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Excellence in Teacher Education: How Liberal Arts Institutions Contribute to the Conversation

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Abstract

The Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education (AILACTE), representing over 200 institutions nationwide, created the Models of Excellence (MOE) Committee to define exemplary qualities of teacher education preparation programs and to select and recognize programs that meet these high standards. With input from members of AILACTE institutions, the MOE Committee developed four Qualities of Excellence. To assess whether the Qualities accurately represent what AILACTE institutions value, the authors studied mission statements and purposes of AILACTE institutions and their teacher education programs. The results of the study and ensuing suggestions add to the professional conversation about what constitutes a quality teacher education program and reminds those in liberal arts institutions, and in the wider education community, of the unique role liberal arts colleges fill in the preparation of teachers.

One of the major foci in teacher education during the last 20 years has been the development of state and national standards for beginning teachers and for teacher education programs. In standards-based teacher education one set of standards is established for programs ranging from large public research universities to small independent liberal arts colleges. Because of this one-size-fits-all format, there is the danger that

the voice of liberal arts colleges may be lost among the complexities of formal program review and accreditation.

This article presents the findings of a study which examined the mission statements and other introductory language found on-line for a select group of liberal arts institutions and their teacher education programs. Unique characteristics of these liberal arts institutions and teacher education programs were examined as they related to the Qualities of Excellence developed by the Models of Excellence Committee of the Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education (AILACTE). Recommendations are then made to ensure that liberal arts institutions promote their unique strengths in their teacher education programs, program reviews and to the wider education community.

AILACTE is a 25-year-old organization of over 200 independent liberal arts colleges and universities that prepare teachers. During the 1990's, most teacher education institutions were required by their respective state governing boards, which in turn were influenced by multiple national standards initiatives, to meet new or revised standards for teacher education certification programs. These standards clearly set the baseline for what a teacher education program needed to contain. Yet within AILACTE, as in the broader teacher education community, there was a growing unease about the focus on and dependence upon standards alone as the driving force to improve teacher education. The AILACTE Executive Committee (the officers and regional representatives in the organization) believed the profession needed to identify and recognize the equally important exemplary practice of talented educators and strong programs. In addition, they saw a need for dialogue in the teacher education profession about what constituted that excellence.

The Executive Committee members also noticed that many colleagues within AILACTE institutions focused on complying with external standards or regulations, often to the exclusion of creative and institution-specific reform work. The state and national accreditation processes often diverted faculty members' personal and professional energies away from their passion for helping students become good beginning teachers and dampened their zeal for program review, improvement or innovation. Palmer (1998) stresses the need for teachers to

connect their teaching with who they are. In contrast, the accreditation process was an area where teacher educators often felt they were not telling their own story.

The Executive Committee wanted to help AILACTE institutions create high expectations and set high standards for themselves that also reflected their institutional uniqueness. The committee agreed with Perrone (1991) who speaks of needing "larger purposes" in education. Perrone suggests that when thinking about schools, educators need to "reach back to first things, to guiding purposes, to our richest, most generative conceptions of education and work toward them" (p. 11). Guided by the mission of the organization, which centers on the intellectual, moral and ethical goals of teacher education (Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education, n.d.), the leadership of AILACTE wanted to identify a way to help its membership tap into those qualities that were most central, important and powerful in teacher education.

Additionally, in the 1990's the Executive Committee perceived that all types of teacher education programs were being judged by the same criteria and with the same processes. Liberal arts institutions and large state institutions have some corresponding structures and requirements and often similar goals, but there is a perception by many AILACTE institutions that the American public and policy makers, along with much of the teacher education community, do not understand the inherent uniquenesses, differences and strengths of teacher education programs situated in independent, liberal arts colleges and universities. They also believe that standards-based, one-size-fits-all, assessment often does not build on and reflect the true identity of AILACTE-type institutions.

AILACTE institutions are liberal-arts based. Students take core requirements in various disciplines, and in many institutions teacher education candidates have liberal arts majors. The teacher education programs within AILACTE institutions help students learn how to think critically and creatively and know their subject matter well - to become thoughtful, well informed and liberally educated beginning teachers. A major focus on teaching and the smallness of the institution sets up a natural conversation between teacher educators and other liberal arts

faculty members leading to shared goals, interdepartmental respect and support and interdisciplinary work.

A final hallmark tradition of AILACTE institutions is the close involvement between students and faculty. Class sizes are usually under twenty and rely on discussions and other interactive pedagogy. Instruction is usually provided by full-time tenure-track faculty members who are also the ones setting policy and procedures, providing the possibility of congruency among all those involved in the program. Faculty members help to educate the student through intensive, one-on-one work with advisees, independent studies and attendance at extracurricular activities. Also, faculty members usually have the same students in different courses over the span of several years. Taken together, these differences suggested to the AILACTE Executive Committee they wanted to help the members of the organization think about what constituted excellence in teacher education, articulate what was already special in their institutions and articulate what separated AILACTE programs from other teacher education programs. In 1997, the Executive Committee appointed representatives from its membership to serve on a Models of Excellence (MOE) Committee to undertake this task.

As a result of the its early discussions and research, the MOE committee decided to develop Qualities of Education pertaining to excellence and then identify and recognize outstanding teacher education programs in AILACTE that exemplified those qualities. The MOE Committee worked for five years, tapping the organization's membership for ideas and feedback through discussions at annual meetings and national forums. It was a dynamic and generative process. The Qualities of Education came directly from the lived experiences of teacher educators who represented liberal arts teacher education programs throughout the country and what they considered most central to exemplary teacher education.

From this process, four Qualities of Excellence emerged. Each Quality includes a Statement of Distinction, describing the characteristics of the Culture/Institution, Curriculum/ Programs, and Faculty. The Qualities and their Statements of Distinction are presented below. The Qualities, criteria and examples can be found at the AILACTE website, http://www.ailacte.org.

Model of Excellence Qualities

Quality I: Moral and Ethical Dimensions of the Learning Community

   Statement of Distinction: An exceptional AILACTE institution views teaching as a moral activity. Preservice teachers are rooted in moral and ethical positions that are influenced by multiple views. The institution is one that creates an intellectually safe environment that promotes dignity and respect for all people within the academic community. The institutional ethos is communicated through its people, policies and programs.

Quality II: Partnerships

   Statement of Distinction: An exceptional AILACTE institution is engaged in substantial P-12 partnerships that are forged on the basis of mutual goals for preparing effective beginning teachers. Partnerships include collaboration within and between institutions. This can mean that departments and faculty members in teacher education work with counterparts in the liberal arts, with teacher education programs in other institutions and/or with P-12 schools. Each partner has structures and resources to support the work of the collaboration. The attitudes and understandings of the partnership design support major goals of an effective teacher education program. The partnerships demonstrate sustainability over time.

Quality III: Liberal Arts

   Statement of Distinction: An exceptional AILACTE institution views the liberal arts as essential to and integrated throughout its teacher education program. The institution excels at preparing preservice teachers who are broadly educated, have a strong command of content knowledge and pedagogy and are thoughtful and discerning professionals. Students from such an institution are active learners, critical thinkers, problem solvers, decision makers and risk takers.

Quality IV: Global Awareness and Action

Statement of Distinction: An exceptional AILACTE institution values, implements, monitors and promotes policies, programs and practices focused on global awareness and action. Global awareness involves understanding and reflecting on knowledge and issues related to diversity. Global action involves students utilizing their understanding of diversity to implement positive change within the lives of children, schools and communities. The institution supports cross-cultural sensitivity and affiliation, develops programs that systematically integrate diversity and encourages faculty and students to think and act globally and locally.

In order to verify that these Qualities did represent what was of central importance to AILACTE institutions, the authors of this study compiled a descriptive statistical analysis. This analysis evaluated the mission statements of AILACTE institutions and their teacher education programs.

The Study

In 2002, 245 institutions, from 39 different states, belonged to AILACTE. Because liberal arts colleges with teacher education programs are more common in some states than others, each AILACTE institution was assigned to one of four different regions and a randomly chosen representative sample from each region was included for this study. In all, 84 schools (about 34% of the total AILACTE membership) were used in the study. Chosen were 21 institutions from five southern states, 19 institutions from four eastern states, 25 institutions from three mid-western states and 19 institutions from four western states. Mission and/or Purpose Statements for each of the 84 institutions and their teacher education programs were collected from the institutions' websites. All language on the website containing the mission, purpose or letter of introduction from the President that supported the four MOE Qualities was collected. Also, any other themes that emerged from this web information, and if an institution self-identified as connected with a faith or faith-based tradition, were noted.

Results

In the following section, each Quality is discussed separately. In addition, Table 1, situated after the four sections, is included to show a comparison of percentages between Qualities.

Quality I: Moral and Ethical Dimensions of the Learning Community. Within the Mission and/or Purpose Statements of the institutions or the central descriptive language of the teacher education programs, 65 of 84 websites featured moral, ethical and/or spiritual ideas as central. Of the 84 institutions, 69% said they were connected to a religion or faith tradition. About 62% of the institutions that included moral, ethical and/or spiritual language self-identified as faith-based institutions. Of the 26 institutions that were non-faith related, half of them had moral, ethical and/or spiritual references.

The vast majority of the institutions in the study indicated that this first MOE Quality is central to both the AILACTE members who generated the Quality and their institutions. Faith identity played a central role with regard to this Quality in many institutions, but not all. Some of the language is clearly religious, focusing on Christian values and/or a specific religious tradition. Other language used by both faith-based and non-faith based institutions was more general and recognized that goals of those institutions needed to include areas of ethical, moral and/or spiritual growth for graduates.

