Overview

University of Wyoming
Trustees Education Initiative

Elevating educational excellence to drive Wyoming’s cultural and economic engine into the future

September 10, 2018
Contents

Creation, Vision, and Mission, Governing Board .......................................................... 1

Pilot Innovations ............................................................................................................. 2-10

UW•E4 .......................................................................................................................... 2

Mursion ® Augmented Reality Avatars ............................................................................ 6

Ethical Educator Program ............................................................................................ 7

Wyoming Coaching Laboratory ..................................................................................... 8

Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network ............................................................ 9

Deans for Impact Common Indicator System ............................................................... 10

Key External Partners .................................................................................................. 11

September 10, 2018
Creation
The University of Wyoming Board of Trustees created the Trustees Education Initiative by resolution on November 14, 2014.

Vision
To elevate the College of Education to the status of a preeminent college in professional educator preparation

Mission
Through extensive evaluation and adaptation of national best practices, TEI will recommend, and the College of Education will implement practices to prepare and graduate preeminent P-12 professional educators. These highly skilled P-12 teachers will spread throughout Wyoming’s P-12 system, ultimately resulting in high school graduates who are among the most skilled and best educated in the nation. These high school graduates will drive Wyoming’s cultural and economic engine into the future.

Governing Board • 2018
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The University of Wyoming Enterprise for Elevating Educational Excellence (UW-E4) model combines multiple innovations in educator preparation to create a unique, comprehensive model to prepare pre-eminent educators.

**Brief Overview**

**E1: Exploration**
- Join Educators Rising® Wyoming to explore education professions while in high school.
- Participate in an annual statewide Teaching Exploration Conference

**E2: Experiential Learning**
- Complete courses and learning modules in educational foundations and observe classrooms across all K-12 grade bands and specialty areas
- After observations, declare a major and complete specialty courses, learning modules, and clinical experiences

**E3: Embedded Practice**
- Complete an extended residency in a Wyoming K-12 school, co-planning and co-teaching with a mentor teacher

**E4: Entry into the Profession**
- Graduate from UW and begin employment in a Wyoming school, supported by a three-year UW-E4 Induction and Mentoring Program
Detalied Description

E1: Exploration
Educators Rising® chapters in schools across the state engage promising Wyoming youth in education professions; guided fieldwork observations in their home school districts, and completion of online modules on Sanford Inspire modules designed to foster character development.

E2: Experiential Learning
UW-E4 students enroll at the University of Wyoming as education majors with no specialty area declared. UW-E4 students complete introductory courses, learning modules and experience fieldwork across all grade bands and content areas, e.g., early childhood, elementary education, mathematics, science, technology, English, and special education. Students practice their teaching skills through augmented reality technology and live simulations of parent-teacher conversations, and practice peer collaboration in a professional learning community (PLC). At the end of their first year of enrollment at the University, UW-E4 students declare a specialty area and begin their specialty area courses and learning modules, which include aligned fieldwork in Wyoming schools. In their third year of full-time enrollment, UW-E4 students finalize all courses, modules and early fieldwork.

E3: Embedded Practice
UW-E4 students complete an extended residency in a Wyoming school district. Each UW-E4 student is paired with a mentor teacher. The UW-E4 student agrees to teach in a Wyoming school district.

E4: Entry into the Profession
UW-E4 graduates are supported by a formalized Induction and mentoring program in which the graduate is paired with an Induction Mentor for coaching and support. Induction Mentors receive a stipend for each Fellow they support.
One option for the Exploration phase of UW•E4 is TEI’s formation of Wyoming Educators Rising®. In this phase of the program, TEI will cultivate future highly skilled educators in Wyoming and guide promising students on a path to education careers beginning in high school, extending through college, and continuing into the profession.

Educators Rising® chapters in high schools strengthen teacher recruitment to meet local workforce needs; elevate the teaching profession; raise the bar for aspiring educators; advance competency-based education through the Educators Rising micro-credential system; and create career ladders for exceptional educators to lead without leaving the classroom.

Educators Rising® members experience teaching, while building successful educator skills and interest in the profession. Members have access to: the EdRising Virtual Campus, the Educators Rising National Conference, micro-credentials, leadership opportunities, and scholarships.

Educators Rising® Teacher Leaders have access to a national Teacher Leader Community, and a library of resources and materials.

Through Trustees Education Initiative funding, UW will fund stipends to all Wyoming Educators Rising Teacher Leaders, fund travel expenses for student members to an Annual Wyoming Educators Conference at UW.
The University of Wyoming College of Education is piloting the use of Mursion® augmented reality technologies to provide a clinical environment in which educator candidates practice complex instructional skills, including classroom management, content area instruction, interactions with adults, including other professionals and parents, and working with students with special needs in a safe, simulated environment.

