

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief Proposal)
Shenandoah University
Educator Preparation Program¹
Audit Dates: January 21-23, 2009

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*:

Mary Bowser, professor of education, was the primary author of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. She was assisted by 11 colleagues who had responsibility for contributing sections, editing and data input. The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* was approved unanimously by faculty of the School and Education and Human Development on October 6, 2008, by the faculty of the School of Education & Human Development and the College of Arts and Sciences. On October 8, 2008, the faculty of the Conservatory unanimously approved the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*.

Introduction:

Founded as a high school in 1875, the Shenandoah Seminary in Dayton, Virginia subsequently changed names several times as it added post-secondary programs (principally in music) before becoming a four-year degree granting school in 1974, taking its current name in 1991, and moving to a new campus in Winchester, Virginia in 1960. The University has 183 full-time and 158 part-time faculty members, who instruct 3107 students of whom 1524 are undergraduates.

The teacher education program began as music teacher preparation program, receiving state approval in 1975 and subsequently adding early childhood, elementary and secondary teacher preparation. The current program has two levels (undergraduate and graduate), three locations (Education & Human Development, Arts & Sciences, and the Conservatory), approximately 14 options in various license areas and graduates about 50 students each year on average, who are predominately women (76%) and white (90%). There are nine core faculty members who are devoted full-time to the program with the balance of the 93 program teaching faculty from other units, evenly divided by gender, but predominately white.

Program claims:

The faculty proposes to investigate whether their licensure candidates know and understand the following:

1. Their subject matter and its applications to teaching
2. Current research, best educational practice, and the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL)

3. How to demonstrate high levels of caring teaching skill in their professional relationships with students, their parents, and colleagues.
4. How to incorporate *learning to learning*, *multicultural perspectives*, and *technology* into the three items above.

Evidence supporting the claims:

The faculty plan to find the evidence needed for their investigations from the following sources, many of which will be revised:

1. Standardized Tests (Praxis I and II, the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment, and the Virginia Reading Assessment)
2. Grades (major GPA, pedagogy GPA, field experience grades, and grades in specific courses)
3. Course outcomes (measured by performance rubrics for the cross-cutting themes and reflective practices with the WEAVE on-line tool,)
3. Portfolio products (measured by performance rubrics for the cross-cutting themes and reflective practices with the WEAVE on-line tool,)
4. Capstone & Field Experiences Project (ratings of student teachers by faculty and cooperating teachers)
5. Surveys (Virginia Initiative for Technology and Administrative Leadership questions will be sent to alumni and employers)

The faculty have set some criteria for the assessments -- grades (2.5 u/g, 2.9 in the major and 3.0 for graduate students), survey results of 3.0/5.0, capstone results of 80% success, and have adopted the state's criterion for the standardized tests, the benchmarks by which the validity of the local assessments will be evaluated.

The faculty members have some reason to believe their proposed assessments are reliable and valid. The program reports grades typically above 3.0, Praxis II final pass rates of 80-100%, student teaching ratings of over 4.50/5.00 and there are modest correlations between grades and standardized test scores.

Internal audit:

The audit of the quality control system was conducted in two phases: examination of the data for Appendix B and an examination of a sample of student records, which was assembled by the unit heads drawing, by an unbiased procedure, a weighted sample of 21 graduates from May 2008. The students came from the three units (SEHD, Arts and Sciences, Conservatory) and included both undergraduate and graduate students.

The faculty concluded that their quality control system generally functioned as it was designed, but owing perhaps to transition issues over the last three, about ten areas of quality were identified as needing attention.

Commitment:

The issues of parity are complex when three of institutions six academic units manage the program, but on the whole the faculty found that their respective program units were treated comparably to the others at Shenandoah, with some exceptions in the percentage of adjunct faculty in the School of Education and Human Development.

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

Shenandoah University has Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) approved undergraduate and graduate programs including program options for initial licensure in elementary, middle, and secondary education. Those include biology, chemistry, English, history and social science, mathematics, health and physical education, choral and instrumental music, dance, and Spanish. The approved graduate program option leads to a postgraduate professional license for reading specialists.