

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Medaille College
Education Program¹

Audit Dates: September 30-October 2, 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 *Inquiry Brief* was written by Illana Lane, Henry Peters, Mary Beth Scumaci, and Patrick McDonald, and was approved by the School of Education faculty on June 15, 2009.

Introduction:

Medaille is a private liberal arts college located in western New York, with a main campus in Buffalo and branch campuses in Amherst and Rochester. Founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1875 to prepare teachers for Catholic schools, it is now a nonsectarian co-educational institution known for its flexible delivery systems which offers masters, bachelors, and associate degrees through day, evening, and weekend programs primarily to students from western and central New York and from southern Ontario.

The School of Education, one of the largest units on campus, offers career-oriented curricula based on a liberal arts foundation and a constructive philosophy. With Canadian residents making up more than half the student's curriculum is aligned to the NYS Learning Standards with consideration given to the Ontario Unit Curriculum Expectations. In 2008, the program included 28 full-time and 68 adjunct faculty members and enrolled 946 students, 168 at the undergraduate level and 778 at the graduate level.

Program claims:

Claim 1: Medaille College graduates know the subject matter in their certification area(s), which is aligned with *TEAC Component 1.1: subject matter knowledge* and the cross-cutting theme of *multicultural perspectives*.

Claim 2: Medaille College graduates meet the needs of diverse learners through effective pedagogy and best teaching practices, which is aligned with *TEAC Component 1.2: pedagogical knowledge* and the cross-cutting themes of *learning how to learn* and *multicultural perspectives*.

Claim 3: Medaille College graduates demonstrate scholarship supported by the use of technology, which is aligned with *TEAC Component 1.2: pedagogical knowledge* and *TEAC Component 1.3: teaching skill*, as well as with the cross-cutting themes of *learning how to learn* and *technology*.

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Claim 4: Medaille College graduates are caring educators, which is aligned with *TEAC Component 1.3: teaching skill* and the cross-cutting theme of *multicultural perspectives*.

Evidence supporting the claims

The faculty have collected evidence from a number of sources, including grades, licensure scores, and a set of four benchmark assignments (the first four assessments listed below) known as the “Core Big Four:”

- ***Medaille Lesson Plan*** (*Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 4, Multicultural Understanding*)
Students are assessed on their ability to write lesson plans, which the faculty note is a necessary (albeit not sufficient) component of quality teaching. Lesson plans are rated in the areas of lesson data, instructional data, procedure/presentation, academic considerations, and reflections. Full-time and adjunct faculty were trained on use of the rubric and achieved an inter-rater reliability of 0.976. The average rating on a scale of 1 (unacceptable), 2 (novice), 3 (competent), and 4 (mastery) was 3.7 for both BSED and MSED students for items relating to subject matter knowledge, 3.6 for BSED students and 3.7 for MSED students on items relating to pedagogical knowledge, and 3.6 for both BSED and MSED students on items relating to meeting the needs of diverse students, which the faculty note provides evidence for both caring teaching and multicultural understanding.
- ***Medaille Unit Plan*** (*Claim 2*)
Students are assessed on their ability to write unit plans, which the faculty note is a practice frequently used by highly effective teachers. Unit plans are rated in such areas as objectives/expectations, individual lessons, evaluation, and reflection, as well as areas of format and presentation. Full-time and adjunct faculty were trained on use of the rubric and achieved an inter-rater reliability of 0.811. The average rating on a scale of 1 (unacceptable), 2 (novice), 3 (competent), and 4 (mastery) was 3.6 for 55 BSED-ELED students, 3.1 for 28 MSED-SPED students, and 3.7 for 1026 MSED-ELED students.
- ***Medaille Annotated Bibliography*** (*Claim 3*)
All students are required to create annotated bibliographies of peer-reviewed journal articles, which are rated on ability to summarize, analyze, and relate to the relevant topic. Students find articles through electronic databases such as ERIC and ProQuest and hence must use technology to complete the assignment. Full-time and adjunct faculty were trained on use of the rubric and achieved an inter-rater reliability of 0.896. The average rating on a scale of 1 (unacceptable), 2 (novice), 3 (competent), and 4 (mastery) for the 77 BSED students was 2.9, and for the 968 MSED students was 3.5.

- Medaille Philosophy of Education (Claim 2)**
 Students are required to articulate philosophies of education, which are rated on the quality of their explanations, elaborations, and demonstrated understanding of school, curriculum, learning, learner, assessment, classroom management, and teacher. Full-time and adjunct faculty were trained on use of the rubric and achieved an inter-rater reliability of 0.935. The average rating on a scale of 1 (unacceptable), 2 (novice), 3 (competent), and 4 (mastery) for the 61 BSED students was 3.1, and for the 615 MSED students was 3.3.
- New York State Teacher Certification Examinations: Liberal Arts and Science Test (LAST), Content Specialty Tests (CST), and Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written (ATS-W) (Claim 1, Claim 2)**
 The LAST is designed to measure general knowledge and the Content Specialty Tests specific subject matter knowledge, and thus the two assessments provide evidence of Claim 1. The ATS-W is designed to measure professional and pedagogical knowledge and thus provides evidence for Claim 2. The passing score for all NYSTCE assessments is 220. Overall mean scores on the LAST were 244.7 for 66 undergraduate students and 254.7 for 853 graduate students. Overall mean scores on the CST Multi-Subject Test were 232.6 for 63 undergraduate students and 245.8 for 913 graduate students; the mean score on the CST Literacy assessment was 256.7 for 42 graduate students; and the mean score on the CST Students with Disabilities assessment was 248.2 for 12 graduate students. Overall mean scores on the ATS-W were 254.4 for 58 undergraduate students and 260.5 for 873 graduate students.
- GPA Liberal Arts Courses, Course Grade EDL 550 (Claim 1)**
 The faculty tracked undergraduate education students' performance in seven liberal arts courses that reflect the subject matter they will teach: Analytical Writing, Critical Thinking, Colonial N. America, Creative Expression, Scientific Discovery, Concepts in Math, Speech. For literacy students, they tracked grades in EDL 550, which focuses on the essential components of reading instruction. The undergraduate mean grades ranged from 2.8 (Scientific Discovery) to 3.5 (Creative Expression), with each mean taking into account between 47 and 76 grades. The EDL 550 mean grade for 65 students was 3.9.
- GPA Education Core Courses (Claim 2)**
 The faculty note that education course grades reflect knowledge of pedagogy and application of best teaching practices. The average course grade for the 18 required undergraduate courses, taking into account a total of 1213 grades, was 3.7.

