

College of Education One Year Initial Alumni Survey Results

ONE YEAR SURVEY RESULTS ON COMPLETER SATISFACTION

Q7. How well did Niagara University prepare you for your current position? 1-5

1-Extremely unprepared, 2-Unprepared, 3-Neutral, 4-Well Prepared, 5-Extremely Well Prepared

Undergraduate			
	Class of 2016-17	Class of 2017-18	Class of 2018-19
Rating	N=33	N=10	N=10
Mean	4.18	4.1	3.6
Median	4	4	4
Mode	4	4	4
Range	3-5	3-5	2-5

Graduate-Initial			
	Class of 2016-17	Class of 2017-18	Class of 2018-19
Rating	N=12	N=2	N=3
Mean	4.17	4	4
Median	4	4	4
Mode	5	4	4
Range	3-5	4	4

What could Niagara University have done to better prepare you for your current position?

Undergraduate Initial:

Class of 2016-17 Responses

By not requiring the EdTPA be completed during student teaching so that it doesn't take away from the classroom experience.

Teach us strategies to teach writing and reading. For example: how we teach personal narratives to elementary kids, how to teach guided reading

Given more 'real' classroom preparation.

I don't think there's anything. I had plenty of "real world" experience. I had great professors, great curriculum. It was a great experience all together. My only wish is that I would have discovered I love the older age students sooner and got my 5-9 extension instead of B-2 but that's no fault of NUs! I just wish I could have gone through that program at NU.

I think Niagara University prepared me well, but there are many things you learn on the job such as behavior management. I took a class to help but there were still many things I learned on the job. I do not know if there is anything more that the COE could have taught me because they did teach me so much in my classes and through Learn & Serve.

I currently am working as a preschool teacher at a child care center. I wish Niagara would have focused more on early childhood before kindergarten. For example, more information on child behavior management and educational activities for younger ages. My certification is on Birth through 6th grade. I feel the classes I took

were more focused on ages above 1st grade and academic activities. In preschool I have to focus more on social emotional and cognitive skills.

Make certification exams a requirement during undergrad.

Nothing

Nothing

Placements in private schools

Actual classes on classroom management and discipline. True lesson and unit planning, not wasting time, or in some cases full courses, on outdated theorists and theories.

Maybe offer student teaching in a private school setting as well

Niagara could have done a better job in regard to dealing with behaviors inside of the classroom. More deescalation strategies would have been very useful!

Worked more on classroom management strategies and how to start the first day.

Help prepare for the first day of school and classroom management.

I think there should be more practical hours and an analysis of what occurs in the classroom during those practical hours. It can be difficult to transfer theoretical knowledge without that component.

Classroom management strategies

More information on classroom management, techniques of how to best set up a relationship with a mentor, differentiating graphic organizers

Class of 2017-18 Responses

Integrate trauma informed teaching strategies
More instruction about classroom management, 504s/IEPs, more real world instruction relating to what teachers experience everyday in their classrooms.
Real-life situations over how to write lesson plans - Although lesson plans are helpful as well.
More behavior/ classroom management training. Also, more in depth special ed training including offering TBM training.
Had more self contained special education field placement.
I chose to take a different route in education, and I am now a service coordinator for a non-profit organization and help determine what therapies are appropriate for PreK students. I'm grateful for the knowledge in special education that I have and it has provided me the right tools for my position I'm in now. I wish I had a little more knowledge about funding, grants, problem solving, and the legal sides of early childhood education/special education.
I am currently a teacher in a self-contained classroom. I was underprepared for the level of physical/verbal aggression that can present in a teaching placement such as this.
More classroom discussion about Urban school environments

Class of 2018-19 Responses

Better coordination with the business content classes. The education part was good. However, the business alignment, I couldn't pass the business CST I took it 3 times. I gave up. I'm a school counselor now working on my principal and superintendent masters as we speak at the UofR.

Graduate Initial:

Class of 2016-17 Responses

One area where NU could do significantly better is in job hunting and in student reporting. The first round of report card writing was a massive learning curve and that kind of thing is pretty easy to teach ahead of time.

Focus on teaching students with indigenous backgrounds

More work with the various Ontario Curriculum Documents

More consistency on how to create lesson plans for the Ontario Curriculum. Or have a teacher that is well versed in the Ontario curriculum when Canadians go to their student teaching placements.

I only received conditional acceptance with the Ontario College of Teachers because I was missing some credits from the NU program to meet the OCT requirements. I had to take additional course (which cost money) to receive my OCT certification.

