

*The Introduction of the Secondary Education Program at  
SUNY Brockport and the changes the program and  
college shared*

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## Secondary Education Program coming to SUNY Brockport

By Kim Bruinsma

The 1960's and the 1970's were filled with changes to the United States Education system. The United States faced a scare when the Russian Space program beat the United States with the first satellite to orbit the earth. The fear was that the education system was failing. The answer laid with new ways of educating teachers, and the education system was reworked.

The changes that occur from 1960-1980 were important to the significance of the evolution of SUNY Brockport and education in general because it shows how SUNY Brockport changed due to influences from in and outside of the college. For example, New York State requirements and limitations on teacher colleges and liberal arts institutions affected SUNY Brockport. When looking only at the Secondary Education program at SUNY Brockport one notices that it was influenced by the state, the department changes, the new focus on a liberal arts college and the move towards educating teachers in more specific fields.

The major changes made to the college at Brockport as it was becoming a liberal arts institution really show the focus on trying to get away from the "old" idea that teachers should be educated in a number of small areas with basic understanding. The "new" way of educating teachers was to concentrate on one subject (for example, history) and to have a great deal of knowledge on that subject. This was designed to have more specialized and knowledgeable teachers. In my research I used the Secondary Education program in History as example of these events.

## *Introduction*

The website for SUNY Brockport's Department of Education and Human Development states, "SUNY College at Brockport is committed to providing programs which prepare its graduates to meet the highest professional teacher standards for certification in New York State."<sup>1</sup> This shows SUNY Brockport's effort to deliver the best quality graduates from its teaching programs. It also demonstrates how Brockport is tied to decisions made outside of the college, because ultimately students need to pass state test to teach in New York State. New York State requirements along with other events happening in and outside of the state have influenced Brockport's evolution.

New York State started making changes to the teaching requirements in the late 1930's. In 1936, it was mandatory for teachers in New York State to have a four year degree even though Brockport did not award one until 1942. Then in 1948, the State University system was established. The SUNY system was also going through critical changes concerning the requirements for teaching and the new idea of the SUNY Liberal Arts colleges.

In 1958, Governor Rockefeller supported a change making all SUNY colleges Liberal Arts institutions. He was able to grant large sums of money for New York State to make these changes.<sup>2</sup> The Secondary Education program came to SUNY Brockport after a ten year wait. The deal was made that "ten years would elapse before the teachers colleges became liberal arts colleges."<sup>3</sup> This was done to keep the SUNY schools from competing with the private colleges. Governor Dewey stated, "The State University shall work in cooperation with our priceless

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.brockport.edu/ehd/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> Caccia, Lisa M. "The change in Teacher Training: Brockport State Teachers College and State University College at Brockport, 1949-1965" (unpublished Spring 1999)

private colleges and universities. There must be no competition between them. They must supplement each other with neither weakening the other.”<sup>4</sup> Prior to this, only the private colleges and SUNY Albany could offer Secondary Education.<sup>5</sup> The private colleges were afraid the SUNY schools would become a threat to them by attracting students away from the private schools by offering similar programs. This could be a threat to the private schools’ enrollments, so it was not until 1959, that the teacher colleges could become liberal arts institutions in New York. These changes to a new multi-purpose Liberal Arts college were not happening just in New York but across the country.

The education system across the United States also faced harsh criticism during the late 1950’s, which helped to bring some changes. It seems during this time that the education program was trying to get away from the “old” idea that teachers should be educated in a number of small areas with basic understanding, compared to the “new” idea of teachers concentrating on one subject (for example, history) and having a great deal of knowledge on that subject. This was designed to have more specialized and knowledgeable teachers. Many people believe that this was due to the tremendous amount of pressure put on teachers during the Sputnik era. Sputnik was the first satellite to orbit the earth and was launched by the Soviet Space Program. Many people believed that the United States was falling behind the Soviets and blamed the education program for not having adequate teachers to produce more intelligent Americans. The country was blaming its education program for not launching the first satellite, and the math and

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<sup>3</sup> Fausold, “A Draft History of the State University of New York” (unpublished 1988)

<sup>4</sup> Gelber, Sidney. Politics and Public Higher Education in New York State (NY: Peter Zay, 2001) chapter 6

<sup>5</sup> Caccia, Lisa M. “The change in Teacher Training: Brockport State Teachers College and State University College at Brockport, 1949-1965” (unpublished Spring 1999)

science programs were looked down upon because it was felt they were not effective.<sup>6</sup>

The preparation of teachers was heavily debated. Many believed “Curricula should be overhauled and replaced by a stress on ‘hard-core’ learning.”<sup>7</sup> The post Sputnik era created many different views on how to better the American education system. These major debates were happening at SUNY Brockport as well as across the United States. This influenced the transformation to a Liberal Arts college.

