

**Summary of the Case  
Brigham Young University Hawaii  
Elementary and Secondary Education<sup>1</sup>  
February 24-26, 2015**

*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 Brent Chowen, Jon Shute, Ammon Wilcken, David Buckner, and Eric Rackley, and was approved by the school of education faculty on May 5, 2014.

**Introduction:**

Brigham Young University-Hawaii is a teaching institution that is owned and operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). The campus is located in Laie, Honolulu County, Hawaii. Honolulu County has a population of approximately 953,207 as of 2010 which is near 75% of the population of the State of Hawaii. BYU-Hawaii serves over 2700 undergraduate students from 77 countries. In fall 2013, 42 percent of these students were international and 47 percent of these students were from the primary Asia-Pacific target area (including Hawaii).

The School of Education is housed in the College of Human Development and has two programs: Elementary Education and Secondary Education. One department chair oversees the program, with eight full time faculty slots allocated to the department. The chair supervises the faculty and maintains the budget, course scheduling, and balancing of faculty loads. Faculty members are hired into elementary or secondary program slots, but due to the small size of the program, these professors often teach education courses bridging all education majors or specific content courses for either program based upon their professional backgrounds.

The mission of the BYU-Hawaii, School of Education is to prepare quality teachers with the content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional dispositions required to meet the needs of students in today's diverse and changing society by teaching and modeling: life-long learning and problem-solving abilities; best current educational practices, balanced with gospel principles; and caring, compassionate, and collaborative service in the home, school, church and community, both locally and internationally.

Formal application into the School of Education generally occurs after the 6th semester. All students complete most of their general education courses prior to admission into the professional programs. The Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education leads to a Standard (K-6) Professional Teaching License; licensure courses lead to a Secondary Education degree in a content area and a Standard License (6-12). The Department of Secondary Education partners with content areas to provide education courses leading to the content area education baccalaureate degree and licensure recommendation (See IBP Table 1.1, p. 7).

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<sup>1</sup> The Brigham Young University-Hawaii, Elementary and Secondary Education program offers options at the undergraduate level in elementary, secondary, and K-12 fields. The state of Hawaii, at its discretion, offers licensure to program completers in these option areas.

Both licensure programs share the set of pre-program education courses. Candidates must complete each pre-professional course with a grade of C- or better in order to be accepted into the program. The courses are:

- Foundations of Education
- Education of Exceptional Students
- Introduction to Hawaiian Studies
- General Psychology

Education courses in the professional program align with the ten Teacher Standards adopted by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board from 2012-2014, and to the INTASC standards as of 2014 (see IBP Table 1.3, p. 8). Teacher candidates must successfully complete all professional program courses with a grade of C- or higher.

The Elementary and Secondary Education program consists of 7 full-time faculty members in 2014-2015 academic year. The full-time faculty has been supplemented by 5 adjunct faculty members each year since 2011. The program graduated 27 students in 2012-2013 and enrolled 260 students in 2013-2014 in the following options:

**Table 1**  
**Brigham Young University-Hawaii, Elementary & Secondary Education Options**

<b>Option Name</b>	<b>Level</b> (UG, grad, post-bacc)	<b>Number of completers in previous academic year 2011-12</b>	<b>Number of students enrolled in current academic year 2012-13</b>
Elementary Education (K-6)*	UG	30	22
Secondary Education (7-12)*	UG	8	3
Business Education	UG	0	0
English Education	UG	2	0
Mathematics Education	UG	3	1
Social Studies Education	UG	2	1
Science Education	UG	1	1
other qualified fields offered by the HTSB (e.g. Spanish Education)	UG	0	0
Approved K-12 fields**	UG	5	2
Art Education	UG	1	0
Computer Education	UG	0	0
Physical Education	UG	0	0
Special Education	UG	1	1
TESOL	UG	3	1

\* In 2013, the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board changed the definition of Secondary to grades 6-12. BYU-Hawaii is working with the HTSB to revise its program.

\*\* In 2013 The HTSB also implemented policy that K-12 licensees must complete two field experiences at both the K-6 and 6-12 fields, so candidates in Art, Music, Physical Education, and TESOL choose the secondary route. The K-12 options in Special Education and Music Education are not currently offered but these courses remain on the books for implementation at a later time.

**Program claims (p. 23):**

1. Teacher candidates understand learner development, their differences and create appropriate environments.
2. Teacher candidates possess appropriate levels of content knowledge in their respective areas of licensure.
3. Teacher candidates have knowledge of effective pedagogical practices and demonstrate effective use of these practices.
4. Teacher candidates demonstrate professional dispositions as part of their professional practice and are reflective educators/practitioners.

