

Director's Note

I hope the summer respite provided time for you to relax and strengthen connections with family and friends. During the summer months, several of our colleagues took time to reflect about key points that connect the university and school partners who represent the mainstay of our teacher education program. In this issue, you will find the results of their reflections; their reports are filled with rich fodder to feed the work that lies ahead as we prepare candidates to become teacher leaders who foster learning for all students through thoughtful, research-based practice.

Tracy Lambert, a cooperating teacher who was recently named High School Teacher of the Year by the Kentucky Department of Education, provides the annual analysis of the perception evaluations about the student teaching experience. Tracy has drawn some interesting conclusions from her analysis; she emphasizes the importance of flexibility in supervision and in teaching. Deborah Slaton, Associate Dean for Research and former Chairperson in the Department of Special Education in the College of Education, addresses another critical issue by highlighting research showing how to promote learning for students with special needs. And, Eric Pittman introduces some new university-based faculty who will be working with school-based partners this year. In this issue, you will also find a list of research-based resources that support Deborah's points as well as other nuggets related to effective practice.

We hope you will take a break from the hectic pace that marks the start of the school year to peruse the newsletter and reflect about how our colleagues' insights might facilitate your efforts to guide the development of our teacher candidates. As Deborah Slaton so aptly points out in her article, it is the commitment to collaboration that ensures high quality programming; your contributions are critical to our collective success!

SB

Yoga for Teachers: The Importance of Flexibility in the Student Teaching Placement

By Tracy Lambert, NBCT
Lafayette High School

Trying to take over a veteran teacher's class can be an awkward experience for even the most prepared student teacher. Yet, this experience is a necessary step in the preparation of every teacher and it is crucial that student teachers leave their placements with the knowledge, skills, and confidence that will guide them toward eventually becoming master teachers.

At the end of the Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 student teaching placements, participating student teachers (STs), cooperating teachers (CTs), and university supervisors (USs) were asked to provide feedback based on perceptions of their experience. The survey they were given asked them to rank various aspects of their experience on a scale of 1 (poor) - 4 (excellent). For both semesters, the mean score in every category except one was above 3.0. In fact, when asked to rank each others' performance, the majority of CTs, USs and STs consistently assigned one another 4's. So, when given the task to analyze the strengths of the TEP program and to find areas for improvement, I had to look beyond the numbers by reading the valuable commentary these teachers provided. What I found was affirming and enlightening.

[My CT] taught me that being flexible is key to being a teacher.

I think this ST hits the mark with this statement. The success of the student teaching placement lies not in the hands of one individual but rather in the delicate balance of contributions from the three key partners in the program: the ST, the CT, and the US. With the mélange of personalities, philosophies, and teaching styles, it is imperative that partners remain flexible and communicate regularly. Flexibility and communication allow them to accommodate one another's needs and facilitate the professional growth of the ST.

Helpful... Specific... Supportive... Professional... Honest.

These are words that the STs and CTs used to describe the most effective US. One CT says, *We always spoke briefly before the observation began. This was helpful to see if we were both on*

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the same page. A ST comments, *My supervisor was great. She provided instant feedback for anything that I sent her or that she observed. She offered advice as well as encouragement throughout the semester.*

Obviously, communication is an essential component in the success of a student teaching placement. Some STs and CTs comments suggest communication was insufficient in a few cases and expressed regret that scheduling difficulties and conflicts prevented USs from taking that much-needed time to confer and provide timely feedback before and after observations. One CT expressed a desire to know specifically from the US what role they were expected to play in the ST/CT relationship: *I really had no contact with [the US] other than when he was observing. Since it was my first time being a CT, I thought I might get some guidance.* Another CT regretted not having any time built into the placement to meet with the US: *I would have been happy to meet at any time but was not informed to do so.* Other STs and CTs expressed frustration that their USs' caseloads were so heavy that it was difficult to schedule observations at times when the ST felt prepared or when he or she was in need of the feedback and assistance that a formal observation would provide. Giving priority to and allowing extra time and flexibility for scheduled observations could allow the US to give immediate feedback to the ST and would have a more substantial impact on his or her practice. One way that UK is working to facilitate communication between the CT and the US is through the Office of Field Experiences' orientation, *Tools for Effective Supervision: Preparing Supervisors to Work with Teacher Candidates.* This orientation provides the perfect venue to discuss the roles and expectations of the US, ST, and CT.

