

**Summary of the Case
Ramapo College
Teacher Education and Certification Program ¹
November 27-29, 2012**

The Summary of the Case is written by the auditors and approved by program faculty. The Summary reflects the auditors' understanding of the case the faculty are making for accreditation.

Authorship and approval of the *Inquiry Brief*:

The *Inquiry Brief* was written by Dr. Alexander Urbiel and Ms. Melissa Howard, edited for auditability by Dr. Rexton Lynn, and was approved by the Teacher Education and Certification Program faculty on April 4, 2012.

Introduction:

Ramapo College is located in northern New Jersey. Enrollment is around 6,000 undergraduate and graduate students from diverse backgrounds. The college is designated as "New Jersey's public liberal arts college" by virtue of its curricular emphasis on the liberal arts and sciences, social sciences, fine and performing arts, and professional programs. The academic program at the college is organized around learning communities that benefit from an interdisciplinary curriculum, international education, intercultural understanding, and experiential learning opportunities.

The Teacher Education and Certification program is located in the School of Social Science and Human Services (SSHS), one of five divisions in the college. The program includes both undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students in a common course of study leading to eligibility for initial teacher certification in New Jersey. The program experienced a major revision in 2006 and continues to be modified based on assessment data, changes in public education in New Jersey and the United States, and the changing mission of the College.

The Teacher Education and Certification Program is structurally organized around the eleven New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (NJPST). Sources of evidence of the competency of program completers are aligned with those standards.

The Teacher Education and Certification program consists of 14 full-time faculty members, one of whom is on medical leave and another who is the CLI Coordinator. There are seven adjunct faculty members. There were 138 program completers in 2011 and 354 students enrolled in the following options:

**Table 1
Ramapo College Teacher Education and Certification Options**

Option Name	Level	Number of	Number of
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	Undergraduate and post-Baccalaureate	completers in previous academic year (2011)	students enrolled in current academic year 2012
Art Education	UG/PB	0	6
Biological Science	UG/PB	5	7
Business Education	UG/PB	3	2
Chemistry	UG/PB	1	2
Earth Science	UG/PB	2	4
Elementary Education	UG/PB	78	152
English	UG/PB	14	29
French	UG/PB	0	0
Italian	UG/PB	1	0
Spanish	UG/PB	1	4
Health	UG/PB	0	0
Mathematics	UG/PB	17	42
Music Education	UG/PB	0	1
Physical Science	UG/PB	0	0
Physics	UG/PB	1	3
Psychology	UG/PB	0	0
Social Studies	UG/PB	15	33
Speech Arts and Dramatics	UG/PB	0	0
Total		138	285

Program claims:

Ramapo College makes the following program claims:

1. Ramapo College program completers understand the content knowledge they are expected to teach.
2. Ramapo College program completers understand how to teach and demonstrate the ability to convert subject matter knowledge into lessons that meet the needs of diverse learners.
3. Ramapo College program completers are caring and competent beginning professionals.

The program also embraces TEAC's three cross-cutting liberal education themes of learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives and understanding, and using technology to improve learning.

Evidence supporting the claims

Praxis I and II exams (Claim 1)

Praxis I and II exams are published by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Praxis I scores are used to determine candidacy for admission to a teacher education program based on the assessed reading, writing, and mathematics skill levels. Praxis II is a content based test a passing score for which is required by New Jersey for teacher certification. ETS provides evidence of the validity of both assessments. The New Jersey passing scores are used as evidence of content knowledge. Mean Praxis I subtest scores ranged from 176.5 to 180. Praxis II mean scores ranged from 140 to 177.9.

Grade Point Average (Claim 1)

Students in the Teacher Education and Certification program must have a content major. Mean GPA for program completers was 3.3 or greater for all years for which data are reported. Major GPAs ranged from 1.82 (Law and Society) to 3.97 (International Studies).

Grades in specific required courses (Cross cutting themes)

A number of required course grades are used to provide evidence of competence in the cross-cutting themes. Social Issues (SOSC 101) gives us evidence towards the cross-cutting theme Multicultural Perspectives. Learning, Cognition, and Teaching (PSYC 215) gives us evidence towards the cross-cutting theme Learning How to Learn. Grades in the required Technology distribution category, Systems Thinking (EDUC 340), Technology in the Classroom (EDUC 341), Games, Models, and Simulations (EDUC 305), and Multimedia in the Classroom (EDUC TBA) offer evidence of competence in the cross-cutting theme Technology. Mean grades ranged from 3.24 for PSYC 215 (evidence of learning how to learn) to 3.7 for the courses related to the technology cross-cutting theme.

Cooperating Teacher and Supervisor Ratings (Claims 1, 2, and 3)

Items in a Cooperating Teacher and Supervisor Rating form are aligned with each of the 3 program claims and the cross-cutting themes. Validity is assured by development of the items using the NJPST standards. The scale for ratings was changed to a 5-point scale from a 3-point scale in 2010. Inter-rater reliability is established by correlating supervisor and cooperating teacher ratings and ranges from .047 to .696. Ratings of cooperating teachers and supervisors were above 2.6 (3-point scale) and 4.0 (5-point scale) across scale items.

Portfolios (Claim 2 and cross-cutting themes)

Student portfolios are organized around the 11 NJPST standards. Students select portfolio artifacts from course assignments and provide reflections. The portfolio is finalized during the student teaching semester and is scored using a 3-point scale. Reliability of ratings is accomplished through a process that involves two raters of each portfolio. Ratings are compared and a common rating determined. Face validity is suggested by the use of the NJPST standards as a framework for the portfolios. Ratings are provided for 12 program completers from 2011. Scores ranged from 8 to 34 of a possible total score of 40.

Dispositions Rubric (Claim 3)

The dispositions rubric, The Behaviors of Caring Educators, is used to rate students in several courses as part of an instructional strategy to teach students caring teaching skills. Items and descriptors are linked to NJPST dispositional items and were developed using an iterative process involving faculty and students, providing evidence of content validity.

Internal audit:

A random sample of 10 student files was examined in the areas specified by the Quality Control System (Curriculum, Faculty, Facilities, Fiscal and Administrative, Candidate Support, and Candidate Complaints). The internal audit committee probed approximately 17 targets and found the quality control system to be working as designed.

Plans for program improvement

Plans for program improvement based on the evidence are offered and include:

- Increasing the criterion score on Praxis I for admission to the program
- Investigating the relationship of Praxis II scores and GPAs in those academic majors where there is no relationship.
- Continued research on the impact of using a 5-point scale on inter-rater reliability of the Cooperating Teacher and Supervisor Rating form.
- Continued revision and piloting of the Dispositions Rubric.

Statement regarding commitment and capacity:

The faculty concluded that Ramapo College is committed to Teacher Education and Certification and that there is sufficient capacity to offer a quality program.

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- 1 The Ramapo College Teacher Education and Certification program offers options at the undergraduate and post-baccalaureate level in Art Education, Biological Science, Business Education, Chemistry, Earth Science, Elementary Education, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Health, Mathematics, Music Education, Physical Science, Physics, Psychology, Social Studies, and Speech Arts and Dramatics.
The state of New Jersey, at its discretion, offers licensure to program completers in these option areas.
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