

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: PREPARING TEACHERS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS: A MULTI-INSTITUTION ANALYSIS OF NCATE ACCREDITATION APPLICATIONS

Rachael C. Delgado, Ed.D., 2011

Directed By: Professor David Imig, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Teacher education programs are in a primary position to impact teacher candidates' abilities to meet the needs of diverse student learners. While the potential is there, diverse student learners also face crippling achievement gaps and teachers who feel unprepared to meet their needs. The achievement gap, dissatisfaction of new teachers with their preparation for teaching, and the cultural mismatch between teachers and their students underscores the need for more effective preparation of teachers for diverse student learners. This study and the corresponding research questions are based on a theory of action that professional accreditation is a means for ensuring that teacher preparation programs provide highly effective teachers for PK-12 schools who, in turn, are capable of ensuring that all students learn.

Using a qualitative grounded theory methodology, this study examines the eleven teacher preparation programs or institutions rated as "target" by the accrediting agency, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), from Fall

2008 to Fall 2009, in how they prepare teacher-candidates to meet the diverse needs of learners. Specifically, documents produced during the NCATE accreditation process are analyzed to address three research questions: (1) What are the diversity proficiencies units expect of their candidates and how do they compare across units?; (2) What are the assessment tools used to provide evidence about candidates' proficiencies related to diversity?; and (3) How is assessment data used to improve the units' programs and candidates' abilities to work with diverse student learners?.

The elements most-frequently appearing in units' diversity proficiencies were understanding diversity or student differences, adapting instruction, demonstrating attitudes of respect or sensitivity, focusing on the learning environment, and incorporating family and the community. Surveys of alumni, employers, and exit surveys were the assessment tools most frequently used to evaluate entire programs. Observations by candidates, assessment forms completed by university supervisors or cooperating teachers, and observations of candidates were the tools most frequently used to assess student teaching or other field experiences. Lesson plans, class discussions, and profiles of specific students or groups were the assessments used most frequently in conjunction with specific courses. The reported uses of assessment data included course or curriculum adjustments, staffing decisions, adjustments to assessment tools, or related faculty research. Finally, implications for both teacher education programs and NCATE are explored.

PREPARING TEACHERS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS: A MULTI-INSTITUTION
ANALYSIS OF NCATE ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS

By

Rachael C. Delgado

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Advisory Committee:
Professor David Imig, Chair
Professor Emeritus, Willis Hawley
Associate Dean, Stephen Koziol
Associate Dean, Margaret McLaughlin
Lecturer, Jean Snell
Dean, Donna Wiseman

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Over three-quarters of new teachers say that they have received preparation in how to teach an ethnically diverse student body, according to a nationally representative survey by Public Agenda and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (2007). However, of those same new teachers, over half say the preparation only helped them “a little”. Further, when asked to rank the top ways to improve teaching, new teachers ranked the preparation of teachers to adapt or vary their instruction to meet the needs of a diverse classroom is one of the highest priorities, second only to reduced class sizes (2007). It is not just teachers in urban or high-poverty schools who expressed these needs. In fact, teachers in suburban or wealthier schools reported even higher levels of anxiety and a sense of being unprepared and untrained to teach a diverse student body (p. 12).

MetLife’s “Survey of the American Teacher on Teaching Diverse Learners” uncovered similar sentiments (2011). It found that nine out of ten teachers said that strengthening programs and resources to help diverse learners with the highest needs in order to meet college- and career-ready standards should be a priority. This includes 59% who said this must be done as one of the highest priorities. None of the other reform strategies in the survey¹, garnered as much consensus (p. 4). From the students’ perspective, there is significant room for improvement as well. The average grade students gave their teachers for teaching individual students according to their different

¹ Other reform measures in the survey included: giving schools more ability to remove ineffective teachers; using measurements of teacher effectiveness based in part on student growth; expanding and redesigning the school day; and expanding public school choice options (MetLife, 2011, p. 26)

needs and abilities was a B-. However, students who had considered dropping out of school were four times as likely as other students to give their teachers a grade of D or F in this area (p. 6).

In other words, the picture is grim. While most teachers' preparation programs address teaching diverse students, it is clear that over half of these teachers don't find this preparation very valuable once they enter classrooms. And students notice this; the most at-risk students give their teachers the lowest marks for meeting their individual needs. My interest in this area of study is guided by my personal experiences with teacher preparation. My own development as a teacher reflects the majority of teachers in these surveys, and I felt terribly unprepared to meet the needs of students in a diverse classroom. Unfortunately, the research base on what characterizes effective teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse students is thin. This study examines teacher preparation programs at eleven institutions in order to begin to understand how these programs assess candidate readiness for diversity and how they evaluate the programs themselves.

In this chapter I contextualize the dissertation by presenting a brief introduction to the problem and the related research and policy approaches. I describe my research questions and discuss limitations and assumptions of the study. Next, I examine key terms that are used throughout the dissertation. Finally, I outline the remaining chapters in the dissertation.

Background and Conceptual Foundations

There are a range of efforts, both within schools of education and outside of higher education, to address the need to prepare teacher candidates to effectively work with diverse students. Research on these efforts includes a focus on pre-service teacher attitudes, curriculum and instruction, specific teacher education programs, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, field experiences, and the preparation of candidates of color (Grant, Elsbree, & Fondrie, 2004, p. 185; Hollins & Guzman, 2005). Alternative certification programs have also emerged as a way of preparing teacher candidates to work in urban environments (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). Understanding the effectiveness of such efforts, however, is challenging due to the nature and scale of the existing research. The existing research base prioritizes self-reflective and narrative inquiry over empirical research (Grant & Gibson, 2011). This trend of small-scale, qualitative studies also makes it difficult for research to impact policy. Grant and Gibson (2011) argue: “while self-study can be a transformative experience for educators, it does not often impact policy – and without a clear line of inquiry within and the continual building off other self-studies, it will continue to fail to do so” (p. 22).

There are multiple approaches to conceptualizing and organizing research literature on preparing teachers for diverse learners, and these are addressed in Chapter Two. The research questions in this study are based on Cochran-Smith’s conceptual framework of multiple meanings of multicultural teacher education² (2003). She notes that the conceptual framework:

² The distinction between the terms “diversity” and “multicultural education” is discussed subsequently in this chapter.

“is *not* “a model” for teacher education programs to follow... Rather, the elements of the framework are intended to provide a conceptual structure for interrogating the *multiple* meanings of multicultural teacher education – first simply to reveal them and suggest their complexities, but then also to chart their origins and implications as they both shape and are shaped by local and larger political, economic, and social contexts” (p. 8).

Cochran-Smith’s (2003) framework is an appropriate foundation for the research questions, because it is applicable to all eleven units, regardless of the particular approaches to diversity education a teacher preparation program might choose. Cochran-Smith (2003) presents eight key questions in teacher education: diversity, ideology, knowledge, teacher learning, practice, outcomes, selection, and coherence. Institutional capacity, governmental and nongovernmental regulations, and relationships with local communities and schools are external forces that all impact these questions. This study ultimately extends the research around the knowledge and outcome questions and the nongovernmental external forces of Cochran-Smith’s (2003) framework.

The knowledge question asks “What knowledge, interpretive frameworks, beliefs, and attitudes are necessary to teach diverse populations effectively, particularly knowledge and beliefs about culture and its role in schooling” (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 145). A number of theorists have suggested the answer to this question, and these are addressed more fully in Chapter Two. Cochran-Smith points out, however, that there is often a difference between multicultural theory and actual programs (p. 146). This study examines this intersection between theory and programs and describes the proficiencies identified by eleven teacher education programs.

The outcomes question asks: “What should the consequences or outcomes of teacher preparation be, and how, by whom, and for what purposes should these outcomes be assessed?” (p. 147). For the purposes of this study, the outcomes question undergirds the research question addressing how individual candidates are assessed and how programs assess themselves.

In Cochran-Smith’s framework, governmental and nongovernmental relations refer to “the requirements regarding teacher preparation stipulated by the agencies that govern and evaluate programs and approaches, either non-voluntarily or voluntarily” (p. 152). At the same time as schools of education have been focusing on diversity, it has also been a focus of accreditation agencies. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is one of the organizations that accredits institutions that prepare teachers. Currently, institutions seeking NCATE accreditation must meet six standards, called the “Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation Institutions” (see Appendix A). One of these standards focuses exclusively on diversity (see Appendix B). NCATE’s role as a nongovernmental voluntary agency that evaluates programs is a main point of context for this study that focuses on eleven institutions that are rated at the highest level (“target”) by NCATE on the diversity standard.

Using the frame of the diversity question, the outcomes question, and the context of non-governmental regulations, this dissertation describes common practices among eleven institutions where they exist as well as divergent or unique practices. It paints a picture of programs at the "target" level describing how they assess teacher candidates for the professional challenges that await them as they enter the field.

Further, by investigating these areas, this study informs the current landscape in two ways. First, it helps inform NCATE's diversity standard. A recent study by the National Research Council (2010) suggests that research on accountability:

“should describe the nature, influence, and interrelatedness of approval and accreditation processes on teacher education program processes and performance. It should also assess the extent to which existing processes and organizations align with best practices in accountability and offer recommendations for how they could do so more effectively in the future” (p. 177).

Second, this study will contribute to the knowledge on teacher preparation programs. The National Research Council argues that the highest priority research on teacher preparation should include the comparison of programs and their specific components and characteristics (p. 63, 2010). Grossman and McDonald (2008) describe how the lack of ability to generalize across institutions makes research on teacher education difficult. They argue that the field of education “needs a more precise language to represent the variation in programs and pathways. Future research could play a pivotal role in capturing this variation and in exploring how differences in program features lead to differences for teachers and their students” (p. 195). Analysis of the characteristics of teacher preparation programs that are "target" on NCATE's diversity standard contributes to our understanding of how programs vary across institutions.

Theory of Action

This study and the corresponding research questions are based on a theory of action that professional accreditation is a means for ensuring that teacher preparation

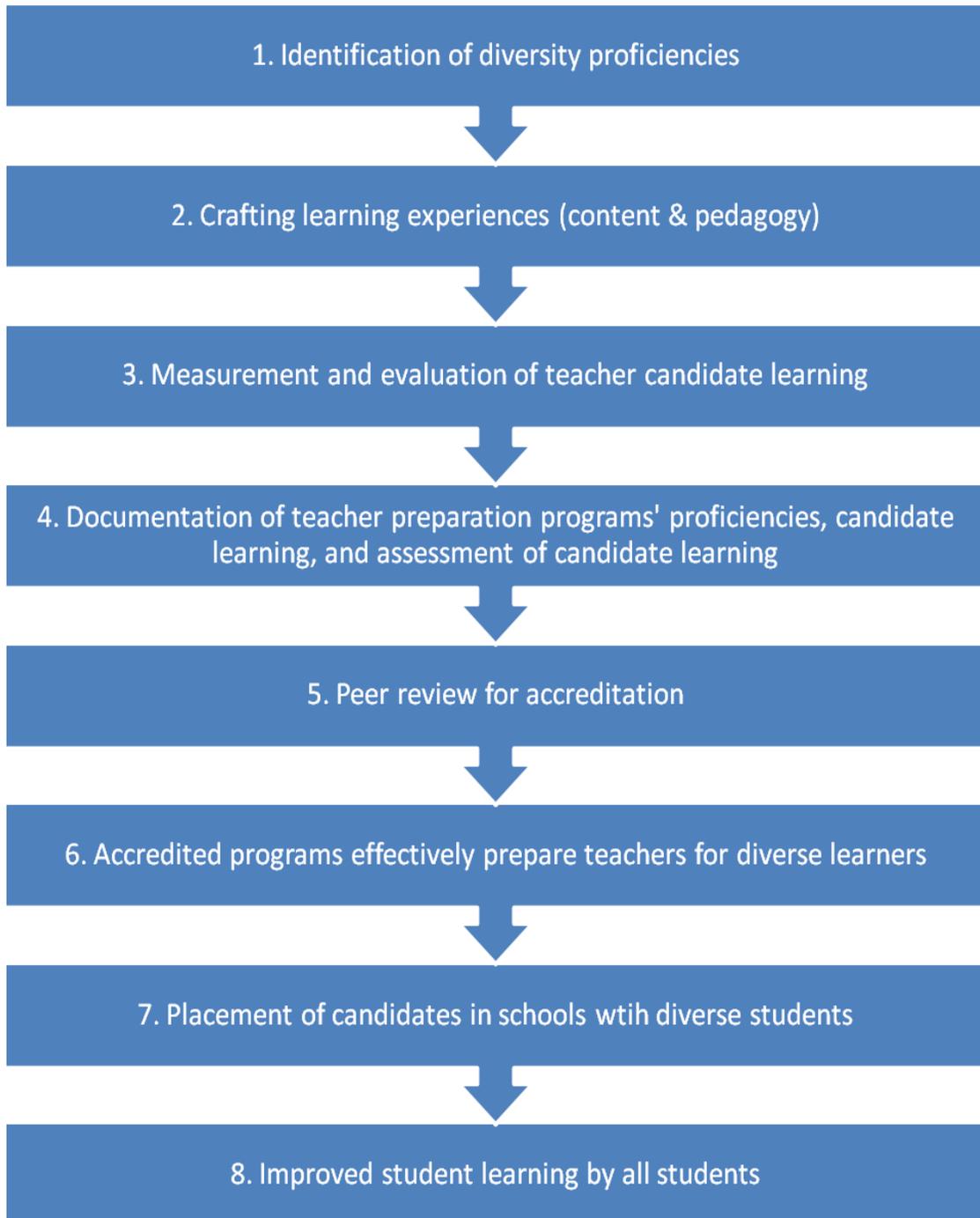
programs provide highly effective teachers for PK-12 schools who, in turn, are capable of ensuring that all students learn. This theory of action is premised on an understanding of professional accreditation as a process through which professional consensus is used to arrive at a set of standards to be used by professional peers to review and recognize a program of study as meeting or exceeding these professional standards. In many states in the US, participation in a program that is professionally accredited is a requirement for entry into professional practice. It is a means to affect professional preparation and what that preparation should include or value. These professional standards are derived from a body of professional evidence accumulated through research and practice and that the standards are intended to drive professional preparation so as to realize particular goals and purposes deemed necessary by the profession. In this dissertation, I am assuming that professional accreditation is a primary means to cause the preparation of teachers to be both sensitive to and effective at teaching all learners.

The assumption that both professional accreditation and this dissertation are based on is that there are certain proficiencies that teachers must possess to be highly effective in their classrooms. These proficiencies are necessary to enable all students to learn and that such proficiencies can be identified from extant research and practice literature and built into preparation programs. The professional accreditation of professional preparation programs, a process by which professional peers review programs to ensure that they meet standards set by the profession, is the means to ensure that professional practitioners possess the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to practice successfully.

This study focuses specifically on NCATE accreditation, and NCATE, in its role as an accrediting body, relies on a model of professional consensus to create its set of professional standards. These standards are created by the Standards Committee of NCATE's Unit Accreditation Board and are revised every seven years in order to ensure that the standards reflect current research and practice. Teacher education programs are informed by a professional accreditation system that requires preparation programs to incorporate attention to diversity, equity, and multi-cultural education to ensure that all teachers are better able to teach students from diverse backgrounds.

The theory of action includes the following elements: identifying diversity proficiencies, crafting learning experiences, measuring and evaluating candidate learning, documenting teacher education programs, a peer review accreditation process, the assumption that accredited programs produce effective teachers, placing graduates in challenging schools, and improved student learning (see Figure X).

Figure 1: Theory of Action



In this theory of change, teacher education programs first identify of a set of proficiencies (skills, knowledge and behaviors), derived from research and practice, that professional preparation should embody, make explicit, teach to and provide experience in, and assess to teacher effectiveness. Teacher preparation programs then craft learning experiences for teacher candidates. These learning experiences build on the identified proficiencies and programs make decisions around how to meet these proficiencies in the content they focus on and the processes and pedagogical approaches used.

Next, the assumption is that teacher candidate learning related to diversity can be measured and evaluated. Teacher education programs assess teacher candidates' growth and performance over time in order to ensure that candidates are meeting the program's goals. Programs use a variety of assessment tools to measure and evaluate their candidates.

Teacher preparation programs are also able to effectively describe and document their proficiencies, candidate learning experiences and assessment of candidate' learning in a way that adequately and accurately reflects the development of teacher candidates, the goals and structures of teacher education programs, and the ultimate impact on candidate and student learning. Teacher preparation programs undergo a process of peer review whereby judgments are made about the value of the program. In the case of this study, NCATE is the vehicle for peer review and accreditation. The documentation of preparation programs is central to the applications for accreditation.

Highly effective teacher preparation programs that incorporate or base their programs on a set of consensus driven standards (including an emphasis on diversity and equity), that are open to professional review and the confirmation of accreditation status,

will produce teachers able to improve the learning of PK-12 students. The placement of graduates of these programs in schools (including challenging, high-risk schools or schools with populations of high risk students or low performing schools) will affect the achievement levels of all students. Student learning by *all* students is thereby improved.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the field's knowledge about how teacher education programs assess their candidates and themselves in meeting the needs of diverse student learners.

In their review of programs applying for accreditation, NCATE delineates between three levels of proficiency on the diversity standard: unacceptable, acceptable, and target. This study examines teacher preparation programs rated as "target" by NCATE in how they prepare teacher-candidates to meet the diverse needs of learners. Specifically, it explores the assessment practices of programs meeting the "target" level on the "Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences" portion of NCATE's diversity standard. The research questions are: (1) What are the diversity proficiencies units expect of their candidates and how do they compare across units?; (2) What are the assessment tools used to provide evidence about candidates' proficiencies related to diversity?; and (3) How is the assessment data used to improve the units' programs and candidates' ability to work with diverse student learners?.

Defining Key Terms

There are five key terms or concepts that need to be clarified in order to facilitate the readers' understanding of this dissertation. The first two terms are specific to the nature of NCATE's accreditation process: "unit" and "proficiencies". "Diversity" and "assessment" are terms that often have multiple meanings in the field, in the research literature, and in the data analyzed for this study. Finally, the specific details of NCATE's diversity standard must be clarified.

NCATE organizes its data by units. Therefore, the term "unit" is used throughout this study. NCATE defines a unit as:

"The college, school, department, or other administrative body in colleges, universities, or other organizations with the responsibility for managing or coordinating all programs offered for the initial and advanced preparation of teachers and other school professionals, regardless of where these programs are administratively housed in an institution" (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2008).

The term "proficiency" is also referred to throughout NCATE's accreditation documents. For the purposes of this study, NCATE's definition is used: "Required knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions identified in the professional, state, or institutional standards" (NCATE, 2008).

Conceptually, the terms "diversity" and "assessment" are more complicated. NCATE's definition of diversity begins with the phrase: "Differences among groups of people and individuals..." (NCATE, 2008). Throughout the literature there is a shared understanding that diversity focuses on differences. The distinctions arise when different

scholars, units, or groups define more specifically what types of differences they include. NCATE includes differences based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area (NCATE, 2008).

It is more typical in the research, however, to conceptualize diversity as focusing on race, ethnicity and/or culture with fewer studies focusing on socio-economic stratification, linguistic differences, religion, disability, sexuality or ideology (Grant & Gibson, 2011, p. 23-24). In the literature review in Chapter Two, I present research that examines the different types of diversity prioritized in teacher education programs. Relatedly, individuals have personal conceptualizations of the term diversity. In the literature review I also examine programs designed to impact pre-service teachers' ideas of diversity. This study does not explicitly examine the definitions of diversity of each of the eleven units, but instead focuses on how each of the units defines the necessary proficiencies related to diversity for its teacher candidates.

It should be noted that throughout the literature, the term “multicultural education” is also used to describe the preparation of teachers for diverse student learners. Similarly, there are a variety of definitions for “multicultural education.” Some advocates propose that multicultural education should be focused on race and ethnicity, but more recently a broadening of the term has come to include ability, sexuality, language, and religion (Grant, Elsbree, & Foundrie, 2004, p. 198). Grant and Gibson (2011) make further distinctions and argue that multicultural teacher education cultivates a commitment to social justice and moves beyond simply naming the demographic differences in achievement and engagement. Instead, they argue, a multicultural

approach asks what the purposes of schooling are in a pluralistic society and articulates what and how students should be taught and what corresponding skills, dispositions, and knowledge teachers need (p. 25). Grant and Gibson (2011) argue “in many ways, a multicultural, social justice orientation subsumes other approaches to diversity” (p. 25). In order to be inclusive of the variety of researcher and higher-education institutions’ definitions, both diversity and multicultural education are used in this study to indicate the broadest sense of the terms.

The main focus of this study is on how units’ assess candidates’ proficiencies and how units use this data. NCATE defines assessment as:

“An evaluated activity or task used by a program or unit to determine the extent to which specific learning proficiencies, outcomes, or standards have been mastered by candidates. Assessments usually include an instrument that details the task or activity and a scoring guide used to evaluate the task or activity” (NCATE, 2008).

It becomes immediately clear that assessment is a nuanced word that is used to refer to activities or tasks completed by candidates as well as instruments used to evaluate the task. Throughout this study, units use the terms “assessment” and “evaluation” in a variety of ways. Interestingly, NCATE does not include “evaluation” in its glossary of terms. There appear to be some tendencies in the data toward using “evaluation” to describe how programs assess themselves, however it is also used to describe summative assessments of candidates. In my findings, it also becomes clear that units’ descriptions of assessments include activities or tasks and at other times, specific instruments such as surveys or rubrics. For the purposes of my analysis, I was inclusive of both of activities/tasks and tools, and both are included in my findings.

The final definitions that need clarification are the NCATE standards. NCATE has six standards (see Appendix A):

- Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions
- Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation
- Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice
- Standard 4: Diversity
- Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development
- Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

This study focuses on the fourth standard, Diversity (see Appendix B). The diversity standard has four sub-parts:

- 4a. Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences
- 4b. Experiences Working with Diverse Faculty
- 4c. Experiences Working with Diverse Candidates
- 4d. Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

This study's research questions are centered on 4a³.

It is important, then, to describe in a bit more detail the Standards that will be used in this study, especially the difference between the unacceptable, acceptable, and target levels. For Standard 4a (Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences), NCATE describes units at each of the three levels. The entire text of these levels follows, although the division of the text into three categories is my own

³ It also uses information from Standard 4d when units provide data directly related to the research questions in their response to questions in part 4d of the Institutional Reports. This is described more fully in Chapter Three.

attempt to clarify each of the levels (see Table 1). No such divisions exist in the original NCATE documentation.

The categories that emerge from the three descriptions are: (a) conceptual framework, curriculum and field experiences; (b) understanding diversity and integration into instruction; and (c) assessment. While the distinction between unacceptable levels and target levels are clear, the distinction between the acceptable and target levels are much more nuanced. In order to meet the target level, units must meet all of the elements in the acceptable level in addition to those in the target level.

Table 1. NCATE Standard 4a – Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences

Conceptual Framework, Curriculum & Field Experiences		
Unacceptable	Acceptable	Target
<p>The unit has not articulated candidate proficiencies related to diversity identified in the unit’s conceptual framework. The curriculum and field experiences for the preparation of educators do not prepare candidates to work effectively with diverse populations, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities.</p>	<p>The unit clearly articulates proficiencies related to diversity identified in the unit’s conceptual framework that candidates are expected to develop during their professional programs. Curriculum and field experiences provide a well grounded framework for understanding diversity, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities.</p>	<p>Curriculum, field experiences, and clinical practice promote candidates’ development of knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions related to diversity identified in the unit’s conceptual framework. They are based on well developed knowledge bases for, and conceptualizations of, diversity and inclusion so that candidates can apply them effectively in schools.</p>

Understanding Diversity and Integration into Instruction		
Unacceptable	Acceptable	Target
<p>Candidates do not understand the importance of diversity in teaching and learning. They are not developing skills for incorporating diversity into their teaching and are not able to establish a classroom and school climate that values diversity.</p>	<p>Candidates are aware of different learning styles and adapt instruction or services appropriately for all students, including linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities. Candidates connect lesson, instruction, or services to students' experiences and cultures. They communicate with students and families in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and gender differences. Candidates incorporate multiple perspectives in the subject matter being taught or services being provided. They develop a classroom and school climate that values diversity. Candidates demonstrate classroom behaviors that are consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn.</p>	<p>Candidates learn to contextualize teaching and draw effectively on representations from the students' own experiences and cultures. They challenge students toward cognitive complexity and engage all students, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities, through instructional conversation.</p>

Assessment		
Unacceptable	Acceptable	Target
<p>Assessments of candidate proficiencies do not include data on candidates' ability to incorporate multiple perspectives into their teaching or service, develop lessons or services for students with different learning styles, accommodate linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities, and communicate effectively with diverse populations.</p>	<p>Candidate proficiencies related to diversity are assessed, and the data are used to provide feedback to candidates for improving their knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for helping students from diverse populations learn.</p>	<p>Candidates and faculty regularly review candidate assessment data on candidates' ability to work with all students and develop a plan for improving their practice and the institution's programs.</p>

For the purposes of this study, Standard 4d is also important. Similarly, the differences between the levels in Standard 4d (Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P-12 Schools) are not always easy to distinguish. Again, while the distinctions between unacceptable and target are clear, they are more fine-grained between acceptable and target. Two categories emerge from the standard's rubric: participation in field experiences and reflection. These categories are reflected in Table 2 and are my own interpretation of the standard, not NCATE's.

