

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Rockhurst University
Elementary & Secondary Education Teacher Education¹
Audit Dates: March 24-25, 2003

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 Debra Pellegrino Smith, and Amy McAninch.

Introduction:

Rockhurst University, a coeducational Jesuit institution, is committed to its founding philosophy of “service to others,” and the Department of Education strives, in this endeavor, to emphasize three central aspects of Jesuit education in its preparation of teachers. These include moral reflection (values), teaching for social justice, and the liberal treatment of subject matter. In light of these three guiding principles, the Department of Education aims to prepare teachers who:

- 1) Reflect and inquire into the moral values of what and how they teach and the implications it may have on individual learners,
- 2) Have mastered the subject-matter they teach,
- 3) Hold high expectations and engage all students in significant intellectual study fostering critical thinking in the disciplines,
- 4) Teach for critical literacy, i.e. engage students to construct meaning with an emphasis on the social construction of knowledge,
- 5) Develop curriculum and instruction that is learner-centered, taking into account student prior knowledge, experience and development,
- 6) Are committed to the profession of education, and
- 7) Have a solid grounding in the liberal arts and the variety of modes of inquiry as reflected in the liberal arts.

The Department of Education claims that its graduates meet the ten Missouri Standards for Teacher Education Programs (MoSTEP) for beginning teachers. The argument put forth for the use of these standards as claims for meeting the TEAC goals of Quality Principle I is that the MoSTEP standard 1 maps on to TEAC Quality Principle 1.1 (Subject matter knowledge); that MoSTEP standards 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 map on to TEAC Quality Principle 1.2 (Pedagogy); and that MoSTEP standards 3, 6, 8, 9, and 10 map on to TEAC Quality Principle 1.3 (Teaching skills). Finally, the areas of Caring and Professionalism are embedded in MoSTEP standards 3, 6, 9, and 10. Having linked the MoSTEP to TEAC Quality Principle I, the Inquiry Brief then links the MoSTEP standards to the program requirements by showing how each MoSTEP standard is included within the required course work and clinical experiences.

The assessment procedures are likewise aligned with the MoSTEP standards and TEAC goals and, finally, the measures of student learning are aligned with the measures of student learning with program requirements.

Measures of student learning used to support the claims include the C-Base exam of subject-matter knowledge, course grades and GPA, electronic student portfolios, and student teaching University mentor and cooperating teacher evaluations.

The Result section provides mean and sd data for University student teacher supervisors and Cooperating teacher ratings of student performance on each of the ten MoSTEP standards. In addition, admission to the program and recommendation for State certification requires that all students pass the C-Base exam and attain a C or better grade in all required program course work. Since the program requirements align with MoSTEP, students are judged to have met these standards having achieved the requisite grades and C-Base score.

Student mean ratings in student teaching on each of the 10 MoSTEP standards range from 3.4 to 3.86 (4 point scale), and the correlation between University supervisor and Cooperating teacher rating is .37. The argument is made that both the mean ratings and the correlations between raters meet the TEAC 75% heuristic for sufficiency. Thus, it is concluded that since the evidence shows that students at graduation have met the MoSTEP standards for beginning teachers and that since these standards subsume the components of TEAC's Quality Principle I, therefore Rockhurst Education students meet TEAC Quality Principle I requirements.

The faculty undertook the internal audit of the Quality Control system. The report indicates that for those components for which formal mechanisms exist, the system appears to work as intended. For those components for which explicit quality control mechanisms do not exist, the internal audit probes indicated satisfactory outcomes. Thus, while the overall conclusion is that the Quality Control System at Rockhurst is working satisfactorily, a number of concerns and weaknesses in the system were found and are discussed. Measures have been implemented or planned to address these issues.

Evidence is provided in Appendix B for Institutional Capacity for Program Quality and for Institutional Program Commitment in Appendix G. In both cases, the faculty provide evidence for each component (4.1 - 4.7). Rockhurst University claims it has demonstrated both the capacity and commitment in order to provide a high quality teacher education program. In one instance (faculty rank), the Department of Education was found to be at significantly less than parity with the University norm. However, this discrepancy was explained by the high faculty

turnover rate in the Department during the past few years and the University policy not to hire new faculty with tenure.

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

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