



## AAQEP Annual Report for 2024

Provider/Program Name:	Mars Hill University Teacher Education Program
End Date of Current AAQEP Accreditation Term (or "n/a" if not yet accredited):	December 2027

# 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.

Mars Hill University is a private, Christian-affiliated institution with a longstanding tradition of excellence in providing educational opportunities to the people of Western North Carolina. In 1856, the institution opened as the French Broad Baptist Institute, which operated for much of its early history as an academy or boarding high school with some college-level courses, serving the people of Madison County, North Carolina, and the surrounding region. It was chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1859, changing its name at that time to Mars Hill College. In 1921, Mars Hill College was reorganized as a junior college and in 1960, it began the transition to a baccalaureate-level institution with the first Bachelor's degrees awarded in 1964. In 2008, Mars Hill College and the Baptist State Convention severed formal ties, and the institution's board became self-perpetuating. In December 2010, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) approved a level change, moving the College from a Level II to a Level III institution, allowing master's degree offerings. In May 2011, the Master of Education in Elementary Education was established and in that same year, the institution's accreditation was reaffirmed. In August 2013, Mars Hill College made the official transition to university status and was renamed Mars Hill University, to reflect the institution's expansion, both in terms of enrollment and variety of offerings.

The adult evening program, now known as the Adult and Graduate Studies Program, also has a long history. As early as 1901 the college conducted the teacher institute to provide in-service training for public school educators. In 1970, it launched the Career Opportunities Program (COP) to provide 17 African-American teaching assistants from Asheville City Schools with classes leading to baccalaureate degrees. In 1974 the Continuing Education Program (CEP) broadened the opportunities for adults, especially in education. CEP was re-named Adult Accelerated Credit Continuing Education and Summer Sessions (ACCESS) in 2000. In 2010, ACCESS was renamed the Adult and Graduate Studies Program (AGS) in preparation for the launch of the Master of Education in Elementary Education in 2011. In June of 2019, the organization of AGS once again evolved to align programs and adult students more closely with their academic programs. AGS continues as an extension of Mars Hill University's long-standing tradition of excellence in providing educational opportunities to the people of western North Carolina.

For liberal arts colleges and universities today, the liberal arts refer both to content areas (math, science, humanities, arts) and to skill areas (critical & creative thinking, speaking, reading, writing, and doing art & science). Liberally educated persons ask good questions, don't stop at the first answer, and contribute responsibly to their world.

At Mars Hill University, the liberal arts curriculum has three parts:

- Foundations and Perspectives, providing fundamental knowledge and skill development
- Majors and minors, providing depth in one or more fields of study
- Electives: providing breadth of study

Students university-wide are challenged to excellence by a liberal arts curriculum, which offers five types of undergraduate degrees (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Bachelor of Social Work) in 35 majors with various concentrations), 31 minors, 6 certificate/licensure areas, and three graduate degrees (Master of Education in Elementary Education, Master of Management, Master of Arts in Criminal Justice).

**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.mhu.edu/academics/majors-and-minors/education/accreditation/>

**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 2023-2024**

Degree or Certificate granted by the institution or organization	State Certificate, License, Endorsement, or Other Credential	Number of Candidates enrolled in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending 12/24)	Number of Completers in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending 12/24)
<i>Programs that lead to initial teaching credentials</i>			
Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education	K-6 teaching certification	9	2

Bachelor of Arts in Integrated Education	K-6 teaching certification in Elementary and K-12 teaching certification in Special Education-General Curriculum	11	0
Bachelor of Arts in Special Education	K-12 teaching certification in Special Education-General Curriculum	2	0
Bachelor of Music Education	K-12 teaching certification in Music	5	3
Bachelor of Physical Education	K-12 teaching certification in Physical Education	3	2
Total for programs that lead to initial credentials		30	7
<b><i>Programs that lead to additional or advanced credentials for already-licensed educators</i></b>			
Master of Education Integrated Ed	Various	9	3
Master of Arts in Teaching	Various	9	2
Total for programs that lead to additional/advanced credentials		18	5
<b><i>Programs that lead to credentials for other school professionals or to no specific credential</i></b>			
N/A			
Total for additional programs			
TOTAL enrollment and productivity for all programs			
Unduplicated total of all program candidates and completers			

### **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.)

Elementary Education and Special Education have been eliminated as stand alone programs, and have been combined into Integrated Education. This began in the Fall of 2024, so we are “teaching out” those students who are majoring in Elementary Ed and Special Ed.

### 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**

A. <b>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.
48
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.
12
C. <b>Number of recommendations</b> for certificate, license, or endorsement included in Table 1.
8
D. <b>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.
Our Teacher Ed. Program does not use a cohort model. Candidates begin the program usually during their second year and are expected to complete all requirements in (3) three years. Candidates who take longer than 3 years usually complete more than one certification or added a minor to their degree of study.

