

# **Newberry College Institutional Report**

## **Standard 3**

**D. Standard 3. The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn.**

**D.1. How does the unit work with the school partners to deliver field experiences and clinical practice to enable candidates to develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to help all students learn?**

Newberry College (NC) has been actively involved in creating meaningful partnerships to impact pre-service and in-service teacher education throughout its history, but most notably since 2006 when NC began to place a large emphasis on its relationships with the public schools. Evidence of our collaborative work is demonstrated not only through our strong, clinically-based teacher preparation program, but also in extensive NC and school-based faculty projects and initiatives.

Faculty from across the P-16 continuum share the responsibility of designing, delivering, and evaluating field experiences and clinical practice to prepare teachers. NC faculty provide professional development, implement projects such as Guaranteeing Teachers Through Research, Outreach and Wisdom (GROW), and invite P-12 public school teachers to serve as guest speakers on a regular basis. This regular contact creates relationships and provides the opportunities for true school-college collaboration. P-12 faculty have assumed important roles in teacher education including serving as mentor teachers (an active term replacing "cooperating teacher"), field experience mentors (mentors who host practicum students who teach classes, grade assignments, and work with the mentor teacher closely), and serving on committees.

School partners are integrated into the governance of the Teacher Education Program (TEP) and participate in decisions impacting partnerships. For example, two P-12 representatives sit on the Teacher Education Committee (TEC), which is the lead committee of the TEP with responsibility for oversight of program quality and assessment. When special task forces are formed, such as conceptual framework task forces of 2006-2007 and 2009 -2010, the task force for the revision of the Clinical Experiences Manual in 2010, focus groups to improve field experience in 2010, or a search committee for a new faculty position, one or more school-based representatives are always key members. The Coordinator of Clinical Experiences (CCE) works with school and college faculty and administrators to facilitate the placement of candidates in the field. The Director of TEP meets with administrators from the School District of Newberry County (SDNC) on a regular basis to discuss strengthening and expanding collaborations.

In an effort to continually improve our program and provide more meaningful field experiences and deeper learning for our candidates and local school children, focus group meetings were held to obtain input from NC faculty, candidates, and school partners. Dr. Lisa Waller conducted a focus group meeting with candidates in the morning and with school partners in the afternoon on October 4, 2010. Questions focused on strengths and weaknesses of the TEP field experiences and suggestions for more meaningful experiences.

The major themes that emerged from the focus group of candidates included the desire for more meaningful tasks during field placements, more opportunities to teach prior to the internship, greater connection to course content, the use of quality mentors in all experiences, and earlier placements during the semester. The major themes that emerged from the focus group of school partners included the need to schedule specific times for experiences, providing task lists where mentors can select tasks with candidates, and the request for less observation and more engagement in early experiences.

NC works consistently with eight school districts in the immediate area to provide clinical experiences for teacher candidates in 27 local schools. Although the primary partner is the School District of Newberry County (SDNC), NC also partners with Lexington Districts 1, 3, and 5, Laurens 55 and 56, Richland District 1, and Saluda County Schools on a regular basis. Partnership sites are dedicated to providing high quality clinical experiences for teacher candidates and supporting these emerging teachers in implementing strategies consistent with their education course work. All NC clinical experiences are coordinated through the Coordinator of Clinical Experiences (CCE) who works with college and P-12 faculty and administrators regarding placements, clinical experience policies and procedures, and clinical experience logistics of all kinds.

The Director of TEP is responsible for hiring college supervisors needed for internships not supervised by full-time faculty. All supervisors must have a teaching credential for the area in which they supervise. The Director ensures that all college supervisors and mentor teachers are trained in the state mandated performance-based assessment Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT). In addition, NC has on-going initiatives for communication with and professional development of supervisors and mentor teachers. The internship Wiki serves as the location where all members of the internship triad (candidate, mentor, supervisor) can receive current information on the internship (<http://newberryinternship.pbworks.com/w/page/34380629/Newberry-College-Internship>). Information on ADEPT trainings, agendas/minutes of partnership and supervisor meetings, and criteria for mentor teachers is also provided.

College supervisors, mentor teachers, and interns all evaluate each other at the end of the semester. Results of these evaluations are positive and attest to the high quality of NC college supervisors and mentor teachers. The Director of TEP/Chair of DOE and the appropriate department chair monitor individual results of college supervisors and mentor teachers and address any concerns that are raised.

All candidates are required to participate in a minimum of 100 hours of field experience prior to their final internship and most engage in many more. Candidates are engaged in clinical experiences early in their programs and increase the intensity of their experiences culminating in a full-time internship.

Programs provide detailed descriptions of expectations/assessments of candidates even in early experiences. Extensive guidelines and assessments are provided for clinical experiences. Assessments are aligned with the Conceptual Framework and with appropriate state and professional association standards.

