

**Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief Proposal)**  
**St. Ambrose University**  
**Teacher Education Program<sup>1</sup>**  
**Audit Dates: April 19-20, 2006**

*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*:**

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* was written by Tracy J. Schuster-Matlock, Dean Marple, and Michael Hustedde, and was approved by the Teacher Education Program faculty on December 7, 2005.

**Introduction:**

St. Ambrose University, located in Davenport, Iowa along the Mississippi River, was founded as a Catholic seminary in 1882, and is today a private, coeducational liberal arts institution with a strong Catholic heritage. The campus has experienced tremendous growth at the undergraduate level recently, with a 35% increase in the number of full-time undergraduate students between 2000 and 2005, and has a current graduate and undergraduate student enrollment of 3,534 students.

St. Ambrose has offered programs in teacher preparation since the 1920s. Teacher education has undergone a number of organizational developments, and is currently offered through two departments, the Early Childhood and Elementary Education Department and the Secondary Education Department (including K-12 Art, Music and PE) , which overlap in the area of foundations of education courses and with respect to educational services. The Teacher Education Program currently serves approximately 350 students, and is staffed by 12 faculty members.

The curriculum of the Teacher Education Program stresses the liberal arts, and the Elementary and Secondary (including K-12 Art, Music, and PE) curricula are aligned with Charlotte Danielson's Components of Professional Practice, while the Early Childhood curriculum is aligned with the Iowa Competencies for Early Childhood Education.

The faculty of the St. Ambrose Teacher Education Program seek accreditation for their undergraduate program, which offers the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Music degrees, as well as the Bachelor of Education degree to students who already possess a bachelor's degree and wish to become certified to teach, along with the following endorsements:

## **Degrees offered**

### **Endorsements offered**

#### **Early Childhood Education**

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education
  
- Endorsement 100 consisting of both ECE & ECSE (birth-3 rd grade)
- Any K-6 endorsement

#### **Elementary Education**

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education
  
- Reading
- Language Arts
- Social Studies: Social Science
- Social Sciences: History
- Mathematics
- Special Education (Instructional Strategist Level I: Mild Moderate)
- Science
- PK-K
- Middle School (5-8)
- Foreign Language

#### **Secondary Education**

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Education
  
- General Business
- Business Marketing/Management
- Communications/Theatre/Speech
- English/LA
- French
- German
- Spanish
- Mathematics
- Biology

- Chemistry
- General Science
- Physics
- Economics
- American Government
- History (American and World)
- Psychology
- Reading
- Sociology
- Middle School (5-8)

### **K-12 Education**

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Music Education
- Bachelor of Education
  
- PE
- Health
- Art
- Music

#### **Program Claims and Proposed Supporting Evidence:**

The St. Ambrose Teacher Education Program faculty claim that TEP graduates are competent, caring, and qualified teachers who possess the skills necessary to be effective teachers. Specifically, they claim:

1. TEP graduates possess subject matter knowledge.

The faculty propose to support this claim using—

- C-Base scores
- GPAs of selected courses
- Cooperating teacher ratings of student teaching in selected domains
- Portfolio scores in selected domains

2. TEP graduates possess pedagogical knowledge.

The faculty propose to support this claim using—

- GPAs of selected courses
- Cooperating teacher ratings of student teaching in selected domains
- Portfolio scores in selected domains
- Student teaching grades

3. TEP graduates possess teaching skill.

The faculty propose to support this claim using—

- Cooperating teacher ratings of student teaching in selected domains
- Portfolio scores in selected domains
- Student teaching grades

### **Reliability and Validity of Measures:**

The measures fall into five categories which are listed below along with their associated reliability and validity information:

#### **C-Base scores***(Claim 1)*

The C-Base is a criterion-referenced standardized entrance exam for the Teacher Education Program that assesses basic skills in English, writing, and mathematics. The faculty note with respect to its reliability that C-Base scores are fairly stable over time, and with respect to its validity that C-Base scores correlate moderately but significantly with overall GPA.

