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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*

**South Carolina's Clemson University One of Nation's Top Tier Programs;
Furman University Ranks in the Top Ten Percent of Programs**

Washington DC – Today, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) releases its latest ratings for 717 undergraduate programs that prepare high school teachers, including 11 in South Carolina.

South Carolina can claim one of the 16 programs to be named to NCTQ's list of the "Nation's Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Programs"-- Clemson University.

Programs achieve "Top Tier" status because they have solid admission standards, provide sufficient preparation in each candidate's intended subject area, and show candidates how best to teach that subject. Many also do well in evaluating candidates on how to manage a classroom and providing and ensuring high quality practice opportunities.

Teacher Prep Programs in South Carolina

Although not earning "Top Tier" status, Furman University ranks in the top 10 percent nationally. South Carolina has no programs in the bottom 10 percent. South Carolina programs include:

- Bob Jones University (46th percentile)
- Charleston Southern University (57th percentile)
- Citadel Military College of South Carolina (37th percentile)
- Clemson University (98th percentile)
- College of Charleston (76th percentile)
- Converse College (37th percentile)
- Furman University (92nd percentile)
- Southern Wesleyan University (71st percentile)
- University of South Carolina - Aiken (23rd percentile)
- University of South Carolina - Columbia (87th percentile)
- University of South Carolina - Upstate (59th 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.

- Through a combination of licensing test and coursework requirements, all programs in South Carolina earn an A or B for content preparation in the sciences.
- 79 percent of programs in South Carolina earn an A or B for content preparation in the social studies, which is only slightly better than the 76 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](#).

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 -- nationally 57 percent of programs draw most of their students from the top half of the college-going population. In South Carolina, 65 percent of programs do so. For a list of programs by selectivity, go [here](#).
- Among sufficiently selective programs, half nationally also meet diversity goals including South Carolina's College of Charleston. 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 program in South Carolina scores well in this area because none sufficiently monitors the quality of mentor teachers. For a list of programs across the country with strong student teaching, 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 South Carolina, 62 percent of programs ensure that future teachers 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 South Carolina, 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, South Carolina has an inadequate licensing test for General Science certification and requires the same inadequate social studies content knowledge test for all seven 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