

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11th, 2017 at 12:01 AM

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

*ALTHOUGH MANY PROGRAMS DO WELL ON SOME ASPECTS OF TEACHER PREPARATION,
OTHERS STILL STRUGGLE TO DELIVER TRAINING FUNDAMENTALS;
MAJOR WEAKNESSES FOUND IN PREP FOR SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS*

**NO MAINE PROGRAMS RANK IN TOP HALF NATIONALLY;
THREE PROGRAMS RANK AMONG THE WORST 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 seven in Maine.

None of the 16 programs on NCTQ’s list of the “Nation’s Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Programs” is in Maine. The closest “Top Tier” program is Gordon College in Massachusetts.

“Top Tier” programs have solid admission standards, provide sufficient preparation in each teacher candidate’s intended subject area, and show candidates 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 Maine

None of the evaluated programs in Maine rank above the 40th percentile, and three rank in the bottom 10 percent:

St. Joseph’s College of Maine (3rd percentile)	University of Maine at Machias (1st percentile)
University of Maine at Farmington (40th percentile)	University of Maine at Presque Isle (11th percentile)
University of Maine at Fort Kent (1st percentile)	University of New England (18th percentile)
	University of Southern Maine (20th percentile)

Key National 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.

- Only one quarter of programs in Maine earn an A for content preparation in the sciences, which is in contrast to 81 percent nationally.
- Only 43 percent of programs in Maine earn an A for content preparation in the social studies, compared to 65 percent of programs nationally.

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. Only five secondary programs in Maine require teacher candidates to take a methods course in the subject area they will be certified to teach.
- 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 Maine, only 11 percent of programs earned an A or A+, compared to a national average of 26 percent. Programs that earn an A or higher draw most of their teacher candidates from the top half of the college-going population. In Maine, 67 percent earn a C or lower, meaning that they are not sufficiently selective. For a list of programs by selectivity, go [here](#).
- Among sufficiently selective programs nationwide, half also meet diversity goals. No programs in Maine are both selective and diverse. For a list of selective and diverse programs in each state, 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. Unfortunately, only one program in Maine, the University of Maine at Farmington, takes both of these steps to protect the quality of its student teaching. The remaining programs do not sufficiently monitor the quality of cooperating teachers, and more than half of them do not even require student teachers to be observed frequently. For a list of strong student teaching programs in each state 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 Maine, only a third of programs evaluate future teachers on most or all of these strategies. For a list of programs that do well on classroom management, 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 Maine, are overdue for revamping their licensing tests, as most allow a high score in one subject to compensate for a low score in another. For instance, Maine has inadequate licensing tests for Physical Science and Social Studies certification. Currently, 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* analyze 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