Quality II: Partnerships. Few institutions or teacher education programs specifically mentioned the idea of partnerships in their introductory information. Only six of the 84 websites addressed this element. However, several teacher education programs named their key partner(s) schools. A majority of teacher education programs surveyed did mention the importance of field experiences.

This Quality has the least resonance with the missions/purposes of the institutions studied. Unlike the other three qualities, this one reflects more what a teacher education program values rather than the values of the entire institution. None of the institutional missions/purposes mentioned partnerships. Although reference to specific partnerships was rare, inclusion of the idea of extensive field experiences permeated the teacher education programs' sites. Perhaps because the

teacher education programs are small and most of the education faculty members work with the schools, the partnering with P-12 schools is usually informal and personal. The need for extensive field experiences and close relationships with P-12 teachers is a concern of high importance, while the need for a formal partnership is not seen as critical.

Quality III: Liberal Arts. Of the 84 institutions, 64 of them made some mention of the importance of the liberal arts to their mission/purpose. All the institutions in the study had joined AILACTE, the Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges of Teacher Education, indicating their self-identification as a liberal arts institution.

This Quality also rings true with the mission/purpose of most AILACTE institutions. Although it may seem obvious that institutions that are members in an organization for liberal arts colleges would see as central to their mission the importance of the liberal arts, a quarter of the study's websites did not explicitly refer to the liberal arts. In a day and age that stresses the importance of higher education's need to prepare graduates for jobs, many of the liberal arts references also include balancing becoming liberally educated with being professionally ready for the work world.

Quality IV: Global Awareness and Action. Of the 84 institutions, 58 of them included language that referred to this Quality. In many cases the focus was on the idea of helping students learn to be aware of issues of diversity and social justice. For some institutions this awareness was developed partly through study abroad programs. Other institutions also included the need to help their students take action with regard to issues of diversity and justice. Many statements focused on service, with an emphasis on service learning or leadership. A final group of institutions' literature focused on social justice and graduates being positive change agents.

Of the institutions that had Moral and Ethical Dimension language included, 56% of them also had language about Global Awareness and Action. Conversely, only 12% of the schools had Global Awareness and Action language and not Moral and Ethical Dimension language. It seems that for some institutions the commitment to Moral and Ethical Dimensions in education also influences their commitment to Global Awareness and Action.

Table 1
Percentages of Institutions including Language of the Qualities

Quality	%
Moral and Ethical Dimensions of the Learning Community	77
Partnerships	7
Liberal Arts	76
Global Awareness and Action	69

Additional Themes. Although not connected with one of the MOE Qualities, the idea of close professional, working relationships emerged often (49%) in the descriptive language studied. Most AILACTE institutions are small and consider their size to be an asset. Consequently, the institutions in this study included language describing the positive consequences resulting from their size. A strong emphasis is on individual college students and their needs—with institutions focusing on personal attention, individual advising and fostering the development of the whole person. Other closely related characteristics of liberal arts institutions and their teacher education programs identified by the authors are community, student-centered, and the institution as a family.

The theme of one-on-one relationships fits with the ethos of a small institution. Although "one-on-one relationships" is not another Quality, it is a structure that allows institutions to focus on individuals and their intellectual, social, physical and moral/ethical/spiritual growth. Students get to know faculty members well and see them as models of professional and personal behavior and attitudes.

Another theme that appeared on 31% of the institutions' websites is one of life-long learning. The institutions want to promote and facilitate life-long intellectual, social, moral/ethical and emotional growth in their graduates. Similarly, the theme of life-long learning was affirmed in the Model of Excellence Committee's exploration of the concept of on-going faculty, program and institutional vitality. The Committee recognized the importance of this theme and chose to weave it throughout each of the four Qualities. Each Quality now has at least one criterion that has to do with continuous improvement,

imagining new ways of helping students grow, or making new connections.

Three of the four Qualities of Excellence developed by the MOE Committee were clearly addressed by the institutions included in this study. Many of the 84 institutions provide literature in which the areas of The Moral and Ethical Dimension of the Learning Community, Liberal Arts and Global Awareness and Action all resonate with what AILACTE members consider important, what AILACTE institutions' stress in their missions and what AILACTE, as an organization, considers central to exemplary teacher education programs. While the fourth Quality, Partnerships, with its teacher education focus, was important to the members in their discussions, it did not appear as important in the study. Since few institutions wrote about Partnerships, the concept of a formalized relationship with a school or schools or between departments on campus does not seem to represent what is most vital for AILACTE schools. However, the more general idea of the need for extended and varied field experiences is central.

Recommendations

Findings from the study suggest that the Qualities do represent what is important to AILACTE teacher education programs and lead to a set of suggestions and recommendations for AILACTE and AILACTE-type institutions. The authors, who both work in AILACTE institutions, suggest five ways in which teacher preparation programs can preserve the distinctive voice of AILACTE institutions in the context of program reviews and can better promote a liberal arts teacher education program.

First, promote the institution's mission. Over three quarters of the schools in this study showed a strong commitment to developing and sustaining the moral and ethical dimensions of the learning community. These responsibilities permeate the institution's culture, curriculum and faculty. This commitment to the development of self-reflective, moral and ethical teachers needs to be articulated clearly throughout the teacher education program and showcased in state and national reviews. The preparation of graduates with these attributes is a major

contribution of liberal arts colleges of teacher education to educational reform.

Second, articulate how liberal arts teacher education programs expand and promote dialogue about teaching and learning. On and off campus, faculty members at liberal arts colleges form a unique community of learners. Conversations about learning are frequent and engaging. The dialogue about the importance of teaching and learning is continually modeled, with the student playing a central role in this conversation. When faculty members, P-12 personnel and students share the roles of teachers and learners, the collaboration results in programmatic renewal and enrichment of student and faculty learning. Institutions need to articulate more clearly how informal but pervasive ways of collaboration permeate their programs and relationships with schools and influence their students.

Third, identify how the program develops a candidate's ability to use knowledge critically and responsibly. Learning at liberal arts colleges, according to Cronin (2003), is a process of exploring, thinking critically, debating, examining and participating. This approach to learning is reflected in programs at liberal arts colleges that prepare teachers who are broadly educated, have a strong command of content knowledge and pedagogy and who are thoughtful and discerning professionals. Additionally, many liberal arts colleges with teacher education programs create conceptual frameworks that promote the teacher's abilities to advance democratic and socially responsible understanding and actions in today's classrooms. Teacher education programs with moral and ethical components prepare teachers to be able to analyze their teaching context in order to gain insights about issues and challenges in today's educational settings. Liberal arts institutions need to emphasize how teacher candidates are supported and assessed in their abilities to analyze the teaching context and to create sets of learning experiences appropriate to those contexts.

Fourth, highlight how critical inquiry and depth of understanding of the liberal arts base is key to preparing quality teachers who can help all students learn. Liberal arts colleges provide for the need identified by Ladson-Billings (1994) to prepare teachers with an understanding of cross-cultural background knowledge, community knowledge and ability to build

relationships. The emphasis on learning at liberal arts institutions is on critical thinking and examination of causal issues such as social, philosophical and political concerns. Because the work of becoming a teacher is often built through one-to-one relationships and small group work, students learn those critical skills necessary to bridge cultures and backgrounds. AILACTE and AILACTE-type institutions must stress the importance of the liberal arts components of critical inquiry skills, knowledge understanding and relationship building as central to the development of strong teachers.

Fifth, use the program review process in a proactive, positive manner. State and national program review processes present teacher educators with opportunities to be engaged in reflection about their programs' distinctive missions and conceptual frameworks. It is possible for the program review process to mirror the kind of thinking, dialogue and reflection that our liberal arts colleges promote in their missions and learning outcomes. Because of their small student and faculty populations that are conducive to collaboration, AILACTE institutions can serve as models for integrating mission ideals into all aspects of teacher education programming.

The program review process can also serve as professional development and renewal experiences. Liberal arts colleges can preserve and celebrate the essence of the liberal arts foundations within the context of complex education program reviews. It is essential that we avoid the notion of review as solely a mechanism of accountability and, instead, endeavor to promote the reflection that is more holistic and multidimensional in nature (Berlak, 2003). The characteristics of AILACTE institutions and their missions, as described in this study, highlight values and viewpoints that could be easily be glossed over, as Popekewitz (1991) suggests happens in most reviews. Education programs at liberal arts colleges need to continue to promote vitality, reflection and staff development that support the uniqueness of their own missions and perspectives.

Sleeter (2003) cautions that the "view of knowledge from multicultural, ethnic, gender and other critical perspectives is oftentimes ignored in a standards orientation." Further, we are concerned that, as Popekewitz (2003) proposes, "Important liberal arts concepts such as diversity, justice and core values

are stifled within the context of multiple regulations." Findings of this study show that AILACTE institutions reflect these perspectives as part of their overarching missions. AILACTE institutions have at their center, critical reflection of self and intellectual engagement. These skills serve as the basis of teacher education programs that prepare educators who have the tools of inquiry and understandings necessary to analyze critically the context, culture and community of today's schools.