**D.2. Please respond to D.2a if this is the standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level. If it is not the standard on which you are moving to the target level, respond to D.2b.**

**D.2a. Standard on which the unit is moving to the Target Level**

- **Describe work undertaken to move to the Target Level**
- **Discuss plans for continuing to improve**

The TEP is moving toward target in Standard 3 due to numerous major initiatives, reflection by candidates, work with diverse populations, professional development activities, and close collaboration with public schools.

Initiatives: NC's leadership in many initiatives has had a tremendous impact on the alignment of program goals and clinical experiences including:

-Robert C Noyce RE-MAST grant to recruit, prepare and retain Math and Science teachers. Recruit and Retain Math and Science Teachers (RE-MAST) is a \$900,000 grant designed to add 26 new high school math and science teachers to the teaching force over a five-year period. It also provides for 12 mentors from local high schools to be part of the project by working closely with Noyce interns and scholars and engaging in professional development at NC. All mentors were trained in Foundations of Mentoring in June 2010. In March 2011, mentors, candidates, and faculty attended the Noyce Southeastern Regional Conference together and in June 2011, Learning Focused Schools Model training will be offered at NC for Noyce mentors and college faculty.

-Center of Excellence in Teacher Retention (RETAIN). This five-year grant for \$625,000 establishes NC as the hub for teacher retention in SC. Working with 17 high-need schools and 51 teachers, NC faculty work to improve the retention problem in these schools through research, professional development, and an innovative programmatic model. NC believes it may be the only college in the nation to offer a Guaranteed Teacher Program for its graduates. Funded by RETAIN and a private donation, the project has been titled Guaranteeing Success Through Resources, Outreach and Wisdom (GROW). GROW is being piloted during Spring 2011 with a local principal, two mentors teachers, two recent NC graduates and NC faculty. This project gives school partners the opportunity to be involved in teacher retention in conjunction with the college.

-Establishment of an articulation agreement with technical colleges to offer a 2 plus 2 ½ program in Early Childhood Education entitled FastForward. FastForward cohorts A and B are underway with members of the first cohort graduating in May 2011. This program brings a diverse group of candidates into the program. Classes are offered at nights and on weekends to accommodate the schedules of

working adults. Other than moving away from a traditional schedule, every other aspect of FastForward is the same as the traditional daytime program – faculty, courses, field placements and expectations. Field Experience mentors working with the program are knowledgeable of the needs of adult learners.

- The Newberry College MISTERS have been a tremendous asset to the Newberry community, but especially to the faculty, staff and students at Newberry Elementary School. The MISTERS have assisted teachers with providing small group and one-on-one instruction, mentored students who are experiencing personal and academic challenges, coordinated extra-curricular activities for students and served as positive role models for all children. In an effort to cultivate the seeds of unprecedented success in young children, the MISTERS established the Newberry Elementary School Jr. MISTERS Program. Participants in this program range in grades PreK-5. It is the Jr. MISTERS' obligation to dress, behave and communicate in a positive way that sets the example for other students to follow. In addition to the above contributions to Newberry Elementary School, the Newberry College MISTERS also provide(d) the following services to the school:

1. Assisted with Fall Festival
2. Serve as instructional assistants for the Rocket Academy (Saturday School)
3. Serve as chaperones on school field trips
4. Coordinate a weekly back pack program that sends food home with needy students.

- June 8, 2010 Moving Toward Target Retreat. The DOE held a day long retreat which led to major changes in the field experiences, some of which are being implemented now and others scheduled for implementation in Fall 2011 and beyond. Some of these changes are noted below:

The Social Studies Fair was created in Fall 2010 as an innovative way for teacher candidates to engage in teaching social studies methods. The fair consisted of eight learning stations that presented “People of America’s Past” through engaging lessons that aligned with South Carolina fourth grade social studies standards. Approximately 150 fourth grade students from local schools in the SDNC attended the all-day event. This unique teaching experience provided early childhood and elementary education majors the opportunity to teach the same lesson 16 times during the day. Candidates were able to reflect, make changes, and continually perfect their teaching and the overall presentation of the lesson. In addition to planning for the fair, candidates prepared materials for the teachers to later use in their classrooms to extend the learning that took place at the fair. The fair was a huge success measured by the students’ engagement at each station. Local teachers praised the teacher candidates for such a fun learning experience, requested fairs for other school subjects, and are eager to return for the fair next year.

Revisions to the Lesson Plan Template. NC has received many compliments on the template format that candidates use for lesson planning. While the lesson plan template changes from time to time in order to improve its effectiveness, changes to the template since September 2010 have been structural. The “Materials needed for instruction” section was moved from the top of the template and placed closer to the end of the template. The “Assessment” section was redesigned to emphasize that assessment is an

ongoing, integrated part of the lesson. This change involved asking the student to clarify the pre-assessments, formative assessments and summative assessments that would take place during the lesson. Instructors support candidates in conducting research and implementing the work of others in lesson plans. To avoid plagiarism, the template now includes a statement and section for the student to cite any outside resources used to create the lesson. One section, "Lesson Summary", was removed from the template as this section seemed to apply more to a unit plan template. The rubric for scoring the lesson plan was amended to reflect the changes to the template. A discussion is currently taking place to determine if it might be appropriate to have different templates for Early Childhood, Elementary, K-12, and Secondary lessons. This proposed change is partly justified by the integrated nature of ECE and ELE and the long single content focus of 90-minute classes at the middle and secondary level.

