

**Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)**  
**Alfred University**  
**Teacher Education Program<sup>1</sup>**  
**Audit Dates: November 29–30, 2006**

*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 Katherine D. Wiesendanger, James F. Curl, and Nancy E. Furlong, with contributions by Jeonghee Choi, Kathryn Curl, Nancy Gallenstein, Eric Gaze, and Kelly Williams, and was approved by the Teacher Education Program faculty on April 11, 2006.

**Introduction:**

Alfred University is a private, coeducational institution comprised of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Business, the Graduate School, and the publicly endowed New York State College of Ceramics that encompasses the School of Engineering and Science and the School of Art and Design. The University emphasizes excellence in teaching and a student-centered environment on both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and awards bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees to students from 43 states and 20 nations.

The Division of Education is housed in the College of Liberal Arts (which also includes Biology, Chemistry, English, Environmental Studies, Human Studies, Mathematics and Computer Science, Modern Languages, Performing Arts, Physical Sciences, Psychology, and Social Sciences); its chairperson reports to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, who oversees each of the divisions. The Division of Education seeks accreditation for its teacher education program which has undergraduate options in early childhood education in middle/adolescent education and a graduate option in literacy education. The program leads to a teaching license in the following areas:

<b>Certification Type</b>	<b>Program Level</b>
Early Childhood/Childhood Education (Birth to 2 and 1-6)	Undergraduate
Middle/Adolescent Education (5-9 and 7-12), in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biology</li> <li>• Chemistry</li> <li>• Earth Science</li> </ul>	Undergraduate

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English</li> <li>• French</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> <li>• Physics</li> <li>• Social Studies</li> <li>• Spanish</li> </ul> <p>Special Subjects (K-12) in the following areas:</p> <p>Visual Arts Education</p> <p>Business and Marketing Education</p> <p>Literacy Education (Birth to grade 6)</p>	
	Masters

**Program claims:**

The faculty make the following claims that align with TEAC's *Quality Principle I*: they claim that their students have a *thorough, broad and deep* knowledge of the content represented in the New State curriculum standards and that they can teach this content in ways that ensure that all students meet the standards. They claim that their students' success as teachers is attributable to their development of writing, listening and speaking skills; their understanding of human development, motivation, cognition, diagnostic and remediation strategies; their understanding of the multicultural, family and social context of schooling; and their training in classroom management, technology, critical analysis, and lesson planning.

**Supporting evidence for the claims:**

The faculty report the following sources of evidence in support of their claims:

1. Mean cooperating teacher and university supervisor ratings of 4.5/5.0 for student teaching with regard to most of the claims. The Cronbach's alpha for all rated items was 0.89 for university supervisors and 0.83 for cooperating teachers, and a factor analysis confirmed that the variation in ratings came from predicted sources.
2. Mean grade point averages were over 3.0/4.0 in education courses, liberal arts and science courses, and courses in the major and all courses.
3. Mean scores on New York State Teacher Certification Examinations (the Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written, ATS-W, the Liberal Arts and Science Test, LAST, the Content Specialty Tests (CST) that were at least 15 points higher than the state mean scores.

**Plan for program improvement:**

Based on what they have learned through the TEAC Internal Audit and *Inquiry Brief* process, the faculty noted the need to be more systematic in their data collection and monitoring, to expand the number of faculty rating candidates with the Alfred University Surveys from one to two, and to strengthen the collection of follow-up data for graduates. The faculty also noted several ways they have instituted changes to the program, including:

- adding a course in science and mathematics linked to the NYSED standards,
- focusing the practicum experience of Early Childhood/Childhood students prior to student teaching to two placements,
- adding 100 hours of field-based experiences prior to student teaching for those in the Adolescent program,
- increasing the number of student teaching placements from one to two,
- adding a Special Education course to the curriculum,
- increasing the required GPA to 2.75, and
- bringing a mathematician into the teacher education program as half-time faculty.

**Internal audit:**

The Internal Audit, conducted by faculty in the Division of Education, was completed in October 2003 and examined the Quality Control System at the department level, the division level, and the college level. The files of six randomly selected students – two from each of the undergraduate program options and two from the graduate literacy program option – were used as the starting point to examine the components for capacity.

The internal audit revealed the following:

- Courses for sampled students were appropriately approved, and all sampled students met admission, graduation, and placement requirements.
- Faculty were appropriately hired and reviewed, although it was noted that there is no evaluation process in place for non-tenure track faculty.
- Faculty offices are large, and classrooms for education courses are appropriately-sized and well-equipped with technology, although the building in which the Education Division is housed is in need of renovation.
- Faculty received all travel funds for which they applied, and all faculty computers had been updated within the past five years.
- Sampled students made use of and were satisfied with student services.

- Sampled students met all admission requirements in place at the time of their admission.
- Student rated education courses more positively than courses university-wide, and no formal complaints from education students had been filed with the ombudsman, although several Art and Design students had made informal complaints about communication regarding program requirements.

**Evidence of commitment and capacity:**

The faculty reported the following:

- Curriculum is NYSED-approved and includes a solid foundation in the liberal arts.
- Education faculty share equally in research and travel funding; the promotion and tenure process equals that of all College and Liberal Arts and Sciences divisions; the mean Education salary is equal to or greater than salaries of faculty university-wide at the same rank, although the percentage of faculty at the instructor rank exceeds that of the university overall.
- The Division of Education has ample space, including large offices and a seminar room not common to other divisions, and two classrooms equipped with Internet-accessible computer systems, although the condition of the Education building is not on par with most other buildings on campus.
- Alfred University is financially sound, and the Division of Education receives a proportional budget share equal to, or greater than, that of other LAS Divisions, and has a full-time secretary for a 12-month period as compared to a half-time secretary for a 9-month period for most other divisions.
- Student support services are available to all students on an equal basis; and library resources are allotted based on curricular need.
- Catalog information is current, and an academic calendar is distributed to students every semester.
- Course evaluations for faculty are positive and are equal to or better than evaluations for faculty in other divisions.

The faculty concluded that Alfred University is committed to the teacher education program.

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<sup>1</sup> **The program includes options in the following areas and New York, following to its own policies and regulations, may grant teaching licenses in these areas to the program's graduates:**

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Undergraduate - Early Childhood/ Childhood Education (Birth to grade 6); Undergraduate - Adolescent Education (grades 7-12) with possible Middle School; (grades 5-9) extension;  
Graduate - Literacy Education (Birth to grade 6)