

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Hartwick College
Teacher Preparation Program¹
Audit Dates: October 6-7, 2005

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 Mark Davies, and was approved by the Hartwick College Education Department faculty on May 4, 2005.

Introduction:

Hartwick College offers a liberal arts and sciences education through 30 majors and 3 professional programs. Founded in 1797, the Hartwick campus in New York's Catskill Mountains is home to over 1400 undergraduate students. All students in the college take a common core of liberal arts and sciences courses known as Curriculum XXI, and all students write and defend a baccalaureate thesis. Additionally, students in most programs participate in service learning, which is consistent with Hartwick's institutional motto, "The Liberal Arts in Practice." The college is organized into three divisions: Humanities, Physical and Life Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences, in which the Education Department is located.

Students in the Education Department major in a content area, and in addition, complete a 47- to 50-credit education program. They are required to log 120 hours of service learning and 420-450 practicum hours of student teaching, which must include an international or urban placement. Students may pursue endorsements for certification in early childhood education (grades K-6), middle childhood education (grades 6-8), or adolescence education (grades 9-12).

The Hartwick Education Department faculty values progressive education as a means to effect social change. The goal of the education faculty is to train teachers who will empower children to transform society through the democratic process.

Program claims:

The Hartwick College Education Department makes the following claims about the capacity of their program because they believe that their students are:

Competent scholars who:

- demonstrate competency in their chosen subject area and have mastered their content area.
- possess skills for critical, reflective thinking and knowledge of the social, political, cultural, psychological, philosophical and moral dimensions of teaching.
- possess a broad, interdisciplinary liberal arts and sciences education which provides the foundation for competent teaching.

Progressive educators who:

- utilize varied teaching techniques and have acquired the skills and abilities for competent teaching.
- are prepared to teach in diverse educational settings and to a diverse population of students.
- apply the knowledge they have learned at Hartwick College to new educational situations and settings.
- demonstrate technological skills and possess technological competency which will aid them in teaching.
- believe in the right of every student to receive an equal education and are committed to accommodating students' full range of abilities.

Evidence supporting the claims:

For Claim 1 (students demonstrate competency in their chosen subject area and have mastered their content area), measures used are:

- Grades for content area methods courses
- Scores for the Content Specialty Test
- Final grades for student teaching

For Claim 2 (students possess skills for critical, reflective thinking and knowledge of the social, political, cultural, psychological, philosophical and moral dimensions of teaching), measures used are:

- Grades for core education courses
- Grades for education courses
- Grades for methods courses
- Scores on the Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written
- Evaluations of sample graded papers reflecting critical pedagogical analysis for Junior Review Portfolio
- Final grades for student teaching

For Claim 3 (students possess a broad, interdisciplinary liberal arts and sciences education which provides the foundation for competent teaching), measures used are:

- Grades and completion rates for Curriculum XXI courses
- Scores on the Liberal Arts and Sciences Test
- Final grades for student teaching

For Claim 4 (students utilize varied teaching techniques and have acquired the skills and abilities for competent teaching), measures used are:

- Evaluation scores for student teaching
- Completion rates for Service Learning hours
- Ratings by Cooperating Teacher for student teaching
- Ratings by College Education Advisor for student teaching

For Claim 5 (students are prepared to teach in diverse educational settings and to a diverse population of students), measures used are:

- Grades and completion rates for a multicultural mini-practicum field experiences (EDUC 390)
- Grades for core education classes
- Final grades for student teaching
- Ratings by Cooperating Teacher for student teaching
- Ratings by College Education Advisor for student teaching

For Claim 6 (apply the knowledge they have learned at Hartwick College to new educational situations and settings), measures used are:

- Grades and completion rates for a multicultural mini-practicum field experiences (EDUC 390)
- Evaluations of sample reflection papers from Multicultural Mini-practicum
- Final grades for student teaching

For Claim 7 (students demonstrate technological skills and possess technological competency which will aid them in teaching), measures used are:

- Grades for Educational Technology course (EDUC 381)
- Ratings by Cooperating Teacher for student teaching
- Ratings by College Education Advisor for student teaching

For Claim 8 (students believe in the right of every student to receive an equal

education and are committed to accommodating students' full range of abilities), measures used are:

- Evaluations of students' statement of philosophy of education
- Grades for a multicultural mini-practicum field experiences (EDUC 390)
- Final grades for student teaching
- Ratings by Cooperating Teacher for student teaching
- Ratings by College Education Advisor for student teaching

Reliability and validity of measures:

The measures fall into three categories:

1. Completion rates for program requirements
2. Grades and evaluations for program courses and course assignments
3. Scores for NYSTCE standardized tests

The program faculty has directly addressed the reliability and validity issues concerning the second two categories. With respect to grades and evaluations, the faculty has addressed reliability threats from individual subjectivity by instigating discussions among the graders/raters to develop consistency in evaluation, and they have sought to increase validity of these measures by focusing assessments on the skills and knowledge relevant to teaching. With respect to the NYSTCE standardized tests, the faculty feels that while individual reliability may vary, the institutional results are reliable, and the tests can be considered valid since they have undergone independent validity reviews by NES.

Results:

Overall, completion rates, grades, and NYSTCE standardized test scores were sufficiently high to support all eight claims.

Internal audit:

The program faculty conducted an internal audit first by examining informal and formal mechanisms for assuring quality, and then by selecting three students at random to use as points of entry examining elements of the quality control system relating to these students.

For the most part, the faculty found that the quality control system was functioning as intended. The internal audit revealed several concerns, including out-of-date information in the catalog and website, insufficient classroom and curriculum lab space, no mechanism for collecting anonymous student concerns/complaints, and an inconsistently-applied formal admissions process. Additionally, the faculty concluded that the assessments for the

Junior Portfolio and for student teaching did not adequately reflect program goals. The faculty has discussed, and in some cases implemented, plans to address these concerns.

Evidence of commitment and capacity:

The faculty has made a case for institutional commitment to the education program, and capacity to provide a quality program. In most comparisons the education program was on par or compared favorably with other programs or with the college as a whole. The areas in which this was not the case all related to faculty capacity, and for the most part these disparities have been ameliorated with the hiring of two additional tenure-track faculty for the 2005-2006 academic year. The faculty notes that this staffing shortage was a result of a recent Education Department expansion, and had not been a chronic issue.

¹ **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:**

Childhood Education (1-6), Middle Childhood (5-9), Adolescence Education (7-12), Music (All grades), Visual Arts (all grades)