Dates for CIG 697

The Culminating Experience is offered every Spring, Summer, and Fall semester.

Eligibility for CIG 697

Eligibility for the culminating experience requires the completion of 27 graduate semester hours in the M.Ed. degree program. Students should not enroll in CIG 697 alone, but with at least one other course, ideally a 2-3 credit course. The university requires students to enroll in at least 3 credits during their last semester in the program; students who do not enroll in another course concurrent with CIG 697 will be required to take CIG 697 for 3 credits instead of 1. Students should enroll in the section of CIG 697 that corresponds with the last name of their advisor.

Purpose of CIG 697

The culminating experience activity provides students with the opportunity to synthesize knowledge and experience gained throughout their master's program of study. Students will demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge in their major emphasis concentration of study. The culminating experience project will focus the application of theory, research, content, pedagogy, and standards for effective educational practices. It is recommended that students keep copies of coursework from all master's program of study classes in preparation for the culminating experience. Within the project students are required to use the American Psychological Association (APA) writing style format.

Due dates for CIG 697

• Spring: submit on or before April 1st
• Summer: submit on or before July 1st
• Fall: submit on or before November 1st

NOTE: If due date is on a weekend or holiday, the due date will be next business day.
M.Ed. Multicultural Program Area Concentration CIG 697 Culminating Experience  
(*Students in the M.S. Multicultural Program Area Concentration Complete a Thesis  
in lieu of this Culminating Experience, accordingly, M.S. students should meet with their advisor to plan for the Thesis*)

Students ready for the Multicultural Program Area Culminating Experience need to enroll in CIG 697 in accordance with the guidelines set forth above. Students are advised to let their advisors know if any of the resource links embedded below are broken.

Once enrolled you will write a *single comprehensive essay* in which you discuss:

I) How you came to the concentration personally;

II) What you have learned in the concentration academically; and,

III) How you will apply this academic knowledge professionally.

In responding to I-III:

A) Describe the “evolution” of your **multicultural educational teaching philosophy** (from where you started to where you see yourself heading in the near future) paying special attention to your ”disposition” to teach *all* students *equitably* and to the fullest extent and highest level of excellence possible in accordance with the original *National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Diversity Standard* (see pp. 29-32 <http://www.ncate.org/documents/standards/unit_stnds_2006.pdf>). This standard became to focus of controversy in 2006 when conservative political groups targeted NCATE claiming that the standard was politically motivated against their interests. As a result, NCATE rewrote the diversity standard (see <http://www.ncate.org/Standards/UnitStandards/UnitStandardsineffect2008/tabid/476/Default.aspx>) and removed the phrase “social justice” from the standards document (it only ever appeared on p. 53 of the original document (the glossary) relative to the discussion of the word “Dispositions”). Read the five resources listed immediately below in the order that they are listed. The first three resources offer varied critical multicultural educational analyses of how NCATE responded to the controversy; the first one is written by NCATE’s former Vice President. The fourth resource discusses a related controversy. The last resource locates these controversies in the larger sociopolitical context in which teacher education and teaching finds itself today.


Quinn, T. & Meiners, E. (Summer 2007). Do ask, do tell: What’s professional about taking social justice and sexual orientation out of classrooms? *Rethinking Schools Online* (see pages 18-20 of this document).


Baltodano, M. (2015). *Appropriating the discourse of social justice in teacher education*. Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield (a copy of this text is on reserve at the Lied Library for in-library use).

In 2010, the boards of the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) voted unanimously to consolidate educator accreditation under a new agency, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) (<http://www.teac.org/news-events/caep/>), however, no CAEP standards is focused on diversity, instead diversity and technology are described as “cross-cutting themes” in all of the standards (<http://caepnet.org/commission/standards/>). Esteemed multicultural education scholar, James Banks (2004), has argued that the shift from explicitly
focusing on diversity to the “so-called” integration of it in this and related manners has the effect of eliminating meaningful attention to diversity altogether.

Based on the controversies associated with linking teacher disposition to issues of equity and diversity in education (especially, teacher disposition to teach ALL students, especially historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minority and/or working class students in the United States) delineated in the preceding materials, consider the following questions in your teaching philosophy:

Should teacher candidates be assessed on their multicultural competence? If so, why, if not why not?

Should the lack of multicultural competence be a reason for a teacher candidate not to be able to move forward in her/his teacher education program—that is, are some people simply “not cut out for teaching” based on disposition in general and, more specifically, as disposition relates to issues of equity and diversity, broadly and complexly considered? Why or why not?