### **Evidence supporting the claims:**

#### **Course Grades (Claim 1, 3)**

The program uses grades from three courses: EDU 300 (Human Growth and learning), EDU 312 (Effective Pedagogy), and EDU 385 (Assessment). Candidates must pass each course with a C- or better. Each course has associated applications and field experiences. EDU 312 is a pre-requisite to the field experiences of the professional year.

#### Validity and Reliability

All program courses are aligned with the Hawaii Teacher Standards. Course grades are believed to be valid and reliable due to their practical usefulness for making decisions about candidates, and because courses are taught and graded by experienced faculty with appropriate educational and P-12 employment backgrounds.

#### Results

Faculty report on page 24 that candidates must pass all courses to complete the program. An internal audit finding (Table A.2, GPA row, p. 60) reports that all final grades for completers in the sample met the requirements for exit from the program.

#### **Content GPA (Claim 2)**

One requirement of the School of Education is that all candidates pass each course in education and the content major with grades of C- or higher. Candidates may choose to re-enroll in a course if the grade does not meet the C- threshold.

#### Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of course grades is rooted in the alignment of course content to the Hawaii Standards and the qualifications of the faculty. But a more careful review of grades to evaluate consistency in grading (i.e. grade inflation, influence of attendance policy, alignment with Praxis scores, etc.) will take place in the near future to increase the value of grades as an indicator of content knowledge in the elementary education program (p. 34). Additionally, each department at BYU-Hawaii undergoes a program review every five years, and evidence of content knowledge is supplemented by portfolio artifacts.

#### Results

The overall content GPA earned by secondary licensing students is above the 3.0/4.0 threshold (p. 30) and for elementary candidates, the overall mean GPA yearly is no lower than 3.37, or a B+ (p. 34) An internal audit finding (Table A.2, GPA row, p. 60) reports that all completers in the sample (n = 16) met the minimum GPA requirement.

#### **Praxis Exams (Claim 1, 2)**

Candidates take three Praxis exams: The Principles of Teaching and Learning (PLT) for K-6 or 7-12, the Praxis I Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPST), and the Praxis II content knowledge tests.

#### Validity and Reliability

"The ETS tests are accepted as valid measurements and are aligned with courses in the School of Education" (p. 26). For the PLT, the faculty conducted a content analysis to determine alignment between what it tested and the program. This satisfied the faculty that the test is appropriate for measuring the outcomes for learner development and student differences that are emphasized in the program. They also believe that the PPST measures literacy and reasoning skills that are important for teachers and that the results are indicative of student knowledge. The faculty also agrees with the HSTB requirement that candidates pass Praxis II prior to full-time clinical practice as it measures foundational content knowledge.

#### Results

Mean scores for the PLT, PPST, and Praxis II meet or exceed the HI cuts score every year for every test taken by BYU-Hawaii candidates. Most mean scores exceed the cut score by a large margin. Various tables in Section 2 and Appendix E provide details. The internal audit (Table A.2, Test row, p. 61) reports that all completers met the testing requirements for all of Praxis exams.

#### **Observation Scores (Claim 1, 3, 4)**

To gauge an individual teacher candidate's ability to implement the knowledge of learner development in a classroom, faculty continually monitor key formative and summative items on observation forms. The comprehensive classroom observation form contains 41 measured indicators during the final 20 week field experience. The form is aligned to the Hawaii Teacher Performance Standards. Table 2.1 (p. 26) shows the alignments between the content of the observation instruments and the Hawaii Teacher Performance Standards. The table indicates that data from Standards 1-3 support Claim 1. Table 2.9 (p. 40) indicates that data from Standards 6-8 support Claim 3. Table 2.11 indicates that data from Section F of the Field Observation form support Claim 4.

#### Validity and Reliability

These measures are believed to be valid due to alignment with the Hawaii Teacher Standards, including the adoption of new standards as of July 1, 2014. Reliability is promoted via training meetings with cooperating teachers, field adjuncts, and faculty are held at the beginning of each semester. This training meeting includes a review of the standards and expectations for each person observing a candidate. Candidates, cooperating teachers, and field adjuncts use this time to discuss calendaring and expectations (p. 40). To increase reliability and the usefulness of rating for measuring growth, the observation forms are being revised to expand rating scales from met/not met to 4 point scales. Rubrics are being developed and rater training will take place. Revised forms will be piloted in Fall 2014.

Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, results from the Hawaii Department of Education teacher evaluations will provide additional data through student surveys (p. 47). This data can be compared to observation results from the program.

#### Results

Candidates have met expectations for progressing through the three phases of field work. No specific data are provided. However, the brief reports that Section F (which measures dispositions) of existing observation form, is consistently marked with Pass scores for

candidates. The few instances where concerns arise in this section are immediately addressed by faculty in conjunction with the cooperating teacher (p. 46).

