

Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)

**Summary of the Case
The University of Virginia's College at Wise¹
Teacher Education Program
Audit Dates: February 21-24, 2010**

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.

Introduction:

The University of Virginia's College at Wise (known informally as UVa-Wise), was founded in 1954 as Clinch Valley College, a two-year college of the University of Virginia. UVa-Wise is the only four-year, state-supported college in far southwestern Virginia and the only branch of the University of Virginia. The first Bachelor of Arts degrees were granted in 1970, and included majors in Elementary and Secondary Education. On July 1, 1999, the institution's name changed to the University of Virginia's College at Wise.

Its 94 full-time faculty serve an undergraduate student body of more than 1,600. Approximately 8-9 percent of the students at UVa-Wise are part of the Teacher Education Program (TEP). The TEP offers integrated concentrations in four academic areas for students preparing to teach elementary education, special education, as well as health and physical education. Students preparing to teach middle and high school subjects major in a specific discipline area. Students may choose to earn an elementary and middle school endorsement at the same time.

The stated mission of the institution is "to guide students to become knowledgeable, caring, and life-long learners who enrich the lives of their students and their communities." The mission of the Teacher Education Program at UVa-Wise is to prepare professional educators "to be transformative leaders in their classrooms by caring for, teaching, and inspiring their students to excel as learners and citizens." UVa-Wise is ranked by *U. S. News & World Report* as one of the nation's top ten public liberal arts colleges.

The program includes options (Virginia Endorsements) in 17 areas, and the state, following its own policies and regulations may grant teaching licenses in these areas to the program's completers.¹

Program Claims

The Teacher Education Program makes three claims that are aligned with TEAC Quality Principle I (QP 1.1, Evidence of Student Learning): They claim that program completers have:

1. Both depth and breadth of subject matter attained through the general liberal arts core requirements;

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2. Pedagogical knowledge and skills to teach all learners; and
3. Dispositions reflective of caring and effective teachers.

Flowing from the three overarching claims, the faculty has identified eight competencies that students develop through the curriculum of the TEP. These include:

1. A thorough background in the liberal arts;
2. A high level of competence in a specialization area where endorsement is sought;
3. The ability to transfer concepts from the social and behavioral sciences to education problems;
4. An understanding of human growth and development as well as principles of teaching and learning;
5. Knowledge of current educational research and technology and the ability to design, implement, and evaluate curriculum that reflects that knowledge;
6. Sensitivity to the needs and characteristics of children from a variety of cultural backgrounds and levels of development;
7. Knowledge and skill to teach the Virginia Standards of Learning; and
8. The development of skills to sustain personal and professional growth.

Evidence Supporting the Claims:

The faculty members rely on six categories of evidence to support their claims:

1. Grade point averages (GPA) overall, major, education coursework, and in specific courses to support claims 1 and 2 as well as the cross-cutting theme of technology;
2. Scores from standardized exams required in Virginia, including Praxis I, Praxis II, the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA), and the Virginia Communications and Literacy Assessment (VCLA) to support claims 1 and 2;
3. Ratings derived from evaluations of field experiences by college supervisors and cooperating teachers to support claims 1,2,3 and all three cross-cutting themes;
4. Data derived from surveys of employers and alumni to support claims 1,2,3 and all three cross-cutting themes;
5. Rubrics developed to evaluate oral and written communications as well as dispositions; and
6. A student-created portfolio.

Internal Audit:

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A total of 143 candidates completed the TEP at UVa-Wise for initial licensure in the academic years 2006-2009. Eighteen of the TEP program completers, representing approximately 12% of all completers in a stratified random sample.

The faculty concluded that the University of Virginia's College at Wise is committed to the teacher education program and that there is sufficient capacity to offer a quality program.

Plans for improvement:

While the internal audit and the faculty's inquiry led the faculty to conclude that its quality control system works somewhat effectively and that its claims were supported, the faculty also uncovered some areas that they plan to act on to improve the program. These are:

1. Continue to develop a more comprehensive system for the management for data collection;
2. Try to use an electronic system that can interface with other college systems;
3. Categorize data in a manner that is more aligned to TEAC's Quality Principles and cross-cutting themes;
4. Revise documents, survey, and internal evaluation forms to align with TEAC principles;
5. Conduct pilot tests and training;
6. Attempt to increase the number of respondents to the Employer Survey;
7. Increased use of the Student Disposition Form; and
8. Develop greater uniformity and consistency in documenting required field experiences.

¹ Program options include:

Option Name	Level	Number of completers in previous academic year (2008-2009)
Elementary Education/Pre-K-6	undergraduate	23
English/6-12	undergraduate	5
French/Pre-K-12	undergraduate	
Spanish/Pre-K-12	undergraduate	
Health & Physical Educ./Pre-K-12	undergraduate	6
History & Social Science/6-12	undergraduate	2
Library Media/Pre-K-12	undergraduate	
Mathematics/6-12	undergraduate	4

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Biology/6-12	undergraduate	
Chemistry/6-12	undergraduate	
Music Education/Pre-K-12 Choral Band	undergraduate	1
Special Education/K-12 Emotional Disturbance Learning Disabilities Mental Retardation	undergraduate	9
Business Education/6-12	undergraduate	3
Earth Science (add-on)	undergraduate	
Mathematics-Algebra I (add-on)	undergraduate	
Driver Education (add-on)	undergraduate	1