B) Choose three critical multicultural issues (in Nevada (see, Nevada’s Promise www.nevadaracetothetop.org/), and/or elsewhere/nationally (see, National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) positions statements http://nameorg.org/position-statements/) facing especially urban public PK-12 schools today (or facing the broader communities in which especially urban public PK-12 schools are situated, or facing public higher education contexts) and provide a data-driven/research based (and appropriately referenced/sourced) explanation of the current status of these issues and then discuss how you would, working collaboratively with other education stakeholders (define who these stakeholders are), seek to address/resolve these issues in your own teaching, PK-12 school, community, higher education context, state, and/or nationally; and,

C) Review the attention to "diversity" and concerns about “equity” in the entire Common Core Standards (www.corestandards.org/) and then broadly evaluate this attention from the lens of multicultural education—what's in the Common Core Standards, is it good, why/why not? what's missing and why? After undertaking this broad evaluation, identify three particular "standards” from the Common Core that: 1) best and least align with your multicultural teaching philosophy (as delineated in A above); AND, either 2A are for your teaching grade level/subject area, if you teach/are going to teach in PK-12 in a common core area; or 1B) dovetail with some area of interest that you have in education, if you do not teach/are not going to teach in a common core area. Delineate how your three chosen standards relate to your thinking in 1 and 2A OR 2B. Finally, rewrite your three chosen standards to do, from a multicultural perspective, what in your broad evaluation of them you identified as not being well done and/or as missing.

Carefully consider the additional resources listed on pages 6-7 of this document in your essay.

Your essay should be robustly supported by references to these resources (as well as to the afore-referenced ones) and other relevant significant work in multicultural education that you consult in completing your essay. Your essay should also follow the writing and formatting conventions delineated in:


Your essay should reflect, in length and substance, the depth and breadth of knowledge you have developed in your Master’s program.

Your essay will be evaluated by the rubric delineated on pages 4-5 of this document.
Evaluation of the M.Ed. Multicultural Program Area Concentration CIG 697 Culminating Experience

- The comprehensive essay must be in 12-point font, double-spaced, with appropriate in-text citations and reference citations, and otherwise presented in accordance with formal American Psychological Association (APA) format (sixth edition).
- The comprehensive essay will be read and scored by Department of Teaching and Learning, Multicultural Education concentration area faculty reviewers in accordance with department’s Culminating Experience Scoring Rubric (see below).
- Initially, one faculty member will review each student’s comprehensive essay. Work that is deemed marginal or otherwise problematic by that one faculty member will be further reviewed by at least two additional faculty members. In this latter case, the scores of all faculty reviewers will be averaged to determine the student’s total score.

Culminating Experience Scoring Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARDS LEVELS</th>
<th>Theory into Practice</th>
<th>Professional Philosophy</th>
<th>Conduct and/or Evaluate Research</th>
<th>Content and Pedagogical Knowledge</th>
<th>Professional Standards Knowledge</th>
<th>Presentation and Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinguished (3)</td>
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<td>Proficient (2)</td>
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<td>Unacceptable (0)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Faculty reviewers of students’ comprehensive essays will fill in the cells of this rubric with feedback appropriate to the unique nature of each student’s essay, and that takes into account the following evaluation parameters. These parameters have been designed to assist faculty reviewers consistently distinguish between student performance levels in a manner that seeks to ensure there is comparable rigor in the evaluation of all students department-wide.

Distinguished (3)
- exceeds expectations
- delineates multiple layers of interconnected and compelling evidence
- demonstrates exceptional performance
- communicates distinctively and with confidence
- proposes original and creative solutions to problems engaged

Proficient (2)
- meets expectations
- clearly delineates multiple sources of evidence
- demonstrates satisfactory performance
- communicates with accuracy
- presents a clear and compelling perspective(s)

Marginal (1)
- meets minimum expectations
- provides some evidence to support ideas engaged
- demonstrates limited performance
- reveals limited ability to communicate ideas in writing
- presents partial or faulty logic
Unacceptable (0)
• does not meet expectations
• provides little or no evidence to support perspectives
• demonstrates insufficient or incomplete performance
• contains numerous errors in writing that confound writer meaning/reader understanding
• presents unsupported ideas or incoherent logic

Total Score
• SATISFACTORY: Total score is $\geq 12$ with no score = 0 for PASS.
• NO PASS TO PASS: Total score is $> 8$ and $< 12$ for NO PASS.
  o Revise and resubmit on or before the Friday of the last week in instruction.
    ▪ Revision Total score $\geq 12$ with no score = 0 for PASS
    OR
    ▪ Revision Total score $< 12$ for FAIL.
• FAIL: Total score $< 8$ for FAIL.

