

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

**Contact**  
Stephen Buckley  
National Council on Teacher Quality  
[sbuckley@nctq.org](mailto:sbuckley@nctq.org)  
(202) 393-0020 ext. 129

## **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*

### **University of Rhode Island Ranks in Top Ten Percent Nationally Salve Regina University Ranks Only Slightly Lower**

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

None of the 16 programs on NCTQ's list of the "Nation's Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Programs" are in Rhode Island. The closest "Top Tier" program is Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts.

"Top Tier" programs have solid admission standards, provide sufficient preparation in each candidate's intended subject area, and show candidates how to best 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 Rhode Island**

The University of Rhode Island ranks in the top ten percent nationally, and the state has no programs in the bottom ten percent. Rhode Island's programs are:

- University of Rhode Island (92nd percentile)
- Salve Regina University (89th percentile)
- Providence College (76th percentile)
- Roger Williams University (52nd percentile)

#### **Key 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.

In Rhode Island, all four evaluated programs earn an A for content preparation in the sciences and an A for content preparation in the social studies through a combination of licensing test and coursework requirements. 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](#).

#### **Additional Findings:**

- A quarter of all programs do not require a course in the best ways to teach a specific subject.
- 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, among sufficiently selective programs nationally, half also meet diversity goals. In Rhode Island, Salve Regina University earns an A for selectivity and Providence College is both selective and diverse. For a list of selective programs in each state go [here](#). 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 effective teachers should be allowed to mentor a future teacher and requiring student teachers to be regularly observed by program staff. In Rhode Island, only Salve Regina University takes both these key steps. 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. The University of Rhode Island is the only Rhode Island program that ensures that future teachers have this experience. For a list of programs that score well in this area 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 Rhode Island, are overdue for revamping their licensing tests, as most allow a high score in one subject to compensate for a low score in another. Currently, Rhode Island has an inadequate licensing test for Social Studies certification. 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 be in Fall 2017 and will cover graduate and alternative

(or non-traditional) programs preparing elementary teachers. The ratings for graduate and non-traditional 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](http://www.nctq.org)*