I teach in Ontario, so my knowledge of assessment criteria and expectations specific to ministry of education requirements was lacking

More interview practice.

It would have been great to add at least one leadership course to the program, because I became an administrator.

Class of 2018-19 Responses

I had no idea how much extra work teachers do besides planning and teaching. There are lots of extra components (such as coordinating spirit week, parent communication, handling tough behavioral and parent situations, etc.) Teaching is more draining than I ever imagine but worth every moment. I just wish I was prepared a bit more for all of the extra work thrown at you besides lesson planning.

Class of 2018-19 Responses

Spent more time on developing relationships with students' families and facilitating proactive educational conversations with parents/guardians.

Revised Survey for Class of 2018-19

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements now that you have completed your program of study.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Agree (3)
- ☐ Strongly Agree (4)

1. Learner Development

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I know how learners grow and develop and apply this knowledge in my practice.

2. Learning Differences-Individual

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I am able to accommodate and modify my instruction for individual differences among my students.

3. Learning Differences-Cultures and Communities

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I am able to implement instruction inclusive of the diverse cultures and communities of my students.

4. Learning Environments

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I can support effective learning environments.

5. Content Knowledge

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I have in-depth knowledge of the content area(s) I am expected to teach.

6. Application of Content

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I am able to use my content knowledge to engage students and promote learning.

7. Assessment

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I am able to implement a variety of assessments to measure students' progress and my own effectiveness.

8. Planning for Instruction

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I am able to plan instruction that affords all students access to rigorous college- and career-ready standards (e.g. Next Generation, Common Core, Ontario Expectations, National Standards.)

9. Instructional Strategies

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I am able to implement a variety of effective, evidence-based instructional strategies.

10. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I know and uphold all standards of educational practice and ethical behaviors of teaching.

11. Leadership and Collaboration

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I am able to collaborate with families and colleagues to promote student learning.

12. Technology

As a result of courses and field experiences in my program, I am able to use current technologies to engage students, improve learning, and enrich my professional practice.

Response

How well do you feel Niagara University's program has prepared you for professional practice in the following areas: 1
(Not Prepared) - 4 (Well Prepared)

Chart presents percentage of respondents at each rating level and the mean overall response.

Standards	Aggregate Undergraduate Programs	Class of 2022-23 N= 9 % Response Rate					Class of 2023-24 N= 1 % Response Rate				
		1	2	3	4	Mean	1	2	3	4	Mean
INTAS C 1	Learner Development	0	11.11%	22.22%	66.67%	3.56	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 2	Learner Differences-Individuals	0	0	22.22%	77.78%	3.78	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 2	Learners Differences-Cultures and Communities	0	0	33.33%	66.67%	3.67	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 3	Learning Environments	0	0	22.22%	77.78%	3.78	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 4	Content Knowledge	0	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	3.00	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 5	Application of Content	0	0	44.44%	55.56%	3.56	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 6	Assessment	0	11.11%	22.22%	66.67%	3.56	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 7	Planning for Instruction	0	0	11.11%	88.89%	3.89	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 8	Instructional Strategies	0	0	22.22%	77.78%	3.78	0	0	0	100%	4.00
InTAS C 9	Professional Learning	0	0	11.11%	88.89%	3.89	0	0	0	100%	4.00

	and Ethical Practice										
InTASC 10	Leadership and Collaboration	0	11.11%	11.11%	77.78%	3.67	0	0	0	100%	4.00
	Technology	0	0	22.22%	77.78%	3.78	0	0	0	100%	4.00

Undergraduate Comments 2020-21:

- Courses specifically on PLC's and collaboration in the school setting. Perhaps a fun course on game based learning - something that is necessary to engage the modern student.
- More examples of activities as they relate to subject specific areas. It's one thing to have students research based on curricular expectations but it's another to provide resources and materials that we could use and that show us how they can be differentiated and used across the curriculum. The field experiences are great for this but the courses leading up to field placement could do better to demonstrate and also to include some long range planning and unit planning that doesn't solely rely on us as students to source out materials and find out what a unit plan is and how to do it without having previous experience doing it. Along with this, rather than having us make assessments based on information, show us a variety of assessments and how they connect to the lesson plans and activities, how they connect to the curriculum, how do we use it to inform our teaching and later write report cards - first show, then we do together, then we do it independently. Sometimes it seemed like we skipped right to the you do it and figure it out yourselves rather than showing a variety of examples to go from before doing more research.
- Teach more about how to assess students and talk about report cards.
- A course only on differentiating learning

