

Diversity  
Newberry College  
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June 19, 2008

This report will provide an update to the South Carolina State Department of Education on the Diversity Standard at Newberry College. The Unit completed a revision of the Conceptual Framework August, 2007. One of the five Guiding Themes of the revised Conceptual Framework is Diversity. Since the Unit will be evaluated using the new NCATE standards in September 2010, this report will address the new standards.

### **Standard Four: Diversity**

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.

#### **4a. Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences**

##### *Relationship to the Conceptual Framework*

The Newberry College Conceptual Framework is multi-dimensional and contains outcomes that represent the evolution of the teacher candidate at four stages of progress: Emerging, Developing, Practicing and Becoming a Professional and across five Guiding Themes: Technology, Diversity, Collaboration, Ethics and Best Practice and within four Domains of Learning: Planning, Instruction, Classroom Environment and Professionalism. Key performance assessments have been identified to assess mastery of all teacher education candidates on critical outcomes at each stage across guiding themes. Since Diversity is a Guiding Theme of the Conceptual Framework; candidate proficiencies related to diversity have been identified at each stage of progress named above.

##### *Curriculum and Field Experiences*

In the Fall of 2007 a new course was added to the curriculum to replace the exceptionalities class. Previously, all candidates took a Psychology course related to working with students with Special Needs. Through post graduate surveys, the Unit learned that graduates felt under prepared for working with all of the exceptionalities they encountered in public schools. Therefore, the new course entitled *Working with Exceptional and Diverse Learners* is housed in the Department of Education, and is greatly expanded to include all types of exceptional students and diverse learners. Field Experiences provide an excellent opportunity for candidates to work with diverse

learners. Newberry County has the fastest growing Hispanic population in South Carolina and all candidates complete several placements in the School District of Newberry County.

Candidates are aware of different learning styles and can adapt instruction to meet the needs of all students, both culturally and linguistically. Candidates are introduced to Learning Styles in EDU 230, *Human Growth and Development*. Each candidate takes an upper level course entitled, *Classroom Environment* (EDU 341 or 342). In this course, students learn about assessment, classroom management, and writing lesson plans that connect to students' experiences and cultures.

Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education majors may choose to concentrate their studies in Spanish. All English Education majors must take Spanish. Dr. Greg Cole and Mrs. Cathy Mitchell have partnered to develop a series of Spanish courses that directly enable candidates to communicate with Hispanic students and families in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and gender differences.

In Spring 2007, the Future Educators Association (FEA) at Newberry College hosted several events designed to highlight diversity. Dr. Mark Dewalt came to campus to speak to club members on working effectively with students from poverty. Later that evening, he did a large group presentation on Amish Schools, pointing out that Amish Education is the fastest growing educational group in the United States and what local schools and educators can learn from their practices.

In Fall 2007, the focus was on poverty and inequity as FEA hosted the *But What About Us* exhibit along with a viewing of the Corridor of Shame video and a panel discussion on what can be done to improve educational inequality in South Carolina. In Fall 2008, FEA will host a guest presenter on Hispanic culture.

Because of the Unit's commitment to diversity, both in the Conceptual Framework and in the revised dispositions, all candidates will develop a classroom climate that values diversity. Candidates are assessed on the dispositions throughout the program and are expected to demonstrate classroom behaviors that are consistent with the ideal of fairness and a belief that all children can learn. Candidate proficiencies related to diversity and assessed through coursework, dispositions, and on field experience and internship evaluations. Data are used to provide feedback to candidates for improving their knowledge, skills, and dispositions for helping students from diverse populations learn.

#### **4b. Experiences Working with Diverse Faculty**

Candidates interact with professional education faculty, faculty from other units and school based faculty, both male and female, from at least two ethnic/racial groups. Demographic data is being collected on all faculty who work with candidates. While faculty members are mostly white (45 out of 51), they have the knowledge and experiences to prepare candidates to work with diverse student populations, including

English language learners and students with exceptionalities. When there is a void in experience, the Unit brings in experts to assist in candidate preparation as evidenced in section 4a. Newberry College and the Unit make every attempt to recruit and hire diverse faculty although the efforts have not proven to be successful thus far. Because of the continuing concern that Newberry College students are not exposed to diverse faculty to the desired extent, the Unit is planning to hire several adjunct faculty from diverse backgrounds to teach courses in teacher education.

#### **4c. Experiences Working with Diverse Candidates**

The overall student body of Newberry College is quite diverse with a thirty-three percent minority student population of which twenty-five percent is African-American. Ninety-eight percent of the overall student population receives some type of financial aid. Thirty-seven percent are Pell eligible and twelve percent of the students have an Estimated Family Contribution of less than \$500. In addition to ethnic diversity and financial challenges, approximately one-third of the student population is comprised of first generation college students. Most of the student body is from rural South Carolina communities. To assist these students, the college offers mentoring, tutoring and an academic skills center to address the needs of students who may not be fully prepared for college, but who deserve a chance. Newberry College has on staff a Director of Retention who coordinates student interaction with faculty, staff, and other students. Many of the tutors are teacher education majors and this allows them to interact with diverse college students.

Within the teacher education program itself, the diversity is limited to two racial groups. Eighty-eight percent of the students seeking teacher certification are white and twelve percent are black. Candidates are given opportunities to interact with each other throughout the program.

#### **4d. Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P-12 schools**

Due to the geographic location of Newberry College, diversity among student populations abounds. The School District of Newberry County is a primarily a rural schools district and has the fastest growing Hispanic population in South Carolina. Only 15 miles away is Lexington School District 5, one of the wealthiest and least diverse districts in the state. Another 10 miles away is Columbia, South Carolina, a large city which offers inner city and suburban placements for teacher candidates. Candidates complete field experience and internships in a variety of schools and grade levels and are asked to reflect on and analyze these experiences in ways that enhance their development and growth as professionals. The Unit collects demographic data on its public school partners and has adopted a diversity formula in the 2007-2008 academic year. The unit is committed to insuring that every candidate has at least one experience in each of the following school settings during their field experiences and internships:

- High Poverty- Schools in which more than fifty (50) percent of students are eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch.
- High Diversity/Hispanic- Schools in which the percentage of minority students is thirty (30) percent or greater.
- Non-Diverse- Schools in which seventy (70) percent of students are made up of non-minorities.
- Academically Diverse- Schools in which at least fifteen (15) percent of students are eligible for Gifted and Talented programs.
- Out of District- Schools that are not located within the Newberry County School District.
- Special Needs- Schools in which eight (8) percent of students are students with disabilities other than speech.

### **Summary**

Newberry College has completed a lot of exciting work in the area of diversity. The Unit knows that providing diverse experiences for all candidates is the right thing to do. One of the main projects for this summer is to collect the demographic data on the public school mentors so that we can insure that candidates are receiving experiences with diverse faculty out in the field.