#### **GPA's of selected courses***(Claim 1, Claim 2)*

Courses for which GPA has been calculated in support of Claim 1 (subject matter knowledge) are major courses for Secondary majors, and general education courses for ECE and Elementary majors. Courses for which GPA has been calculated in support of Claim 2 (pedagogical knowledge) are education courses for all majors. The faculty note with respect to the validity of the GPA's that courses are aligned with either the Iowa Competencies for Early Childhood Education or the Danielson Components of Professional Practice.

#### **Cooperating teacher ratings of student teaching in selected domains***(Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 3)*

Cooperating teachers rate student teachers using a form provided by the TEP. The faculty note with respect to reliability of the ratings that there is no statistical difference between ratings from the cooperating teachers and the university supervisors, and that all raters undergo training in the use of the forms. They note with respect to validity of the ratings that the items on the forms are aligned with either the Iowa Competencies for Early Childhood Education or the Danielson Components of Professional Practice.

#### **Portfolio scores in selected domains***(Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 3)*

Students must maintain portfolios that are assessed at a number of checkpoints throughout the program. The faculty note with respect to the reliability of the portfolio ratings that all raters undergo training, although correlations of ratings made for the training video reflect an unsatisfactory reliability. They note with respect to validity of portfolio ratings that the portfolio

expectations are aligned with either the Iowa Competencies for Early Childhood Education or the Danielson Components of Professional Practice.

**Student teaching grades** (*Claim 2, Claim 3*)

The student teaching grade is assigned by the university supervisor in consultation with the cooperating teacher and is based on student teaching evaluations and quality of required assignments. The faculty are concerned with the reliability and validity of the student teaching grade as an independent measure, but note that it is useful as a means of triangulation.

**Results:**

Overall, the faculty felt that the results supported their claims, although their confidence in the results was moderated by their concerns about reliability and validity of the measures. The results were as follows: C-Base scores were generally 60 points or more over the passing score of 235 for all domains. GPAs were overall above the required minimum of 2.7, and in most domains were above 3.0, but general education or content GPAs were below 2.7 for ECE and Elementary majors. Cooperating teacher ratings of student teaching were around 3.8 on a scale of 0 (worst) to 4 (best) for sets of items associated with each of the three claims. Mean portfolio subscores were around 2.9 of a scale of 0 (worst) to 3 (best) for all three claims. Student teaching grades averaged around 3.9, with most students receiving the grade of A (4.0).

Additionally, the faculty noted that results from both alumni and employer surveys supported the claims as well, as both groups reported that overall they were “satisfied” to “very satisfied” with the teacher preparation program at St. Ambrose.

**Internal audit:**

The internal audit was conducted by Tracy Schuster-Matlock and Dean Marple during the summer of 2005. The preliminary internal audit report was presented in October 2005, and faculty members were asked for their interpretations of and recommendations regarding the findings.

Dr. Schuster-Matlock and Dr. Marple chose as points of entry into the quality control system an unbiased sample of 27 of the 270 current students, and themselves as 2 of the 12 faculty members. Overall, they found that quality control mechanisms, such as curriculum alignment and admissions standards, were in place, and for the most part were working as designed, but they cited concerns in some cases that quality control procedures were not consistently followed.

**Evidence of commitment and capacity:**

The faculty determined that the Teacher Education Program is on par with St.

Ambrose University as a whole in terms of degree credit hour requirements, faculty rank and degrees earned, classroom space and equipment, salaries and budget, student course satisfaction, availability of students services, admissions and grading policies, and rate of student complaints.

Overall, the faculty conclude that St. Ambrose University is committed to the Teacher Education Program and provides suitable capacity for a quality program.

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

- Early childhood education
- Elementary education
- Secondary education
- K-12 (health, physical education, art, and music)