Undergraduate comments - 2022-23

- I just felt like the classes did not focus on special education enough at all. We were always completing lesson plans pages long, but never really touched on IEP writing, 504's and nothing prepared me for anything having to do with literacy and grammar. There were no teachings on different applications and curriculums we use, and I was never told that schools had pacing guides until student teaching. I literally thought teachers taught what they wanted when they wanted, no teacher or course told me about pacing guides or curriculums.
- Building the portfolio into each semester instead of compiling the portfolio in one semester
- Focus more on classroom management and how different parts of a school operate, not just logistical things like planning or analyzing test scores.
- More instruction regarding everyday teacher requirements (e.g., grading, creating appropriate assignments, etc.)
- More organization with getting information to ALL students. More classes to ensure we know the CONTENT we need to teach instead of how to teach it.
- More realistic lesson plans and creating resources that we will actually use in an elementary classroom.
- Student behavior has greatly changed in the last ten years. Personally, I believe professors overly romanticized classroom management strategies and how effective they are (such as attention grabbers and different reinforcement tactics). Moreover, many of these only applied to elementary school settings and seem inappropriate in High School. Give more up to date classroom management protocol and how to respond WHEN a student throws a desk, or starts a fight in your

room, or is blatantly insubordinate. Additionally, differentiate between what classroom management looks like for children vs. adolescents.

- Many professors seemed out of date with what was actually happening in classrooms post COVID. Looking at how packaged curriculums intersect (and often don't perfectly align) with state standards. More conversations on teacher record keeping and parent communication. More transparency with the certification process (specifically initial to precessional and CTLE hours). Integrate certification testing thought he course sequence (give a suggested time to test based on what courses students take that semester).

Undergraduate comments- 2023-24

- Nothing

Standard s	Aggregated Graduate Programs	Class of 2022-23 N= 23 % Response Rate					Class of 2023-24 N= 49 % Response Rate				
		1	2	3	4	Mean	1	2	3	4	Mean
INTASC 1	Learner Development	0	0	34.7 8	65.2 2	3.65	0	8.16%	42.86%	48.98%	3.41
InTASC 2	Learner Differences-Individuals	0	0	34.7 8	65.2 2	3.65	0	8.16%	42.86%	48.98%	3.41
InTASC 2	Learners Differences-Cultures and Communities	0	4.3 5%	17.3 9%	78.2 6%	3.74	0	6.12%	36.73%	57.14%	3.51
InTASC 3	Learning Environments	0	4.3 5%	17.3 9%	78.2 6%	3.74	0	8.16%	40.82%	51.02%	3.43
InTASC 4	Content Knowledge	0	18.18 %	40.9 1%	40.9 1%	3.23	4.08%	14.29%	42.86%	38.78%	3.16
InTASC 5	Application of Content	0	4.3 5%	21.7 4%	73.9 1%	3.70	0	4.08%	42.86%	53.06%	3.49
InTASC 6	Assessment	0	8.7 0%	30.4 3%	60.8 7%	3.52	0	10.20%	40.82%	48.98%	3.39
InTASC 7	Planning for Instruction	0	4.3 5%	26.0 9%	69.5 7%	3.65	0	6.12%	44.90%	48.98%	3.43
InTASC 8	Instructional Strategies	0	4.3 5%	34.7 8%	60.8 7%	3.57	0	6.12%	46.94	46.94	3.41
InTASC 9	Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	0	0	21.7 4%	78.2 6%	3.78	0	4.08%	28.57%	67.35%	3.63
InTASC 10	Leadership and Collaboration	0	0	30.4 3%	69.5 7%	3.70	0	8.33%	37.50%	54.17	3.46

	Technology	0	4.3 5%	21.7 4%	73.9 1%	3.70	0	12.24	38.78	48.98	3.37
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Graduate Comments 2020-21:

- I feel NU needs to better prepare future teachers on communication with parents and collaboration skills with colleagues. Additionally, I feel NU needs to better prepare future teachers on analyzing student data and how to adapt instruction accordingly. I believe there also needs to be more emphasis on classroom management and student engagement strategies and the opportunity to practice implementation during field experience.
- Diving deeper into popular programs that schools use. In college we just learn how to make a lesson plan but in the field we have to strictly follow our schools curriculum so there is not much wiggle room. I would have like to become familiar with these ELA and math programs ahead of time instead of taking a NYS standard and just creating a lesson out of it that I won't be able to use.
- Bring in guest speakers to share what it's like to be a first year/tenure teacher.
- I felt the field placement was a much better indicator and support when it came to my learning. There was not much course content on diverse learners (other than special education), and I have experience with much more ethnic diversity. I additionally did not feel prepared when it came to different assessments that were modern including online assessments that every school I have had experience with uses (Zearn, iReady, Lexia), and technology was taught more at a STEM level by teachers who did not know how to use online software and instead focused on science experiments.