- **Capstone Course Grades GEN 411 and ECI 695 (Claim 3)**
 Students in the capstone courses use technology to research their capstone projects, which they must present and defend. The mean grade for 72 students in GEN 411 was 3.25, and all program completers earned grade of Satisfactory in ECI 695.
- **Course Grades ECI 530 and EDU 469 (Claim 1, Multicultural Understanding)**
 These courses present multiple cultural perspectives and foundational educational theory. The mean grade was 3.7 for 1165 students in ECI 530, and 3.6 for 66 students in EDU 469.
- **College Supervisor/Associate Teacher Survey (Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 4)**
 College supervisors and associate teachers are surveyed anonymously regarding the preparedness of student teachers. Overall, 89% to 96% of 2212 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with positively-worded items relating to subject matter knowledge, 87% to 96% with items relating to effective pedagogy; and 90% to 95% with items relating to caring teaching.
- **College Supervisor/Associate Teacher Performance Summary Evaluation (Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 4)**
 Student teachers are rated at the end of their placements by college supervisors and associate teachers on a variety of items. Mean ratings for 1237 students, disaggregated by program option and year, ranged from 3.39 to 4.00 on a scale of 1 to 4 in which 3 is “competent” and 4 is “mastery,” on items related to Claim 2 generally, and between 3.49 and 4.00 on items specifically related to caring.
- **Lesson Observation Descriptor (Claim 2, Claim 4)**
 Student teachers are rated by the college supervisor on their teaching performance in a variety of professional dispositions. Mean scores for 1197 students ranged from 3 (competent) to 4 (mastery) for items relating to effective pedagogy and caring teaching.
- **Tutoring Rubric (Claim 2, Claim 4)**
 Literacy Specialists are not required to student teach, but instead participate in literacy practica which is evaluated using the tutoring rubric. Literacy students are assessed on pedagogical skills and knowledge, with an overall mean score for 38 students over the past four semesters of 3.56 on a scale from 1 to 4 in which 3 is “proficient” and 4 is “exemplary.” Students are also assessed on the caring qualities of motivation and praise/support, with an overall mean score of 3.89.
- **Case Study Rubric (Claim 2, Learning how to Learn, Multicultural)**

Understanding)

Literacy Specialists throughout an entire semester assess students, design instruction, and make recommendations for further development. Mean scores for 63 students ranged from 3.4 (Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses, in 2007-2008) to 3.9 (Assessment/Administration, in 2007-2008) on a scale from 1 to 4 in which 3 is "competent" and 4 is "mastery."

- ***Placement Evaluation Experience Survey (Claim 4)***
Student teachers are asked to report on their level of participation in school activities beyond the program requirements, classifying the number of experiences in various categories as "many," "some," "few," or "none." The faculty viewed any additional participation as evidence of caring. The percent of students reporting "many," "some," or "few" experiences ranged from 43% (Assisted in the development of academic programs and/or projects for individual classroom or school-wide use, in 2008-2009) to 99% (Attended staff development on- or off-site, in 2007-2008).
- ***Student Self-Evaluation Report Card (Claim 4)***
The children who participate in the literacy practica rate the experience on a scale of 1 (needs improvement), 2 (satisfactory), or 3 (excellent) on the basis of their enjoyment of the lessons, their perception of the pertinence of the lessons, and the level of support they received. On each item except work/performance prior to tutoring, mean ratings for the 39 students were above 2.5.

Internal audit:

Acting Dean Illana Lane and Assessment Coordinator Mary Beth Scumaci conducted an internal audit of the quality control system, organized according to the seven TEAC capacity components. The internal audit committee sampled several selected courses, six selected faculty members, and 62 student teaching files. They probed admission requirements; advising procedures; budget allocation; classroom and office space; course/program approval; hiring, promotion, tenure, and course assignment; and student teaching files. They found that for the most part that admission requirements were in evidence, students were appropriately advised, budget allocations complied with policy; space was adequate; curricula were approved; faculty members were hired, promoted, tenured, and assigned appropriately; and the completeness of the student teaching files was greatly improved over the past two years.

Plan for program improvement

The faculty identified a number of issues regarding their assessment processes that they plan to attend to, including revising and creating assessment instruments to ensure that all aspects of interest are being measured, improving data collection processes, determining how to use some assessment results, and

continuing to communicate results to faculty for program reflection and improvement.

Statement regarding commitment and capacity:

The faculty concluded that Medaille College is committed to the Education Program and that there is sufficient capacity to offer a quality program.

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:

Program options include:

- BSED Childhood Education (1-6)
- BSED Middle Childhood Education (5-9)
- MSED Childhood Education (1-6)
- MSED Curriculum & Instruction
- MSED Literacy (B-6)
- MSED Special Education: Childhood (1-6)
- MSED Special Education: Middle Childhood (5-9)