Middle Level Education. Faculty regularly research innovative ways to prepare candidates for the unique challenges of the middle level learner. Faculty believe that teaching early adolescents academic subjects without constantly considering social, physical, and emotional development is impossible. Therefore, faculty have created a large block of instructional time to jointly teach EMD 335 *Middle School Curriculum and Organization* and EMD 336 *Adolescent Growth and Development*. In addition, Newberry College has partnered with a local middle school to teach this block on their campus. This arrangement with Newberry Middle School will allow middle level candidates to participate in instruction and then immediately go into the middle school environment (classroom, cafeteria, gymnasium, and others) to observe, assist, and learn. Candidates and instructors will be able to make connections and extend their learning between course instruction and real-world application providing an optimal learning experience for all involved.

Changes to field experience in ELE 353 – *Teaching of Reading*. Changes were made to enable candidates to have practical experiences each week in what has been learned in the classroom the previous week. The experience also meets the need of candidates to have more opportunities to work with students prior to the internship. The field experience is designed to ensure that (1) they understand reading content and standards, (2) they can assess students and interpret the information, and (3) they can formulate instruction based on assessment that meets the needs of all students.

The Noyce/RE-MAST Master Teacher, Teacher Cadet College Partner, Teaching Fellows Campus Director, Coordinator of Clinical Experiences, and Call Me MISTER Campus Director all come from P-12 schools and bring with them a wealth of experience.

Reflection: Reflection is a central focus of the TEP and is integrated throughout candidates' experiences leading naturally to a focus on candidates approaching teaching/leading as inquiry. NC and P-12 faculty/administrators work together to make reflection an integral part of programs. Candidates reflect on their work as seen in program reports and candidate work samples. Internships, conferences, unit work samples, and lesson plans all require self-assessment. Additional reflection is required, as directed by

programs in specific assignments/tasks packets. *The Senior Seminar* (EDU 483) affords candidates the opportunity to practice a different reflection protocol each week. Field Experiences create the opportunity for teacher candidates to observe master teachers teach lessons and then share perspectives and analyses.

In ECE 437, *Teaching an Integrated Curriculum*, candidates create lesson plans and teach three integrated lessons during the field experience. Working with a peer, candidates are asked to video tape the second or third lessons using flip cameras provided by the education department. In order to give positive feedback and productive insight for improving teaching strategies, lessons are viewed and discussed in class. This procedure helps candidates reflect on their performance with the children in their field experience. This process has become a beneficial project for candidates and enhances teaching performance in their internships.

Reflection takes place at the secondary and K-12 level as well. The curriculum in *Secondary and Middle School Classroom Environment* (EDU 342) focuses on theory and best practice for establishing a classroom environment that is safe and organized so that all students can learn. The field experience for the course involves weekly observations and collegial conversations with the field experience mentor. These tasks include learning how to create procedures and consequences for student behavior and how to implement best practices for assessment and instruction impact the learning environment. There are 10 tasks that the students must complete. Reflective class discussions are held concerning each task to relate the task back to the content discussed in the college classroom.

**Work with Diverse Populations:** Program faculty work closely with the Coordinator of Clinical Experiences (CCE) to ensure teacher candidates work in a variety of school settings representing diverse student populations. The CCE maintains a database of demographic statistics for schools that serves as a reference in making internship assignments. In addition to considering racial and socio-economic factors, all programs require that candidates have experience with one or more English language learners and one or more students with exceptionalities in their program. Although many factors are considered when faculty are choosing schools and teachers for placements, faculty make a concerted effort to place candidates in schools serving ethnic minority students and those in low socio-economic groups. When making the internship placements, the CCE reviews all previous field experience placements to look for any gaps in diversity of placements related to grade level, content, and school/student demographics.

**Professional Development (PD) Activities:** A lynchpin in providing meaningful clinical experiences for teacher candidates is a simultaneous focus on connecting those experiences with professional development activities for school and college based faculty.

**Close Collaboration:** As demonstrated throughout the institutional report and exhibits, NC enjoys a close collaboration with local public school partners. Mentors and administrators are willing to help the TEP by hosting students in their classes and schools, participating on committees, working on special projects, helping solve problems, and participating in professional development. The new field experience model

being implemented focuses on tasks rather than hours. Collaboration between field experience candidates and mentor teachers is fostered through the development of and subsequent reflection on these tasks.