

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
New York University
Teacher Education Program¹
Audit Dates: February 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 Alyson Taub, Robert Tobias, and John Mayher, and was approved by the Teacher Education Program faculty on November 14, 2005.

Introduction:

New York University (NYU), a member of the Association of American Universities, was founded in 1831 and is the largest private, non-profit university in the world, with 14 schools and colleges, occupying six major centers in Manhattan, and six campuses in Europe and Africa. Total enrollment is close to 52,000 students, including more international students than any other college or university in the United States. The University employs over 10,000 faculty and staff and operates with an annual operating budget in excess of \$2 billion.

Founded in 1890 as the School of Pedagogy, the Steinhardt School of Education, as it is now called, was the first university-based graduate school dedicated to the advanced education of teachers and school administrators. The school enrolls about 6000 students each year -- 2000 undergraduates and 4000 full- and part-time masters, certificate, and doctoral students. The school has 224 full-time faculty members in 11 separate academic departments.

The teacher education program has 74 faculty members, supported by a cadre of 101 adjunct and part-time faculty members who are drawn from the departments of (1) Teaching & Learning, (2) Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology, (3) Art and Art Professions (Art Education), and (4) Music and Performing Arts Professions (Music Education, Educational Theatre, and Dance Education). The teacher education program enrolls approximately 1400 students (600 undergraduates and 800 graduate students) and has options at the graduate and undergraduate levels in educational theater, music, dance, art, speech and language disability, speech pathology, childhood/early childhood education, English, foreign language, biology, chemistry, physics, earth science, mathematics, social studies, literacy, bilingual education, TESOL, and special education.

Claims:

The program faculty members make three claims about their students:

Claim 1: the students have acquired pedagogical content knowledge (viz., the integration of subject matter knowledge with an understanding of how the subject matter is most effectively taught and learned by the pupil).

Claim 2: the students have acquired pedagogical knowledge, which includes an understanding of the pupil's developmental level, individual characteristics, and socio-cultural background.

Claim 3: the students can teach in a caring manner and can reflect on and improve their teaching.

The faculty members further claim that their students understand technology and multicultural perspectives aspects of each claim.

Method and categories of evidence supporting the claims:

The evidence for the three claims comes primarily from assessments of samples of the 579 graduates (459 MA and 120 BS degrees) of the class of 2004, and 577 graduates (153 BS and 424 MA degrees) of the class of 2005. The categories of the NYU assessments are: grade point indices in content, pedagogy, liberal arts courses; scores on the New York State license tests of liberal arts, content, and pedagogy; questionnaire results of students' beliefs about 24 educational issues; survey results of students' evaluation of their cooperating teachers' and supervisors' efficacy in promoting their development as teachers; questionnaire results of students' perceptions of their level of preparation for teaching in nine areas; results of a one-year follow-up alumni success in teaching in 11 areas; and the student teacher supervisors' evaluations of student teachers on 20 items aligned with the program's claims.

Results:

The program faculty set clear and ambitious criteria for success on each assessment and these were generally in the 80 - 90% range of accomplishment. Eighty statistical analyses were conducted on the graduates' performance, and 84% of these indicated that the graduates met or exceeded the criteria of success set by the faculty. The criteria for the license tests results, for example, were that the sample mean exceed the passing score (220) by 0.80 standard deviation and post no less than a 90% pass rate. GPA and student teaching performance were expected to be greater than 3.0 on a four point scale, questionnaire attainment was set at 4.0 on a five point scale overall and for questionnaire items associated with each claim, and the criterion for educational beliefs was a mean of 4.5 on a six point scale.

Program research:

The faculty also made extensive investigations into the reliability and validity of their assessments and generally found grounds for asserting construct and concurrent validity for the instruments. The faculty also made significant investments in the reliability of their locally developed assessments with training regimes to improve inter-rater agreement.

As one example, the faculty developed and field tested a 40 item instrument designed to assess 320 students' educational beliefs in two domains – efficacy of their teaching and caring, equity, and social justice. Through factor analysis they reduced the instrument to 26 items that loaded significantly on factors associated with the two hypothesized domains. The 26 item questionnaire (reduced on subsequent analysis to 24 items) was taken by faculty and the performance of experienced and less experienced program students was investigated and confirmed that faculty and students who had taken more of the program held, or had developed, beliefs that were in line with the program's goals.

A similar line of development was taken with the instrument used by field supervisors to assess student teaching performance, which went through three versions, each vetted in focus group discussions of the results of field testing, and each subjected to inter-rater agreement training exercises.

Internal audit results:

Four internal auditors (three faculty and one administrative staff) were appointed and they drew a stratified sample of 35 students (10% of the May 2005 graduates of the program) with which to begin their audit. The internal auditors made 23 distinct probes into the mechanisms they have in place to monitor and improve the capacity of the program for quality. Apart from the discovery that some program and policy requirements were occasionally waived and the confirmation of the widely held view that space at NYU is problematic in amount and quality, the internal audit verified that the system operates as it was designed and that yielded quality outcomes with regard the faculty, students, and the program overall.

Evidence of commitment and capacity:

There was generally parity between the Steinhardt School and other units of NYU. Where deficiencies were identified in the internal audit, the faculty members were encouraged that these were part of the dean's priorities in an upcoming capital campaign. The faculty concluded that the institution and school were committed to their teacher education 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:

- Teaching Educational Theatre, Music, Dance, or Art – All Grades
- Teaching Students with Speech and Language Disabilities – All Grades
- Speech Language Pathology
- Childhood Education or Early Childhood Education
- Teaching a Foreign Language 7-12 (Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian, or Spanish)
- Secondary School Teaching 7-12 (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Earth Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, English)
- Bilingual Education for Teachers
- Literacy (B-6; 5-12)
- Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- Special Education Dual Certification: Educational Theatre, All Grades, with English Education 7-12; Teaching a Foreign Language 7-12 (Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian, or Spanish) with TESOL; Childhood Education / Childhood Special Education; Early Childhood Education / Early Childhood Special Education