The development of the MOE Qualities and the study of what matters to liberal arts institutions clearly demonstrates that these institutions play a distinctive role in the preparation of teachers. Liberal arts colleges are in the unique position to be advocates for a teacher education curriculum that leads to an increased appreciation for the moral, ethical, intellectual, community and multicultural aspects of classrooms today. The authors encourage liberal arts institutions to use the Qualities for their faculty and program development, to help them stay focused on what is key to their programs and what matters most to them as educators. AILACTE institutions need to use the Qualities that are most dear to them as a "high bar," to guide them toward designing and implementing the best teacher education programs possible. Liberal arts institutions are obligated to tell their institutional stories by conscientiously promoting these values and characteristics via program reviews, scholarship and interactions with the wider educational community.

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Implementing Teacher Work Sampling

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Abstract

This article describes how the teacher work sample methodology of the Renaissance Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality was implemented within the teacher education program at a small liberal arts college. Resulting program improvements are described, as well as on-going challenges. The adapted teacher work sample prompt and scoring rubric are included as appendices.

As the definition of effective teaching has shifted from how well teachers teach to how well students learn, teacher education programs need to ensure that their assessments are capturing information about their candidates' preparedness to effect learning in P-12 students. As evidenced by accreditation standards (NCATE, 2002; TEAC, 2001), an integral part of this paradigm shift has focused on the importance of using assessment data to inform instruction. If our candidates are to become effective teachers, they must learn not only to teach engaging lessons, but also to measure their students' progress toward important learner outcomes and then use the results of those measurements to construct lessons that are aimed at correcting students' misconceptions, misunderstandings or failure to appropriately apply knowledge. One goal of the teacher education program is to produce candidates who are able to use assessment data as feedback for their instructional decision-

making, thereby "closing the assessment loop" in a way that improves learning for all students. One means for doing this is the teacher work sample.

Originally developed at Western Oregon University (Schalock & Myton, 1988), and later adopted by the Renaissance Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality (2002), teacher work samples are defined as "exhibits of teaching performance that provide direct evidence of a candidate's ability to design and implement standards-based instruction, assess student learning and reflect on the teaching and learning process" (Renaissance Partnership, 2002, p. 1).Teacher work sample methodology can be a systematic tool for documenting the impact of teacher candidates on P-12 student learning. Through wide-spread dissemination, the Renaissance Partnership has invited teacher educators to adapt this methodology for their own programs.

The teacher work sample is an authentic assessment that requires candidates to carefully analyze the learning context, to plan and deliver a unit of instruction with appropriate assessment before, during and after instruction and to analyze those assessment results in both aggregated and disaggregated form, with reflective analysis of student learning (Schalock & Myton, 2002). Because the intent is to help candidates grasp that the primary purpose of assessment is to "educate and improve student performance, not merely to audit it" (Wiggins, 1998, p. 7); the presentation of assessment data is accompanied by reflective analysis. Rather than producing a subjective reflection on how the lesson seemed to flow and observation of the level of student engagement; candidates are expected to focus their reflection on the assessment data as evidence of their students' learning. Reflection is not an end in itself, but serves the broader purposes of (a) focusing the candidate's thoughts on how to bring meaning to assessment data and (b) forcing an informed speculation on how instruction could be adjusted to improve student learning (Wood, 2002). Implemented within the student teaching experience, the teacher work sample serves as a curriculum-based measurement of student learning over time; thus it provides candidates with practice in being accountable for the student learning that results from their teaching.

As an authentic measure of the effectiveness of a teacher education program, the teacher work sample provides a rich combination of qualitative and quantitative data which can be used by program faculty in both formative and summative ways. Teacher work sample data may provide information about program strengths and weaknesses, thereby allowing program faculty to adjust curriculum to better prepare teacher candidates. It can also be used to inform judgments about candidates' understanding of the connectedness of teaching and learning, particularly their reflectivity about how particular instructional strategies and assessment tools affect their students' content learning. Summatively, teacher work sample data can serve as one source of information about candidates' preparedness for classroom practice.

This article describes the implementation of a teacher work sample requirement in the student teaching practicum at a liberal arts college. We will describe the preparation and implementation phases, the program modifications that have been made based on the implementation of the work sampling requirement and a preliminary analysis of its effectiveness.

Preparation and Implementation

The task of proposing a means of documenting candidates' effect on P-12 student learning was given to a committee in the fall 2001. This committee reviewed the work of the Renaissance Partnership project through its published materials, conference presentations and website, and modified the teacher work sample to fit the needs and constraints of our program. This modified teacher work sample prompt is presented as Appendix A.

In the spring of 2002, student teachers were required to complete a teacher work sample as part of their student teaching experience. The work sample was to be based on the formal two-week unit plan that they were already required to submit. These work samples were not graded, but were used as base-line data for creating a scoring rubric. The rubric was developed by one of the committee members, following the Renaissance model, then fine-tuned by the full committee

before being reviewed by departmental faculty. The rubric is included as Appendix B.

In the fall of 2002, student teachers were supervised by one full-time faculty member and two adjunct faculty members. The full-time faculty member provided training on the teacher work sample and scoring rubric and ensured inter-rater reliability by co-scoring one work sample from the previous term with each of the adjunct faculty members. Work samples from this term are hereafter referred to as the original group. From this point forward, work samples have been required as a component of student teaching.

Program Modifications

There is a general consensus among department faculty that implementation of teacher work sample methodology, along with the professional dialogue that has accompanied its development and implementation, has helped to demonstrate the breadth of understanding (or lack thereof) among our student teachers about the connectedness of learner outcomes, learning activities and assessments. Program improvements resulting from the implementation of teacher work samples have included professors collaborating with classroom teachers to collect samples of actual P-12 student work as a basis for engaging candidates in the authentic work of collaboratively analyzing student work, as well as increased attention in education courses on developing evaluation criteria and scoring rubrics that are closely related to learner outcomes.

As one of the foundational courses, Educational Psychology was deemed an appropriate course in which to begin to require candidates to focus on P-12 student work. Within an introductory unit on assessment, candidates are introduced to the concept of authentic assessment and are required to create some quality indicators by which to sort samples of P-12 work. This task helps to familiarize candidates with the need for meaningful evaluation criteria and promotes discussion of the issues involved in assessing worthwhile learning, as opposed to assessing only the more measurable surface features of P-12 student products.

In their general methods course, Theory-to-Practice, candidates focus on planning. Themes of this course include lesson and unit planning, curriculum, instructional strategies and assessment. As a result of the teacher work sample requirement in student teaching, this course was altered to increase the focus on designing specific assessment and evaluation components that show how P-12 students have met learning objectives.

Because all teacher candidates take Educational Psychology and Theory-to-Practice, these program modifications will reach all candidates. As candidates proceed through the program, their coursework requirements become more license-specific. Therefore, the next program modification is implemented in both the Elementary Literacy course, and the Secondary Methods course. In these courses students have a concurrent field experience in which they deliver a micro-teaching unit. Candidates in these courses are required to collect P-12 student work that is an extension of the lessons taught during micro-teaching. Candidates analyze these P-12 student work samples to determine how well their students met the learning objectives of the micro-teaching lessons, and they must write a reflection that is based on this analysis of P-12 student work. This requirement is intended to be an exercise that turns candidates away from a mentality of "I taught it but they didn't learn it" to "I thought I taught it, but they didn't learn it, so I must not have taught it very effectively." The latter mentality is consistent with the "no excuses" philosophy articulated by Corbett, Wilson and Williams (2002) that is fundamental to our departmental vision of "reflective practice in urban, multicultural contexts."

Preliminary Analysis

Two years after the original implementation of the work sample requirement, copies of the teacher work samples were again collected to determine whether the program changes that had been implemented were reflected in improved teacher work sample products. Work samples from this term are hereafter referred to as the current group. Descriptive statistics on work sample scores of the original group and the current group

are reported in Table 1. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) on the dependent variables of outcomes score, context score, assessments score, report and analysis score and total score was used to compare the original group with the current group, as reported in Table 2. This analysis indicated that the current group had significantly higher scores than the original group on all sections of the teacher work sample; with the greatest increase in scores in the assessments section and the reflection section.

To illustrate the difference, Figure 1 shows excerpts from a teacher work sample on a literature unit in a multi-aged class of 4th, 5th and 6th graders, taken from the original group; as contrasted with excerpts from a teacher work sample on a 4th grade theater unit taken from the current group. Excerpts from the assessment and reflection sections are included, as these sections demonstrated the largest effect sizes. Outcomes are included in Figure 1 so that assessments may be viewed in terms of the learner outcomes. Although there are strengths and weaknesses in each example, in the teacher work sample from the current group, both the assessments and the reflection are more focused on the learner outcomes than those of the teacher work sample from the original group.

Secondary Analysis

In order to have an unambiguous measure of inter-rater reliability, teacher work samples were subsequently evaluated, using the same scoring rubric, by a graduate assistant who had no former involvement in the teacher work sample project but received the same level of training as the original scorers. Descriptive statistics on work sample scores of the original group and the current group as scored by the graduate assistant are reported in Table 3. Inter-rater reliability between the graduate assistant's scoring and the university supervisors' scoring was calculated separately for the original group and the current group; yielding Pearson's r values of .75, $p < .01$ and .01 (non-significant) respectively. Thus there was a moderate degree of inter-rater reliability between the graduate assistant and the faculty on the teacher work samples in the original sample; but there was no inter-rater reliability between the graduate assis-

tant and the faculty on the teacher work samples in the current sample.

