

AILACTE Journal

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With the publication of Volume I of the *AILACTE Journal*, the Executive Board has realized their goal to publish a national refereed journal specifically for independent liberal arts colleges of teacher education. The work of the Executive Committee has led us to the formation of an Editorial Board who has given this journal its initial direction. I want to thank the members of the Editorial Board for the time and effort they contributed to reviewing manuscripts and making recommendations to the Editors. We now have a forum to share our research and examples of best practice with each other and our colleagues in teacher education. We hope you gain insights and perspectives on the work that is being done at independent liberal arts colleges to inform the field of teacher preparation.

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Dispositions: Teacher Perceptions

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Abstract

There is a tremendous gap in the research of the moral and ethical dimensions of teacher dispositions. Teacher dispositions need to be reviewed, re-evaluated and constructed with a plan in mind to accommodate what we, as educators, now know about the legitimate and unique differences in learning at every age. The purpose of this research was to ascertain perceptions of which dispositions are most valued and needed in effective teachers so institutions that are responsible and committed to training future teachers will have more concrete research-based guidelines.

Introduction

Teacher dispositions have been defined as “values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward

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students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice” (NCATE, 2004).

We live in a world of constant change with technology growing faster than time can record its growth. Society is changing equally fast, calling families to re-evaluate their priorities, reaffirm their commitment to traditional structure, as we know it and solidify its purpose in the dynamics of social development. The fluctuating and erratic makeup of the American economic system has dramatically changed the family unit often requiring two parents to work and single parent families to struggle on one income. It is no longer uncommon for children to be raised, in their early formative years, by grandparents, extended family members or day care centers. Children have become victims of changing times. When assessing children making a transition from preschool to the regular public school system, researchers Dockett and Perry (2003) found children valued feeling good about school and understanding the rules above all other requirements. However, when parents and teachers listed the most important areas that would affect successful transition, they listed social adjustment, basic skills and good attitudes toward school.

With all these changes in our social structures, it would be ludicrous to think they would not affect the educational system. The impetus behind this study lies in a deep concern for the educational institutions that will be training teachers to teach children from diverse populations, fluctuating economies, confusing ethical and moral circumstances and overwhelming technological growth that propels our society into worldwide reality of the moment.

Generally speaking, fundamental changes in teaching and learning are rare in higher education. Students today, from preschool to higher education, not only want, but also expect

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organizational change and diffusion of innovative programs, flexible teaching patterns, more challenging research programs and closer nurturing and mentoring from their teachers. Who will be their teachers? What will these future teachers look like and how will they perceive their responsibilities to the children in their classrooms? One answer to these questions came from a teacher candidate in a graduate program in a small university in Illinois. Her response was that “virtuosity is the single most important character trait a teacher must exhibit if he or she is to be successful in the classroom” (Schroeder, 2004). Virtuosity was defined to encompass many character traits which include: faith, hope, charity, prudence and wisdom, justice, courage, loyalty, tolerance, creativity and enthusiasm. Nowhere was content mentioned. Although it is assumed that content is the core value of education, it appears that the dispositions needed to be successful in the classroom weigh heavily on the minds and hearts of future teachers as they ponder the responsibility of choosing teaching as a profession. This hypothesis is supported in a study by Nowak-Fabrykowski and Caldwell (2002) of 46 college students who were majoring in early childhood education. A caring attitude is most important and is defined as one that: listens, gives feedback, smiles, shares, helps, uses positive reinforcement and gets down on the child’s level of interaction. As suggested by Easton (2002), teachers who put their needs as second to the needs of their students model a caring attitude and develop a relationship that fosters a sense of comfort in the classroom. Another researcher states that, “students enjoy and learn better from a teacher who is positive and optimistic, encouraging, nurturing and happy ...” (Kellough, Stollenwerk, Parker, & Lindy, 2003, p. 86). It is becoming more and more obvious that teachers need to do more than just teach the subject-matter to be successful in the classroom. This is an expectancy that seems to flow from early childhood through graduate school.

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No Child Left Behind and current proposed legislation focus performance on standardized tests. Teachers are focusing on teaching standards-based lessons and obtaining higher and higher results on such tests. While research does not deny the importance of focused teaching and accountability, research does indicate there is more to teaching than just standards. Research indicates a teacher must have certain dispositions in order to be an effective teacher. While research is limited on what exactly those dispositions might be, this study hypothesizes that with continued effort and evaluation of those in the teaching profession there will be an answer to the teacher dispositions puzzle.

Design of This Study

The purpose of the study is to ascertain what dispositions will be required of future teachers so that learning will continue to take place, in and out of the classroom, and to examine what dispositions are important for continuing effective teaching strategies.

A list of suggested dispositions for teachers was generated by a focus group of educators from teacher education institutions and current research. This list of suggested dispositions was summarized and discussed with a second focus group of educators from a private university of teacher education. While the researchers understand the completed study will be accepted by private faith-based universities and colleges of teacher education, the results are hypothesized to be acceptable to all institutions that embrace the definition of teacher dispositions in the moral and ethical domains.

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The list of summarized dispositions was used to generate a survey that was used with an additional focus group of educators of teacher education and several groups of both practicing teachers and administrators and candidates in teacher education programs. Statistics for this study were compiled from Olivet Nazarene University's Master of Arts in Education and Master of Arts in Teaching programs. Candidates for the M.A.E. include a diverse population of students from rural and suburban communities, as well as the city of Chicago. Thus, the sample represents an excellent cross-section for this study. This program, as well as the M.A.T., is approved by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Educators (NCATE).

Candidates for the M.A.T. program consist of those who desire either an Illinois standard elementary or secondary teaching certificate. The program combines professional study with practical classroom experience. Candidates for this program are also quite diverse drawing from rural and suburban areas, as well as Chicago.

Results

This study sought to determine what dispositions teachers perceive to be important in order to inform teacher education. Two hundred and thirty-seven teachers in a master's program were surveyed and the results were statistically analyzed using SPSS.

On a Likert-type scale of 1 – 5, with 1 being absolutely unnecessary, 2 being unnecessary, 3 being somewhat necessary, 4 being necessary, and 5 being absolutely necessary, the mean, median and standard deviation are given in the following table:

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	MEAN	MEDIAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Content knowledge	4.72	5.00	.639
Knowledge of psychological theories	3.53	3.00	.825
Knowledge of human development theories	3.77	4.00	.748
Knowledge of learning theories	4.11	4.00	.776
Knowledge of learning styles	4.42	5.00	.714
Knowledge of historical foundations	3.24	3.00	.946
Knowledge of philosophical foundations	3.22	3.00	.944
Classroom management	4.83	5.00	.498
Making adaptations for ALL students	4.58	5.00	.698
Knowing instructional techniques	4.58	5.00	.668
Applying instructional techniques	4.61	5.00	.658
Motivating students	4.73	5.00	.558
Demonstrating praise	4.69	5.00	.610
Demonstrating positive reinforcement	4.69	5.00	.615
Exhibiting poise	4.16	4.00	.784
Exhibiting self-confidence	4.46	5.00	.687
Exhibiting energy	4.39	5.00	.755
Professional dress	3.85	4.00	.914
Cooperation	4.51	5.00	.705
Acceptance of constructive criticism	4.39	4.00	.624
Reflective thinking	4.22	4.00	.807
Reliability	4.71	5.00	.633

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	MEAN	MEDIAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Being punctual	4.59	5.00	.683
Collaborative relationship with administrator	4.38	4.00	.744
Collaborative relationships with colleagues	4.49	5.00	.739
Collaborative relationships with parents	4.51	5.00	.719
Respectful relationship with students	4.73	5.00	.630
Dependability	4.72	5.00	.631
Respect for ALL learners	4.76	5.00	.624
Belief that ALL students can learn	4.76	5.00	.614
Ethical standards	4.63	5.00	.692
Tact	4.45	5.00	.722
Courtesy	4.53	5.00	.704
Faith-based attitudes	3.64	4.00	1.159
Seeking opportunities for service in local church	3.03	3.00	1.204
Seeking opportunities for service in community	3.41	3.00	1.075
Exhibiting enthusiasm	4.54	5.00	.693

In addition, a statistical analysis of the data indicates that teachers perceive the following dispositions as absolutely necessary:

- Content knowledge
- Knowledge of learning styles
- Classroom management
- Making adaptations for ALL students
- Knowing instructional techniques

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- Applying instructional techniques
- Motivating students
- Demonstrating praise
- Demonstrating positive reinforcement
- Exhibiting self-confidence
- Exhibiting energy
- Cooperation
- Reliability
- Being punctual
- Collaborative relationships with colleagues
- Collaborative relationships with parents
- Respectful relationship with students
- Dependability
- Respect for ALL learners
- Belief that ALL students can learn
- Ethical standards
- Tact
- Courtesy
- Exhibiting enthusiasm

The statistical analysis indicates that teachers perceive the following dispositions as necessary:

- Knowledge of human development theories
- Knowledge of learning theories
- Exhibiting poise
- Professional dress
- Acceptance of constructive criticism
- Reflective thinking
- Collaborative relationships with administrators
- Faith-based attitudes

The statistical analysis indicates that teachers perceive the following dispositions as somewhat necessary:

- Knowledge of psychological theories
- Knowledge of historical foundations

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- Knowledge of philosophical foundations
- Seeking opportunities for service in local church
- Seeking opportunities for service in the community

Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations

The research of this study reinforces the work of Dockett and Perry (2003) and Schroeder (2004). Teachers in a master's program perceived attitudes and relationships as more important in being an effective teacher than theoretical knowledge. While the teachers agreed that theoretical knowledge is necessary, they perceived the application of that knowledge is absolutely necessary in being an effective teacher.

Teacher attitude coupled with relational development creates a synergy that allows for the emergence of a comfort zone in the classroom according to Easton's (2002) research. Kellough, Stollenwerk, Parker and Lindy (2003) echoed this when discussing the relationship between student learning and a teacher's traits, such as positive, optimistic, encouraging, nurturing and happy. Clearly, the importance of dispositions is seen as being an integral component of teacher education programs. Knowledge of subject matter is imperative and should not be ignored; however, institutions need to include teacher dispositions as a paradigm to help ensure full, teacher effectiveness.

These researchers recommend that teacher education institutions continue the instruction of theoretical knowledge, but emphasize application of that knowledge. In addition, these researchers recommend that teacher education institutions carefully assess such dispositions as were perceived as absolutely necessary (e.g., motivating students, demonstrating praise...). Without these dispositions, new teachers will

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probably not be effective teachers and will not continue in the field of education.