Table 2. NCATE Standard 4d – Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

Participation in Field Experiences		
Unacceptable	Acceptable	Target
In conventional or distance learning programs, not all candidates participate in field experiences or clinical practices with exceptional students and students from diverse ethnic/racial, gender, language, and socio-economic groups	Field experiences or clinical practice for both conventional and distance learning programs provide experiences with male and female P-12 students from different socioeconomic groups and at least two ethnic/racial groups. Candidates also work with English language learners and students with disabilities during some of their field experiences and/or clinical practice to develop and practice their knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for working with all students.	Extensive and substantive field experiences and clinical practices for both conventional and distance learning programs are designed to encourage candidates to interact with exceptional students and students from a broad range of diverse groups.

Reflection		
Unacceptable	Acceptable	Target
The experiences do not help candidates reflect on diversity or develop skills for having a positive effect on student learning for all students.	Feedback from peers and supervisors helps candidates reflect on their ability to help all students learn.	The experiences help candidates confront issues of diversity that affect teaching and student learning and develop strategies for improving student learning and candidates' effectiveness as teachers.

Other concepts that emerge in the findings of this study, especially related to the types of assessments used by units, are described in Chapter Four. It is hoped that this examination of the relevant terms at the outset will help orient readers to the remainder of this study.

Dissertation Overview

Recent years have been marked by a focus on the need to prepare teachers for diverse students in both the policy arena, as demonstrated by the inclusion of diversity in NCATE's accreditation standards, and in the educational research arena. As described earlier, recent surveys indicate that teachers and students are also calling for improved teacher preparation. This dissertation extends current research and describes the assessment practices of programs that are leading the way, at least according to NCATE's reviewers, in preparing our nation's teachers for increasingly diverse classrooms.

This dissertation consists of five chapters that situate the analysis of NCATE accreditation data within the existing research and current policy context. Chapter Two examines the theoretical and research literature that frames this dissertation. First, I begin by examining the nature of the problem and the conceptual frameworks that are relevant to understanding the issue. Then, I examine research on teacher education programs and the preparation of teachers for diverse learners. Next, I turn to the policy context and focus on NCATE's role as an accrediting agency, its diversity standard, and evidence on the effectiveness of accreditation. I conclude the chapter by exploring expert

recommendations for educating teachers for diverse students, weaknesses in the existing research base, and additional research needs.

Chapter Three identifies the methods and types of analysis used in the study. A qualitative grounded theory methodology was used to examine eleven separate units. The chapter describes the selection of participants, the data used, and the limitations of the methodology.

Chapter Four presents a detailed analysis of the data as it relates to each of the research questions. It looks across all eleven units to identify commonalities and points of divergence in relation to the proficiencies expected of their candidates, the assessment tools used by the unit, and how the units used the resulting assessment data.

Chapter Five summarizes the findings and includes implications of this study in the current policy context. It also includes recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The gaping differences in resources and achievement that exist across the country among students based on race, ethnicity, and class are no secret. How we successfully, consistently, and universally prepare teachers to meet the learning needs of *all* students, however, is not nearly as clear. Teacher education programs continue to face the ongoing challenge of preparing teachers to meet the needs of diverse student learners.

One policy approach to meeting this challenge is the accreditation standards set by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. Most specifically, NCATE's diversity standard includes particular elements and approaches that teacher education programs must meet in order to be NCATE accredited. The diversity standard focuses on four main areas: (a) the design, implementation and evaluation of curriculum and experiences; (b) the diversity of faculty; (c) the diversity of teacher candidates; and (d) opportunities to work with diverse students in schools. This study, and this literature review, will focus on the first of these areas, concentrating on a subset of the standard, namely, how teacher education programs assess teacher candidates' readiness to meet the needs of diverse learners⁴.

I will begin by contextualizing the need for preparing teachers for diverse learners and presenting relevant conceptual frameworks. Then, I will examine the existing research on the effectiveness of diversity efforts in teacher education programs, including

⁴ As noted earlier, when relevant data is reported by units in response to part 4d ("opportunities to work with diverse learners in schools") it was also used to inform the study.

how candidates and programs are assessed and evaluated. I then situate the role of NCATE within the existing policy context and describe the history of NCATE's diversity standard and research on the effectiveness of accreditation. Finally, I present weaknesses in the exiting research base and future research needs.

Characterizing the Problem

Educating teacher candidates to meet the needs of diverse student learners, also sometimes referred to as multicultural teacher education, exists in order to solve a fundamental problem. What is this problem? There are two main characterizations of the challenge: the demographic imperative and the achievement gap. Much of the research in the field of preparing teachers for diverse learners situates itself in response to the demographic imperative. This argument basically states that there is a mismatch between the overwhelmingly white, middle class, female teacher candidates and the increasingly diverse students they will teach in classrooms across the country. In a review of multicultural teacher education research, Furman (2008) found that authors often mention this problem in the first few sentences of their research. She writes, "the extent to which the demographic imperative is used as rationale for research in the primary literature is staggering" (p. 72).

Critics of this underlying rationale argue that there is little evidence to support the idea that the problem would be solved if there were sufficient numbers of diverse teachers available to be "matched" to diverse student learners (Shudak, 2010, p. 352).

In a variation of the demographic imperative definition of the underlying problem, some argue that it is not just demographics that create the need for multicultural teacher

education, but the limited intercultural experiences of both teacher educators and teacher candidates (Melnick & Zeichner, 1997).

Furman (2008) argues, however, that the underlying impetus is actually the achievement gap. He notes that many researchers don't explicitly identify the achievement gap as a driving force in multicultural education, and identifies Cochran-Smith, Davis and Fries (2004) as unusual in making the direct connection between the achievement gap and the need for research in multicultural teacher education. Cochran-Smith et al. (2004) explicitly identify both the "staggering disparities in educational outcomes" and the "staggering disparities in allocation of resources... to urban, suburban, and rural schools" (p. 934) as a reason for the reform of teacher education. Other scholars also cite the achievement gap as a rationale behind teacher education practices focusing on diverse learners (See for example, Pang & Park, 2011; Trent, Kea & Oh, 2008; Akiba, et al, 2010). The inequitable distribution of teachers, namely the tendency of inexperienced and under-prepared teachers to be more highly concentrated in districts with larger numbers of low-income and minority students, also contributes to the problem (Darling-Hammond, 2004).

NCATE, in its supporting explanation for the diversity standard, focuses on the demographic imperative without acknowledging the achievement gap or discrepancies in resource allocation:

"America's classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse; over 40 percent of the students in P-12 classrooms are students of color. Twenty percent of the students have at least one foreign-born parent, many with native languages other than English and from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Growing numbers

of students are classified as having disabilities. At the same time, teachers of color are less than 20 percent of the teaching force. As a result, most students do not have the opportunity to benefit from a diverse teaching force. Therefore, all teacher candidates must develop proficiencies for working effectively with students and families from diverse populations and with exceptionalities to ensure that all students learn. Regardless of whether they live in areas with great diversity, candidates must develop knowledge of diversity in the United States and the world, professional dispositions that respect and value differences, and skills for working with diverse populations (NCATE, 2008).”

Within teacher education, there are several possible policy responses to both the demographic imperative and achievement gap. These can occur at the federal level, the state level, the local or institutional level, and the professional or organizational level (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2011, p. 342). At the institutional or local level, higher education institutions can make choices about policies and practices that impact the preparation of teacher candidates for diverse learners. At the professional or organizational level, accreditation bodies, such as NCATE, can leverage change through standards and accrediting requirements. In this chapter, I first address approaches to reforming teacher education programs at the local and institutional level, and then turn to the role of NCATE as a professional accrediting body.

Framing the Issue

Multicultural education, in one form or another, pre-dates the development of national and state standards for preparing teachers to meet the needs of diverse students.

Two aspects of multicultural education are relevant for this study. The first, which this literature review will address briefly, are the approaches to multicultural education reform that have played out in K-12 education. The second, more directly related to the study, is how higher education has evolved to incorporate multicultural and diversity education into its teacher preparation programs.

Banks (2004) characterizes the evolution of multicultural education as having four phases. The first phase was ethnic studies, when educators with interest in the history of cultural and ethnic minority groups initiated the incorporation of concepts from ethnic studies into the school and teacher-education curricula. The second phase, multiethnic education, aimed to bring about structural and systemic changes in schools designed to increase educational equity. The third phase consisted of the incorporation of other groups, such as women and people with disabilities, into the curricula and structure of schools and universities (p. 13). The fourth and current phase, according to Banks (2004), is the development of theory, research, and practice that interrelates variables connected to race, class, and gender. Banks notes that each of these phases continue to exist today, although the later phases tend to be more prominent (p. 13).

Frameworks characterizing the nature of multicultural education tend to address the nature of multicultural education as it plays out in K-12 education, but not the multicultural education of pre-service teachers in higher education. Two frameworks frequently used in multicultural education research are Banks' (2004) dimensions of multicultural education (which includes Banks' (1988) typology for approaches to curricular reform), and Sleeter and Grant's (1987) typology of multicultural education.

To frame the analysis of multicultural education literature, Banks (2004) proposed five dimensions of multicultural education: content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social structure. Content integration deals with the extent to which teachers use content from a variety of cultures to illustrate key concepts (p. 4).

The knowledge construction process relates to the extent to which teachers help students understand how implicit cultural assumptions and biases influence the way knowledge is constructed within a discipline (p. 5). Knowledge construction includes Banks' (1988) four approaches to multicultural curricular reform. The first level, the contributions approach, consists of a curricular focus on heroes, holidays and discrete cultural elements. Level two, the additive approach, is the addition of content and themes into curriculum without changing its basic structure. Level three is the transformative approach that changes the basic assumptions of the curriculum and allows students to view concepts from multiple perspectives. The fourth level, the social action approach educates students for social action and social change.

Prejudice reduction focuses on the characteristics of students' racial attitudes and how they can be modified (Banks, 2004). According to Banks (2004), equity pedagogy exists when teachers use methods that facilitate the academic achievement of all students. Finally, empowering school culture and social structure occurs when schools are restructured so that students from all groups experience educational equality and cultural empowerment (p. 5-6).

Sleeter and Grant's (1987) typology was created to bring clarity to the meaning of multicultural education (p. 421). Resulting from their analysis of 89 studies and 38

books, the authors' typology identifies five approaches to multicultural education. "Teaching the culturally different" is an assimilation approach that uses transitional bridges to bring students of color into the cultural mainstream. The "human relations" approach is used to help students of different backgrounds get along. "Single group studies" are courses taught about the experiences and contributions of distinct ethnic, gender, or class groups. "Multicultural education" promotes cultural pluralism and social equality through the reform of school programs, including school staffing and curricula. Finally, "education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist" focuses on preparing students to challenge social structural inequality and to promote cultural diversity (p. 422).

More directly related to this study are frameworks that focus specifically on the preparation of teachers for diverse learners. Two in particular are relevant here: Zeichner and Hoefft's (1996) dimensions of variation for pre-service programs with regard to diversity and Cochran-Smith's (2003) conceptual framework on the multiple meanings of multicultural teacher education. The latter informs the research questions for this study and is also discussed elsewhere in this study.

Zeichner and Hoefft (1996) examine four dimensions along which pre-service teacher education programs vary in terms of diversity. The first is how programs use either an infusion approach or a segregated approach. Strategies to prepare teachers to teach all students can be organized around either an infusion approach that integrates cultural diversity throughout a program or the segregated approach where the focus is on a single course or discrete topics in a few courses but other components of the program remain untouched. The second dimension is how programs vary in regard to the culture-

specific or culture-general socialization strategies. Culture-specific approaches emphasize the preparation of teachers for specific cultural groups or in specific contexts whereas culture-general approaches prepare teachers to be successful in any context that involves cross-cultural interactions. The third dimension is the degree to which programs emphasize interacting with cultures as opposed to studying about cultures. Finally, programs vary in the degree to which the programs themselves model cultural inclusiveness and cultural responsiveness (Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996, p. 526-527).

In contrast to Zeichner and Hoeft's dimensions of teacher education programs, Cochran-Smith (2003) presents a series of questions designed to examine multicultural teacher education programs. Cochran-Smith describes the multiple meanings conceptual framework not as a model for teacher education programs, but rather a structure for interrogating the multiple meanings of multicultural teacher education. She writes,

“The framework is intended to be useful in examinations of all sorts of research, practices, and policies that in some way are related to or have an impact on the preparation of teachers for a diverse society, regardless of epistemological or methodological paradigms and regardless of whether these policies and practices themselves would be considered “liberal,” “conservative,” or otherwise” (2003, p. 9).

The framework consists of eight key questions, three external forces, and the historical and social context related to preparing teachers for diverse populations (see Figure 1).

Figure 2: Cochran-Smith's Multiple Meanings Conceptual Framework (2003)

The eight key questions are:

1. Diversity – How should the increasingly diverse student population be understood as a challenge or “problem” for teaching and teacher education? What are the desirable “solutions” to this problem?
2. Ideology or Social Justice – What is the purpose of schooling? What is the role of public education in a democratic society? What historically has been the role of schooling in maintaining or changing the economic and social structure of society?
3. Knowledge – What knowledge, interpretive frameworks, beliefs, and attitudes are necessary to teach diverse populations effectively, particularly knowledge and beliefs about culture and its role in schooling?
4. Teacher Learning – How do teachers learn to teach diverse populations? What are the pedagogies of teacher preparation (e.g. coursework assignments, readings, field experiences) that make this learning possible?
5. Practice – What are the competencies and pedagogical skills teachers need to teach diverse populations effectively?
6. Outcomes – What should the consequences or outcomes of teacher preparation be? How, by whom, and for what purposes should these outcomes be assessed?
7. Recruitment/selection – What candidates should be recruited and selected for America's teaching force?

8. Coherence – To what degree are the answers to the first seven questions connected to and coherent with one another in particular policies or programs and how are diversity issues positioned in relation to other issues?

The three external forces are:

1. Institutional capacity and mission
2. Relationships with local communities
3. Governmental and non-governmental regulations.

The larger context includes the social, historical, economic, and political contexts in which the forces are embedded (Cochran-Smith, 2003).

Cochran-Smith (2003) suggests that the framework can be used to examine and characterize existing teacher preparation approaches.

This review will now move from the theoretical level to research on the actual implementation of diversity approaches in teacher education. It is followed by an examination of the role of NCATE as a policy lever in impacting teacher preparation for diverse students.

Research on Teacher Education Programs and the Preparation of Teachers for Diverse Learners

Scholars have taken several approaches to characterizing the nature and scope of programs that prepare teachers to meet the needs of diverse students. The literature describes three general approaches to preparing teachers for diverse populations: recruiting teacher candidates of color, developing existing pre-service teachers, and addressing institutional issues at the level of the college or university (Sleeter, 2001, Melnick & Zeichner, 1997; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996). This study focuses on the development of existing pre-service teachers.

I have divided the research on how teacher education programs prepare teachers for diverse learners into four areas: (a) the extent to which multicultural teacher education programs exist; (b) the beliefs and dispositions of teacher candidates; (c) the specific pedagogical approaches used in teacher education programs, including field experiences and related candidate assessments; and (d) the evaluation of teacher education programs. Much of the literature focuses on making recommendations for teacher education programs, and I examine those recommendations later in this chapter. Unfortunately,

there are significant limitations to the existing research base and these are also discussed later in this review.

Prevalence of Multicultural Teacher Education Programs

One of the earliest multi-institution studies of teacher preparation programs found that only a small number of programs were adequately addressing diversity (Gollnick, 1992). Gollnick analyzed NCATE's accreditation data and found that only eight of the fifty-nine institutions seeking accreditation were in full compliance with multicultural education requirements (p. 234). The two weaknesses most frequently cited by the NCATE Board of Examiners were a lack of emphasis on studies or experiences related to cultural diversity and a lack of adequate content in global and multicultural perspectives (p. 235).

Hollins and Guzman's (2005) review of studies found that few programs offer carefully crafted programs aimed at teaching diverse students and many universities had hardly begun to address issues of diversity (p. 509).

Beliefs and Dispositions of Teacher Candidates

There is general agreement in the field that ideology, dispositions, and beliefs matter (Grant & Gibson, 2011). Undoing potentially harmful beliefs is often the focus of multicultural teacher education (p. 29). In terms of candidates' predispositions, Hollins and Guzman (2005) found that the majority of teachers are white, female, middle class, from suburbs, with limited experience with those from different cultures. Many hold negative attitudes about those different from themselves and while many are willing to

teach in urban areas, some are unwilling. Many candidates feel inadequately prepared to teach in urban areas. Further, candidates of color and white candidates have different experiences and interests in teaching as a career (p. 485). A survey of pre-service teachers suggests that teachers have a limited view of what constitutes diversity and that pre-service teachers may find it easier to agree with statements about the nonspecific term diversity than specific diversity constructs such as sexual orientation, gender, or faith (Silverman, 2010).

Research from Boston College's Teachers for a New Era program has focused, among other assessments, on instruments designed to measure changes in teacher beliefs about social justice (Enterline, Cochran-Smith, Ludlow, & Mitescu, 2008). Enterline, Cochran-Smith, Ludlow, and Mitescu (2008) describe the development of a scale that detects changes in beliefs related to teaching for social justice over time and across cohorts of candidates. The scale includes the key ideas of high expectations, an asset-based perspective on the resources students bring to school, the importance of critical thinking in a democratic society, the role of teachers as advocates, challenges to the notion of a meritocratic society, teaching as related to underlying assumptions about race, class, gender, disability, and culture, and the idea that culture, equity, and race are topics that are visible in the curriculum (2008). The authors argue that the development of such a tool allows beliefs about social justice to be constructed as a legitimate outcome of teacher education while also making teacher education accountable for its candidates (p. 267).

Specific Pedagogical Approaches in Teacher Education

In review of research syntheses, Cochran-Smith, Davis, and Fries (2004) found that research focusing on teacher learning was often

“teacher educators themselves study[ing] practice by examining their own and students’ writing, course discussions, and programs and course materials. Often the intent in this kind of inquiry is not to measure the impact of specific pedagogies but to explore the pedagogies themselves by investigating how pre-service teachers interact with course and program content and how they make sense of their experiences” (p. 957).

The challenges that accompany this type of research are evident in the fragmented and tenuous findings that follow. I will first characterize the nature of the research and then address two areas: research on specific knowledge, skills, and abilities and research on specific modes of teacher education (single courses and lesson plans). Field experiences are addressed separately.

Zeichner and Hoeft (1996) characterize research on pre-service teacher preparation programs for diverse students as focusing on building high expectations among prospective teachers for all students, increasing self-knowledge of prospective teachers and their role in a multicultural society, providing prospective teachers with cultural knowledge about other groups in society, and providing opportunities for pre-service teachers to develop relationship-building skills and teaching strategies. They note that this work sometimes happens via case-based teaching or field experiences (p. 529).

In a review of studies of the effects of teacher education strategies, Sleeter (2001) found that pre-service programs focused on community-based cross-cultural immersion experiences, multicultural education coursework (which included stand-alone courses or

multicultural education coursework with field experiences), and program-level interventions that infuse multicultural education throughout.

Research on teacher candidates' specific knowledge, skills, and abilities centers on efforts in teacher education to focus on the social context of schooling, cultural knowledge, prejudice reduction, and pedagogy to support diverse student learners.

The social context of schooling is the focus of a review of research on teacher candidates who study structural inequality and use this understanding as the backdrop for pedagogical decision-making (Grant & Gibson, 2011). The authors found that such experiences must be carefully scaffolded or else they can foster resistance and hopelessness.

While experts recommend a focus on cultural knowledge, Grant and Gibson (2011) found that research shows many potential challenges. These include the danger of pre-service teachers essentializing cultures and cultural differences, ignoring the complex intersections of identity, and reinforcing stereotypes and misconceptions. Further, evidence suggests that to be effective, culture must be woven throughout the entire program (p. 30).

Hollins and Guzman (2005) found that the majority of studies examining prejudice reduction reported positive short-term impacts on candidates' attitudes and beliefs, but some studies reported mixed results or no impact. Unfortunately, however, there were significant methodological concerns with the studies, including the small sample sizes and reliance on self-reported data (p. 490).

There is some evidence suggesting that problems in candidates' thinking can act as barriers to implementing equity pedagogy⁵ (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). These include inflexibility, rigidity, and socialization (p. 491-492). Research does not suggest that one subject-matter course in equity pedagogy that results in positive outcomes consistently generates the same effect in another subject-matter course (p. 492).

Single courses and lesson plans are two approaches to teacher education addressed in the research. There is evidence that courses in teacher preparation programs are driven by state licensure and national guidelines (Trent et al., 2008). There is some evidence, using self-reported teacher data, to suggest that courses in bilingual education and multicultural education courses have a positive influence on teachers' multicultural attitudes and knowledge (Capella-Santana, 2003). However, other research suggests that there is limited impact of a single stand-alone course on teacher candidates' knowledge, attitudes, and practices (Banks et al., 2005, p. 274 citing Bennett, Okinaka, & Xio Yang, 1998; Grant & Koskella, 1986, McDiarmid & Price, 1990; Sleeter & Grant, 1988). Huber-Warring, Mitchell, Alagic, and Gibson (2005) studied teachers' multicultural knowledge bases and found that there was a lack of transfer from course content to teacher knowledge (p. 43). Silverman (2010) describes how multicultural courses can sometimes result in negative paradigm shifts and even the development of detrimental views of multicultural education after pre-service teachers take diversity courses.

There is evidence to suggest that candidates have limited skills in lesson plans for diverse students (Trent et al., 2008). A study by Ambrosio, Seguin, Hogan and Miller

⁵ Banks (2004) defines equity pedagogy as techniques and methods used by teachers that facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups (p. 5).

(2001) addresses the creation of lesson plans, one of the most common assignments in teacher education. The study involved the development and implementation of a lesson plan rubric for assessing diversity learning outcomes for student teachers. A total of 361 lesson plans were scored according to the rubric and the authors found that only about half of the candidates demonstrated at least minimal skills in creating an effective, meaningful diverse lesson plan.

Underlying these approaches is a debate among teacher educators about how to prioritize and target pre-service teacher education. Gay (2010) describes this debate as focusing on whether teacher education for cultural diversity should begin with beliefs or behaviors. However, she suggests that this debate may be misplaced: “The more important issue is that examining beliefs and attitudes about cultural diversity, *along with* developing cognitive knowledge and pedagogical skills, are included as essential elements of teacher education” (p. 151).

Field Experiences

There is wide acceptance of the importance of field experiences in preparing teachers to meet the needs of diverse students. These experiences range from very brief to full-scale immersion experiences and may include: the required completion of practicum and student teaching experiences in schools serving minority students; overseas student teaching experiences; immersion in the community or other cross-cultural encounters (Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996). Research on rural candidates’ field placements in urban settings shows increased cultural awareness and sensitivity (Hollins & Guzman, 2005, p. 502). Studies also show the short-term impact of community-based

field experiences on candidates' awareness and acceptance of diverse students (p. 502). Grande, Burns, Schmidt, and Marable (2009) explored the willingness of teacher candidates to teach in urban schools following a paid field experience. Using a survey and journal entries, the authors found no difference in the willingness to serve in urban environments as a result of the paid experience. Other factors, however, positively influenced candidates' willingness including ratings of previous urban field experiences and having previously attended an urban school (p. 188).

Some research suggests that the more intense experiences with diverse perspective and populations are, the better (Grant & Secada, 1990). However, standalone community experiences are not sufficient to overcome years of prior conditioning (Banks et al, 2005, p. 274 citing Bennett, Okinaka, & Xio Yang, 1998; Grant & Koskella, 1986, McDiarmid & Price, 1990; Sleeter & Grant, 1988). Others caution that cross-cultural experiences may serve to strengthen and legitimate the prejudices and stereotypes they are designed to correct (Grande et al., 2009; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996, p. 535 citing Haberman, 1991; Haberman & Post, 1992). Further, systematic restraints, such as students choosing to do fieldwork in privileged schools, may make it difficult for some programs to provide diverse experiences (Trent et al., 2008, p. 335).

Program-level Evaluation

This study focuses mainly on how teacher education programs assess candidates' preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners and how they use this data to improve their own programs. Unfortunately, the research evidence to support particular assessment methods or approaches is limited. As noted in the first chapter, there are

multiple meanings attributed to the terms “assessment” and “evaluation”, and this becomes clear when examining the literature in this area. Grant and Gibson (2011) frame this issue by asking:

“If multicultural education requires pedagogical and cultural-content knowledge, if it requires habits of mind that enable teachers to critically analyze the social context and to make pedagogical decisions based on this analysis, and if it requires teachers to develop authentic and respectful relationships with students across differences, how will those competencies be measured? How can we measure teachers’ ability to apply what they know about content, pedagogy, and culture to the specific children in their classrooms? How can we use those assessments to evaluate teacher education programs?” (p. 33)

Researchers and teacher educators describe the challenging conditions under which these questions are asked. Smith (2005) acknowledges the dilemmas created by accreditation requirements, characterizing the pressure as the need to balance human evaluation systems with high-stakes assessments. According to Smith (2005), colleges of education develop assessment systems to maintain accreditation (including NCATE accreditation) and are coerced to mix high-stakes teacher tests with more “human” internally designed assessments (p. 12). Further, Smith notes the preference in the current political environment for quantitative assessment instruments over qualitative assessments.