Given this situation, the above analysis comparing the original group with the current group was repeated to look for improvement in the graduate assistant's scoring. This multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) indicated no significant differences between the two groups in scores on the learner outcomes section, the assessment section, the report section or the reflection section. On the context section, however, the current group scored significantly lower than the original group, $F (1, 30) = 4.57$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .13$. This suggests that the performance difference demonstrated in the first analysis may have been the result of inflated scoring, rather than an actual difference. Certainly inter-rater reliability will need to be established before the teacher work sample can be used as a high-stakes assessment. At the current time, the teacher work sample is used as one of the required assignments within student teaching. If a teacher candidate does poorly on his/her teacher work sample, the candidate is offered remediation, but the candidate does not pass or fail student teaching based on his/her teacher work sample performance.

Discussion

Inter-rater reliability is an important issue, but it is an issue that can and will be addressed through collaborative review of the scoring rubric and additional on-going training on use of the rubric. Such training will serve to improve understanding of teacher work sample methodology among both the full-time faculty and the adjunct faculty who supervise student teachers; and to increase the degree of professional consensus regarding program outcomes.

Although it is critically important that inter-rater reliability be established and regularly monitored, implementation of the teacher work sample has already proven valuable to the teacher education program. Important program changes have been made within courses, to ensure that candidates have opportunity to learn a variety of assessment approaches, as well as practice interpreting classroom assessment results. These changes, along with an increased focus in all courses on the

interconnectedness of objectives and procedures to assessment and evaluation, should ultimately translate into improved teaching and learning. Also, our program's use of the teacher work sample data to inform program improvements effectively models "closing the assessment loop." It provides evidence that teacher educators do the kind of analysis required by the teacher work sample—we critically examine our own practices, seeking data-based evidence that our practices are, indeed, improving learning. If we do not find such evidence, we at least gain insight into weaknesses, and gather some ideas about how to improve.

At this point, the teacher work sample shows promise as a vehicle for assessing our candidates' ability to use assessment data with their P-12 students to refine their teaching in ways that improve P-12 learning. Authentic, meaningful assessment is important, but is not easy. Continuing issues and challenges include the establishment and regular monitoring of inter-rater reliability; regular examination of teacher work sample data to inform continuing program improvement; and maintaining teacher work sample data over time to determine whether these modifications really do lead to improved candidate preparedness, or more importantly, to improved P-12 student learning.

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Table 1
Teacher Work Sample Scores as Scored by University Supervisors

Sample	Mean Score		Standard Deviation	
	Original	Current	Original	Current
N	18	14	18	14
Outcomes	2.28	2.84	.62	.30
Context	1.86	2.82	.74	.37
Assessments	1.69	2.84	.60	.30
Report & Analysis	1.64	2.79	.84	.26
Reflection	1.53	2.82	.78	.32
Total	9.00	14.11	2.87	.74

Table 2
Multivariate Analysis of Variance –
Original group vs. Current group

Variable	Hypoth. SS	Error SS	Hypoth. MS	Error MS	F	Sig. of F	Effect Size η^2
Outcomes	2.73	7.83	2.73	.26	10.48	.003	.26
Context	9.04	0.43	9.04	.35	26.01	.000	.46
Assessments	11.88	6.98	11.88	.23	51.06	.000	.63
Analysis	11.45	12.98	11.39	.43	26.31	.000	.46
Reflection	14.34	11.54	14.34	.38	37.27	.000	.55

Table 3
Teacher Work Sample Scores
as Scored by Graduate Assistant

	Mean Score		Standard Deviation	
Sample	Original	Current	Original	Current
N	18	14	18	14
Outcomes	2.53	2.11	.61	.66
Context	2.47	1.82	.90	.61
Assessments	2.44	2.14	.97	.69
Report & Analysis	1.81	1.96	.91	.66
Reflection	1.83	1.68	.80	.80
Total	11.08	9.71	3.49	2.01

APPENDIX A
HAMLINE UNIVERISTY
CLA Education and GSE Master of Arts in Teaching Program
Description of Required Student Teaching Work Samples

A work sample documents your impact on P-12 student learning through a portfolio entry that indicates your ability to assess and use that assessment data to impact P-12 student learning. The work sample should include four categories: A) the learner outcomes from your unit plan that you have selected for this work sample, B) copies and/or descriptions of the assessment tools, C) pupil assessment data, D) your analysis & reflections. The following boxes describe in detail the steps required. **Please note the 10-page limit.**

Section 1 **Learner Outcomes**	Review the plans for the teaching unit (2 weeks or 10 lessons, minimum) you have selected to include in your portfolio. Be sure that your learning outcomes for students are clear, and varied in complexity. Select and submit the unit outcomes that will be the focus of this work sample.
Section 2 **Teaching Context**	Describe the teaching context in a 1-page reflective analysis of both the physical and social/emotional climate of the classroom. Include general observations about student personalities, interests, social interactions, development, etc.
Section 3 **Assessment** (Pre)	Describe your **pre-assessment** of the selected outcomes. This could be a narrative description of your observations, a summary of discussion(s) you held with pupils, a pre-test, or any quantitative or qualitative tool that you used to assess pupils' needs prior to instruction. Include copies of any assessment tools that you used.
Section 4 **Assessment** (Formative)	Describe at least one method of **formative assessment** of the selected outcomes that you used in this unit. As you moved through the unit, how did you determine whether the class as a whole was progressing? How did you determine whether individual pupils were progressing? Include copies of any assessment tools that you used.
Section 5 **Assessment** (Post)	Describe each of your **summative assessments**. How did you measure overall student growth for these selected outcomes? Describe your formal and informal assessments, and why you used them. Include copies of any assessment tools that you used.

Section 6 **Report**	Aggregate your pupils' results from the assessments you used, and report the class-wide results in meeting the selected outcomes. This information could be reported graphically, with a ½ page overview, or in any way that best communicates the changes in your pupils' knowledge, skills, attitudes or behaviors.
Section 7 **Analysis**	Examine responses from 2-3 individual pupils from the same class as your aggregate results in Section 6 that demonstrate a range of responses. Explain why you selected each pupil. What kinds of progress did you see pupils making in meeting the selected outcomes? Include relevant samples of pupils' work ...such as journals, artwork, or any pupil products generated by your learning activities.
Section 8 **Reflection**	Reflect on how your pupils have responded, as compared with how you expected them to respond. Were you pleased with their gains on the selected outcomes? Did you over-estimate or under-estimate their gains? How did the success of the individual lessons/interventions contribute to the overall pupil progress? What modifications would you make if you could go back and re-teach this unit? Focus on the interaction between teaching and learning...what improvements are needed? ...what about your pupils' progress in this unit should be celebrated?
Section 9 **Data Privacy**	Document your efforts to protect your pupils' privacy in the collection of this "Student Teacher Work Sample." Review all pupil products that are included to be sure that the anonymity of your pupils is protected. Delete or mark out pupil names. Use pseudonyms or numbers to refer to individual pupils.
Instructions	The entire Student Teacher Work Sample should not exceed 10 pages (not including samples of your students' work). Include two copies of the entire Student Teacher Work Sample as the last section of your Post-Student Teaching Portfolio. One copy will be retained by the Professional Education Unit, the other will remain in your portfolio for use in job interviews.

(Based on the TWS of the Renaissance Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality Project http://fp.uni.edu/itq)
Revised 9/27/02

APPENDIX B
HAMLINE UNIVERISTY
CLA Education and GSE Master of Arts in Teaching Program
Section 1
Student Teacher Work Sample (STWS)
Analytic Scoring Rubric

LEARNER OUTCOMES

3 = Distinguished
Selected learning outcomes are significant, reflect high ex-
pectations for student understanding and application of knowledge,
and are developmentally appropriate. Outcomes are clearly stated,
and vary in complexity. Outcomes reflect several types or levels of
learning to accommodate individual differences of students.

2 = Proficient
Selected learning outcomes are significant and focused on
student understanding and application of knowledge and are devel-
opmentally appropriate. Outcomes are clearly stated.

1 = Basic
Selected learning outcomes are clearly stated and measur-
able, but reflect low expectations for student learning or little oppor-
tunity to apply knowledge. Outcomes are simple, not complex, easily
met by memorization of facts without deep understanding.

0 = Unacceptable
Learner outcomes are not stated or are unclear.

TEACHING CONTEXT

3 = Distinguished
Description includes observations about students' develop-
ment, interests, and experiences. Evidence of comprehensive under-
standing of the characteristics of the school, the classroom and the
students, including differences in development, culture, interests,
learning styles, and prior knowledge.

2 = Proficient
Evidence of some understanding of the characteristics of the
school, the classroom and the students; with some understanding of

individual differences in development, culture, interests and learning styles.

1 = Basic

Little evidence of understanding the characteristics of the school, the classroom or the students, with no description of individual differences among students.

0 = Unacceptable

Description of teaching context is not included, or is shallow, with no evidence of understanding the school, the classroom or the students.

ASSESSMENTS

3 = Distinguished

Pre-assessments and formative assessments are intentional, and are related to learner outcomes. Data gathered from pre-assessment is used in planning instruction. Data gathered from formative assessments is used to adjust instruction. Summative assessments are clearly related to selected outcomes, both in scope and complexity. Summative assessment measures student learning/growth on each of the selected outcomes and is evaluated according to clearly identified criteria that were made known to pupils prior to the assessment. Student teacher provides thoughtful rationale for selection of assessment tools/methods used, as well as analysis of their utility, reliability and validity.

2 = Proficient

Pre-assessments and formative assessments are intentional and are related to learner outcomes and used to provide remediation to individuals. Summative assessment measures student learning/growth on each of the selected outcomes and is evaluated according to clearly identified criteria that were made known to pupils prior to the assessment. Student teacher provides thoughtful rationale for selection of assessment tools/methods used, as well as analysis of their utility, reliability and validity.

