



A Closer Look at Selection Criteria

Undergraduate Elementary Programs

KEY FINDING: A quarter of the 875 programs evaluated ensure that they draw most aspiring teachers from the top-half of the college-going population – including 113 that are both selective and diverse.

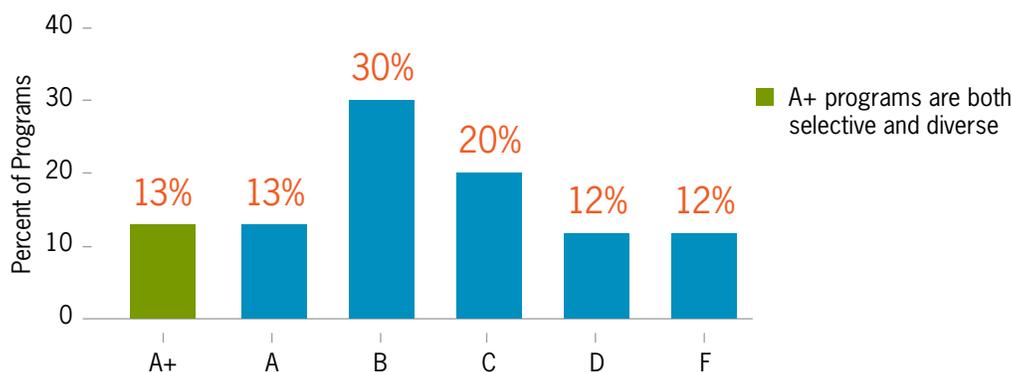
Why teacher prep programs should have strong selection criteria

Sixty years of research and evidence from nations whose students outperform American students demonstrate that raising the selection criteria of teacher preparation programs will help improve the effectiveness of new teachers. This analysis examined the admissions requirements for undergraduate teacher candidates to determine if the requirements help ensure that programs draw from the top half of the college-going population. Programs earn an A or better if they ensure that their candidates come from the top half of the college-going population, as measured by whether the institution housing the program is selective or whether the program takes proactive measures to set high admissions standards. Programs earning an A+ do this while maintaining a diverse teacher candidate cohort, proving that selectivity need not come at the expense of diversity.

For more information about analysis and program grades, including how programs' GPA requirements are evaluated, see the *Methodology in brief* and *Understanding program grades* sections below.

How likely are undergraduate elementary programs to select aspiring teachers from the top half of college students?

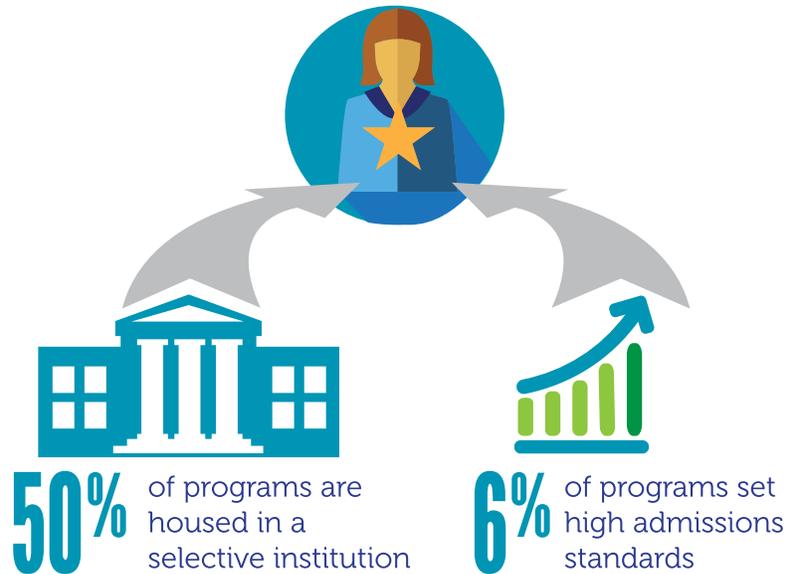
(N=875 undergraduate elementary teacher prep programs)



The 2014 *Teacher Prep Review* found 36 percent of programs were sufficiently selective. Since then, we have raised the criteria for this standard to reflect new research and accreditation standards,¹ and now 26 percent of programs are sufficiently selective.