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**Exploring Diverse Cultures
With Undergraduate Education Students**

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Abstract

Future teachers face the challenge of teaching an increasingly diverse student population in a mainstream classroom. Teacher education programs, therefore, are charged with the necessity of designing, implementing and evaluating effective experiences which will expand students' views on diversity. The teacher education program at Berry College in Northwest Georgia is designed to prepare teachers who are developers of human potential and who are prepared with the necessary skills and strategies to teach and support speakers of other languages in grades P-12. The Explorations in Diverse Cultures course is a unique travel experience required of students. The experience is designed to allow students to gain insights into the cultures of linguistically and culturally diverse groups in the United States or abroad which are significantly different from their own. This article provides a description of two

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two-week immersion experiences, one within country and one out of country, in communities where the language and culture are different from those of the education majors.

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There are currently more than 4 million students enrolled in U.S. schools who come from homes in which a language other than English is spoken (U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement & Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students [OELA] [2002]). In Georgia, over 35,000 students are language-minority students residing in rural, urban and suburban areas with over 15,000 being Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Therefore, future teachers must be provided with training to face the challenge of teaching an increasingly diverse student population in a mainstream classroom. Teacher education programs must design, implement and evaluate effective experiences which will expand students' views on diversity (Peterson, Cross, Johnson and Howell, 2000).

Experiences in diversity are being added to teacher education programs across the country in an effort to encourage future teachers to examine factors that will influence their beliefs and actions with respect to equality (McAllister and Irvine, 2000; Smith, Moallam, and Sherrill, 1997). At Berry College in Northwest Georgia, the mission is to educate the head, the heart and the hands of the college students. The teacher education program is designed to prepare teachers who are developers of human potential. Students receiving an undergraduate degree in teacher education from Berry College receive an ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) endorsement as part of their teaching certification. This endorsement assures that students are prepared with the necessary skills and

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strategies to teach and support speakers of other languages in grades P-12. Additionally, these future teachers are prepared to provide the scaffolding needed to give these students access to the academic content of the curriculum, provide opportunities for all learners and ensure that the special needs of these students are met in order to enhance their success in school (Clement, Smith, Tant, Herendeen and Winkles, 2002).

Preservice teachers are involved throughout their teacher preparation at Berry with a number of integrated experiences and courses that will enable them to increase their ability to effectively teach students of diverse cultures. One unique experience, EDU 222 Explorations in Diverse Cultures, a required course (also called Maymester), is the cornerstone of the Berry College Charter School of Education and Human Sciences' cultural immersion plan. This three-hour course is taken any of the four months of May that the student is enrolled at Berry. Students usually take the course in the May of their sophomore or junior year. During May 2001, 82 education majors completed EDU 222 to gain insights into the cultures of linguistically and culturally diverse groups in the United States or abroad in relation to their own culture. Unlike more traditional courses in which students study a culture through textbook readings, in-class activities and exposure to guest speakers, the students are immersed in a host culture environment. Students are made aware of this mandatory experience in their freshman year and begin making plans to participate in a trip during their freshman, sophomore or junior years. Locations of the sites are announced each October.

Since this experience was designed in 1999, faculty and students have had the opportunity to visit communities in Belize, Mexico, Costa Rica, Italy, South Korea, Jamaica and non-English communities in Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. Faculty submit a written proposal for a Maymester site to their department chair, the coordinator of the ESOL program and the dean of the school. The

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dean forms a Maymester Committee of faculty who are approved for travel. The faculty, during the fall semester, finalize the site visits, develop the syllabi and begin recruiting the students into their sections of EDU 222. A Maymester Fair is organized for recruitment purposes and to promote travel options. Costs for the experience range from approximately \$350 plus meals and gas for Dalton to approximately \$3,000 (all inclusive) for Italy. The variety of costs, as well as the variety of locations, allows students to plan ahead and make financial arrangements prior to the trip.

Faculty often travel to the site to make in-country arrangements under competitive course development grants offered through the provost's office. Two faculty members serve as instructors for each trip in a given year.

Candidates are prepared for their cultural immersion by meeting as a class for approximately 9-12 hours prior to traveling to their destination. Class topics include orientation to Maymester, culture and customs of the country, anthropological field study techniques, travel arrangements and language study. During these sessions candidates are involved in content reading and discussion, case study exploration, simulations and a variety of other activities specifically related to the culture in which they will be immersed. During this time faculty begin arranging for host families with whom the students will live, as well as arranging other experiences such as transportation, school visitations and various field trips unique to the locales.

Faculty make travel arrangements with a travel agent of their choice or on their own and work with an in-country representative to arrange classes, trips and home-stays. Faculty members stay with the students at all times and may live in homes as well. Faculty accompany the students on all trips and school visits.

The immersion component arranged by the faculty includes working (teaching and service) and socialization in multiple settings. By becoming a working member of a host community,

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the candidates are provided with opportunities to participate in family life, learn family customs, attend a cultural dinner/dance evening and experience being a language-minority individual. Students are encouraged to speak the host language during language class and are expected to use the language outside of class in shopping, travel and, especially, school settings. Within the public school settings of the host culture, candidates observe student diversity, participate in classroom and school activities and become involved in service learning projects. Finally, candidates share and apply their knowledge about historical and social dimensions of the host culture by writing article reviews, lesson plans and keeping a travel diary, which results in a reflection paper centered on bringing experiences of being in a different culture into their classroom.

Results of pre- and post-cultural self-evaluations and experience assessments indicate an increase in content knowledge related to cultural content, awareness of the needs of ESOL learners, necessary techniques and strategies needed to appropriately encourage learning of ESOL students and the inclusiveness of teaching ESOL. Participants of this program also indicate an increased focus on assisting all students to achieve their individual learning potential. Additionally, reflective writings indicate increased sensitivity and awareness of the complex nature of learning and functioning in a culture different from one's culture of origin. The integration of teaching ESOL in the mainstream classroom is intended to motivate the students and to promote their self-confidence and their abilities to function effectively in society. As a result of this experience, students are provided with ways that will enable them to accomplish the goals of the experience:

- become aware of the differences and similarities of their cultural and schooling backgrounds from those of other groups without making judgment;

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- reflect on how their background may impact their relationships with people of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and how that background may influence teaching and learning outcomes;
- formulate a personal philosophy with respect to the role of the teacher in serving culturally and linguistically diverse student populations;
- develop interpersonal skills needed for encouraging harmony between minority and mainstream cultural groups;
- reflect on the teacher's role in working with families and multicultural communities and fostering parental involvement in education;
- begin creating culturally responsive curricula and strategies;
- develop understanding and affirmation of the unique linguistic, cultural and schooling practices that children bring into the classroom; and
- develop verbal and nonverbal skills to communicate with people who speak languages other than English.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a mountainous Central American country bordered by Panama to the south and Nicaragua to the north. Costa Rica's proximity to the equator provides a balanced day-and-night cycle that is reflected in Costa Rican life. Temperature-wise, Costa Rica's tropical location is somewhat misleading because the mountain elevations keep temperatures pleasantly mild.

The Sabanilla district of San Jose, Costa Rica's capital, served as home base for our immersion into "Tico" culture. The host homes were within easy walking distance of Sabanilla Plaza. A traditional Roman Catholic Church opened onto the

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plaza and was the primary rallying point for the students each morning. Nearby businesses included Tico eateries, a pharmacy, supermarket and an Internet cafe.

The Mesoamerica Institute for Central American Studies in the Guadalupe district of San Jose coordinated host families, Spanish teachers, tour guides, school visits and classroom space. Each morning students walked or rode city buses from Sabanilla to Mesoamerica for daily culture and Spanish studies. Afternoons were spent visiting cultural and historical sites around San Jose. On the first weekend in country, the group visited the rainforests in Monteverde in northwestern Costa Rica. The second weekend was spent at Manuel Antonio Beach on the west coast.

Planning and Cost

Faculty chaperones worked with a coordinator in Costa Rica to plan home-stays for 20 college students. Important overarching concerns during planning were: (1) security, (2) cost (\$1,500 maximum), (3) cultural immersion, (4) multi-level language lessons and (5) school observations. Initial planning for the diversity experience in Costa Rica began with a colleague's exploratory trip in 2001. Mesoamerica recruited and screened host families and arranged a program that met the college's needs for cultural diversity and school experiences.

College sponsors were responsible for recruiting students, organizing preliminary orientation sessions, arranging international transportation, managing funds and chaperoning students. Mesoamerica did a superb job of arranging housing, local tours and Spanish instruction. Most of Mesoamerica's guides/translators were former U.S. students who returned to Costa Rica after visiting. The primary responsibility of faculty sponsors in Costa Rica was to chaperone students.

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The final trip package offered to students included round-trip airfare, home-stays and two meals per day with pre-approved Tico families, in-country transportation, cultural-educational experiences and two all-inclusive weekend excursions for U.S. \$1,250.

Transportation

To reduce airfare costs the trip from Atlanta to Costa Rica included a stop-over in Houston—a savings of \$150 per student when compared with a non-stop flight. A potential show-stopper in Costa Rica was ground transportation, but Mesoamerica arranged transportation of students and luggage to Sabanilla and handled all weekend bus charters.

Daily Experiences

Upon arrival in Sabanilla the students met the Mesoamerica staff and their host families. Host family representatives escorted students around Sabanilla, teaching bus routes and identifying landmarks. The first full day involved an orientation to home-stays, safety issues, exchange of money and Spanish placement tests. Afternoons were spent touring local attractions. In the evening students often met at Sabanilla Plaza to visit and check email at a cyber café.

The home-stays with Tico families were the unqualified highlight of the trip. Each student had a bedroom, access to a bathroom and “Mr. Coffee” showers—semi-reliable in-line water heaters. Students typically ate breakfast and dinner with their Tico families. The Tico staple of rice and beans received mixed reviews, but the tropical fruits—mangos, pineapples and papaya—were superb. Students quickly formed unforgettable relationships with their adopted families.

South Louisiana: Cajun Country

The experience of visiting the Cajun Parishes of South Louisiana was designed to provide students with opportunities to develop insight into schools, family life and the culture of a French-speaking area within the United States. St. Martin Parish was selected as the location for cultural immersion due to its historical background as the Cajun and Creole capital. Established as a military post in 1714, the town of St. Martinville was settled by French expatriates, wealthy planters who fled a slave revolt in Santo Domingo, Spanish soldiers, members of the French aristocracy who escaped the revolution in that country and the Acadiennes from Nova Scotia. This area retains its cultural identity, which is manifested through language, music, food, religion, family traditions and philosophy about life.

Planning and Cost

Initial planning for the diversity experience in South Louisiana began with the faculty's exploratory trip in fall 2002. Having lived in Louisiana for approximately 10 years, the faculty were able to make connections with appropriate personnel with whom they were familiar. Faculty chaperones worked with the ESOL coordinator, the superintendent of St. Martin Parish, the French Immersion coordinator and the superintendent of Lafayette Parish and the director of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) to plan a trip for 11 college students and 2 faculty chaperones.

