

Summary of the Case (from the Inquiry Brief)
Oakland University
Teacher Education Program¹
Audit Dates: June 11-13, 2007

The Summary of the Case is written by the auditors and approved by program faculty. The Summary reflects the auditors' understanding of the case the faculty are making for accreditation.

Authorship and Approval of the *Inquiry Brief*:

The *Inquiry Brief* was written by Robert Wiggins, and prepared by TEAC Team members Sandra Deng, Diane Parfitt, Garbette Garraway, Mary Rose Day, Sandy Packard, Robert Maxfield, Ambika Bhargava, Janet Graetz, Jim Gall, James Cipielewski, Robert Schwartz, Michael Macdonald, Dyanne Tracy, Dawn Pickard, Judy Hoppin, Chris Abbott, Helen L. Gauntt, Sherrill Karppinen, Rick DeMent, and Molly McCallum, and was approved by the School of Education faculty on November 20, 2006.

Introduction:

Oakland University, a state-assisted, comprehensive university serving more than 17,340 students in baccalaureate through doctoral programs was established in 1957 as Michigan State University-Oakland, and was granted autonomy by the Michigan Legislature in 1970. The teacher education program is housed in the School of Education and Human Services (SEHS), which is the largest of the five professional schools at Oakland University and is the second-largest academic division after the College of Arts and Sciences. The School has just under 4,000 students almost evenly divided between graduate and undergraduate, about half of whom are in the initial teacher preparation program.

Distinguishing characteristics of the program include extensive field experiences, faculty who are scholars with K-12 teaching experience, state-of-the-art facilities, curriculum requirements that exceed state standards, and close monitoring of students' progress throughout the program. Governance of the secondary option vested in SEHS, but shares faculty with the College of Arts and Sciences and is overseen by an advisory group made up of representatives from the School and the College called the Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP) Council. Governance of the elementary option is shared among the SEHS departments of Teacher Development and Educational Studies (TDES), Departments of Human Development and Child Studies (HDCS) and Reading and Language Arts (RLA) through the Elementary Teacher Preparation Governance Council (ETPGC) which is chaired by a TDES faculty member.

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The program is guided by a constructivist view of teaching and learning, a belief that in-depth content knowledge is critical, a commitment to a strong partnership with local schools, and alignment with the Entry Level Standards for Michigan Teachers.

In Michigan, teacher education candidates are recommended for certification at either the secondary or the elementary level, and all students must also earn endorsements in a teachable major. Oakland offers options leading to elementary/middle school endorsements in integrated science, language arts, mathematics, modern languages (Spanish, French, or German), and social studies; secondary endorsements in biology, chemistry, dance, English, history, mathematics, physics, and political science; and K-12 endorsements in art, modern languages, and music (through a program accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music). These endorsements can be earned through either the undergraduate or the recently-established MAT track designed for career changers with a bachelor's degree. Requirements for the two tracks are essentially the same, except that MAT students must complete a research component the faculty considers essential for masters-level study.

Program Claims:

With reference to TEAC Component 1.1 (**subject matter knowledge**), the faculty claim:

1. Undergraduates in the teacher education programs at Oakland University have a foundation in the liberal arts.
2. Students in the teacher education program are proficient in subject matter knowledge and apply this knowledge in their teaching. Secondary candidates have at least a major and a minor in the disciplines for which they are endorsed. Elementary candidates are proficient in all the subjects typically taught at that level as well as having a specialization in at least one and typically two content areas earning endorsements for the middle school level.

With reference to TEAC Component 1.2 (**pedagogical knowledge**), the faculty claim:

3. Graduates of the Oakland University teacher education programs have appropriate knowledge of pedagogy needed by teachers and apply this knowledge to promote student learning – including students with special needs and from all cultures.
4. Graduates are able to integrate technology into their teaching and learning.

With reference to TEAC Component 1.3 (**caring teaching skill**), the faculty claim:

5. The Oakland University Teacher Education Program ensures that graduates are caring individuals with the skills needed to meet the academic, personal and social needs of students in a professional manner.

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **learning how to learn**, the faculty assert that students understand that not all learning takes place in the classroom and that they must take continuous responsibility for their own learning.