1 For more on how and why this standard has changed, visit a brief on this topic [here](#).

Paths to being a selective teacher prep program



Half of programs (50 percent) are housed in institutions that are moderately or highly selective, based on their average SAT or ACT scores or other measures, such as Barron's ratings.² The other half of programs must take additional steps to ensure that they only admit aspiring teachers from the top half of the college-going population. Only a fraction of all [programs](#) (6 percent) are proactively selective, admitting cohorts of teacher candidates with high standardized test scores or setting a high minimum GPA for admission despite being housed in a less selective institution.³ However, nearly half of all programs (44 percent) do not take these measures, and so they fail to ensure that their incoming candidates are among the top half of college students.⁴

As mentioned above, one step programs could take is to set a minimum GPA for admission – or in lieu of a minimum GPA, they could demonstrate that the cohort average GPA is high. We evaluated programs' GPA requirements only if they did not earn an A for the selectivity of their institutions. For this reason, we collected GPA data for only a subset of programs. Of those, we collect these data in both 2014 and 2016 for 370 programs. A comparison of these data reveals that 71 programs now require at least a 3.0 GPA for admission into the program, compared with 44 programs in 2014, representing a small but notable improvement.⁵ These programs are among those taking additional steps to ensure that their teacher candidates meet acceptable admissions standards.

A closer look at diversity

Programs that are selective and diverse earn an A+

In 2016, programs earn an A+ when they both are selective and maintain a level of racial diversity that is the same or greater than that of the institution itself, or of the teacher workforce in the state. Previously, programs could earn an A+ (then called Strong Design) through two pathways: by being selective and racially diverse compared with the diversity of the institution or by being selective based on multiple measures (GPA and standardized test scores). Of the 225 programs that earn at least an A on selection criteria, 113 programs earned an A+ based on this updated measure of selectivity and diversity, compared with 56 programs in 2014.

- 2 These programs earn an A or B based on the selectivity of their institution.
- 3 These programs earn an A or B based on the selectivity of admission into the teacher prep program.
- 4 These programs earn a C or lower on Selection Criteria.
- 5 While programs only earn a C on Selection Criteria for setting a 3.0 GPA minimum, this finding nonetheless represents a positive trend of programs moving toward a higher bar for admissions.