Students must receive a SATISFACTORY on the culminating experience to pass it. Those who do pass will receive, via U.S. Mail, a copy of their Culminating Experience Form for Advanced Degree from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction’s Graduate Studies Office.

Students who receive a NO PASS TO PASS must revise and resubmit their work on or before the Friday of the last week in instruction. Total score must be score $\geq 12$ with no score = 0 for PASS after oral defense or revision of his or her paper.

Students who receive a NO PASS or FAIL must retake the entire culminating experience the following semester.

If requested by either the student and/or her/his advisor, the departmental Graduate Coordinator and/or Chairperson will meet with the student and her/his advisor to discuss the outcome of the experience and support or mediate the revision process. Other faculty with content area expertise related to the culminating experience concentration area may also be asked to meet with the student and/or her or his advisor to, again, discuss the outcome of the experience and support or mediate the revision process. The UNLV Graduate College does not permit a third revision and resubmission iteration, thus, students who do not pass on their second attempt are not permitted a third. There may be exceptions to this rule under specific circumstances. Students who find themselves in this situation are encouraged to contact the Graduate College and other offices on campuses to assist them in exploring possible exceptions.
Resources


Web-Based Resources on Multicultural Education

www.beyondprejudice.com/
www.rethinkingschools.org/
www.teachingforchange.org/
www.tolerance.org/

Students in the Multicultural Concentration Area Culminating Experience are encourage to access and cite additional resources related to Multicultural Education as are appropriate to their comprehensive essay.
Additional Resources on APA Formatting

owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

http://www.nova.edu/library/dils/lessons/apa/index.htm

http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/wkshops/schedule.html

http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=apa_exposed
HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH ON TEACHER EDUCATION

Enduring Questions in Changing Contexts

THIRD EDITION

EDITED BY

Marilyn Cochran-Smith

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D. John McIntyre

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Associate Editor

CO-PUBLISHED BY ROUTLEDGE/TAYLOR & FRANCIS GROUP
AND THE ASSOCIATION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS
15 Teacher capacity for diversity

Donna M. Gollnick
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

For the purposes of accreditation, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) would define teacher capacity as what teachers and other school professionals should know, be able to do, and be disposed to. In fact, NCATE's Standard I is entitled “Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions.” However, teachers, teacher educators, policymakers, parents, and critics do not always agree on the capacities that teachers should develop. They agree that teachers should know the subjects they teach, and should be able to help students learn those subjects. Consensus has not been reached on whether “good teaching transcends settings and populations” (Howard and Aleman in this volume, Chapter 10). Many teacher educators, particularly multiculturalists and critical theorists, believe that teachers must understand the power dimensions of society as well as the cultures and prior experiences of students, their families, and communities to help all students learn and become active participants in a democracy. Others are not so sure.

Critics of teacher education charge that teacher education prepares teachers with “warm and fuzzy” notions about teaching such as developing self-esteem and helping students feel good about themselves at the expense of in-depth study of content or subject matter. In fact most secondary teacher candidates do major in their subjects. Requirements for mathematics and literacy in elementary and special education are increasing. The NCATE program standards for elementary education require candidates to develop content proficiencies in reading and English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The number of credit hours required for a baccalaureate degree is often limited to around 120 hours, limiting the amount of time for both in-depth study of content and the study of teaching and learning in professional education courses. A number of institutions have decided that a four-year program does not provide enough time to adequately prepare candidates to work in schools, and have moved teacher preparation to the graduate level in master’s, post baccalaureate, and fifth year programs. Others are offering graduate pathways into teacher education for candidates who have already completed a bachelor’s program in a content field.

A part of the debate around teacher capacity focuses on what teachers should know. Is there a set of proficiencies that teachers should develop and who should determine them? Beginning in the late 1980s, teacher educators, researchers, and policymakers developed national and state standards for what students and teachers should know and be able to do. The teacher standards focus on the subjects being taught and the age/grade of students. These are generally accepted for state program approval and national accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has incorporated very similar standards in the model licensure standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), which many states have adopted or adapted. Similar standards
have also been developed for the national board certification of teachers by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

However, not everyone agrees that the profession should set its own standards. A number of national committees with business representatives, policy makers, and other non-educators have produced reports with recommendations about teacher education. They call for a greater emphasis on academics, the elimination of teacher education, and testing of teachers. The U.S. Department of Education promotes a curriculum based solely on scientifically based research in reading, mathematics, etc. A recent study by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) ranked 72 institutions based on an examination of the syllabi and textbooks of reading courses in their elementary education programs for references to the five components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) identified by the National Reading Panel in its report to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in 2000. President George W. Bush has now appointed a similar panel on mathematics to determine the critical components of mathematics that should be taught in the nation’s schools. When this report is complete, states and schools may receive federal funding to implement the recommendations in a way similar to the Reading First projects. When it comes to what should be included in the teacher education curriculum related to diversity, the disagreement can become very polarized as will be discussed later.

