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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*

HOPE COLLEGE IN MICHIGAN RANKS AS ONE OF TOP 16 IN THE NATION; THREE OTHER MICHIGAN SCHOOLS RANK IN TOP TEN PERCENT

Washington DC – Today, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) releases its latest ratings for 717 undergraduate programs that prepare high school teachers, including 20 in Michigan.

Of the 16 programs nationally that appear on NCTQ’s list of the “Nation’s Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Programs”, Michigan can claim one program, Hope College of Holland, MI.

“Top Tier” programs 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 teaching how to manage a classroom and providing and ensuring the high quality of practice opportunities.

Teacher Prep Programs in Michigan

Other programs in Michigan also do well; although not earning “Top Tier” status, three are ranked in the top 10 percent nationally:

Albion College, 96th percentile
Michigan State University, 91st percentile
Spring Arbor University, 92nd percentile

None of Michigan’s programs ranks in the bottom 10 percent.

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 social studies teachers will be asked to teach, one out of five programs requires minimal to no history courses of their candidates.

- 90 percent of programs earn an A for content preparation in the sciences, compared to 81 percent of programs nationally.
- 86 percent of programs earn an A for content preparation in the social studies, which is in contrast to only 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. However, 86 percent of programs in Michigan require teacher candidates to take a methods course in their subject area.
- 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 Michigan 64 percent of programs draw most of their students from the top half of the college-going population, above the national average. For a list of programs by selectivity, go [here](#).
- Among sufficiently selective programs, half also meet diversity goals, including Michigan's Calvin College and Michigan State University. 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, in Michigan only Michigan Technological University takes both of these steps to protect the quality of its student teaching. The remaining 95 percent of Michigan programs do not perform well in this area, primarily because they do not adequately monitor the quality of mentor teachers. 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 Michigan, 42 percent of programs do so. For a list of programs in each state 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 Michigan, are overdue for revamping their licensing tests, as most allow a high score in one subject to compensate for a low score on another. Michigan has inadequate licensing tests for Integrated Science, 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* 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. 130.

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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