Akiba et al. (2010) note that there is a lack of focus on assessment in teacher education program accreditation requirements:

“Without specific requirements for teacher education programs to... assess teacher candidates’ knowledge and skills, the programs can interpret the ambiguous wording in the standards in various ways, and pre-service teachers are less likely to achieve the qualification described in the candidate performance standards” (p. 459).

Within this climate, teacher education programs are faced with two assessment challenges: assessing candidate learning and evaluating teacher education programs themselves. According to Grant and Gibson (2011), teacher education programs assess candidates by using performance assessments, tying teacher competencies to K-12 student learning, and with longitudinal assessments that take into account teacher retention (p. 34). However, as my study subsequently suggests, it appears that there are other approaches to assessment not included in this characterization such as surveys, candidate observations, class discussions, and journaling.

A related, yet separate, question is how teacher education institutions evaluate the outcomes of the programs themselves. According to Cochran-Smith (2004), three outcomes questions are receiving attention nationally, at the state level, and within teacher education institutions. First, teacher education institutions are facing the question of the long-term impact of teacher education on K-12 students’ learning. She notes that this question is squarely situated in policy debates about teacher quality and the value of teacher education (p. 104). The second outcome is the aggregated teacher test scores of candidates (p. 108), which, as noted later in this chapter, is one of the ways scholars have attempted to measure the effectiveness of accreditation. Finally, the professional performance of teachers in the field is a third question facing teacher education programs.

Performance measures may include ability-based performance assessments, performance understanding (assessing how teachers are prepared to perform in situations for which they cannot fully prepare in advance), teacher work samples, and how teacher candidates work within professional communities to construct knowledge (p. 109-112).

Some studies use satisfaction with teacher preparation programs as a measure of the effectiveness of diversity education within teacher education. For example, Cross (2003) found that teachers most frequently learned to respect children's languages, to use diverse literature in the classroom, to recognize diversity, and to acknowledge different backgrounds and experience. Masci and Stotko (2006) assess teacher satisfaction in an alternative program aimed at preparing teachers for urban schools and used exit surveys to identify overall satisfaction with the program. Neither of these examples, however, provides details on the characteristics of the program or how the information gained informs the improvement of the specific programs.

Not surprisingly, experts note the significant lack of research on assessment in teacher education programs. Research on how teacher education programs assess either their candidates or themselves at the program level is limited in its scope and generalizability. Further, most research on teachers' actual classroom practice and experiences is disconnected from pre-service teacher experiences (Furman, 2008, p. 61). Very little empirical attention is paid to the outcomes of multicultural teacher education, including the teaching practices of teacher candidates and new teachers, or K-12 student learning (Cochran-Smith, Davis & Fries, 2004).

Grant and Gibson (2011) characterize the state of affairs as "a vague vision for assessing teacher education's effectiveness in terms of multicultural outcomes" (p. 49)

and others call for more clearly delineated performance outcomes and comprehensive assessments (Ambrosio et al., 2001; Gollnick, 1992). There are a few examples, however, of the explicit examination of how to assess multicultural proficiencies.

Villegas and Lucas (2006) describe how their teacher education program aligned its standards for developing culturally and linguistically responsive educators with learning experiences and assessments. Further, they explain in detail how the faculty used the resulting data to question and revise existing practices as well as the assessment tools themselves. The authors describe the assessments at three transition points in candidates' programs. First, candidates are assessed upon entry to the teacher education program. Second, they are assessed after completing required coursework but prior to beginning their student teaching. The assessments at this stage include reflection on a classroom community of inquiry, analysis of how a teacher organizes a classroom for student learning, observations by cooperating teachers, development of a unit plan, and adapting instruction for a student with a disability and for an English-language learner. Each of these assessments is embedded within related courses or field experiences and has a related rubric that corresponds to standards for culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The third transition point occurs after completing student teaching and includes several cycles of observations by mentors, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors. It also includes the development of instructional plans (p. 7-10).

In addition to the social justice beliefs scale developed by Boston College's Teachers for a New Era described earlier, four additional assessment tools were also researched to provide multiple measures of the outcomes of teacher education for social justice (Cochran-Smith, Mietescu & Shakman, 2009). These include qualitative case

studies of teacher candidates that rely on extensive interview and observation data, a protocol to gauge the quality of the assessments and assignments teachers used in their classrooms and their students' learning in response to those, a rubric to assess candidates' efforts to teach for social justice via inquiry learning projects, and a pre-service performance assessment that adapted the Massachusetts tool to include additional social justice items (2009). While the social justice beliefs scale is the only tool that focuses explicitly on issues related to preparing teachers for diverse students, the authors describe how social justice was incorporated into each of the remaining four assessment tools.

Expert Recommendations

Much of the knowledge in the field about how best to prepare teachers for diverse students comes in the form of recommendations by experts. While these recommendations are informed by the existing research base in a general sense, the recommendations are not the result of direct research. Some recommendations center on identifying desired proficiencies of teacher candidates whereas others link these proficiencies to specific programmatic and pedagogical approaches.

Proficiencies Recommendations

Garibaldi (1992) suggests that teachers in diverse classrooms must understand the difference between culture and class, be able to plan and organize instruction, make assessments based on students learning styles, motivate students and learn how to encourage the cooperation of students' families and communities (p. 25).

Zeichner (1993) identifies key elements for teacher education for diversity: knowledge of and about cultures; historical knowledge about school and social inequities; how to learn about diverse cultures; diverse community and field experiences; and how to create culturally appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment (p. 940).

Howard and Aleman (2008) suggest that there are three important aspects to teachers' capacity to teach diverse learners: subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of effective practice about teaching in diverse settings, and the development of a critical consciousness (p. 158).

Among the variety of approaches suggested by scholars to improve teacher education are the specific ideas advocated by critical educational theorists. According to Howard and Aleman (2008), "critical educational theorists differ from many multicultural education scholars in that they do not see individual prejudice or ignorance as the problem in education, but rather that it is the systematic institutionalization of such prejudice which allows it to remain hidden and thriving" (p. 166). The proficiencies described by Jordan-Irvine (2003), Nieto (2005), and Villegas and Lucas (2002) could arguably be characterized as coming from a critical theorist perspective.

Jordan-Irvine (2003) argues for a complete reconceptualization of the roles of teachers. According to Jordan-Irvine (2003), for teachers to be effective in diverse schools, they must become culturally responsive pedagogists, systemic reformers, members of caring communities, reflective practitioners and researchers, pedagogical-content specialists, and antiracist educators (p. 73).

Nieto (2005) considers five attitudinal qualities essential for the promotion of cultural diversity and social justice: a sense of mission to serve diverse children to the

best of their abilities; solidarity with, empathy for, and value of students' experiences and cultures; courage to question mainstream school knowledge and ways; willingness to go beyond established frameworks; and a passion for equality and justice (p. 145 as cited in Gay 2010).

In an effort to directly address the work of teacher educators, Villegas and Lucas (2002) present a vision of culturally responsive teaching and couple this with an illustration of how to infuse multicultural instruction throughout the pre-service curriculum. The authors identify six characteristics of a culturally responsive teacher: sociocultural consciousness; affirming attitude toward students from diverse backgrounds; commitment and skills to act as change agents; constructivist views of learning; learning about students; and culturally responsive teaching practices.

Looking across all of these recommendations, several broader concepts emerge including pedagogical knowledge, teacher attitudes toward diversity, understanding diversity and student differences, and qualities of social justice. There is a distinct emphasis on pedagogical content knowledge, including culturally responsive strategies, constructivist views of learning, and how to create culturally appropriate instruction. A focus on teacher attitudes toward diversity is reflected in the recommendations that teachers have empathy for students' experiences and cultures and have a sociocultural consciousness. Understanding diversity and student differences is present in recommendations that pre-service teachers have knowledge of other cultures and know how to learn about diverse cultures. Proficiencies related to social justice include questioning mainstream school knowledge, demonstrating a passion for equality and justice, antiracist behaviors, and becoming systemic reformers. Other proficiencies

include the need to be members of caring communities and understanding the role of education in society.

Teacher Education Recommendations

Other recommendations relate more directly to reforming teacher education. While there are recommendations related to teacher recruitment and faculty diversity, I will focus here on recommendations related to the curricular and programmatic approaches in teacher education.

Zimpher and Ashburn (1992) argue that teacher education needs to include an appreciation for diversity, a belief in the value of cooperation, and a belief in the importance of a caring community (p. 49-50).

Cochran-Smith (1995) argues for significant changes in teacher education. Instead of focusing on linear lesson planning, she argues that student teachers should have opportunities to develop systematic and self-critical inquiry to reconsider personal knowledge and experience, to locate teaching within the culture of the school and community, to analyze children's learning opportunities, to understand children's understanding, and to construct reconstructionist pedagogy (p. 500).

Gay (2000) suggests that teacher training should center around six areas: multicultural classroom communications; awareness of the foundational principles of multicultural teaching, including why it is needed; multicultural pedagogical knowledge and skills; multicultural performance appraisal; public relations skills for culturally diverse groups; and multicultural change agency (p. 10).

Abbate-Vagn (2008), links specific proficiencies with pedagogies. She recommends using process writing to facilitate teacher candidates' social reconstruction

of knowledge related to previously held notions about diverse communities and using ethnic autobiographical literature to increase candidates' understanding of their students' parents (p. 176).

A 2005 report by the National Academy of Education's Committee on Teacher Education suggests that teacher education needs to include opportunities for teachers to learn about their students and the communities from which they come, about themselves and how their past experiences frame their ways of knowing and what they believe, and about how to learn from teaching (Banks et al., 2005, p. 264).

Nieto (2000) articulates three factors that teacher education programs must consider in preparing teacher education students for diverse classrooms: take a stand of social justice and diversity, make social justice ubiquitous in teacher education, and promote teaching as a lifelong journey of transformation (as cited in Howard & Aleman, p. 165).

Several themes emerge from across these recommendations. These include recommendations that teacher education programs focus on having teacher candidates learn about themselves and their students, the role of teaching in greater society, and about how to learn. Teacher education programs are also called to equip teacher candidates with communication skills and multicultural pedagogical approaches. Finally, multiple experts call for social justice to be a focal stance of teacher education programs. As noted earlier, however, these recommendations for pre-service teacher proficiencies and specific programmatic approaches are often without a solid research base. Grant and Gibson (2011) argue that while several teacher educators have articulated a vision of what improved multicultural teacher education looks like, "these visions of culturally

relevant, multicultural, equitable, and socially just education are not always explicitly woven into research on teacher education” (p. 27).

In examining the tools teacher education programs use to assess candidates and how programs use this data to improve teacher education, this study will hopefully contribute to the field’s understanding about assessment practices. This review now turns to the overall policy context surrounding the reform of efforts to educate teacher candidates for diverse learners.

Policy Context

As previously mentioned, there are multiple policy approaches to addressing the challenges of educating teachers to meet the needs of diverse learners. Policy can be impacted at the national, state, local or institutional level, and professional or organizational level (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2011). Federal mandates and funding opportunities, such as Race to the Top, impact teacher education. At the state level, state regulations regarding teacher licensure, certification, and accreditation as well as state advisory agencies have the potential to impact policy (p. 342). At the local or institutional level, local school districts, higher education institutions, and other teacher preparation providers influence teacher preparation, including providing professional development to in-service teachers to meet the needs of diverse student learners (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2011, Sleeter, 2001). Finally, at the professional or organizational level, regional and professional accreditors, including NCATE, as well as professional organizations in the subject areas and teacher organizations play a role in

policies that impact teachers' ability to meet the needs of diverse learners (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2011, p. 342).

This study focuses on the last of these approaches, the regulatory role of NCATE as a national accreditor. It intersects, however, with the approaches taken by institutions of higher education in their efforts to reform teacher education. These approaches include:

- increasing the diversity of teacher education faculty,
- recruiting more culturally and linguistically diverse students into teacher education programs, and
- reforming the structure and content of teacher education programs to develop the existing teacher candidates (Trent, Kea, & Oh, 2008; Sleeter, 2001).

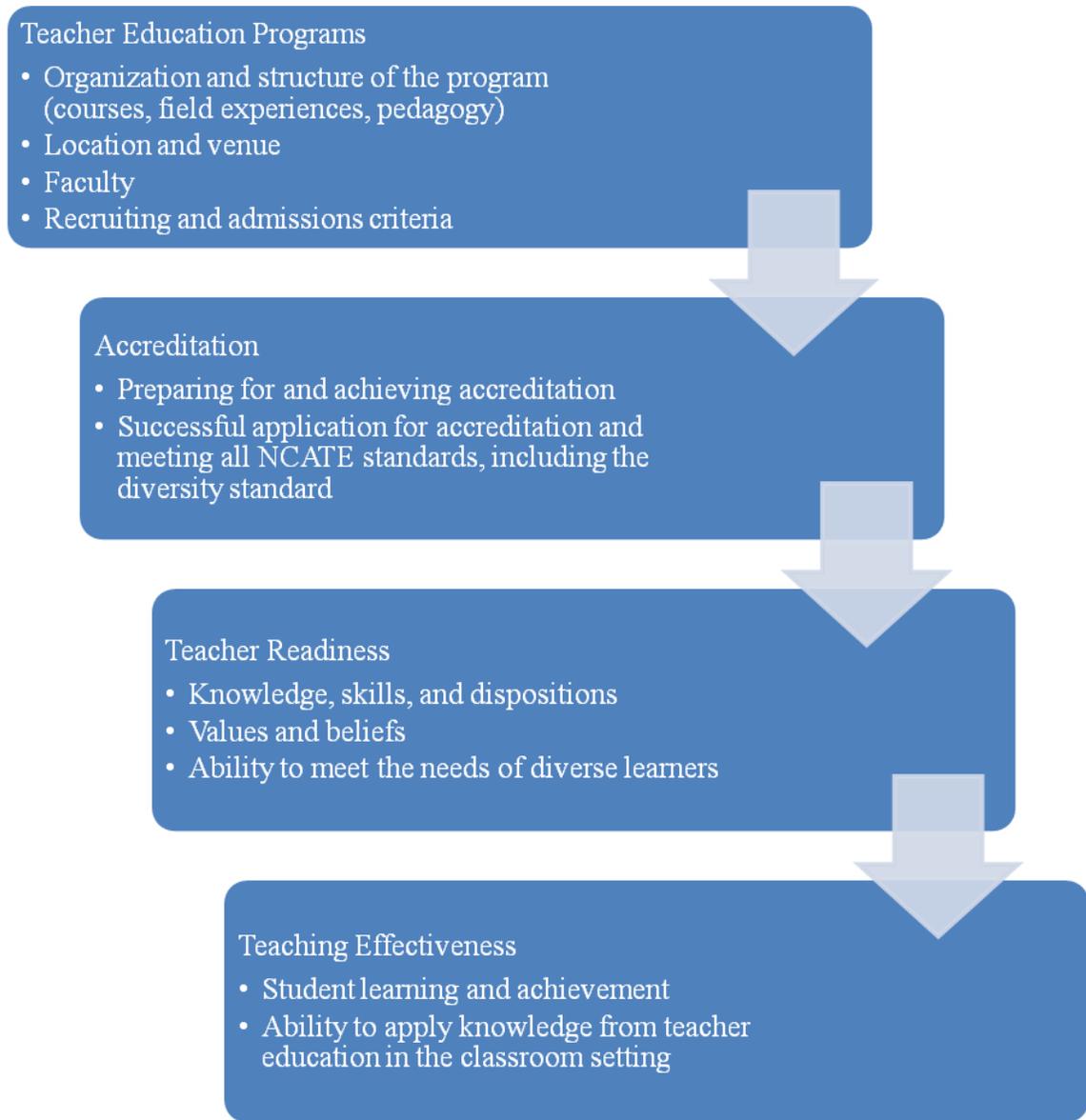
Ongoing policy debates in teacher education can be characterized as pushes between professionalization and deregulation (Cochran-Smith et al. 2004; Grant & Gibson, 2011). The professionalization supporters advocate standards- and knowledge-based teacher preparation and teacher assessments based on school and classroom performance (Cochran-Smith et al., 2004, p. 935). NCATE, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment Support Curriculum are examples of organizations supporting this agenda (Cochran-Smith, et al. 2004; Grant & Gibson, 2011).

On the opposite side, the deregulation agenda is characterized by a movement to deregulate teacher preparation. Supporters advocate alternative routes into teaching and high-stakes teacher tests as gatekeepers to the profession. Deregulation supporters

include the Fordham Foundation, the Heritage Foundation, and the Manhattan Institute (Cochran-Smith et al., 2004 p. 935).

Within the professionalization agenda, NCATE takes the role of holding teacher preparation programs accountable to its standards. The theory of action underlying the role of NCATE can be represented as indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 3: Accreditation Theory of Action



The theory states that schools of education will be better prepared to create teacher readiness and ultimately teaching effectiveness by meeting the diversity standard through its accreditation process. The main challenge with this theory of action is that

there are still large gaps in our understanding of how teacher preparation is linked to student achievement.

NCATE Accreditation

To more fully explore this theory of action I describe the history of the NCATE diversity standard and other diversity proficiencies, the process teacher education programs undergo to become accredited, the evidence on the effectiveness and impact of accreditation, and critiques of accreditation.

History of NCATE's Diversity Standard

The current version of NCATE's accreditation standards requires units to meet acceptable levels on a rubric for six standards: (1) candidate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions; (2) assessment system and unit evaluation; (3) field experiences and clinical practice; (4) diversity; (5) faculty qualifications, performance, and development; and (6) unit governance and resources (see Appendix A). This study focuses explicitly on the diversity standard that states:

“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, 2008)

This diversity standard did not exist in this same form throughout NCATE’s history, however.

In 1972, the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education’s Commission on Multicultural Education, issued its ‘No One Model American’ statement that defined multicultural education (Gollnick, 1992). The Commission, with support from the National Institute of Education appointed a committee to make recommendations on how to impact NCATE’s standards. As a result, in 1979, NCATE added multicultural education to its standards (Gollnick, 1992; Trent et al., 2008).

In the 1990 revision of the standards, NCATE dropped the separate multicultural standard and integrated multicultural components into four different standards: professional studies, field-based and clinical experiences, student admission into professional education, and faculty qualifications and assignments (Ladson-Billings, 1999).

In 1992, a review of the standards by NCATE’s Standards Committee of the Unit Accreditation Board resulted in rewritten indicators that made attention to diversity explicit (Melnick & Zeichner, 1997). Revisions included references to the design and content of teacher education curriculum, the quality of instruction for teacher candidates, collaborative relationships with the professional community, the composition of the faculty and teacher candidate body, faculty qualifications and governance, and the accountability of the unit responsible for preparing teachers (p. 24-25).

The 1995 standards revised the definition of diversity and added definitions of global perspective and multicultural perspective. The indicators related to the recruitment of diverse candidates were revised and included the addition of explicit plans for recruiting diverse student bodies and an annual evaluation of the success in meeting recruitment goals. Similar adjustments were made regarding the recruitment of diverse higher education faculty. Indicators of faculty diversity were also revised to reflect the formal study by faculty of cultural differences and exceptionalities (Gollnick, 2007).

In 2001, there were further changes to the standards, including revisions of the definitions of diversity, global perspective, and multicultural perspective. Most notably, in the 2001 standards, an entire standard was once again dedicated to diversity. Elements related to diversity were also found in the other standards (Gollnick, 2007). In 2006, in a controversial move, NCATE removed the term “social justice” from its glossary of terms describing educator dispositions⁶. The current standards, published in 2008, continue to devote an entire standard to diversity, although diversity elements are also found in the other standards as well.

Tracking the development and revision of the NCATE standards reveals that the placement and emphasis of multicultural education and diversity have evolved over time. The revisions to both the standard and the accompanying definitions are reflective of the evolution of the approaches to multicultural education in the field. As this study will subsequently explore, it is also indicative of a wide-ranging and evolving definition of what diversity means in teacher education.

⁶ Cochran-Smith and Fries (2011b) provide a more complete description of the removal of the term “social justice” from NCATE’s glossary, including the request by the National Association of Scholars’ to the U.S. Department of Education to investigate the “educational and constitutional propriety” of the term “social justice” (p. 193-195).

Diversity Standards and Proficiencies

NCATE's diversity standard states that units must clearly articulate the proficiencies related to diversity that candidates are expected to develop in their professional programs (NCATE, 2008). The literature reveals that there are a variety of recommendations and practices in place related to how diversity proficiencies are defined. Banks (2004) states that there is an emerging consensus about the aims and scope of multicultural education, but the variety of typologies, conceptual schemes, and perspectives in the field reflect that complete agreement about the aims and boundaries of the field have not yet been obtained. Findings from this study regarding the range and variety of teacher education programs' diversity proficiencies confirm this assertion.

Diversity proficiencies can be examined from a policy perspective (either at the national or state level) or from the vantage point of an individual program. State and national level policies often provide broader outlines of what teachers should know and be able to do in regards to meeting the needs of diverse students, whereas individual programs may define specific proficiencies they seek to develop in teacher candidates.

Diversity standards at the state level are often informed by national standards (Akiba et al., 2010). Akiba et al. (2010) conducted a content analysis of teacher certification and program accreditation across all 50 states and the District of Columbia and found that the majority of the states (29) rely, wholly or in part, on national standards by NCATE, TEAC, or INTASC (p. 452). The remaining states rely solely on their own state standards for accreditation.

The NCATE diversity standard has already been described. The current draft of Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards includes the Learning Differences Standard: "the teacher uses understanding of individual differences

and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that allow each learner to reach his/her full potential” (INTASC, 2010).

TEAC’s “multicultural perspectives and accuracy” is one of three themes for Principal I: Evidence of Candidates Learning. The theme states that candidates must “demonstrate that they have learned accurate and sound information on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives” (TEAC, n.d.).

In addition, the content-area associations and organizations, referred to by NCATE as Specialized Professional Associations (SPAs), each have their own standards which often include either a specific standard related to diversity or sub-indicators across multiple standards.

Teacher education programs are often guided by and held accountable to state or national standards set by professional organizations. It is understandable, therefore, given this number and range of standards, that the work of identifying specific proficiencies produces even greater variation. While state and national standards present a higher-level view of diversity in teacher education, specific proficiencies are identified at the local level by individual teacher preparation programs.

There is emerging knowledge about how teacher education programs adopt and adapt the diversity proficiencies of national organizations or how they create their own proficiencies. In a study of 152 public university elementary and secondary teacher preparation programs, Jennings (2007) analyzed the specific diversity topics that each university addressed. In particular, he focused on how teacher education programs prioritized the various forms of diversity relevant to the preparation of new teachers. The survey demonstrated that race/ethnicity was the most emphasized diversity topic,

followed by special needs, language diversity, economic, gender, and sexual orientation. There were some regional differences, however. For example, in California language diversity was emphasized more than race/ethnic diversity. Jennings (2007) suggests “beyond the mandates from state agencies and accreditation bodies, the types of diversity addressed in teacher education programs are ultimately reflections of the values and beliefs held by teacher education faculty” (p. 1266).

As previously described, scholars have also produced a range of recommendations for the diversity proficiencies teacher candidates should possess.

Accreditation Process

In general, professional accreditation processes are designed to insure the high quality of programs and to serve as a measure of public accountability in teacher education. According to Tamir and Wilson (2005), the accreditation movement “arose as a result of attempts to monitor and enhance program quality, for there have been concerns about teacher preparation quality for as long as there have been teacher education programs” (p. 333).

Teacher education programs can obtain national accreditation through NCATE or TEAC. Currently, NCATE has 656 accredited institutions and TEAC has a process that includes about 200 schools (Sawchuk, 2010). While NCATE is aligned with the specialty-group standards, such as the National Council of the Teachers of Mathematics, TEAC does not make such a requirement. There are also differences in governance: NCATE is governed by its own members; TEAC is governed by individuals who hold the

same roles but do not represent specific organizations (Murray, 2005). TEAC also accredits individual programs, whereas NCATE accredits institutions as a unit.

However, distinctions between the two organizations will likely become less relevant as the organizations are working to merge into a single organization called the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Under the new structure, CAEP will have a 20 member governing board that will include the CAEP president, postsecondary expertise, Pre-K-12 practitioners, and members from the public at large (Sawchuk, 2010).

At the present time, NCATE fulfills its role as a regulatory agency through its accreditation process. In a multi-year process, units pass through several phases beginning with declaring the intent to seek NCATE accreditation, meeting pre-conditions, and meeting specialized professional association standards. The unit then submits its institutional report documenting how the unit meets NCATE standards. NCATE's Board of Examiners reviews the institutional report and conducts a site visit before a final determination is made.