Collaboratively, they worked to arrange a program that met the college's needs for cultural diversity and experiences. As part of their Cajun Country experience, students participated in situational Cajun French language experiences, a Creole/Cajun cultural anthropology class, observation of French lessons and

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lessons taught in French within CODOFIL classrooms in the public schools and field trip experiences associated with historical aspects of the area while living with French-speaking host families and functioning as a member of these families. Weekday mornings were spent in ESOL and French Immersion schools, afternoons for touring culturally significant sites. Important overarching concerns during planning were: (1) security, (2) cost (\$1,500 maximum), (3) cultural immersion, (4) situational language lessons and (5) school observations. The experiences were designed to promote an understanding of ESOL, second-language acquisition (analogous to ESOL) and the importance of retaining one's own cultural identity and language. College sponsors were responsible for recruiting students, organizing preliminary orientation sessions, arranging transportation, managing funds and chaperoning students. The St. Martin Parish and Lafayette Parish contacts arranged housing and school visits. The CODOFIL director arranged local tours, language instruction and historical accounts. The primary responsibilities of faculty sponsors in South Louisiana were to chaperone students, provide transportation between locations and make any last-minute on-site arrangements or adjustments to the afternoon schedules.

The final trip package offered to students included round-trip train fare, home-stays and two meals per day with pre-approved Cajun families, four nights' accommodations during excursions, admission costs for the various field trips, local transportation, cultural-educational experiences, one weekend excursion, four student group dinners and one group meal, which included the host families for \$1,175.

Transportation

Travel by train (Amtrak) from Atlanta to New Orleans was used in order to provide an experience that most of the students

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had never had, and most would never have had otherwise. The use of train travel also reduced the trip cost since rates per student were as low as \$98 each round trip. Upon arrival in New Orleans, local travel to St. Martin Parish was completed by mini-bus driven by the faculty sponsors.

Daily Experiences

Like Costa Rica, the home-stays with Cajun families were the unqualified highlight of time spent in South Louisiana. Two or three students stayed with each host family and became members of the family, forming positive reciprocal relationships with their host families. Students typically ate breakfast and dinner with their Cajun families. The variety of foods (crawfish, 'gator, black beans and rice, shrimp etouffe, boudin, gumbeaux and jambalaya) were sometimes met with mixed reviews, but everyone found something that they truly enjoyed.

Upon arriving in St. Martin Parish, students met their host families and spent the evening settling in and getting to know their Cajun families. Many were quite nervous at first, but quickly adjusted because of openness and acceptance of the people, which is characteristic of the Cajun culture. Each morning, members of the host families transported students to a school where the students worked and interacted with children and teachers.

Students visited a variety of schools that included two Lafayette Parish schools: Prairie and Broadmoor. Prairie Elementary, a full French Immersion school, provided students with opportunities for students to observe and interact in classrooms where no English was spoken. Broadmoor is an ESOL school where students participated in classroom activities with children from more than 61 countries. Students also had opportunities to visit Creole and Cajun schools in St. Martin Parish and participate in school activities. Creole culture derives

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from a rich African-American, Spanish, Acadienne blend of food, music and folk traditions, whereas Cajun culture traces its beginnings to the original Acadienne immigrants from Nova Scotia whose folkways, foods and traditions are distinctly different from Creoles.

Each afternoon immediately following lunch in the schools, students met with the faculty chaperones to participate in field trips to various locations. During the weekdays, daily feedback sessions were done in whole-group settings. These meetings allowed the faculty members to obtain information about what was going on in order to monitor progress and ascertain if adjustments of any kind were needed. These meetings also provided students with an opportunity to share news and experiences from their individual family and school placements. Students returned to their host families at approximately 4:30 p.m. (sunset was at approximately 6:00 p.m.) for dinner. Once students had settled into the schedules of their respective homes, they often met at one another's homes or host families would take them to all meet at a special function in the area.

During the first week, students visited historical sites as part of their afternoon field trips. Some also participated in a Cajun family crawfish boil. Over the first weekend of the visit, they visited Konrico Rice Plantation and Crayfish Farm to gain further insight into the agricultural and economic heritage of the area as they visited the Cajun French Music Association Hall of Fame and the Acadian Cultural Center and attended the Saturday night broadcast of *Roundez Vous des Cajun*, a "Cajun Grand Ole Opry" conducted in French. On Sunday, the host families jointly planned outings to a Zydeco breakfast in Breaux Bridge, where students ate traditional breakfasts while listening and dancing to Zydeco and Cajun music and visited McGhee's Landing where they took an Atachafalaya Swamp Tour.

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Week two field trips began with a focus on the town of St. Martin and its famous landmarks: St. Martin de Tours Catholic Church, the Evangeline Oak and Statue, Acadian Memorial and the Acadian Eternal Flame. This area provides tribute to the Acadian refugees arriving in South Louisiana in the mid-1700's. During the middle of the week, students said a very tearful (families and students) goodbye to their host families and began their trip to the middle part of the state, Natchitoches. Here they learned more about the Creole culture by touring a Melrose plantation and exploring the oldest city in the Louisiana Purchase. Finally, after an overnight stay in New Orleans, the group once again boarded Amtrak and headed home.

Summary: In Their Own Words

Throughout each trip students kept travel diaries in which they responded to readings about the area, reflections on their experiences and ideas about how to integrate the knowledge they were gaining into their own teaching situations. Reflections of their experiences provide the most evidence of having reached the objectives of the cultural immersion experience, thus providing authentic assessment for professional feedback to the instructors. Several consistent patterns emerged from student comments related to (1) school experiences, (2) experiences in integration of oneself into a culture other than one's own and (3) acceptance of a culture other than one's own. The benefits of this type of experience are tremendous. Excerpts from various students' journals demonstrate these most effectively:

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School Experiences	Experiences in integration of self into a different culture	Acceptance of a culture other than one's own
<p>“My outlook on teaching kids from other cultures has totally changed. I have really learned how to empathize in a truly different way.” (Costa Rica)</p> <p>“We went to Spanish again today and I can't explain how much I HATE IT! It is so frustrating having a teacher who does not speak any English.” (Costa Rica)</p> <p>“The most important thing I learned was that I will not have 18-20 perfect English-speaking children in my classroom.... I'll be better</p>	<p>“I would say that the biggest thing I have learned was what it is like to be the one who doesn't know what is going on.” (Costa Rica)</p> <p>“Living with strangers from a different cultural background than your own for a couple of weeks teaches you a lot about a different lifestyle as well as provides you with a new perspective of your own culture.” (Cajun Country)</p> <p>“Don't worry if you think they are looking at you—they are!” (Costa Rica)</p> <p>“Traveling to a different</p>	<p>“I always pictured other countries to be so deprived and the people to be so depressed and sad. Not so. Costa Ricans are just as happy and content with their lifestyles as I am with mine. Costa Rica is all they know just like the USA was all I knew.”</p> <p>“After this experience, I am more motivated to learn about other cultures that I encounter.” (Cajun Country)</p> <p>“I took my last Costa Rican shower, ate my last Costa Rican breakfast and walked through my Costa Rican neighborhood for the last time. I first got teary-eyed and started to cry when my Tico dad had to leave and</p>

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School Experiences	Experiences in integration of self into a different culture	Acceptance of a culture other than one's own
prepared with knowledge of how to involve everyone no matter what their first language may be. Hopefully, this experience will make me a more well-rounded teacher.” (Cajun Country)	culture, and staying with people from another culture, is not an easy undertaking, even if the culture is only a few states away.” (Cajun Country)	go to work—he was so patient with me and did not make me feel self-conscious because I talked so slow.”

Recommendations

While both trips were enormously successful, there are several issues that all faculty arranging future experiences should consider.

- Begin planning a minimum of one year ahead. Inevitably, it takes longer to arrange everything than you think it will initially.
- Arrange for alternative activities for days on which scheduling proves the need to be more flexible due to unanticipated situations/conditions/events.
- Rotate offerings to locations making sure to include both in- and out-of-country locations each year.
- Provide time each day for whole-group meetings and discussions. The days on which students have time to discuss

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events of the day help provide them with valuable insights into the thinking of others.

- Have a minimum of two faculty members for each trip as there are times when the full attention of each needs to be on different students or circumstances.

Extended experiences in non-English settings ensure future teachers who will be adept in cross-cultural communication and are committed to diverse student populations. The U.S. Census Bureau (2004) projects dramatic growth, perhaps as much as 25%, in traditionally non-English speaking populations over the next few decades. The most effective teachers will be those who understand students struggling with a new culture and language. Teacher educators should be among the first to foresee the impact this will have on our nation's schools. Responsible teacher preparation programs will need to restructure in order to meet the demand for culturally sensitive teachers.

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**If Not You, Who?
Preparing All Teachers for All Learners**

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Abstract

This paper was adapted from a speech presented at the Annual Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education in Chicago, Illinois, during the spring 2004 conference. Dr. Pearson articulates the status of education, best teaching practices, teacher preparation, educational reform and instructional change for educating diverse learners in the new millennium. Strategies are offered for increasing awareness of academic achievement among minorities and methods for preparing all preservice teachers to teach all learners.

“Who stole the cookie out the cookie jar? You stole the cookie out the cookie jar! Who me? Yes, you! Couldn’t be. Then who?” This nursery rhyme, chanted to a beat by many in the neighborhood while I was growing up in the inner city, is still relevant today. Who is responsible for educating all learners? We continue to shift the blame, asking, “Who, me? Yes, you! Couldn’t be. Then who?” Are we achieving the goal of raising academic achievement in education or are we still shifting the blame? For decades, the educational playing field

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has been uneven for various races of people. Equity and diversity rank among the most critical issues facing our teachers today (Voltz, 2000). Although all racial/ethnic subgroups have shown improvement since 1990, the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that white students and Asian/Pacific Islander students continue to outperform black, Hispanic and American Indian/Alaskan native students at every grade level (NCES, 1999; 2003b). The United States has made a commitment to ensure that each child receives an equitable, quality education and that no child is left behind. This motto expresses an attempt to bridge the academic achievement gap and level the playing field. How can this mission be successful without considering whether teachers are left behind in preparation to teach all learners? Research suggests that teachers who are well prepared not only remain in the classroom, but have the largest impact on student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2000b; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001).

Educational Reform: Why Not You?

