

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
College of Mount St. Joseph
Teacher Education Program¹
Audit Dates: March 23-24, 2006

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 Tsila Evers, James Green, Paul Sallada, Linda Schoenstedt, Trisha Hartman Travis, and Kathleen Ware; and was edited by Richard Sparks and Trisha Hartman Travis. It was approved by the faculty on November 28, 2005.

Introduction:

The College of Mount St. Joseph is a Catholic academic community founded in 1920 by the Sisters of Charity as southwestern Ohio's first Catholic college for women. Today it is a coeducational institution that educates 2300 students in interdisciplinary liberal arts and professional curricula emphasizing values, integrity and social responsibility.

The College of Mount St. Joseph serves mostly white students but has a growing non-white enrollment. Class sizes are small, and the campus has been wireless since 2000. The College is recognized by such organizations as the Templeton Honor Roll, EDUCAUSE, and U.S. News & World Report for its character development, career preparation, and innovative technology.

The School of Education faculty consists of 19 members who are listed as full-time (although two have half-time appointments), 11 of whom have doctoral degrees, plus 16 adjunct members. The faculty's instructional approaches are varied: some are didactic, some are behaviorist, some are constructivist, and some are guided by critical theory.

Many of the schools in which Mount St. Joseph students observe and student teach primarily serve ethnically diverse populations, families with low socio-economic status, and children who have special needs. Students in the program are taught to work collaboratively with school colleagues as well as the larger community, and they are guided to continue their professional development through membership and participation in professional teaching organizations.

The program offers undergraduate, graduate, and alternative route options to licensure at several grade levels in a number of areas (see table below):

Option Name	Licensure
Inclusive Early Childhood Education	PK – Grade 3
<p>Middle Childhood Education in two of the following content areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Arts • Mathematics • Science • Social Studies 	Grades 4 – 9
<p>Adolescent & Young Adult Education in one of the following content areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Sciences/Chemistry • Life Sciences/Biology • Chemistry • Integrated Language Arts • Integrated Math • Integrated Science • Integrated Social Studies 	Grades 7 – 12
<p>Multi-Age Education Programs in one of the following content areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music Education • Physical Education • Visuals Arts Education 	Grades K – 12
<p>Intervention Specialist/Special Education Programs in one of the following concentrations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild/Moderate • Moderate/Intensive or Mild/Moderate 	Grades K – 12

Program claims and supporting evidence:

Below are the faculty’s claims and supporting evidence about candidates in the

teacher education program at the College of Mount St. Joseph:

1. (Content) The candidate knows the content he/she will teach, knows how the content relates to state standards, and applies knowledge of this content in planning and presenting lessons.

The faculty offer as evidence GPAs (overall and major field), PRAXIS I series (Reading, Writing, and Mathematics) scores, and PRAXIS II Content Knowledge scores.

2. (Learner) The candidate plans and presents instruction based on the knowledge of how students learn and on knowledge of the diverse experiences that students bring to the classroom.

The faculty offer as evidence PRAXIS II Principles of Teaching and Learning scores, PRAXIS III Preparing to Teach, Teaching, and Total scores, evaluations of student teaching by cooperating teachers and college supervisors, Capstone Unit scores, and common assessments rated by faculty in the areas of content, learner, pedagogy, environment, service, and professionalism.

3. (Pedagogy) The candidate employs a variety of instructional activities, effectively assesses students' progress in meeting objectives, and differentiates instruction based on students' needs and assessment results.

The faculty offer as evidence PRAXIS II Principles of Learning and Teaching scores, PRAXIS III Teaching scores, evaluations of student teaching by cooperating teachers and college supervisors, Capstone Unit scores, and common assessments rated by faculty in the areas of content, learner, pedagogy, environment, service, and professionalism.

4. (Learning Environment) The candidate creates a learning environment that encourages active and engaged learning as well as respect for others.