The Board of Examiners (BOE) includes representatives from three constituency groups: teacher educators, teachers, and state/local policymakers or specialty groups (NCATE, 2011). Each BOE team has members from each of the three groups. All BOE members undergo training by NCATE on the application of standards.

The BOE consists of three to eight members who visit the institution to interview faculty, candidates, staff, graduates and employers to gather additional data on the programs. The BOE writes a report summarizing its findings and the institution may

write a follow-up report in response (NCATE, 2008). All materials are submitted to NCATE's Unit Accreditation Board that makes the final decision.

Next, I will consider the existing literature on the evidence of the effectiveness and impact of accreditation as well as criticisms of the accreditation process.

Evidence of Effectiveness and the Impact of Accreditation

Few studies have been conducted on the effectiveness or impact of accreditation, so it is difficult to draw conclusions. However, some research has explored accreditation by examining specific indicators including educator opinion, teacher licensing scores, the rankings of schools of education, the impact of the process of applying for accreditation, and the relationship between accreditation and diversity.

In Goodlad's (1990) case studies, interviews with college presidents, provosts, and teacher education professors revealed a variety of educator opinions on the benefits of NCATE accreditation. Some educators noted the ability of accreditation to provide validation in the academic community, while others were skeptical about the value of NCATE and questioned the costs and cumbersome process. However, Goodlad (1990) acknowledges there are methodological challenges presented by using educator opinions and he found differences between the opinions he reports and the actual conditions in the universities studied.

Passing scores on the Praxis I and Praxis II were found higher for students attending NCATE accredited institutions than for students from other institutions in a study by Gitomer and Latham (1999). In a separate analysis, Ballou and Podgursky (1999) found that NCATE schools were found in the top, middle, and bottom of the

distribution of scores on the National Teacher Examination by institution. These two studies, however, fail to provide sufficient evidence that accreditation impacts teacher test scores one way or another.

Criticisms abound on the methods for ranking graduate schools, however they continue to represent a popular way to represent the quality of educational institutions. Vergari and Hess (2002) found that 14 of the top 25 graduate schools of education ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* were not accredited by NCATE. However, *U.S. News and World Report's* rankings are based on “quality assessment” (which is a reputation score), student selectivity, faculty resources, and research activity. Therefore, these rankings, which do not include any measures of candidate success or learning, do not help clarify the link between accreditation and program effectiveness. Further, graduate education programs often include a range of programs beyond just teacher preparation.

There are examples in academic literature of schools of education describing the impact of the accreditation process (Jingzi & Bareea-Marlys, 2008; Phillips, Docheff, Sawicki, & Crawford, 2002). These qualitative studies reveal information about the benefits and challenges of applying for accreditation, and may include specific knowledge gained by the applicants that was used to improve specific elements of the local program. However, these studies fail to reveal much about the link between the application process and the effectiveness of accreditation.

In addition to analyzing accreditation generally, one study in particular attempts to evaluate NCATE's diversity standard. Using data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), McKittrick (2005) compared teacher candidates to all other respondents at the institution and found that teacher candidates had fewer conversations

related to diversity. However, she also found that compared to freshmen, senior teacher candidates reported higher scores of the effect of the institution on their knowledge, skills, and personal growth with respect to diversity.

Critique of Accreditation

Criticisms of NCATE and the accreditation process relevant to this study center around three main issues: (a) procedural criticisms; (b) controversy and criticisms of NCATE's diversity standard; and (c) the lack of research examining the relationship between accreditation and the effectiveness of teacher education programs. First, criticisms of the process itself include lack of transparency surrounding the members of the Board of Examiners, the compromises made in determining standards, and measurement challenges.

In their book entirely dedicated to criticisms of NCATE, Johnson, Johnson, Farenga, and Ness (2005), argue that the lack of transparency by NCATE in facilitating access to the curriculum vitae of the Board of Examiners is hypocritical. They write, "If NCATE supports transparency of teachers' credentials, shouldn't NCATE and its [Specialized Professional Associations] follow suit with public disclosure of the backgrounds of their examiners, reviewers, and staff?" (p. 133).

The authors also find fault in NCATE's standards-development process, arguing that determining the content of the standards by using professional task forces is "at best, a sampling of topics and processes believed to be important by some often small group of individuals" (p. 92). They further criticize the make-up of the task forces, citing the minimal involvement of current classroom teachers.

Johnson et al. (2005) argue that there are measurement challenges associated with the NCATE standards. In particular, they focus on the difficulty of assessing dispositions (p. 194). Relatedly, they point out that NCATE's materials don't define or suggest what evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that standards have been met (p. 84).

Second, there are criticisms of the specific nature of NCATE's diversity standard. Feln (2004) argues that the lack of faculty dispositions is problematic: "without explicitly setting expectations for faculty dispositions regarding diversity, realizing the diversity standards may not be truly achievable" (p. 54). While Feln's criticisms were made in regards to the 2002 version of the standards, the basis for his concern remains valid, as the 2008 standards do not hold faculty accountable for dispositions related to diversity.

Others find fault with NCATE's diversity standard because it focuses on teacher candidates' ability to work with diverse students but doesn't address the problems of poverty, unequal funding, and the related problems faced by under-resourced schools (Johnson et al., 2005, p. 87).

NCATE's critics have also focused on the removal of the term "social justice" from its literature. While this does not inform the question of effectiveness directly, it is relevant to accreditation's underlying theory of action. Heybach (2009) calls the removal of the term "social justice" from NCATE's glossary an "obscure bureaucratic action" that revealed that NCATE is not the politically neutral organization it claims to be (p. 234). Baltodano (2006) argues that NCATE's diversity standard is counterproductive. She writes,

"in spite of the most recent NCATE (2000) inclusion of Standard 4 on diversity, multiculturalism is still portrayed as a policy of colored bodies, a set of symbols

and experiences, or a lesson plan, rather than a systematic combination of social policies and practices that permanently challenge racism, sexism, and class exploitation” (p. 124).

She further states that NCATE has legitimized the appropriation of the discourse on diversity and has encouraged the proliferation of social justice programs that are co-opting more progressive dialogues in education (p. 124).

To clarify, while the glossary no longer includes the term “social justice” the current (2008) NCATE standards include a subsection “NCATE and Social Justice” subsection titled “Call to Action: Ratified by NCATE’s Executive Board on October 27, 2007.” The section states that NCATE renews its “commitment to social justice in schooling for all children by demanding well-prepared educators for all children” (NCATE, 2008).

Finally, there is a significant lack of research examining the relationship between accreditation and the effectiveness of teacher education programs. The indicators used to date (educator opinion, test scores, school rankings, descriptions of the application process, and student reported data on diversity) are limited in their ability to inform discussion about the merits of accreditation. As the National Research Council describes, “the standards that do exist are not based on research that demonstrates links between particular standards and improved outcomes for students taught by teachers who were educated in a particular way because such evidence is not available” (2010, p. 159). Instead of being based on research that links standards and improved outcomes, teacher preparation accreditation, similar to other professional societies, draws on “the standards

developed by professional associations, other consensus recommendations, widely held commitments, or recognized best practices” (p. 159).

Having examined the research on preparing teachers for diverse students and the role of NCATE as an accrediting agency, this chapter now turns to exploring the weaknesses and challenges of the existing research base.

Weakness of Research

Throughout the literature there is a general understanding that the research on preparing teachers for diverse students is lacking (see, for example, Sleeter, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Trent et al., 2008; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996; Grant & Gibson, 2011). One of the main weaknesses is the disjointed or fragmented picture painted by the research literature (Sleeter 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1999). Sleeter (2001) writes, “research on preparing teachers... is very piecemeal, predominated by small-scale action research studies that – although useful locally for program improvement – together produce a disjointed and somewhat repetitious knowledge base” (p. 102).

Others criticize the lack of a link between teacher education programs and actual practice or student learning (Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996; Grant & Gibson, 2011). Grant and Gibson (2011) also note the absence of research on how specific components of teacher education, such as field experiences, impact teacher learning and the “vague vision” for assessing teacher education’s effectiveness in terms of multicultural outcomes (p. 49). Methodological challenges in linking teacher education to student learning exist across the entire field, not just for multicultural education programs (National Research Council, 2010, p. 178). Some of the major challenges for teacher education generally include the

lack of consistent outcomes, a lack of attention to context in which programs exist, and the difficulties of isolating the effects of specific program components (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). A more recent study by the National Research Council reaffirms this conclusion: “There is little firm empirical evidence to support conclusions about the effectiveness of specific approaches to teacher preparation” (2010, p. 4).

Methodological challenges include the frequent absence of a theoretical framework, the rare reporting of reliability and validity, weak descriptions of qualitative methods, and the failure to provide the characteristics and backgrounds of researchers (Trent et al., 2008).

Revisiting the Theory of Action

In Chapter One, I presented the theory of action undergirding this study. This theory of action consists of eight elements:

- the identification of diversity proficiencies by teacher education programs;
- the crafting of learning experiences;
- the measurement and evaluation of teacher candidate learning;
- the documentation of teacher preparation efforts;
- programs undergoing peer review for accreditation;
- the effective preparation of teachers for diverse learners;
- the placement of candidates in schools with diverse learners; and
- improved student learning by all students.

An examination of the literature reviewed in this chapter highlights areas where this theory of action is supported by research and where the empirical evidence is weak or non-existent.

Most of the literature on the diversity proficiencies teacher candidates need in order to be effective teachers consists of expert recommendations (Garibaldi, 1992; Howard & Aleman, 2008; Jordan-Irvine, 2003; Nieto, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner, 1993). Looking across these recommendations, several proficiencies emerge, including teacher attitudes toward diversity, understanding diversity and student differences, qualities of social justice such as questioning mainstream school knowledge and becoming systemic reformers, and culturally responsive strategies. These proficiencies, however, are not clearly linked to a research-base demonstrating that the inclusion of such proficiencies in teacher education programs leads to increased teacher effectiveness. However, Jordan-Irvine (n.d.) suggests that by incorporating culturally relevant pedagogy into teacher evaluation instruments would encourage teachers to develop the expertise needed to maximize the achievement of all students. Further, it would provide additional observational data on the effectiveness of culturally relevant pedagogy. Jordan-Irvine (n.d.) maps elements of culturally responsive pedagogy to Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching in order to determine whether the principles between two align. While this mapping only focuses on PK-12 students, this type of work, and similar mappings of diversity proficiencies to observation or other assessment tools at the higher education level, could deepen the thin research base that currently underlies existing proficiencies.

Based on programs identified proficiencies, teacher education programs craft learning experiences, through the use of content and curricula as well as specific pedagogical approaches. The literature on specific approaches to teacher education is predominantly characterized by small-scale studies, often self-studies of specific

programs or courses. It is difficult, therefore, to draw sound empirical conclusions about what content or pedagogies most effectively prepare teacher candidates for diverse student learners. There is some evidence that studying structural inequality can be used for pedagogical decision making, that culture must be woven through an entire program to be effective, and that prejudice reduction efforts can have short-term impacts on candidates' attitudes and beliefs (Grant & Gibson, 2011; Hollins & Guzman, 2005). Research suggests there is limited impact of a stand-alone course on teacher candidates' knowledge, attitudes, and practices, however other research suggests that courses in bilingual education and multicultural education can have a positive influence on teachers' multicultural attitudes (Banks et al., 2005; Capella-Santana, 2003; Huber-Warring, Mitchell, Alagic, & Gibson, 2005.) Other researchers warn of the possible negative effects on teacher beliefs of diversity courses (Silverman, 2010).

Research on field experiences is also inconclusive. Some research suggests that intense experiences, placements in urban settings, or community-based field experiences can have positive impact on candidates' acceptance of diverse students (Grant & Secada, 1990; Hollins & Guzman, 2005). However, other studies find that field experiences don't impact candidates' willingness to serve in urban environments and that cross-cultural experiences may even serve to strengthen and legitimate prejudices and stereotypes (Grande et al., 2009; Grant, Burns, Schmidt & Marable, 2009; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996).

The theory of action assumes then, that teacher education programs can effectively assess and evaluate candidate-learning resulting from the experiences in teacher preparation programs. Some research on the assessment of candidate learning has focused on teacher satisfaction with teacher preparation programs (Cross, 2003;

Masci & Stotko, 2006). There are very few examples, however, to ground recommendations on specific approaches to assessment. Villagas and Lucas (2006) present a detailed description of how their teacher education program aligned its diversity standards, with learning experiences and assessments. Boston College's Teachers for a New Era also presents a range of assessment tools researched to provide multiple measures of outcomes of teacher education for social justice (Cochran-Smith, Mietescu & Shakman, 2009).

Very little is known about how effectively teacher education programs can document their own programs. This link in the theory of action, therefore, is quite tenuous. There are some examples in the academic literature of schools of education describing the impact of the accreditation process (Jingzi & Bareea-Marlys, 2008; Phillips, Docheff, Sawicki, & Crawford, 2002), but these do not provide evidence as to how effectively or not programs are able to self-document their own approaches to diversity proficiencies, learning experiences, and assessments.

The final elements in the theory of action, the effective preparation of teacher candidates, the placement of candidates in diverse schools, and the improved learning by all students, have almost no support in the research literature. Admittedly, linking teacher preparation to student learning is a challenge for the entire field. This challenge is exacerbated even further when the lens used to assess the impact of teacher preparation is focused specifically on preparing candidates for diverse student learners.

Undoubtedly, this is the part of the theory of action that is least supported by research.

However, this study is based on the unproved assumption that these links hold true.

Research Needs

The call for additional research among scholars is both frequent and wide-ranging. We need to know more about the nature of teacher education programs and their preparation of candidates for diverse learners. We need to understand the nature and structure of multicultural teacher education programs, the cost of the programs, the specifics of courses, readings, assignments, and pedagogical strategies that work, the characteristics and effectiveness of field experiences, and identifying programs that are successful in preparing teachers for diverse students (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 2011).

There are also calls to build an understanding of the links between teacher education programs, teachers' practice in classrooms and, ultimately, student learning (Howard & Aleman, 2008; Hollins & Guzman, 2005).

More research is needed on the human capital systems surrounding teacher education as well. This includes understanding the admissions practices, the qualifications and experiences of teacher educators charged with preparing teachers for diverse learners, and examining the successful practices of alternative certification routes in terms of recruiting diverse learners (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 2011).

The field needs to address the current lack of focus on the outcomes of effective teacher education for diverse learners. We need information about how to assess the effectiveness of teacher education for diverse students at various points including entry into teacher education programs, at the end of programs, and once teachers are practicing in the classroom (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Hollins & Guzman, 2005).

Finally, there is a need for new modes of research, specifically studies that examine multiple sites as well as longitudinal studies. (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Hollins & Guzman, 2005). Cochran-Smith argues that marginalization and under-funding “help explain why there has been little change in multicultural teacher education practice and teacher education” (p. 946) and that additional funding and support are needed to allow for thoughtful and well-developed comparative research.

In this review of the literature on teacher education programs’ preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners and the role of NCATE as an accrediting agency, I have presented the research and policy background for my study. In examining the diversity proficiencies used by teacher education programs that are “target” on NCATE’s diversity standard, the assessment tools they use to assess their candidates, and how programs use this information to improve teacher education, I hope to contribute to the ongoing understanding of how best to prepare teacher candidates for diverse learners.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

There are significant gaps in our understanding about how teacher education programs impact student learning and further, how accreditation impacts teacher education programs. This study focuses on eleven institutions that met the “target” level on NCATE’s diversity standard and sheds some light on the assessment of the diversity education of pre-service teachers. This study examines each of these eleven institutions and asks: (1) What are the diversity proficiencies that units expect of their candidates and how do they compare across units?; (2) What are the assessment tools used to provide evidence about candidates proficiencies related to diversity?; and (3) How do units use the assessment data to improve the units’ teacher education programs and candidates’ abilities to work with diverse student learners?.

This study is a qualitative content analysis of pre-existing NCATE data. A grounded theory approach was used in order to create an understanding of the characteristics and practices of the teacher preparation programs being studied. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, this grounded theory method was spiral in nature. In accordance with such a methodology, the study did not begin with preconceived codes, but instead codes were generated directly from the data (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 291).

In this chapter I explain my relationship with the eleven institutions and NCATE, present the method for site selection, and describe the data used in the study. Then, I

outline the process used for data analysis and I conclude by examining limitations of the study.

Relationship with Participants

This study was made possible through cooperation with NCATE. Through an arrangement with NCATE, the national office provided access to the institutional data. In preparation for conducting this research, NCATE leadership presented a range of research questions that were of interest to the organization. Ultimately, however, the research questions were developed independently of NCATE and only tangentially relate to any of their suggested questions. NCATE also facilitated access to the data and several inquiries were made to the Director of Information Systems in order to obtain proper access to the data. This relationship with NCATE presents a potential threat to validity. However, NCATE leadership was not involved in the data analysis nor in any subsequent writings.

Site Selection

The sites were determined based on available data. The most recent and complete data available in NCATE's online data system at the time of the study was from three reporting periods: Fall 2008, Spring 2009, and Fall 2009. During those three reporting periods, information was available for a total of 148 units (54 in Fall 2008, 43 in Spring 2009, and 51 in Fall 2009). Of those 148 units, there were eleven colleges or universities

(7.4 percent) who met the "target" level on the diversity Standard 4a. These eleven institutions form the basis of the study.

If data relevant to the research questions was reported in response to Standard 4d it was included in the study. However, the above-mentioned institutions may not have achieved the "target" level on both Standard 4a and Standard 4d. Data from Standard 4d was most frequently included when it clarified or expanded explanation of assessment instruments addressed in Standard 4a.

Data

This study used an unobtrusive method as the textual data exists independent of this study. The benefits of using pre-existing data are two-fold: the data are not influenced through researcher interaction and they exist regardless of the research being done (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 286). For each of the eleven units, four sets of documents were reviewed: Institutional Reports submitted by each unit, accompanying supplemental documents provided by each unit as a part of the Institutional Report, Board of Examiners reports, and the Unit Accreditation Board report. In total, the following 115 documents were coded and analyzed:

- 11 Institutional Reports (Standard 4 section)
- More than 82 related external documents submitted by units to supplement Institutional Reports. This document count is somewhat misleading since some documents are individual documents, whereas in other cases units submit packages of information that are contained in one document, but actually include multiple sub-documents.

- 11 Board of Examiners Reports (Standard 4 section, including the “Overall Assessment of Standard”, “Strengths” and “Areas for Improvement and Rationales” sections)
- 11 Unit Accreditation Board reports (Standard 4 section)

Only content pertaining to initial certification programs at the undergraduate level was analyzed in order to provide for the greatest degree of comparability. Not all of the eleven institutions had initial programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Therefore, to increase the relevance of comparisons, only initial undergraduate programs were included.

The documents provided insight in each of the three research questions: (1) the proficiencies assessed, (2) the types of assessment instruments used by units to assess candidates' proficiencies related to diversity and (3) how the units used the assessment data. Different subsections of the documents were reviewed for each of the three parts of the study. This is described in detail later in this chapter.

Text data was accessed using the Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS). AIMS is the online system NCATE uses to manage the entire accreditation process. Data prior to the time period analyzed (Fall 2008 to Fall 2009) was available only in paper documents and was not included in this study. As of April, 2011 there were 731 institutions in AIMS, however the accreditation process occurs only every 7 years. About 120 institutions undergo the accreditation process every year.

Each institution has the following information in AIMS:

1. Institutional Detail – This includes descriptive details including whether the institution is private or public, the offering of online courses, the dean, and personnel and other information.
2. Part C of the Annual Report – This includes the visit record, accreditation status, areas of improvement status, and any substantive changes that have occurred in the past year, such as budget changes, an increase or decrease in enrollment or faculty, changes in program delivery, or other changes.
3. Self Study – This includes the Institutional Reports submitted by the units. It also includes Specialized Professional Associations (SPA) assessments that are conducted two years prior to NCATE’s unit review. See Appendix C for the questions in the Institutional Report related to the diversity standard.
4. Board of Examiners Report (BOE) – The Board of Examiners consists of an equal number of representatives from three groups: teacher educators, teachers, and state and local policymakers/specialty groups (NCATE, 2008). Board members are nominated by member organizations and receive training by NCATE prior to participating in a unit review. The report is prepared by the Board of Examiners team that conducts the on-site accreditation review of a unit and describes if and how a unit meets the NCATE standards and recommends any areas for improvement (NCATE, 2008).
5. Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) report – This includes the final determination of whether the unit met each standard.

Finally, an interview was conducted with the Senior Vice President of NCATE in order to understand the history of Standard 4, to highlight the intentions and focus of

Standard 4, and to clarify procedural matters regarding the accreditation process. The interview and other email communications focused on four areas: the historical development of Standard 4; how distinctions were made between unacceptable, acceptable, and target levels; and processes and procedures for guiding Board of Examiners' visits to institutions.

Data Analysis

This study uses Charmaz's (2006) grounded theory approach to first code and then write memos on the main documents for each of the eleven institutions selected (Institutional Reports, supplemental documents, Board of Examiners Reports, and Unit Accreditation Board reports). In selecting a ground theory methodology, the advantages and disadvantages of the methodology were considered. This study could have been conducted by applying an existing typology (such as Sleeter and Grant's typology of multicultural education (1987)). This approach would have allowed for a certain degree of standardized comparisons across units. However since there was not a universal approach to teacher education by each of the eleven units studied, a grounded theory approach allows for considerable advantages.

Applying some sort of standardization would foster comparability, but the open-ended grounded theory approach allows the characteristics of the units' dispositions and assessments to emerge independent of a pre-determined typology. In a sense, it allows the data to speak for itself. A grounded theory approach also has advantages for the specific research questions in this study. The questions do not focus on whether or not units applied a particular approach or if they included specific diversity proficiencies,

instead the questions are designed to paint a descriptive picture of the characteristics of units selected by NCATE as being “target.”

QSR International’s NVIVO software was used to manage the process of coding and writing memos. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), "the idea of a grounded theory approach is to read carefully through the data and to uncover major categories and concepts and ultimately the properties of these categories and their interrelationships" (p. 349). Before the data could be used in NVIVO, each document was downloaded from NCATE’s AIMS system and converted into a non-PDF format that could be read by NVIVO. Each document was coded to describe the content of each statement and memos were written to raise the codes to the level of a category. Using NVIVO, each document was divided into sections for each of the questions appearing in the Institutional Reports or Board of Examiners reports. Supplemental documents from the Institutional Reports were treated as external documents and were uploaded using a separate file structure. I created a node in NVIVO for each of the three research questions, with sub-nodes for each of the diversity proficiencies, assessment tools, and reported data uses. Each sub-node was then linked to a corresponding memo that summarized the findings within each related sub-node.

Ultimately, using grounded theory and the process of coding and memoing informed the research questions by describing the proficiencies identified by units, assessments of these proficiencies, and how units used the resulting assessment data. Each of the three research questions required particular approaches to the documents. In general, most of the data was gathered from the Institutional Reports and supplemental documents. The Board of Examiners reports occasionally contained additional data

gathered from the site visits that was related to the research questions. The Unit Accreditation Board reports were used only to confirm that the recommendations by the Board of Examiners were accepted for final determination by NCATE. For an example of a specific set of coded text, see Appendix D.

Proficiencies

The only document used to describe the concepts and themes present in unit proficiencies was the units' answers to question 4a.1 in the Institutional Reports ("What proficiencies related to diversity are candidates expected to develop and demonstrate"?). Each of the unit's answers was initially reviewed and coded. As concepts emerged, the categories were refined and the proficiencies were re-analyzed against these categories. Finally, text searches were conducted on the resulting categories to ensure that all relevant proficiencies were included in each category.

Assessments

For the second research question, the review and coding of documents took place in five phases. Initially, the IR and BOE documents were reviewed and coded for the specific standard. The "overall" evaluations, "strengths" sections, and "areas in need of improvement" sections of the BOE reports were also reviewed and coded. In the second phase, the supplemental documents referred to in the relevant sections of the IR were reviewed and coded. Third, several rounds of memos were written to aggregate similar codes and draw attention to the emerging themes. Additional full-text queries were conducted on related terms across all documents (Institutional Reports Standard 4, Board

of Examiners Reports Standard 4, Board of Examiners Reports "overall", "strengths", and "areas in need of improvement" sections, and units' supporting documents submitted for Standard 4) to test the possible categories and to identify any additional relevant mentions. Fourth, the negative cases were further investigated to ensure that additional references to a specific category did not appear elsewhere in the report. Finally, after finalizing the categories, each unit's documents were reviewed one last time to ensure accuracy.

Additional criteria were developed for inclusion as the study progressed.

Assessments that were described as being implemented as a pilot or described as in the unit's future plans were included in the study. It is also important to note that in the analysis that follows, it is possible that an assessment appears in multiple categories. For example, if a unit reported using candidate portfolios that included research papers, the unit is represented in both the portfolio and research paper categories. As noted earlier, only assessments in initial programs at the undergraduate level are included in this study. Appendix D provides an example of what the raw coded data for an assessment tool looks like.