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **technology**, the faculty claim that graduates are able to integrate technology into their teaching and learning (Claim 4).

With reference to the TEAC cross-cutting theme of **multicultural perspectives and accuracy**, the faculty assert that graduates apply knowledge of pedagogy to promote learning for students from all cultures (Claim 3)

Supporting Evidence with Associated Reliability and Validity Measures and Results:

Overall Grade Point Averages ([Claim 1](#))

See Table 4.1: Overall GPA and Mean Grades of Oakland University Teacher Education Students

Overall GPA means ranged between 3.34 and 3.86 between 2003 and 2006 for all tracks (elementary undergraduate, secondary undergraduate, elementary MAT, secondary MAT).

The faculty deemed overall GPAs valid as a measure of baseline competency because they provide evidence that students have a liberal arts background and persevered in a college setting, and reliable because they are assigned by reasonably objective faculty.

Success in the gate-keeping course for admission (EED 310 or SED 300) ([Claim 2](#))

See Table 4.1: Overall GPA and Mean Grades of Oakland University Teacher Education Students

Mean grades in gate-keeping courses ranged between 3.74 and 3.92 for all tracks in 2005-2006.

The faculty deemed grades for gate-keeping courses valid indicators of subject matter knowledge because they are based on part on field experiences, field experience journals, and students' construction of a theoretical framework for teaching, and reliable because they are assigned by reasonably objective faculty.

Course grades in general education, content majors/minors, and pedagogy courses ([Claim 2](#), [Claim 3](#))

See Table 4.4: GPAs for Current Oakland University Education and Non-Education Students

Table 4.6: Mean course grades and standard deviations in professional courses for currently enrolled Oakland

Mean GPAs for secondary education students as compared to their content-area peers outside education were slightly higher for those majoring in biology, English, history, modern languages, and music, and slightly lower for those majoring in chemistry and mathematics, but for all majors comparable. Mean grades in professional courses ranged between 3.63 and 3.92 for currently enrolled students.

The faculty deemed these grades valid indicators of competence based on alignment of associated courses with the relevant claims, and reliable because they are assigned by reasonably objective faculty.

Final Internship Grade ([Claim 2](#), [Claim 3](#), [Claim 5](#))

See Table 4.1: Overall GPA and Mean Grades of Oakland University Teacher Education Students

Mean grades in capstone courses ranged between 3.81 and 3.89 for all tracks in 2005-2006.

The faculty deemed internship grades a valid measure of the associated competencies based on alignment of course goals with the relevant claims, and reliable because they are assigned by reasonably objective faculty.

Michigan Test for Teacher Certification ([Claim 1](#), [Claim 2](#), [Claim 3](#))

See Table 4.2: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Currently Enrolled Oakland University Teacher Education Students on the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification

Table 4.3: MTTC Content Test Scores for 2005-2006 Teacher Education Graduates and 3-year Passing

Mean MTTC scores for the Basic Skills (Reading, Mathematics, Writing) tests and the Elementary and Content tests ranged from 233 (Writing) to 269

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(Mathematics) for enrolled students who met the admission criteria of a passing score of 220 on these tests. Mean MTTC Content test scores disaggregated by content area ranged from 229 (Modern Languages) to 264 (Secondary Mathematics), with 220 the passing score. Three-year passing percentages ranged from 81% (Elementary Social Studies) to 98% (Music).

The faculty deemed the MTTC, a professionally-constructed criterion-referenced test, valid because it has been reviewed by experts and is aligned with Michigan K-12 curriculum.

Field Placement Evaluations ([Claim 2](#), [Claim 3](#), [Claim 5](#))

See Table 4.12: Field Placement Teachers Rating of Student Proficiency Levels Reported on Field Placement Evaluations

Field placement teachers rated over 90% of elementary and secondary students as proficient in the overall categories of personal attributes, relationship with others, attendance, and teaching skills in all field placements except the long-term placement, in which they rated only 86% of elementary students as proficient in teaching skills.

The faculty deemed field placement evaluations valid because they are assessments of authentic teaching activity and they correspond to associated course objectives, and reliable because the assessments are consistent over a number of years.

