Exhibit 4.3.i.1 Policies, Procedures and Practices that Support Candidates Working with PK-12 Students from Diverse Groups

Adapting curriculum to the needs of hypothetical diverse learners is simply a theoretical construct until candidates have opportunities to actually work with students. The Unit’s conceptual framework emphasizes the need for caring, committed, competent and culturally responsive professionals for urban schools. This necessitates candidate placements in culturally diverse school communities (See Exhibit 4.3.f and 4.3.i). Given the demographics of Houston, Texas, initial candidates are assured ample opportunities to interact with diverse student populations. Thus, field experiences include urban, mid-urban and suburban learning communities, experiences with English Language Learners, students with individual learning needs, and students from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. The mid-urban schools are those with balanced proportions of students by ethnic group membership. Many of the field and clinical experiences are linked to the professional core courses and they focus on particular aspects of diversity that allow candidates to apply what they learn in the classroom.

Candidates are required to record their reflections on the field and clinical practice experiences. Their reflections center on how these experiences will enable them to be more caring, committed, competent, and/or culturally responsive. Candidates also complete self-assessments at varying points during the program to monitor growth toward demonstrating behaviors and dispositions that reflect diversity (Exhibits 4.3.a1 and 4.3.a2). Feedback from university supervisors and school-based educators is shared with candidates during the clinical practice experiences and candidates are observed to determine to what extent this feedback informs their attitudes and actions during the clinical experience semester.

In the advanced program, field experiences and practicum courses are designed so candidates will experience diversity. For example, in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations, candidates’ field experiences include interviewing principals and other administrators who are not similar to the candidate in ethnicity, gender, or age, as evidenced by the following requirement: Conducting interviews: Each candidate will schedule and interview one (1) principal and one (1) assistant principal. The student will submit written analyses of each, based on the related rubric. Candidates are directed not to interview any administrator in the school where you work. They are required to find school leaders who are at a different school level, who works in a setting that is different from their current school community and who are from different race/ethnic groups.

This commitment to diverse placements is also evident in the Counseling Department, COUN 839 (Practicum), where candidates are encouraged to select a field experience in an agency or school setting which will provide them the opportunity to be serve diverse clients and populations. The outcome of these courses for the counseling candidate is the recognition of ethical issues associated with the field of counseling and its practice, the acquisition of essential skills to provide professional counseling for clients from various cultural, ethnic, and social
backgrounds and attainment of knowledge on how cultural and ethnic diversity affect the practice of professional counseling.