

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief Proposal)
State University of New York College at Plattsburgh
Teacher Education Program¹
Audit Dates: April 13-15, 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*:

The *Inquiry Brief* was compiled by David Hill, Dean of Education, Health, and Human Services (with contributions from eight individuals named in the *Brief*) and was approved by the Teacher Education Unit faculty in draft form on September 19, 2008, and in its final form on February 13, 2009.

Introduction:

The institution that is now the State University of New York College at Plattsburgh was founded in 1890 as a normal school to prepare teachers for the region's public schools. Today, SUNY Plattsburgh's education faculty and programs are housed in Sibley Hall, formerly the College's laboratory school. Located in the City of Plattsburgh in northeastern New York State, the College enrolls roughly 6360 students (5700 undergraduate and 660 graduate), served by 291 full-time and 338 part-time faculty members. Undergraduate students at Plattsburgh are generally traditional college-age, full-time students; the student body has limited numbers of member of historically under-represented groups.

The Teacher Education Unit is housed in the Division of Education, Health, and Human Services; the unit consists of 27 full-time members (20 tenured or tenure-track, 7 lecturers) supported by 56 part-time adjunct faculty. The program served 1032 students in 2007, the latest year for which data were analyzed in the *Brief*. In that year 338 students completed the program. The Faculty has been actively engaged in redesign of programs and administrative structures in recent years.

Program Claims

The current program is guided by nine themes, long embedded, and recently re-affirmed in the redesign of program options, namely: assessment, collaboration, content in context, learning environments, modeling, multiculturalism and diversity, recursive learning, technology, critical thinking and problem solving. These themes undergird the three claims that faculty make about their program completers, namely, that completers are:

1. Knowledgeable about the content they teach and able to apply discipline-specific theories, principles, concepts, and technologies;
2. Knowledgeable about pedagogy in the sense that they both know relevant pedagogical theories, principles, and concepts and are able to apply them;

3. Possess professional skills including the commitment to teach in a caring manner, maintain positive professional behaviors and dispositions, and adapt their teaching to meet all students' educational, social, and emotional needs.

In addition to these claims, the faculty assert that each of TEAC's cross-cutting liberal education themes are addressed.

Evidence supporting the claims

Data presented as evidence in support of the claims include:

1. **Course grades:** GPAs in general education for all undergraduate students [2.84 – 3.34] and in content majors for secondary education students [2.92-3.75] in support of claim 1; professional education course GPAs for graduate students [MSEd] in support of Claims 2 [3.35 - 4.0] and 3 [3.38 - 4.0]; and education course grades for all three Claims for BS/MST students [means of 3.45 to 3.93 across program options];
2. **Scores and pass rates on New York State Teacher Certification Exams:** scores on the Liberal Arts and Sciences test and the Content Specialty test in support of Claim 1 [means for all program option groups above established cut scores, pass rates ranging from 75% to 100% across options]; scores on the Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written in support of Claim 2 [means for all program option groups above established cut scores, pass rates 99-100];
3. **Supervisor evaluations** of student teaching or clinical practice (which contain evidence relevant to all Claims) [means of 4.22 to 4.64 on a scale of 1 to 5 across years and program options for BS and MST students; 2.79 to 3.0 on a scale of 1 to 3 for students in the Literacy option; 4.12 – 4.76 on a scale of 1 to 5 for those in the Special Education masters program option];
4. **Learning Experience Portfolios ratings:** The LEP is an instructional segment produced, analyzed, and reported by the teacher candidate and scored by the faculty yielding data to support Claims 2 and 3. [means of 82.75 to 97.78/100 across program options] or, for the Special Education program option, the Capstone Portfolio means of [2.45 to 2.75 across cohorts on a scale of 1 to 3];
5. **Surveys** of program completers [means of 3.65 to 3.88 across years] and employers [means 3.07 to 4.05, both on a five-point scale], including an externally produced Educational Benchmarking survey of two program completer cohorts [means of 3.79 to 5.89 on a 6-point scale across factors and cohorts (in support of all three Claims)].

Validity and reliability of each data source was investigated: 12 of 16 correlations reported for measures of Claim 1 were significant at the 0.01 level; as were 3 of 5 correlations reported for measures related to claim 2, and 1 of 3 reported for Claim 3. Reported results of data analysis generally supported the claims, with supporting evidence marginally stronger for Claims 1 and 3 than for Claim 2.

Internal audit:

An internal audit of the program's quality control system was conducted in the summer and fall of 2007. A stratified random sample of 35 program completers (Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007) from across program options was drawn, as were samples of course syllabi and full- and part-time faculty. The audit reviewed:

1. Course and program approval
2. Fiscal and Administrative support
3. Quality of the Faculty and support for faculty
4. Student learning (admissions, academic standards, support)
5. Assessment (grades, standardized tests, field experiences, student teaching, graduation requirements).

The quality control system was generally found to be working as designed.

Plans for program improvement:

Program faculty intend both to improve the quality control system (through efforts to enhance inter-rater reliability on faculty-rated instruments, to construct a comprehensive data system that will facilitate ongoing investigation of student performance, and to gather data on student experience and concerns at multiple points prior to program completion) and to investigate five questions that emerge from their analysis of the findings reported in the *Brief*.

Statement regarding commitment and capacity: The faculty concluded that SUNY Plattsburgh is committed to the Teacher Education Program and that there is sufficient capacity to offer a quality program.

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

Program options include: BS and MST program options leading to initial certification in Childhood Education (1-6); Adolescence Education (7-12) for teachers of biology, chemistry, earth science, English, French, mathematics, physics, social studies, and Spanish; and MEd programs leading to certification in Special Education (teaching students with disabilities B-2, 1-6, or 7-12); and Literacy Education (B-6 or 5-12).