majors' critical thinking skills.

The program also plans to work with the Education program to review and revise the courses required for the social science endorsement to best represent the focus of the program and the requirements for the endorsement.

Faculty will continue to work with the Enrollment Department to recruit a larger number of students to the program.

**What are implications for overall unit improvement initiatives to the endorsement program?**

Several programmatic changes in the Unit have had an impact on the Religious Education endorsement program.

- These include use of the statewide Clinical Practice evaluation format, updated CSM Student Outcomes, the Case Study project requirement and changes in Praxis II requirements.
- The use of the statewide NDE Clinical Practice Evaluation had impact upon this endorsement program. The evaluation is built on InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards. The CSM Student Outcomes have been aligned with the InTASC standards.
- The Case Study project was developed to provide an authentic assessment tool in addition to the clinical evaluation. This additional tool provides opportunity to use multiple measures of student performance in assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating students. Students complete the case study during Clinical Practice.
- The standard lesson plan template used by the program for many years was revised to two formats: a Lesson Plan with Analysis and Lesson Plan with Reflection. It was developed in fall 2013 to be used across methods courses program-wide when students are able to plan, implement and evaluate lessons in field experience settings. There have been limited opportunities for students to conduct lessons that allow for collection of data and detailed analyses. This has resulted from restricted opportunities for students to take leading roles in classroom instruction due to reluctance of classroom teachers to relinquish responsibility to students, because of the pressures of testing. The unit plans to solicit partnerships with specific schools and classrooms to allow students to complete at least one detailed Lesson Plan with Analysis as part of their preparation.

- The requirement that secondary education students must pass the Praxis II content exam for certification has had an impact on the Religious Education Program. The Religious Education Program Director and Teacher Preparation faculty collaborate to ensure that course content is consistent with the content of the exam.
- Teacher Preparation Faculty keep directors of secondary content areas informed of changes in endorsement requirements. Decisions will be made in collaboration between the content area program director and Teacher Preparation Faculty. Shared advising of students by content program faculty and Teacher Preparation Faculty ensures that students complete all requirements for both programs.
- There has been continual work on dispositional reflection by all individual Teacher Education candidates as well as faculty input on dispositions from across the coursework prior to clinical practice.
- Short and long form field experience evaluations have been adopted. The long form evaluation reflects standards used in the NDE Clinical Practice evaluation and also addresses professional characteristics/dispositions.
- The Clinical Practice application was updated and now includes disposition reflection and assessment of strengths and weakness in dispositional areas.