SUNY Brockport’s curriculum tremendously changed during this transformation. The curriculum was turning away from teacher preparation to a liberal arts curriculum. A team of three committees chaired by Dr. Wayne Dedman worked on a study of a curriculum that would provide a well-balanced course study in Liberal Arts.<sup>8</sup> After two years, Brockport adopted the new Liberal Arts program in 1963 and accepted “Senior college Liberal Arts candidates.”<sup>9</sup> Then in 1965, the first freshmen were accepted into the program. The push to start the senior candidates in the new program in 1963 came from the State University system’s need to allow the growing number of graduates coming from the community colleges a place to continue their education.<sup>10</sup>

The curriculum changed to include the first two years of general education classes and then last two years devoted to academic specialization. This allows the student to learn more about one subject rather than learn a little about many subjects. This was designed to have

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<sup>6</sup> Lucas, Christopher J. “Teacher education in America” (St. Martins Press New York, 1997)

<sup>7</sup> Lucas, Christopher J. “Teacher education in America” (St. Martins Press New York, 1997)

<sup>8</sup> Satta, Ronald F. “A Metamorphosis: Brockport’s Transformation from a Teachers College to a Liberal Arts Institution” (unpublished Aug 1998)

<sup>9</sup> Dedman, Wayne. Cherishing This Heritage (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969), 282

<sup>10</sup> Dedman, Wayne. Cherishing This Heritage (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969), 282

teachers with more specialized knowledge in their field (for example, history). They could now be experts in an area to pass on greater knowledge to their students. The major role for the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the 1971-1972 catalog states, “the department is to prepare a teacher who can perform complex professional tasks in a variety of educational situations. Such a teacher may be identified as a scholar-pedagogue. He is a scholar in that he has a firm grasp of a particular body of knowledge and its characteristic methodology for gathering new knowledge.”<sup>11</sup> This re-emphasizes the idea of a teacher having a good deal of knowledge on one subject.

### *Beginning of the Secondary Education program*

Brockport’s goals changed in the early 1960’s from just educating students for elementary and physical education positions to educating students for a number of different opportunities with a Liberal Arts degree. Even today there is a stress on the flexibility of a Liberal Arts degree. The History Department’s website today states “ The study of history lives at the heart of the liberal arts tradition, and has recently become an essential part of many pre-professional programs.”<sup>12</sup> The idea is that a student can build his or her education with a Liberal Arts degree. With the addition of the Liberal Arts degree in the early 1960’s, the Secondary Education program was also introduced.

The Secondary Education program was added between 1961 and 1965 when the programs and departments at Brockport were going through major changes. The Brockport

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<sup>11</sup> “State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1971-1972” 67

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.brockport.edu/history/>

undergraduate catalog for 1961-1963 lists the elementary teaching curriculum with an extension to teach 7th to 9th grade social studies. There is a program leading to Secondary Education in Mathematics, General Science and Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, and Physics, but it is not until the 1965-1967 catalog that there is a Bachelor's and Master's degree with provisional and permanent secondary certification in Social Studies. The Science and Math programs may have come first due to concern in those areas after the Sputnik ordeal and the delay of a "history" department. The other major difference from the 1961-1962 catalog to the 1965-1967 catalog is that the latter now has Liberal Arts listed as a program.

Comparing the two curriculums, the 1961-1963 extension for Social Studies and the 1965-1967 Secondary Education program, they are similar. Both programs have the same amount of credits required for graduation (130 credits are required for graduation, but changes to 120 the following year), and both basically have the same courses required during the freshmen year. Many of the same courses are required in both programs, for example, Sociol.100 ( The Social Order), Biol.100A&B ( General Biology I & II), Math.100 ( General College Math), and Econ.200 ( Economic Principles), to name a few. There are some differences between the two programs that illustrate the change made to push a specialization in the teacher training program. The time when the student does his or her student teaching does change. In the 1961-1963 catalog the student does their student teaching in the second semester of their junior year, but in the 1965-1967 program the student does their student teaching the first semester of their senior year. The major difference is the number of education courses required. In 1961-1963 there are 30 credits of education courses required and in the 1965-1967 catalog, there are only 24 credits of education courses required, which includes six credits devoted to General and Adolescent

Psychology.<sup>13</sup> The cut in education requirements occurred to eliminate some education classes and replace them with specialized courses, like history. However, the number of history credits remained 15.

