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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*

**ST. OLAF COLLEGE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-DULUTH
RANK TOP 16 TEACHER PREP PROGRAMS IN THE COUNTRY;
MINNESOTA BOASTS ANOTHER THREE SCHOOLS IN THE 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 16 in Minnesota.

Of the 16 programs nationally to appear on NCTQ’s list of the Nation’s “Top Tier” Secondary Teacher Prep Programs, Minnesota can claim two programs, St. Olaf College in Northfield and the University of Minnesota-Duluth. Only one other state has that many “Top Tier” programs.

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 teaching how to manage a classroom and providing and ensuring the high quality of practice opportunities.

Teacher Prep Programs in Minnesota

Other programs in Minnesota also do very well; although not earning “Top Tier” status, three additional programs rank in the top 10 percent nationally:

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, 96th percentile
University of Minnesota - Morris, 94th percentile
University of St. Thomas, 91st percentile

None of the state’s programs fall in the bottom 10 percent. Its lowest ranked program, Concordia University St. Paul, is at the 25th 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.

- Through a combination of licensing test and coursework requirements, all programs in Minnesota earn As for content preparation in both the sciences and social studies.

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, 94 percent of programs in Minnesota 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. However, 82 percent of programs in Minnesota are sufficiently selective, mostly drawing their teacher candidates from the top half of the college-going population. For a list of programs by selectivity, go [here](#).
- Among sufficiently selective programs, half also meet diversity goals. Minnesota has seven programs that are both selective and diverse: the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Olaf College, the University of Minnesota–Duluth, the University of Minnesota–Morris, the University of Northwestern–St. Paul, and the University of St. Thomas. 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, no Minnesota program performs well in this area, because none adequately monitors the quality of mentor teachers. For a list of programs with strong student teaching in each state go [here](#).
- Fewer than half of all programs (44 percent) expect teacher candidates to demonstrate the most effective strategies for managing classrooms while student teaching. In Minnesota, 42 percent of programs meet this criterion. For a list of programs that do 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 are overdue for revamping their licensing tests, as most allow a high score in one subject to compensate for a low score on another. However, Minnesota is one of only three states--along with Arizona and Missouri--that has 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