Use of Assessment Data

To determine how the units used assessment data, all answers to questions 4a, 4d, and optional questions in Standard 4 from the Institutional Reports were reviewed along with the Board of Examiners reports. Two notable exclusions from the analysis were made. First, simple reports of the outcomes of assessments without description of how the data was used by the unit were not included in this section of the analysis. For

example, if a unit reported its candidates' scores on Praxis II without any further description, it does not allow the reader to understand if or how this data was used to inform the development of the teacher preparation program. Second, descriptions of general planning by the unit that did not include explicit mention of the use of assessment data were also not included.

Limitations and Assumptions

Limitations associated with this study include a reliance on self-reported data, a non-random sampling, and the lack of greater contextual information. The findings in this study reflect only what units reported in Standard 4 of their Institutional Reports. This means that if the unit did not report the data in the Standard 4 section, it is not included in the results of this study. For example, if a unit were to have a diversity-related item in its alumni survey but did not report this in the Standard 4 section of the Institutional Report, it is not reflected here. However, while the entire Institutional Report was not coded, if part of what the unit reported in Standard 4 was unclear, information from other Standards was used to clarify details of the report.

Another limitation of this study is the reliance on self-reported data in the Institutional Reports. The data that forms the basis of this study is the information collected by NCATE that is used to determine eligibility for accreditation. The bulk of this data is included in the Institutional Reports that colleges and universities submit to NCATE describing the scope and nature of their teacher education programs as they relate to each of NCATE's standards. This study offsets this limitation somewhat by also analyzing data submitted by the Board of Examiners following site-visits and a review of

the Institutional Reports. Without further corroboration of the data through other means, such as case-studies of the eleven units, the extent of this limitation is impossible to estimate.

Internal validity of this study is threatened by lack of random selection of participants. Eleven units were selected for this study based on their “target” rating by NCATE. This is a non-random sampling and limits the ability of the findings to be generalized to a larger context. In order improve the validity of the findings, negative cases or instances that did not fit the initial analysis were sought out and reviewed. Also, a final examination of the data was done to review for internal consistency. In addition, the use of multiple sources of data (institutional reports, and the board of examiners reports) improves validity.

Generalizability of the study is limited and does not extend beyond the programs studied. It is hoped, however, that the findings will inform both teacher education programs as they consider appropriate assessments of teacher candidates and NCATE in its continual evaluation of applicants and its own standards.

Finally, this study had limited access to contextual data surrounding the documents that were analyzed. Other than what is described in the documents themselves, no background information is known about the conditions under which institutions apply for accreditation, the authors of the unit-written documents, or the backgrounds of members of the Board of Examiner teams. Additional case study research on each of the institutions and/or the Board of Examiners would help alleviate this limitation, however this was beyond the scope and capacity of this dissertation.

This study is based on the assumption that the institutions' determined to be at the "target" level on NCATE's standard are actually worthy of being identified as successfully preparing teachers for diverse classrooms. Further, identification as "target" applies to the entire subsection of Standard 4, not just to the units' proficiencies or assessment practices. This study assumes that the specific subsections related to the units' proficiencies and assessment practices are also worthy of identification as "target." A fundamental challenge to this assumption is that each Board of Examiners team consists of different members, and therefore there is no consistency in the personnel examining the eleven units. It can be argued, however, that so little is known about how units' assessment practices compare with each other, that even if the consistency of the "target" level is questioned this study can still offer the field valuable insights.

Summary

To conclude, this study examines the eleven units that met the "target" level on the section of NCATE's diversity standard that focuses on the design, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum and experiences. It relies on pre-existing data from NCATE's accreditation system, namely the reports submitted by units to apply for accreditation and the subsequent reports issued by NCATE. A grounded theory approach was used to code and memo the data in order to understand the units' diversity proficiencies, the tools used to assess teacher candidates, and how units use this information to inform the development of their teacher education programs.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This chapter examines the undergraduate initial teacher preparation programs of eleven units with the ultimate goal of better understanding how units rated as “target” by NCATE prepare teacher candidates for diverse student learners. The findings reflect what each of the eleven units report in their applications for NCATE accreditation. The study presents a multi-institutional analysis of the types of proficiencies and assessments units use to evaluate their candidates and their own programs.

From Fall, 2008 to Fall, 2009, NCATE identified eleven units that were rated as “target” on the “design, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum and experiences” part of the diversity standard. This study examines each of these eleven institutions to understand: (1) What are the diversity proficiencies units expect of their candidates and how do they compare across units?; (2) What are the assessment tools used to provide evidence about candidates’ proficiencies related to diversity?; and (3) How do these units use the assessment data to improve their own programs and candidates’ ability to work with diverse student learners?. This chapter analyzes the data reported by units in their Institutional Reports, supplemental documents, Board of Examiners reports, and Unit Accreditation Board reports to address these questions.

Understanding the Eleven Units

The eleven units in this study were selected because they met NCATE’s “target” level in the Board of Examiner report for Standard 4a. The eleven units vary significantly

in terms of the size of their teacher education programs, public-private status, religious affiliation, and location. All but two of the units offer programs at both the initial and advanced levels. However, as noted earlier, this study focuses exclusively on undergraduate, initial programs to allow for the greatest degree of comparability. The enrollment in the undergraduate initial preparation programs ranges from 53 to 1,130 candidates. Four units have between 50 and 200 candidates, five units have between 200 and 400 candidates, and two units have over 500 candidates.

About half of the units are public institutions (six units) and about half are private institutions (five units). Four of the five private units have religious affiliations. Two are Catholic institutions, one is Methodist, and one is affiliated with the Church of Nazarene.

The units vary in terms of their size. To provide an even comparison across institutions, data was used from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching database. This database includes information from 2008 to 2010 and categorizes institutions by full-time equivalents as very small (fewer than 1,000 FTEs), small (1,000-2,999 FTEs), medium (3,000-9,999 FTEs), or large (more than 10,000 FTEs). Of the eleven units in this study, there are six small units, two medium units, and three large units.

In the Institutional Reports, units self-identify as rural, suburban, or urban campuses. Four units self-identify as urban and four units self-identify as rural campuses. One unit identifies as rural with urban regional campuses. One unit self-identifies as suburban and one unit does not self-identify its location, but is located in suburban area. Geographically, units are located across the country with the notable lack of any institutions in the west. When described according to the geographic areas

delineated by the Census (n.d.), five units are located in the Midwest, three are located in the South, and three are located in the Northeast.

At the time of the study, nine of the units were applying to continue their NCATE accreditation and two units were applying for initial accreditation.

In the remainder of this dissertation, pseudonyms are used for each of the eleven units in order to preserve their anonymity. The pseudonyms given to the units are Birch, Cedar, Hickory, Linden, Magnolia, Maple, Oak, Poplar, Redwood, Spruce, and Willow.

Diversity Proficiencies

The first part of NCATE's Standard 4a (4a.1) focuses on the diversity proficiencies units expect their candidates to develop and demonstrate. NCATE defines proficiencies as the "required knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions identified in the professional, state, or institutional standards" (2008). The rubric for this standard refers to these proficiencies at each of the three performance levels (see Table 3).

Table 3: Sections of NCATE Standard 4a Rubric Related to Diversity Proficiencies

Performance Level	
Unacceptable	The unit has not articulated candidate proficiencies related to diversity identified in the unit’s conceptual framework.
Acceptable	The unit clearly articulates proficiencies related to diversity identified in the unit’s conceptual framework that candidates are expected to develop during their professional programs.
Target	Curriculum, field experiences, and clinical practice promote candidates’ development of knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions related to diversity identified in the unit’s conceptual framework.

This study focuses on the assessments used by units to evaluate candidates’ performances on diversity proficiencies. Therefore, it is important to understand the scope and nature of the proficiencies identified by the eleven units. The analysis of the proficiencies that follows describes the units’ proficiencies and provides important context for understanding the units’ assessment tools. It does not, however, address the differences between the acceptable and target levels of the NCATE rubric. It is beyond the scope of this study to assess the extent to which the units’ curriculum, field experiences, and clinical practice align with the proficiencies identified by the units.

However, understanding the themes and concepts included in the diversity proficiencies informs the subsequent analysis of how units assess candidates' ability to meet the needs of diverse learners.

During the time period of this study, the Institutional Reports included one question on diversity proficiencies: "What proficiencies related to diversity are candidates expected to develop and demonstrate?". The units' responses to this question were reviewed to answer the research questions: What proficiencies do each of the eleven units' expect their candidates to develop and demonstrate?; and, How do these proficiencies compare across the units?

Each of the eleven units clearly identifies diversity proficiencies in response to the question posed in Standard 4a.1. In addition, some units include broader statements of the units' overall mission or goals related to diversity. In some cases this is tied to the conceptual framework. In this study, these broader statements are not included in the analysis and only the specific proficiencies identified by the units are considered.

The number of proficiencies identified by each of the units ranges from one (Redwood) to eleven (Poplar). In this analysis, individual proficiencies may be included in multiple categories if it includes more than one diversity concept.

In four cases, units reported that their proficiencies were based on outside sources such as other standards or frameworks. These units reported using the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards, NCATE's framework and diversity definition, other national, state and professional program standards, Charlotte Danielson's framework in *Enhancing Professional Practice: A*

Framework for Teaching (1996), and Michael Fullan's *The Meaning of Educational Change* (1982).

Upon analysis of the documents, five concepts appeared in over half of the units' proficiencies:

- understanding diversity or student differences;
- adapting instruction or differentiation;
- demonstrating attitudes of respect, appreciation, sensitivity, or valuing diversity;
- focusing on the learning environment; and
- incorporating family and community.

Other proficiencies reported by more than one unit included:

- incorporating student experiences into instruction;
- believing that all children can learn;
- focusing on achievement;
- incorporating best practices;
- understanding the role of education in society;
- using student focused instruction; and
- understanding the role of technology.

In addition, there were many proficiencies that were reported by only one unit. No units shared the exact same set of proficiencies (see Table 4).

Table 4: Concepts in Diversity Proficiencies by Unit

Diversity Concept	Redwood	Linden	Magnolia	Birch	Cedar	Hickory	Maple	Oak	Poplar	Spruce	Willow	Total Units
Understand Diversity		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Adapt Instruction		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	8
Respect, Appreciation, Sensitivity		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	7
Learning Environment		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		7
Family and community		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				6
Incorporate Student Experiences	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓			5
All students can learn		✓				✓	✓				✓	4
Achievement		✓				✓						2
Best Practices						✓					✓	2
Education in Society								✓	✓			2
Student-focused Instruction			✓		✓							2
Technology			✓	✓								2
Number of Other Proficiencies			1	4	2		1	1	7		2	18

Twelve diversity concepts were reported by more than one unit. The concepts appear below from most frequently reported to least frequently reported. See Appendix E for the original wording by each of the eleven units.

Understand Diversity and/or Student Differences

Eight units include a proficiency focusing on candidates' understanding of diversity and/or student differences. Two units state this proficiency in very broad language: "understands diversity" and "knowledgeable about diversity." Three units list specific types of diversity including ethnicity, culture, gender, socioeconomic, race, social class, urban environment, diverse communities, and sexual orientation. Two units focus specifically on understanding both group and individual differences. Five units' proficiencies include student differences in learning styles or development. One unit includes an understanding of the differences between teachers and students.

Adapt Instruction

Eight units' proficiencies focus on adapting instruction or using differentiated instruction. Three units emphasize using appropriate strategies or instructional approaches. Two units describe adaptation in terms of accommodating diversity and varied individual needs. Linden includes students' strengths as a motivator for instructional design and Oak focuses on providing learning opportunities to support the growth of diverse students.

Respect, Appreciation and Sensitivity

Seven units include an emotive diversity proficiency. Four units include the respect for diversity or difference and three units include sensitivity to diversity or diversity issues. Three units include the valuing of difference and two units focus on appreciation. The statements range from very broad: “the educator appreciates and values diversity” to more specific: “the educator respects the unique cultural background, skills, talents, and interests of each student.” Cedar and Maple include the respect for families and Magnolia emphasizes the importance of appreciation within a national and global context.

Learning Environment

Seven units include a focus on the learning environment or learning community in their proficiencies. Examples of these proficiencies include:

- create a culture for learning in which individual differences are respected;
- build class community with opportunities for participation and student involvement;
- know how culturally diverse learning communities should be created;
- foster a positive learning environment... and healthy social interactions between students of diverse backgrounds; and
- create a classroom environment that promotes fairness.

Family and Community

Six units have proficiencies that include students' families and/or communities. In some cases there is overlap between this category and the "understanding diversity" and "respect, appreciation, and sensitivity" categories. Family and community proficiencies include using knowledge of students' families and communities for instruction, fostering family and community involvement, and soliciting and using the input of parents, caretakers, and families to create a healthy community.

Incorporate Students' Backgrounds in Instruction

Five units include how candidates incorporate student experiences and backgrounds into instruction in their proficiencies. These include:

- use information about students' interests, abilities, skills, backgrounds, and peer relationships to make knowledge accessible to all students;
- incorporate students' experiences, cultures, family, and community resources into instruction;
- utilize cultural differences for resources that enhance learning and cultural proficiencies for all students;
- build effectively on students' prior knowledge; and
- identify social, economic, cultural, and cognitive conditions, including exceptionalities, that influence instructional decisions.

All Students Can Learn

Four units include a proficiency focusing on the belief that all students can learn. One unit's proficiency includes a link to instruction: "design learning experiences so all can learn."

Achievement

Two units focus on student achievement in their diversity proficiencies: persistence in helping students achieve success; and positively impacting the learning of all students.

Best Practices

Two units have proficiencies on the application of best practices to student learning. No further details were provided to define or explain what these best practices are or how they should be applied.

Education in Society

Understanding education's role in society is the focus of two units' proficiencies. Oak expects candidates to reflect on the roles that teachers and education play in a political and social democracy, specifically the moral and ethical purposes of schooling. Poplar expects its candidates to understand the ways in which public schools are linked to the health of democracy and democratic processes.

Student Focused Instruction

Two units explicitly include students as the center of instruction in their proficiencies. Magnolia's proficiency is fostering student-centered, teacher facilitated instruction and Cedar expects candidates to use subject matter and activities that are meaningful to students.

Technology

Two units include the integration of technology in their diversity proficiencies.

Other Proficiencies

There are many proficiencies that are unique to an individual unit. These fall roughly into three general areas: performance, knowledge, and dispositions. These proficiencies are not evenly distributed among the units. Poplar has seven additional proficiencies, Birch has four, Cedar and Willow each have two, and Magnolia, Oak, and Maple each have one. Of the eleven units, therefore, Poplar is the only unit that has more proficiencies unique to the unit than proficiencies held in common with other units.

Performance

- Challenge assumptions and stereotypes about the identity and abilities of those who are culturally different (Poplar)
- Critically interpret educational documents and curriculum with regard to values and bias (Poplar)
- Acquire content understanding and know how to experiment with pedagogical

techniques (Birch)

- Able to be reflective inquirers (Birch)
- Foster global connections (Birch)
- Work effectively with English-language learners (Cedar)
- Work effectively with special needs students (Cedar)
- Develop open-minded, reflective problem solvers who are lifelong learners
(Magnolia)
- Develop clear goals appropriate for all students (Maple)
- Take proactive roles in the stewardship of the school and/or in the advocacy of
children (Oak)
- Pursue spiritual development and exhibit competence, character, and compassion
(Willow)

Knowledge

- Understand candidates' own cultural identity and history (Poplar)
- Know how the history of exclusion and discrimination faced by groups in the
schooling system (Poplar)
- Know how educational philosophies and their orientations to human difference
and equality (Poplar)
- Know how constructs of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and learning
abilities are products of human intervention, power dynamics and history (Poplar)
- Understand the ways cultural diversity should be represented throughout K-12
curricula (Poplar)

Dispositions

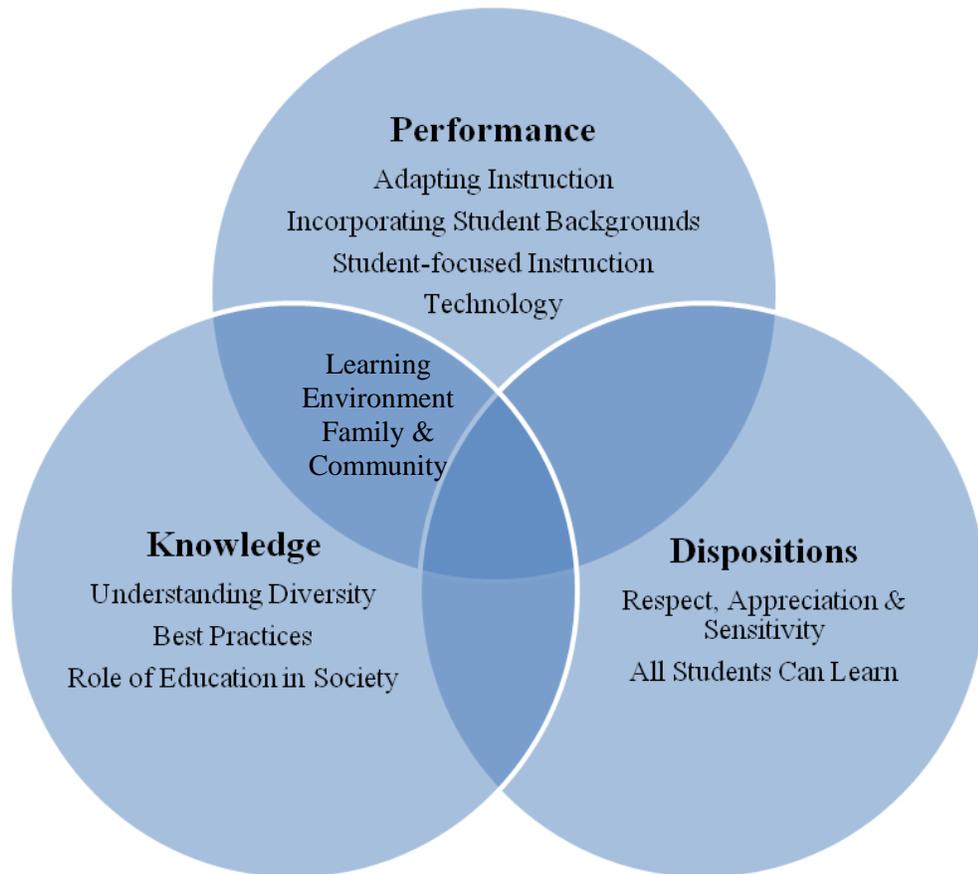
- Exhibit dispositions and habits of mind consistent with mindfulness and thoughtfulness (Birch)
- Demonstrate a commitment to equality (Willow)

Summary

The proficiencies shared by multiple units may also be considered using the lenses of performance, knowledge, and dispositions, the same three elements used by INTASC in *Model Core Teaching Standards: A Resource for State Dialogue (Draft for Public Comment)* (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). See Figure 2.

Considered in this way, five of the dispositions are performances: adapting instruction, incorporating students' backgrounds into instruction, impacting student achievement, creating student-focused instruction, and integrating technology into instruction. Two of the dispositions, the learning environment and family and community, can be considered both performances and knowledge since some units state them as performances and others as candidate knowledge. Understanding diversity and student differences, knowledge of best practices, and understanding education's role in society are part of candidate knowledge. Finally, two can be considered dispositions: respect, appreciation and sensitivity and the belief that all students can learn.

Figure 4: Performance, Knowledge, and Disposition Diversity Proficiencies



Overall, there is a broad range of proficiencies reported by units. No two units have the same set of proficiencies and there are a significant number of proficiencies reported by a single unit. Poplar stands out for having the most unique proficiencies. While five proficiencies are shared by over half of the units (understanding diversity, adapting instruction, demonstrating attitudes of respect, appreciation, and sensitivity, focusing on the learning environment, and incorporating the family and community) each unit presents a unique set of expectations for its candidates. In the next section, I examine how units assess these proficiencies.

Assessment

The third part of Standard 4a (4a.3) focuses on how units assess candidate performance related to diversity. The rubric for this standard specifically mentions assessment at each of the three performance levels (see Table 5).

Table 5: Sections of NCATE Standard 4a Rubric Related to Assessment

Performance Level	
Unacceptable	Assessment of candidate proficiencies do not include data on candidates' ability to incorporate multiple perspectives into their teaching or service, develop lessons or services for students with different learning styles, accommodate linguistically and diverse students and students with exceptionalities and communicate effectively with diverse populations.
Acceptable	Candidate proficiencies related to diversity are assessed, and the data are used to provide feedback to candidates for improving their knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for helping students from diverse populations learn.
Target	Candidates and faculty regularly review candidate assessment data on candidates' ability to work with all students and develop a plan for improving their practice and the institution's programs.

During the time period of this study, the Institutional Reports included one question on assessment. However, the institutional reports reflect two versions of the

question: (a) What key assessments provide evidence about candidates' proficiencies related to diversity? How are candidates performing on these assessments?; (b) What data from key assessments indicate that candidates demonstrate proficiencies related to diversity, including English-language learners and students with exceptionalities?. Six units responded to the first question and five units responded to the second question (see Table 6). According to NCATE senior staff, the discrepancy is likely due to the timing of when an institution accessed a particular version of the institutional report online (personal conversation, December 15, 2010).

Table 6: Versions of Institutional Report Question 4a.3 by Unit

Question	Redwood	Linden	Magnolia	Birch	Cedar	Hickory	Maple	Oak	Poplar	Spruce	Willow
<i>What key assessments provide evidence about candidates' proficiencies related to diversity? How are candidates performing on these assessments?</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓				
<i>What data from key assessments indicate that candidates demonstrate proficiencies related to diversity, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities?.</i>		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

As noted in the Chapter Three, in order to describe the units' assessment tools, the responses to both Standard 4a and 4d questions in the Institutional Reports and Board of Examiner Reports were reviewed, not just the assessment questions. It is also important

to note that not all candidates in a unit are exposed to all assessment tools since some assessments are particular to specific programs or courses within a unit.

Twenty-five assessment tools were identified by more than one unit. The designated purpose and use of these varies by tool. While there are no clear-cut lines about which assessments are used for which purposes, it is possible to describe some general tendencies. Three broad usage types emerge. Some tools are used to evaluate the programs or units as a whole. Others are used to assess student teaching and field experiences, and a third group of tools are used as part of specific course assignments. The tools are organized below according to these broad usage types, however assessments are often used for more than one of these purposes. Table 7 identifies these twenty-five assessments by unit.

Table 7: Assessment Instruments by Unit

Assessment Instrument	Redwood	Linden	Magnolia	Birch	Cedar	Hickory	Maple	Oak	Poplar	Spruce	Willow
Unit or Program Level Assessments											
Employer Survey		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Exit Survey		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Alumni Survey		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Dispositions or Diversity Survey		✓	✓						✓		
Praxis		✓					✓		✓		
Student Teaching or Field Experience Assessments											
Student Teaching Coop. Teacher Assess. Form	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student Teaching Self-Assess. Form				✓		✓		✓			
Student Teaching University Supervisor Assess. Form	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Candidate Assess. of Student Learning			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Observation by Candidates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Other Observations of Candidates' Student Teaching		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Assessment Instrument	Redwood	Linden	Magnolia	Birch	Cedar	Hickory	Maple	Oak	Poplar	Spruce	Willow
Course-Specific Assessments											
Profile			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Family Related Assessments						✓	✓	✓			✓
Case Studies			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Book or Film Reports	✓					✓		✓		✓	✓
Journals	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
Lesson Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Analysis of Personal Experience							✓	✓		✓	
Research/Action Research				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Class Discussion		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Materials Analysis										✓	✓
Written Reflections		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Classroom Management			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Candidate Portfolio	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			
Other	✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	

Assessment Tools Used at the Unit or Program Level

There were five main tools used to assess teacher education at the unit or program level. These assessments were almost entirely survey-based, with the notable exception of Praxis test scores. They include employer surveys, exit surveys, alumni surveys, dispositions or diversity surveys, and Praxis test scores.

Employer survey. Of the eleven units, seven describe diversity items in their employer surveys. Several units either specifically mention low return rates or include low n-sizes on the survey responses. More than half of the units indicate that the employer responses are generally positive in regards to the diversity items surveyed.

Exit Survey. Seven units assess diversity proficiencies as teacher candidates complete their degree programs. These surveys go by a variety of names: exit surveys, end-of-coursework surveys, end-of-program surveys, pre-service surveys, or program completer surveys. In all cases but one, diversity items are included in a broader survey. One unit, Magnolia, was piloting a diversity survey at the time of the report and was the only unit with an exit survey solely devoted to diversity issues. Six units note generally positive outcomes on the survey.

Two units note lower outcomes on diversity items as compared to other areas of the survey. Cedar notes that among the weakest preparation areas of candidates, less than half of the students felt they received strong or very strong preparation to work with special needs students or English-language learners. Another of the weakest areas was how prepared candidates felt in working with special needs families. Poplar also reports that candidates felt they were less prepared to work with English-language learners.

Of all of the units, Cedar provides the most extensive analysis of the results. As mentioned, Cedar was one of only two units to describe less-than-positive results. Cedar also evaluated how the weakest responses corresponded to specific programs. For example, while one of the weakest program ratings was in working with students with special needs, the report notes that candidates in the childhood and early childhood special education programs rate their programs' contributions to skills in working with special needs students higher than the average unit-wide responses.

