

Quality III: Liberal Arts

Statement of Distinction: An exceptional AILACTE institution views the liberal arts as essential to and integrated throughout its teacher education program. The institution excels at preparing preservice teachers who are broadly educated, have a strong command of content knowledge and pedagogy, and who are thoughtful and discerning professionals. Students from such an institution are active learners, critical thinkers, problem solvers, decision makers, and risk takers.

A. Category: Culture/Institution

1. The institution is guided by a dynamic mission statement, goals, and/or principles that focus on the importance of the liberal arts. *An institution's mission statement designates clear liberal arts themes that are specifically infused into the teacher education program. The institution has a standing interdisciplinary committee meets annually, involving faculty in discussions regarding the knowledge, skills and dispositions inherent in liberal arts education.*
2. The institution emphasizes the utilization and application of liberal arts content knowledge in an intellectually stimulating environment. *Liberal arts and teacher education faculty members team-teach an interdisciplinary science course using the inquiry method. Monthly interdisciplinary faculty lunch discussions center around the teaching of writing across the curriculum.*
3. The institution practices on-going assessment and monitoring of the effectiveness of the integration of education and the other liberal arts. *Annual reviews of the teacher education program document that faculty are systematically integrating liberal arts themes within their courses. Arts and sciences faculty and education faculty collaboratively analyze performance assessment data to determine how liberal arts education informs candidate practice.*

B. Category: Curriculum/Programs

1. The program provides an intellectual community where students are comfortable and capable of addressing critical issues based on moral rightness and religious/philosophical beliefs. *Faculty members establish an on-line discussion for teacher education students from institutions with differing philosophical orientations about controversial issues in education. As part of a service learning experience, education majors work in a food pantry for an extended period of time.*
2. Students engage in a broad range of liberal arts courses that stimulate thinking in action. These courses serve as the basis for pedagogy. *Teacher education students reflect on how they can use their skills learned in writing across the curriculum to inform their instructional methods in the teaching of writing. Education students interview liberal arts faculty regarding how their discipline influences their pedagogy.*
3. Students prepare to use knowledge paired with pedagogy to effect and influence change in education. *Students implement principles about family communication that they learned in a sociology class as they work with parents in a difficult student teaching situation. Teacher education graduates utilize knowledge of political systems and group communication skills to facilitate productive P-12 faculty meetings.*
4. Students learn to integrate personal views, informed by content knowledge, pedagogy, and context, into a dynamic philosophy of teaching and learning. *Teacher education students develop a vision statement that is revisited and integrated into each new learning*

situation. Faculty members help teacher education students re-evaluate their educational philosophy after doing an internship in another country.

5. Students prepare to use interdisciplinary thinking as they explore issues, topics, and subjects in a learning situation. *In her portfolio review, a history teacher education student is required to discuss how history influences her as a prospective teacher. Secondary student teachers team-teach in a humanities block.*

C. Category: Faculty

1. Education and other liberal arts faculty members understand the importance of liberal arts and incorporate its strengths when emphasizing pedagogy. *Problem based instruction is used in methods courses allowing students to draw from their general education courses. Faculty members facilitate presentation and discussion of multiple perspectives on issues through the use of role-playing.*
2. Education faculty members are grounded in the liberal arts, in addition to P-12 teaching experiences. *Faculty members have published articles related to liberal arts research. Biology faculty members model effective pedagogical strategies as they work in a long-term partnership with local fourth grade science classes.*
3. Education and other liberal arts faculty members model collaboration and cooperation as they interact with each other and P-12 schools to create an integrated teacher preparation program. *The institution has an advisory board of P-12 and liberal arts faculty that is utilized to align curriculum and program with P-12 standards. Faculty members from throughout the institution and P-12 teachers receive a grant to attend an interdisciplinary conference.*