

**Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief Proposal)**  
**Richard Stockton College of New Jersey**  
**Teacher Education Program<sup>1</sup>**  
**Audit Dates: September 23-26, 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 Ron Tinsley, and was approved by the STEP faculty members on May 17, 2007.

**Introduction:**

Richard Stockton College of New Jersey was established in 1970 as a public liberal arts college and received Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation in 1975. There are over 7,000 students at Stockton College; 93% of them are in the undergraduate program which offers baccalaureate degrees in the arts, sciences, and professional studies. Graduate students are enrolled in one of seven master's degree programs or one doctoral level program.

The college's academic programs are organized into five divisions: Arts and Humanities, General Studies, Natural and Mathematical Sciences, Professional Studies, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Teacher education is currently housed in the Professional Studies division. The Associate Dean/Director of Teacher Education reports to the Dean of Professional Studies and oversees several programs including the Stockton Teacher Education Program (STEP), the subject of this *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. Stockton College has plans to form a new education academic division that will be independent of Professional Studies.

Stockton College has helped students gain teacher certification since 1971 but, until the late 1990s, it required students to pursue teacher certification at the post-baccalaureate level. In 1997-98, the college granted students a second baccalaureate degree in teacher education when they completed all certification requirements and a minimum of 32 credits above the first bachelor's degree.

The current director of teacher education was appointed in 1998 and between 2002 and 2006, 11 full time tenure track faculty were hired. In May 2006, faculty members agreed that the program's goal was to prepare competent,

caring, and qualified educators and that its mission was to ensure that students demonstrate competence in the subject matter they will teach, apply the fundamentals of pedagogy, and develop caring teaching practices in diverse classroom settings .

STEP is accredited by the state of New Jersey as a post-baccalaureate certification program that prepares candidates for elementary certification with middle grades specializations (mathematics, English/language arts, science, and social studies) and secondary (6-12) certifications in art, biological sciences, chemistry, earth science, physical science, physics, mathematics, English, social studies, and world languages. STEP also offers an English as a Second Language (ESL) add-on endorsement.

**Claims:**

STEP faculty at Stockton College makes three claims about its graduates, specifying that the claims apply to novice teachers. First, the graduates demonstrate competence in the subject matter they will teach; second, they understand and apply appropriate pedagogy; and third, they demonstrate caring teaching practices in diverse classroom settings.

These claims align directly with TEAC Quality Principle I and with the three subsets of the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (NJPST): knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In addition, the faculty believes that graduates of the program are able to demonstrate their capacity for independent learning, using technology, and understanding multicultural perspectives – TEAC’s three cross-cutting themes.

**Evidence in support of the claims:**

The program faculty used data from the 59 December 2006 graduates to provide the evidence that it currently uses to demonstrate how well students meet the claims and to determine what other assessments to use in the future. As the table below demonstrates, the program relies on admission requirements, grades, and scores on the student teaching and field experience rating forms for its evidence.

<b>Current Assessments</b>	<b>Claim 1</b>	<b>Claim 2</b>	<b>Claim 3</b>
2.5 GPA for admission 2.75 GPA for certification	<b>X</b>		
PPST score of at least 171 in reading, writing, and math <b>OR</b> a combined SAT score of 1100 <b>OR</b> an ACT score of 21	<b>X</b>		
B.A. degree (or 10-course equivalent) in discipline	<b>X</b>		

Admission screening interview			X
Grade of C or better in subject matter courses	X		
Grade of B- or better in pedagogy courses		X	
Grade of B- or better on certification courses			X
Praxis II passing score	X		
STCRF (student teaching evaluation) teacher supervisors	X	X	X
STCRF (student teaching evaluation) cooperating teachers	X	X	X
ESTEP (program completer survey) self-evaluation	X	X	X

Table created by auditor from Table 2.3 in *IBP*.

The student teaching and field experience rating forms and the self-evaluation rating form are also used to produce evidence that students demonstrate their capacity for independent learning, using technology, and understanding multicultural perspectives.

### **Results:**

The means of admission and graduation test scores, GPAs, Student Teacher Competency Rating Form (STCRF) ratings, and Evaluation of Stockton Teacher Education Program (ESTEP) responses all met the program's desired benchmarks; however, in each instance, some individual program completers had lower scores/GPAs than the program requires. Faculty investigated each individual case and determined that when exceptions were made, the program had followed policy.

Correlations between the scores assigned to students by cooperating teachers and college supervisors for student teaching showed discrepancies with college supervisors consistently assigning higher scores. The program suggests that individual items on the form may be problematic and that cooperating teachers and supervisors may have different expectations. It intends to examine these (and other) possibilities as it improves the instrument.

The program does not express confidence in the validity and reliability of its assessment data in the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and describes its plans to use GPAs, for example, in triangulation with other measures and to improve the validity and reliability of the assessments.

### **Plan for program improvement:**

In reviewing its program for writing the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, STEP faculty

identified a number of additional assessments it wishes to introduce to the program as well as new strategies to ensure the reliability and validity of its measures. The new assessments and the claims for which they would provide evidence appear in the following table:

<b>Proposed New Assessments</b>	<b>Claim 1</b>	<b>Claim 2</b>	<b>Claim 3</b>
Admission orientation, pilot fall 2007 (including self-reflection essay)			<b>X</b>
Praxis III – projected to pilot in Spring 2009	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Web-based field work feedback, pilot fall 2007	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Web-based student assessments, pilot fall 2007	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Alumni survey, pilot spring 2008	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Praxis II – Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT), fall 2008		<b>X</b>	

Table created by auditor from Table 2.4 in *IBP*.

In addition to instituting these new assessments, the program intends to rethink and revise the existing STCRF (to align better with the claims) and to develop better training procedures for assessors. It will also revise items on the ESTEP to align them with the program’s claims and will revise data collection and file maintenance procedures. Although the *IBP* did not discuss it, Appendix E describes the use of portfolios as “currently under consideration.”

**Internal Audit:**

A three-member TEAC Committee designed procedures for an internal audit of the Stockton College Teacher Education Program quality control system in July 2006 and the faculty approved the procedures in May 2007. The audit was conducted by various faculty members over several months.

Overall, the audit revealed in very general terms the processes and procedures of the Stockton Teacher Education Program (STEP) and noted that most procedures worked as planned. In many specific areas of institutional capacity, however, the audit revealed elements that need improvement:

- The need for full-time faculty: 23.3% of courses taught in fall 2006 were taught by full-time faculty and 76.7% were taught by adjuncts which could mean that some students graduate from the program having taken few courses taught by full-time faculty.
- The need for science labs and language labs equipped with technologies specific to education, such as Smart Board.

- The need for a revised system for maintaining required program documentation as many of the forms required for admission, graduation, and certification were missing from student files.
- The need for better consistency in describing program goals, mission, and requirements among various print and electronic sources.

The STEP program and its faculty are relatively new and are in the process of establishing an effective quality control system.

**Commitment:**

On the whole, the program faculty found that the program had parity with regard to the institutional norms and concluded that Richard Stockton College of New Jersey was committed to its teacher education program.

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<sup>1</sup> **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:**

STEP offers programs leading to elementary teacher certification with middle grade specializations and secondary teacher certifications for subjects taught in grades 6-12. Middle grade specializations include mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies. Secondary subjects include art, biological science, chemistry, earth science, physical science, physics, mathematics, English, social studies, and world languages. STEP also offers an add-on endorsement program for English as a Second Language (K-12).