Alumni Survey. Eight of the eleven units report that alumni surveys are used to assess diversity proficiencies. Of these eight units, seven also conducted Employer Surveys and there is strong overlap among the units using both Alumni and Employer Surveys. Three of the eight units note that alumni positively affirm their preparation to meet the diverse needs of students. One unit reports that alumni feel that they understand less about how to teach special education students after working in the field for over one year. Five units provide detailed descriptions of the diversity related indicators. Two institutions do not provide any detailed information about the surveys, other than stating that the alumni survey assesses diversity.

Two units describe how alumni survey results compare to employer survey results. In one case, alumni rated themselves lower than their employers and the unit used this data to increase staffing in the area of English-language learners. In the other case, the alumni rated themselves higher than their employers.

Dispositions or Diversity Survey. Three units specifically address how they use dispositions or diversity surveys to assess candidates' diversity proficiencies either in the beginning of candidates' programs or at some point mid-course. For purposes of this analysis, this category does not include surveys that occur at the end of the program or as part of the student teaching assessment as these surveys are addressed separately.

Two units implemented surveys specifically dedicated to diversity issues. At Magnolia, the survey is implemented upon entry into the program and results are then used to track trends over time as the same survey is completed again upon exit from the program. Early childhood candidates complete the survey at three points in the program. Poplar candidates complete an online diversity survey in two courses, typically in the freshmen and junior year in order to compare results over time. The resulting data is used by the dean's office to evaluate how well candidates are being prepared to work in culturally diverse settings. Poplar provides the most in-depth analysis of the results of any of the units. Both Magnolia and Poplar note generally positive results on the surveys.

Linden uses a dispositions self-assessment survey as part of a specific course. Linden notes the results are consistently in the proficient to distinguished range. Linden is the only unit where the survey is also completed by a faculty member. Linden's survey is not specifically devoted to diversity, but instead the unit analyzes diversity components as part of a broader dispositions survey.

Praxis. Three units specifically describe how they use Praxis test scores to assess candidates' preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners. All three units note the

positive results of candidates' scores on this instrument. All three units also acknowledge that while Praxis does not specifically focus on diversity, there are relevant subsections that can be used to inform the unit. Maple maps specific categories of the Praxis II Professional Learning and Teaching instrument to its own diversity proficiencies. Poplar is the only unit that mentions its use of Praxis III assessment and indicates eleven items in particular that align with the unit's diversity proficiencies. The Praxis III assessment is intended for beginning teachers in classroom settings and includes direct observation of classroom practice, a review of documentation prepared by the teacher, and structured interviews (Educational Testing Service, 2011).

Student Teaching or Other Field Experience Tools

The second type of assessment tools are those used in conjunction with student teaching or other field experiences. While field experiences sometimes occur as a specific part of a course they are included in this section to provide a more complete picture of these types of assessments.

Cooperating Teacher Assessment Form. Nine units report using a form completed by the cooperating teacher during student teaching or field experiences to assess candidate proficiencies related to diversity. In all cases, diversity items are included as part of a broader assessment form. Six out of the nine units report generally positive results from these assessments.

Student Teaching Self-Assessment Form. Three units report using candidate self-assessment forms during the student teaching experience to assess diversity proficiencies. Little information is reported in regards to the results of these self-assessments, but one unit notes generally positive outcomes. In all three cases, the items on the assessment instrument are the same as instruments completed by either cooperating teachers or university supervisors. Hickory reports that the assessment instrument is completed by the cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and the student, and forms the basis of a discussion between these three individuals.

Student Teaching University Supervisor Assessment Form. Nine units report using a university supervisor assessment form related to diversity during the student teaching experience. Most report positive results⁷, although not all units address the results of the assessment. In all cases, diversity items are included as part of a broader assessment instrument. One unit, Magnolia, describes how comments are provided to students with low scores to improve their performance. Further, Magnolia uses an accompanying rubric for both formative and summative purposes. In a mid-term evaluation the instrument is used to provide candidates with detailed feedback, especially when there are unacceptable ratings. When used as a summative tool, candidates need acceptable scores in each competency area.

⁷ For example, Magnolia reports data on four student-teaching questions for five semesters for 300 respondents and there was only one respondent for each of the questions that was rated as “unacceptable,” the rest were either “acceptable” or “target.” Birch reports data on three diversity items for 108 respondents and less than one percent of respondents were “inadequate,” the rest were either “adequate” or “target.”

Candidate Assessment of Student Learning. Seven units report the use of candidate assessments of student learning. Five of the six units state that candidates consider and/or document how student learning has occurred. This may be through the use of pre- and post- assessment tools or other descriptions of student progress. These four units, however, do not explicitly describe how this assessment of student learning is linked to diversity proficiencies.

Two units explicitly link the assessment of student learning to achievement gaps between students or subgroups. Hickory requires a self-evaluation of the impact on student learning followed by candidate recommendations for closing identified achievement gaps between diverse students. Further, candidates discuss the performance of different students including explanations of student factors that may have contributed to variations in performance and how the candidate could have more effectively bridged such achievement gaps. Oak candidates conduct a subgroup analysis where achievement differences between African American students or students from another subgroup are compared with white students.

Observations by Candidates. Ten units report using observations conducted by candidates to assess diversity proficiencies. Observations of the candidates by supervisors, peers, or others are addressed as a separate tool. In some instances, units merely list observation as one of the assessment tools used for specific courses. Five units report candidate observations of specific populations, either English-language learners, special needs students, or students described as diverse. Three units specifically describe the linkage between observations and specific unit goals. Magnolia

describes how observations are often associated with courses that focus on a particular aspect of diversity, allowing candidates to apply what they are learning to courses in classroom settings. Birch reports that the goal of the observations is to form more culturally sensitive teachers through the process of gathering information and analyzing it, writing down observations, and clarifying thoughts of the observations. Finally, Poplar provides candidates with a culturally competent practices module. Candidates subsequently observe practices, language, lessons, and other behaviors that reflect cultural destructiveness, cultural incompetence, cultural blindness, cultural competence, or cultural proficiency. Observations are followed by debriefing sessions, however no further details about these sessions are reported. Poplar also reports that the Dean for Diversity Issues helps candidates put observations into context to promote understanding and acceptance.

Other Observations of Candidates' Student Teaching. In addition to the observations previously described (by cooperating teachers, university supervisors), nine units describe using observations to assess candidates' diversity proficiencies as a part of the student teaching assessment. Observations in this category are not necessarily tied to evaluation forms and sometimes the units don't specifically state who conducts the observations. In some cases, the units include general statements that observation is used during student teaching to assess diversity outcomes. Other units broadly describe observations, including peer observations, used to assess candidates' ability to effectively meet the needs of all students or their ability to differentiate instruction effectively.

Cedar provides more specific evaluation criteria in the form of an observation rubric that includes nine items related to diversity proficiencies.

Course-Specific Assessment Tools

The third group of assessment tools are used in assignments specific to individual courses. As noted earlier, there is some overlap between these assessments and assessment tools used as a part of student teaching or other field experiences. The assessments are ordered below starting with those tools used by the most units to those used by the fewest units.

Lesson Plans. All eleven units report using lesson plans to assess candidates' diversity proficiencies. However, there is a great range of detail provided by the institutions. Some institutions simply state that they use lesson plans to assess diversity proficiencies or list lesson planning as one of the ways diversity is assessed for various courses. Lesson plans are reported as assessment items in courses prior to student teaching and as a component of the student teaching assessments. Units report multiple ways in which diversity is incorporated into lesson planning: considering the needs and abilities of all students, creating specific accommodations or modifications, reflecting multiple intelligences, and accommodating students' background knowledge. Cedar reports that candidates' lesson plans demonstrate how they adapt instruction for all learners, connect instruction to student experiences and cultures, incorporate multiple perspectives into teaching, and develop a classroom climate that values diversity.

Class Discussion. Nine units report using class discussions in their assessments of diversity proficiencies. Discussions between candidates and their advisors that occur in relation to student teaching observations are not included here, but instead are included as part of student teaching observations for the purposes of this study. In some cases, units specifically report the topic of discussion. These include:

- how technology can be used with diverse populations;
- using differentiation for learning difficulties;
- cultural differences;
- diversity in field and clinical settings;
- providing instruction that meets the needs of all learners;
- stereotypical portrayals of diverse learners; and
- understanding candidates' own culture and identity.

None of the seven units describe how course discussions are used for formal evaluation purposes and none provide rubrics or aggregated data from class discussions. While nine units report using class discussions, it is unclear from the documents reviewed how class discussions are used for assessment purposes.

Profiles of Students, Groups, or Areas. Eight units report specific assessments related to course assignments where teacher candidates profile specific students, groups, or geographic areas. Some units report multiple instances of this type of assignment in different courses. The level of detail provided on these assessments varies greatly from one-line phrases to multiple paragraph descriptions with the accompanying original assignments. The classes in which these assignments take place also vary greatly and

include courses on diversity, educational psychology, learning and cognition courses, school and society, content-specific courses (reading and social studies), as well as field experiences.

Profiles focus on specific students or groups of students from minority populations (four instances), profiles of entire cultures (one instance), and countries (one instance). There are two instances of profiles of students with a particular disability. Other assessments profile specific communities and international students. Oak describes a project where students complete multiple visits to a particular area of the city, record reflections, take photographs, attend community events, and complete a pre- and post-survey that assesses candidates' multicultural attitudes.

Case Studies. Seven units report using case studies to assess candidates' diversity proficiencies. Unfortunately, beyond stating that case studies are used, limited details are reported. Spruce provides the most detail and indicates that case studies focus on individualized education plans, cerebral palsy, and the transition of a high school special education student into the community. Some units refer to analyses of specific students as case studies, but for this analysis these instances have been categorized as profiles of specific students.

Journals. Seven units report using candidate journals to assess diversity proficiencies. In most cases, the journals are tied to field experiences or student teaching. Three units report using journals as part of diversity-related experiences, but do not explicitly describe how journals are used for this purpose. Other units provide more

specific examples of the proficiencies assessed through journaling. Willow reports that reflective journals reveal how candidates create classrooms comfortable for diverse students. Magnolia uses journals to develop appreciation, respect, and understanding, and journals are shared with faculty members or university supervisors. Redwood reports the most complete assessment details and provides a rubric for how journals are scored. Criteria include how candidates connect with all students, what they believe about the learning abilities of all students, what they see as the purpose of education, and how they see the importance of the affective domain.

Classroom or Behavior Management Plans. In seven units, candidates create classroom or behavior management plans that are used to assess diversity proficiencies. In some cases, this is tied to student teaching, but in others the plans are created as part of separate classroom management courses. The plans address a range of issues including differentiation, applying ethno-linguistic and cross-cultural knowledge to management techniques, culturally responsive management, grouping decisions, accommodations for special education students, creating equitable environments, and accessibility.

Research, Action Research or Other Papers. Seven units report using research papers, action research, or other papers to assess candidates' diversity proficiencies. Topical papers are also included in this category as it is unclear how strictly the term "research" is used to describe the papers. While minimal detail is provided as to the focus of the research papers or action research projects, some themes include:

- exceptionalities;

- ways in which teachers accommodate student diversity;
- differences in student learning styles;
- cultural differences;
- experiential backgrounds;
- intellectual abilities;
- gender issues;
- controversial issues in diversity; and
- English as a second language.

Written Reflection. Candidates' written reflections are reported by six units in the assessment of diversity proficiencies. In some cases, the reflections follow specific experiences such as professional development sessions, field experiences, specific courses or completed research projects. In other cases the reflections are topically based and include the skills and dispositions needed to create a learning environment supportive of diverse students, the philosophical foundations of culturally responsive management, and the candidates' abilities to differentiate instruction and make adaptations. Poplar reports that it plans to implement rubric-driven reflections about diversity issues that will be assessed at two points in the candidates' programs to confirm if there is growth in knowledge, perceptions, and awareness about diversity issues. Poplar did not include the rubric in its reporting. Poplar plans to code this data to allow it to be compared to other diversity data in the program.

Book, Article, or Film Reports. Five units use book, article, or film reports as assessments of diversity proficiencies. Varying degrees of detail are provided. Redwood describes how students reflect on a video to focus on students' learning disabilities and candidates' possible interventions. Willow's candidates create presentations on chapters of "multicultural views" and in response to diversity videos that address individual and group differences, gender, cultural diversity, socioeconomic status, language minorities, ability grouping, special education, and others issues. Spruce has multiple assessments in multiple courses including book reports about teachers in diverse communities, reading response essays, and video critiques. One unit simply lists book reports as one of the ways diversity proficiencies are examined.

Candidate Portfolio or Work Sample. Five units report using candidate portfolios or work samples to evaluate diversity proficiencies. Portfolios are used at various points in the candidates' programs. Linden requires a portfolio prior to admission to the teacher education program while Magnolia and Redwood use the portfolio at the end of program. Linden's portfolio includes candidates' reflections on educational theories, learning styles, and service or advocacy agencies available to diverse learners.

Maple uses the following four parts of the portfolio as the culminating capstone assessment at the conclusion of the student teaching semester: (a) planning and teaching assessment; (b) teacher work sample; (c) teacher professionalism assessment; and (d) student teaching evaluation. Maple's portfolio includes a focus on building positive relationships with diverse families and students, classroom management that respects individuality and culture, identifying and accommodating student diversity, reflecting on

teaching and learning to improve instruction for all students, and developing supportive relationships with diverse children.

Oak reports that it evaluates candidates' work samples both prior to and after completing student teaching to determine how the artifacts provide evidence of proficiencies. Oak reports that its candidate portfolios include artifacts demonstrating candidates' abilities to work with students of all abilities, engage students in culturally enriching classroom environments, provide access to all students for learning, and promote respectful classroom behavior. Oak includes the rubric it uses to assess the work sample.

Family-related Assessments. While proficiencies related to communicating with and understanding students' families are found in many diversity surveys, only four units have assessments specifically related to interacting with families. Oak has an entire course devoted to family systems, however the assessment item (interviews with families) is not described. In Willow's classroom climate course, candidates participate in parent-teacher conferences that address disciplinary issues in the context of a diverse family makeup. Maple reports an assessment where candidates create home literacy activities to accommodate families' socioeconomic, educational, and cultural backgrounds. Hickory includes family involvement plans as a part of candidates' work samples. Candidates develop plans that encourage family involvement through activities that respect cultural differences and values. The plans detail communications with parents with limited literacy and/or limited English-language proficiency.

Analysis of Personal Experience. Three units report using analyses of personal experiences to assess diversity proficiencies. Maple candidates complete a cultural autobiography. Oak reports a variety of assessments in specific courses that include a literacy autobiography examining the effect of race, gender, socio-economic status, and ethnicity on candidates' literacy skills, reflections on candidates' culturally responsive teaching practices in light of their own cultural background, a personal vision, and a review of "who I am." Spruce reports requiring candidates to examine their past experiences as learners, their teachers' teaching styles, their knowledge of subject and pedagogy, and their role as socially conscious teachers. Spruce reports an additional step where candidates follow-up the analysis with the development of a personal vision of teaching focused on equity and a personal statement of curriculum.

Materials Analysis. Three units report having candidates conduct analyses of curriculum or other materials to assess diversity proficiencies. The purposes of the assessments include teaching about diversity and recognizing diverse students in class, honoring and celebrating diversity, and helping students see themselves represented in the literature they read in school. Two of the units also include technology resources in their materials analysis assessment.

Other Assessments. Some assessments are only reported by one unit. These include:

- candidate interviews of cooperating teachers;
- candidate evaluations of field placement sites;

- conducting diversity surveys of program completers' mentors⁸;
- developing a set of higher order test items with accompanying accommodations for students with special needs;
- written analyses of candidates' own perceived proficiency levels on each program objective, including the objective related to working with diverse student populations;
- using traditional tests to assess diversity proficiencies; and
- implementing the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Diverse Students Initiative.⁹

Summary

Certain assessment tools are used by the majority of units, while others are used by only a few (see Table 8). Lesson planning is the only assessment item reported by all eleven units for the purpose of evaluating diversity proficiencies. Seven other tools are used by eight or more units. Four of these, observations of candidates, observations conducted by candidates, the student teaching cooperating teacher assessment and the student teaching university supervisor assessment, are related to student teaching or field experiences. The other three are class discussions, alumni surveys and profiles of specific students, groups, or areas.

⁸ Hickory was the only unit to include a survey of the mentors of candidates once they were already in the field. The survey included one item related to diversity and the unit reported the results.

⁹ The Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Diverse Students Initiative consists of a set of tools, including surveys, a primer on culturally responsive pedagogy, and case-based learning modules, designed to foster teacher expertise and school improvement (Teaching Diverse Students Initiative, 2011).

Other tools are unique to specific units, including the assessments categorized as “other” in the previous discussion. The Praxis examination, diversity survey, self-assessment form of student teaching, analysis of personal experience, field experience survey, and analysis of materials are reported as diversity assessments by three or fewer units.

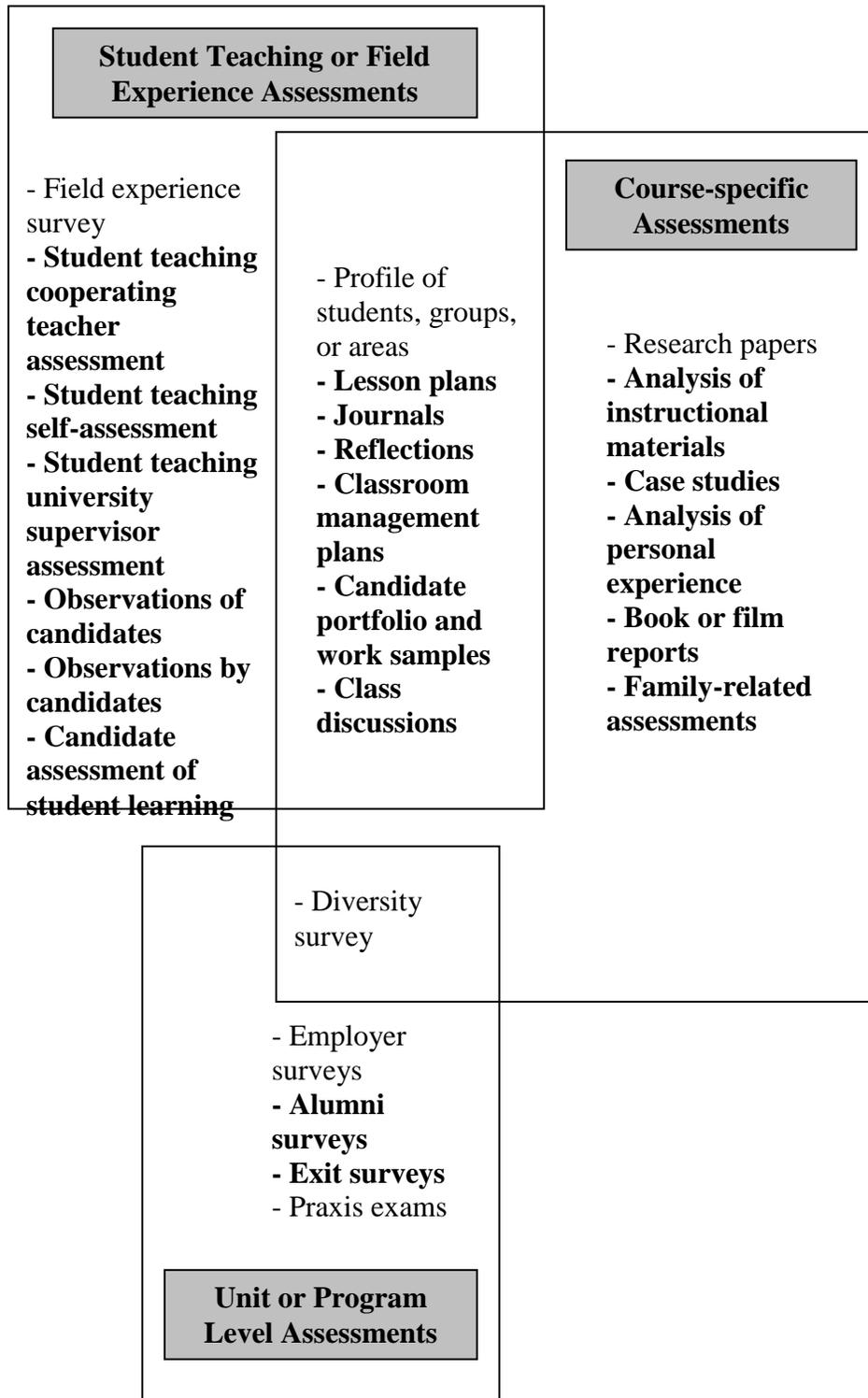
Table 8: Number of Units per Assessment Tool

Assessment Tool	Number of Units
Lesson Planning	11
Observation by candidates	10
Student Teaching University Supervisor Assessment Form	9
Student Teaching Cooperating Teacher Assessment Form	9
Class Discussion	9
Observations of candidates	9
Alumni Survey	8
Profile	8
Employer Survey	7
Exit Survey	7
Candidate Assessment of Student Learning	7
Journals	7
Classroom Management	7
Case Studies	7
Research/Action Research	6

Reflections	6
Candidate Portfolio	5
Book or Film Reports	5
Other Assessments	5
Family Related Assessments	4
Praxis	3
Dispositions or Diversity Survey	3
Student Teaching Self-Assessment form	3
Analysis of personal experience	3
Materials Analysis	2

As noted, assessment tools are used at the unit or program level, to assess student teaching or other field experiences, and as part of specific courses. Figure 4 examines the overlap between these three areas. Employer surveys, alumni surveys, exit surveys, and Praxis exams are used by units to describe the overall unit or program performance on diversity proficiencies. In some cases, units compare the results of these tools. For example, units may compare alumni and employer survey results or exit and alumni results. In two units, diversity surveys are used to provide unit-level data, but in the case of another unit the diversity survey data is part of a specific course.

Figure 5: Assessment Tools by Type



Other assessment tools are specifically designed to evaluate candidates' field experiences and student teaching: field experience surveys, student teaching cooperating teacher assessment forms, student teaching self-assessment forms, student teaching university supervisor assessment forms, and observations of candidates. Observations by candidates and candidate assessments of student learning are two other tools used to evaluate candidates' experiences in the field.

Other tools are sometimes, but not always, used during field experiences or student teaching. For example, some units report using the profile of students, groups, or areas as a part of field experiences, but in other cases this is done completely separate from field experiences. The same is true for lesson plans, journals, reflections, and classroom management plans. In some cases these assessments are specifically linked to student teaching or field experiences and in others they are conducted as part of specific courses.

Finally, the largest number of assessment tools are used to assess individual candidates, often associated with specific courses. These assessments include research papers, analysis of instructional materials, case studies, analysis of personal experience, book or film reports, and family related assessments.

Candidate portfolio and work samples may include assessments of both field experiences or student teaching and specific course-related assessments.

Use of Assessment Data

As previously discussed, the difference between “acceptable” and “target” on NCATE’s fourth standard includes differences in the use of assessment data. At the

“acceptable” level, “candidate proficiencies related to diversity are assessed, and the data are used to provide feedback to candidates for improving their knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for helping students from diverse populations learn” (NCATE, 2008). At the “target” level, “candidates and faculty regularly review candidate assessment data on candidates’ ability to work with all students and develop a plan for improving their practice and the institution’s programs” (NCATE, 2008).

This study now turns to focus on the distinction made at the “target” level. Specifically, it examines how units review candidate assessment data to develop a plan for improving faculty and candidate performance and to improve the institutions’ programs.

During the time period of this study, the Institutional Reports most frequently reported information on the use of assessment data in response to one of the two versions of question 4a.3: (a) “What key assessments provide evidence about candidates’ proficiencies related to diversity? How are candidates performing on these assessments?” or (b) “What data from key assessments indicate that candidates demonstrate proficiencies related to diversity, including English-language learners and students with exceptionalities?”. Units occasionally reported on data-use in response to other questions, most notably in response to the optional question 4.2 (“What research related to Standard 4 is being conducted by the unit or its faculty?”).

Only nine of the eleven units report on how assessment data was regularly reviewed or used by the faculty or candidates to develop a plan for improving the institutions’ practice and programs. Two notable exclusions were made in this analysis. First, reports simply describing the results of assessment data were not considered

sufficient to be included in this analysis. For example, if a unit reported on the answers to a diversity survey but did not describe how assessment data was subsequently used by faculty, it was not included in the analysis. Second, if a unit described ongoing programmatic or institutional planning but did not link it to assessment data this was also excluded from the analysis.

When examining the nine units that reported the use of data to inform institutional programs, five main uses emerge: changes to curriculum or courses, staffing changes, adjustments to assessment tools, faculty research, and general comments about the use of assessment data (see Table 9).

