



A Closer Look at Selection Criteria

Secondary Undergraduate Programs

Key Finding: Only a quarter of the 717 programs evaluated ensure that they draw most of their aspiring teachers from the top-half of the college-going population — including 88 programs that are both selective and diverse.

Why teacher prep programs should have strong selection criteria

Sixty years of research and evidence from nations whose students outperform American students demonstrate that raising the selection criteria of teacher preparation programs will help improve the effectiveness of new teachers. This analysis examined the admissions requirements for undergraduate teacher candidates to determine if the requirements help ensure that programs draw from the top half of the college-going population. Programs earn an A or better if they ensure that their candidates come from the top half of the college-going population, as measured by whether the institution housing the program is selective or whether the program takes proactive measures to set high admissions standards. Programs earning an A+ do this while maintaining a diverse teacher candidate cohort, proving that selectivity need not come at the expense of diversity.

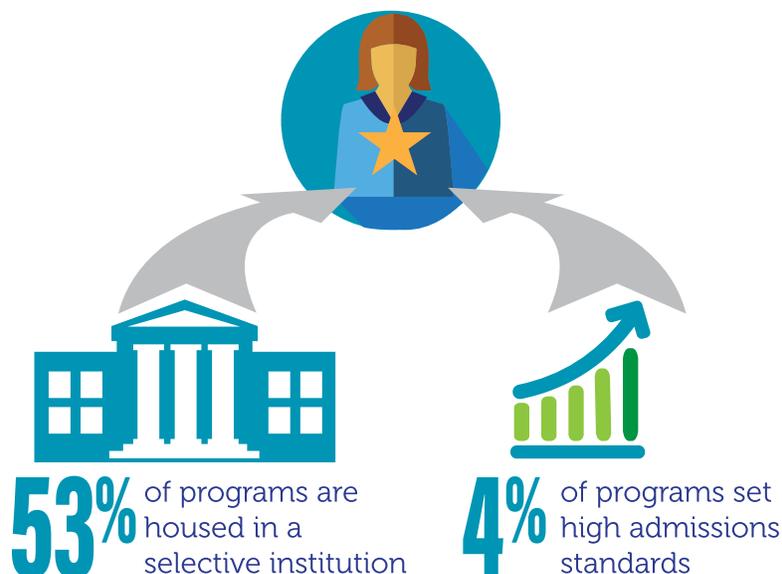
For more information about analysis and program grades, including how programs' GPA requirements are evaluated, see the *Methodology in brief* and *Understanding program grades* sections below.

How likely are undergraduate secondary programs to select aspiring teachers from the top half of students?

(N=717 undergraduate secondary teacher prep programs)



Paths to being a selective teacher prep program



Half of programs (53 percent) are housed in institutions that are highly or moderately selective (earning an A or B), based on their average SAT or ACT scores or other measures, such as Barron's ratings.¹ Programs that are housed in less selective institutions must take active steps to ensure that they predominantly admit aspiring teachers from the top half of the college-going population. Only a fraction of all programs (4 percent) are proactively selective, admitting cohorts of teacher candidates with high standardized test scores or setting a high minimum GPA for admission despite being housed in a less selective institution.² However, nearly half of all programs (43 percent) do not take these measures, to ensure that their incoming candidates are among the top half of college students.³

Comparing programs

The 2014 *Teacher Prep Review* found 36 percent of programs were sufficiently selective. Since then, we have raised the criteria for this standard to reflect new research and accreditation standards,⁴ and now 26 percent of programs are sufficiently selective.

One area of progress is in the minimum GPAs programs set for admission.⁵ We evaluated programs' GPA requirements only if they did not earn an A for the selectivity of their institutions. For this reason, we collected GPA data for only a subset of programs. Of those, we collected these data in both 2014 and 2016 for 298 programs. A comparison of these data reveals that 54 programs now require at least a 3.0 GPA for admission into the program, compared with 30 programs in 2014, representing a small but notable improvement.⁶ These programs are among those taking additional steps to ensure that their teacher candidates meet acceptable admissions standards.

The distribution of grades for undergraduate secondary programs is virtually the same as for undergraduate elementary.

- 1 These programs earn an A or B based on the selectivity of their institution.
- 2 These programs earn an A or B based on the selectivity of admission into the teacher prep program.
- 3 These programs earn a C or lower on Selection Criteria.
- 4 For more on how and why this standard has changed, visit a brief on this topic [here](#).
- 5 Programs can also demonstrate that the cohort average GPA is high.
- 6 While programs only earn a C on Selection Criteria for setting a 3.0 GPA minimum, this finding nonetheless represents a positive trend of programs moving toward a higher bar for admissions.

A closer look at diversity

Programs that are selective and diverse earn an A+

Programs earn an A+ when they are both selective and maintain a level of racial diversity that is the same or greater than that of the institution itself, or of the teacher workforce in the state. Previously, programs could earn an A+ (then called Strong Design) through two pathways: by being selective and racially diverse compared with the diversity of the institution or by being selective based on multiple measures (GPA and standardized test scores). Of the 186 programs that earn an A on selection criteria, 88 programs earned “Strong Design” status based on this updated measure of selectivity and diversity, as opposed to 44 programs in 2014.