The United States educational system and teacher education programs have not adjusted to demographic changes in the student population, including a growing number of language-minority students. Recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau suggest that the Hispanic population accounted for 40% of the total population growth in the United States between 1990 and 2000, increasing from 22 million to 35 million (Lane, 2001). Novice and veteran teachers alike are expected to teach all students to meet high standards, but they are frequently not given the necessary skills to teach students whose language and culture is different from their own. According to a national staffing survey by the National Center for Education Statistics

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(NCES), 54% of all teachers said they taught culturally diverse students, but only 20% felt very well prepared to meet their needs (U.S. Department of Education, 1999). Whose responsibility is it to prepare preservice teachers to teach diverse groups of learners? Is it the state departments of education, the local school districts or higher education academies? As academicians, we are vested with the responsibility of educating the nation's youth and preparing teachers for tomorrow's students. Not only is the diversity of the school-age student population increasing (Educational Research Service, 1995; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2000), but the diversity of teachers is decreasing (Simpson, Whelan, & Zabel, 1993; Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank & Leal, 1999). Therefore, the need to prepare all teachers to teach all learners is urgent (Sobel, Taylor, Kalisher, & Weddle-Steinberg, 2002; Taylor & Sobel, 2001; Zeichner, 1993). Jawanza Kunjufu (2002) contends that within two decades, America's three million teachers will need to be replaced, primarily due to retirement. By the year of 2035, children of color will be the majority; and since *Brown vs. Topeka* (1954) and the integration of schools, there has been a 66% decline in African Americans pursuing the role of teaching. Does it matter what leaders do to prepare preservice teachers? Are preservice teachers prepared to teach cultures different from their own, using multiple teaching modalities? Will preservice teachers accept the challenge facing them of becoming diverse themselves? Questions like this can go on and on and on and should continue if we desire to meet the needs of all learners. It is critical for leaders to realize the need to prepare all teachers to teach all learners, and if not you, who?

Teacher Sensitivity and Awareness: Who Me?

While preparing, nurturing and developing teacher educa-

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tors, we must value, understand and address issues that impact academic achievement, including factors like culture differences, ethnicity, race, ability, gender, socioeconomic level and sexual orientation. Despite the many internal and external factors that may contribute to academic failure, there are three key elements for raising awareness of academic achievement among minorities and preparing tomorrow's teachers.

The first key element is to optimize opportunities and maximize every moment. How do we optimize opportunities and maximize every moment with the preservice teachers we serve? How do we raise teacher sensitivity and awareness for those they will serve in the 21st century classroom? We begin by recognizing that learning begins with the self and the curriculum. Each teacher brings into the classroom—personal experiences, knowledge and instructional strategies or methodologies to be enacted for the benefit of the students through the curriculum. Therefore, we must utilize every moment as a teachable moment. For example, the first day of class can be a time of mere introduction or a time for establishing the road to production. The word *maximizes* means to obtain the most. . . , realize the greatest. . . , and achieve the highest. As educators, we learn that schooling is not the end, but the means to acquire productive lives and progressive relationships, and to exert positive influences on those we serve.

Optimize opportunities—like Madam C. J. Walker. She was an orphan at seven, married at 14 and a widow by the age of 20. Her husband thought she should be satisfied with earning ten dollars a day from her black hair products. She resisted that notion and later became the first African American woman millionaire. She did not allow herself to be restricted or limited by narrow stereotypes and concepts of what ought to satisfy women in a sexist society during the early twentieth century (Potter & Claytor, 1997; Smith, 1994; 2003). She optimized her opportunities and maximized her every moment.

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The second key element in raising awareness of academic achievement among minorities and preparing tomorrow's teachers is to recognize that often ordinary people do extraordinary things. How do you connect with preservice teachers in your teacher education program? You can make the connection by recognizing that often ordinary people do extraordinary things. Ordinary people are passionate, empathetic, caring and nurturing; they are very good listeners and make themselves available for the students they serve. What should we be doing to emphasize the vital and most salient components of an effective teacher education program? It is critical for those in higher education institutions to share books and narratives of the many ordinary individuals who demonstrate dedication, persistence and resiliency. Remember to introduce preservice teachers to books that will stimulate their interest and increase their awareness of diverse educational settings, books such as Jonathan Kozol's *Savage Inequalities* (1993) and *Amazing Grace* (1996); Ruby Payne's *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (2001); Lisa Delpit's *Other People's Children* (1995); Gary Howard's *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know* (1999); and Gloria Ladson-Billing's *Dreamkeepers* (1994). Who are the ordinary? According to the Johari Window, ordinary people are "The open, the blind, the hidden, and the unknown." The open is that which is recognized by individuals and those with whom they interact. The blind is that which is not seen by the individual, but observable to others. The hidden is that which is known by the individual, but hidden from others, and the unknown is that which is known neither to the individual nor to others with whom they interact. It is there—where contend that although it is unknown, it is through the learning process that excellence is discoverable (Luft, 1969). Therefore, it is critical that we allow students in teacher education programs across the nation to plan, explore, construct and discover. . . ordinary people like Oprah Winfrey, who lived a very transitory life,

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raised by her grandmother until the age of 6 in Mississippi, raised by her mother at the age of 7 in Milwaukee, and raised by her father during her early teens in Nashville, later being sent back to Milwaukee where she was raped at 14, a promiscuous teenager headed for trouble. She loved to read and speak in front of audiences and later became an icon in the entertainment industry and the world's highest paid entertainer (Smith, 1994; 2003). Oprah was an ordinary person who did extraordinary things.

The third key element in raising awareness of academic achievement among minorities and preparing tomorrow's teachers is to be onward for others and others-centered. Education is part of the service sector, as opposed to the product sector, within our society. You may ask: What does that mean? We as academicians must provide service to our students or be "student-centered" and not "subject-centered." It is imperative that we merge theory with practice, which is praxis. We should have the desire to turn our data into *capata* which, according to Lanigan (1998), is that which is experienced. In other words, learning should be experienced as well as exposed for all learners. Each of us enters into schooling or the academy—as a stranger. It is at this juncture that we as educators have the opportunity to become onward for others or others-centered: others-centered like Susan B. Anthony. She believed in women's capabilities of being able to transform society. Her bold actions inspired millions of women to fight for women's suffrage. She compared the condition of women to the enslavement of African Americans before the Civil War. Finally, in 1920 the nineteenth amendment of the constitution was approved, granting women the right to vote. She had others in mind, the European American woman, the Asian American woman, the African American woman, the Hispanic American woman and the Native American woman. Susan B. Anthony was onward for others and others-centered.

Teacher Preparation: All for All

What are best practices for ALL pedagogy? Best practices for all pedagogy are in effect when you optimize opportunities and maximize every moment. How do we keep the teachers we prepare when teacher turnover rate is 50% higher in high poverty areas (Ingersoll, 2001)? How do we recruit, encourage and maintain teachers, especially African Americans students, to re-enter the field of teaching—a field they once knew? We must provide strong teacher support, superb teacher mentors and safe teacher environments.

We must improve diversity, by becoming culturally responsive! Ana Maria Villegas and Tamora Lucas (2002) in *Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers* recommend six strategies: (1) Gain social cultural consciousness; (2) develop an attitude toward students from culturally diverse backgrounds; (3) develop the commitment and skills to act as agents of change; (4) understand the transformist foundation of culturally responsive teaching; (5) learn about students and their communities; and (6) cultivate culturally responsive teaching practices. These practices will lead to setting high expectations, integrating curriculum and teaching to multiple intelligences and varied learning styles, using multiple modalities and differentiated instruction.

Differentiated instruction is an increasingly important factor in student success as schools deal with all the challenges facing them today (Tomlinson, 1999). Meeting the individual needs of all teachers, whereby they learn to meet the needs of every student, may be more challenging than ever before, but it is of vital importance if we truly want each one to learn to his or her potential. James Banks (2001) asserts that we no longer should see the world from one perspective, but instead place the event (teacher education) in the center; and from that center we should strive to meet the needs of Native Americans,

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Hispanic/Latinos, Asians, Europeans and African Americans. I raise the question: If Not You, Who? How do we connect with the preservice teachers we serve? How do Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCU) with only 16% of the total African American college student population produce almost 30% of African American college graduates? What explains their success? Almost 75% of African Americans who go on to earn a master's or doctoral degree graduated from a Historically Black College or University (Kunjufu, 2002). Their success can be explained by teachers knowing the importance of role modeling, nurturing, bonding and making connections with their students. In order to raise academic awareness about minorities in teacher education programs, we must recognize others, their lived world experiences, the frame of reference which they draw upon and their basic needs. Abraham Maslow (1968) developed a classical framework for understanding human motivation. He suggested a hierarchy of human needs and arranged these needs into a series of different levels in order of importance: physiological needs, safety, and a sense of belonging, self-esteem and self-actualization.

Visualize a teacher utopia: a program that would allow ALL students to achieve and reach the level of self-actualization. Of American students, 6% are referred to special education, 92% of that number are tested and 73% of that number are placed (Kunjufu, 2002). Four million children receive Ritalin, one million before third grade. We must move from labeling students to defining students' needs, from broadened definitions and new acronyms to broadened assessments and new teaching strategies and from sorting services to providing an assortment of services. It is up to teacher education programs across the nation to prepare ALL preservice teachers to teach ALL learners.

Conclusion

If your teacher education program is optimizing opportunities and maximizing every moment, if you recognize that ordinary people do extraordinary things, if you are onward for others and other-centered, let not your enthusiasm for the optimum. . . end with the activities of today. Keep raising your own awareness and strive to bridge the gap in education. Keep nurturing, bonding and connecting with those you serve. If not you, who? Teach teachers with passion, like the teachers who taught Madeline Albright, the first female Secretary of State and the highest ranking woman in the U.S. Government; Elizabeth Dole, the first woman to hold positions as Secretary of Transportation under Reagan and Secretary of Labor for President George Bush; and Mary McCleod Bethune, a woman who started a school for girls with \$1.50 in her pocket and had so much passion that even boys had a desire to attend. Teach teachers with passion like the teachers who taught Ben Carson, a teenager headed for trouble, almost taking the life of a classmate, but who later began saving lives, becoming the neurosurgeon to separate the first Siamese Twins; Chen Wu, the nuclear scientist whose pioneer work altered modern physical theory and changed the accepted view of the structure of the universe; Bill Gates, a spatially intelligent child who became a multi-billionaire. Teach teachers with passion like Walter Dean Meyers, a special education student with a speech impediment, who was encouraged by his teacher to write his thoughts on paper, and who became one of the most prolific adolescent authors hooking adolescents on reading.

In order to become a successful academician you must possess several ingredients. You must have a self to live with, a cause to live for and a faith to live by. "Success is inevitable. It is for those energetic enough to work hard for it, patient enough to wait for it, courageous enough to seize it, and strong

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enough to hold on to it” (Zuch, 1997, p. 364). So I charge you, you, you, and you, and I say: If not you, who? Who will prepare ALL teachers to teach ALL learners?

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A public school teacher for over 17 years in the Oklahoma City Public Schools, Dr. Pearson captivates others through her own research and lived experiences. Her audience is motivated, inspired, stimulated and propelled to strive for excellence as she speaks and writes with passion about topics so dear to her heart.

Joint Literacy Learnings for Preservice and Practicing Teachers

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Abstract

This research project examined how student and practicing teachers interacted and learned reading methodologies during an intensive literacy institute. When developing this learning opportunity, careful consideration was given to best practices and calls for reform in teacher education. The curriculum focused on fostering extensive knowledge about all aspects of literacy through hands-on learning and immediate implementation at nearby public schools.