Table 9: Use of Assessment Data by Unit

Use of Assessment Data	Redwood	Linden	Magnolia	Birch	Cedar	Hickory	Maple	Oak	Poplar	Spruce	Willow
Curriculum or Course Adjustments	✓	✓			✓						
Staffing Decisions								✓			
Adjustments to Assessment Tools			✓		✓				✓		
Faculty Research				✓	✓					✓	✓
General Statements about Data Use	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

Curriculum or Course Adjustments

Three units described how assessment data was used to inform changes to courses or curriculum. In response to data demonstrating candidates' concerns about their ability to work with English-language learners, Redwood added a course requirement on working with English-language learners. Linden used student and faculty feedback data to continue visits to a particularly diverse school. Cedar used survey data that revealed a concern about candidates' ability to work with English-language learners and special needs students to inform work in restructuring their programs. Cedar's test data also revealed that non-native English speaking candidates were having difficulty passing the state certification exam. In response, a new workshop was added to address the needs of candidates who needed extra help with reading and writing.

Staffing Decisions

Oak's survey data revealed that alumni rated themselves lower than employers in their abilities to meet the needs of English-language learners. In response, the unit introduced a search for a full-time English-language learner instructor.

Adjustments to Assessment Tools

Three units reported adjustments to or planning around assessment tools. Magnolia reported that pilot survey data was being reviewed and adjusted for full implementation the subsequent year. Magnolia also established an assessment committee

to investigate ways to better align entry, exit and graduate survey prompts to increase the reliability of the measures. Cedar reported that there was a need to better understand candidate impact on student learning and was in the process of developing new assessment measures to this effect. Poplar reported revisions to the piloted diversity survey as well as plans to implement a rubric-driven reflection about diversity. The unit reported plans to triangulate diversity data from three separate sources to inform unit planning. Poplar also described plans to use a university-wide diversity survey to provide benchmark data for candidates as they enter the program and to allow instructors to tailor class activities and projects.

Faculty Research

It is not always clear from the unit reports how faculty research is integrated into unit planning, however the research topics are relevant to the preparation of candidates' for diverse student learners. Birch, Cedar, Spruce, and Willow reported related faculty research. Topics include:

- Candidate evaluations of courses that contribute to their views on diversity;
- How units evaluate plans for teaching diversity;
- Culturally responsive research practices for scholars working with inner-city youth;
- Book club experiences of minority adolescent females in their development;
- Evidence used to examine teacher dispositions;
- Pre-service teachers' beliefs about inclusion;
- What influences teacher candidates' dispositions;

- Teacher candidates' preparation to work with diverse students;
- Multiple intelligences in distance education course design; and
- Teaching in diverse classrooms.

For a complete listing of all of the faculty research topics, see Appendix F.

General Statements about Data Use

Finally, most units included a general statement about how assessment data is used to inform unit planning. For example, Magnolia described how diversity competencies are tracked in each course and discussed in regular meetings and casual communications by faculty and students. Cedar reported that aggregated data is shared with key groups for improving programs and to enhance the effectiveness of unit operations. Oak reported that goals and objectives are discussed in the context of what works and what isn't working during regular faculty retreats. Redwood reported plans to regularly monitor diversity plan strategies as part of annual updates and regular progress reports. Linden, Poplar, Spruce, and Willow also provided general statements of how assessment data is used by the unit.

Summary

Seven units reported using assessment data for the purposes of making curriculum or course adjustments, making staffing decisions, making adjustments to assessment tools, faculty research, or other more generally stated purposes. It is notable that two units, Hickory and Maple, did not describe how they use assessment data to improve faculty practice or to improve the units' program(s). It is possible that the units addressed

this issue elsewhere in the Institutional Reports and this is a recognized weakness in this study

Given the wide range of tools that units' use to assess their candidates' proficiencies, it is interesting that only a limited number and type of these tools are reported by units to be used by faculty to inform their work. Survey data was the most frequently used type of data. Magnolia, Cedar, Oak, and Poplar reported using some type of survey data to inform their program improvements. Poplar used the most diverse set of assessment tools and in addition to surveys, it used candidate reflections, lesson plans, and candidate assessments of student learning. Willow was the only unit to report how it used assessment data from student teaching and it used assessment forms completed by cooperating teachers and university supervisors. Interestingly, two data types were described by units that did not appear in their reports of how they assessed candidates' proficiencies: course evaluations and general knowledge test scores. Two units, Linden and Birch, reported using course evaluations to inform their program work. Cedar reported using the test results on a general knowledge test to address the needs of teacher candidates who were English-language learners. Redwood and Spruce did not specify which assessment tools they used to inform their program improvements.

Of all of the assessment tools identified, there is a definite emphasis on the use of surveys to inform and improve the programs. Notably, the units do not describe how the resulting data from most of the assessment tools is used. Further research beyond what is available from the documents examined in this study is needed to more fully understand the specifics of how units use assessment data.

Conclusion

This study analyzed the accreditation documentation of eleven units to understand the diversity proficiencies identified by each unit, the assessment tools used to provide evidence about candidate proficiencies, and how the units used the data to improve the programs and candidates' ability to work with diverse learners. While in-depth case studies would reveal additional information, several conclusions can be drawn from this analysis.

The most prevalent concepts appearing in units' diversity proficiencies were an understanding of diversity or student differences, adapting instruction, demonstrating attitudes of respect or sensitivity, focusing on the learning environment, and incorporating family and the community. However, while there were proficiencies that were more frequent than others, no two units reported the same proficiencies. Further, Poplar was an outlier in that it had more unique proficiencies than shared proficiencies. The identified proficiencies can be characterized as knowledge-, performance-, or disposition-based. More proficiencies were performance- or knowledge-based than disposition-based.

The assessment tools reported by units focused on the entire program, on student teaching or other field experiences, or on specific courses. Surveys of alumni, employers, and exit surveys were the tools most frequently used to evaluate entire programs. Observations by candidates, assessment forms completed by university supervisors or cooperating teachers, and observations of candidates were the tools most frequently used to assess student teaching or other field experiences. Lesson planning, class discussions, and profiles of specific students or groups were the assessments used

most frequently in conjunction with specific courses. Notably, many units did not describe how the tools linked to their diversity proficiencies.

Finally, some units reported how they used the resulting assessment data. However, most units reported only general statements that the data was used without providing specific details. Reported uses included making course or curriculum adjustments, staffing decisions, adjustments to assessment tools, or related faculty research.

In the final chapter, this dissertation examines the implications of these findings including how it relates to the current policy context, considerations for teacher preparation programs and NCATE, and additional questions raised by the research.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Teacher education programs are in the position to impact teacher candidates' abilities to meet the needs of diverse student learners. Future teachers, in turn, are in the position to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students and to impact the existing gaps in student achievement. Finally, NCATE, in its role as a national accrediting agency, is in the position to hold teacher education programs accountable to high standards related to the preparation of teachers for diverse learners.

While the potential is there, we also know that there are crippling achievement gaps and teachers who feel unprepared to meet the needs of their students. Ultimately, this study attempts to deepen our understanding about how we can better prepare teachers to be able to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students.

In this concluding chapter, I begin by summarizing the study and research questions and reviewing the major findings. Next, I discuss the findings in the context of the current policy environment. Then, I examine the implications of the research for higher-education teacher preparation programs and NCATE. Finally, I suggest areas for future study.

Summary of Study

This dissertation focuses on the intersection of the preparation of teachers for diverse student learners, the assessment of these teacher candidates and the programs they attend, and the accreditation of teacher education programs. The review of literature

in these three areas reveals that knowledge of how teacher candidates are prepared for diverse learners is informed by studies that are often small-scale case studies and sometimes analyses of researchers' own pedagogical approaches. It is difficult to draw generalizable conclusions from the research and few studies look across institutions. In its own study of teacher preparation, the National Research Council suggests that the highest priority research should include the comparison of programs and their specific components and characteristics (p. 63, 2010).

The underlying problem is often described as a demographic mismatch, where increasing numbers of diverse students are taught by white, middle-class, suburban, females. Others characterize the problem as one of achievement, citing the gaps between subgroups of students. There is also emerging evidence that teachers themselves feel they are under-prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners (MetLife, 2011; National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality & Public Agenda, 2008).

This study is guided by Cochran-Smith's (2003) multiple meanings conceptual framework and draws upon her questions around the knowledge necessary to effectively teach diverse populations, around the outcomes of teacher preparation and how they are assessed, and around the role of non-governmental external forces. The dissertation examines three research questions: (1) What are the diversity proficiencies units expect of their candidates and how do they compare across units?; (2) What are the assessment tools used to provide evidence about candidates' proficiencies related to diversity?; and (3) How is the assessment data used to improve the units' programs and candidates' ability to work with diverse student learners?.

The literature review suggests that carefully crafted programs aimed at teaching diverse students are not widespread. While there is general agreement that ideology, dispositions, and beliefs matter, studies have revealed challenges in dealing with negative or potentially harmful beliefs. Much of the research on specific pedagogical approaches to multicultural teacher education and related field experiences is characterized by a lack of generalizability, small sample sizes, and are often self-studies (Cochran-Smith, Davis & Fries, 2004; Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Sleeter, 2001; Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). While acknowledging the challenges posed by the current accountability climate, scholars have posed questions to the field asking how to effectively assess teacher candidates and teacher education programs. The literature review also examined the limited knowledge to date on the effectiveness of the accreditation process. Finally, the review explored some of the scholarly recommendations for diversity proficiencies and teacher education programs.

To address the research questions, this dissertation examined eleven institutions that were rated by NCATE as having achieved the highest level on the section of the diversity standard related to the design, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum and experiences during the reporting period from Fall, 2008 to Fall, 2009.

Findings

This study examined the diversity proficiencies of each of the eleven units and found that while no two units shared the same set of proficiencies, some were more prevalent than others. There were more performance- or knowledge-based proficiencies than disposition-based proficiencies. The most frequently occurring proficiencies were

an understanding of diversity or student differences, adapting or differentiating instruction, demonstrating attitudes of respect or sensitivity, focusing on the learning environment, and incorporating family and the community. One unit was an outlier and had more unique proficiencies than shared proficiencies.

Units' assessment tools focused either on the entire program, on student teaching or other field experiences, or on specific course-related activities. Units most frequently used alumni, employer, and exit surveys to evaluate entire programs. They assessed student teaching or field experiences most often with university supervisor or cooperating teacher assessment forms, other observations of candidates, and observations conducted by teacher candidates. Lesson plans, class discussions, and profiles of specific students or groups were the most frequently used assessments of course-related activities. Often, units did not describe how the specific tools linked to their stated diversity proficiencies.

Finally, units reported how they used the resulting assessment data. However, in most instances only general statements about data-use were provided. Specific uses of data included making course or curriculum adjustments, staffing decisions, adjustments to assessment tools, or related faculty research.

Discussion

This research was inspired by two personal experiences, one from my teaching experience, and another from the early stages of my research. I entered teaching through an alternate route program, the DC Teaching Fellows. However, as a part of the program, I pursued a more traditional Masters in Teaching in Elementary Education. As I recall it, my preparation for diverse students focused almost entirely on lesson plans and

materials analysis. In many courses I was required to create lesson plans, and these often required some sort of differentiation or recognition of students' backgrounds. I also recall several courses that required an analysis of curricular materials or the selection of materials with diverse student populations in mind.

I recall, both at the time I was taking these courses, and when I was teaching in the classroom, that these learning experiences seemed extremely detached from the everyday reality of my classroom. Like so many other educators, my urban classroom was racially and culturally diverse. I taught in what many would consider a low-performing district. My students were about one third African-American, about one third Latino (most of whom were recent immigrants), about one third recent African immigrants. The majority were English-language learners. It was not, however, economically diverse, as 100% of the children were below the poverty line.

I wondered then, and still wonder today, what type of preparation would have allowed me to enter the classroom to be more effective with my students? Experts recommend teacher preparation experiences that have opportunities to locate teaching within the culture of the school and community, to develop systematic and self-critical inquiry, to focus on multicultural classroom communications and multicultural performance assessments, and to promote teaching as a lifelong journey of transformation (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Gay, 2000; Nieto, 2000). Would that type of preparation have enabled me to better meet the needs of my students?

The second experience that remained with me throughout the dissertation process happened at the very beginning of my research. I started this study with relatively little familiarity with the details of how the NCATE accreditation process works. In early

conversations with NCATE staff, I asked a question that I now realize was overly optimistic. Acknowledging that NCATE doesn't require specific program approaches or traits, I asked: "How does the Board of Examiners Team know what to look for? Do they have a rubric of sorts that describes possible best practices?" I soon learned that the Standards and their accompanying three performance levels are the core documents that support the reviewers' work. There was no guide for Examiners describing what "target"-level practices looked like. These questions, both from my time in the classroom and in examining the NCATE review documents, remain with me today, and this study is one small way of contributing toward finding the answers.

Ideally, one might hope that this study would reveal how units, rated as excelling in the preparation of teachers for diverse learners, assessed candidate proficiencies. Under these hypothetical conditions, the results of this study would have revealed the specifics of a range of assessment tools and how they connect to the teacher education programs' structures and experiences. Further, they would be clearly linked to the stated diversity proficiencies and units would fully describe how they use the assessment data to improve teacher preparation. These hypothetical findings would become useful tools for other units to adopt, adapt, or extend to improve their own teacher education programs. The findings might be reminiscent of Villegas and Lucas's (2006) description of their own teacher education program and how assessment is used to inform the program's development.

Not surprisingly, however, the reality of the findings in this study reflects a much more complex situation. Some of these shortcomings are due to the state of the field and some are due to the limitations of the study. A clear picture of the linkages between

proficiencies, candidate experiences, assessments, and use of assessment data does not emerge. Assessment tools tell us only a small part about what the actual instruction and learning experiences looked like for teacher candidates. Notably, this study did not examine the linkage between candidate experiences and assessments. However, the tools begin to create a broad understanding of the types of experiences that candidates receive. It is likely that additional case studies or research using a similar methodology focusing on candidate experiences would deepen our understanding of these links. However, the evidence suggests that these linkages may also not be clear to the institutions themselves, or at the very least are not clear in how units report linkages in their application for NCATE accreditation.

Several questions remain unanswered. The analysis of the data also raised four additional questions, specifically related to the nature of the NCATE documents examined in this study. First, in reading through Standard 4 to fully understand the assessment tools units used to assess diversity proficiencies, the information presented by units was not always clear. Occasionally, in order to gain a clear understanding of specific assessment tools, I needed to refer to Standard 2, which addresses assessment. NCATE's review process is by the Board of Examiners is based on one team member leading the review of each section. If each section does not stand-alone, the unit and NCATE are relying on the Board of Examiners team member searching for and locating the necessary information in the documentation for a separate standard. At times, in conducting this research that process was lengthy and convoluted and raises the question of if and how BOE team-members are able to crosswalk between the two standards to get a complete understanding of the assessment of diversity proficiencies.

Second, access to supplemental data was not always consistent. In most occasions, supplemental documents were uploaded to NCATE's AIMS system and could be accessed in this way. Occasionally, however, the documents were hosted on the units-own web site. Most of the time, the links were still valid, however, there were some instances where the data hosted on the units' sites was no longer accessible. In these cases, additional research was required to locate the documents in question. If NCATE data is to continue to be used for research and other purposes, this raises the question of documentation procedures, specifically where documents are hosted, and for how long.

Third, in a related documentation issue, not all of the actual assessment items were provided in the Standard 4 documentation in full. Sometimes the name or a description of the assessment was provided, but not the assessment itself. For example, a unit would report that research papers were required, but not provide the actual assignment that would allow both Board of Examiners and researchers the ability to actually see the assignment itself. Observation forms and surveys were often included in documentation, but many of the course-specific assessment tools were not. Again, if NCATE data is to be used for research purposes (or even for clearer depiction of assessment to BOE team-members) it raises the question of what and how NCATE requires units to provide in their Institutional Reports. The lack of consistency across units in terms of what level of documentation is provided creates challenges from a research perspective, and similarly would seemingly create challenges for BOE team-members.

Fourth, in examining the eleven BOE reports, it seems that the BOE often reports back in a very straight-forward manner the same details that the unit provided in its

Institutional Report. There were definitely exceptions, where the team-member provided additional details that wasn't present in the reports, but very often the content of the BOE report reads like a summary of the Institutional Report. However, the BOE reports also include a quality judgment in that each report identified the unit as meeting the "target" level on Standard 4a. No clear understanding of why these units were rated as "target" since there is so little consistency across the units in terms of the proficiencies they identified, the assessment tools they used, or the programs' use of assessment data. I wonder, then, how NCATE guides BOE team-members to report their findings and how this might be communicated in a clearer manner in the BOE reports.

One of the more disappointing findings from this study was that while some units linked some assessment items to specific proficiencies, in many cases the connections were unclear. If assessments show that candidates are frequently performing at or above expected levels, how do programs square their own assessment results with data showing that new teachers frequently feel unprepared to meet the needs of diverse students? What rubrics are units using? What do quality rubrics look like? What does successful data analysis look like on the part of faculty?

These questions are also relevant in the current policy context as the calls for accountability continue to grow louder. The National Council of Teacher Quality (NCTQ) plans to review all 1,400 schools of education and publish its findings in *U.S. News and World Report* (Sawchuk, 2011a). This move has generated significant controversy, including a letter by 37 education school deans to *U.S. News and World Report* as well as accusations that NCTQ has ignored education programs' responses to findings (Sawchuk, 2011a). The grading criteria include elements on English-language

learners, special education, and the belief that all children can learn, including those in poverty. There is no mention, however, of racial, ethnic or other cultural diversity (NCTQ, n.d.).

Federal policy is calling for increased accountability measures as well. The 2009 Race to the Top called for state applicants to institute data systems that identify and help improve teacher education programs whose graduates improve their students' achievement scores. More recently, President Obama's fiscal 2012 budget request includes an overhaul of reporting requirements for higher-education-based teacher preparation, moving toward outcomes-based indicators of program quality (Sawchuk, 2011b). According to this proposal, teacher preparation programs would be expected to report on three outcome measures: (a) achievement growth of students taught by program graduates; (b) graduate job-placement and retention rates; and (c) graduate and employer satisfaction.

NCATE's most recent design principles echo similar calls for increased accountability (NCATE, 2010). In its national strategy document, NCATE calls for more rigorous accountability, including increased accountability for outcomes by focusing accountability closer to the classroom and linking candidate performance and program approval more directly to student learning (p. 16-17). Further, they call for an increased research and development agenda with systematic gathering and use of data to support continuous improvement in teacher education (p. 6). NCATE acknowledges that there is not a large research base on what makes clinical preparation effective and suggests that NCATE itself should facilitate a national data network to gather and disseminate what is learned from new research (p. iv).

Within this climate, the findings in this study are indicative of the challenges facing teacher education programs, especially in terms of preparing candidates for diverse student learners. The diversity proficiencies programs identified in this study are a far cry from what some scholars would suggest. The most frequent proficiencies include understanding student differences and demonstrating respect or sensitivity for diversity. The proficiencies, such as those identified by Jordan-Irvine (2003), Nieto (2005), and Villegas and Lucas (2002) that include anti-racism, social justice, questioning mainstream school knowledge and ways, and a commitment to act as change agents were among the least-frequently occurring. For example, the proficiencies identified least-frequently (by only one unit) include: challenging assumptions and stereotypes about those who are culturally different; taking proactive roles in the advocacy of children; understanding of the history of exclusion and discrimination faced by groups in the schooling system; and demonstrating a commitment to equality.

The findings in this study about the types of assessment tools used by the eleven units are both reflective of the existing literature and go beyond the existing knowledge base. Several of the measures used to assess teacher preparation identified in the research literature were also found in this study. The beliefs and dispositions of teacher candidates are a focus of research (Hollins and Guzman, 2005; Silverman, 2010) and were assessed with a variety of tools by the eleven units, including dispositions surveys, journaling, and written reflections. Research suggests that teacher candidates may have limited skills in lesson plans for diverse students (Ambrosio, Seguin, Hogan & Miller, 2001; Trent, Kea, & Oh, 2008). The findings in this study suggest that lesson plans are

widely used for diversity instruction and were the most frequently reported assessment tool.

The exit and alumni surveys are examples of assessment tools that measure candidate satisfaction and scholars have identified this as one of the ways to examine with teacher preparation (Cross, 2003; Masci & Stotko, 2006). Echoing research on the prevalence of field experiences (Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996; Grant & Secada, 1990), all of the eleven units in this study reported using specific tools during field experiences or student teaching to assess candidates' diversity proficiencies.

Cochran-Smith (2004) suggests that the long-term impact of teacher education on K-12 students' learning, aggregated teacher test-scores, and the professional performance of teachers in the field are the three outcomes questions facing teacher education institutions. Among the eleven units in this study, there is some use of teacher test-scores, however the Praxis examination is the only reported test and is not explicitly designed to assess diversity proficiencies. There are also examples of initial attempts to assess the professional performance of teachers in the field via employer and alumni surveys. There is no evidence in this study of any attempt to examine the long-term impact on K-12 students' learning in order to assess units' ability to prepare candidates to meet the needs of diverse learners.

The findings lead me to examine implications for higher-education based teacher education programs and for NCATE.

Implications

The findings suggest several implications for higher-education based teacher education programs. While some units are explicit in their reporting about how specific assessment tools relate to diversity proficiencies, there are many occasions where they are not. Making this link is important if teacher education programs are going to be able to build knowledge around which experiences and curricula lead to candidate learning in given areas.

Also, on many assessments, units report generally positive results. This leads me to question the assessment instruments. While it is possible that most students would perform successfully, the emerging data about teacher satisfaction with preparation for diverse students would suggest that units should consider adapting the assessment tools to be able to provide finer-grained assessment information. For the units that were able to decipher areas that suggested needs for improvement, they were able to report adjustments that were made in the programs. Alternatively, without having reviewed the assessment data if it was not provided by the unit, this may suggest that units are highlighting positive results for the purposes of NCATE accreditation.

Not all units provided rubrics for the assessment items. In some cases, units provided detailed descriptions of learning experiences as well as the accompanying rubrics. When units do not share their rubrics, research opportunities are lost. It is quite possible that in many cases there are no rubrics, which also suggests that units might begin to more closely examine how they evaluate teacher candidates' work with the tools described in this study. By providing the rubrics used for diversity assessments, or creating rubrics if they do not already exist, teacher education programs would create a

vehicle for refining learning experiences and assessments for their candidates. Further, NCATE could begin to use this data to promote cross-institutional research on such assessment tools, contributing to the “national data network” it describes in its national strategic document (NCATE, 2010).

The findings from this study also suggest implications for NCATE around the questions used in Institutional Reports and the use of existing accreditation data. The questions in NCATE’s Institutional Reports guide units to provide evidence related to each of the standards. It seems that there is an opportunity to use the questions to require units to describe how they use assessment data and how it connects to their proficiencies. The question in the reports analyzed in this study stated “What key assessments provide evidence about candidates’ proficiencies related to diversity? How are candidates performing on these assessments?” However, in the performance levels, NCATE clearly indicates that units at the target level “regularly review candidate assessment data on candidates’ ability to work with all students and develop a plan for improving their practice and the institution’s programs” (NCATE, 2008). It would seem, then, that adding a question to the Institutional Reports regarding the uses of data would impel units to describe their efforts and perhaps push units to implement such practices if not already in place.

In order to provide better guidance to the Board of Examiners teams, and perhaps to the units themselves, NCATE should consider how it might share and document the practices of units that meet the “target” level on any of the sub-parts of the standards. Admittedly, this is a delicate road to travel, however, as NCATE is not in the business of explicitly prescribing how units should go about structuring their teacher education

programs. On the other hand, publicly sharing the characteristics of “target” level programs would be a service to the field, especially since NCATE is in the unique position of having access to detailed information across multiple institutions. Obviously, one of the challenges is that the practices of “target”-level units are not empirically proven to improve the teaching of diverse learners. However, given what little is known on a large scale about effective teacher education programs, documenting and sharing this data would be a good first step and could provide a natural base for further research by the field.

Further, to test NCATE’s Board of Examiners review process, a similar study might be conducted examining units that met the “acceptable” level in order to determine how effectively the review process allows NCATE to differentiate between “acceptable” and “target” level applications. Similarly, NCATE could examine other parts of Standard 4 and the other standards. Admittedly, the lack of consistency across Board of Examiners teams presents a challenge to both NCATE and researchers in comparability of BOE evaluations. The lack of specific examples of what “target” units look like for Board of Examiners raises the question of how BOE team-members are able to effectively make judgments about the units, especially in terms of distinguishing “acceptable” from “target.”

It is disappointing that this study did not provide more robust findings around how units deemed “target” by NCATE are assessing candidates and how they are using the resulting data. Admittedly, this study did not examine the link between diversity proficiencies, candidates’ learning experiences and candidate assessments. However, the lack of documentation by units to connect the assessments to proficiencies and, most

notably, the absence of a clear picture of how units are using this data, is troubling. It is unclear, and raises questions for NCATE, how BOE team-members were able to make effective determinations about the use of assessment data when data in the Institutional Reports presented such a shallow picture of what units were doing.

Finally, the inconsistency in what data was presented by each unit made comparisons across units difficult. Units did not consistently present both descriptions of assessment tools and the tools themselves. Most often, only a description was provided. If NCATE were to require some degree of consistency in terms of its documentation requirements, especially in regards to if and when the actual assessment tools should be provided, it would facilitate more effective comparisons, both for NCATE's own review process as well as for outside researchers.