1 = Basic

Assessments measure student engagement and participation, but do not measure student learning/growth on each of the selected outcomes. Pre-assessments and formative assessments are given, but the results are not used. Summative assessment is not related to learner outcomes and contains no clear criteria or standards for measuring student learning/growth. Minimal rationale for selection

of assessment tools/methods, and no analysis of their utility, reliability or validity.

0 = Unacceptable
    Pre-assessment is not used. Formative assessment may be given, but results are not used to adjust instruction. Summative assessment is not related to learner outcomes and contains no clear criteria or standards for measuring student learning/growth. No rationale for selection of assessment methods/tools.

REPORT & ANALYSIS OF STUDENT LEARNING (Sections 6-7)

3 = Distinguished
    Aggregated whole-class assessment results are accompanied by accurate interpretation of data and thoughtful analysis of student learning. Samples of work from 2 or 3 students demonstrate a range of student learning and evidence of feedback given to students. Student work samples are accompanied with a rationale for their inclusion. Analysis provides a comprehensive profile of student learning relative to outcomes. Conclusions are drawn based on the pre-assessment, formative assessment and summative assessment data. Student privacy is protected.

2 = Proficient
    Aggregated whole-class assessment results are accompanied by accurate interpretation of data and thoughtful analysis of student learning. Samples of work from 2 or 3 students demonstrate a range of student learning, and are accompanied by rationale for their inclusion. Conclusions are drawn based on the summative assessment data. Student privacy is protected.

1 = Basic
    Aggregated whole-class assessment results are included, but not accompanied by interpretation or analysis. Samples of work from 2 or 3 students do not represent a range of student learning, and no rationale for their inclusion is provided. Conclusions drawn are superficial or are not based on the data provided. Student privacy is protected.

0 = Unacceptable
    Aggregated whole-class assessment results are unclear and are not accompanied by interpretation or analysis. Samples of work from 2 or 3 students are not included, or are included without comment. No conclusions are drawn. Student privacy is not protected.

REFLECTION & DATA PRIVACY   (Sections 8-9)

3 = Distinguished
        Clearly connects learner outcomes, instructional activities
and assessment results in discussion of student learning and effec-
tiveness of instruction. Identifies successful and unsuccessful learn-
ing activities and provides plausible reasons for their level of suc-
cess. Proposes multiple adjustments that are congruent with learner
outcomes and include explanations of why these adjustments are
likely to improve student learning for individual students and for the
whole class.

2 = Proficient
        Connects learner outcomes, instructional activities and as-
sessment results in discussion of student learning and effectiveness
of instruction. Appropriate adjustments of the instructional plan are
proposed to improve instruction. Proposed adjustments are congruent
with learner outcomes and include explanations of why these ad-
justments are likely to improve student learning. Reflection explores
multiple hypotheses for why some students did not meet learning
goals, and proposes multiple paths for amelioration.

1 = Basic
        Only loosely connects learner outcomes, instructional activi-
ties and assessment results in discussion of student learning. Little
discussion of effectiveness of instruction. Few adjustments are pro-
posed, with no explanation of why these adjustments are likely to
improve student learning. Reflection explores single hypothesis for
why some students did not meet learning goals.

0 = Unacceptable
        Does not connect learner outcomes, instructional activities
and assessment results. Discussion of student learning focuses on
weaknesses of students. No adjustments or only surface adjustments
are proposed, with no explanation of how learning is likely to im-
prove. No consideration of why some students did not meet learning
goals.

Figure 1 – Comparison on Original and Current Teacher
Work Sample

Section of STWS	Original – Student X	Current – Student Y
Learner Outcomes	1) Students will participate in and understand an informal debate. 2) Students will understand significance of particular vocabulary. 3) Students will illustrate their understanding of bio-morphic and geometric im-agery. 4) Students will compose two letters demonstrating an un-derstanding of different per-spectives. 5) Students will create a new story ending for Tuck.	1) Students will work in a group and partici-pate. 2) Students will get a better understanding of Black Box behavior. 3) Students will con-struct and manipulate a puppet.
Assess-ment	For my post-assessment, I decided to assess the packet (weekly packet of language arts assignments) as it covers a wide array of learning styles and abilities. I figured the best way to evaluate this was to create a rubric for the stan-dard grading system already in use…basically considers the student, looks at his/her work and decides if that stu-dent is working up to his/her potential and ranks it accord-ingly. I decided to consider whether the assignments were done correctly – meaning I checked to see if the direc-tions were followed … whether all of the assign-ments were all completed, whether they were completed on time, if they were neatly done, and presented in an	In order to be fair for the judgment of this unit I used two differ-ent rubrics to assess their final grades. I had an overall group work and participation ru-bric that assessed each student's ability to individually help, lis-ten, participate, per-suade, question, re-spect, and share with one another. The scor-ing for this portion of the grade was one on a scale of 1-4…The second rubric assessed the student's puppet show…The purpose of this is to track how well the students did on their puppets and the show, this rubric

	understandable way.	looks at the puppet construction, puppet manipulation, the ability for the students to stay in character, voice projection, and the accuracy of the story.
Reflection	…If I were to teach this lesson again, I would build in more opportunities for personal reflection. We had many group discussions, but I didn't feel much of an opportunity to include journal time into my days as they were already quite full. An easy solution to that may have been having them journal at home. I would have to make sure that extra piece of work would be something that class could handle however…I would also spend more time on the debate…the kids told me they loved it.	…If I were to do this unit over again, I would have the unstructured time more structured. …. tell students that they need to have the head of the puppet done in a half hour, etc. … I feel the students learned a lot more than I expected. Their problem solving skills improved as a result of this lesson…when they were having trouble putting a part of their puppet together I had them think of three different ways to fix the problem. They did, and I was very impressed and pleased with the gains of the learner outcomes.

Navigating Murky Waters: The Challenge of Assessing Teacher Candidate Dispositions

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Abstract

Interest in, and debate about, teachers' attitudes, perceptions, and dispositions is not new (Cruickshank & Haefele, 2001). What is new is the inclusion of dispositions in the standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2003), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS, 1998), and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC, 1992). Despite this renewed interest in dispositions and their effects on the learning of P-12 students, there is no consensus among teacher education programs about which dispositions are essential, or how they may be used to select and educate teachers (Maylone, 2002; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000). This article explores the dispositions debate through one university's attempt to define and assess dispositions and addresses several key questions. Will there be tolerance for diversity in dispositions? Are there professionals genuinely qualified to assess "appropriate" dispositions? Can reliability in dispositions assessment be achieved?

Interest in, and debate about, teacher dispositions is not new. Researchers have been examining the dispositions of effective teachers for decades under descriptors such as attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs (Cruickshank & Haefele, 2001; Maylone, 2002; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000). What is new is the

inclusion of dispositions in the standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), requiring teacher education units to use evidence to "demonstrate that teacher candidates are gaining the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to have a positive impact on P-12 learning" (NCATE, 2003, p.12). The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) also references knowledge, skills, dispositions and beliefs that will characterize National Board certified teachers who meet the five core propositions of "what teachers should know and be able to do" (NBPTS, 1998). Additionally, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), in its Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development: A Resource for State Dialogue (1992), delineates dispositions in language such as: "The teacher believes that all children can learn at high levels and persists in helping all children achieve success" (p.14).

Despite this renewed interest in both teacher candidate and experienced teacher dispositions, there is no consensus about which dispositions are necessary for the most effective teaching, or how they may be used for selecting and educating teachers. There is debate about how to define and assess dispositions, whether the same dispositions apply to both candidates and experienced teachers as well as general educators and special educators, and whether diversity of dispositions should be valued (Freeman, 2003; Maylone, 2002; Renzaglia, Hutchins, & Lee, 1997; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000). According to Taylor and Wasicsko (2000), "The issues for teacher educators will be to define what is meant by 'dispositions,' review the research base, find appropriate measurement tools, decide on the implications for selecting and preparing future teachers, and conduct additional research" (p. 2). For many teacher preparation programs, this is a voyage into deep and sometimes unknown waters.

Defining Dispositions

Teacher education units voyaging into deep and sometimes unknown waters first glimpse the murkiness of the water when they confront an initial consideration: defining dispositions.

Taylor and Wasicsko (2000) assert that dispositions are "the personal qualities or characteristics that are possessed by individuals, including attitudes, beliefs, interests, appreciations, values, and modes of adjustment" (p. 2). Gollnick (2004) defines dispositions for NCATE as "the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own growth." NCATE (2003) further describes dispositions as "guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice" (p. 9).

The NBPTS's (1998) conceptualization of teaching dispositions embeds in its five core propositions descriptive standards such as "treating students equitably" and exhibiting an "ethic of caring and service." Similarly, the INTASC (1992) standards use descriptors of dispositions such as, "The teacher appreciates and values human diversity, shows respect for students' varied talents and perspectives, and is committed to the pursuit of 'individually configured excellence'" (p. 12).