It was hypothesized that both groups of teachers would benefit from participating in the institute. It was further hypothesized that preservice teachers would acquire first-hand knowledge about classroom practices by working closely with practicing teachers and that the inservice teachers would learn current pedagogy from the preservice teachers.

Both groups of participants reported learning valuable pedagogy through this institute. The preservice teachers confirmed that they had gained valuable information from the

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practicing teachers. Inservice teachers reported that the teacher candidates had a positive impact on their learning.

The current educational literature calls for reform change in both preservice teacher education and staff development for experienced teachers. Traditional reading methodologies are failing large numbers of today's students; neither whole-language nor skills-based approaches are working for the 20% to 30% of third graders who are reading and writing significantly below grade level. Today's society requires that students learn more than just decoding or appreciating good stories; they must be able to "think critically, create, and solve complex problems as well as to master ambitious subject matter content" (Darling-Hammond, 1999, p. 221). *All* students must possess large vocabularies and be able to comprehend and produce complex narrative and expository passages. Students must be able to understand and develop intricate plot structures as well as master multiple strategies for learning material from difficult textbooks and writing reports and critical essays. Traditional teacher education programs at both the preservice and inservice level are doing a poor job of preparing teachers to develop these critical skills in all children (Anders, Hoffman & Duffy, 2000).

Preservice reading methodology courses are now a particular target for reform; five recommendations dominate the literature. First, the number of reading methodology courses required by most colleges and universities must be increased (Graves, M. F., Pauls, L. W., & Salinger, T., 1996; Seely, A. & Baloch, B., 2001; Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P., 1998). Second, required reading courses should cover more kinds of conceptual knowledge and explicit pedagogy and offer balanced views of theory and methodology (Alvermann, 1990; Ehri & Williams, 1996; Graves et al., 1996; Myers, 1991; Snow et al., 1998). Third, university faculty should explicitly

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model appropriate pedagogy and methodology throughout reading courses and provide opportunities for students to experience firsthand non-transmissional forms of learning (Alexander and Fives, 2000; Alvermann, 1990; Linek, W. M., Nelson, O. G., Sampson, M. B., Zeek, C. K., Mohr, K. A. J., & Hughes, L., 1999). Fourth, during field experiences, student teachers should be encouraged to practice and experiment with the strategies modeled by professors during coursework. Student teachers should also be required to spend more hours working in classrooms with students, and these field experiences should be more closely supervised (Alvermann, 1990; Harlin, 1999; Linek et al., 1999). Finally, both coursework and field experiences should be designed to change preservice teachers' beliefs about reading instruction and develop feelings of self-efficacy. Only if belief structures are altered and self-efficacy enhanced will teachers deviate from the failed methodology they experienced as children (Harlin, 1999; Linek et al., 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

The calls to reform inservice teacher education are also sounding loud and clear (Alvermann, 1990; Calfee & Patrick, 1995; Fisher, Fox, & Paille, 1996; Lieberman & Miller, 1999). Traditional workshops, often provided in a one-day format, have proved inadequate in transforming teaching to meet today's standards and reform initiatives (Grant, 1998; Stein, Smith, & Silver, 1999). Staff development should be ongoing (Snow et al., 1998), offered in many different formats (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1990) and, above all, include opportunities for teachers to observe and work collaboratively with their peers if beliefs are to be altered and practices transformed (Grant, 1998; Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1990; Stein et al., 1999).

There is a consensus that teachers need to be lifelong learners (Snow et al., 1998). To accomplish that, both preservice and practicing teachers need more learning opportunities.

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Courses and/or staff developments should be designed to develop a rich base of conceptual knowledge, learning theory and effective instructional strategies to ensure that all students learn to read (Alvermann, 1990; Ehri and Williams, 1996; Graves et al., 1996; Myers, 1991). Courses must be redesigned to focus on altering teachers' belief structures and introduce meaningful, effective pedagogical tools (ACE, 1999; Alvermann, 1990; Graves et al., 1996; Harlin, 1999; Linek et al., 1999; Snow et al., 1998).

Research Questions

There are many similarities between the calls for reform in preservice teacher education and professional development for practicing teachers. One way to address both sets of recommendations was to offer both groups an opportunity to learn more effective literacy practices during an intensive institute carefully crafted around best practices in teacher education. The notion of a joint learning opportunity raised important questions: How would two groups of teachers, in very different stages of developing their practice, experience a joint literacy learning opportunity? Could the preservice teachers learn effectively in an intensive staff development setting? How would the experienced teachers affect and regard the preservice teachers? Would both groups report similar learnings?

Program Description—School Institute in Reading and Teaching (SIRT)

The School Institute in Reading and Teaching (SIRT), based on Robert Calfee's Project Read research (1995), was conceived as an intensive staff development opportunity for

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practicing teachers. However, the particular institute under study went a step further combining both preservice and practicing teachers in a unique learning opportunity. SIRT curriculum focused on four components of literacy: vocabulary development within the context of meaning, comprehending and composing both exposition and narrative with an emphasis on graphic organizers and cognitively demanding decoding/spelling strategies. Participants also learned how to administer and evaluate a variety of assessments and to use their findings to plan instruction. Optimizing critical thinking by emphasizing cooperative group work and student discussion, rather than teacher presentation, was stressed.

The Institute was thoroughly grounded in the reforms previously reviewed and differed dramatically from the typical staff development session or university course in several ways. First, participants met daily from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. for two full weeks. Monthly follow-up sessions were scheduled throughout the remainder of the school year to ensure that teachers implemented their learnings and to provide them with ongoing support and feedback. This contrasted sharply with the traditional one-day inservice meeting and weekly course meetings. Second, the Institute structure incorporated hands-on participation in a wide variety of activities. During the morning session, the facilitator modeled assessment techniques and instructional strategies, giving participants a chance to experience non-transmissional forms of learning as active participants. Third, immediately following the morning session, each participant worked for an hour and a half in a primary classroom, implementing his or her new knowledge and skills by teaching lessons and administering assessments. Fourth, with one exception, participants worked collaboratively with a partner in their assigned classrooms and jointly planned and reviewed their lessons and participated in peer observations. Fifth, the facilitator also observed lessons and provided

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immediate feedback and assistance. Sixth, to enhance reflective practice, teachers responded each afternoon to reflective prompts and participated in discussions focused on analyzing the implementation of new teaching strategies and improving pedagogy. Finally, participants explored the theory of their new methodologies by studying current research, preparing short reports, reviewing state and national standards and facilitating discussions.

Methodology

Participants

The data pool included 12 preservice teachers and 13 practicing teachers. The preservice teachers were all female and ranged in age from 22 to 45. All were completing their fifth-year credential program and were student teaching at one of two Professional Development School sites. The inservice teachers all taught full time in year-round primary classrooms in three nearby school districts. All but two teachers were female; they ranged in experience from second-year teachers on emergency permits to teachers with fifteen-plus years of experience.

Both groups received university credit for attending the Institute; grant monies paid for all books and supplies. The inservice teachers received a stipend of \$1,000 when they completed the follow-up sessions and the required student assessments.

Data Sources

A survey composed of both Likert scale and open-ended responses was administered to all participants immediately following the Institute; this survey was the primary data source

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for this study. Sources of corroboration included daily reflective journal entries, tape-recorded discussions and artifacts produced during the Institute. Means and standard deviations were compiled using Excel. Because the data were very consistent in that all 25 participants rated each survey item as “agree” or “strongly agree,” no further statistical analysis was possible. Responses to the open-ended survey questions were transcribed. Atlas/ti was utilized to search for key words from SIRT goals to compile trends and percentages of participants who listed particular learnings as significant.

Limitations

The author both planned and facilitated the Institute. Due to her intimate involvement with the project, the author was able to get to know each participant personally and to observe his or her participation throughout. She also supervised the student teaching experience of the preservice teachers and was, therefore, able to observe and interact with them on a weekly basis. The author’s involvement and potential bias may have influenced what was learned, the particular data collected, and, to some extent, the interpretation of the findings.

Results

Both the preservice and inservice teachers reported benefiting professionally from the Institute. The means and standard deviations for both groups are displayed in Table 1 and document the results of the end-of-Institute survey. Both groups indicated that the Institute had been a valuable learning experience. Each group strongly confirmed that the presence of the other had enhanced their learning. They also indicated that they

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would recommend the Institute to other teachers and student teachers.

Every participant reported learning teaching strategies they considered valuable. When asked to list the learnings they considered most valuable, participants were quite prolific in their responses. The most frequently cited responses are listed in Table 2.

The most often used (100% of the participants) was the use of graphic organizers (weaves, matrixes, Venn diagrams, charts, graphs, etc.) to help students analyze narrative and expository texts and/or develop vocabulary. One preservice teacher wrote

For me, a student teacher, I felt that the matrix, weaves, plot graphs, webs, etc. were the most significant thing learned. It is great to have good ideas on how to teach concepts.

Another preservice teacher responded

[I learned] how to use webbing and weaves to make vocabulary and comprehension meaningful and purposeful. I have never used a matrix with my students until this week. After using it in the kindergarten classroom that I was in for these two weeks I am eager to use it with my own students . . .

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Table 1

Quantitative Results of Post-Institute Survey

Student Teachers n = 12*	Inservice Teachers n = 13
1. I have learned teaching strategies I consider valuable. Mean = 3.92 SD = 0.29	Mean = 4.0 SD = 0
2. I will implement my learning in my own classroom. Mean = 3.92 SD = 0.29	Mean = 3.77 SD = 0.44
3. Having both preservice and inservice teachers attend the Institute was beneficial and positively influenced my learning. Mean = 3.92 SD = 0.29	Mean = 3.85 SD = 0.37
4. I would have learned more if ONLY student teachers had attended the Institute. Mean = 1.09 SD = 0.29	I would have learned more if the student teachers had NOT attended the Institute. Mean = 1.00 SD = 0
5. I collaborated closely with my partner on the thematic unit. Mean = 2.45 SD = 1.37	Mean = 3.36 SD = 0.81
6. All student teachers should be encouraged to attend an Institute as part of their coursework. Mean = 3.33 SD = 0.78	Mean = 3.92 SD = 0.28
7. I would recommend the Institute to my cooperating teacher. Mean = 3.75 SD = 0.45	I would recommend the Institute to my colleagues. Mean = 3.85 SD = 0.28

*One student teacher consistently responded with a score of 3 to all questions with the exception of question #4.

Table 2
Frequency of Significant Learnings Listed by Groups

Topic	% of Preservice Teachers	Percentage of Inservice Teachers
Effective uses of graphic organizers	100%	100%
Importance of including expository texts	67%	92%
Strategies for/importance of teaching vocabulary in context	58%	100%
<i>WordWork</i> phonics program	50%	100%
Assessment techniques	78%	50%
Reference to one specific strategy, technique, or lesson	100%	46%

Inservice teachers responded that graphic organizers were a great way to help students chunk information and would, therefore, lead to higher retention rates, improved school performance and higher level thinking skills.