Mid-Term and Final Internship Evaluations ([Claim 2](#), [Claim 3](#), [Claim 5](#))

See Table 4.13: Efficacy Percentages as Reported by Cooperating Teachers on the 2003-2004, 2004 –2005 and 2005- 2006 Elementary Mid-Term Performance Based Assessment of OU student teachers

Table 4.14: Cooperating Teachers Proficiency Ratings of OU Student Teachers on the Mid-Semester Assessment as they Relate to Quality Principle 1.3

Cooperating teachers rated 98% to 100% of student teachers at the developing level or above on the seven Entry-Level Standards for Michigan Teachers, and 52% to 76% at the accomplished level, with the lowest ratings of accomplishment across 2003-2006 on the standard of “promote all students’ learning,” and the highest ratings on the standard of “employ a liberal education.” Cooperating teachers rated 98% to 100% of student teachers at the developing level or above in the four categories of the Mid-Semester Assessment corresponding to teaching skill, and 61% to 91% at the accomplished level, with the lowest ratings of accomplishment across 2003-2006 in the area of “personal qualities,” and the highest ratings in the area of “classroom climate and management.”

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The faculty deemed Final Internship Evaluations valid based on their alignment with the relevant claims.

Michigan Department of Education Survey of New Teachers ([Claim 3](#))

See Table 4.11: Percentage of Oakland University Teacher Education Graduates Claiming Efficacy on the 2005-2006 Michigan Department of Education Survey

Students' self-ratings of efficacy ranged from 73% to 100% on the six ELSMT items pertaining to knowledge of pedagogy, with lowest overall ratings on "promote all students' learning, and highest on "teach a subject matter."

The faculty deemed the MDE survey a valid measure of the relevant claims based on broad-based expert input and a factor analysis that supported the grouping of items in the survey for each of the seven entry level standards.

Coursework or competency testing in the application of technology in the classroom ([Claim 4](#))

See Table 4.6: Mean course grades and standard deviations in professional courses for currently enrolled Oakland

Mean grades in the technology course are 3.63 for current elementary students and 3.75 for current secondary students. In addition, the faculty note that "38 students enrolled in IST electives in the past two years and 10 students have completed technology portfolios that have received the Michigan Certificate for Outstanding Achievement in Teaching with Technology from the Consortium for Outstanding Achievement in Teaching with Technology which is more than any other teacher education institution in Michigan."

The faculty deemed coursework as a valid indicator of students' technological ability because through the technology courses, students are provided with a knowledge base of appropriate technology.

Circulation of technology equipment among faculty and students ([Claim 4](#))

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Over a five-year period, students checked out laptop computers 5,411 times and digital camcorders a total of 147 times; over a four-year period, faculty checked out the iBook (MAC) cart 180 times and the PC cart (purchased in March 2006) 11 times.

The faculty deemed circulation of technology equipment a valid indication of students' technological ability because it is an observation of students' use of technology in practice.

Faculty/Student Concerns Reports ([Claim 3](#), [Claim 5](#))

See Table 4.7: Number of OU students receiving one or more Concerns Form

Table 4.8: Frequency and Percentages of the Types of Concerns Forms Issued to OU Students Since 2002

Table 4.9: Actions Taken in Response to Concerns Forms

Table 4.10: Final Resolution for Student with Concerns Forms

Since Winter semester 2002, 303 students received a total of 378 Concerns Reports, with most students (83%) receiving only one. The two most common concerns were "failure to hand in required documents" (36%), and "problems with oral and written expression" (16%). The faculty noted that submission of a Concerns Report results in resolution of the concern, but in instances in which this is not the case, they have documented 28 instances in which they have taken additional action and noted that successful outcomes based on these actions are mixed. The faculty provided the final resolution for 291 of the 303 students who had received Concerns Reports, noting that 162 of the 291 were either still enrolled or had graduated successfully.

The faculty deemed data on the frequency and content of these reports a valid measure of pedagogy and teaching skill because they arise from observations of students in the context of various aspects of the program.

