

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief Proposal)
Fairleigh Dickinson University
QUEST, MAT, & TSD Program¹
Audit Dates: October 22-24, 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 Proposal:

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* was written by Vicki L. Cohen, Marlene Rosenbaum, and Carol Karpinski, and was approved by the School of Education faculty on March 28, 2007.

Introduction:

Fairleigh Dickinson University, founded in 1942 as a small junior college, is the currently largest private university in New Jersey, offering locally and nationally recognized programs at two local campuses in Teaneck and Madison, two international campuses, and local community college partner campuses. FDU offers teacher education programs through its University College at the Teaneck (Metropolitan), Madison (Florham), and community college partner campuses.

The School of Education, named for Fairleigh Dickinson founder Peter Sammartino, is philosophically based on the concept of *teacher as leader*, with a vision of teachers strengthening student performance in their classrooms and participating in locally shared leadership of their schools, and its teacher education program is closely aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (NJPST). The SOE offers several programs, including the teacher education program submitted for TEAC pre-accreditation, which consists of the following options:

- Quality in Education, Schools and Teaching (QUEST), in which candidates are admitted as undergraduates and pursue an accelerated five-year program leading to a B.A. or B.S. degree and a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT).
- Traditional Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), in which candidates with an undergraduate degree but no teaching certification are able to earn certification as well as the masters degree.
- Teachers of Students with Disabilities (TSD), in which candidates with initial certification can earn the instructional certificate required to teach in resource rooms, self-contained classrooms, and/or in-class support situations.

Program claims:

With reference to TEAC Component 1.1 (**subject matter knowledge**), the faculty claim that SOE teaching candidates are qualified to teach subject matter (Claim 1).

With reference to TEAC Component 1.2 (**pedagogical knowledge**), the faculty claim that SOE teaching candidates are competent in pedagogical knowledge and skills.

With reference to TEAC Component 1.3 (**teaching skill**), the faculty claim that SOE teaching candidates are caring teachers.

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **learning how to learn**, the faculty assert that SOE candidates engage in reflection and continuous learning to refine their practice, as described in the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers.

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **multicultural perspectives and accuracy**, the faculty assert that SOE candidates support diverse learners, as described in the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers.

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **technology**, the faculty assert that SOE teaching candidates make appropriate use of instructional technology, as described in the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers.

Planned evidence to support the claims:

- **Admission Documentation** (Claim 1)
The faculty review results of SATs for QUEST students, Praxis tests for MAT and TSD students, along with GPAs and transcripts, letters of recommendation, and interviews for predictive evidence of candidates' ability to perform well in their subject areas.
- **GPA and grades** (Claim 1, Claim 2)
The faculty review overall GPA, major GPA, and pedagogy GPA.
- **Clinical Competency Inventory (CCI)—specific indicators** (Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 3)
The CCI allows the faculty to assess the way candidates address the SOE claims and the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers.

- **Alumni and P-20 Teacher Preparation Surveys** (Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 3, cross-cutting themes)
The faculty collect career information and comments about the program through the alumni survey, and information about graduates' preparation through the cross-institution P-20 Teacher Preparation Surveys.
- **Exit Interview** (Claim 2)
The faculty collect information about graduating students' perceptions of their preparation, including with respect to the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teaching.
- **Reflections in performance tasks** (Claim 3)
The faculty cite a specific written reflection task for each of the three options in which students are likely to provide evidence of caring. Data collection from these tasks will begin in Fall 2007.
- **Course-specific performance tasks** (cross-cutting themes)
The faculty are piloting key performance tasks, starting in Fall 2007 and increasing until each program option has a key task for each claim and cross-cutting theme.

Internal audit:

The faculty audited the quality control system using the folders of 30 QUEST, MAT, and TSD students who represented the range of program sites as points of entry. They found that the quality control system was working well overall—in particular, that student advisement was well-coordinated, that faculty were appropriately hired, reviewed, and mentored, and that technology was integrated into the curriculum. The faculty also identified areas of the quality control system that they felt should be strengthened, including record-keeping in advisement and use of data for improving the program.

Plan for program improvement:

Many areas of proposed improvement related to data collection with a general plan to continue development of assessment at the specified points throughout and beyond the program that would include measurement using performance tasks, and measurement of dispositions and school leadership. Other areas of improvement related to existing data collection efforts, including improving the ability to track subject matter GPAs and continuing validation of field observation instruments. The faculty also identified areas in which they proposed to improve the curriculum by better aligning arts and sciences courses with state standards and by incorporating more of the following themes into coursework:

- 1) strategies to teach English language learners;

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- 2) strategies to teach students with learning disabilities (with a specific plan to institute a math clinical practicum addressing this theme);
- 3) classroom management strategies;
- 4) learning how to learn;
- 5) evaluating teaching resources; and
- 6) training for working in districts for underserved populations.

In addition, the faculty identified plans to institute support for students who have difficulties with the Praxis exam, and to increase faculty interaction in the local school districts.

Evidence of commitment and capacity:

The faculty provided the following evidence:

- (4.1) The curricular requirements meet state and institutional standards, and credit-hour requirements for the MAT are comparable to those of other masters degree programs at Fairleigh Dickinson.
- (4.2) The School of Education faculty approved and contributed to the Inquiry Brief Proposal. All are qualified for the courses they teach. The SOE faculty tend to have lower ranks and salaries than their counterparts elsewhere on campus, although this is due in part to the fact that many are new. The coverage of SOE courses by full-time faculty is markedly less than that of almost all other Fairleigh Dickinson programs and is well short of the strategic plan goal percentages.
- (4.3) The School of Education has access to library, technology, and budgetary support. Facilities on the Metropolitan campus are sufficient, but facilities on the Florham Park campus are inadequate.
- (4.4) The university is in a sound financial position. School of Education faculty have access to the same travel and technology resources as other faculty at Fairleigh Dickinson. Because of the way faculty is assigned and students are counted, the SOE at the Florham Park campus contributes more to overhead (65% as compared to 50%) than is required by the Board of Trustees.
- (4.5) All Fairleigh Dickinson have the same access to a variety of student support services.
- (4.6) Campus-wide admissions policies encourage diversity, and the SOE is engaged in an initiative to specifically recruit more diverse education students, who are currently predominantly white and non-Hispanic. Published materials are consistent with the Inquiry Brief Proposal.
- (4.7) All Fairleigh Dickinson students have access to the same grievance procedure. Grievances from education students are comparable to those in other programs.

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

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

Quality in Education, Schools and Teaching (QUEST), in which candidates are admitted as undergraduates and pursue an accelerated five-year program leading to a B.A. or B.S. degree and a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT). Traditional Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), in which candidates with an undergraduate degree but no teaching certification are able to earn certification as well as the masters degree. Teachers of Students with Disabilities (TSD), in which candidates with initial certification can earn the instructional certificate required to teach in resource rooms, self-contained classrooms, and/or in-class support situations.