**E. Summary of state license examination results**, including teacher performance assessments, and specification of any examinations on which the pass rate (cumulative at time of reporting) was below 80%.

At the end of the Spring semester of 2024, MHU TEP Candidates had a passing rate of 73.3% (11 out of 15) on EdTPA which is a subject specific, pedagogical teacher assessment used in North Carolina to determine teacher licensure. The edTPA evaluates a candidate's performance in three key areas: planning, instruction and assessment. The competencies assessed by the edTPA reflect what instructors must know to effectively work with students in a specified grade level and subject area (e.g., math or language arts). Candidates are required to complete the edTPA during the final semester of their program and earn the minimum passing score, as determined by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, in order to graduate and be recommended for licensure.

During the 2021-22 school year, TEP faculty re-focused the instructional program and courses leading up to the semester in which students take the EdTPA Assessment. The intent was to provide detailed instruction for program participants on key elements of the assessment, including terminology, methods, and teaching strategies measured by the EdTPA assessment.

As a result of our efforts, the candidate passing rate on the EdTPA continues to stay above 73% passing each school year.

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

MHU TEP student completers currently participate in exit interviews with their program coordinators at the completion of the program. After submission of EdTPA, Praxis tests, and other state required licensure assessments, students utilize their individual assessment results to design an individual professional growth plan, based upon the strengths and weaknesses as determined through the assessments. The Professional Growth Plan serves as a professional development tool for continued professional growth entering the teaching profession. In addition, two students who are currently involved in EdTPA training process are creating a powerpoint and handout which will be shared with future student. The materials will focus on helping students to better understand the EdTPA Process.

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

MHU TEP has developed the final Program Completer/Employer Surveys, which will provide the information needed. TEP staff plan to introduce these surveys to employers at the completion of the 2023-2024 school year.

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 EPP Dashboard for the North Carolina Department of Instruction has been updated so that the MHU EPP has access to completer-employer information on an ongoing basis. We also have dedicated social media pages that we encourage our graduates to follow so we can keep up with their careers. We invite our undergraduates to return to MHU to complete a Master's degree with a discount. We maintain close relationships with the local public schools who reach out to us with job postings for our recent graduates.

#### 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**

<b>Provider-Selected Measures</b>	<b>Explanation of Performance Expectation</b>	<b>Level or Extent of Success in Meeting the Expectation</b>
edTPA	All candidates must meet the minimum cut score of 37 (as indicated by state minimum requirements) in order to meet program requirements.	Percentage Passing in Spring 24 was 66.6% (9 completers) Percentage Passing in Fall 23 was 83.3% (6 completers) Total for 2023-24- 73.3% Passing (15 Completers)
Content Praxis	All candidates must take a content licensure exam once before all of their program requirements are met. A passing score is not necessary to meet program requirements.	100% of MHU TEP Candidates take a content licensure exam. MHU TEP does not sign off on licensure requirements until passing scores are received.

MHU EPP Dispositions	All candidates are evaluated using the MHU EPP Dispositions assessments Growth is indicated based on the observation by the University supervisor and CT.	100% of MHU TEP Teacher candidates meet the program requirements
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**Table 4. Expectations and Performance on Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth**

<b>Provider-Selected Measures</b>	<b>Explanation of Performance Expectation</b>	<b>Level or Extent of Success in Meeting the Expectation</b>
Dispositions Assessment	Each candidate must be evaluated on their professional dispositions using the MHU EPP dispositions assessment. Growth is indicated by the completion of a self and non-self assessment.	100% of MHU TEP Teacher candidates meet the program requirements

## 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 MHU TEP curriculum map serves as a guide for the EPP as we work to reflect on our program and make improvements. The curriculum map allows us to identify program gaps in course work, introductory through mastery, as diversity, field experiences, practice, and the NC Professional Teaching Standards. Department members work collaboratively to redesign courses to better meet the needs of our future educators, keeping them current and cutting edge as they move towards graduation. This year, the EPP made curricular changes which better reflect the ongoing direction of the program. The Department recommended that we add more science content options in addition to Natural Science 113, which is a content-based course as opposed to a methods course. The program staff felt as though the single content-based course failed to meet our needs as the focus was on content rather than pedagogy.



Program staff also decided to reduce our instructional licensure programs from three to one. Specifically, we dropped the Elementary and Special Education Licensure programs and now focus instead on integrated education. The decision was made because at the present time, the number of Special Education credentialed program Completers cannot meet the demands of the number of vacancies in area school systems. Program staff determined that completers will be much more marketable for area school systems. The change will require Program staff to “Teach out” the remaining students who were designated as either Elementary Education or Special Education.

