
TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM GAUDELLI
CHAIR, TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
BEFORE THE
NEW NEW YORK EDUCATION REFORM COMMISSION
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My name is William Gaudelli, and I am associate professor of social studies and education and Coordinator of the Program in Social Studies at Teachers College, Columbia University. I am here as my capacity as Chairman of the Teacher Education Policy Committee at Teachers College.

Teachers College, Columbia University, is the oldest and largest graduate school of education in the United States, and also perennially ranked among the nation's best. Its name notwithstanding, the College is committed to a vision of education writ large, encompassing our four core areas of expertise: health, education, leadership and psychology.

About one-third of our 5,400 students are enrolled across several educator preparation programs and become teachers, principals, and superintendents in New York and across the country.

TC last month opened the Teachers College Community School, public preK-8 elementary school in Harlem in partnership with the New York City Department of Education and Columbia University. The school is intended to demonstrate how affiliation with a higher education institution can lead to effective implementation of comprehensive educational services in an urban, community public school.

Just as the school will be a model for the country, Teachers College is here today to emphasize three key attributes of high quality teacher education that we hope the State will include in its teacher education reform agenda.

First, Link Teacher Education to Research about Learning

Preparing teachers to provide an excellent education for our students is critical, and New York has long been a pioneer in ensuring that teachers are well prepared for the complexities of their work. In order to meet changing educational needs, teacher preparation should undergo continuous study and review. To that end, Teachers College supports the development and study of paradigms that integrate academic content with practical concerns.

Any teacher education program should apply what is commonly accepted practice in other professions, including medicine: that scholarship and practice inform each other, and that preparation in both areas is critical for new professionals. We believe strongly that teaching is far more than a set of easily defined skills or techniques. Rather, teaching effectively requires a deep understanding not only of subject matter but also of learning progressions and strategies that enable

each individual student to learn content and concepts. High-quality, university-based graduate teacher education programs go beyond training: they ground professional preparation in scholarship about that professional practice.

We are hopeful that New York State will be among the nation's leaders in connecting teacher preparation to emerging knowledge and research about teaching and learning, including the new, very exciting discoveries about student cognition and development. Teacher educators should be scholars who can bring these new, critical findings about how students learn to teachers-in-preparation, and should strive to produce high-quality educators who use evidence and research throughout their careers.

Connecting knowledge-generating institutions such as colleges, universities, museums and libraries, to teacher preparation prevents professional stagnation and paralysis, which would occur if future generations of teachers were exposed to outdated skills and obsolete knowledge. Society urges doctors to keep up with advancements in their field, so why would we accept anything less from the people who teach our children?

Second, Emulate Successful Clinical Residency Programs

Teachers College supports the replication of clinical residencies, which have been shown to increase student achievement, teacher retention, and teachers' sense of preparedness. For example, Teaching Residents at Teachers College ([TR@TC](#)), is a fourteen-month intensive master's degree program that places TC students in classrooms with experienced teachers at high-need New York City schools. The program seeks career changers who understand the circumstances of the populations they will serve. Residents work three full days a week in the classroom of a master teacher, supplemented by one day doing community-based work, and one day on campus at TC. In the second half of the year, residents are in their schools four full days a week.

We encourage the State to consider TR@TC as a model residency program to be replicated statewide. Universities are especially well-positioned to implement these types of residencies since they can connect the social, emotional, and cultural aspects of learning.

Third, Evaluate Teachers and Hold Teacher Education Programs Accountable

We endorse the development of rigorous assessments of beginning teachers' readiness for responsible practice, including their ability to increase students' learning. We encourage the exploration of approaches to assessment that can be shown to link teachers' skills and knowledge to students' academic growth. New York State should support the development of these sorts of assessments, and should evaluate the validity of these tools.

The State has the capacity to support and to enhance all teacher education programs by incentivizing the implementation of accountability measures already in place. For example, New York could:

- Begin to implement high-quality observational assessments of classroom teaching by supporting efforts to link these assessments to student achievement and by developing rigorous training for classroom observers to ensure reliable assessment findings.
- Employ current state data systems to track the teaching persistence rates for graduates of every program, and use the findings as a public disclosure measure.

- Implement feedback surveys of preparation program graduates and their employers using state education, labor department (or state insurance department), university, and school district data systems.

All New York teacher education programs will be strengthened if the State improves standards, adds resources, maintains rigorous certification processes and requirements, and ensures that all programs meet the needs of schools state-wide. By requiring that all graduates of teacher education programs are to incorporate emerging research and scholarship, the State will further enhance its reputation as an education leader in preparing superb teaching professionals.

Thank you for your time and I welcome your questions and comments.

William Gaudelli is associate professor of social studies and education and Coordinator of the Program in Social Studies at Teachers College, Columbia University. His research areas include global citizenship education, media as curriculum, and teacher education and development. Gaudelli received a doctorate in social studies education from Rutgers University and a Bachelors degree in political science from Rutgers College. He is currently engaged in research of case studies of global citizenship education and an upcoming, related book. He has published a variety of pieces in scholarly journals, including *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *Teachers College Record*, *Curriculum Inquiry*, *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *The Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, *Teaching Education*, *Theory and Research in Social Education*, *CITE* along with two books, *World Class: Teaching and learning in global times* (Erlbaum Associates, 2003) and *Social Inequality in the Global Culture* (Kluwer, 2008, co-edited). Gaudelli has been involved with a variety of international projects, including collaboration with the Global Education Leadership Foundation in India and received a US-DOE FIPSE grant for an international exchange project in Europe. Gaudelli is a frequent presenter at professional development meetings and an invited speaker for a variety of national and international conferences. Gaudelli was elected to the South Orange-Maplewood (NJ) Board of Education in 2011 for a three year term and was appointed to the New York State Content Advisory Panel for Common Core and Social Studies. He recently served on the executive boards of *Theory and Research in Social Education* and as an executive board member for the John Dewey Society and the College and University Faculty Association of NCSS.