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Contact
Stephen Buckley
National Council on Teacher Quality
sbuckley@nctq.org
(202) 393-0020 ext. 129

NCTQ RELEASES NEWEST TEACHER PREP RATINGS IDENTIFYING TOP PROGRAMS PREPARING HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

NO ILLINOIS PROGRAMS RANKS IN THE TOP TIER NATIONALLY; SEVEN SCHOOLS RANK AS SOME OF THE WEAKEST IN THE NATION

Washington DC – Today, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) releases its latest ratings for 717 undergraduate programs that prepare high school teachers, including 32 in Illinois.

Illinois has no programs on NCTQ's "National Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Program" list. The closest "Top Tier" programs to Illinois can be found in neighboring states Wisconsin and Iowa--the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Coe College (Cedar Rapids, IA), and the University of Iowa (Iowa City).

Programs achieve "Top Tier" status because they have solid admission standards, provide sufficient preparation in each candidate's intended subject area, and show them how best to teach that subject. Many also do well in evaluating candidates on how to manage a classroom and providing and ensuring the high quality of practice opportunities.

Teacher Prep Programs in Illinois

Other programs in Illinois also do relatively well; although not earning "Top Tier" status, three rank in the top 25 percent nationally:

Augustana College, 81st percentile
Olivet Nazarene University, 86th percentile
Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 81st percentile

However, the state has seven programs in the bottom 10 percent:

Elmhurst College, 10th percentile
Knox College, 10th percentile
Northern Illinois University, 6th percentile
Lewis University, 6th percentile
University of Illinois Springfield, 4th percentile
Concordia University Chicago, 3rd percentile
North Park University, 2nd percentile

Key Findings: As for overall performance of the 700+ programs, a common problem that surfaced in the analysis is the weak content preparation provided to science and social studies teacher candidates. That weakness contrasts sharply with almost uniformly strong preparation in English and mathematics content in the same institutions. A sizeable portion of programs (43 percent across the country) struggle to prepare teachers who will be qualified to teach the subjects under the umbrella of either science or social studies. For example, even though history is the subject most teachers with general social studies certification will be asked to teach, one out of five programs requires minimal to no history courses of their candidates.

In Illinois, 70 percent of programs fail to have adequate requirements in the sciences and 33 percent fail to do so in the social studies, a failing rate higher than the national average of 25 percent.

To see how programs in each state perform on their coverage of science go [here](#), and for social studies go [here](#).

Only 42 percent of programs succeed at teaching future teachers both the content and teaching methods for their subject. For a list of these programs in each state, go [here](#).

Other Key Findings:

- A quarter of all programs do not require a course in the best ways to teach a specific subject. However, 95 percent of Illinois programs do have this requirement.
- There are early signs of some programs becoming more selective in their admissions, but it is still the case that 44 percent of programs set the bar too low for who gets into their programs. In contrast, all Illinois programs except one (Concordia University-Chicago) are sufficiently selective. For a list of programs' selectivity rank in each state go [here](#).
- Among sufficiently selective programs, half also meet diversity goals. Four programs in Illinois are recognized for being both selective and diverse--DePaul University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Knox College, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. For a list of selective and diverse programs, go [here](#).
- Only 6 percent of programs pay sufficient attention to the quality of student teaching by establishing an expectation that only skilled teachers should be allowed to mentor a future teacher and requiring student teachers to be regularly observed by program staff. Among Illinois programs, only Wheaton College takes both of these steps to safeguard the quality of its student teaching. The remaining programs perform poorly in this area, primarily because they do not sufficiently monitor the quality of mentor teachers. For a list of programs in each state with strong student teaching go [here](#).
- Fewer than half of all programs (44 percent) evaluate teacher candidates on their use of the most effective strategies for managing classrooms while student teaching. In Illinois, just 21 percent of programs do so. For a list of programs that score well on classroom management in each state, go [here](#).

Recommendations: Based on this research, NCTQ recommends that states make sure that high school teachers have a deep understanding of the content they will teach students, a goal that can be met by better licensing tests. Most states, including Illinois, are overdue for revamping their licensing tests, as most allow a high score in one subject to compensate for a low score in another. Currently, Illinois has

inadequate licensing tests for all five science and all six social studies certifications. Only Arizona, Minnesota, and Missouri have strong tests in all core subject areas.

NCTQ also calls on programs to raise subject content requirements to require a solid education in *all* the subjects the future teacher will be licensed to teach, even in the broad categories of science and social studies. For more on what programs do to successfully ensure the preparation of all candidates in science, go [here](#), and for social studies, go [here](#).

This edition of the *Teacher Prep Review* analyzes undergraduate programs preparing secondary school teachers. The next set of ratings from NCTQ will appear in Fall 2017 and will cover graduate and alternative (or nontraditional) programs preparing elementary teachers. The ratings for graduate and nontraditional secondary programs will follow in Spring 2018, followed by undergraduate and graduate special education programs in Fall 2018.

To read the *Landscape* report, click [here](#). To schedule an interview with NCTQ President Kate Walsh, please contact Stephen Buckley at (202) 393-0020 ext. 129.

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About the National Council on Teacher Quality:

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) is a nonpartisan research and policy group, committed to modernizing the teaching profession and based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. NCTQ is the nation's expert on the quality of teacher preparation programs and evaluates national teacher education against evidence-based criteria. More information about NCTQ can be found on our website, www.nctq.org