

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Colorado State University - Pueblo¹
Teacher Education Program
Audit Dates: March 18 - 21, 2004

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 Victoria Marquesen.

Introduction:

Colorado State University – Pueblo (CSU-P) is a regional, comprehensive university located on a 670 - acre campus overlooking the Front Range in south-central Colorado, approximately 100 miles south of Denver. Its programs serve Pueblo, an ethnically and culturally diverse community of over 100,000 people, as well as the region of south-central and southeastern Colorado. In 2003, the University enrolled approximately 4,173 students in 29 undergraduate and 6 graduate programs, with about 150 full-time faculty members. The University is committed to diversity, and has made educational equity for students one of its highest priorities

The teacher education program for which the University is seeking TEAC accreditation has nine options: Art (K-12), Elementary Education (K-6), English (7-12), Mathematics (7-12), Music (K-12), Physical Education (K-12), Science (7-12), Social Science (7-12), and Spanish (7-12).

The program also has six distinguishing features:

- Teacher Education is the responsibility of the whole university, a collaborative effort among the teacher education faculty, the faculty of programs in the arts and sciences, and the university administration.
- A Partnership School model provides more than 200 hours of field experiences and student teaching for cohorts of four to five preservice teachers in the program.
- Program graduates have access to (1) materials and resources for the classroom, (2) an initial two-day orientation program on how to begin the school year, and (3) continuing professional development activities (e.g., classroom management) from a large cadre of K-12 master teachers who volunteer their services. Some graduates are involved in these activities through the University's network of interactive distance classrooms.

- A Learning Community design provides a comprehensive support system for all students (e.g., the program has system of early warnings for students experiencing difficulty, study support groups for licensure exam study, collaborative classroom activities, and a student Teacher Education Association.
- Technology, with access to the highest quality hardware and software, is integrated across the curriculum, and faculty make extensive use of online and distributed learning communities in their courses.
- The partner schools, in which students complete early field experiences and student teaching, are all, by USDE criteria, high need schools, with diverse student populations in low socioeconomic areas.

The Program faculty members make the following thirteen claims about their program:

- Their graduates are well informed, liberally educated persons who can construct interdisciplinary lessons that incorporate accurate and in-depth liberal knowledge.
- Their graduates are competent in their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter that they teach.
- Their graduates can construct lessons that incorporate accurate and in-depth content knowledge in the major area(s) in which they are preparing to teach.
- Their graduates have the knowledge to plan, deliver, and assess standards-based lessons to students they are preparing to instruct.
- Their graduates are professional educators who have demonstrated ability to teach skillfully, using a variety of teaching approaches and tools.
- Their graduates demonstrate caring for their students and see their role as advocates for all the children in their care.
- Their graduates can develop communities with their colleagues that support each other in a variety of ways.
- Their graduates are successful with diverse groups of students in high need schools.
- Their graduates meet or exceed proficiency on both the Colorado and national (NETS) technology standards for beginning teachers.
- Their graduates are effective collaborators, establishing communities of learners that support and strengthen their own learning.
- Their graduates complete all licensure requirements, including successfully passing the Colorado licensure exam.

- Their graduates are employed as teachers who remain in teaching after three years.
- Their graduates are successful during their first year of teaching.

The evidence advanced in support of these claims is embedded in the CSU-Pueblo's performance-based assessment scheme, which has the following five components :

- Seventy-six program standards, organized into eight goal areas, are aligned with the 45 Colorado State Standards, as well as the standards of six professional and learned societies (viz., INTASC, NCTM, IRA, AAHPER, NSTA, and ISTE).
- For each program standard there are rubrics (the *CSU-PStudent Performance Inventory*) that describe the required student outcomes and proficiency, and provide formative assessments throughout the program.
- At three transition points in the program – admission to education, admission to student teaching, and program completion – the rubrics also provide a summative evaluation of the students' accomplishments.
- A reporting system for documenting and monitoring student progress is in place.
- A quality control system for using the data in the Inventory to monitor the program's strengths and weaknesses is also in place.