The faculty offer as evidence PRAXIS III Learning Environment scores, evaluations of student teaching by cooperating teachers and college supervisors, and common assessments rated by faculty in the areas of content, learner, pedagogy, environment, service, and professionalism.

5. (Support for Learning) The candidate collaborates with colleagues, families, and the community to support student learning.

The faculty offer as evidence PRAXIS III Professionalism scores, and evaluations of student teaching by cooperating teachers and college

supervisors.

6. (Professionalism) The candidate is a reflective practitioner who engages in opportunities for professional growth.

The faculty offer as evidence PRAXIS III Professionalism scores.

Reliability and validity of measures:

The measures fall into six categories listed below along with their associated reliability and validity information:

1. Standardized written tests (PRAXIS I series, PRAXIS II series)

Claims 1, 2, 3

The PRAXIS I series (Reading, Writing, Mathematics) and PRAXIS II series (Content Knowledge, Principles of Learning and Teaching) are standardized written tests designed by the Educational Testing Service. The faculty found that correlations between the PRAXIS II Content Knowledge scores and overall GPA were mostly moderate to significant across the program options, but correlations between the PRAXIS II Principles of Learning and Teaching scores with common assessment scores were only weak to moderate.

2. Evaluation scores of state assessors (PRAXIS III series)

Claims 2, 3, 5, 6

The PRAXIS III series is a performance-based test designed by the Educational Testing Service which consists of evaluation of teaching by state assessors. The faculty computed correlations between PRAXIS III series scores and student teaching evaluation scores and found that the correlations were mostly weak, so concurrent validity with student teaching evaluation scores was not established. The faculty also expressed concern that PRAXIS III is only indirectly aligned with Claims 5 and 6, and hence felt somewhat less confident about the validity of this measure for those claims.

3. Grade point averages (overall, major field)

Claim 1

The faculty computed ANOVAs to determine the stability of the overall GPA means over time, and found that there were no significant differences in the undergraduate GPAs over the three-year period of 2002-2005, although some significant difference was found in the graduate GPAs for that time period. In addition, correlations between grade point averages and PRAXIS II Content Knowledge scores were mostly moderate, suggesting some concurrent validity with PRAXIS II scores.

4. Student teaching evaluation scores (given by cooperating teachers, college

supervisors)

Claims 2, 3, 4, 5

Student teachers are rated by one or two cooperating teachers and one college supervisor on a number of items on a scale from 1 to 4 (1-unsatisfactory, 2-emerging, 3-proficient, 4-outstanding). The faculty computed Cronbach's alphas for ratings of undergraduate students given by two cooperating teachers and a college supervisor, for ratings of graduate students given by two cooperating teachers and a college supervisor, and for ratings of graduate students given by one cooperating teacher and a college supervisor, and found that they were 0.803, 0.913., and 0.814, respectively, thus establishing reliability across groups of raters. The faculty asserted that the student teaching evaluation is aligned with the associated program claims and hence has content validity, although they expressed concern that the evaluation is only indirectly aligned with Claim 5, and hence felt somewhat less confident about the validity of this measure for that claim. However, computed correlations between student teaching evaluation scores and PRAXIS III series scores were mostly weak, so concurrent validity with PRAXIS III was not established.

5. Common program assessment scores

Claims 2, 3, 4

The faculty began administering common assessments in 2004-05 in all practica for the evaluation of formal planned lesson presentations. The ratings for each item correspond to frequencies of observation (0-not observed, 1-seldom, 2-usual, 3-frequent). The faculty computed Cronbach's alpha for the six common assessment measures (content, learner, pedagogy, environment, service/support for learning, professionalism) to determine reliability, and found that the index for the six measures was 0.517, while the index for five of the measures (not including service/support for learning) was 0.806. The faculty asserted that the common assessments are aligned with program claims and hence have content validity. However, computed correlations between common assessment scores and the PRAXIS II Principle of Learning and Teaching, and student teaching evaluation scores were mostly weak to moderate, so concurrent validity with PRAXIS II was not established.