As I mentioned earlier, the mean score fell slightly below 3.0 in the evaluation data in only one category. In the Fall 2006 semester, STs ranked the "Overall value of seminars held during the student teaching semester in promoting your professional growth" at a mean score of 2.92. The majority of STs, 50.6%, gave seminars a score of 3 (good), 21.68% of STs gave it a 4 (excellent), 25.30% scored it at 2 (fair), and .02% gave it a 1 (poor). STs' comments indicate that a great deal of the learning from their student teaching placement took place not in the university classroom but rather in their CT's classroom:

Overall, I have learned all the small 'tricks of the trade' in teaching.

I learned how to more successfully manage my time due to the large amount of content that was to be taught.

I feel that I have developed more confidence in working with parents by watching how...handled those situations.

I have also learned how to develop a 'teacher voice'...

And isn't that how we hope that each of these new teachers will teach his or her students—through authentic experiences that reinforce instruction to foster learning? I believe that these scores of 2 and 3 represent the ST's *perception* of the value of university seminars compared to actual classroom experience during the student teaching placement. How could a seminar motivate the most reluctant learners, manage time to avoid burn out, keep cool when a parent is losing his/hers, remain open-minded, adaptable and above all, *flexible*? These skills are best learned through experience with a supportive mentor to serve as a guide. Yet the experience cannot replace the university seminars which facilitate professional growth by laying a solid groundwork of correct and relevant information that the ST can use to experiment with various approaches and techniques in the classroom.

The perception surveys play a significant role in maintaining a high quality program. Reflection is a necessary element in the professional growth process and communication with mentors represents an important part of reflection. By soliciting feedback from the US, ST, and CTs, the Teacher Education Program is gathering the information it needs to make positive changes and to better prepare teacher candidates for the workforce. What I find most encouraging about the comments provided in the program evaluation data is that each of the survey respondents reflected about his/her practice and its impact on students and on other professionals. Each of the commentaries show evidence of thoughtful, constructive feedback, as well as a general spirit of cooperation, open-mindedness, and flexibility that contribute to the professional growth of the individuals involved in the student teaching process as well as the Teacher Education Program. Just as consistent, continued practice of *Yoga* serves as a way to strengthen mind, body and spirit, *communication* and *flexibility* serve to enhance the student teaching experience and lay the foundation for solid teaching practice. I was pleased to see those principles of practice represented in comments from respondents to this year's program evaluation surveys.

Course Announcement

EDC 724: Guiding and Analyzing Effective Teaching

2007 Fall Semester (August 22 - December 12)

Wednesday Evenings 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Southern Middle School

This course is designed to assist educators interested in supervising teacher candidates and intern teachers.

For more information, contact Sharon Brennan or Kathy Heineman: Phone (859) 257-1857 or e-mail: sharon.brennan@uky.edu

Field Notes is published twice a year by the Office of Field Experiences and School Collaboration
104 Taylor Education Building
Lexington, KY 40506-0001
859•257•1857 E-mail: fieldx@uky.edu
www.uky.edu/Education/ofeover.html

Editorial Staff:
Sharon Brennan
Julie Cleary
Patricia David
Kathy Heineman

Classroom Success for Students with Disabilities

By Deborah Bott Slaton

Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, Professor of Special Education

Recent reports from the U.S. Department of Education confirm what most classroom teachers already know: general education classes likely include at least two students with disabilities. These students are eligible for special education services and most spend a large portion of their day in general education classrooms. Sometimes a special education teacher is present, but very often the general education teacher must implement parts of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) without the benefit of co-teaching. This means that teacher education programs must prepare all teachers to work with students with disabilities.

This past spring, program faculty members from the University of Kentucky's (UK) teacher preparation programs participated in a work session in which we considered ways to improve the expertise of our candidates enrolled in our programs to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Recognizing that this is a difficult area, we are working to improve our programs and the skills of our graduates. The purpose of this article is to highlight points that my colleagues, Dr. Bill Gustashaw, Dr. Don Stenhoff, and I presented at the spring work session. We hope this will serve as a foundation for the work that lies ahead this year as university and school based partners guide the development of our teacher candidates in this critical area.

The IEP for each student with a disability provides details about what is legally required in terms of specially designed instruction for that student. As a starting point, cooperating teachers should help their field experience students understand these requirements for members of the class who have IEPs. Districts vary in their policies about who may see an IEP, but everyone working with a student with disabilities should understand the accommodations and interventions specified in the IEP. In addition to IEP requirements, there are many effective

teaching and management tactics that teachers may use to improve the performance of students with disabilities. What follows is a sampling of some of the big ideas drawn from research on effective academic and behavioral interventions for students with disabilities.