University of Wyoming educator candidates in the exploration phase of their professional preparation practice teaching skills using Mursion® mixed reality environment to interact with live-puppeteered avatars representing small classes of students, other professionals, parents, school leadership, or community members. The digital puppeteers who speak and control the voices, physical movements and appearance of the avatars in response to the teaching that the candidate is providing are selected and highly trained in student behaviors and learning styles. The mixed reality approach is hyper-responsive to the unique educator candidate, allowing them to fully immerse themselves in the experience, providing meaningful practice in their teaching skills.

The Mursion® system also allows for custom development of scenarios and can be used one-on-one with candidates or in a lab setting, with candidates taking turns teaching while the other candidates view and reflect on the experience. University of Wyoming faculty members are be present in all candidate augmented reality experiences to manage the experience as well as provide feedback and guide reflection. This technology is designed to focus on discrete skills and force common performance errors of novice educators from which pre-professional educators can learn. The simulations can be personalized to each individual candidate's current level of skill by increasing or decreasing the difficulty of the interactions. The system also allows for multiple rounds of practice and feedback.
The University of Wyoming (UW) Ethical Educator Program integrates an ethics awareness strand throughout its teacher preparation program. Elements of this strand are based on the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE), developed by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification. The MCEE standards are built on five principles:

1. Responsibility to the Profession
2. Responsibility for Professional Competence
3. Responsibility to Students
4. Responsibility to the School Community
5. Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology

The UW Ethical Educator program includes:
• completion of ProEthica online modules on educator ethics based on the MCEE standards with all educator candidates and faculty completing the modules receiving Certificates of Achievement;
• development of ethics-based case studies for candidate discussion and reflection throughout their coursework;
• ethics awareness modeling by Wyoming student teaching and fieldwork supervisors in fieldwork with candidates observing and reflecting on ethics practices in their placements;
• candidate completion of a Professional Oath of Ethics upon successful completion of the program; and
• invitation for distinguished candidates to participate in an ethical education presentation at various UW co-sponsored educational conferences.
The Wyoming Coaching Laboratory (WYCOLA) is a year-long, intensive professional development model for educator candidates and professional educators, including instructional coaches and facilitators.

The program begins with a two-week summer institute. In the subsequent academic year, WYCOLA leaders visit institute participants in their regions at community colleges throughout the state to reflect on learnings from the summer institute and to plan for intentional use of high leverage teaching practices.

WYCOLA’s aims are to improve teaching at all levels through improved instructional coaching in Wyoming schools, to strengthen the partnership between UW and Wyoming schools, and to develop a sustainable approach for continued partnership and professional growth. These goals are in keeping with the current needs and goals of the University of Wyoming and the College of Education.

By providing a laboratory classroom in which participants observe teaching and participate in formal professional development grounded in the classroom, a venue is created for unpacking and exploring the complex work of teaching. This makes teaching public, provides opportunities for educators to name practice, and explores core aspects of the work of teaching. This program provides an effective means for providing outreach and service to Wyoming’s schools and teachers while making the practice of coaching and teaching visible and open to study and research.
The Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network (WY•ECON) serves as an organizing body for high-quality field experiences and professional development opportunities to all Wyoming early childhood educators.

WY•ECON will provide professional development and leverage existing resources to provide a seamless system of professional development opportunities to early care and education professionals across the state and to expand field experience options available to early childhood educator candidates.

The program will place candidates in a broad range of fieldwork settings, including licensed home-based early childhood learning environments, Wind River Reservation Head Start centers, childhood development centers and mobile early childhood classrooms.

WY•ECON's fieldwork placement system will connect family childcare providers with University of Wyoming educator candidates, where both the mentor and the candidate will receive training. Mentors will receive a stipend, full access to professional development opportunities, and the option of receiving college credit or credit in the Statewide Training and Resource System or Childcare Professionals.

Early childhood educator candidates will have the option of completing fieldwork within their own hometowns, either in a school system, a provider organization, or a home-based environment. This opportunity to connect with their own communities will reduce housing barriers for candidates, and support community systems. Candidates will complete online courses including parent partnerships, leadership, special education, and curriculum development.
In Summer 2017, University of Wyoming's College of Education Dean D. Ray Reutzel was named a member of Deans for Impact (DFI), an organization committed to transforming educator preparation and elevating the teaching profession. DFI has advanced four principles to guide future teacher education program development and innovation.

1. Programs must be data-informed.
2. Programs must be outcomes-focused.
3. Programs must be empirically tested.
4. Programs must be transparent and accountable.

Built on these principles, Deans for Impact has recommended a set of common program metrics that are cost effective, valid, and reliable for assessing, improving, and innovating key elements of teacher preparation programs. The College of Education will begin implementing these measures in 2019.