Another critical learning frequently cited by both groups (preservice teachers = 67%, inservice teachers = 92%) was the increased realization of the importance of expository texts and writings as essential elements of reading/writing programs. Prior to the Institute, most participants stated that they rarely utilized exposition. Afterward, several commented that they now understood the importance of exposing children to these texts. Many reported that they had avoided using expository formats in their classrooms because students found them too difficult. The Institute, however, provided “many new

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techniques and tools” for using exposition effectively. Participants wrote they now felt comfortable instructing their students on strategies to use in comprehending expository text. As one experienced third-grade teacher stated

I’ve never really used any expository texts in my reading program. I didn’t really know how. Now, I see how important they are—the expository imperative—and I feel much more prepared to use them. I’m excited about the possibilities for my upcoming Plains Indian unit.

Participants also cited as significant strategies they had mastered for teaching vocabulary lessons in meaningful contexts (preservice teachers = 58%, inservice teachers = 100%). During the Institute, teachers learned “how to use webbing and weaves to make vocabulary meaningful and purposeful.” As one teacher explained

[I learned] a different way to approach the teaching of vocabulary—allowing students to create associations. I will use this strategy to get more kid-talk generated and to get students to look for patterns for grouping and making associations. I will attempt to get students responsible for synthesizing meaning and making personal connections.

Several participants listed three or four new strategies for teaching vocabulary that they planned to utilize in their classrooms.

Also highly praised by participants (preservice teachers = 50%, inservice teachers = 100%) was *WordWork* (Calfee, 1995), the phonics program introduced during the Institute. Teachers commented on the “metacognition” required by

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students during *WordWork* lessons. Others highlighted specific components of the program such as “the use of big letter neck cards for students to actively build words” and “the partner rule to change vowel sounds from short to long.”

Exposure to and practice with techniques for conducting in-depth assessments rated high with 50% of the preservice teachers and 78% of the inservice teachers. Many teachers noted the specific information they would gain about individual students with the assessment tools they learned. Several felt this information could be used to plan more effective small-group instruction. As one inservice teacher noted

I now have an assessment tool I can use to get a better understanding of why a particular child, though second time around, shows less progress than students who came in as non-readers. This will help me teach this child and it will help me when I go to the Student Study Team to better pinpoint the problem.

Differences in Learnings between Groups

Despite similarities, noticeable differences were found in the learnings reported by the preservice and inservice teachers. For example, twice as many inservice teachers as preservice teachers (100% vs. 50%) indicated that the *WordWork* phonics program was a significant learning. Almost twice as many inservice teachers (preservice teachers = 58%, inservice teachers = 100%) included vocabulary development lessons on their list of significant learnings. Five times as many inservice teachers reported significant learnings about higher level/critical thinking than did student teachers (preservice teachers 8%, inservice teachers 38%). Twice as many inservice teachers as preservice teachers (32% vs. 16%) commented that they would begin to teach more thematically and consciously integrate different

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subject areas in their language arts units. These last two findings probably reflect the fact that the student teachers had recently completed coursework that focused on both of these concepts. Twice as many preservice teachers (preservice teachers = 100%, inservice teachers = 46%) cited learning a specific teaching strategy or type of lesson as a key component of the Institute. Beginning teachers are often looking for specific techniques that they can immediately implement in their classrooms. Preservice teachers were also much more likely to list a specific modeled lesson as a significant learning.

Overall, the preservice teachers tended to list specific lessons that they could easily adapt and teach in their classrooms. The inservice teachers tended to be more interested in theories and ideas that they could integrate into their existing practice. Both groups seemed to view the information through a lens appropriate to their level of expertise.

Impact of the Groups on Each Other

Both groups of teachers reported benefiting from the Institute, and 100% of the teachers agreed that the presence of the other group had enhanced their learning experience. Three views emerged.

First, the discussions offered benefits for both groups. The student teachers strongly believed that they had gained many valuable pieces of information from the inservice teachers. For example, one preservice teacher wrote

Everybody has opinions and stories to relate—sharing of their stories and experiences are helpful. The [inservice] teachers were very helpful and provocative in their comments and thoughts. I found it beneficial.

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Another responded, “I learned a lot from the perspective of real teachers on the activities and discussions.”

Several experienced teachers commented that the questions asked by the preservice teachers had caused them to reflect on their practice. One inservice teacher wrote, “It helped being around people who were studying teaching and to hear their perspectives and their questions.” Another inservice teacher commented

They [the student teachers] had great ideas and beliefs to share. Teaching is learning twice. Answering some of their questions was beneficial to me as well.

Additionally, inservice teachers felt that the preservice teachers brought “fresh insights” to the discussions. As one inservice teacher stated

The class is balanced by having experienced and inexperienced people bringing their perspectives and insights to the discussions. It’s empowering for teachers and student teachers to exchange ideas in an environment where there are no power differences between them and we are all being students and classroom interlopers.

Second, the collaborative planning between preservice and inservice teachers on the required thematic units was viewed as beneficial. A preservice teacher wrote

The cooperative learning was great. Working with teachers to complete assignments was actually fun. I have gotten several ideas that I would like to use.

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My partner teacher and I gave each other ideas and suggestions every day.

Similarly, two inservice teachers reported

Having experienced teachers working side by side with student teachers was very valuable. It was a great illustration of how teachers are “forever” learners. . . . Student teachers also have valuable ideas to share. The dialogue between the experienced and student teachers allowed us to collaborate on ideas for planning lessons.

And: “The student teacher asked me about things she felt I would be experienced in and so could help her. We collaborated on other areas. I feel we complemented each other.”

Finally, inservice teachers’ attitudes were positively influenced by the presence of the preservice teachers. “The student teachers were so eager to learn and their enthusiasm seemed to be infectious.” There was less resistance to new ideas, assignments and theoretical discussions than in previous institutes attended only by experienced teachers. The following quote from an inservice teacher sums up the feelings of the group.

I don’t think the student teachers impaired my learning at all. They were a very diverse group in terms of experience, age and attitudes. Since most of the class learning involved getting into groups, the student teachers’ presence probably helped.

Summary of Post-Institute Implementation

Data about levels of post-institute implementation by the practicing teachers was available only in the form of self-reports collected during the five follow-up sessions. At each meeting teachers shared in small and large groups what they had implemented and their successes and failures. Most of the teachers brought artifacts from their lessons in support of their overwhelmingly successful results. Data sources for the pre-service teachers, which were more varied and included interviews, observations and follow-up sessions, will be discussed.

Pre-institute observations and interviews with the student teachers over a period of four months indicated that they possessed only a vague understanding of how to teach reading. Four trends were observed: heavy reliance on teachers' guides, lessons consisting primarily of round robin reading, little integration of writing, and, daily instruction of skills in isolation using worksheets and workbooks. These findings were surprising because these preservice teachers had all completed the only reading methodology course they were required to take as part of their credentialing experience.

Post-institute observations and interviews document significant changes in how the preservice teachers approached the teaching of reading. One month following the Institute, each of the student teachers had the responsibility for planning and implementing a full week of literacy activities in their assigned classrooms. During this "week-in-charge" their cooperating teachers helped them decide on a theme and then allowed the student teachers the flexibility to plan their own lessons. Each student teacher was required to submit detailed plans for the week in advance and each was observed for a full morning during her week in charge. The results briefly described below demonstrate that attending the Institute significantly altered literacy beliefs held by the student teachers and transformed how

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they conceptualized and practiced the teaching of reading. Although some utilized stories from the basal text, none relied on the teacher's guidebook to plan instruction, and all included more authentic reading and writing. Evidence of the impact the Institute had on the teaching methods of these beginning teachers was noted in every classroom. Three typical lessons taught by the teachers are briefly described here. All three student teachers independently chose to implement an integrated science and language arts unit focused on the topic of ocean.

Susan's Second Grade Vocabulary Lesson

Prior to the Institute, Susan introduced new vocabulary by listing eight words on the white board, discussing a definition for each word and having the students copy the words and definitions and use each word in a sentence. On the first day of her week-in-charge, Susan began with a vocabulary lesson. Prior to the lesson she developed a list of ocean words that she felt the students would need to be familiar with in order to comprehend the texts they would be reading later that week. She began the lesson with a visualization activity about the ocean, including background music. Students then generated words about ocean that she organized into a word web. As each word was added, Susan and her students briefly discussed its meaning. Toward the end of this part of the lesson, she slipped in the two words on her list that the students had not generated. The second graders then worked in small groups to come up with a label for each section of the web. Susan then had the students write a short text using as many of the words from the web as they could; most were over a page in length. Susan then continued her literacy instruction by integrating both reading and writing into the science experiment that concluded the morning's lessons. She later reported, "They have to make

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connections to their world if they are going to remember the new words. I also have to really challenge them.”

Mary’s Kindergarten/First Grade Narrative Lesson

Prior to the Institute, Mary reported that she “had never used a real book to teach a reading lesson.” She also stated, “I just did what the [teacher’s] guidebook told me to do. And we always did worksheets. Lots of worksheets.” During her week-in-charge, Mary used the book *Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Phifter to focus on the concept of character. Prior to reading the story, she clearly defined the term character for the students and listed all of the characters from the story on the chalkboard. As she read, she paused frequently to ask a wide variety of higher and lower level comprehension questions in a discussion-like manner. At the conclusion of the story, the students listed plot elements that Mary recorded onto sentence strips. The students then sequenced the strips and taped them to the bottom of a large sheet of butcher paper. A different color of ribbon was used for each character and their levels of emotions were charted on the butcher paper event by event. (The end result looked similar to a line graph.) Students were then instructed to compare the Rainbow Fish to the goldfish on their tables by writing and drawing in their journals. When asked about her lesson, Mary stated, “This feels really different. I can see how much more involved the students are now and they seem to be learning more.”

Kelly’s Third Grade Expository Lesson

Kelly chose to conclude her ocean unit by focusing on water pollution utilizing an expository text and integrating a science experiment into her language arts lesson. First, the students developed a K-W-L Chart listing what they already knew

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about pollution and what they wanted to learn. Almost every student responded with appropriate information. The children were then shown the book cover and briefly discussed ocean pollution. The concept of factual information was also defined; the students were told that they must listen differently to exposition. Kelly encouraged her students to interact with the text during the read aloud by eliciting their comments with open-ended questions. The text was debriefed by completing the chart on which the students listed all of the new information they had learned. Students were then given the assignment to write a summary about what they learned either independently or with the group. After their summaries were completed, the students were given the opportunity to learn firsthand how oil spills affect birds and other sea life by participating in an experiment. Students were required to do a variety of writing activities throughout the investigation. Before Kelly even sat down at her post week-in-charge interview she commented

Wow! I now teach everything differently than I did before [the Institute]. It changed everything. The kids learned so much last week. I didn't know second graders could do so much...They can really think and they can write tons of stuff...It's truly amazing!