History at this time was part of the Social Science Department that included courses in Political Science, Economics, and Sociology-Anthropology. When looking at these courses, one notices that there are an extra three credits required in Political Science and an extra three credits in Economics.<sup>14</sup> This is cutting the number of education classes but adding more of the specialized courses to the curriculum, since Political Science and Economics are still associated with History. This is an example of the committee’s idea of a well balanced course study. The following chart shows the differences in the credits and subjects required in each catalog:

<b>Courses</b>	<b>1961-63 Requirements</b>	<b>1965-67 Requirements</b>
Economics	3 credits	6 credits
Math	3 credits	6 credits
Education	30 credits	18 credits
History	15 credits	15 credits
Political Science	6 credits	9 credits

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<sup>13</sup>” State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1965-1967,” 63, 87 & State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1961-1963,” 55, 56

<sup>14</sup> “State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1965-1967,” 63, 87 “State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1961-1963,” 55-56

## *New History department*

The break up of the Social Science Department into more specific areas is extremely important for the understanding of the changes in the curriculum as the Secondary Education program started at SUNY Brockport. The Social Science Department was broken up into four separate departments: the Department of History, Political Science, Economics, and Sociology-Anthropology.<sup>15</sup> The 1962-1963 curriculum was the last time all courses were listed under “Soc. St” instead of the new department (for example “His” or “Ant” for History or Anthropology).<sup>16</sup> This is why the requirements were still combined together in the 1965-1967 catalog when the education requirements are cut. As the History Department was being developed, the courses in history that were required were easier to distinguish because they would all be under “HIST” at first and later “HST.”

During President Brown’s term, he pushed for the “immediate”<sup>17</sup> division of the History Department from the old Social Science Department. With the new specialized departments, the college was able to educate its students in more specialized fields and expand the idea of a Liberal Arts college, which has stuck with the college ever since. The Social Science Department was not the only department going through these changes at this time, the Natural Science Department was also being divided and there were new departments being created ( for example,

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<sup>15</sup> Dedman, Wayne. Cherishing This Heritage (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969), 292

<sup>16</sup> Peraciny, Matt. ”Brockport’s Curricular Revolution: History of the Breakup of the Social Studies Dept.”

<sup>17</sup> Peraciny, Matt. ”Brockport’s Curricular Revolution: History of the Breakup of the Social Studies Dept.”

the Fine Arts Department).<sup>18</sup>

Looking at the expansion of the History Department shows the need to divide the existing Social Science Department into separate departments. The 1965-1967 catalog has 33 courses offered in “history,” but looking at the 1971-1972 catalog, there are 87 courses offered. The number of courses offered more than doubled in four years. This gives the students majoring in history many more classes to chose from. The courses in the 1965-1967 catalog seemed to be very basic American History courses, European History courses, and some on Latin America and Russian History. The 1971-1972 catalog has many new courses that focus on other aspects besides American, European, Latin America, and Russian History. For example, courses on the “Islamic World to 1258,” several courses in African History, courses on foreign relations, courses on India and Pakistan, courses on the history of education in the United States and else where, and seminars are listed. Here is a chart with the different courses offered in the two different catalogs that were not included in both catalogs:

<b>1965-67 History Courses offered</b>	<b>1971-72 History Courses offered</b>
HIST 150 &151 World War I, II	HST 101-102 Western Civilization I, II
HIST 190 &191 HIST. of the Asian World I, II	HST 243 England to 1688
HIST 300 The Old South & the Civil War	HST 318 American Ethnic History
HIST 360 Medieval Institutions	HST 331 Canada to 1896
HIST 275 Russian- American Relations	HST 343 Russia to 1917
HIST 380 Russian lives- six tsars, a statesman, two Bolsheviks	HST 363 Islamic World to 1258
HIST 394 HIST. of Communism & Revolution in the Far East.	HST 427 US Foreign Relations Since 1900
	HST 437 Brazil

<sup>18</sup> Dedman, Wayne. Cherishing This Heritage (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969), 292

Also when looking at the two catalogs the history courses in the 1971-1972 catalog are assigned numbers higher than 400, while all the courses in the 1965-1967 catalog are below 400.<sup>19</sup>This most likely had to do with Brockport's ability to give out Masters degrees in many new programs.<sup>20</sup> This is important because it shows the need for new higher level courses that are associated with a Masters degree.

