

## Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)

### Summary of the Case Roanoke College Teacher Licensure Program<sup>1</sup>

*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 is making for accreditation.*

#### **Authorship and approval of the *Inquiry Brief*:**

The *Inquiry Brief* was written by M. Lisa Earp, Gary L. Whitt, Maria E. Stallions, Timothy L. Reynolds, Leslie D. Murrill, Lisa G. Stoneman, and Kathryn S. Elmore, with statistical analysis by Gary L. Whitt and Jeffrey L. Spielman, and was approved by the faculty on August 28, 2009.

#### **Introduction:**

Roanoke College, originally Virginia Institute, was founded in 1842 with a mission to educate young men of the frontier. After a move to its present-day location of Salem, Virginia, the institute was elevated to college status by the Virginia Legislature in 1853 and renamed Roanoke College. Today Roanoke is an independent coeducational liberal arts institution enrolling over 1900 students, with a commitment to developing students as whole persons with a sense of freedom and purpose who become resourceful, informed, and responsible citizens.

Roanoke College has offered a teacher licensure program since 1906. The current version of the program, Teaching in the Diverse Classroom, was developed to address federal and state expectations regarding preparation of teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The program is distinguished by seven characteristics:

1. constructivism
2. professional development
3. cross-cultural competencies
4. differentiation
5. relationships with schools
6. mentoring relationships
7. liberal arts foundation

In 2007-2008, the department included seven full-time faculty members and 229 students in various stages of the program.

#### **Program claims:**

The four TEAC claims are the four Roanoke College Education Department Goals on which the teacher licensure program is built:

**Claim 1:** Roanoke College teacher licensure candidates know and use the central concepts, tools, and structures of the discipline. This claim aligns with TEAC Quality Principle 1.1.

**Claim 2:** Roanoke College teacher licensure candidates understand and develop compelling instruction appropriate to a wide range of learners. This claim

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aligns with TEAC Quality Principle 1.2.

**Claim 3:** Roanoke College teacher licensure candidates implement instruction in a manner which reflects pedagogical mastery and care for students. This claim aligns with TEAC Quality Principle 1.3.

**Claim 4:** Roanoke College teacher licensure candidates know how to grow as professional teachers.

In addition, the faculty have identified evidence for each of the cross-cutting themes embedded in Claims 1-3.

### Evidence supporting the claims

- ***Student Teaching Final Evaluations by Clinical Faculty (Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 3, Claim 4)***

The clinical faculty assess student teachers on the 33 Education Department goal exemplars, 7 (section ST1) are used as evidence for Claim 1, 9 for Claim 2 (section ST2), 11 (section ST3) for Claim 3, and 6 (section ST4) for Claim 4. Mean scores on specific sections of the student teaching final evaluations ranged from 4.14 (section ST4, for health and human performance students) to 4.95 (section ST4, for chemistry students) on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) for the twelve program options.

- ***Oral Defense Score (Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 3, Claim 4)***

Each teacher education candidate assembles evidence for each of the 33 Education Department goal exemplars, and presents evidence for two exemplars per goal—one exemplar chosen by the student and the other chosen randomly or strategically by the faculty without prior notice to the student. The oral defense is rated by three Education Faculty members. Of the 33 exemplars, 7 (section OD1) are used as evidence for Claim 1, 9 for Claim 2 (section OD2), 11 (section OD3) for Claim 3, and 6 (section OD4) for Claim 4. Mean scores for the oral defense ranged from 4.35 (section OD2, for art students) to 5.00 (section OD3, for theatre arts students) on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) for the twelve program options.

- ***Overall GPA (Claim 1, Claim 4)***

The faculty view the overall GPA as evidence for candidates' content knowledge and their ability to grow as professional teachers because the component grades are for courses taught at different academic levels by content specialists across the disciplines using a variety of instructional and assessment formats. Mean overall GPAs ranged from 2.88 (physics students) to 3.64 (professional licensure program students) the twelve program options.

- ***Education GPA (Claim 2, learning how to learn)***

In the 2005 approved program, candidates must complete 10.5 credits (elementary education) or 7 credits (secondary and PreK-12) (with most courses being 1 credit or 0.5 credits) of education courses, which are taught at various levels by the education faculty, with an average GPA of 2.5 or better. Coursework covers all required VA DOE pedagogical knowledge competencies for teacher licensure and so provides evidence for Claim 2 (pedagogical knowledge), and it also requires candidates to

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apply what they have learned about best practices and constructivist-based teaching to lessons that they create and so provides evidence for the cross-cutting theme of learning how to learn. Mean Education GPAs ranged from 3.27 (English students) to 3.77 (math students) for the twelve program options.