Conclusions

This study contributes to both preservice and inservice teacher education research in several significant ways. First, it addresses the lack of adequate literacy preparation for preservice teachers by providing an additional 60 hours of coursework and 15 hours of closely supervised field experience and analyzes the effects of such an intensive intervention. Second, it offers insights into the relationships between inservice

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program features and the experiences of the participants. All participants reacted very favorably to the daily structure of the Institutes. Many reported that the time went quickly because they were engaged in a wide variety of stimulating activities. They also stated that because they were constantly actively participating, their learning was much greater than at previous workshops and courses where they were more passive. Third, because the required follow-up sessions focused on examining student work samples and reflecting on teaching practices, the long-term effectiveness of the staff development was determined to be positive. All participants implemented a wide variety of the concepts taught during the Institute, indicating a transformation in their beliefs about how reading should be taught. Finally, it examined the benefits of collaboration between preservice and experienced teachers. No negative interactions were observed or reported. Both groups appear to have been positively influenced by the presence of the other. Many reported that the presence of the other group increased their learning.

SIRT is a powerful tool for enhancing teacher capacity and increasing student achievement. All who attended this Institute changed their practice in significant ways. The preservice teachers, for the first time, believed they were well equipped to teach reading and writing in a manner that engages their students' minds. The inservice teachers reported significant growth in their students, which they attributed to the new techniques and strategies learned at the Institute. Today, more than ever before, teachers are constantly reminded that they must teach to higher standards and that all of their students must be successful. The School Institute in Reading and Teaching is a means for helping teachers meet this challenge.

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**Mirror Accountability:
Using Data to See Ourselves and to Show
Ourselves to Others**

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Abstract

Program accountability is increasingly important in teacher education. Yet, program accountability often implies reporting quantitative data in an easy-to-understand visual format. Such data can lack validity when numbers are small and they may confuse issues of candidate performance with candidate understanding. In this study, four teacher educators from a small graduate program examined the understanding of their teacher candidates using survey and focus group data. Qualitative analysis revealed predictable connections and disconnections between coursework and field work, as well as surprising conceptions of the nature of teaching and learning. The authors used the findings to inform and improve their practice and they argue that qualitative data can and should be utilized for program improvement and accountability.

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In a recent joint visit from an accreditation agency and the State, it was clear that a system for collecting, analyzing and summarizing program outcome data was a primary expectation of both entities. Outside agencies expect us to gather data and evidence of student learning to review our program efforts and to make decisions about program development. In part, our accreditation instructions note: “Summarization and analysis shifts focus from individuals to programs. Programmatic analysis, in turn, should lead to program change and improvement” (NCATE, 2000, p. 3). We see the wisdom of such an approach. Well-gathered and analyzed data call us to confront “the facts” and use those facts to make informed decisions (Wilson & Morrow, 2004). Yet, we fear that the emphasis on data collection implicitly values the collection of quantitative data. How else might we evaluate candidate performance?

To illustrate our dilemma, consider the following data about our program. In the summer of 2002, 27 preservice secondary teachers entered a fifth-year Master’s of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) program on a predominantly undergraduate liberal arts campus with 2,600 students. These secondary teacher candidates had an average GPA of 3.18 and average GRE scores of 510 for verbal and 578 for quantitative. All 27 successfully completed three prerequisite courses, participated in two fall semester field experiences and completed student teaching in May 2003. They scored an average of 4.5 on a 5-point rating scale for their ability to meet State teaching standards as observed by their mentor teacher, and earned a master’s degree in August 2003. Over the 13-year history of the M.A.T. program, 98% of students have earned a Washington State teacher’s certificate, 98% have completed a master’s degree, 20% are employed by the local school district and 46% are employed in the local region.

Evidence of this sort can tell monitoring agencies much about our program. We offer a fifth-year master’s degree and

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our graduate program is small in comparison to the campus undergraduate population. Our students move through the program as a cohort; and the vast majority of our students reach important benchmarks, successfully completing fall coursework and field experiences, student teaching and a master's degree.

How meaningful is this data in terms of our own classroom practice? The reality of our experience, teaching in a small graduate program on a liberal arts campus, is that we lack a sufficient number of students to allow for reliable patterns to emerge from quantitative data about students. Further, the emphasis on student performance (such as completion rates) can effectively hide issues of student understanding. For example, knowing that a student completed the program with a given grade-point average tells us next to nothing about how that student understands a complex notion such as constructivism. A focus on quantitatively displaying program outcomes pushes us toward data that is easily displayed visually and may also cast us into a trap of working to produce high scores at the expense of our own efforts to teach for understanding and critical thinking (Resnick, 1987).

As a program, we make every attempt to convince our teacher candidates of the importance of attending to the understanding of their students (e.g., McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993). It is important that we practice what we preach. Without attending to our own students' understanding, we risk being only a "weak intervention on the powerful images, understandings, beliefs, and ways of thinking that prospective teachers bring with them from their prior experiences as students" (Lampert & Ball, 1998, p. 24).

We see a need to use multiple measures to assess our students' understanding and performance. Our work at a small liberal arts college makes us acutely aware of the limits of using quantitative data alone. We need to have a fuller picture of

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our students' efforts to become teachers. In this paper, we discuss how we have attempted to develop a multi-tiered qualitative assessment based on student understanding to shape program decisions and to create a viable systematic assessment that can serve both our program needs and accountability requirements.

Here we present a chronological narrative that tells the story of our experience. Throughout this narrative we weave in our process of data collection and analysis. We begin by describing our need to understand how recent changes to our secondary teacher education program were impacting the learning of our students. We describe the steps in our thinking and the resulting data. At the end, we consider the possibilities of this model to meet accountability and program assessment needs of small liberal arts teacher education programs.

The Program Assessment

The program assessment effort that we developed is grounded in the cooperative effort of four teacher educators in a small, fifth-year M.A.T. program situated within a nationally ranked liberal arts college. In 2002, the four of us collaboratively developed secondary pedagogical seminars in each disciplinary area, and we were interested in the understandings our secondary preservice teachers were developing as they moved through the seminars. Participants in these seminars ranged across secondary subject areas: English (6 students), social studies (6), math (5), science (5), PE (2), art (1) and music (2). The students took these disciplinary seminars in the fall before full-time student teaching, along with a general curriculum and instruction course, a literacy course, an assessment course and an adolescent development course. In the spring, the students were involved in 15 weeks of student teaching.

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Our process moved through three distinct phases. In phase one we collected data from all 27 secondary education students using a survey designed to elicit how they viewed the connections between their courses and their work in schools. In phase two, we administered a second survey in which we asked all secondary students to articulate what they believed they had learned during their coursework and to assign that learning relative importance to their future. In phase three, we brought together five students for a focus group session to explore the themes, metaphors and tensions we saw in the previous data. Throughout the analysis we used a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) with early analysis framing later data collection. The data reported here is representative but not comprehensive. In this paper we show data that were particularly helpful in revealing our students' understanding about teaching.

Phase One: Connection and Disconnection

The first survey was a short-answer survey, administered halfway through the initial semester, which asked students for their perceptions of what was important to their teacher development in the courses (see Appendix A). In analyzing the data we developed coding categories that emerged as: students' worlds, teacher role and development, instruction, literacy, disciplinary understanding and folk wisdom. Student survey data highlighted important areas of connection and disconnection between classes and field experiences. For example, students saw a clear connection between the courses. However, students experienced a disconnection from the field experiences. While university professors used a common language, that language overlapped only tangentially with the field. One student noted

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My clearest connection between coursework and the fall placement was creating lessons to use in a classroom. Yet, this was also a clear disconnect because most of the teachers that I observed were very traditional teachers—I didn't see any group work/ inquiry, etc. being used in the classroom.

Across the data, students made connections when they were asked to do work they saw as concrete or “practical.” Creating lessons and working through ways of organizing instruction were clear areas of connection both between courses and between the university and schools. However, the organization of the curriculum and instruction course, designed to foster student understanding of various pedagogies, placed conceptual burdens on students by asking them to adapt these best practices to their own subject areas. They perceived a disconnection between theory and their classroom observations. Students struggled to find connection if course content moved too far into the more abstract world of major theories in the field. Even in the practical world of learning to use different pedagogies, students observed that real classrooms do not break life down into neat categories.

This [course] gives me an idea of different ways to structure lessons and different ideas of how to teach. It is difficult, however, to try to place subjects in categories like concept lesson and inquiry.

The absence of connection between the university and the field is hardly surprising. As others have noted (e.g., Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985), the dual settings of teacher education, combined with the need for our novice candidates to make connections between the two, places immense intellectual demands on intending teachers. Still, we found the specific

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areas of connection and disconnection helpful as we considered the redesign of our program, and we wondered how these connections (or lack thereof) were impacting our teacher candidates' understanding.

Phase Two: Identifying Tensions

After analyzing the survey data and determining patterns and themes, we organized a follow-up survey, in a graphic format, designed to elicit student understanding based on Wiggins and McTighe's (1998) three-tiered conceptual model of student understanding: (1) enduring understandings; (2) important to know and do; and (3) worth being familiar with (see Appendix B).

Our students were remarkably consistent regarding the topics and concepts they listed (and omitted) from their surveys. Cooperative analysis of these surveys revealed intricate tensions in student thinking as they construct complex concepts such as constructivism and progressivism. Student conceptual understanding was dynamic and recursive with experiences in their courses and field experiences as contexts. They did not demonstrate a linear progression of sophisticated understanding as we often planned for in our courses. Their understanding seemed at times to follow an additive model where they linked previous experiences and understanding rather than the transformative model we envisioned for our students. In other words, lacking a clear understanding of terms such as constructivism (not unlike students reported in Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004), our students seemed to maintain their initial frames of reference (Kennedy, 1999) rather than construct a new conception of teaching and learning. For example, one student wrote that it was important to "find progressive ways to present knowledge and build critical thinking." In this statement we noted the conflict between

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progressive, constructivist ways of knowing and knowledge that is *presented* and critical thinking that is *built by the teacher* rather than the student. Rather than form a new understanding of what it is to construct knowledge, this student seems to have added new vocabulary to established notions of learning and teaching.

It seemed premature to build a theory of student understanding based on individual, decontextualized statements. We also understood that our view of what students were actually saying varied widely depending upon our own experiences and understanding. We decided that we needed to talk with students in a more in-depth way in order to understand how they viewed the tensions we saw in the data. We used tensions we identified from this analysis to design questions for the focus group interview.

Phase Three: Working Out Tensions Through Metaphor

During the spring we conducted the focus group to question students directly in order to understand earlier written comments and to probe for clarity about student perceptions. We met to discuss themes, tensions and metaphors we had identified. We purposefully sampled five students across subject areas, using such factors as disciplinary area, gender, age and “how student teaching was going” at the time, to gain representative responses. During the twelfth week of their 15-week student teaching, these students came together for a single two-hour meeting on campus with all four authors present. We posed broad questions for discussion, including the following: 1) Thinking about your student teaching, what have you drawn upon as you went about making instructional decisions? 2) In what ways, if any, has fall coursework prepared you to teach high school students in your content area? We also asked

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specific follow-up questions related to earlier survey responses. For each question, as students talked, two researchers took field notes, attempting to capture as much verbatim talk as possible.

