

**Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Southern Utah University
Leadership in Education and Administrative Development¹
Audit Dates: October 6-7, 2008**

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 Ward Gubler, Katy Herbold, David Lund, Jim McCoy, Tony Pellegrini, and Bart Reynolds, and was approved by the LEAD Program faculty on January 13, 2009.

Introduction:

Southern Utah University is a comprehensive, regional institution offering graduate, baccalaureate, associate and technical programs in the more geographically isolated and less populated area of the state. Its commitment to excellent education has been recognized with citations from Consumer's Digest and the Princeton Review.

The LEAD program began as a partnership with Utah State University in 1986, and became independent in 2000. It serves students state-wide through face-to-face classes as well as online and television instruction. The program is offered at the graduate level and includes both a licensure only course of study and an M.Ed. with an emphasis in educational leadership

The program is standards-base with a focus on application and reflective practice. The four full-time LEAD faculty have extensive K-12 administrative experience. These four, along with four additional full-time education faculty and a few adjunct faculty, serve a growing number of students with 56 students completing the program in 2008.

Program claims:

With reference to TEAC Component 1.1 (**professional knowledge**), the faculty claim that candidates have mastered the professional knowledge provided through the LEAD program (Claim One).

With reference to TEAC Component 1.2 (**strategic decision-making**), the faculty claim that candidates demonstrate abilities for strategic decision making (Claim Two).

With reference to TEAC Component 1.3 (**caring leadership skill**), the faculty claim that candidates possess caring leadership skills (Claim Three).

The faculty also report assessment results for the TEAC cross-cutting themes of **learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives and accuracy, and technology.**

Evidence supporting the claims

- **Culminating Program GPA (Claim One, Claim Two, Claim Three)**
Course grades are based in large part on Applied Administrative Assignments, which incorporate both applications and national standards, which in turn support the program goals. The culminating GPA correlated significantly with Praxis scores, giving the faculty confidence in the validity of the grades. Mean culminating GPAs were 3.95 on a 4-point scale.
- **Praxis Scores—overall score and topic scores (Claim One, Claim Two, Claim Three, Learning how to Learn, Multicultural Perspective)**
SUU LEAD students take the Praxis Educational Leadership: Administration and Supervision Exam 0410 following coursework and before internship. The faculty computed means and pass rates for 162 of the 164 students who took the Praxis in 2003-2008, eliminating the remaining two scores because they were outliers. Mean overall Praxis scores were 699, with 91% passing, and 93% to 96% scoring within or above average performance range on the three topics.
- **Mentor Principal Final Evaluation—overall rating and specific item ratings (Claim One, Claim Two, Claim Three, Learning how to Learn, Multicultural Perspective, Technology)**
The Mentor Principal Final Evaluation is a locally-constructed 11-item instrument with each item rated as 0 (Standard Not Met), 1 (Standard Partially Met), or 2 (Standard Met). The overall item mean was 1.97 out of a possible 2 points, with means for specifically cited items between 1.97 and 2.00.
- **Exit Survey (Claim One, Claim Two, Claim Three)**
Students are given exit surveys at the completion of their program and asked to mail them in anonymously. The faculty feel confident of the validity of the surveys because the program completers are professional educators. A large majority agreed or somewhat agreed with positive statements about the program, with agreement on applicable items ranging from 80% (“I liked taking courses online”) to 100% (“The program of study was relevant to my degree and career aspirations”).
- **Administrative/Supervisory Work Sample (Claim One, Claim Two)**
The Administrative/Supervisory Work Sample is a culminating project which requires candidates to develop a strategic plan for a campus, program, or

district. It is graded pass/fail and a pass is necessary for program completion. The pass rate between 2003 and 2008 exceeded 99%.

- **Applied Administrative Assignment (AAA) 6540-1 Personal Leadership Philosophy (Learning how to Learn)**

The AAAs are project-based assignments that require students to state a philosophy of educational leadership, which is reviewed by the faculty for evidence of caring. The faculty identified themes of caring in 77% of the AAA 6540-1 papers.

Internal audit:

The faculty examined files for 26 randomly-selected program completers, along with institutional documentation, to conduct the internal audit.

4.1 Curriculum: All 26 program completers had met all degree requirements and had been recommended for licensure.

4.2 Faculty: Faculty vitae indicated that LEAD faculty members had appropriate education and experience for their positions.

4.3 Facilities: Budget documentation was accurate and reflected sufficient funding for the LEAD program.

4.4 Fiscal & Administrative Capacity: Funding is appropriately monitored by the Dean's office.

4.5 Student Support Services: Students access the support services that are critical to their studies.

4.6 Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading and advertising: Most accepted students meet all admission requirements, and those who do not are able to correct deficiencies quickly.

4.7 Student Feedback: The Vice President of Student Services reports no graduate student complaints to date.

Plan for program improvement

The faculty identified several areas for improvement, many relating to collecting better-aligned, more complete, and more comprehensive data and using it to make program decisions.

Evidence of commitment:

4.1 Curriculum: Curricular requirements meet state and University standards.

4.2 Faculty: Faculty members are qualified to teach the courses to which they are assigned, and most have terminal degrees.

4.3 Facilities: Facilities, equipment, and supplies are excellent.

4.4 Fiscal & Administrative Capacity: The institution is financially sound and provides appropriate support to the LEAD program.

4.5 Student Support Services: All university support services are available to LEAD students.

4.6 Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading and advertising: Program publications are accurate and include an academic calendar and grading policy.

4.7 Student Feedback: The program collects feedback from students through surveys and course evaluations, which generally indicate satisfaction.

The faculty concluded that Southern Utah University is committed to the Leadership in Education and Administrative Development Program.

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

- M.Ed. with an emphasis and licensure in Educational Leadership
- Non Degreed Administrative Licensure course of study