Graduate Comments 2022-23

- It was great! thank you!
- I would have loved to learn more techniques on how to work with students with special needs, for example autism and downs...
- Provide more learning opportunities and instructions for teaching children who are significantly challenged in all domains.
- I think Niagara has done everything to prepare me for my current position as an early childhood teacher!
- Niagara has done a great job in preparing me for my current position as an early childhood educator.
- The best University ever!!! Amazing teachers and very accommodating
- taught us more math and reading instruction strategies, as well as concrete ways to address social-emotional goals for those who are struggling in this area.
- Focus more on field experiences than writing papers and completing assignments for class.
- N/A

- If you are applying to OCT do it early, follow up with everyone to ensure all documents are received in a timely manner, and advocate advocate advocate. You need to self advocate.
- More de escalation and regulating strategies taught for severely behavioral students
- Realistic lesson planning, not 12 pages.
- The communication between students and the office is non-existent. Students had to rely on others outside of the school and their classmates to complete this program and get through certification. Many of my classmates wouldn't not recommend this school as it stands.
- na

Graduate Comments 2023-24

- More subject specific courses
- being that i am not actively using my knowledge if what we've learned currently i cannot answer this question
- Not sure
- A course dedicated to writing IEPs
- More explicit teaching of lesson structure and planning to correspond to Ontario Curriculum would benefit me
- Have a course on "Now that you have the job... these are the expectations...". It's quite a learning curve there.
- I found the communication was not great and it was a very stressful transition trying to determine next steps when Graduating.
- Educate students about the nature of private schools
- Have more experienced and informed professors for some of the courses we had to take. They were quite honestly ridiculous. I am grateful for professors Tracia McKissic, Dr. Ciminelli, Dr. Riegel and Joanna Weld as I did learn a lot from them and they are the most memorable to me. I appreciate Andre Cece's advice and help with resumes, real life advice and and post grad prep
- More focus on planning an entire day, and not just individual lessons.

- I did my course work through medaille and then my practicum through Niagara. I wish the Ontario program and the American program was less coursework and more practicum time. I felt like if I learned a lot in term 1 and then 2/3 were just repeats. Speaking to new grads of American and Canadian programs everyone agrees they wish they had more focus on practical teaching and less coursework.
- Be more organized.
- Larger focus on classroom management as well as more courses like the tech course where we learned about all these resources and ways to incorporate and use technology to our advantage.
- More specific assignments and general resources related to classroom activities. Perhaps access to a larger set or databank of possible tasks and relevant assignments to accompany them.
- They prepared me so well!!
- I was extremely happy with the school and felt that they genuinely care for and accommodate the needs of every student.
- I had a great experience and greatly appreciate everything you taught me!
- Nothing, Niagara University prepared me for the position.
- I feel the program prepared me to teach and implement many practices in my own classroom
- Prepare for Oct better, help equip job application process and interview. Set realistic expectations and time lines in job search
- NA
- Have more practical learning opportunities
- Overall, I did really enjoy my time with Niagara University. I think my cohort (Medaille transfers) had a few extra barriers we had to overcome. Although, I always felt supported and cared for from the Niagara University staff. One area that I would have benefited from learning more about would be phonics instruction.
- Point to resources that students could use in case they want to review or build their expertise in a content area.
- I needed courses that are based around classroom management. Less courses and emphasis on lesson plans and more on things like how to write a rubric, how to deal with upset parents, assessments (not from a PhD or studying further lenses) but real life assessments that could be used in my program area

- Niagara could have done a better job of having integrated artifacts within courses to help prepare student teachers to take over classrooms full time. For instance, I feel it would be beneficial to have students prepare ice breaker activities, activities that utilize UDL and culturally responsive activities within folder that students can keep after teachers college and take with them into the first few years of teaching.
- I don't believe this is specific to NU, rather applicable to all teacher ed programs in general. The courses must better prepare teacher candidates for the increasing challenges with student behavior. These challenges are further exacerbated by the lack of learning strategies support, especially for subjects outside of Math and LA.
- Discuss NTIP (New Teacher Induction Program) and what to expect.