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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*

University of Utah Ranks as One of the “Top Tier” Teacher Prep Programs in the Nation
Brigham Young University Ranks Second in Utah at 81st Percentile

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

Of the 16 programs on NCTQ’s list of the “Nation’s Top Tier Secondary Teacher Prep Programs”, Utah can claim one -- The University of Utah in Salt Lake City.

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

Teacher Prep Programs in Utah

While Utah has no other program in the top ten percent, no Utah program ranks in the bottom tenth either. Utah’s programs include:

- Brigham Young University (81st percentile)
- Dixie State University (57th percentile)
- Southern Utah University (64th percentile)
- University of Utah (99th percentile)
- Utah State University (46nd percentile)
- Utah Valley University (76th percentile)
- Weber State University (49th 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 Utah earn an A or B for content preparation in the sciences and an A or B 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 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. However, all evaluated programs in Utah require teacher candidates to take such 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. For a list of programs' selectivity rank in each state go [here](#). However, in Utah, 86 percent of programs earn draw the majority of their students from the top half of the college-going population.
- Among sufficiently selective programs, half also meet diversity goals, including two in Utah -- Brigham Young University and the University of Utah. For a list of selective and diverse programs in each state, go [here](#).
- Only 6 percent of programs nationally 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. However, in Utah, one quarter of evaluated programs take both of these 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. Of the Utah programs that could be evaluated on classroom management, 60 percent ensure that future teachers have this feedback. For a list of programs that score 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 Utah, 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, Utah has an inadequate licensing test for Physical Science certification and uses the same inadequate licensing for all

eight social studies certifications. 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