Myths Not Supported by Research

Sometimes it's as helpful to know what not to do as it is to have information about promising classroom practices. It may be surprising to many educators that some widely held notions about learning and students with disabilities actually are not supported by research. For example, "learning styles" and the idea that students, particularly those with learning disabilities, have a predominant "learning style" (e.g., auditory, visual or kinesthetic) that should be accommodated through instruction is very popular. Rigorous scientific studies have not supported this idea. Rather than working to adapt instruction and materials to fit a single "learning style", presentations of content, skills, and strategies should match what is being taught to make the learning activity vivid and memorable. Often, multi-sensory presentations are optimal. (See "Ask the Cognitive Scientist" article listed in resource list for information about related research.)

Similarly, teachers sometimes receive the message that using reinforcers to encourage changes in behavior is not good practice. Actually, there is strong evidence showing that using appropriate, positive consequences immediately after a student exhibits an appropriate academic or social behavior increases the likelihood that the student will exhibit that behavior again in the future. (Related research can be found on reinforcement and behavior tutorial web sites on the resource list.) Positive reinforcers take many forms: praise, gestures (i.e., a smile or thumbs up sign), privileges, activities, and tangible items. Selecting reinforcers depends on the age of the student and the situation,

but effective teachers often use high rates of positive reinforcement, especially for those students who struggle with academics and behavior.

Promoting Appropriate Classroom Behaviors

Students with disabilities sometimes exhibit very high rates of inappropriate or inadequate classroom behaviors. Of course, this is why students with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities (EBD) are eligible for special education services, but students with other disabilities also may disrupt their own learning and that of their classmates with inappropriate behaviors. Beginning teachers often are hesitant to exert their influence on these students, but establishing rapport and conveying a sense of confidence are essential to establish a productive learning climate. Since they will likely need careful guidance to develop effective strategies, I offer a few specific tactics that teachers may use to promote appropriate classroom behaviors:

- Open a class period or lesson by telling students the expected behaviors. Whenever possible, emphasize productive and appropriate behaviors rather than what not to do.
- Pre-correct inadequate or inappropriate behaviors observed in the past—don't wait for the problem to happen again. Sometimes this is best done as a private message to a student as he or she enters the classroom. Again, specify what the appropriate behavior is and express confidence that the student can succeed.
- Give immediate feedback about behaviors, both positive and corrective.
- Build in academic success opportunities; some students disrupt the classroom to avoid academic tasks they see as too difficult.

Spotlight on New University-Based Faculty in Two Departments

By Eric Pittman
Information Specialist

We are pleased to have this opportunity to introduce six new faculty members who will be working with school partners this year. Lauri Henry, Timothy Jaccobbe, Kristen Perry, and Gerry Swan are assistant professors in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Karen Hager and Jennifer Stringfellow, who are also assistant professors, join the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling.

Professor Henry's primary area is adolescent literature. She comes to UK from the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education where she spent the last three years working as a researcher and a research assistant in the New Literacies Research Lab. This lab focused on discovering new reading comprehension and learning skills required by the internet and other emerging information and communication technologies. Prior to that, Dr. Henry spent three years teaching seventh-grade English, literature and math in the Connecticut public school system. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees, in addition to her Ph.D., all from the University of Connecticut.

Professor Jaccobbe, whose academic area is Mathematics Education, comes to UK from The College of New Jersey, Ewing, N.J., where he was a math instructor for two years. During this time, Dr. Jacobbe also worked as an assessment specialist in mathematics for the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, N.J. While there, he wrote and reviewed math content for the SAT, GRE, AP statistics and Praxis math exams. During his career, Jaccobbe also taught math on the high school level and spent four years

serving in the United States Navy. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Bowling Green State University (Ohio), and his Ph.D. from Clemson University.

Professor Perry's focus is Elementary Education. Her background includes teaching on the elementary and collegiate levels, in addition to extensive work in the Literacy Achievement Research Center in the Michigan State University College of Education. Dr. Perry also spent a year with the Peace Corps where she taught classes in Lesotho, Africa. For the past five years, she has continued her international work by tutoring African refugees who now live in the United States. She earned her bachelor's degree from Carleton College, Northfield, Minn.; her master's degree from the University of Colorado-Denver; and her Ph.D. from Michigan State University.

Gerry Swan's work focuses on instructional design and technology in the classroom. Although he is assuming a new role, Professor Swan is no stranger to the University of Kentucky. For the past three years, he has served as the senior program manager of instructional technology for UK. Prior to that, he spent a year at UK as a post-doctoral fellow researching the integration of instruction with technology. His experience also includes teaching three years in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, and an additional three years in the private high school sector. Dr. Swan earned his bachelor's degree from Clemson University, and his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia.