In the Master’s program, both MAT and MED, instruction are fully online and program enrollment continues to grow from last year.

The Teacher Education Program moved to a different Learning Management System during the 22-23 school year. All assessment data and program requirements are now fully functioning, allowing program staff to better evaluate student proficiency in all program areas. During the 23-24 school year, use of the new LMS expanded to include program required artifacts from every education course. In addition, transfer students and student placement for internships are all managed and housed within the LMS.

Program staff made some important changes to the physical space within the education department. Changes were designed to provide a more student-centered workspace for both staff and students. The Education Department now includes a technology lab, Inservice teacher lab, pre-service teacher lab, Curriculum library, and student workroom.

We are now using the NCPTS rubric formatively throughout the program.

Program staff are now utilizing the placement dashboard in SL&L. This allows staff to track student placements and to ensure a diverse experience K-12.

All program faculty have been trained in the Science of Reading.

TEP Program staff, in coordination with Madison County School system has developed a lab school on site at Mars Hill Elementary School. Currently, there are two classes being taught at the lab school. ED 404 (English Language arts in the Elementary Classroom) and ED 450 Advanced Mathematics.

TEP Program staff, in coordination with the Music Education Department, has developed and implemented a Pre-EdTPA training program in which TEP staff work directly with students in the principles of music education class to provide additional training specifically designed to help music education students successfully complete EdTPA licensure.

TEP Program staff, in coordination with Madison County Schools has developed and implemented a newly revised Memorandum of Understanding which outlines and governs MHU student teaching internships within Madison County Schools. The newly developed MOU necessitated the need for MHU students to join professional education organizations earlier in the program, and to secure background information in order to be placed in the public schools.

MHU TEP is now in the process of reviewing similar MOU partnerships with other school systems within the region.

TEP program staff have worked to align the Institutional report and accreditation report.

MHU Teacher Education Council now has significant student representation at both undergraduate and graduate levels on the Teacher Education Council

Two faculty members are in the process of becoming certified Reading Research to Classroom Practice trainers, which will allow TEP staff to conduct additional professional development with local school systems.

Four Faculty members were certified in Youth Mental Health First Aid, through a partnership with the local County Health Department. Staff plan to include YMHFA for Student Teachers in ED 470 in the last semester of the teacher Education training.

During the Spring of 2024, MHU TEP staff lost an integral staff member through resignation. In response to the loss, program staff hired an additional staff member and adjunct faculty member whose experience in assessment programs has improved the overall assessment program. With the new staff member, program staff are currently in the process of evaluating, updating, and streamlining the current assessment systems to improve data collection and cataloging of essential data. The new assessment system is more comprehensive while at the same time more accessible to all program staff. The newly revised assessment system is outlined within the TEP Assessment Handbook.

Program staff have worked together over the past several months to align institutional, state, federal, and accreditation reports so that they are more meaningful and better represent program goals and outcomes. The result of these efforts are

outlined in the newly developed Assessment handbook. The intent is to avoid problematic issues normally associated with staff turnover. Essentially, under the new system, program staff will be able to carry on regardless of staff changes. Program staff have initiated a new dress code policy which aligns with TEP values and dispositions. The intent is to make sure students who represent the institution and the profession dress appropriately within the context of a school environment.

The ED 402, and through consultation with individual students, Program staff are instructing students in regard to issues related to separation of church and state. Faculty members alert students to what is and what is not allowable on a public-school setting, based upon legal precedent.

Through the Center for Engagement in Teaching and Learning, an on-campus organization which provides research based pedagogical development for university faculty, MHU TEP staff are in the process of initiating AI effectively. Staff are learning about the advantages and challenges the new medium provides, as well as ethical issues related to student work.

## Part II: Self-Assessment and Continuous Growth

AAQEP does not require public posting of the information in Part II, but programs **may** post it at their discretion.

### 6. Self-Assessment and Continuous Growth and Improvement

This section charts ongoing improvement processes in relation to each AAQEP standard. Note that providers may focus their work on an aspect of one or two standards each year, with only brief entries regarding ongoing efforts for those standards that are not the focus in the current year.

**Table 5. Provider Self-Assessment and Continuous Improvement**

	<b>Standard 1</b>
<b>Goals for the 2023-24 year</b>	With CEDAR/DPI input and Feedback, MHU TEP staff will develop a draft Dispositions instrument.
<b>Actions</b>	Program staff will work together with CEDAR/DPI on research and development of the pilot dispositions assessment.
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Program Staff will pilot the completed Dispositions assessment to assess program candidates on dispositional qualities and skills beginning in the Spring Semester of 2024
<b>Reflections or comments</b>	
	<b>Standard 2</b>
<b>Goals for the 2023-24 year</b>	SL&L will be utilized to ensure student field placements are diverse in setting, cultural representation, and grade level.
<b>Actions</b>	Program staff will analyze placement of student teachers throughout the program experience to determine the level of diverse experiences students have had by completion of the program. The intent is to provide students with a wide variety of experiences in classrooms which offer multi-diverse situations, so that they will be better prepared to meet the needs of all students.