Selective and diverse programs

- AK ▶ University of Alaska Fairbanks
- AR ▶ John Brown University
- AZ ▶ Arizona State University
- AZ ▶ University of Arizona
- CA ▶ Loyola Marymount University
- CA ▶ University of Redlands
- CA ▶ University of the Pacific
- CO ▶ University of Colorado Boulder
- CO ▶ University of Colorado – Colorado Springs
- FL ▶ Florida International University
- FL ▶ University of Miami
- FL ▶ University of South Florida
- GA ▶ Georgia College and State University
- GA ▶ Mercer University
- ID ▶ Northwest Nazarene University
- IL ▶ DePaul University
- IL ▶ Illinois Wesleyan University
- IL ▶ Knox College
- IL ▶ University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- IN ▶ Goshen College
- IN ▶ Indiana University – Bloomington
- IN ▶ Purdue University
- IN ▶ Saint Mary's College
- KS ▶ Benedictine College
- KS ▶ Newman University
- KS ▶ University of Kansas
- KY ▶ Asbury University
- KY ▶ University of Kentucky
- KY ▶ University of Louisville
- MA ▶ Boston College
- MA ▶ Gordon College
- MA ▶ Mount Holyoke College
- MA ▶ Smith College
- MA ▶ Stonehill College
- MD ▶ University of Maryland – College Park
- MI ▶ Calvin College
- MI ▶ Michigan State University
- MI ▶ University of Detroit Mercy
- MI ▶ University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
- MI ▶ University of Michigan – Dearborn
- MN ▶ Bethel University
- MN ▶ College of St. Benedict and St. John's University
- MN ▶ Gustavus Adolphus College
- MN ▶ Hamline University
- MN ▶ St. Catherine University
- MN ▶ University of Minnesota – Duluth
- MN ▶ University of Minnesota – Morris
- MN ▶ University of Northwestern – St. Paul
- MN ▶ University of St. Thomas
- MO ▶ Maryville University of St. Louis
- MO ▶ Rockhurst University
- MO ▶ St. Louis University
- MO ▶ University of Missouri - St. Louis
- MO ▶ Westminster College
- MO ▶ William Jewell College
- MO ▶ William Woods University
- MT ▶ Carroll College
- MT ▶ Montana State University
- NC ▶ Guilford College
- NC ▶ High Point University
- NC ▶ University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- NE ▶ Creighton University
- NE ▶ University of Nebraska – Lincoln
- NJ ▶ College of New Jersey
- NJ ▶ Seton Hall University
- NY ▶ Barnard College
- NY ▶ College of Mount Saint Vincent
- NY ▶ Columbia University
- NY ▶ CUNY – Hunter College
- NY ▶ Five Towns College
- NY ▶ Manhattan College
- OH ▶ John Carroll University
- OH ▶ Miami University of Ohio
- OH ▶ University of Cincinnati
- OH ▶ University of Dayton
- OH ▶ Xavier University
- OK ▶ University of Oklahoma
- OR ▶ Linfield College
- OR ▶ Oregon State University
- PA ▶ Arcadia University
- PA ▶ Bucknell University
- PA ▶ Drexel University
- PA ▶ Elizabethtown College
- PA ▶ Grove City College
- PA ▶ Juniata College
- PA ▶ Messiah College
- PA ▶ Misericordia University
- PA ▶ Pennsylvania State University
- PA ▶ Saint Joseph's University
- PA ▶ Susquehanna University
- PA ▶ University of Scranton
- RI ▶ Providence College
- SC ▶ College of Charleston
- TN ▶ Belmont University
- TN ▶ Lee University
- TN ▶ Maryville College
- TN ▶ University of Tennessee
- TX ▶ LeTourneau University
- TX ▶ St. Edward's University
- TX ▶ Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
- TX ▶ Texas Christian University
- TX ▶ University of Houston
- TX ▶ University of St. Thomas
- TX ▶ University of Texas at Arlington
- TX ▶ University of Texas at Austin
- TX ▶ University of Texas at Dallas
- UT ▶ Brigham Young University
- UT ▶ University of Utah
- VT ▶ University of Vermont
- WA ▶ Pacific Lutheran University
- WA ▶ Walla Walla University
- WA ▶ Western Washington University
- WY ▶ University of Wyoming

Methodology in brief

We examine admissions data and requirements to see if aspiring teachers are strong students — in the top half academically of college-goers. We do this through the average SAT/ACT scores of the university overall, the institution's Barron's selectivity rating in the absence of SAT/ACT data, the minimum required GPA to enroll in the teaching program, or the average GPA of the program's teacher candidates upon enrollment. Click [here](#) to read more.

Understanding program grades on Selection Criteria

- A+** The program is both selective (highly likely to draw almost all potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by an institutional average SAT or ACT score in the 70th percentile or better or by other measures of selectivity such as Barron's rankings of "most competitive," or by program average SAT or ACT scores at the 60th percentile), and diverse (as measured by comparing the diversity of the teacher prep program with the diversity of the institution or the state's teacher workforce).
- A** The program is highly likely to draw almost all potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by an institutional average SAT or ACT score in the 70th percentile or better or by other measures of selectivity such as Barron's rankings of "most competitive," or by program average SAT or ACT scores at the 60th percentile.
- B** The program is likely drawing a majority of potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by an institutional average SAT or ACT score in the 60th percentile or better or by other measures of selectivity such as Barron's rankings of "highly competitive," or by program average SAT or ACT scores at the 50th percentile, minimum GPA requirements of 3.3, or by cohort average GPA requirements of 3.5.
- C** The program likely draws a moderate number of potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by an institutional average SAT or ACT score in the 50th percentile or better or by other measures of selectivity such as Barron's rankings of "very competitive," by minimum GPA requirements of 3.0, or by cohort average GPA requirements of 3.3.
- D** The program likely draws a small number of potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by Barron's rankings of "competitive" or by minimum GPA requirements of 2.75.
- F** The program is unlikely to draw more than a few potential teachers from the top half of students, as measured by the institution's not requiring an ACT or SAT score, Barron's rankings of "less competitive" or "noncompetitive," or minimum GPA requirements of less than 2.75.



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