The concept of which dispositional qualities make good teachers has been researched for decades. Ornstein (1993) described effective teachers as having the capacity to accept, understand and appreciate students on their own terms. Good and Brophy (1994) described effective teachers as those who set high, realistic goals, and who present information in ways to meet student needs. Irvine (1990), in describing the need for culturally responsive teaching, described highly effective teachers as those with dispositions for developing personal relationships with their students and for listening patiently to their students. An empathetic disposition has been associated with increased sensitivity to different cultures and is identified as a key characteristic of effective teachers in urban schools with great diversity (Darling-Hammond, 2000; McAllister & Irvine, 2002). Garmon (2004) identified dispositional factors including openness to diversity, self-awareness/self-reflectiveness and commitment to social justice as influencing the development of greater multicultural awareness and sensitivity in teacher candidates. Cruickshank and Haefele (2001) summarized much of the effective teacher research, concluding that there are many kinds of good teachers (dutiful, competent, re-

flective, analytic, diversity-responsive), each of whom may meet the different needs of individual learners.

One school of education's journey into the murky waters of assessing dispositions is discussed in this article. Many of the issues inherent in the definition, assessment and application of dispositions occurred in the process of gathering information and building consensus among the faculty for adopting specific dispositions instruments. This process included developing instruments to assess the established dispositions, addressing confusion that arose among some of the university's field partners, establishing reliability of multiple measures and sources and grappling with future directions in the dispositions movement.

Developing a Dispositions Instrument

A small, Midwestern liberal arts university began a systematic dispositions assessment process at the initial certification level. This teacher education unit began developing an instrument that connects the state's nine standards for new teachers with selected dispositional commitments identified by INTASC. A question quickly arose about the need to consider the value of diversity in candidate dispositions, which led to the problem of defining effective teaching dispositions.

Problems with Defining Dispositions

Taking Cruickshank and Haefele's (2001) and Maylone's (2002) conclusion that many different models of good teachers are needed to meet the needs of a diverse population of learners, the faculty in this education unit wondered if it were hypocritical to evaluate a teacher candidate's respect for diversity while mandating a dispositional framework of conformity to a particular teacher model. The diversity of dispositions may be the element that makes one teacher highly effective in working with a student who does not connect well with other teachers. Does one sacrifice the uniqueness of varied teacher qualities for a pre-established set of desirable dispositional characteristics?

Beyond this discussion, the issue of faculty agreement with, and compliance to, established dispositions pushed the unit's voyage into even cloudier water, as controversy over professional beliefs arose. For example, to meet NCATE's requirement to assess candidate knowledge, skills and dispositions, the faculty developed a dispositions assessment that focused on desirable dispositions but struggled with how to describe undesirable ones. This conversation raised further questions: Are students still able to learn from teachers with undesirable dispositions? Was that fear-inducing, incredibly strict, never smiling teacher able to generate learning in his/her classroom? Arguably, effective teacher research promotes a caring, empathetic, positive, fear-reducing teacher as the model (Clark, 1993; Stronge, 2002). The faculty decided, however, that requiring a teacher candidate to demonstrate that he/she possesses specific dispositional qualities to a particular degree might shift the unit closer to a conforming prototype that is more exclusive than inclusive. Ironically, valuing human diversity may not extend to valuing diversity in the dispositions of teacher candidates.

A critical thinking approach to dispositions that gives teacher candidates skills to identify and assess effective dispositions that are situationally appropriate may be the best model to equip new teachers to work with diverse learners (Freeman, 2003). Arnstine (1990) views dispositions as a flexible range of tendencies to act that must follow a teacher into a future that is essentially unknown. In order for schools of education to measure this "flexible range of tendencies to act," teacher candidates would need to be evaluated in a myriad of field placement settings as well as during the professional semester to determine their range of actions. Otherwise, dispositional measures would be more a measure of what teacher candidates aspire to possess than actual behaviors. This teacher education unit agreed that continuous assessment of a flexible range of skills and attitudes would best represent their understanding of the dispositions that are correlated with effective teaching.

Table 1 provides a sampling of the initial instrument mandated by this teacher education unit for assessing candidate dispositions at three continuous assessment points. This sample highlights the connection between one new teacher stan-

dard and one dispositional commitment identified by INTASC and supported by the faculty and the mission of the unit.

Table 1
Sample from One University's Dispositions Assessment

4: Distinguished -- The student's performance demonstrated exemplary mastery of the standard. **3:** Proficient -- The student's performance demonstrated skilled and strong mastery of the standard. **2:** Apprentice -- The student demonstrated limited mastery of the standard. **1:** Novice -- The student demonstrated unskilled or little mastery of the standard.				
Standard I: The teacher designs/plans instruction and learning climates that develop student abilities to use communication skills, apply core concepts, become self-sufficient individuals, become responsible team members, think and solve problems, and integrated knowledge.	1	2	3	4
Operational Dispositions: The teacher candidate values the development of students' critical thinking, independent problem solving, and performance capabilities; values both long term and short term planning; believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on student needs and changing circumstances.	1	2	3	4

University faculty piloted the dispositions instrument during the 2003-2004 academic year and also collected feedback from adjunct faculty and cooperating teachers in the local public school system. After analyzing data from the instrument and receiving feedback from these teaching partners, the difficulty of navigating the unit through the murky waters of assessing dispositions again became apparent when disagreement arose between a regular education teacher and a special education teacher supervising a candidate seeking dual certification. Instead of viewing dispositions as situational and flexible, the regular education teacher believed that a set of "universal" dispositions were required for effectiveness in a general education environment. Though university faculty maintain that candidates should possess flexibility in determining situationally appropriate dispositions, this partner was only willing to assess dispositions based on a given setting. For example, institutional assessments completed by the university supervisor and the cooperating teachers in the professional semester were dramatically different. The cooperating teacher in the special edu-

cation resource environment maintained that a quiet, more introspective and unassertive approach worked well with the small number of students. In the general education environment, however, the university supervisor and cooperating teacher deemed the quiet demeanor to be ineffective with a larger group of children. This lead to a discussion about whether the candidate was unwilling to demonstrate situationally appropriate dispositions or whether the candidate simply did not recognize that a situational behavior was necessary. This case became even complex when the candidate was given a third general education placement and worked with a quiet, more introspective cooperating teacher. This time the candidate was evaluated by the teacher as having appropriate dispositional characteristics, even in the larger general education setting. Again, differences in perception cloud the assessment of effective dispositions and raise questions about the value or problematic nature of diversity in dispositions.

Assessing Dispositions

There are multiple challenges to assessing dispositions, such as the commitment of faculty time and the subjectivity of ratings, are many. In addition to the candidate's self-assessment of his/her dispositional qualities, others who are influential in the development of the candidate's knowledge, skills and dispositions should be part of the assessment process, especially those supervising the candidate in school settings, and students being taught by the candidate in these settings. Such consensus moderates individual differences in definition and interpretation of dispositional behaviors. Reliability among multiple measures becomes a key component, possibly raising the question, once again, of diversity of perceptions and beliefs among evaluators. Can reliability in dispositions assessments be achieved? Is a candidate's self-assessment more or less accurate than the assessment of a professor or a cooperating teacher?

Differences in 2004-2005 scores on students' self-assessments and scores on institutional assessments completed by university faculty and field partners became another obstacle in the unit's voyage into the murky waters of assessing disposi-

tions. Initial assessments for admission to the school of education focused on the dispositional characteristics associated with 4 standards: I: Designing and Planning Instruction; V: Reflecting on Teaching and Learning; VI: Collaborating with Parents, Students, and School Personnel; and VIII: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content. However, the only significant correlation between measures (self and institutional) was on Standard VIII: Knowledge of Content, which asks candidates to demonstrate a disposition for valuing the complexity and ever-evolving nature of knowledge and for valuing the importance of connecting knowledge to personal experiences [$r(35)$ = .41, $p < .05$]. Candidates overwhelmingly scored themselves higher than faculty or field partners on the other 3 standards: Standard I [$r(35)$ = .19, $p > .05$]; Standard V [$r(35)$ = .25, $p > .05$]; and Standard VI [$r(35)$ = .06, $p > .05$].

Are the differences in the dispositions scores on the self and institutional assessment a result of poor orientation to the instruments, the competitive nature of the admission process or simply an indicator of the beginning stages of a developmental process? Unfortunately, a comparison to data from later in the candidates' program is not yet available. A logical assumption is that candidates would become better able to accurately assess their performance as they have additional experiences as evidence of growth. Perhaps this is the essence of dispositional assessment – that it be a progression of increasingly refined attitudes and behaviors. Though close, the unit has not yet formalized that determination.

To maintain the commitment to assessing effective teaching dispositions, and in an attempt to successfully navigate the increasingly murky waters of assessing dispositions, the unit decided to modify the instrument piloted in 2003-2004 and used as the standard in 2004-2005. Additional feedback revealed that more than 85% of the unit's school partners were confused about using the instrument. Instead of focusing on dispositional qualities such as *valuing* critical thinking or *believing* that lesson plans must be open to adjustment based on changing circumstances, field partners wanted to focus on assessing candidate work behaviors, i.e., standard use of English and good attendance. The teacher education unit did not want to change the emphasis on dispositional values and commitments considered to be critical for effective teaching but agreed

to include both dispositional values and operational behaviors on the revised instrument. This final evaluation, therefore, includes all nine new teacher standards, selected dispositional statements provided by INTASC, and particular dispositional behaviors to which they are connected. Table 2 provides a sampling of the revised dispositional assessment.

