

**Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)**  
**St. Martin's University**  
**Teacher Education Program<sup>1</sup>**  
**Audit Dates: December 3 – 5, 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*:**

The *Inquiry Brief* was written by Joyce Westgard, Steve Siera, and Fumie Hashimoto, and was approved by all faculty and staff of the College of Education for submission on May 2, 2007.

**Introduction:**

St. Martin's University, located on a 300 acre campus in Lacey, Washington, was founded in 1895 by monks from the Order of St. Benedict, the oldest of the Catholic orders. The university strives to maintain the order's 1500 year tradition of *scholarship, education, hospitality, and community* in a blend with modern thought and practices and with a particular emphasis on the spiritual and ethical dimensions of all human activity. The 83 faculty members of the university, organized into six academic divisions and schools, offer 21 majors and 25 minors to about 1500 students on the main Lacey campus and five extension sites.

The teacher education program is given by 16 full-time (full and part-time, 14.5 FTE) and 24 adjunct faculty members, supported by 13 supervisors and four staff members, and leads to teacher certification in elementary, secondary, or special education as part of an undergraduate or master's degree or it leads to certification independently of the degree. The staff is 70% female and approximately 86% white. Two of the program's twenty-four 24 endorsement areas are completed by each of the program's 255 students (60% female and 80% white). The program has 15 carefully drawn design components and is basically a field-based constructivist oriented program with emphasis on differentiated instruction, technology, inquiry into the integration of the theoretical and practical, all of which are expected to yield P-12 educators who know their subject matters, can think critically, *love learning*, and strive to perfect their spiritual and ethical character.

**Claims:**

The program makes three claims about its graduates -- they (1) know the subject matters of their endorsement areas, (2) understand the individual needs and characteristics of their students so they can deliver effective

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instruction, and (3) can teach with *caring* and *compassion* because they believe that all children can succeed at learning.

These three claims and the ten assessments which support them (at least six per claim) align with TEAC's requirements and the Washington State Program Requirements (WAC).

**Evidence in support of the claims:**

The faculty assessed its success at achieving its claims with the ten measures, some of which are state-mandated and which had the following results:

1. State basic skills tests (WEST-B) and content tests (WEST-E/Praxis II) – about 90% on average scored above the state's passing score of 240 on WEST-B. On WEST-E/Praxis II tests the program's mean score exceeded the state's passing scores in all endorsement area tests.
2. Ratings by mentor teachers of student work samples (PPA) – 90% of the sample of program students met the state standard.
3. Student teacher survey ratings of the program showed 71% of the responses were in the *excellent* or *above average* categories and only 6% in the lowest categories of the survey.
4. Ratings by the students, faculty, mentor teachers, and faculty supervisors of the student's 24 dispositional behaviors – ratings were no lower than 6.4/10 and were generally in the 8/10 range.
5. Multiple ratings of the students' field experiences by classroom mentor teachers and faculty supervisors were predominately in the *excellent* or *outstanding* rating ranges.
6. Ratings by employers and alumni of the first year's teaching experience (EBI) showed variability over 2001-06 but compared favorably against ratings of other programs in the state.
7. Annual surveys of alumni responses through their first five years (1999-2004) were generally in the 3.0/4.0 range indicating that courses or components of the program were thought to be in the *helpful* to *very helpful* range of the rubric (vs. a *little* or *not at all helpful*).
8. Annual job placement rates (OSPI) are above state averages.
9. Grades in 3.70/4.00 ranges and comparable to non-program subject matter majors in the endorsement areas of English and mathematics, the only areas that had sufficient students for comparison.

The faculty investigated the reliability and validity of its measures through considerations of content, concurrent, predictive validity, and also through reliance on the research of others into the state-mandated and created instruments. In general the faculty found moderate positive correlations among the measures they investigated and levels of inter-rater agreements that were

generally within one unit of assessment. The faculty, as a result, felt they had a reasonable basis for confidence in the measures they employed.

**Internal audit:**

The faculty described its Quality Control System as a set of systems at the university and program levels (academic, administrative, faculty, resources, and student support services). They selected nine students, a little more than 10% of the 64 students who completed the program in 2005-06 in all program options and sites, as the entry point of their internal audit. All faculty members participated in the audit and followed a trail throughout their systems and generally found their procedures and practices of controlling the quality of the program worked as expected. They identified six actions they took to improve the program over the years 2001-2006 based on evidence acquired in their three step academic data gathering control system. The internal audit did reveal some limitations, however, and among these were the wisdom of requiring two endorsement areas, the large number of credits taken by some students, the lack of participation and involvement of the adjunct faculty members in quality control, the tight financial condition at the university, and the difficulty in uncovering relevant data at the institutional level.

**Commitment:**

The faculty made extensive comparisons between their program and the university overall and found parity or comparability with regard to the curriculum's requirements, faculty characteristics, resources, their students' access to services and benefits, and the numbers of complaints lodged centrally. Because the university's most recent regional accreditation report found the institution had the capacity to offer quality programs, the faculty concluded, based on their program's parity with the institution, that the program also had adequate capacity and that the institution was committed to the program. The program intends to make inquiries into issues of parity between their program and other teacher education programs in the state.

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**<sup>1</sup> The program includes options in the following areas and Washington, following to its own policies and regulations, may grant teaching licenses in these areas to the program's graduates:**

- Teacher certification program with options in: elementary, secondary, and special education; 24 endorsements; undergraduate, certification-only and master's levels; main campus (Lacey, WA) and extension site locations (Ft. Lewis Army Post; McChord Air Force Base; Clover Park School District (some special education courses)) :

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- Endorsements in 24 areas provide content and grade level expertise to support the program options above: biology, bilingual education, chemistry, drama, early childhood education, early childhood special education, elementary education, English language arts, English as a second language, French, health/fitness, history, Japanese, mathematics, middle-level humanities, middle-level math/science, choral music, instrumental music, general music, reading, science, social studies, Spanish, and special education.