

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Texas Lutheran University
Teacher Education Program¹
Audit Dates: November 10-11, 2005

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 Caroline Kyhl (former faculty member), Joyce Kostelnik, Gary Short, Pat K. Watkins, Joan Williams, , Nick Lockard, and was approved by the faculty of the Education Department at the following meetings:
Departmental Working Meeting - Wednesday, 2/23/2005, 12:00-2:00pm
Departmental Working Meeting - Friday, 2/25/2005, 2:00-4:00pm
Departmental Working Meeting - Wednesday, 3/2/2005, 12:00-1:00pm
Departmental Working Meeting - Friday, 3/4/2005, 2:00-4:00pm
Departmental Working Meeting - Friday, 3/11/2005, 2:00-4:00pm
Departmental Working Meeting - Monday, 3/14/2005, 2:00-4:00pm

Introduction:

Texas Lutheran University (TLU) is a private, undergraduate liberal arts institution affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, founded in 1891 as the Evangelical Lutheran College of Brenham, Texas. Located in Seguin, Texas since 1912 it evolved into a university in 1996, having been an academy, a junior college and a senior college, ultimately obtaining university status in 1996. The institution has been recognized ten times by *U.S. News and World report* for quality and value.

TLU's current enrollment exceeds 1340 students served by approximately 69 full-time and 50 part-time faculty members. The faculty seeks to create a community of learning and a community of Christian faith.

The TLU Department of Education was created in 1962 to prepare professional educators for both public and private schools. This department's faculty aims to develop intellectually competent, confident, caring and reflective graduates who will make a positive difference in their classrooms, in their communities, and in their profession.

The TLU Department of Education nurtures students' intellectual development within a community of faith and learning. It draws on the views of Vygotsky with an emphasis on social interaction as a fundamental principle in cognitive development.

TLU's education faculty (4.5 members) offers a program of study that prepares about 40 undergraduate students for elementary and secondary teaching certifications in the following specialties: 1) Elementary (PreK-4), 2) Middle (4-8), Secondary (8-12), and All-level (K-12.) Elementary candidates major in multidisciplinary studies; Middle School candidates major in multidisciplinary studies with specialization in one of three areas: math/science, social studies, or English language arts/reading. Secondary candidates major in mathematics, biology/life science, history, social studies, or English/language arts. All level candidates major in either Kinesiology or Music. These students chose a second certification area from this list of certifications (with the exception of those majoring in mathematics.)

Program's claims:

The faculty makes an overall claim that their graduates are competent, caring, qualified, and caring as well as a number of specific claims associated with the components of *Quality Principle I* (graduates have acquired subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and can teach in a caring manner that enables them to create successful learning environments for all students.)

Evidence supporting the claims:

To support its claims the faculty relies on the following categories of evidence:

- GPA of 2.90 on admission
- License test results
- Cooperating teacher ratings
- Student self-assessment
- Grades in major (Multidisciplinary major only)
- Grades in supporting arts & science courses
- University supervisor ratings
- Principal and alumni survey ratings

The grade point averages overall and in subject matter and pedagogy were uniformly above 3.0/4.0, the students passed each of the appropriate state license tests, and the local ratings were above 4.00/5.00.

Internal audit:

An internal audit was conducted with four students, two randomly selected from those who graduated with elementary degrees between 2000 and 2003 and two from those who completed secondary degrees during the same period.

Overall, the internal audit revealed that the program had policies and procedures in place to support a quality program. The audit also revealed gaps

in the data gathering system, which is being addressed by an Excel-based tracking system and the consideration of a data management system.

Evidence of commitment and capacity:

Since the last TEAC audit, the TLU Department of Education has developed new courses; hired of a faculty member with expertise in early childhood and literacy; increased office, lab, classroom, and storage space; initiated a Teacher Recruitment Fair; and improved departmental publications regarding the program.

The university has hired a student support director. The program has parity with other programs with respect to student support services, curricular standards, faculty qualifications, facilities, fiscal and administrative support for faculty scholarship and professional development, and student complaints, but compares unfavorably with other programs regarding student diversity. The program is now housed in a new modern building.

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

Elementary (PreK – 4), Middle (4-8), Secondary (8-12), All-level (K-12)