

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Boston College
Initial License Teacher Educator Program¹
Audit Dates: October 25 – 28, 2009

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 authors were the program faculty of the Boston College Department of Teacher Education, Special Education, and Curriculum and Instruction, led by Sarah Enterline, the Director of Assessment and Accreditation. The faculty worked in small groups, each devoted to one of the program's claims and these groups provided the initial text and analysis regarding each claim. The entire faculty was engaged with a body, called the Evidence Team, which presented the results of various investigations for group discussion and adoption. The faculty approved the *Brief* on February 26, 2009.

Introduction:

Boston College, located in the Chestnut Hill area of Boston, Massachusetts, was founded by the Society of Jesus in 1864 to promote the teaching of the liberal arts and religion. Its 679 full time faculty serve 14,000 undergraduate and graduate students in nine schools and colleges, which offer 50 fields of study and confer more than 4,000 degrees annually. Its endowment is among the 40 largest in the nation and it is rated a top tier university by *U.S. News and World Report*. The stated mission of the institution is to nurture the intellectual, personal, ethical, and religious transformation of its students and to unite them in high academic achievement with service to others.

The program is offered annually to approximately 830 students by the 19 faculty members of the Department of Teacher Education, Special Education and Curriculum and Instruction of the Lynch School of Education (LSOE). About 270 students complete the program each year. The LSOE, ranked in the top 25 among U.S. schools of education by *U.S. News and World Report*, offers 25 programs to its 1800 students (800 undergraduate and 1,000 graduate students). The School has 56 full-time faculty, approximately 35 part-time or adjunct faculty, 30 clinical faculty, and 60 researchers.

The mission of the Lynch School of Education is to enhance the human condition, to expand the human imagination, and to make the world more just, specifically by preparing educators whose teaching is directed toward social justice. It prepares teachers, administrators, human service providers, researchers, and psychologists to meet the educational needs of diverse populations. The LSOE's teacher preparation program has both undergraduate and graduate options. Undergraduate students must have a major in the LSOE

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and another major in a subject area in Arts and Sciences or an interdisciplinary major in the LSOE for those in the elementary option.

Program Claims

The program claims overall that its candidates and graduates are competent, caring, and qualified to improve pupils' learning and enhance their life chances. It defines this overall claim by six subsidiary and interrelated claims that are scaled from claims about what the students believe to claims about their professional knowledge and finally to claims about what they can actually do.

The faculty members claim that their students --

1. Believe in and are committed to teaching for social justice, defined as improving the learning of all pupils and enhancing their life chances.
2. Possess subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge, and demonstrate this knowledge in practice.
3. Are knowledgeable about and understand the relationships among culture, language, learning, and schooling.
4. Develop and demonstrate in practice social justice orientations, commitments, and interpretive frameworks.
5. Demonstrate commitment to learning across their professional lifespan and possess knowledge of technology tools to do so.
6. Assess and promote all pupils' learning.

Evidence Supporting the Claims:

The faculty members rely on six categories of evidence to support their claims.

1. Five surveys of 2000 students (at entry, exit, one, two, and three years out) to support claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, which show relatively high reliability indices and a preponderance of ratings in the top two points on the survey scale.
2. Course grades from 1000 students in support of claim 2, which are invariably above 3.0 on a four point scale.
3. The Massachusetts pre-service performance assessment (PPA+) of 55 student teachers in support of claims 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, which shows consistent ratings of more than 2.00 on a three point scale.
4. Inquiry Projects completed by 94 students during student teaching that addresses pupil learning and social justice in support of claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and which show mean ratings on a five point scale greater than 3.50 on the scale's four domains, five components and 58 indicators.

5. Qualitative Case Studies (QCS) – including samples of Teacher Assessment/Pupil Learning (TAPL), from 22 masters students which through intensive interviews examined relationships among entry characteristics, course and fieldwork, student teaching, first year teaching, pupils' learning, and efforts to teach for social justice in support of claims 1, 4, 6. Twenty-seven codes were identified in the interview record and were consistent with the claims.

6. Massachusetts Teacher Educator Licensure Test (MTEL) from 584 students in support of claim 2 showed pass rates between 96% and 98%.

Internal Audit:

The faculty committee sampled 31 students (10% of the 2006-07 undergraduate and graduate students in the program), using a stratified random sample to ensure representation from all the program options. The internal audit probed eight mechanisms designed to ensure teacher candidate quality, 16 mechanisms designed to ensure program quality, and 11 mechanisms designed to ensure faculty quality. The faculty concluded that, with the exception of some record-keeping lapses, lax reporting deadlines and larger than expected numbers of course waivers, their system of monitoring quality worked as designed.

The faculty concluded that Boston College is committed to LSOE's teacher education program and that there is sufficient capacity to offer a quality program.

¹ The program includes options in the following areas and Massachusetts, following to its own policies and regulations, may grant teaching licenses in these areas to the program's graduates:

The program has options for undergraduates may major in: 1) Early Childhood (being phased out), 2) Elementary Education (grades 1-6), 3) Secondary Education (grades 8-12) – in English, history, biology, chemistry, geology, physics, mathematics, French, Spanish, or Latin and classical humanities. Graduate students may earn a M.Ed. in Elementary Education, Secondary Education (English, history, biology, chemistry, geology, physics, mathematics, French, Spanish, or Latin and classical humanities), Special Education moderate disabilities (pre-K-9 or 5-12), Special Education severe disabilities (including deaf/blindness education) and Reading/Literacy. A M.A.T./M.S.T. option exists for licensed teachers who want to earn another certification or license and a C.A.E.S. option (Certificate of Advanced Educational Specialization) is given Special Education or Reading/Literacy (30 hours beyond a Master's degree). Certificate options in Teaching English Language Learners (TELL) are open to all teacher candidates.

The state of Massachusetts, at its discretion, offers teaching licenses to program completers in the option areas.