<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Program Completers will be exposed to a wide array of educational experiences which include multi-cultural, multi-racial, academically diverse, and alternative instructional learning environments.
<b>Reflections or comments</b>	
	<b>Standard 3</b>
<b>Goals for the 2023-24 year</b>	Program staff will develop a digital technology instructional plan with the purpose of aligning the plan with the NC State Digital Teaching and Learning Standards.
<b>Actions</b>	Program staff will design a curriculum map which will infuse digital learning skills and standards in existing program classes throughout the Teacher Education Program. Curriculum will focus on the ISTE Standards for Educators which include teachers in the roles of digital learners, digital leaders, digital citizens, digital collaborators, digital designers, digital facilitators, and digital analysts.
<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Program completers will be more knowledgeable regarding the use of digital competencies in teaching and learning.
<b>Reflections or comments</b>	
	<b>Standard 4</b>
<b>Goals for the 2023-24 year</b>	TEP Staff will develop a comprehensive survey system to collect and analyze data from Program Completers, Cooperating Teachers, and administrators.
<b>Actions</b>	Phase 1 will be distributed to Program Completers and Cooperating teachers at the end of Student Teaching. (Beginning Spring/Summer 2024) Phase 2- surveys will be distributed to hiring administrators approximately one year after Completer graduation. (Beginning Spring/Summer 2025)

<b>Expected outcomes</b>	Program staff will be able to utilize the results of the completer survey to gain feedback on curriculum effectiveness; Help with identification of program strengths and weaknesses; Assess field experience outcomes; Alignment with instructional standards; Job placement and success; and cohort analysis.
<b>Reflections or comments</b>	

## 7. Evidence Related to AAQEP-Identified Concerns or Conditions

This section documents how concerns or conditions that were noted in an accreditation decision are being addressed (indicate “n/a” if no concerns or conditions were noted). Note that where a condition has been noted, a more detailed focused report will be needed in addition to the description included here. Please contact staff with any questions regarding this section.

N/A

## 8. Anticipated Growth and Development

This section summarizes planned improvements, innovations, or anticipated new program developments, including description of any identified potential challenges or barriers.

The MHU TEP continues to progress as a cohesive unit. Additional staff changes have expanded the potential benefits of the program. TEP staff collaborate daily in the effort to improve the overall program. With the changeover to Integrated Ed, program staff feel as though multi-certified teacher candidates are better prepared to enter the teaching force, and much more knowledgeable about meeting the needs of all students.

Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, program staff will implement phase 1 of our comprehensive completer survey protocol, with the intent of gaining valuable information regarding the overall effectiveness and preparation of our completer candidates. Information gathered from hiring administrators and cooperating teachers will continue to guide staff in continuous improvement efforts for the TEP.

MHU TEP continues to develop partnerships with area school systems and governmental organizations with the goal of and providing more intensive, hand-on training for completers. The MHU Lab school, housed at Mars Hill Elementary School, provides students with real-world, hands-on opportunities to work closely with elementary staff and students. The program now includes two undergraduate level classes, which are taught on site at the elementary school. TEP staff plan to work with the school to offer even more classes and opportunities for involvement in the coming years.

In addition, the collaborative effort between MHU TEP staff and the Madison County Health Department to provide Youth Mental Health First Aid training for program faculty provides faculty with the understanding of how to help students who are experiencing social emotional crises. TEP staff have already agreed to offer the training to MHU student teachers during their program experience. The intent is to help better prepare future teachers for possible social emotional issues their future students may encounter

The Masters of Arts in Teaching program is now underway and completely online. The program is designed for students who would like to seek licensure and currently hold a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited institution. The MAT is a Graduate level initial licensure program.

The newly developed Assessment System is streamlining data and program information to make it more accessible and beneficial to program goals.

Program staff are readying for the future in education by embracing AI and harnessing the potential benefits it offers to students and teachers.

## 9. Regulatory Changes

This section notes new or anticipated regulatory requirements and the provider's response to those changes (indicate "n/a" if no changes have been made or are anticipated).

N/A

## 10. Sign Off

Provider's Primary Contact for AAQEP (Name, Title)	Dean/Lead Administrator (Name, Title)
Susan Stigall, Chair, Education	Susan Stigall, Chair, Education

Date sent to AAQEP:	12/3/2024
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