Table 2
Sample from University's Revised Dispositions Assessment Instrument

Knowledge and Skills (New Teacher Standards)	Operational Behaviors: The teacher . . .
I. Designs and Plans Instruction: The teacher. . . a) Values the development of students' critical thinking, independent problem solving, and performance capabilities b) Values both long term and short term planning c) Believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on student needs and changing circumstances	a) Develops lesson plans with activities that require application, synthesis, and evaluation; designs choices for performance-based assessments b) Demonstrates organization and attention to detail; articulates broad instructional goals for daily plans and units c) Accepts assessment feedback from evaluators and students and makes necessary changes; exhibits flexibility and ease with spontaneity
Novice (1) **Apprentice (2)** **Proficient (3)** **Distinguished (4)**	

The revision will be piloted in the 2005-2006 academic year, and the unit hopes that with our teacher candidates and field partners back on board, we can continue the journey through the murky waters of assessing dispositions.

Reaching the Destination

The teacher education program and its dispositions assessment process, conceptualized as the ship in the extended metaphor of navigating murky waters, has "set sail," but the surrounding waters are polluted with a multitude of questions, and the destination is uncertain. The "what," the "how" and the "what if" of dispositions appear as confusing as ever. What dispositions are necessary for effective teaching? It depends on

whom you ask. How do education units assess these dispositions? This seems to depend on the attitudes and perceptions of the person measuring them and on which instrument or rubric is used. What if analysis of dispositions scores shows the measures to be dramatically different? Is this because of the assessor or the assessment tool? And, finally, what of diversity? Are we forgetting the beauty of the unique connections that teachers make with students—different teachers with different students?

Though other important questions remain, the teacher education unit profiled in this article asserts that a perfect prototype of the effective teacher does not exist. Instead, diversity of professional thought, i.e., flexible or situational dispositions, and application of these behaviors at the P-12 and post-secondary level is required to effectively meet the needs of teacher candidates and P-12 students, indeed, of all learners. There is beauty in that diversity. Let us not muddy the water in teacher education programs to the extent that the uniqueness of what lies within each individual candidate is hidden or camouflaged. Dispositions are a critical part of quality teaching, but additional research to support definition, assessment and implementation is needed before institutions can journey through these murky waters with confidence and intention.

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Voices of Newly Marginalized Preservice Teachers

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Abstract

This paper explores expressions of marginalization of White preservice teachers serving as academic mentors to Black adolescent males in a unique partnership program. Junior secondary education majors form tri-partite interdisciplinary teams and work with intact groups of Black youth, members of a community-based Black rites of passage program for a full academic year. The preservice teachers responded to the experience with multi-media images that included "artist's statements" to explain their imagery. Several themes emerged in the art: marginalization and the awareness that this was a completely novel sensation for one from the dominant culture; having one's voice taken away; becoming invisible in a new culture. Students connected these new feelings and their own charge as educators to create mechanisms to ensure their own future students of color, or indeed anyone distinct from the dominant culture of the classroom, do not experience the same level of marginalization.

As P-12 classrooms diversify at a nearly exponential pace, ensuring the formation of high quality teachers who can respond to the needs of culturally and linguistically heterogeneous youth is crucial to teacher education programs. The preservice teachers at our institution—a small, private comprehensive university in the liberal arts tradition—continue

to reflect the national norm of those entering the teaching profession. They are predominately White, middle class and female. Although we continue industrious recruiting efforts to attract students of color and cultural diversity, a certain hopeful pragmatism has settled into our teacher formation programs; if we aren't going to attract culturally diverse students in meaningful numbers, then let us do an exemplary job of equipping the students we *do* have to serve their own future students with wisdom, grace and salient skills. One promising endeavor is a partnership between our School of Education and a community-based rites of passage program for Black adolescent males in the Portland, Oregon, metro area, the Bridgebuilders/Prospective Gentlemen (the Gents, as they are called within the organization). While previous research on this partnership has focused on the impact of the program on the Gents, this paper explores another dimension: perspectives of the White preservice teachers as expressed via artistic responses to their experiences. We begin with a bit of contextualizing the project, then move to describing the major themes that emerged in the preservice teachers' art and artists' statements that accompanied their work.

The Partnership

The Bridgebuilders is an organization dedicated to helping young Black men navigate the treacherous road to adulthood through rigorous rites of passage throughout high school that focuses on 4 "barometers of manhood": scholarship, entrepreneurship, spirituality and community building. There are 100 Gents in the program at a time, 25 from each level in high school; and 23 different high schools are represented in the Gents. College matriculation is not merely a goal for these youth; it is an expectation. Seven years ago they asked for study hall space at our university. This evolved into the partnership we have today in which university students contribute to the scholarship dimension of the organization. Working in multidisciplinary trios, secondary education majors in their junior year serve as academic mentors for the Gents who come to our campus each Monday evening for an entire school year. The title "Academic Mentors" is carefully chosen and meant to

signify the fact that there are as many Gents in AP classes needing extensions and stretching of their considerable talents as there are those requiring assistance from "tutors." We learned very early in the endeavor how crucial attention to language is for all concerned. Thanks to grant support, the Gents eat dinner with their mentors in the campus Dining Commons, then have 2 hours in intact small groups of 10 working first on general sessions which the mentors prepare, then on their homework. The sessions cover everything from study skills to poetry writing to financial aid forms. Following the academic mentoring, the Gents move onto a group meeting called "Kikao Wa Ndugu," "meeting of the brothers" in Swahili, in which they explore African and Black-related themes. In the past two years, we have made attending at least one Kikao Wa Ndugu meeting mandatory for the academic mentors as part of the class they take concurrent with the field experience.

The course is called "Models of Literacy," so in keeping with the instructor's philosophy that there are multiple modes of literacy that all serve different purposes and honor different strengths, the students were asked to respond in some artistic mode of their choice to their Kikao experience. They were also asked to provide a brief written "artist's statement" to accompany their piece and ensure that their original meaning was clear to the audience. The artists' statements proved to be invaluable for at least three reasons: a) the artists' symbolism (even representational images) was often ambiguous; b) their rendering was hampered by limitations of their skills in the media of this novel assignment; c) their intentions could be triangulated with and compared to their reflections and progress demonstrated in more traditional assignments in the course, such as journals, lesson plans and papers, to assess the impact of this yearlong field experience on their emerging skills and dispositions as educators. We also realized that along with the ambiguity inherent in any piece of art, it is impossible to separate one's own sense of place in the world from interpretations of another's rendering. If the task was indeed to understand the perspectives of the students based on their art, rather than what we thought they should or might be learning from the experience, the artists' statements helped keep us at least a little bit more accurate. Those artistic responses, particularly the images, are what we turn to now.

The Images

The 6 images we have selected are representative of the 40 unique responses that students have generated in the past two years. In varied ways, they showcase important themes in these students' development as teachers and, in some cases, in their own words, as human beings.

Image 1

Image 1 is a heavy black chain in the center, with a sun in the upper right corner and some of the color from that sun making its way into the center of the circle. Barely visible are two white links to the bottom left of the chain. It was important to the artist that the picture be rendered in oil pastels, for that medium allowed diffusion of the colors and elements of the fairly simple picture. What this artist intended to communicate was not alienation (which some observers of the picture have inferred, due to the heaviness and centrality of the chains), but a powerful unity and intact culture of which she had been previously unaware. At the meeting she attended, the Gents stood and sang the Black National Anthem, to which she responded, "I didn't even know there was such a thing. Should I stand or sit? Either one seemed potentially disrespectful. This picture is supposed to represent the awesome power I felt watching them as a group of Black people, who varied in generations. . . The sun they are moving towards is enlightenment and unity. The white chains show me and Tracy (a colleague), also powerful (we're two links on a chain), moving toward the same sun of enlightenment and unity, but very much outsiders. I have never felt so blatantly outside something as I did at this one meeting."

Image 2

Image 2 also has a vivid representation of the artist's feeling excluded from something powerful. In this painting, we see the director's addressing the whole group, each of whom is a different shade of brown and, as the artist points out, "all listening to him and making eye contact with him. They NEVER do that for me in our sessions! The Gents are surrounded by images of red lions. The heads are distinct, but the bodies are more diffused on these lions. What this artist wanted to communicate with that device is that "These Gents are in the process of becoming Simba Changas (young lions), but they are not finished yet—it takes 4 years of high school plus your first year of college before you can become a Simba, or a Man, in this group. On the yellow behind the Gents is a picture of the artist, or rather, several of them. She is fairly distinct, if small, in the upper left-hand corner. "But as the meeting wore on, and I understood or could participate in hardly anything, I started feeling less and less visible. So in this painting, I am literally just fading away over time. That was new for me, as I am not used to feeling like no one can see me or that what I have to say is not important."

Image 3

Image 3 is from another female who found herself "shrink-ing" as the Kikao Wa Ndugu progressed. In this picture, a large female figure with an open mouth dominates as the left side of the canvas, with four Black youth facing her from the other side, eyes and mouths all wide open. Three of them are clus-tered; those are the Gents who do not know her, and so won-dered what she was doing there. The boy in the bottom center of the canvas was one of the boys in her group, and "went out of his way to make sure I felt included." The lines radiating out from her signify, in her words "light that is similar to a spot-light, which is how I felt being the only female, not to mention the only White person there." They too are rendered in oil pas-tel and in broken lines, illustrating her sense that "I wasn't sure of what the boundaries were, but things started to form a pat-tern as the night went on." The open mouths on all the figures, interestingly, do not represent dialogue among them, or "shout-ing between Me and Them," which has been suggested by some viewers of this image, but consternation: "the girl is con-fused at what is going on all around her and the boys don't know what to make of her being at their meeting." The artist meant to suggest open-mouthed silence, not noise of any kind from the figures she drew.