Survey of Graduating Students ([Claim 3](#))

See Intern Evaluation 2005-06, pages F4-F7

Intern Evaluation 2004-05, pages F8-F11

Most students rated themselves as well-prepared or adequately prepared on a number of items pertaining to teaching readiness.

The faculty deemed the OU survey a valid measure of students' pedagogical knowledge based on its alignment with the seven entry level standards.

Internal Audit:

Associate Dean Bob Wiggins, who headed the TEAC accreditation process, conducted an internal audit of the quality control system. He found:

- (4.1) Program options were reviewed and approved by the Michigan Department of Education, recent curricular changes had retained the balance across the areas of liberal education, content, and pedagogy, course and program changes were appropriately documented, and a

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- selected sample of students had completed all curricular requirements.
- (4.2) Faculty members initiated and supported course and program changes, a selected sample of faculty members were hired according to procedures that assured high quality, and all faculty members who received tenure in the past three years met appropriate tenure guidelines.
 - (4.3) Space, which is allocated by the SEHS dean, is plentiful and appropriate. The facility was installed with state-of-the-art equipment when it was built five years ago, but this equipment will need to be upgraded soon. The Information Technology Analyst has developed a plan for funding and implementation of the upgrades.
 - (4.4) General operating fund amounts were determined based on department size and program needs and can be adjusted to support outreach efforts, and all of the purchase orders and budget transfers were handled according to University policy.
 - (4.5) The School of Education and Human Services has the lowest student-to-advisor ratio, and education students see their advisor 4.5 times on average.
 - (4.6) Catalog, website, and recruitment materials are accurate and consistent with regard to the teacher education program.
 - (4.7) Course evaluation responses by students have declined since evaluations were converted to an on-line process. Responses are higher for non-tenured faculty, who are required to provide a summary of evaluations for their periodic reviews. Data from past evaluations corresponds to program changes made over the same period, but it is not clear that the changes were in response to the evaluation data.

Plan for program improvement

The faculty have already modified the program to better align it with Michigan Department of Education requirements, state test content, and K-12 curriculum. They have also added new program options (K-12 Visual Arts Education), a new track (MAT for career changers), and a new venue (Macomb County Intermediate School District satellite program). The faculty plan to inquiry into issues concerning retention and attrition as well as the success with and timing of the state licensure exams.

Evidence of Commitment and Capacity:

- (4.1) Teacher education students must take an academic major and minor, or two minors (elementary only), in order to meet MDE requirements for certification, and they must maintain a higher GPA for admission to major, earn better grades in their content areas than non-education majors, and accumulate substantially more credits for graduation as compared to other students at Oakland University.

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- (4.2) The percentage of University full-time faculty assigned to teacher education is commensurate with its enrollment percentage, the percentage of teacher education courses taught by full-time faculty is 61% as compared with 52% University-wide, and the percentage of full-time faculty with terminal degrees in the School of Education and Human Services is 97% as compared with 92% University-wide.
- (4.3) The School of Education and Human Services is housed in a new, well-equipped building, and is the only academic unit to have a dedicated building.
- (4.4) Oakland University is financially sound, and the teacher education program receives resources commensurate with its enrollment percentage.
- (4.5) Student services include teacher education-specific assistance in the areas of advisement and field placement, and university-wide support in the areas of retention, academic skills, and health and counseling.
- (4.6) The teacher education program draws from students already admitted to the University, and makes an effort to recruit minority students to the program.
- (4.7) The Office of School and Field Services administers a survey to our graduates every semester.

The faculty concluded that Oakland University is committed to the teacher preparation program.

¹ **The program includes options in the following areas and Michigan, following to its own policies and regulations, may grant teaching licenses in these areas to the program's graduates.**

Oakland options lead to elementary/middle school endorsements in integrated science, language arts, mathematics, modern languages (Spanish, French, or German), and social studies; secondary endorsements in biology, chemistry, dance, English, history, mathematics, physics, and political science; and K-12 endorsements in art, modern languages, and music (through a program accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music). These endorsements can be earned through either the undergraduate or the recently-established MAT track designed for career changers with a bachelor's degree. Requirements for the two tracks are essentially the same, except that MAT students must complete a research component the faculty considers essential for masters-level study.