

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Utica College
Teacher Education Program¹
Audit Dates: September 29-30, 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 Laura Dorow, and was approved by the Teacher Education Faculty on August 31, 2005.

Introduction:

Utica College, located in the Mohawk Valley in upstate New York, serves close to 2200 undergraduate and 400 graduate students with 131 full-time and 160 adjunct faculty. Established in 1946 by Syracuse University to provide courses in the local area, Utica College is now financially and legally independent from Syracuse, although it maintains an academic relationship with Syracuse whereby Utica College undergraduates earn a Syracuse University baccalaureate degree (although master's and doctoral students earn Utica College degrees). Utica began offering teacher education in the 1970s with a program option leading to secondary certification, and expanded offerings starting in 1995 with elementary education and TESOL, adding early childhood/childhood and middle childhood in 2000 and business and marketing education in 2001. Current offerings also include childhood and special education, adolescence education, adolescence and special education, adolescence-apprenticeship teacher education (graduate only), special education (graduate only), and leadership and instruction for inclusive classrooms (graduate only).

Undergraduate students at Utica College wishing to qualify for certification must enroll in a major from one of Utica's three academic divisions—Arts and Sciences, Social Sciences and Management, or Health and Human Studies. The Teacher Education program itself is housed in the Division of Health and Human Studies, but it does not offer a major in teacher education. Rather, undergraduate students take 37 to 55 credit hours of education courses (depending on program option) in addition to courses for majors such as biology, English, liberal studies, or sociology and anthropology.

A value for maximizing inclusion of diverse learners into general education settings underlies the program. The Education Program states as its first of four main goals that “degree candidates will acquire a foundation in the

knowledge, values, and teaching practices for quality inclusive schools," and as its first of three philosophic beliefs that "students with diverse backgrounds, capabilities and support requirements should participate in general education settings as full members of the learning community."

Program Claims:

The Utica College Teacher Education program makes the following claims about its degree candidates:

1. Utica College degree candidates have a strong knowledge of subject matter.
2. Utica College degree candidates demonstrate pedagogical content knowledge and the ability to use this knowledge to design effective lessons.
3. Utica College degree candidates acquire teaching skills that promote student learning.
4. Utica College degree candidates teach caringly and effectively and are professionals.

Evidence supporting the claims:

For Claim 1 (degree candidates have a strong knowledge of subject matter), measures used are:

- GPA for major courses,
- GPA for major courses plus education courses, and
- The Content Specialty Test (CST).

For Claim 2 (degree candidates demonstrate pedagogical content knowledge and the ability to use this knowledge to design effective lessons), measures used are:

- the Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written (ATS-W),
- the Teaching Strategy Survey, and (TSS), and
- the Values, Knowledge, and Practices Related to Teaching Survey (VKP).

For Claim 3 (degree candidates acquire teaching skills that promote student learning), measures used are:

- GPA for education courses, and
- the Student Teaching Internship Evaluation (STIE).

For Claim 4 (degree candidates teach caringly and effectively and are professionals), measures used are:

- the Student Teaching Internship Evaluation (STIE), and
- the Professional and Ethical Behavior Summary (PEBS).

The program faculty established the reliability and validity for these measures as follows:

1. GPA for major courses, and GPA for major courses plus education courses: GPAs were deemed reliable because they were stable over time, and valid because they correlated with scores on the Content Specialty Test.
2. Content Specialty Test: The CST was deemed valid because of the processes (e.g., review by experts and practitioners, piloting of items, analysis of job skills) by which it was designed.
3. Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written: The ATS-W was deemed valid because of the processes (e.g., review by experts and practitioners, piloting of items, analysis of job skills) by which it was designed.
4. Teaching Strategy Survey: The TSS was deemed valid because it was reviewed by experts and practitioners.
5. Values, Knowledge, and Practices Related to Teaching Survey: The VKP was piloted and the collected data were analyzed. The results of this analysis were not reported in the Inquiry Brief. Student Teaching Internship Evaluation: The STIE was deemed reliable by computing agreement between ratings of the college supervisor and the cooperating teacher, and valid by relating STIE and ATS-W scores. Professional and Ethical Behavior Summary: The PEBS was deemed valid because of the agreement by both current and future educators on the categorization of the descriptors used in the instrument into levels of ethical behavior.

Results:

GPAs and pass rates on the CST were sufficiently high to substantiate Claim 1. For Claim 2, GPAs and pass rates on the ATS-W were sufficiently high, but no post-program data was available for the TSS. Overall STIE scores and PEBS scores, along with GPAs, were sufficiently high to substantiate Claims 3 and 4.

Program research:

The Utica College Education faculty asked a number of research questions about the data they reported on in the Inquiry Brief. These questions focused on (a) correlations of some of the measures described above, (b) relative performance on these measures by subgroups of the students, (c) weaknesses of the students in the program. For the most part, the faculty

found that the measures of interest did correlate, and that differences in performance between student subgroups were not large. However, several measures of social studies content knowledge were revealed to be weak.

Internal audit:

An internal audit was conducted using 32 students, consisting of 2 randomly-selected students from each of 16 program options, as the entry points to the quality control system. The Utica College teacher education quality control system consists of means of assuring and monitoring elements of program quality, faculty quality, and quality of student learning.

The internal audit was guided by three questions, which are listed below along with the associated findings:

- Does college documentation provide evidence that students meet admission, program option, culminating experience, and graduation requirements?

College documentation indicated that students met admission requirements, and most students met program option requirements, culminating experience, and graduation requirements.

- Is there evidence that qualified faculty deliver instruction as intended by the design of the program options?

A review of hiring practices and of course syllabi suggested that full-time qualified faculty delivered instruction as intended by the design of the program options, although syllabi varied in levels of specificity, making a clear determination of course content difficult.

- Is there sufficient evidence of the Quality Control System to support the claims made in the Inquiry Brief and the data generated in the assessment of those claims?

Overall, the internal audit revealed that the Quality Control System was functional, and findings of the audit were consistent with claims made in the Inquiry Brief.

Evidence of commitment and capacity:

The Education Program has parity with other programs in Utica College with respect to curriculum procedures, course evaluations, classrooms, tutoring and mentoring services, representation in publications, and appeals procedures. Course load, secretarial support, administration, recruitment activities and student appeal petitions compare favorably to other programs at

Utica, while office facilities compare unfavorably, although not strongly so, to other campus programs.

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:**

Undergraduate Program Options: Early Childhood; Childhood; Early Childhood/Childhood; Childhood & Special Education; Middle Childhood; Adolescence; Adolescence & Special Education; TESOL; Business & Marketing Education. Graduate Program Options: Childhood; Childhood & Special Education; Adolescence; Adolescence & Special Education; Apprenticeship; Leadership & Instruction.