Another part of the debate on teacher capacity focuses on when teachers learn the expected proficiencies. Some critics of teacher education believe that professional knowledge and skills are more effectively developed on the job after receiving a college degree rather than as part of the college degree. The question is not so much whether teachers should have the capacity to teach all students, but whether they learn their profession in college or in schools when they accept their first teaching job.

As part of the accreditation process, NCATE is concerned with the impact of a program on a candidate’s capacity. It has worked with numerous professional associations to determine the capacity a teacher needs to ensure that all P-12 students learn the subject and other important proficiencies. With this goal, NCATE’s Standard 1 asks institutions to provide evidence that teacher candidates and candidates preparing for other professional school roles have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions outlined in professional, state, and institutional standards. McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright earlier in this volume (Chapter 9) suggest that the focus on knowledge, skills, and dispositions may be an “old formula” that is “too static and individualistic a framework for thinking about teacher capacity.” They suggest that teaching is too complex and contextually based to be captured in this way. At the same time, they suggest that a disposition(s) might capture the milieu in which teachers work. It is “ability to step outside of one’s practice and examine it in good company and in light of a range of data” that might include community expectations and the insights and perspectives of colleagues. The concern that knowledge, skills, and dispositions is an old formula might be correct if candidates’ proficiencies were static and prescriptive, NCATE and its member organizations have tried to keep their standards current with research in the field by reviewing them every seven years. Most standards are framed in terms of broad statements of knowledge, skills, and dispositions and are not specific and narrow.

McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright also highlight the importance of a culture of evidence in schools and teacher education. NCATE agrees, requiring institutions to show that candidates are meeting standards through assessments. In addition, Standard 2 on the unit assessment system requires that faculty, candidates, and other members of the professional community regularly review the assessment data to improve programs and candidate performance.
DIVERSITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Since 1979, NCATE has expected accredited institutions to prepare candidates to work with diverse student populations. The 1979 standards included a standard on multicultural education. Today, Standard 4 on diversity has requirements for curricula, field experiences, faculty, candidates, and the P-12 students with which teacher candidates work. It requires candidates to acquire and demonstrate the capacity to help all students learn as shown below:

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations, including higher education and P-12 school faculty, candidates, and students in P-12 schools. (NCATE, 2006b)

In addition, all accredited institutions are expected to have a conceptual framework that includes diversity. Diversity could be one of the lenses through which all teacher education is delivered as some multiculturalists and critical theorists suggest. The closest that NCATE comes to identifying teacher capacity related to diversity is in the first rubric for the diversity standard. At the acceptable level, the following proficiencies for candidates’ capacity related to diversity are indicated:

- understand diversity, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities;
- be aware of different learning styles and adapt instruction or services appropriately for all students;
- connect lessons, instruction, or services to students’ experiences and cultures;
- communicate with students and families in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and gender differences;
- incorporate multiple perspectives in the subject matter being taught or services being provided;
- develop a classroom and school climate that values diversity;
- demonstrate classroom behaviors that are consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn. (NCATE, 2006b)

These expectations also reflect the knowledge, performance, and dispositions in the INTASC principles. They address some of the proficiencies that multiculturalists and critical multiculturalists raise in the literature, but they do not address many of the issues that these theorists think are important. Accreditation agencies balance among best practices, what is known from research, and what should or could be. The NCATE requirements push institutions to design curriculum and experiences for education candidates to help them learn how to work with diverse students and to value the diversity of the United States. They do not require the inclusion of the issues identified by multicultural theorists although faculty may decide to include study beyond that required by the NCATE standard. Other than ensuring that candidates can help students learn or support student learning in non-teaching roles, NCATE does not specifically require social action or the reconstruction of schools to eliminate inequality. The intent of the diversity standard is to close the achievement gap among students from diverse groups.
McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright report that many institutions have courses on multicultural education and special needs students, but “the gaps in pupil achievement, high school graduation, and college attendance persist and inclusion continues to be a problem in some schools.” Howard and Aleman contend in this volume that teacher education programs are not preparing teachers to be critical multicultural educators because (1) multicultural and diversity issues are addressed in separate classes and not integrated through all classes and (2) fieldwork does not help them acquire the necessary skills. They suggest that the second is, in part, the fault of critical theorists who have not posited a set of proficiencies that critical teachers should have. However, attention to the needs of diverse learners or social justice may not be developed at all if courses specifically on multicultural education and special education did not exist. On entrance into teacher education, most teacher candidates have limited knowledge of and experience with people different from themselves. Although diversity should be integrated in all courses, a multicultural education course can provide the basic knowledge base on diversity and related equity issues.