Future Research

In addition to the research needs described in Chapter Two, this study suggests additional research that would contribute to our understanding of preparing teachers for diverse learners. First, conducting in-depth case studies on some of the units reviewed here would provide additional understanding of how effective the NCATE data is in painting a complete picture of teacher education programs. Second, this study did not examine the specific approaches to teacher education taken by each unit. Additional research examining how each of these eleven units structured their teacher preparation programs and their candidates' experiences would provide a necessary next set of information.

Third, similar to Boston College's Teachers for a New Era research on the development of a social-justice beliefs scale, teacher education programs' own research on developing constructive and valid assessment tools would be a welcome addition to diversity scholarship (Enterline, Cochran-Smith, Ludlow, & Mitescu, 2008). Fourth, in order to inform NCATE's Board of Examination process, a similar study could be done of units that met the "acceptable" level to determine if the existing protocols for determining the difference between "acceptable" and "target" performance levels are providing valid evaluations.

Fifth, this study did not examine NCATE's process for training Board of Examiners team members, nor did it consider how the team members conducted their evaluation of the accreditation report documents. Analysis of both of these areas would provide desperately needed insight into the effectiveness of the accreditation process.

Finally, by allowing its accreditation database to be used for this study, NCATE has demonstrated a willingness and eagerness to learn from its existing data. An entire range of additional research questions surrounding the other standards, or other aspects of teacher preparation and accreditation, could be informed by continued examination of the AIMS database.

Summary

This study extends existing research on the preparation of teachers for diverse learners by providing a multi-institution analysis of the proficiencies expected of teacher candidates and how they are assessed. It is my hope that this study will contribute to the ongoing scholarship on preparing teachers so that teacher candidates will someday be

fully prepared to meet the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms and that all students will have equitable opportunities to learn.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: NCATE Unit Standards (NCATE, 2008)

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework establishes the shared vision for a unit's efforts in preparing educators to work in P–12 schools. It provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service, and unit accountability. The conceptual framework is knowledge-based, articulated, shared, coherent, consistent with the unit and/or institutional mission, and continuously evaluated. The conceptual framework provides the bases that describe the unit's intellectual philosophy and institutional standards, which distinguish graduates of one institution from those of another.

Standard 1: *Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions*

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

Standard 2: *Assessment System and Unit Evaluation*

The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the performance of candidates, the unit, and its programs.

Standard 3: *Field Experiences and Clinical Practice*

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.

Standard 4: *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.

Standard 5: *Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development*

Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance.

They also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.

Standard 6: *Unit Governance and Resources*

The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

The following pages provide the reader information about the meaning of the conceptual framework and the six NCATE standards. Rubrics that accompany each standard address the critical elements of the standard and describe different levels of performance required to meet the standard. The supporting explanations include a rationale for the standard and additional explanation of each standard's meaning.

Appendix B: NCATE Standard 4 – Diversity (NCATE, 2008).

Standard 4: *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

UNACCEPTABLE

The unit has not articulated candidate proficiencies related to diversity identified in the unit's conceptual framework. The curriculum and field experiences for the preparation of educators do not prepare candidates to work effectively with diverse populations, including English-language learners and students with exceptionalities. Candidates do not understand the importance of diversity in teaching and learning. They are not developing skills for incorporating diversity into their teaching and are not able to establish a classroom and school climate that values diversity. Assessments of candidate proficiencies do not include data on candidates' ability to incorporate multiple

perspectives into their teaching or service, develop lessons or services for students with different learning styles, accommodate linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities, and communicate effectively with diverse populations.

ACCEPTABLE

The unit clearly articulates proficiencies related to diversity identified in the unit's conceptual framework that candidates are expected to develop during their professional programs. Curriculum and field experiences provide a well grounded framework for understanding diversity, including English-language learners and students with exceptionalities. Candidates are aware of different learning styles and adapt instruction or services appropriately for all students, including linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities. Candidates connect lessons, instruction, or services to students' experiences and cultures. They communicate with students and families in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and gender differences. Candidates incorporate multiple perspectives in the subject matter being taught or services being provided. They develop a classroom and school climate that values diversity. Candidates demonstrate classroom behaviors that are consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn. Candidate proficiencies related to diversity are assessed, and the data are used to provide feedback to candidates for improving their knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for helping students from diverse populations learn.

TARGET

Curriculum, field experiences, and clinical practice promote candidates' development of knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions related to diversity identified in the unit's conceptual framework. They are based on well developed knowledge bases for, and conceptualizations of, diversity and inclusion so that candidates can apply them effectively in schools. Candidates learn to contextualize teaching and draw effectively on representations from the students' own experiences and cultures. They challenge students toward cognitive complexity and engage all students, including English-language learners and students with exceptionalities, through instructional conversation. Candidates and faculty regularly review candidate assessment data on candidates' ability to work with all students and develop a plan for improving their practice and the institution's programs.

4b. EXPERIENCES WORKING WITH DIVERSE FACULTY

UNACCEPTABLE

Candidates in conventional or distance learning programs interact with professional education faculty, faculty from other units, and/or school faculty who are from one gender group or are members of only one ethnic/racial group. Professional education and school faculty have limited knowledge and experiences related to diversity. The unit has not demonstrated good-faith efforts to recruit and maintain male and female faculty from diverse ethnic/racial groups.

ACCEPTABLE

Candidates in conventional and distance learning programs interact with professional education faculty, faculty from other units, and/or school faculty, both male and female,

from at least two ethnic/racial groups.^[17] Faculty with whom candidates work in professional education classes and clinical practice have knowledge and experiences related to preparing candidates to work with diverse student populations, including English-language learners and students with exceptionalities. Affirmation of the value of diversity is shown through good-faith efforts to increase or maintain faculty diversity.

TARGET

Candidates in conventional and distance learning programs interact with professional education faculty, faculty in other units, and school faculty from a broad range of diverse groups. Higher education and school faculty with whom candidates work throughout their preparation program are knowledgeable about and sensitive to preparing candidates to work with diverse students, including students with exceptionalities.

4c. EXPERIENCES WORKING WITH DIVERSE CANDIDATES

UNACCEPTABLE

Candidates engage in professional education experiences in conventional or distance learning programs with candidates who are from one gender group or from the same socioeconomic group or ethnic/racial group. Unit activities for candidates do not encourage or support the involvement of candidates from diverse populations. The unit has not demonstrated good-faith efforts to increase or maintain a pool of candidates, both male and female, from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic/racial groups.

ACCEPTABLE

Candidates engage in professional education experiences in conventional and distance learning programs with male and female candidates from different socioeconomic groups, and at least two ethnic/racial groups. They work together on committees and education projects related to education and the content areas. Affirmation of the value of diversity is shown through good-faith efforts the unit makes to increase or maintain a pool of candidates, both male and female, from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic/racial groups.

TARGET

Candidates engage in professional education experiences in conventional and distance learning programs with candidates from the broad range of diverse groups. The active participation of candidates from diverse cultures and with different experiences is solicited, valued, and promoted in classes, field experiences, and clinical practice. Candidates reflect on and analyze these experiences in ways that enhance their development and growth as professionals.

4d. EXPERIENCES WORKING WITH DIVERSE STUDENTS IN P-12 SCHOOLS

UNACCEPTABLE

In conventional or distance learning programs, not all candidates participate in field experiences or clinical practices with exceptional students and students from diverse ethnic/racial, gender, language, and socioeconomic groups. The experiences do not help candidates reflect on diversity or develop skills for having a positive effect on student learning for all students.

ACCEPTABLE

Field experiences or clinical practice for both conventional and distance learning programs provide experiences with male and female P–12 students from different socioeconomic groups and at least two ethnic/racial groups. Candidates also work with English-language learners and students with disabilities during some of their field experiences and/or clinical practice to develop and practice their knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for working with all students. Feedback from peers and supervisors helps candidates reflect on their ability to help all students learn.

TARGET

Extensive and substantive field experiences and clinical practices for both conventional and distance learning programs are designed to encourage candidates to interact with exceptional students and students from a broad range of diverse groups. The experiences help candidates confront issues of diversity that affect teaching and student learning and develop strategies for improving student learning and candidates' effectiveness as teachers.

SUPPORTING EXPLANATION:

America's classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse; over 40 percent of the students in P–12 classrooms are students of color. Twenty percent of the students have at least one foreign-born parent, many with native languages other than English and from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Growing numbers of students are classified as having disabilities. At the same time, teachers of color are less than 20 percent of the teaching

force. As a result, most students do not have the opportunity to benefit from a diverse teaching force. Therefore, all teacher candidates must develop proficiencies for working effectively with students and families from diverse populations and with exceptionalities to ensure that all students learn. Regardless of whether they live in areas with great diversity, candidates must develop knowledge of diversity in the United States and the world, professional dispositions that respect and value differences, and skills for working with diverse populations.

One of the goals of this standard is the development of educators who can help all students learn or support their learning through their professional roles in schools. This goal requires educators who can reflect multicultural and global perspectives that draw on the histories, experiences, and representations of students and families from diverse populations. Therefore, the unit has the responsibility to provide opportunities for candidates to understand diversity and equity in the teaching and learning process. Coursework, field experiences, and clinical practice must be designed to help candidates understand the influence of culture on education and acquire the ability to develop meaningful learning experiences for all students. Candidates learn about exceptionalities and inclusion, English-language learners and language acquisition, ethnic/racial cultural and linguistic differences, and gender differences, and the impact of these factors on learning. Proficiencies, including those related to professional dispositions and diversity, are drawn from the standards of the profession, state, and institution. Candidates are helped to understand the potential impact of discrimination based on race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and language on students and their learning. Proficiencies

related to diversity are identified in the unit's conceptual framework. They are clear to candidates and are assessed as part of the unit's assessment system.

Field experiences and clinical practice support the development of educators who can apply their knowledge of diversity, including exceptionalities, to work in schools with all students. They provide opportunities for candidates to reflect on their observations and practices in schools and communities with students and families from diverse ethnic/racial, language, gender, and socioeconomic groups. Clinical faculty design learning experiences for candidates to help them process diversity concepts and provide feedback to them about their performance. Teachers in advanced programs are expected to complete field experiences in educational settings with diverse populations.

A cohort of candidates and faculty from diverse groups informs the unit's curriculum, pedagogy, and field experiences in culturally meaningful ways. Diverse faculty and peers assist candidates in addressing teaching and learning from multiple perspectives and different life experiences. It provides for different voices in the professional development and work of the education profession. The greater range of cultural backgrounds and experiences among faculty and candidates enhances understanding of diversity. In this regard, the unit recruits, admits or hires, and retains candidates and faculty from diverse populations. A plan that is monitored and revised regularly may provide guidance in ensuring and maintaining diverse representation.

Candidates have the opportunity to interact with adults, children, and youth from their own and other ethnic/racial cultures throughout their college careers, and particularly in

their professional preparation programs. Candidates, higher education faculty, school faculty, and P–12 students with whom candidates work are from diverse ethnic/racial, language, gender, and socioeconomic groups. Candidates also have opportunities to work with adults and students with exceptionalities.

**Appendix C: Questions from NCATE’s Institutional Reports -
Standard 4 Diversity**

Note that questions related to uploading or completing tables have not been included below.

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

4a.1. What proficiencies related to diversity are candidates expected to develop and demonstrate?

4a.2. What coursework and experiences enable teacher candidates and candidates for other school professional roles to develop:

- awareness of the importance of diversity in teaching and learning;
- and the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to adapt instruction and/or services for diverse populations, including linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities?

OR

4.a.2. What required coursework and experiences enable teacher candidates and candidates for other school professional roles to adapt instruction to different learning styles, connect instruction or services to students’ experiences and cultures, communicate with students and families in culturally sensitive ways, incorporate multiple perspectives

into teaching, develop a classroom and school climate that values diversity, demonstrate behaviors consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn?

4a.3. What key assessments provide evidence about candidates' proficiencies related to diversity? How are candidates performing on these assessments?

OR

4a.3. What data from key assessments indicate that candidates demonstrate proficiencies related to diversity, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities?

4a.4. What differences, if any, exist in the ways candidates develop and demonstrate their proficiencies related to diversity in programs for other school professionals, off-campus programs, and distance learning programs¹⁰?

4b. Experiences Working with Diverse Faculty

4b.1. What opportunities do candidates (including candidates at off-campus sites and/or in distance learning or alternate route programs) have to interact with higher education and/or school-based faculty from diverse groups?

OR

¹⁰ Not all Institutional Reports included this question.

4b.1. What educational interactions do candidates (including candidates at off-campus sites and/or in distance learning programs) have with higher education and school-based faculty from diverse groups?

4b.2. What knowledge and experiences do faculty have related to preparing candidates to work with students from diverse groups?

4b.3. How diverse are the faculty members who work with education candidates¹¹?

4b.4. What efforts does the unit make to recruit and retain a diverse faculty?

4c. Experiences Working with Diverse Candidates

4c.1. What opportunities do candidates (including candidates at off-campus sites and/or in distance learning or alternate route programs) have to interact with candidates from diverse groups?

OR

4c.1. What educational interactions do candidates (including candidates at off-campus sites and/or in distance learning programs) have with peers from diverse groups?

4c.2. How diverse are the candidates in initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation programs?

¹¹ Not all Institutional Reports included this question.

4c.3. What efforts does the unit make to recruit and retain candidates from diverse groups?

4c.4. How diverse are candidates in the initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation programs¹²?

4d. Experiences Working with Diverse Students in P-12 Schools

4d.1. How does the unit ensure that candidates develop and practice knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions related to diversity during their field experiences and clinical practice?

OR

4d.1. How does the unit ensure that each candidate has at least one field/clinical experience with students from ethnic/racial groups different than his/her own, English language learners, students with exceptionalities and students from different socioeconomic groups?

4d.2. How diverse are the P-12 students in the settings in which candidates participate in field experiences and clinical practice¹³?

¹² Not all Institutional Reports included this question.

¹³ Not all Institutional Reports included this question.

4d.3. How does the unit ensure that candidates use feedback from peers and supervisors to reflect on their skills in working with students from diverse groups?

Optional

1. What does your unit do particularly well related to Standard 4?
2. What research related to Standard 4 is being conducted by the unit¹⁴?

¹⁴ Not all Institutional Reports included this question.

Appendix D: Example of Coded Nodes (Journal Assessments)

Note: This is text coded as related to journal assessments. Identifying information, such as course names or geographic locations have been removed, but no other changes to the text have been made.

Board of Examiners Report - Redwood

The COURSE# interterm experience in City, State ensures candidates have at least one diverse placement where they have the opportunity to work with diverse faculty, students and community. Candidates participating in this field experience record not only activities but perceptions as they reflect on the experience. These journals are then scored using the unit dispositional rubric.

Board of Examiners Report - Magnolia

Course syllabi indicate classroom adaptations are included in each program and focus on the various aspects of diversity. As a candidate's knowledge base grows, multiple opportunities are provided to develop appreciation, respect, and understanding through journaling, observation, parent conferencing and community projects.

Board of Examiners Report - Maple

All candidates take COURSE#, Diverse Learners, which requires that candidates complete a 30-hour experience in an inclusion or special education setting. They must

also submit a portfolio with guided journal entries, reflections, classroom description, interview summaries, and description of work with students.

Board of Examiners Report - Willow

At the initial level, examples of reflective candidate journal pages described their enthusiasm for their opportunities to create a classroom that is comfortable for a diverse student population.

Institutional Report - Redwood

One assessment requires candidates to complete a daily journal that records perceptions, reflections and interpretations of classroom events and learning. The journals are evaluated using the unit's disposition rubric on a) how candidates connect with all students, b) what they believe about the learning abilities of all students, c) what they see as the purpose of education, and d) how they view the importance of the affective domain.

2. Candidates in COURSE#, Diversity in Education, are required to keep journals during the 3 week interterm. Candidates are requested to focus on their perceptions, reflections and interpretations (rather than on classroom activities and events) of teachers and students engaged in learning activities. This assessment is also evaluated using the unit's four part disposition rubric.

Institutional Report - Magnolia

In many courses with field experiences, candidates maintain a reflective journal shared with a faculty member or university supervisor based on their observations and teachings. Many of the aforementioned experiences are done in paired settings where peers can support/critique each other's work.

Institutional Report - Birch

In student teaching, reflection is incorporated in the personal development journal which candidates complete. In these journals, candidates are required to examine their areas of growth based on the feedback received from the cooperating teachers and university clinical supervisors.

Institutional Report - Maple

During the 30-hour field experience associated with the course, candidates work with special needs students in special education and inclusion settings. Reflections are shared in online journals and discussed in class. Candidates are evaluated on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions exhibited in this experience and a satisfactory evaluation is required for admission to professional licensure.

Supplemental Document - Redwood

Disposition 2 Candidates in COURSE#, Diversity in Education, are required to keep a journal during the 3 week interterm. Candidates are requested to focus on their perceptions, reflections and interpretations (rather than on classroom activities and

events) of teachers and students engaged in learning activities. Candidates are asked to use higher order thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation) in the reflection process. This assessment is also evaluated using the unit's four part disposition rubric.

Supplemental Document - Redwood

1. Initial candidates spend approximately three weeks in COURSE# Diversity in Education, working in highly diverse urban settings, assisting with instruction and supporting candidate learning. Candidates participate in multiple activities and assessments during COURSE#. One assessment requires candidates to complete a daily journal that records perceptions, reflections and interpretations of classroom events and learning.

The journals are evaluated using the unit's disposition rubric on a) how candidates connect with all students, b) what they believe about the learning abilities of all students, c) what they see as the purpose of education, and d) how they view the importance of the affective domain.

Supplemental Document - Maple

Diverse Learners Field Experience

- Candidates complete a 30-hour experience in an inclusion or special education setting
- Candidates submit a portfolio with guided journal entries, reflections, classroom description, interview summaries, and description of work with students

Supplemental Document - Oak

Socio Cultural Consciousness

COURSE# -classroom experience, journaling, course discussions

COURSE# -journals, discussions

Constructivist

COURSE# -journal discussions & lesson planning

Learning about students

COURSE# -journal discussions; visits/conferences

Supplemental Document - Spruce

COURSE# Introduction to Education (Freshmen, Fall)

1. Each week students read articles that address issues of social consciousness. We then discuss these articles in length during the next class meeting. A few sample titles are listed below:

- Individual Assignment Write a reflection journal on your book. In this journal please address the following: was the teacher in your book a passionate teacher? Explain. What was his or her stance? Did he/she play the game? Include comments on the students, administration, parents, etc. Be sure to include personal observations and reflections.

Appendix E: Diversity Proficiencies

Understand Diversity and/or Student Differences

- Apply an understanding of how learners develop, including an understanding of differences in development among students of different ethnicities and cultures, genders, and socioeconomic statuses.
- Candidates are knowledgeable about diversity and demonstrate respect and valuing of difference...
- Candidates understand how students differ in their approaches to learning...The educator understands and can identify varied approaches to learning and performance, including different learning styles...
- Demonstrate knowledge of cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, and learning style diversity and its implications for professional practice.
- Process outcome proficiencies engender candidates as... able to understand individual and cultural differences among students.
- The teacher candidate expands his/her knowledge of how diverse groups of students as well as individual students learn and develop.
- Understand the ethnic, racial, social class, sexual orientation and gender differences between teachers and students.
- Understands diversity.

Adapt Instruction

- Candidates understand the range of educational options for diverse learners and can apply the appropriate strategies, methods, and materials.
- Candidates... create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.... The educator... can design instruction that uses students' strengths as a basis for development.... The educator identifies and designs instruction appropriate to students' level of development, learning styles, strengths, needs, and progress in learning.
- Creating and adapting general education environments for all learners, including those with exceptionalities.
- Effectively implement differentiated lessons designed to meet the needs of students with varying skill levels and/or content knowledge from diverse socioeconomic and/or cultural backgrounds.
- Select and utilize appropriate methods, materials and instructional activities that align with goals and accommodate diversity in students' backgrounds, abilities, and learning styles.
- Successfully accommodates varied needs of individuals.
- The candidate expands his/her knowledge of how diverse groups of students as well as individual students learn and develop and provides learning opportunities that support the intellectual, social and personal growth of these students.
- Use differentiated instruction to provide for individual student differences (e.g., different developmental levels, English-language learners, and students with

disabilities)... Use a variety of strategies and instructional approaches to engage learners.

Respect, Appreciation, and Sensitivity

- Address diversity issues effectively and sensitively, including differences in ethnicity, language, gender, socioeconomic status, and developmental levels. Demonstrate respect for students and their families and the community where students go to school.
- Candidates are knowledgeable about diversity and demonstrate respect and valuing of difference.
- Candidates as reflective inquirers sensitive to diversity.
- Embrace diversity and value differences in people.
- Instilling an appreciation of individuality and multiculturalism within a national and global context.
- Respect cultural diversity of students and their families and diversity in student backgrounds, experiences, and abilities.
- The educator appreciates and values human diversity... The educator respects the unique cultural background, skills, talents, and interests of each student.

Learning Environment

- Build class community with opportunities for participation and student involvement

- Candidates are committed to stewardship that promotes a positive learning environment for all students.
- Create a classroom climate that promotes fairness.
- Educator creates a culture for learning in which individual differences are respected...
- Implement research and/or best practice based management strategies that foster a positive learning environment and promote active engagement in learning and healthy social interactions between students of diverse backgrounds....
Demonstrate fairness and the belief that all students can learn as evidenced by classroom climate...
- Knowledge of how culturally diverse learning communities can and should be created in educational environments.
- Striving to create a healthy community in the classroom and beyond.

Family and Community

- The educator understands how students' learning is influenced by individual experiences, talents, and prior learning, as well as language, culture, family and community values and knows how to incorporate students' experiences, cultures, family, and community resources into instruction.... The educator uses knowledge of students' families, cultures, and communities as a basis for connecting instruction to student experiences.
- Fostering family and community involvement.

- As reflective inquirers, candidates use the richness of diverse communities and understanding of the urban environment to enhance learning and to foster global connections.
- Demonstrate respect for students and their families and the community where students go to school.
- Respect cultural diversity of students and their families...
- Soliciting and using the input of parents, caretakers, and families...

Incorporate Students' Backgrounds in Instruction

- Build effectively on students' prior knowledge.
- Identify social, economic, cultural, and cognitive conditions, including exceptionalities that influence instructional decisions.
- Knows how to incorporate students' experiences, cultures, family, and community resources into instruction... The educator uses knowledge of students' families, cultures, and communities as a basis for connecting instruction to student experiences.
- Recognizing and utilizing cultural differences within educational environments for resources that enhance learning and cultural proficiencies for all students.
- The ability to use information about students' interests, abilities, skills, backgrounds, and peer relationships to make knowledge accessible to all students, including students with exceptionalities and diverse learners.

All Students Can Learn

- Communicate appropriate learning expectations for all students... Exhibit a belief that all children can learn.
- Demonstrate fairness and the belief that all student can learn...
- Demonstrates an ideal of fairness and belief that all students can learn...Design learning experiences so all can learn.
- The educator believes that all students can learn

Achievement

- Appropriately respond to formative and summative assessment data in order to modify and/or extend lessons to increase the positive impact on student learning and bridge achievement gaps... Positively impact the learning of all students, including linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities.
- The educator ... persists in helping [all students] achieve success.... And is committed to the pursuit of excellence of the individual learner.

Best Practices

- Implement research and/or best practice based management strategies that foster a positive learning environment and promote active engagement in learning and healthy social interactions between students of diverse backgrounds.
- Provide learning environments to support student learning and apply best practices to student learning.

Education in Society

- The teacher candidate reflects on the roles that teachers and education play in a political and social democracy. The focus is on the moral and ethical purposes of schooling.
- Understanding of ways in which the public schools are linked to the health of democracy and democratic processes in our society.

Student Focused Instruction

- Fostering student-centered, teacher facilitated instruction....
- Use subject matter and activities that are meaningful to students.

Technology

- Candidates as stewards of the discipline not only know their content and pedagogical content but also how to experiment with... the integration of technology....Candidates foster learning environments that take into account technological resources.
- Fostering student-centered teacher facilitated instruction and authentic assessment that meld traditional and technology-enhanced approaches...

Appendix F: Faculty Research Topics

- Addressing adult learning styles and computer anxiety issues in the acquisition of technology skills by post-baccalaureate students.
- Candidate evaluations of academic courses which contributed to their views on diversity
- Culturally responsive research practices for scholars who work with inner-city youth.
Book club experiences of African-American and Latino adolescent females and how these forums support their academic achievement and social and emotional development
- Encouraging minority youths with disabilities to enter the sciences.
- How the unit evaluates effectiveness and plans for the teaching of diversity
- How urban youth of color deconstruct and conceptualize race, class, and gender within the book club experience.
- Howard Gardner's' theory of multiple intelligences as a factor in course design for distance education
- Multicultural counselor competency
- Pre-service teachers' beliefs about inclusion.
- Professional development seminar on learning how to work with English-language learners
- Teacher candidates' preparation to work with diverse students and developing and sustaining social consciousness.

- Teaching in diverse classrooms
- The legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding challenges to materials in school libraries.
- Using multiples of evidence to examine teacher dispositions
- What influences teacher candidates' dispositions.

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