

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Emory & Henry College
Teacher Education Program¹
Audit Dates: September 18-19, 2007

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 Suzanne Reid, and was approved by the Education Department faculty on March 14, 2007.

Introduction:

Emory & Henry College is a private, four-year co-educational liberal arts institution located in Southwest Virginia. The college is named for Methodist bishop John Emory and American Revolutionary patriot Patrick Henry, signifying belief in the union of faith and learning and commitment to freedom and civic virtue. The 930 Emory & Henry students are primarily traditional-aged and residential, and about 52% female. The college, with a faculty-student ratio of 1:11, attracts top students and has been cited as a quality institution by *Money* magazine, *U.S. News & World Report*, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, and placement expert Lauren Pope's book *Colleges That Change Lives*.

The College's Department of Education, known as the William N. Neff Center for Teacher Education, is treated as an academic department although it is technically a service program offering support courses, elective courses, or courses leading to a minor. The Teacher Preparation program, an undergraduate program with 6 faculty members and an average of 25 students per year, is based on a conceptual model that reflects the stance of the 1986 Holmes Group report that competent teaching comprises subject matter knowledge, systematic knowledge of teaching, and reflective practical experience.

Education students take an academic major, with students seeking endorsement at the preK-3 or preK-6 levels majoring in Interdisciplinary English, Interdisciplinary Social Studies, or Interdisciplinary Math; students seeking endorsement at the 6-8 level taking one of these interdisciplinary majors plus a concentration of coursework in a second academic subject; and students seeking endorsement at the preK-12 or 6-12 levels majoring in the subject they wish to teach. Endorsement areas in Teacher Education include the following:

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- Early/Primary Education (preK-3)
- Elementary Education (preK-6)
- Middle Education (6-8)
- Physical Education, Health, Music Education (Instrumental and Choral), Foreign Language (Spanish and French), and Art (preK-12)
- English, History and Social Science, Mathematics, Science (Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, and Physics), and Business Education (6-12)

Program Claims:

With reference to TEAC Component 1.1 (**subject matter knowledge**), the faculty claim that candidates understand the subject matter that they intend to teach, as consistent with the Virginia Standards of Learning and the requirements of an Emory & Henry major.

With reference to TEAC Component 1.2 (**pedagogical knowledge**), the faculty claim that candidates demonstrate the pedagogical knowledge necessary to effectively teach this subject matter to a wide range of students.

With reference to TEAC Component 1.3 (**teaching skill**), the faculty claim that candidates have the caring teaching skills and professional commitment necessary to create a successful learning environment for all of their students.

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **learning how to learn**, the faculty assert that candidates engage in reflection, critical thinking, and problem solving.

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **multicultural perspectives and accuracy**, the faculty assert that candidates demonstrate knowledge about cultural, linguistic, physical, and intellectual diversity, and that they are committed to providing the best possible teaching strategies for their diverse students.

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **technology**, the faculty assert that candidates are proficient in the use of word processing, spreadsheets, databases, email, network browsers, group presentation, and web design, online databases, and courseware systems.

Evidence with Reliability/Validity and Results:

Grades in coursework corresponding to specific claims

- The faculty believe course grades to be a valid measure of the associated claims because scores of standardized tests with content

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- corresponding to these courses are reflect knowledge of this content.
- Mean major course GPAs were above 3.3/4.0 for all students, and for most majors, GPAs for education students compared favorably to GPAs of non-education students. Mean pedagogical GPAs were above 3.7 for all students, grades for EDUC 370/PHED 335 (which relate to multicultural perspectives) were above 3.7, and grades for CIMT 140 (which relates to technological skill) were above 3.6.

Student teaching evaluation items corresponding to specific claims

- Ratings are made by mentor teachers, most of whom have been trained by Emory & Henry faculty in their mentor teacher role. Ratings are based on 180 hours of student teaching. Faculty confidence in the ratings is enhanced by congruence of the ratings with faculty supervisor observations, faculty's personal knowledge of the students, and feedback from employers about the students following graduation.
- The mean ratings from 14 preK-8 student teaching evaluations and 9 secondary student teaching evaluations were as follows: subject matter knowledge, 2.86 and 3.00, respectively; pedagogical knowledge, 3.00 and 2.89; teaching skills, 2.79 and 2.78; independent learning, 2.93 and 2.56; diversity, fairness, and equity, 3.00 and 2.67; and technology skills, 2.57 and 2.56.