### **Candidate Reflections (Claim 1)**

Candidates are formally observed 18 times during field experiences that include practica (Phase I & II) and Student Teaching (Phase III). Within 48 hours of each formal observation and post-conference, candidates submit a self-reflection that contains a section to Report, Analyze, and Plan. Candidates report on the context and happenings in the classroom during the lesson, then provide an analysis section in which they address the lesson and the impact of individual factors on the learning environment. Each reflection is evaluated by the assigned faculty supervisor. The faculty member can ask for resubmissions based on feedback or can mark the reflection as passed if they meet the competency level (p. 24).

#### Validity and Reliability

The brief does not describe how the EPP conceptualizes an adequate reflection nor how accurately or consistently the assigned faculty grade them. The brief does not mention procedures for checking the performance results for individual candidates from various faculty raters, nor for examining whether reflections that earn passing scores meet the expected criteria.

#### Results

The brief does not report results of candidate performance on reflection assignments, but states on pages 27 and 39 that candidates revise and resubmit reflections that do not meet competency levels. This implies that all candidates achieve mastery, but it is not clear how many attempts they can make or whether every reflection during practica and student teaching must achieve mastery. The internal audit (Table A.2) does not mention reflections or scoring sheets as part of the content in the field placement packets.

### **Portfolio (Claim 1, 4)**

The portfolio is a valid measurement in that the portfolio includes work samples and candidate-generated evidence of performance in the classroom. They provide at least 6 artifacts that demonstrate their achievement of competency in each of the Hawaii Teacher Performance Standards. Portfolio evidence for Standards 1-3 support Claim 1, while that for Standards 9-10 support Claim 4. Appendix F (p. 110) provides a hyperlink to the instructions and provides examples of types of acceptable evidence. According to the IBP (p. 25), portfolios are evaluated on a competency scale, with scores marked as Met/Not Met. The results are marked on the performance portfolio sheet which is included in the candidate's student teaching file (p. 27). The supervising faculty member gives feedback and as needed allows teacher candidates an opportunity to revise and resubmit their portfolio in order meet the required standard of completion (p. 25).

#### Validity and Reliability

The brief reports that the same strengths and challenges of measuring the quality of these assessments that has been outlined in previous sections remain in place here. Improved quality of measurements will strengthen the reliability of the portfolios as strong indicators of candidate effectiveness in the classroom (p. 41)

The review of the portfolio assessment will allow for increased reliability of portfolios in providing reliable evidence of candidate dispositions as the evaluation forms shift towards a rating scale and away from a competency based model (p. 47).

### Results

Claim 1: Each candidate who completed the program submitted a portfolio that was judged to meet the competency level as outlined by the faculty (p. 27).

Claim 4: As part of the performance portfolio, candidates include evidence of their professional dispositions. Hawaii Teacher Performance Standards 9 and 10 address ethical conduct and professional leadership. These two standards are each supported by six artifacts, which are evaluated by the mentoring professor (p. 46).

### **Blue Sheet (disposition ratings" (Claim 4)**

On page 43, the brief states: We have created a set of dispositions to help in evaluating the professional practice of teacher candidates. The dispositions help us to maintain a focus on the specific behaviors or practices that should be part of the education profession. In our use to this point, we have not built rubrics into our dispositions but instead have rated students on the Met/Not Met format. We use the dispositions for general teacher practice and also to evaluate some sections of our teacher observation evaluation form. These measurements are conducted during each education class. The disposition sheet is printed on blue paper, leading to the common use of the term "blue sheets" (See Table 2.10, p. 44-45 for description of the dispositions and behaviors that are monitored).

Professors review the dispositions with candidates at the beginning of the semester. Upon completion of the course, candidates mark a self-evaluation at the end of the semester using the M/NM format. A candidate must include supporting statements to indicate how s/he met the standard. The faculty reviews the form and sign in agreement or mark a change when necessary. A portion of the weekly department meeting is set aside for discussion of student progress, both in academics and dispositions, as evidenced in department meeting notes. The department has an intervention form which can be used by an individual instructor to identify a concern. Faculty then meets with the candidate to find a resolution. Repeated violations are sent to the Department Chair.

### Validity and Reliability

The brief (p. 46) reports that these measurements have been reliable in measuring teacher candidate dispositions. The blue forms are used in each education course and connected to the measurements conducted during the clinical field experience.

### Results

Candidates meet the professional dispositions listed above in order to continue in the program. Concerns that may have been identified in a campus course are addressed before a candidate may progress into full-time field practice. The weekly seminars provide an opportunity to discuss specific candidate concerns regarding K-12 students and situations that arise in the classroom. The observation form section F, which measures dispositions, is consistently marked with Pass scores for candidates. The few instances where concerns arise in this section are immediately addressed by faculty in conjunction with the cooperating teacher (p. 46).