Notes were typed immediately, and exchanged. We met to discuss the notes. We then wrote individual memos reflecting each researcher's understanding of key conclusions before meeting together for collaborative analysis.

We found students' use of metaphors particularly interesting; for example, as we tried to understand the way students understood what they were taught at the university and what they witnessed in schools. One student explained it this way:

We talked about two kinds of tools. Tools like crystal and silver [for best practices]. And then the textbook is like your ramen soup. That is comfortable. But sometimes you just want everyday ware. We're not always comfortable taking the china off the shelf.

While this was clearly "exploratory talk" (Barnes & Todd, 1995), the metaphor was rich (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The students' emphasis on best practices as something that you don't use every day was striking and we found this statement both represents a conflict that was expected and a surprise. We expected that the university would conflict with the field. We also expected that students would believe that best practices were of high quality. However, we were surprised to see best practices talked about as some things that are to be reserved for special occasions. The implication seems to be that pedagogies such as inquiry and discussion are almost pretentious. Students seem to seek a language of the comfortable, needing some sort of everyday mode. In the image of "off the shelf" we saw the pulling of activities that are useable to teach a curriculum that

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is already in place. Missing were ideas of curricular design that we had stressed in our classes. Comments such as these provoked considerable discussion about our own understandings of what we were teaching and about the ways in which our students understood.

Mirrored Reflections: Seeing Ourselves in the Data

Initially our examination of student understandings took the form of “us” understanding “them.” We talked of student conceptions as based in their own backgrounds and experiences but distant from our practice. Further, we tended to interpret student comments in ways that supported what we had set out to achieve (Ball, 1997). Looking closely at student comments caused some uncomfortable realizations. First, we began to realize that many student understandings could be supported directly by the structure of our program and by what we chose to emphasize or de-emphasize. For example, we noted in the second survey that students rarely discussed scaffolding in an explicit way. As a group, we considered the idea of scaffolding to be essential to constructivist teaching. Yet, our students clearly did not. Thinking back over our courses we began to see the ways in which we kept notions of scaffolding implicit and therefore hidden from our students. Further, our students did not seem to consider what happened in the subject-specific endorsement seminars to be central to their learning (although they clearly enjoyed and appreciated them). In the structure of our program we began to see how we privilege general pedagogical knowledge over pedagogical content knowledge.

Second, in conversations, colleagues floated plausible disconfirming interpretations of some of our most prized student comments. We began to give a positive and a negative read to what our students were saying. Such a move forced us to

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expose our own tacit beliefs about teaching and learning, highlighting differences that were otherwise masked. For example, we spent considerable time unpacking the phrase, “performance before competence” (Palincsar & Brown, 1984) as a way of helping our students understand both the structure of our own program and of what we were asking them to do with their own students. In discussions such as these we found that our understandings of basic educational concepts were subtly different, despite the fact that we used the same words. We had, in fact, constructed our own understanding of these concepts and were communicating them to students in slightly different ways. These “inconsistencies in their professors’ perspectives” (Smagorinsky et al., 2004, p. 16) seemed evident as we explored student understanding.

As a result of these discussions, we made both program and course improvements. We noted concepts that seemed to be missing from our students’ understanding (e.g., scaffolding), and we committed to making them areas of emphasis. We started the process of attending to the structure of our program and thinking more clearly about the experience of our students. We spent time working on our mutual understanding of key concepts. We more clearly realized how student conceptions are often sensible; and rather than rail against them, we would be better served by noting how we contribute to any misconceptions and discussing how to support student development over time.

Double Refraction: Accountability to Others

The process we undertook was immensely satisfying and helpful to both our own professional growth and to the improvement of our program. We were involved in this work at the time of the State and accreditation visits. We felt that we

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were doing the difficult work of reform based upon the understandings of our students. However, as far as the outside agencies were concerned, it mattered little. They sought hard, cold quantitative data. We were frustrated with their demands because we saw in their language a desire for a system more appropriate to a large university than a small liberal arts college where students and faculty are few and work closely together.

We were unwilling to throw out what we believed to be a rich and effective system that centered on evidence of student understanding and careful discussions about the implications for program revision. Keeping this system left us with an apparent choice of adapting our data to be more acceptable to outside evaluators, or pushing back against those requirements. In the end, we decided to do both.

Meeting Outside Demands

We first determined to consider how we might take what we were doing and refract it so that it might be visible to external agencies. We believed that our three-tiered system produced trustworthy student evidence based on, and congruent with, the goals of our program. We believed that the consistent use of this system at regular intervals would provide assessment reliability. We were happy with the surveys and the focus group interview and also happy with the ongoing conversations among ourselves angling always toward deeper program examination. We believed that we could use the same tools, modes of analysis and application to program every three years—a cycle that is workable for a more time-intensive program assessment. What we needed was a sensible, workable and rhetorically effective way of communicating this valid, reliable system to the State. We saw the need to document and report in a clear and efficient way both the inquiry and the

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system of inquiry. This means finding a central location for the storing of data and analysis that is added to regularly. Systematically sharing our findings with other faculty and archiving written records of those events provide a way to communicate to those who would audit our progress.

Pushing Back

Pushing back against agency requirements is a more difficult proposition. Outside agencies hold considerable power over our programs. Yet, we are not powerless. As Lee Shulman points out, “[w]ays of seeing are ways of knowing and ways of not knowing. And knowing well is knowing in more than a single way” (Shulman, 1988, p. 25). While the kinds of data agencies currently demand help us to see our program, they also obscure from sight important aspects of student understanding. Exposing this obscured sight is our most powerful way of pushing back.

We hope to address this inadequacy in two places; with like-minded colleagues and within the larger conversation about program evaluation. First, we seek to communicate the importance of knowing our program in more than a single way within the relative safety of our community; at conferences, formal and informal professional meetings and in professional publications. We seek to explore with other liberal arts faculty the power of qualitative data as a way of seeing small teacher education programs. Citing Walter Brueggemann, Catherine Lacey (Personal Communication, August 27, 1998) contends that such conversations are essential for productive critique of the larger public conversation. Without such conversations in our community, “there are no alternatives considered—imagination can’t find room.” As we compare our stories, we become better able to imagine alternatives and better

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prepared with a coherent argument for our conversations in the politicized contact zones of the larger community.

Armed with “hope born of reflection on experience” (C. Lacey, Personal Communication, August 27, 1998), we plan to engage agencies and policy makers. In reports to agencies we can talk explicitly about the value of qualitative evidence for our small liberal arts program. We can outline the components of our assessment system and the reliability and validity of our well-constructed qualitative assessments. We can consciously communicate how the personalized understanding of our students’ understanding, possible in a program such as ours, can be transformative to our own instruction and to the improvement of our program. In our interactions with policy makers we can communicate both the weaknesses we see in the current focus and the possibilities for greater understanding. Engaging with policy makers keeps alive the conversation about our differing values (Cuban, 1990), allows for feedback essential for successful reform (McLaughlin, 1987) and juxtaposes marginalized discourses with the dominant discourses (Gee, 1996) of program assessment—fueling a conversation about what is gained and lost in the current quest for quantitative data in program assessment.

By providing outside agencies with the kind of data they require, combined with an unapologetic demonstration of what these data do not show, we hope to challenge agency demands even as we work to meet them. We welcome others to join us in this effort to reframe program evaluation in liberal arts teacher education to a system that truly helps us to “know well.”

Discussion

We are not sure that we will be able to overcome the longstanding dilemmas of teacher education (Feiman-Nemser &

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Buchmann, 1985) regardless of how we evaluate our program. Yet, we see value in evaluation that considers and serves the needs of outside agencies and of our students and ourselves. Three points are worth acknowledging here.

First, our students are busy people and class time is short. Program assessment should mirror classroom assessment practices in that they should not only provide information for understanding and improving the program, but they also enhance the thinking of our students. In designing the tools for program evaluation, we purposefully created instruments that would push our students to review and develop their own understandings. We asked them to think about the way their courses connected to each other and to their observations in schools. We asked them to use a framework of curricular design we had taught them in order to think about their own learning. We asked them to consider and expand upon the tensions in their understanding through the focus group questions. In every case we sought to maximize student learning as we worked to find out valuable information for program improvement.

Second, focused conversations about artifacts are both an efficient and effective use of faculty time. We spent hours in these conversations both formally and informally. However, the impact on our own thinking and practice is profound. Program changes became more coherent and substantive when grounded in discussion of student understanding using data explicitly designed to reveal that understanding. Time spent is not wasted when professors and students benefit.

Third, it can be risky sharing data about student understanding across the program. Both positive and negative evaluative comments were written by students and shared with all involved parties. Absent honest feedback from students, program improvements are unlikely to be appropriate. We minimized the risk in two ways. While our conversations were open within our group, students' evaluative statements were

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not shared beyond the group. Also, we each took responsibility for our role in the preparation of our students and avoided any attempts to place blame on others. The close working relationships often present and necessary in our liberal arts settings may mitigate risks that would be untenable in a large institution where faculty do not work together closely.

As professors in a small liberal arts college, we know our students well. We can benefit from both aggregated quantitative data and detailed qualitative data. We are uniquely situated to prepare teachers and we should insist that evaluative agencies view us in our unique situation and complexity.

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Appendix A
Secondary Program Mid-Term Questionnaire

1. Please check the general category that describes your endorsement area:
_____ English/Social Studies _____ Math/Science
_____ Art/ P.E/Health/ Music
2. What role do you see each of the following experiences playing in your development as a teacher? Please comment in each section.

Education 617: Secondary Curriculum and Instruction

1 2 3 4
Critical Very Helpful Somewhat Helpful Not Helpful

What role does this experience play in your development as a teacher?

Education 619: Literacy in Secondary Schools

1 2 3 4
Critical Very Helpful Somewhat Helpful Not Helpful

What role does this experience play in your development as a teacher?

Endorsement Seminar or Tutorial Sessions

1 2 3 4
Critical Very Helpful Somewhat Helpful Not Helpful

What role does this experience play in your development as a teacher?

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Fall Field Placement

1	2	3	4
Critical	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not Helpful

What role does this experience play in your development as a teacher?

3. On this page, please describe the kinds of connections, if any, you see between the various fall experiences (i.e., courses, field placements, seminar meetings/tutorial sessions)?

Appendix B

Secondary Program Reflection

Please check the general category that describes your endorsement area

English/Social Studies Math/Science

Art/P.E./Health/Music

Take a moment to think about your experiences this fall. Use the space in the Wiggins and McTighe's 3-part model of curricular decision-making to comment on 1) the enduring understandings you have gained, 2) what you learned that is important to know and to be able to do, and 3) what is good to be familiar with.