Service experiences (corresponding to claim of teaching skill)

- The faculty believe that candidates' experience in coaching and related leadership positions is a factor in their student teaching success.
- Mean faculty ratings of service experiences were nearly 2.8 for preK-8 candidates and nearly 2.7 for secondary candidates on a scale of 1 (negligible) to 3 (extensive).

Praxis I and Praxis II scores (corresponding to claim of subject matter knowledge)

- The faculty note that the Praxis series is grounded in research and expert knowledge about the important skills for beginning teachers, and that it is validated by extensive surveys.
- All students in the program passed Praxis I or were exempted by virtue of high SAT scores, and the Emory & Henry mean Praxis I score was 7 points above the Virginia cut score. Over 93% of students completing the program between 2002 and 2006 passed Praxis II, with nearly 94% of passes accomplished during the graduation year.

Portfolios (corresponding to assertions of independent learning and technological skill)

- The faculty note that Portfolios are assembled and submitted online;

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thus the format itself reflects students' technological skill.

- Portfolios included research projects and lesson plans that include material new to the student teacher, reflecting ability to learn independently; and students used the Internet, word-processing programs, PowerPoint, Smart Boards, and digital streaming to assemble and submit their portfolios.

Internal Audit:

The faculty selected seven students from among the 2006-2007 completers who were representative of students in the program in terms of program option, residence status, academic skill, age and family status, and gender, and probed the quality control system using these students as points of entry. Overall, the faculty found that the quality control system was working well, and problems that were identified in the internal audit had already been identified through the existing quality control mechanisms and were being addressed. The faculty did note some improvements that could be made to the quality control system, including ways of monitoring classroom capacity and equipment, and of establishing additional mechanisms for student feedback.

Plan for program improvement:

The faculty have made and contemplated several changes in the Teacher Education program over the last five years, based on state mandates and on feedback from students, colleagues, and regional education leaders. Some changes include revision of the curriculum in order to streamline the program, enhance consistency with Virginia State Competencies and Standards of Learning, and strengthen the social studies and Spanish coursework; while other changes involve increasing students' opportunities in the areas of technology and multicultural experiences.

Evidence of Commitment and Capacity:

The faculty have investigated evidence of capacity and commitment, and found the following:

- (4.1) Curriculum is appropriately reviewed and approved. Curriculum standards for the teacher education program exceed those for the institution as a whole in terms of credit hour requirements, minimum grade point average, and external assessments.
- (4.2) The faculty have accepted the goals articulated in the *Brief*. All full-time faculty members have doctorates and are well-qualified for their positions. The rank and experience of program faculty are in similar distribution to that of other similarly-sized programs at Emory & Henry.
- (4.3) Budget allocations are adequate; faculty members have private offices and new computers. The department has its own office equipment.

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Facilities, equipment, and supplies for teacher education are equivalent or better than those for the institution overall.

- (4.4) The institution is financially sound. The non-salary per-student budget for the education department is well above the median for all departments, and just under the mean. The salaries by rank are somewhat lower education faculty, but this represents differences in experience, job markets, responsibilities, and historical factors, rather than lack of commitment to the education program. The program budget is monitored regularly and systematically.
- (4.5) Students services available to all Emory & Henry students include financial aid counseling, career counseling, personal and academic counseling, academic services such as the Writing and Math labs, and peer tutoring, and those available to teacher education students specifically include Praxis I tutoring, education advising, and services provided by the Education office. Services for teacher education students are equal to or greater than those for all students at the institution.
- (4.6) Admission standards for the teacher education program are higher than those for the institution overall. Efforts are made to recruit diverse students through scholarships and community college contacts. Published material regarding the academic calendar, grading, and program descriptions are reviewed regularly by faculty to insure accuracy.
- (4.7) There are mechanisms for registering student complaints. Complaints against the teacher education program have been relatively minor.

The faculty concluded that Emory & Henry is enthusiastically committed to the teacher education program.

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

Early/Primary Education-preK-3, Elementary Education preK-6, Middle Education 6-8, PreK-12 endorsements in Physical Education and Health, Music Education (Instrumental and Choral), Foreign Language (Spanish and French), and Art. **Secondary 6-12 Endorsements** in English, History and Social Science, Mathematics, Science (Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, , and Physics), and Business Education. Add-on Endorsements for English as a Second Language, Journalism (Mass Communications), Driver's Ed, Mathematics (Algebra), and Speech/Communication; as approved by the Commonwealth of Virginia.