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NCTQ RELEASES NEWEST TEACHER PREP RATINGS IDENTIFYING TOP PROGRAMS PREPARING HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

16 PROGRAMS EARN “TOP TIER” RANK, INCLUDING MANY HIDDEN GEMS

*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*

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

NCTQ’s Top Tier: The Nation’s Best Undergraduate Secondary Teacher Prep Programs

Arizona State University (Phoenix, AZ)
Clemson University (Clemson, SC)
Coe College (Cedar Rapids, IA)
Colorado Christian University (Lakewood)
CUNY - Hunter College (New York, NY)
Gordon College (Wenham, MA)
Hope College (Holland, MI)
Lipscomb University (Nashville, TN)

Messiah College (Grantham, PA)
Ohio Wesleyan University (Delaware, OH)
St. Olaf College (Northfield, MN)
University of Iowa (Iowa City)
University of Minnesota - Duluth
University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg)
University of Utah (Salt Lake City, UT)
University of Wisconsin - Platteville

These programs make the “Top Tier” 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 teaching how to manage a classroom and provide plenty of high quality practice opportunities. A full listing of how all programs in the nation fared can be found [here](#).

“These are programs that understand their most important job is to deliver well prepared teachers to classrooms,” commented Kate Walsh, President of NCTQ. “That means paying a lot of attention to the nuts and bolts of what it takes to become an effective teacher.”

NCTQ researchers unearthed no common characteristics about these programs that may have led them to be more successful than others. The top 16 are located in 14 states with Minnesota and Iowa each boasting two Top Tier programs. Half of the programs are public, half are private, and about two-thirds are secular. Programs range in size from Ohio Wesleyan University, which graduates about 20 teachers a year, to Arizona State, one of the nation's largest, which graduates over 800 teachers a year. Undergraduate in-state tuition ranges from under \$7,000 a year at CUNY - Hunter College to a high of just over \$44,000 at Ohio Wesleyan University.

This analysis found that a common problem for many of the other 700+ programs is the relatively weak content preparation provided to science and social studies teacher candidates, compared to the almost uniformly strong preparation in English and mathematics content in the same institutions. A sizeable portion of programs (43 percent) struggle to prepare both science and social studies teachers to teach the subject's content. For example, even though history is the subject most social studies teachers will be assigned to teach, one out of five programs requires minimal to no history courses of their candidates. To see how programs in each state perform on their coverage of science go [here](#), and for social studies go [here](#).

Observed Walsh, "Looking at program performance across the board, our big takeaway is that the preparation of high school teachers is a big leaky bucket. Much of what we continue to find in all of our ratings work reflects the relative anarchy in the field of teacher preparation, where every institution independently decides what it means to prepare a teacher well, whether or not it is what public schools need or where the evidence points. That lack of coherence and a professional governance is without parallel in other fields of professional preparation."

Other key findings

- A quarter of all programs do not offer a course in the best ways to teach a specific subject. Only 42 percent of programs succeed at teaching future teachers both the content and teaching methods for their subject. For a list of ratings for Secondary Methods, go [here](#).
- 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. Of those that were found to be sufficiently selective, half were commended for also meeting diversity goals. For a list of programs nationally by selectivity, 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. For a list of programs with strong student teaching in each state, 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. For a list of programs in each state that do well on classroom management, go [here](#).

A full analysis of the findings, the *Undergraduate Secondary TPR Landscape Report*, can be found [here](#).

Recommendations: Based on this research, NCTQ recommends that programs 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. All aspiring social studies teachers should

have to take the equivalent of at least a minor in history. All programs should require subject-specific teaching methods courses that provide practice. For more on what programs do to successfully ensure the preparation of all candidates in science, go [here](#), and for social studies, go [here](#).

NCTQ also recommends that states require new teachers to pass licensing tests in every subject they will teach, meaning that the many tests that allow a high score in one subject to compensate for a low score on another need to be retired.

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, covering graduate and alternative (or nontraditional) programs preparing elementary teachers. The ratings for graduate and nontraditional secondary follow in Spring 2018, followed by undergraduate and graduate special education programs in Fall 2018.

To schedule an interview with Ms. 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