With all these new added courses, the departments needed to hire more specialized staff members to accommodate this new course load.<sup>21</sup> Looking at the 1967- 1968 catalog it is easy to notice the huge difference in the total number of history professors compared to the number in the 1971-1972 catalog. The first catalog has a total of seven professors listed and two assistant professors. The 1971-1972 catalog has ten professors, two associate professors, twelve assistant professors, and four instructors, for a total of twenty-eight, compared to nine in the 1967-1968 catalog. Only one of the professors from the first catalog was not listed in the second, so the department was being added to, not re-staffed. Many of the professors in the 1971-1972 catalog are still professors at SUNY Brockport today, and this shows how experienced the faculty at the college is today. The number of faculty has dropped to eighteen in the 2003-2005 catalog. The high numbers for the history faculty and courses offered in the 1971-1972 catalog was also influenced by the increasing enrollment during this time.

The History Department, along with several other departments, become directly connected to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction during the late 1970's because they began sharing students. There is a major change that happens in the 1970's that requires a

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<sup>19</sup> "State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1971-72" 228-237 & "State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1965-67" 149-153

<sup>20</sup> Dedman, Wayne. Cherishing This Heritage (New York: Meredith Corporation,1969), 295

<sup>21</sup> Peraciny, Matt. "Brockport's Curricular Revolution: History of the Breakup of the Social Studies Dept."

student to take part in the Secondary Education Program as well as another specialized area (for example, history). A student during this time needs to fulfill the requirements for the Secondary Education program as well as the chosen specialized area. This is a dramatic change compared to the early 1960's programs, where the student is following one department's requirements.

This is clearly shown in SUNY Brockport's 1987-1989 catalog. On one page it lists all academic majors, on another, it lists all certification programs for teaching. Under the section for Secondary Teacher Certification it states, " Each secondary certification area requires an academic major in the subject area of the certification. Specific advisement is provided for both the academic major and the certification area." The student needs to work closely with two separate departments to fulfill requirements for graduation. Also in the 1987-1989 catalog the history requirements have been changed to include more than four required courses that were required in the 1975-1976 catalog. Now the four courses, HST 101 and 102 (world history), 211 and 212 (US history) have been added to include HST 300 (modern Europe), HST 390 (seminar), a concentration in an area (for example, United States history), and any two electives in history.<sup>22</sup> This still remained 36 credit hours for the history major. In the 1987- 1989 catalog the Secondary Education certification states that an academic major is needed in the subject area, however, after 1990, the catalog states for a Secondary Education certification in social studies "includes a major in history".<sup>23</sup> The requirement that a student needs to be a history major has stuck with the program and still continues to be true. The major now has to be history for students seeking certification in Secondary Education for Social Studies. The number of education courses did not change in the Secondary Teacher Certification in the 1987-1989

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<sup>22</sup> "State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1987-1989,"

<sup>23</sup> "State University of New York College at Brockport, Undergraduate Catalog, 1993-1995,"

catalog, it still lists 18 credits of education courses.

### *Today's Curriculum*

Looking at the New York State requirements for Secondary Education teachers today, one notices that they are still required to have 18 credit hours of Professional Education courses, not including the student teaching credit hours. Students are also required to have 36 semester hours of a specialized subject matter.<sup>24</sup> There are also three state test that need to be passed, the Liberal Arts and Science Test (LAST), Assessment Teaching Skills-Written (ATS-W), and the Content Specialty Test. These tests need to be passed before the student can receive a provisional certification.

Brockport has new education programs that were put into affect within the last few years. The Secondary Education program has been replaced with the new, Adolescence Education that includes an extension to teach 5th and 6th grade. Students that participate in this program will be able to teach 5th - 12th grade, this is a major difference compared to the past Secondary Education programs that allowed students to teach the traditional 7th- 12th grade.

The basis of the current curriculum is still the idea of a history major along with the education courses, similar to the one in the 1993-1995 catalog. Looking at Brockport's current requirements, Adolescence Education students still needs 36 credits in a specialized subject along with 42 education credits required for graduation with a Adolescence Education certification at SUNY Brockport. Both New York State and SUNY Brockport require student teaching, and it is included in the 42 education credits required for graduation at SUNY Brockport. Student teaching is 15 credit hours, and was also required in the 1960's. There is also

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.nysed.gov>

a Social Science component required for the program at SUNY Brockport. This consists of 12 credits, one course in African-American Studies, Anthropology, or Sociology. One course in economics, a course in geography, and a course in political science. Another change that sticks out compared to the 1960's curriculum is the current requirement to have a year of a foreign language for both New York State and SUNY Brockport. This requirement was put into effect in the 1990's. The shift in the number of education requirements now has changed again from less to more. The trend seems to still emphasize a specialization like history, but now there is a stronger emphasis on the education classes. Even though SUNY Brockport offers a secondary education program as well as many other programs, SUNY Brockport still prides itself in its Liberal Arts programs.