Howard and Aleman report that some critics of multicultural education indicate that it “relies too heavily on theory with few, if any, implications for practice.” They recommend increased attention to field experiences and criteria for school and university supervisors. I agree that ideals like social justice, if a part of the teacher education unit’s conceptual framework, need to be incorporated into methods courses and field experiences. At the same time, leading scholars and practitioners in the field should provide examples and themselves model the practices that they are promoting.

The closest the NCATE standards come to addressing faculty capacity is in the rubric, which accompanies each standard, on faculty diversity in which professional education faculty, including the school and university supervisors of student teaching, “have knowledge and experiences related to preparing candidates to work with diverse student populations, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities.” Standard 5 on faculty qualifications expects them to “integrate diversity and technology throughout their teaching.” Teacher educators are expected to regularly and systematically examine candidate assessment data. If completers of teacher education programs are not helping students learn once they are in the classroom, it is time for faculty to chart a different course.

### Social Justice

The meaning of social justice appears to be in the eyes of the beholder. The papers and artifacts in this volume have presented numerous definitions from the literature. In 1988 Maxine Greene believed that it was the removal of “obstacles” such as poverty, sickness, and ignorance. James Baldwin did not use the words, social justice, when he spoke to teachers in 1963, but he did speak to one’s responsibility “to examine society and try to change it and to fight it—at no matter what risk.” The same sentiment is reflected in Paulo Freire’s “Letters to Those Who Dare Teach.”

The literature refers to equality within schools, teaching as a political act, social responsibility, caring, ethics, concern, sense, an orientation, concern with quality of life, and social consciousness about injustice, discrimination, racism, power, etc. Many authors link the concepts of democracy, justice, and struggle (Grant & Agosto in this volume). A number of teacher education units list social justice as part of their conceptual framework or identify other related concepts such as urban teaching, teaching all students, etc. However, conceptual frameworks are not always explicit about the capacities
that a candidate should have to reflect social justice or multicultural education in their teaching.

What does NCATE say about social justice? Social justice is included as an example of a disposition in the NCATE standards used for visits between 2001 and 2008. NCATE does not define social justice, but it has defined dispositions as

The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty; responsibility, and social justice. For example, they might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment.

(NCATE, 2006a)

As part of the revision of the NCATE standards that will become effective in 2008, the term, dispositions, has been changed to professional dispositions to more clearly indicate that NCATE is primarily concerned with teacher behavior in classrooms and schools. The new definition, which indicates that teacher educators should base their assessments on behaviors rather than beliefs and values, reads as follows:

Professional dispositions: The behaviors demonstrated as educators interact with students, families, colleagues and communities, which are expected of professionals and support student learning and development. NCATE expects candidates to demonstrate classroom behaviors that are consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn. Based on their mission, professional education units may determine additional professional dispositions they want candidates to develop. NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behavior in educational settings.

(NCATE, 2006b)

NCATE’s new definition of professional dispositions does not identify social justice as an example or requirement. It also does not prevent an institution from including social justice as a part of its conceptual framework or as the centerpiece of its mission and work.

SOCIAL JUSTICE UNDER ATTACK

Social justice in teacher education became part of the mainstream news in 2005. The first report of a few students resisting “social justice” and threatening law suits appeared in The New York Sun on May 31, 2005. Several teacher candidates had charged an instructor with discrimination based on their political beliefs, which they perceived as not aligned with the School of Education’s conceptual framework, which included “social justice.” A professor of history and another of business and economics sided with the students, charging that the assessment of dispositions was leading to indoctrination into leftist ideology. They blamed NCATE’s requirement for dispositions for politicizing teacher education.

Soon afterwards the National Association of Scholars (NAS) weighed in on the issue with a letter to the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education requesting that NCATE be
stripped of its authority to accredit. The NAS did not limit its attack to NCATE, it also asked that the right to accredit be withdrawn from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) because of its social justice requirement. The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation published an article by a professor at Stanford that equated dispositions with personality and attacked NCATE’s requirement for the assessment of dispositions as giving education schools “unbounded power over what candidates may think and do” through “ideological arm-twisting and Orwellian mind-control” (Damon, 2005, p. 1). The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) has been working with candidates in these schools to make sure their First Amendment rights are not violated by social justice assessments.