Selective and diverse programs

AZ ▶ Arizona State University	NY ▶ Barnard College
AZ ▶ University of Arizona	NY ▶ CUNY – Hunter College
AR ▶ John Brown University	NY ▶ College of Mount Saint Vincent
CA ▶ University of Redlands	NY ▶ Columbia University
FL ▶ University of Central Florida	NY ▶ Manhattan College
FL ▶ University of Miami	NY ▶ Stony Brook University
IL ▶ DePaul University	NC ▶ Guilford College
IL ▶ Illinois Wesleyan University	NC ▶ University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
IL ▶ Knox College	OH ▶ John Carroll University
IL ▶ University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	OH ▶ Miami University of Ohio
IN ▶ Goshen College	OH ▶ University of Cincinnati
IN ▶ Indiana University – Bloomington	OH ▶ University of Dayton
IN ▶ Purdue University	OH ▶ Xavier University
IN ▶ Saint Mary’s College	OR ▶ Linfield College
KS ▶ Benedictine College	OR ▶ University of Portland
KS ▶ Newman University	PA ▶ Arcadia University
KY ▶ Asbury University	PA ▶ Bucknell University
KY ▶ University of Louisville	PA ▶ Elizabethtown College
MA ▶ Boston College	PA ▶ Grove City College
MA ▶ Mount Holyoke College	PA ▶ Juniata College
MA ▶ Simmons College	PA ▶ Messiah College
MA ▶ Stonehill College	PA ▶ Misericordia University
MI ▶ Calvin College	PA ▶ Pennsylvania State University
MI ▶ Michigan State University	PA ▶ Saint Joseph’s University
MN ▶ College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University	PA ▶ Susquehanna University
MN ▶ Gustavus Adolphus College	PA ▶ University of Scranton
MN ▶ St. Olaf College	PA ▶ Villanova University
MN ▶ University of Minnesota – Duluth	RI ▶ Providence College
MN ▶ University of Minnesota – Morris	SC ▶ College of Charleston
MN ▶ University of Northwestern – St. Paul	TN ▶ Freed-Hardeman University
MN ▶ University of St. Thomas	TN ▶ Lipscomb University
MO ▶ Maryville University of St. Louis	TN ▶ Maryville College
MO ▶ Rockhurst University	TX ▶ LeTourneau University
MO ▶ St. Louis University	TX ▶ Rice University
MO ▶ University of Missouri – St. Louis	TX ▶ St. Edward’s University
MO ▶ Westminster College	TX ▶ Texas Christian University
MO ▶ William Jewell College	TX ▶ Texas Southern University
MO ▶ William Woods University	TX ▶ University of St. Thomas
MT ▶ Carroll College	UT ▶ Brigham Young University
MT ▶ Montana State University	UT ▶ University of Utah
NE ▶ Creighton University	VT ▶ Saint Michael’s College
NE ▶ University of Nebraska – Lincoln	VT ▶ University of Vermont
NJ ▶ College of New Jersey	WA ▶ Seattle Pacific University
NJ ▶ Seton Hall University	WA ▶ Western Washington University

Methodology in brief

We look at admissions requirements to see if aspiring teachers are strong students — in the top half academically of college-goers. For undergraduate programs, we note the average SAT/ACT scores of the university overall, the minimum required GPA to enroll in the teaching program, and the average GPA of the program's students upon enrollment. Click [here](#) to read more.

Understanding program grades on Selection Criteria

- A+** The program is both selective (highly likely to draw almost all potential teachers from the top half of students) and diverse, as measured by:
 - an institutional average SAT or ACT score in the 70th percentile; other measures of selectivity such as Barrons rankings of “most competitive”; or, a program average SAT or ACT scores at the 60th percentile and
 - its relative diversity compared to the diversity of the institution or the state's teacher workforce.
- A** The program is highly likely to draw almost all potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by:
 - an institutional average SAT or ACT score in the 70th percentile or better, or by other measures of selectivity such as Barrons rankings of “most competitive;” or,
 - program average SAT or ACT scores at the 60th percentile.
- B** The program is likely drawing a majority of potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by:
 - an institutional average SAT or ACT score in the 60th percentile or better, or by other measures of selectivity such as Barrons rankings of “highly competitive;”
 - program average SAT or ACT scores at the 50th percentile;
 - minimum GPA requirements of 3.3; or,
 - cohort average GPA requirements of 3.5.
- C** The program likely draws a moderate number of potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by:
 - an institutional average SAT or ACT score in the 50th percentile or better or by other measures of selectivity such as Barrons rankings of “very competitive;”
 - minimum GPA requirements of 3.0; or,
 - cohort average GPA requirements of 3.3.
- D** The program likely draws a small number of potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by:
 - Barrons rankings of “competitive;” or,
 - minimum GPA requirements of 2.75.
- F** The program is unlikely to draw more than a few potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by:
 - the institution not requiring an ACT or SAT score, Barrons rankings of “less competitive” or “noncompetitive;” or,
 - minimum GPA requirements of less than 2.75.



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