

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*

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA–LINCOLN AND THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA–OMAHA
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 12 in Nebraska.

None of the 16 programs on NCTQ’s list of the “Nation’s Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Programs” are in Nebraska. The closest “Top Tier” programs are Colorado Christian University, Coe College (Cedar Rapids, IA), and the University of Iowa.

“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 Nebraska

Several programs in Nebraska did well, although not earning “Top Tier” status. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Nebraska-Omaha rank in the top 10 percent nationally.

Undergraduate Secondary Programs in Nebraska	Percentile
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	96
University of Nebraska - Omaha	92
Union College	89
Creighton University	83
Hastings College	67
Doane College	59
Concordia University Nebraska	34

Midland University	34
College of Saint Mary	28
Wayne State College	28
Peru State College	14
Chadron State College	12

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.

- All programs in Nebraska earn an A or B for content preparation in the sciences
- Through a combination of licensing test and coursework requirements, all Nebraska programs earn an A for content preparation in 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 offer a course in the best ways to teach a specific subject. Half of programs in Nebraska do not 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. The same is true for 42 percent of programs in Nebraska. For a list of programs' selectivity rank in each state go [here](#).
- Of those programs that were found to be sufficiently selective, half also meet diversity goals. 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. In Nebraska, no program performs well in this area, primarily because no program sufficiently monitors 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) expect teacher candidates to demonstrate the most effective strategies for managing classrooms while student teaching. In Nebraska, only 20

percent of programs meet this criterion. For a list of programs and their rank 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 Nebraska, are overdue for revamping their licensing tests, as most allow a high score in one subject to compensate for a low score on another. For instance, Nebraska has inadequate licensing tests for the general Science and Social Studies certifications. 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. 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