The news then escalated to the national level with an article in U.S. News & World Report by John Leo. Leo repeated the accusations from candidates at Brooklyn College and added the woes of a student at Washington State University who complained that faculty had failed him on his professional disposition evaluations because he expressed conservative opinions in his classes. Again, the claim was that NCATE required accredited institutions to incorporate social justice in their curriculum. Articles in the Chronicle of Higher Education expanded the stories to include the University of Alabama and University of Alaska. In January 2006 George Will joined the bandwagon in a commentary in Newsweek that suggested that students with conservative views were being weeded out of teacher education programs. He claimed that NCATE focused on a candidate’s beliefs and attitudes and cared not whether teachers understand the subjects they will teach.

Following NCATE’s hearing for re-recognition by the U.S. Department of Education, an article in the online Chronicle of Higher Education announced that NCATE had dropped its standard on social justice. Of course, as noted, NCATE never had a standard on social justice. The only reference to social justice was an example in the glossary definition of dispositions. NCATE continues to have a standard on diversity that has become stronger with each iteration of the standards since 1978. The debate about dispositions and social justice has continued in Inside Higher Education’s blog, “A Spirited Disposition Debate,” at http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2006/06/06/disposition.

Why the attack? Maybe some teacher education programs have begun to include a critical multicultural perspective, which some conservatives connect to the liberal faculty members they perceive as dominating universities. On the one hand, critics view social justice as attacking our social and political system that causes the inequities. NCATE has been attacked for years by right-wing groups for its standard on diversity. Robert Holland from the Lexington Institute in Virginia was quoted as saying “The tight link between the accreditors and multiculturalists indicates that social justice is being defined by those who despise the very ideal of an American common culture—considering it irredeemably racist, sexist, homophobic, etc” (Gershman, 2005, p. 6). One group periodically contacts policymakers and chief state school officers suggesting that NCATE and the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) are corrupting the minds of children with their attention to diversity.

The American Bar Association (ABA) is the latest accrediting group to be attacked for including diversity in standards. The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights attacked the group in June 2006 for proposed standards that the Commission perceives as requiring racial preferences for hiring and admission. The Center for Equal Opportunity joined NAS in protesting the standards, threatening to sue the ABA if the standards are adopted.
CONCLUSIONS

When social justice refers to working with the least advantaged students to ensure that they are provided all of the opportunities necessary to learn at the same levels as advantaged students, most people see it as a laudable goal. Even No Child Left Behind requires the disaggregation of test data by race, sex, native languages, and ability to determine the group of students not being well served in school. When the discussion of equity in a teacher education course begins to question the current distribution of goods and benefits in society, many conservatives see it as an attack on the American way of life. They may believe that racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia do not exist or are inflated beyond their actual occurrence. Perspectives on social justice vary across a cohort of teacher education candidates. Some are very supportive because of their religious background or their intense concern and empathy for less advantaged families. Others argue that white privilege and oppression do not exist.

Faculties who are reforming their programs to reflect multiculturalism or social justice should consider how they will help candidates understand diversity or social justice and develop educational strategies for ensuring that P-12 students achieve at equitable levels. Howard and Aleman identify several strategies being used by faculty to increase candidates’ awareness of the issues and develop their commitment to overcoming existing inequities among students.

As Howard and Aleman point out, examples of integrating multiculturalism or social justice into classrooms can help candidates understand how they could be reflected in classrooms. The teachers who write in the periodical, Rethinking Teachers, describe their work at engaging students with real world issues such as child labor, homelessness, and immigration throughout the school year. Teachers tell their stories about working with students from low-income families, students with disabilities, English language learners, and students of color in segregated schools in a number of books. During their preparation programs, teacher candidates should have the opportunity to observe and collaborate with teachers who have eliminated the achievement gap between groups of students. Programs that are serious about social justice help candidates understand the courage it takes to deliver social justice in classrooms. The realities of student, and sometimes community, resistance to multicultural education or social justice should be discussed along with ways to gain support and not become discouraged.

A number of accrediting agencies include diversity or social justice in their standards, in part, because the clients that will be served by the professionals who complete programs are increasingly diverse in race, ethnicity, language, and religion. They are more likely to be in poverty, have low-incomes, or have a disability than in the past. The professionals who write standards believe that the graduates of accredited programs should be able to serve these populations effectively, equitably, and without bias. As part of learning how to work with diverse clients, most professional groups think that society, its institutions, and the profession itself need to be studied and understood for the way clients from different groups have been treated over time. This study almost always reveals inequality and discrimination. It seems quite appropriate that accrediting agencies require programs in their fields to incorporate attention to diversity or social justice in the curriculum.