### **Internal audit:**

In April 2014, the internal audit team was chosen by the accreditation chair, Brent Chowen, and approved in a department meeting on April 7, 2015. The internal audit team was composed of four individuals. The members were Dr. Brent Chowen, Department Chair and Accreditation Team leader; Dr. Jon Shute, Education faculty member; Peggy Hirata, part time adjunct and former field placement coordinator; and Kaye Wright, a retired school librarian and university service volunteer.

The department formal self-audit was conducted on Tuesday, April 15, 2014. The team completed the following steps as aligned with the audit trail and outlined in Table A.2 (p. 59-65):

1. Using program completer lists for the years 2009-2013, the team verified the names submitted to the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board. The total completer count was 167. Using a 10 percent guideline, the team chose 16 names at random starting from the first name in 2009 and choosing every 16<sup>th</sup> completer.
2. The files for each completer were located and evaluated. Each completer had two files: admissions and field completion.
3. Drs. Chowen and Shute reviewed the admissions packet examining 14 items, including GPA, Praxis tests, and Admission procedures. Peggy Hirata and Kaye Wright examined each field placement packet reviewing 7 key categories of forms, including forms signed by university supervisors.
4. Items were checked off and compiled on an excel spread sheet. Files and results were set aside in a secure area for future evaluation, if necessary.
5. The field placement coordinator, Cynthia Chun, was asked to review that all field placements were completed in accordance with SOE and Hawaii guidelines.
6. The other items on the audit trail were compiled by the accreditation chair after meetings with various university personnel.

The internal audit committee probed elements of the quality control system that relate to candidates, faculty, and resources, and found the program has strong procedures for carrying out the requirements of the program, and an influential quality control system with information feedback loops that support appropriate decision making about candidates. However, the quality control system needs improvements in record-keeping infrastructure and procedures to allow for electronic recording, to reduce missing or misfiled information, and to ease future monitoring and review (p. 65).

### **Plans for program improvement:**

The plans for program improvements (p. 48-49) presented below address all issues in the QCS discovered in the internal audit, plus enhancements that would improve the quality of assessments that will support the claims for Quality Principle I in the full brief.

- Better record keeping and filing. The Education programs use paper copies and files are stored in secure areas in the School of Education building. However, electronic copies of key data points (i.e. Praxis scores, observation data, etc.) will help the faculty to better use the data as formative information to continually monitor and improve candidates performance. The self-audit including one missing file from the random sample and several records were misfiled.
- Faculty training. One aspect of the program that has led to its success has been the strength of faculty. Recent events, such as retirement, have led to the hiring of six new faculty. Of the seven current full-time faculty, five have been at BYU-Hawaii for less than three years. This turnover has coincided with the numerous changes in Hawaii licensing requirements and the timeline for accreditation. The new faculty bring energy, perspectives, and experiences that will benefit the School of Education. Their inexperience with the program has required additional training, and consistency in the program will need to be carefully maintained as new programs, forms, and measurements are developed.

- Grades. The grading policy in the School of Education has gone through revisions during the past several years. With this accreditation process, the faculty cannot indicate the level to which attendance and grades are linked. The GPA requirements reflect a philosophical framework that is currently under discussion.
- Praxis exam data. Although each individual candidate has a record of the Praxis I, Praxis II, and PLT test scores, the School of Education has not created a database where the scores can be analyzed as a group. This lack of database limits the opportunity to use the data as formative assessment. Further, running statistical analyses of the data has been difficult. Going forward, the implementation of an electronic data base will mitigate this concern.
- Rater reliability. The adjunct faculty who conduct observations for the School of Education have a great amount of experience in the K-12 classrooms and in supervision. However, this background experience does not guarantee consistency across observations. Each adjunct brings an individual perspective that potentially impacts the observation. Discussions with adjunct reflect priorities on classroom management, special education accommodations, or other aspects of the learning experience. A solid rubric and training will help reconcile these differences. This same issue holds true with cooperating teachers. Although training meetings are held at the beginning of each cohort semester, training for observation scoring has not been a part of the training.
- Observation forms. Due to philosophical approaches to learning and measurement, observation and evaluation forms used by the School of Education are based upon the Met/Not Met scale. Discussions on the limitations of these forms has been addressed in previous sections. The limited range of scoring on the observation and portfolio form do not provide opportunities to discriminate between the levels of candidate performance. Implementing a scale will the faculty to not only determine candidate performance more accurately, but to electronically record the scoring, thus allowing for more formative discussions with individual candidates and the cohort as a whole.

A timeline for addressing these issues, and the parties responsible for the effort, are outlined in a table on p. 49-52 of the IBP.

**Statement regarding commitment and capacity:**

The faculty concluded that BYU-Hawaii is committed to the Elementary and Secondary Education program and that there is sufficient capacity to offer a quality program.