- ***Grade in EDUC 221 (multicultural perspectives)***  
A passing grade for EDUC 221: The Exceptional Student provides evidence for students' understanding of multicultural perspectives. Since 2008, this course has been taught by an Education Department faculty member with expertise in English language learners and special education. [The faculty note that new courses, TESL 220/221: Cross-Cultural Learning and Communication, have been developed for the Teaching in the Diverse Classroom program that will replace EDUC 221 as evidence for multicultural perspectives.] The one sampled student with a grade for EDUC 221 received a 3.33 (B+).
- ***Grade in EDUC 342 (technology)***  
A passing grade for the course EDUC 342: Instructional Technology provides evidence for students' technological competence in that students are required to create an electronic portfolio to show mastery of the four Education claims. Mean grades for EDUC 342 ranged from 2.00 (theatre arts students) to 4.00 (professional licensure program, chemistry, math, physics, and Spanish students) for the twelve program options.
- ***Praxis II (Claim 1)***  
Teacher education candidates must pass the Praxis II subject area test in their licensure area (secondary and PreK-12 candidates) or in English, mathematics, science, and social studies (elementary candidates). All but three of the 96 candidates who took the Praxis II passed.
- ***Virginia Communications and Literacy Assessment (Claim 1)***  
The VCLA includes a reading and a writing subtest and is intended to measure the communication and literacy skills necessary to teach. Mean scores for the VCLA ranged from 514 (Health and Human Performance students) to 551 (Spanish students) relative to a passing score of 470 for the twelve program options.
- ***Student Teaching Grade (Claim 3)***  
The student teaching grade is assigned by the college supervisor and is based on evaluation of at least four in-class observations of the student teacher, interviews with the clinical faculty and the student teacher, and written evaluations by the clinical faculty. Mean student teaching grades ranged from 3.5 (English students) to 4.00 (chemistry, music, physics, theatre arts students) for the twelve program options.
- ***Final Evaluation of Student Teacher Performance (learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives, technology)***  
The clinical faculty assess student teachers using specific exemplars from the 33 Education Department goal exemplars, with learning how to learn assessed using

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exemplars 1.3 (use new information, skills and attitudes and apply the learning), 1.6 (access, assess and synthesize information from disparate sources), and 3.1 (apply cognitive learning theory and practice to teach and assess learning effectively); multicultural perspectives used to assess exemplar 1.2 (relate the importance of cultural perspective to the discipline); and technology assessed using exemplar 1.4 (uses appropriate technology to learn and to teach). Mean scores on specific subsections of the final evaluation of student teacher performance ranged from 3.8 (on ST1.2 for math students) to 5.00 (for ST1.4 for professional licensure program, chemistry, and physics students) on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) for the twelve program options.

- ***Diverse Placement (multicultural perspectives)***  
All candidates must complete a field-based experience in a diverse setting, which may be in a Title I school, an international placement, a hard to staff school, or the local urban school division. The faculty regard completion of this requirement as evidence that the students have been exposed to a multicultural environment. Of the 101 students included in the report for this assessment, 92% had been placed in a diverse setting.
- ***Faculty Reference Form for Field Placement Applicants (learning how to learn)***  
The Faculty Reference Form has been developed for use starting in Fall 2009 to include an assessment by two non-Education faculty members of the pre-service teacher's ability to learn how to learn and transfer learning. The faculty does not yet have results of this assessment.
- ***Roanoke College Computer Literacy Requirement (technology)***  
Roanoke College requires each student to be computer literate at a standard set and assessed by the student's major faculty. Graduation from Roanoke is taken as evidence that candidates have met the relevant standard.

### **Internal audit:**

Two faculty members conducted an internal audit using 14 randomly-selected student files (7 licensure and 7 advising) as points of entry into the quality control system, examining the following targets: curriculum, faculty, resources, support and feedback, practices and policies, and exit. The internal audit revealed that:

- College policy was followed for course and program approvals
- Each of four selected courses aligned with college policies, VDOE requirements, and catalog course descriptions
- Faculty interviews and examination of randomly-selected personnel files revealed no violation of faculty search, appointment, promotion, and contract policies, although faculty members raised concerns about salaries, facilities, staff support and college committee representation
- Education department salaries are generally lower than salaries of peers in the college
- Facilities and space were in some ways inadequate
- There was no record that budget policy relating to systematic assessment activity had been followed
- Students reported satisfaction with college and departmental support services

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- Student feedback was sought and reflected positive view of the program
- It was not clear that the education department's alignment of goals with the college strategic plan has resulted in expected funding
- Education faculty advising load is higher than that of peers in the College
- Financial aid through FAPIE is not available to student teachers who wish to complete an international placement

### **Plan for program improvement**

The faculty have revised and will revise aspects of their assessments: they have established clearer requirements for admission and successful completion of student teaching; they have better honed and aligned assessment instruments; they plan to evaluate the use of additional assessments to support their claims, including e-portfolios, pupil surveys of student teachers, and written reflections; and they plan to add student and college supervisor raters to the Final Evaluation of Student Teacher Performance, and consider including content-area faculty member ratings to the oral defense. They also plan to improve data collection and monitoring through use of a departmental database and through expanded use of the college database, and will use the EDGER system to further examine coverage of the exemplars for the Education Department goals. Additionally, they have worked with mathematics and music faculty members to address low Praxis II pass rates in those areas, and plan to work with the English faculty in the same way in the Fall of 2009.

### **Statement regarding commitment and capacity:**

The faculty concluded that Roanoke College is committed to the Teacher Licensure Program and that there is sufficient capacity to offer a quality program.

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<sup>1</sup> Program options include the following licensure programs, which can be earned in conjunction with an undergraduate degree or through a post-baccalaureate option called the Professional Licensure Program:

- Algebra I (add-on endorsement)
- Art Education
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Elementary Education
- English
- Journalism (add-on endorsement)
- Speech Communication (add-on endorsement)
- English as a Second Language
- French
- German
- Spanish
- Health & Physical Education
- History/Social Science
- Mathematics
- Vocal/Choir
- Physics
- Theatre Arts