NCATE not only requires accredited schools, colleges, and departments of education to incorporate diversity into the curriculum and experiences of programs, it also requires an institution’s conceptual framework to identify the proficiencies related to diversity that candidates should develop. Diversity proficiencies include knowledge, skills, and dispositions. NCATE’s standard on diversity does identify some proficiencies
for which there is general professional consensus. However, NCATE gives education faculty a great deal of latitude in identifying proficiencies not included in other sets of standards to which they are being held such as the content standards for mathematics or early childhood teachers. A number of religious institutions include social justice in both their conceptual framework and institutional mission. The faculty in a growing number of public institutions, especially those serving urban areas, have also adopted social justice.

Whatever proficiencies the faculty includes in their conceptual framework, candidates must be assessed to determine if they are developing those proficiencies. The assessments used to determine whether candidates are developing explicit proficiencies are developed by faculty. For the assessment of dispositional, which could include social justice, NCATE recommends against the use of attitude or belief scales. Instead, NCATE recommends that dispositions be assessed as candidates work with students, parents, and colleagues at the university, in schools, and in communities. The NCATE standards do not require the development of critical multiculturalism as described in the Howard and Alemán chapter. However, they do push teacher education programs to incorporate some multicultural concepts and develop some of the dispositions that are inherent in social justice such as fairness and the belief that all students can learn.

As professions think about the proficiencies that their members need to provide effective services to their clients, an understanding of their clients and communities is important. Teachers need first to have an in-depth understanding of the subjects they teach. In addition, they need to know how to help the P-12 student learn what is being taught. To do that, they need to know the culture and prior experiences of their students and be able to draw on representations from the real worlds of their students. To provide a quality education to students who have limited economic and educational advantages requires educators who are advocates for their students. Accreditation standards, at a minimum, should expect graduates of its schools to have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn.

NOTES

1 NCATE has the following six standards: 1-Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions; 2-Assessment System and Unit Evaluations; 3-Field Experiences and Clinical Practice; 4-Diversity; 5-Faculty Qualifications, Performance and Development; and 6-Unit Governance and Resources.

2 A teacher education unit is usually the Department, School, or College of Education at a college or university.

REFERENCES


National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (2006a) Professional standards
Do Ask, DoTell

Summer 2007

What's professional about taking social justice and sexual orientation out of classrooms?

By Therese Quinn and Erica Meiners

In the fall of 2006, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) solicited feedback on proposed revisions to its "Professional Standards, 2002 Edition." The organization responsible for accrediting colleges and programs for teacher education wanted to erase the phrase "social justice" and facilitate the de facto elimination of sexual orientation through the addition of various phrases and qualifiers.

While NCATE's deletion of social justice was clear and outright, the way it has marginalized sexual orientation is more complicated, or perhaps just really sneaky. Sexual orientation is included in the Standards' glossary definition of diversity, but the 2006 revisions added this text to the definition: "The types of diversity necessary for addressing the elements on candidate interactions with diverse faculty, candidates, and pre-K–12 students are stated in the rubrics for those elements."

A review reveals that sexual orientation is not included in any of those rubrics. In another explanation posted on its website in 2006, NCATE notes that it "expects the institution to provide candidates with opportunities to work with diverse higher education and school faculty, candidates, and students in pre-K–12 schools so that the candidates are ready to help all children learn. In this context, diversity is defined according to U.S. Census categories (gender; racial/ethnic background) socioeconomic status and exceptionalities." Again, as it is throughout the 2006 edition, sexual orientation is absent.

These are not merely bureaucratic shifts or language games. NCATE's standards have direct consequences for students, teachers, and schools. The standards reflect and contribute to a larger culture that actively attempts to erase our histories of social movements for change and LGBTQ lives. In particular, without the "tool" of inclusive and social justice-focused standards, teacher educators will have a more difficult time advocating for social justice and broader definitions of diversity in their programs.

As teacher educators concerned about social justice and LGBTQ youth, families, and teachers, we felt professionally obligated to challenge these proposed changes and to request the addition of gender identity. We drafted a letter to Arthur Wise, president of NCATE, pointing out that the "absence of sexual orientation and gender identity in the body of the standards, where other aspects of diversity are listed, sends the message that the needs and identities of LGBTQ students, families, and teachers are not important."
Using statistics compiled by Chicago's Coalition for Education on Sexual Orientation, our letter highlighted the urgent need for schools and teachers to be better prepared:

**The population of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth is large.**
In a 2003 survey conducted by the Chicago Public Schools and the Center for Disease Control (the Youth Risk Behavior Survey) 6.3 percent of high school students attending Chicago Public Schools identified their sexual orientation as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

**Schools are unsafe for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth.**
According to the 2005 School Climate Report conducted by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN):
— 75.4 percent of LGBT students reported hearing remarks such as "faggot" or "dyke" frequently or often.
— 45.5 percent reported being verbally harassed and 26.1 percent had experienced physical harassment in school because of their gender expression.