Image 4

   Image 4 is the only non-representational piece we have received thus far, but the themes expressed by the artist are consistent with those of her colleagues. According to the artist, "This painting is all about the sharing of ideas and the blending of differences. The opposing colors of purple and orange splitting the canvas fairly evenly show that I didn't understand half the words the director was using, which is very foreign to me, as an English and History teacher!" The blue figure in the upper left-hand corner is the artist, "separated by my color and my cautious posture," whereas the boys and their club leaders are painted with lively strokes and lots of orange, "the unbridled color," denoting for this student "the distinct energy in the air—the exclamation points are the uninhabited, full-bodied shrieks of laughter and emphasis on being brothers, which was new to me. The dots represent ideas exchanged over the evening. The background colors are also significant for this artist: "Purple is there as our school's color, as is the green—the uncensored color of nature—and orange, a color of warmth and energy. The three colors gradually blend into one another to show general interconnectedness."

Image 5

Image 5 has the artist consciously looking in from outside the window. In the lower left she documents "witnessing something I know I will probably never see: all those boys are looking intently at [the director] and LISTENING! Amazing, I thought." She could step back at the discrepancy between her own interactions with the Gents and this meeting to see qualities such as "contributor," "bonding" and "wisdom" in the boys that she depicts in the lower right corner. Just above that is her own reaction to the new insight: "I wasn't exactly sure what it meant," shown with a white figure surrounded by question marks. Rounding out her perception is the vivid awareness of being "other" in the upper left corner, where we see a young girl trying to cover her face with a long turtleneck sweater and the phrase "all the looks" dominating that pane of the window. "In my whole life, I have always been in the majority, but not tonight," writes this artist. "Seeing the Gents together in a place where they are the majority with other Bridgebuilder adults made me realize how infrequently that feeling probably happens for them. That is why I chose to place these scenes and insights on the other side of the window with me looking in from my unfamiliar position."
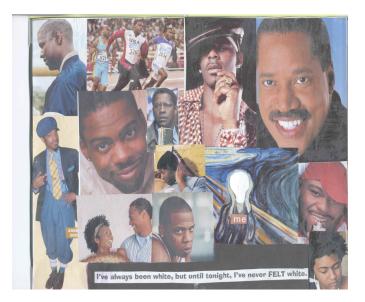
Image 6

Finally, in **Image 6**, we see perhaps the clearest image of self-conscious "otherness." "For the first time in my whole life, it actually felt WEIRD to be a White, upper class female. I didn't know how to feel or what to do." For the Black faces that surround me in this collage I tried to show lots of different occupations and positive images with a little bling, because it was all there tonight." And to render herself in the midst of all this Black culture and success, the artist borrows the figure from Munsch's *The Scream*, eradicating the features, taking away the mouth and generally making the figure voiceless. These steps were to communicate her overall feeling of the evening, which she expresses in the bottom caption: "I've always been White, but until tonight I've never FELT White."

Themes in the Images

There are a few commonalities in the images created by these preservice teachers and those are supported by the words with which they extended and explained their work. First, there are many forms of "barrier," "isolation" and "separation" in these images. The chain is an obvious example, but the windowpanes, the distinct bands of color radiating out from the female image, the intentionally heavy brush strokes in the impressionistic piece are also examples of separating an individ-

ual from a group. In the final image, it is telling that the artist did not insert a magazine picture of a White woman, when she used all magazine images for the Black in the collage—she chose an entirely different medium for herself, then spoke at length about her own novel sense of awareness of her skin color. It's also ironic that the title of the famous painting she chose, *The Scream*, is moot when the mouth is obliterated—a silent scream would not be inconsistent with the artist's expressions of her alienation. It is true that the academic mentors frequently felt barriers between themselves and their Gents throughout the semester as they struggled to understand their music, mode of dress and nearly constant physical movement during sessions. In their journals, all mentors saw these things as barriers to academic success and frequently expressed amazement that the Gents didn't just tone it down and act, as they came to see, more like themselves. Ogbu and Fordham (1986) have called this the phenomenon of "acting White."

A hopeful theme of "potential relationship among isolated beings" emerged not from the images themselves, but from the descriptions of the media the student artists chose. Paints and oil pastels were popular, as several students noted that they could "blur boundaries" and that people and ideas "could blend into each other." Over the course of the year, these students came to see relationship between teacher and student as crucial to successful education and their art reflects that. Statement after statement reveals their new concentration on relationship: "I will always remember to hold the highest expectations for my students after being surprised by what I saw my Gents being capable of tonight;" "Knowledge and effort and willingness to see my students as individuals makes anything possible, whether the kids know it or not;" "I can see it's my job to get to know my students—all of them, not just the ones who look and learn like me—really well so they can trust me with what they need and I can learn how to give it to them."

Another theme that pervades the images and their explanations is a new sense of what constitutes "strong" and "beautiful." However imperfectly rendered, several of the artists wanted to communicate the awareness that seemed to dawn on them as a result of the Kikao Wa Ndugu that there are many shades of black, "from Denzel fine to Coltrane's chocolate intensity," to quote one of their poems, and that the diversity is

both beautiful and a source of potential strength. The black chains tell us that, as do the diverse and carefully selected faces in the collages. Attending one hour of the Kikao came closer to achieving what nearly a whole undergraduate major in education, in a program that professes to embed multicultural competency, could not: a genuine appreciation for diversity and the eyes to see it. The novelty and vulnerability of being the only White woman in a large room full of Black youth and men perhaps enhanced the potential for this insight on the mentors' part—several made it clear they had truly never noticed that most of their teachers were White women, and that they had just taken it for granted that their position as teacher would be assured once they had their own classrooms. This experience, at a minimum, helped them refine that vision and see more nuances to their interactions with future students. "Even though I plan to go right back to my small rural community and teach people who look pretty much like me," wrote one student in her journal, I now know that even a classroom of kids who all look the same has a lot of diversity, and I will not be able to get away with 'one size fits all' teaching when I get out there."

Some Conclusions

This is an exploratory work; nonetheless we can suggest some tentative insights. One is specific to the enterprise and one we were startled into by the very act of this research.

First, the many images of "boundary" and "separation" suggest that we still have a lot of work to do in preparing a teaching force that looks to maintain its trajectory of remaining relatively consistently White, middle class and female to work in diverse classrooms. All of the students in this project are in their third year of college, just one year away from certification and had been through a program that sincerely endeavored to give them deep knowledge, skills and dispositions to approach culturally diverse students with competence and confidence. However, they found that base wanting in just one hour at Kikao Wa Ndugu. This partnership is one promising stride in that work, and ensuring that the preservice teachers have a significant experience—and time, support and space to debrief that—of being "other" themselves contributes considerably to our

institution's progress in that regard. We found ample evidence that once our students were made aware of their otherness, they had increased empathy for their own students and were ready to seek and learn the skills that would make them more effective, culturally competent teachers.

A startling realization we had, which probably does not surprise this audience, is about using art as an assignment in an academic class. On the one hand, this assignment elicited powerful work and self-revelations from students. The images they produced are vivid, poignant, provocative, articulate, hopeful— all the things teachers love to see in their students. It is clear to us that asking students to respond in non-linguistic ways to an experience allows them to communicate affective knowledge and even declarative knowledge and cognitive growth in a depth that seems unlikely via more traditional assignments. Both of us have crafted careful journal prompts and thoughtful paper topics that did not yield anything as lively as the images we have just explored. Without exception, students' artwork (when coupled with their characterizations of what they produced) had depth and spoke eloquently of robust new self-knowledge and positive enculturation into teaching—of moving at least a bit beyond ethnocentrism—more substantively than their journals and papers did. This kind of assignment is less language-dependent and seemed to create an opportunity for a more complete expression of what was going on internally with students in their journey through the semester. Indeed, in course evaluations, there were several comments that this assignment allowed them to say things they could not have otherwise: "I felt stretched by this assignment to use a part of my brain that usually doesn't get much of a workout"; "The art project taught me that there are some things that happen to you that are just beyond words—and art gives us a way to say it anyway"; "I loved being able to express all of what I learned in this non-traditional way—it showed me something I need to remember about my own students in the future."

As gratifying as these insights are, we also realized that artistic knowledge and modes of expression may be somewhat threatened in the current school climate that privileges formal writing above other types of discourse. Upon reading the assignment in the syllabus for the first time, several students had reactions similar to this one, taken from a course evaluation:

"At first I was really *offended* by the art thing—we're high school teachers! [emphasis is ours] . . ." "I thought the art project would be a *no-brainer and an easy A* [emphasis is ours]. As we prepared to study students' art, we asked our office worker to scan the whole pile for us, only to discover when we opened the file that she had scanned only the text of the artists' statements! When we asked her about this, she said she just assumed that the art was peripheral fluff and that the typewritten pages were the "real work;" her impression, apparently, echoing the students' initial reactions that producing art is not "real" work. We are hopeful, though; the very students who professed being offended by such a jejune assignment completed their evaluations by stating that the assignment turned out to be one of the toughest ones of the assignment, that "it turned out to be very difficult to get onto the canvas what was so clear in my head, since I don't have any art background." While hopeful that this assignment created some converts to appreciating the potential of artistic expression, we understand too that art needs advocates in classrooms as a learning tool in itself. The art created by these preservice teachers brings us to more complex understandings of their perspectives on a critical moment in their formation. Finally, multiple understandings of the Kikao Wa Ndugu experience generated by varied audiences interrogating the images suggests that such assignments demand deep conversation and relationship, a proposition we endorse enthusiastically.

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