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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*

THREE NEW MEXICO PROGRAMS RANK IN BOTTOM FIVE PERCENT NATIONALLY

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

None of the 16 programs on NCTQ’s list of the “Nation’s Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Programs” is in New Mexico. The closest “Top Tier” programs are Arizona State University and Colorado Christian University.

“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 evaluating candidates on how to manage a classroom and ensuring the high quality of practice opportunities.

Teacher Prep Programs in New Mexico

No New Mexico program ranks in the top half nationally, and three fall in the bottom five percent.

Undergraduate Secondary Programs in New Mexico	Percentile
Eastern New Mexico University	42
University of New Mexico	23
New Mexico State University	4
New Mexico Highlands University	1
University of the Southwest	1

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 falls in sharp contrast to 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 of the five evaluated programs in New Mexico earns an A for content preparation in the sciences, in contrast to the 81 percent of programs nationally that earn an A.
- Four of the five evaluated programs in New Mexico earn a D or F for content preparation in the 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 subjects. For a list of these programs in each state, go [here](#).

Other Findings:

- A quarter of all programs do not require a course in the best ways to teach a specific subject. Two of the five programs in New Mexico 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 University of New Mexico is the only sufficiently selective secondary program in the state, earning a B. For a list of programs' selectivity rank in each state go [here](#).
- Among sufficiently selective programs nationally, 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. No New Mexico program performs well in this area, because they all meet, at most, only one of these two criteria. For a list of programs with strong student teaching 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. Of the programs evaluated in New Mexico, only Eastern New Mexico University ensures teacher candidates have this experience. For a list of programs that perform 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 New Mexico, 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, New Mexico could strengthen teacher content knowledge by requiring that licensing tests for Science and Social Science certification adequately assess teachers in all of the subjects they will be certified to teach. 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