### *Conclusion*

Brockport is committed to being a great Liberal Arts college. Brockport's mission statement today states, "The State University of New York College at Brockport Is committed to providing a liberal arts and professional education at both the undergraduate and graduate level for those who have the necessary ability and motivation to benefit from high quality public higher education." Brockport ability to offer Liberal Arts programs makes it easy for a student to change into a professional education program if a student desires. There is a great deal of opportunity for students to build off Liberal Arts programs. Changes made to Brockport in the 1960's through the 1980's continue to be the foundation of the college today.

All of these changes are important to the evolution of SUNY Brockport and education in general because they show how SUNY Brockport developed due to many factors, for instance,

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the state requirements, change in the preparation of teachers, limitations on teacher colleges, and Liberal Arts institutions. When looking at just the Secondary Education program at SUNY Brockport one realizes that it was influenced by the state, the department changes, the new focus on being a Liberal Arts College and the move towards educating teachers in more specific fields.

When reading some of the requirements in the 1970's and in the 1980's catalogs, it is noticeable that there are similarities to today's requirements. The changes that took place during the 1970's and the 1980's, structured the curriculum that students participate in today. The beginning of the Secondary Education program at SUNY Brockport is important to the evolution of SUNY Brockport and the State of New York because it is a great example of how one college dealt with many situations and changes that colleges across the country faced.

### Bibliographic Essay

This paper was extremely hard for me to put together. I believe this was due to the great deal of information available that relates to the arrival of the Secondary Education program to SUNY Brockport. Many great student papers already exist on teacher training, the transformation from a teachers college to a liberal arts college, and the division of the Social Studies department. These student papers done by Lisa Caccia, Ron Satta, and Matt Peracinnny (in the order they were previously mentioned) gave me a good deal of information on issues that affected the Secondary Education program at SUNY Brockport.

The main source of my information found on the Secondary Education program came from the SUNY Brockport catalogs, in the Brockport College archives. I looked at

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the catalogs from 1961-1994. The catalogs gave me the information about the programs available, the credits required within each program, the number of faculty members, and the courses that were offered. The catalogs have number of interesting facts and are a great asset to future research in these areas. I also looked at the current 2003-2005 catalog that can be found on the Brockport website.

The SUNY Brockport's website was helpful. I used information from the Education and Human Development Department's web page and the History Department's web page. I also accessed the Brockport College archives through Brockport's website as well. This web page gives a good deal of basic information of what types of changes were being made at Brockport in different time periods. I also obtained the current requirements for the programs from the website as well. The website is a good source for current and past information.

The other source I relied heavily upon was Wayne Dedman's *Cherishing This Heritage*. Chapters 13 and 14 discuss extensively the curriculum changes, department changes, and the liberal arts program during the 1960's. He also gives some information on the changes made in the SUNY system that affected Brockport.

Dedman's book was helpful but I really could not find anymore information on the affects SUNY had on Brockport. This was one topic I wanted to incorporate into my paper but could not due to the lack of information. I could not find anything on the changes made at the state level that would have an affect on the Secondary Education Program at Brockport. I looked at the papers in the Brockport College Library, on the SUNY committee meetings. These were full of information on the decisions made at the

state meetings, but nothing pertained to this topic. I did find some information on the New York State education website about current requirements and a brief summary about changes made to teacher certification in New York State.

The others two sources that I used were provided by Dr. Bruce Leslie. These two sources deal with the American Education System during the late 1950's and the 1960's during the time the American Education System went through major changes. The first was chapter six from Sidney Gelber's book *Politics and Public Higher Education in New York State*. This gives good information about how SUNY system was organized and some of its goals in the early 1950's to 1960's. The other source was an article by Christopher J Lucas, titled "Teacher Education in America." This is a good article for anyone interested in the changes made to the preparation of teachers in America over the past fifty years.

To anyone interested in related topics I urge you to collect as much information as possible because it is out there. However, make sure you have a clear idea of what you are trying to accomplish because it is very easy to get overwhelmed with too much information and it is hard to say something new. For someone that wants a challenge, a paper on the changes made to the State University System would be a great asset and complement many student's papers.

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