Professor Hager's emphasis is

working with children who live with moderate to severe disabilities. She comes to UK from Boise State University where she was an assistant professor of special education for two years. Prior to her assignment at Boise State, she was a graduate research assistant working on the development of Utah's Alternate Assessment. She also served as the assistant director of the Autism Support Services: Education, Research and Training program at Utah State University, and she taught kindergarten and special education classes in the Colorado and Utah public school systems. Dr. Hager earned her bachelor's degree from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota; her master's degree from the University of Northern Colorado, and her Ph.D. from Utah State University.

Professor Stringfellow's focus is on teaching children with Learning Behavior Disorders. She has spent the last four years teaching in the Department of Special Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. In addition to her collegiate experience, she has worked in the private sector for more than eight years, as well as in the private and public education sectors, teaching both adults and children who live with developmental delays. Dr. Stringfellow earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois-Champaign. Her master's degree and Ph.D. are both from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Please help us welcome these new additions to our community when you see them. They bring expertise that will surely enrich our collaborative endeavors.

Attention New Cooperating Teachers and Field Supervisors

If this is the first time you have supervised a student from the University of Kentucky, we urge you to attend our supervisors' orientation, *Tools for Effective Supervision: Preparing Supervisors to Work with Teacher Candidates*. This seminar will provide a good basis for working with student teachers and university supervisors as well as an opportunity to examine other issues related to supervision. It will be held at Southern Middle School in Lexington on Wednesday, September 12, 2007 from 4:30 - 7:30 p.m., with registration and refreshments available at 4:30 p.m. To register, in advance, please call the Office of Field Experiences at 257-1961 or contact Patricia David at patricia.david@uky.edu.

Cooperating and Resource Teacher Tuition Waiver Program

As provided for in Senate Bill 77, state universities provide resource teachers a tuition waiver for up to six credits for each intern supervised in KTIP. A cooperating teacher, who supervises a student teacher, will also be eligible. To qualify you must:

- *enroll within one calendar year after completing the supervisory assignment,*
- *be admitted to one of the eight state universities and be a student in good standing.*

For further information, contact the College of Education at the state university of your choice. If you wish to enroll at UK, contact:

Michelle Traynor
Office of the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies
107 Taylor Education Building
Lexington, KY 40506-0001
Phone: (859) 257-9795
e-mail: traynor@uky.edu

You may obtain a copy of the application at: <http://www.uky.edu/Education/SB77info.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 21 9:00-12:00 Noon	Student Teacher Orientation Meetings Taylor Ed Auditorium
August 22	First Day of Student Teaching
September 3	Labor Day
September 12 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.	New Supervisors' Orientation at Southern MS
September 20	Last day to apply for a December degree - 166 TEB
October 15	Dual placement students begin 2nd half placement
November 2 8:00 a.m. -12:30p.m.	Professional Seminar for all Student Teachers Grand Ballroom - Old Student Center
November 21-23	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 7	Last day of student teaching. Final evaluation must be turned into Student Teaching Office 107A TEB

University of Kentucky Service Region KTIP TPA 2007-2008 Training:

<http://www.uky.edu/Education/OFE/ktipreg.html>

Research-Based Teaching Tip

Have you ever found that your students failed to complete a reading assignment? If so, you are not alone. In a study conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Barren County, only 24% of students enrolled in a 100-level English class could write a brief paraphrase of an assignment and they could not participate in meaningful discussion of the text. The remedy: Author of the study, Dr. Mary Hoeft, found that quizzes (as compared to journal writing and discussion preparation) proved to be the best way to engender careful reading with 74% producing a reasonable summary of what they read. Victoria Bhavsar who shared this research nugget in the weekly newsletter supplied by UK's Teaching and Support Center, notes the importance of providing students with clear directions for reading, making the reading sound interesting and talking with students about why they do or don't read. Reference: <http://www.uky.edu/TASC/TeachingNotes> retrieved 11/22/2006.

Collaborative Connection: Sharing Ideas

One way to sustain the collaborative connection between university and school-based partners is to share ideas about teaching and learning. What works and doesn't work in your experience to promote quality teaching and foster student learning? What changes have you made, challenges have you experienced that colleagues might find interesting or helpful. Please send your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, concerns, etc., to Patricia David at patricia.david@uky.edu. We welcome your contributions!

University of Kentucky
Office of Field Experiences and School Collaboration
104 Taylor Education Building
Lexington, KY 40506-0001