The performance-based assessment scheme employs several categories of evidence – (1) course grades & grade point averages, (2) faculty and cooperating teacher ratings of field experiences, student portfolios (including work samples) and each program standard, (3) standardized test scores (PLACE, Praxis, the ETS Academic Profile), (4) job placement rates, (5) career retention rates, and (6) evaluations of the students by employers, alumni, and the students' self-assessments. In addition, the students evaluate each individual course in the program and the entire program.

The fact that evidence is overwhelmingly consistent with each claim leads the faculty to conclude that they have more than adequate evidence, from multiple sources, to support their claims as well as the overall program goal that their graduates are competent, caring and qualified teachers.

The evidence for the reliability of the various assessments, still a concern for the faculty, is based on inter-observer agreement between the raters (principally, faculty and cooperating teachers) and in their consistency in

the application of the rubrics in their evaluations of student behavior and artifacts and from the published psychometric properties of some to the standardized tests.

The content validity of the *Inventory* and the fact that the rubrics appropriately reflect the Colorado and national standards for teaching is based on the systematic judgments of the various stakeholders in the program (e.g., university faculty, student teacher supervisors, cooperating teachers, and students).

The evidence for the claims and goals has the following features:

- The preponderance of ratings of 56 students over three recent semesters ('02 –'03) meets or exceeds the established benchmarks (2 or 3 out of 4) for each program standard.
- Standardized test scores, particularly from the new program students, exceed those of non-teacher education students at CSU-P and are at or above the 65th percentile on average, exceed the state-set passing scores on average, show improving pass rates for first-time takers 67%-88% and for multiple takers (86%-98%) from 1995-2003).
- Ratings of students on the program standards consistently improve and exceed the benchmarks over the three transition points -- admission to the program, admission to student teaching, and program completion.
- About 90% of the recent graduates were employed. Approximately 75% of them were teaching in high need schools and about 90% of these remained in teaching three years after graduation.
- Mean ratings by employers of the graduates in high need and non-high need schools were, although variable, well-above the benchmarks for the applicable program standards

In addition, the *Brief* provides many examples of faculty inquiry into any number of interesting questions about the program – such as the differences between the old and new versions of the program, the equivalence of minority and non-minority student performance, the academic superiority of the teacher education students over the non-teacher education students at CSU-P, the value added across the three summative evaluation points (entrance, student teaching, and completion), comparisons of national survey data and local survey data, the generally higher scores from self-assessments, comparisons of student performance at other institutions with the CSU-P teacher candidates, the relationship of CSU-P grades and standardized test

scores, the negligible effect of an extra math course on PLACE exam results, correlations between standardized and locally created measures, comparison of transfer student performance with non-transfer students,

Additional evidence of the effectiveness of the CSU-P quality control system in monitoring and exploring quality comes from the internal audit, which was initiated through the records of six randomly selected 2002-03 program completers (a sample of 10% of completers). The audit findings were positive and the faculty concluded that their procedures and systems of monitoring quality were succeeding with the exception that they were not confident that their system fully explores the true quality of instruction in the program.

The faculty concluded as well that the University is committed to the program and that they have the capacity to offer a quality program. Their conclusion is based on the evidence of parity between the program and university norms. In all comparisons there is either no appreciable difference between the characteristics of the teacher education program and the typical university program or the evidence favors the teacher education program (e.g., smaller class sizes, more senior faculty, and higher budget per FTE student).

CSU – Pueblo is a member of the *Renaissance Group*, a national collaboration of teacher education institutions in which Presidents, Provosts, and Deans of liberal arts and sciences colleges and teacher education

Program goals for the teacher education program and its options are:

Goal 1: Using Democratic Principles to Create Learning Communities
(Management)

Goal 2: Applying Subject Matter Expertise (Content Knowledge)

Goal 3: Ensuring Equity for Diverse Learners (Diversity & Equity)

Goal 4: Using Assessment to Strengthen Achievement (Assessment) Goal

5: Applying Effective Pedagogy, Including Technology, to Raise
Achievement (Pedagogy)

Goal 6: Using Reflection for Professional Development (Reflection)

Goal 7: Working Collaboratively with Colleagues and Families
(Collaboration)

Goal 8: Modeling Professional and Ethical Responsibilities
(Professionalism)

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

Art (K-12), Elementary Education (K-6), English (7-12), Mathematics (7-12), Music (K-12), Physical Education (K-12), Science (7-12), Social Science (7-12), and Spanish (7-12)