6. Capstone Unit scores

Claims 2, 3

The faculty asserted that the Capstone Unit assessments are aligned with program claims and hence have content validity.

Results:

For the most part, the evidence supported the faculty's claims: Overall mean GPAs ranged between 3.30 and 3.75 for the different options, and major field

mean GPAs ranged between 3.08 and 3.77. Mean PRAXIS I Reading scores were at least 178.4 (with passing score 174), mean PRAXIS I Writing scores were at least 175.8 (with passing score 173), and mean PRAXIS I Mathematics scores were at least 179.0 (with passing score 172). Mean PRAXIS II Content Knowledge scores were at least 162, and mean PRAXIS II Principles of Learning and Teaching were at least 168.8; and means for all program options were above passing scores. Mean PRAXIS III scores exceeded passing scores in each domain and overall, with overall mean scores at least 48.9 (with passing score 38). Mean student teaching evaluation scores were at least 3.3 out of 4, mean Capstone Unit scores were at least 15.4 out of 20, and mean common assessment scores were at least 2.0 out of 3.0 for almost all program options.

Internal audit:

All full-time education faculty participated in the internal audit conducted in September 2005. Each faculty member was assigned to a small group whose responsibility was to complete probes for a particular component of the audit, which targeted information from the 2002-2005 time period.

Overall, the audit revealed an effective quality control system. In particular, curricula and courses were appropriately approved by both the College and the state; faculty hiring, promotion, and review processes were followed; instructional space and technology were sufficient; faculty development and administrative funding procedures were operating as designed; surveys and interviews indicated a fair level of satisfaction with student services; completed program tracking forms were present in most student files; and the few grade appeals were handled according to intended procedure.

There were a few areas of concern that the faculty planned to investigate, including missing program approval information from the Ohio Department of Education, unsatisfactory organization and security of the support staff work space, incomplete program tracking forms in some student files, and lack of a mechanism to compel faculty to distribute and submit student course evaluations.

Evidence of commitment and capacity:

The faculty report:

- The numbers of required credits for an education degree are commensurate with those of other degree programs at the same level, and all education degree programs are approved by the College's curriculum committee.
- A slightly higher percentage of the Education Department full-time and

pro-rata faculty have terminal degrees as compared with full-time and pro-rata faculty College-wide.

- The education faculty have comparable office space to faculty in the Business and Health Sciences Departments, and office space has recently expanded along with the size of the education faculty.
- The education faculty workload is comparable to that of other departments, the faculty development funds granted to the Education Department is in the median range across departments in the College, and budget allocations and expenditures are slightly higher than in similarly-sized departments. Numbers of education faculty at higher ranks and education faculty salaries are slightly lower than College figures, but this is in part due to the relatively high number of new faculty in the department.
- The current student-faculty ratio in education has been reduced to be the same as the College ratio (due largely to the above-mentioned hiring of new faculty), and education class sizes are comparable to class sizes College-wide.
- The Education Department participates in both College and Education-specific recruiting activities.
- The number of formal complaints is commensurate with the number of complaints from other departments.

Overall, the faculty conclude that the College of Mount St. Joseph is committed to the teacher education program and provides suitable capacity for a quality program.

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

- Inclusive Early Childhood Education – PK-3
- Middle Childhood Education in two of the following content areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, or Social Studies – Grades 4-9
- Adolescent and Young Adult Education in the following content areas: Life Sciences/Chemistry, Life Sciences/Biology, Chemistry, Integrated Language Arts, Integrated Math, Integrated Science, Integrated Social Studies – Grades 7-12
- Multi-Age Education Programs in the following content areas: Music Education, Physical Education, Visual Arts Education – Grades K-12
- Intervention Specialist/Special Education Programs in one of the following concentrations: Mild/Moderate, Moderate/Intensive – Grades K-12