**Teachers are ill-equipped to confront issues that contribute to anti-LGBT hostility.**
In a study of preservice teachers, 57 percent indicated that they needed more training or education to work effectively with LGBT youth and 65 percent reported that they needed more specific education to address homosexuality in their teaching.

The letter was sent to a wide range of listservs. Within a few days, our letter collected over 300 signatures from faculty and administrators in teacher education programs across the United States and Canada. We snail-mailed, e-mailed, and express-mailed the letter to NCATE. We also sent the letter to Eva Baker and George Wimberly, president and social justice director respectively of the American Educational Research Association, the primary North American professional association for educators, asking the organization to support the call for NCATE to include social justice, sexual orientation, and gender identity in its professional standards.

In February 2007, six months after sending the letter, we noticed that NCATE had posted a new set of revised standards on their website. In a clear attempt to mollify critics, Wise wrote that NCATE has added a definition and a new "professional disposition" for fairness to the standards. However, fairness is an inadequate replacement. Social justice connotes movements and people working — acting — together; it aims at systemic change. *Fairness*, like *personal responsibility or tolerance*, is a term suited to the needs of those who wish to avoid conflict. It attempts to transform public policy issues into individual concerns.

As for AERA, we noticed a column by Baker had been posted on the association's website, along with a statement titled "Key Policy Documents on Position Taking and Policymaking and Social Justice." These statements revealed the process by which AERA will take action on social justice issues to be both arbitrary and capricious.

For example, the documents claimed that AERA is only able to act when issues are "monumental" and "sufficiently compelling," or of "compelling significance," or when issues are "compelling and fundamental." After reading the column and the policymaking article, we felt compelled to observe that AERA was not standing up for social justice or even advocacy. We weren't surprised that the executive board rejected our request that it comment to NCATE on its standards. One could infer from the statements that the organization takes a "majoritarian" position — it will only act when a majority of members are concerned. But we wondered: Since when is social justice a popularity contest?

In response to Baker's column and the revelation of the "down" vote on our letter's request to AERA, we called for action at its April 2007 meeting in Chicago, with a "RED Campaign."
asked all participants to wear red throughout the conference as a visible sign of anger at AERA’s decision to remain silent and of our passion for justice.

The organization also scheduled a meeting to air what it described as "both sides" of the issue. At the invitation of the RED Campaign, Bill Ayers spoke first, reminding us of the context of NCATE’s deletions—war, scapegoatism, growing poverty, weakened rights. He called on AERA to push beyond bureaucratic constraints to act: "Whatever procedures are in place," he said, "we expect leaders to lead."

His talk was powerful. And apparently, an older, straight, famous, white man was able to explain things in a way that the younger, unfamous female queers who called the action, and the 300-plus allies who participated in it, could not. Afterwards, Baker thanked Ayers for making the issues, finally, clear. In fact, even before the meeting started, the NCATE representative invited Ayers to speak on the topic at headquarters in Washington.

After Ayers, the designated AERA representative elected not to speak, leaving the podium to the NCATE’s representative, Donna Gollnick, who stated that social justice had been removed because it was a "lightning rod" and potential trigger for lawsuits. She denied the removal of sexual orientation, but agreed with us, after the meeting, that revisions directing readers to use census categories might make it seem that way. She closed her talk by inviting feedback from AERA and its members. Many in the room added their strong statements to the public record, including a member of AERA’s executive board, David Flinders, who described his vote for inaction as a mistake that he would do everything he could to correct. Baker, and incoming president William Tate refused to state that AERA would act. Tate did commit, though, to work on organizational procedures and transparency during his yearlong presidency. Clearly, the work isn’t over.

Unlike our AERA colleague who urged us toward policy, not protest, we think the time for action is now. Neither fairness nor silence will serve the needs of children and staff in our public schools and in our universities; we deserve radical changes and justice. In the spirit of pushing back against all who want to keep queer lives invisible and to "tone" down social justice agendas because they are too threatening, we contend that the "professional standard" for all educators should be "do ask, do tell." Ask Arthur Wise (art@ncate.org) and the new president of AERA, William Tate (wtate@wustl.edu), to respond to the letter signed by over 300 educators, and tell them both that you support the inclusion of social justice, sexual orientation, and gender identity in NCATE’s standards. Do ask. Do tell. Take action.

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Summer 2007