

PERCEPTIONS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS' PREPARATION FOR CULTURALLY  
RESPONSIVE TEACHING: VOICES FROM THE FIELD

A Dissertation by

Gladys E. Ritterhouse

Master's Degree, Wichita State University, 1986

Bachelor's Degree, Sterling College, 1974

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and the faculty of the Graduate School of  
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I have examined the final copy of the dissertation for form and content, and recommend that it be accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Educational Leadership.

---

Jean Patterson, Committee Chair

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

---

Randall Turk

---

Raymond Calabrese

---

Marilyn Herr

---

Kay Gibson

Accepted for the College of Education

---

Sharon Iorio, Dean

Accepted for the Graduate School

---

Susan Kovar, Dean

## DEDICATION

To Richard, the wind beneath my wings

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## ABSTRACT

This mixed methods research examined whether graduates from the teacher preparation program at a small college in the mid-west United States were perceived to be prepared to meet the needs of all learners in their classrooms. Study participants were 22 teacher education graduates from 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04, and 11 of their first year supervisors.

Data was gathered by way of an on-line survey, from e-mail and telephone interviews, and from teacher education program documents. Data was analyzed through the lens of the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy; caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction.

Teachers from the 2001-02 cohort who had received no training in a culturally responsive pedagogy seemed to be less well prepared to meet the needs of all learners than were teachers from the other two cohorts. Teachers from the 2003-04 cohort whose course requirements included a course in cultural diversity with emphasis on a culturally responsive pedagogy appeared to be better prepared but were also more critical of their own endeavors. Furthermore, perceptions from outside observers indicated that between 2001 when the teacher preparation program curriculum did not include culturally responsive pedagogy and 2004 after the program incorporated it into coursework, the preparation of teachers to meet the diverse needs of all learners had improved.

This study, supported by other research, demonstrated that the inclusion of training in the use of a culturally responsive pedagogy in a teacher preparation program can be effective in readying teachers to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Given that 85 percent of teachers in U.S. public schools are White and that almost half of public school students are members of racial and ethnic minority groups and/or students of poverty, the preparation of teachers is more important than ever. Furthermore, the pervasive gap in achievement between White middle class students and their poor and racial minority peers has raised questions about the effectiveness of teacher education programs (Levine, 2006).

The qualitative case study reported in this dissertation is an examination of the efforts of the teacher education program at Midwest College, a small, private college located in a small Kansas town, to prepare teachers for diversity in their classrooms. For purposes of this study, the definition of diversity is taken from National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. It describes diversity as differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, and language (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002b). Within the context of diversity, the term *exceptionalities* is defined as a physical, mental, or emotional condition, including gifted/talented abilities, that requires individualized instruction and/or other educational support or services (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002b). With knowledge that an understanding of cultural diversity had become an increasingly important piece in an effective teacher education program, a culturally responsive pedagogy (Irvine, 2003) was integrated into Midwest College's teacher education program over a three-year period.<sup>2</sup> Study participants were teachers who graduated during a three-year span between 2002 and 2004. The 2001-02

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<sup>2</sup> Culturally responsive pedagogy is used interchangeably with culturally responsible, culturally appropriate, culturally congruent, culturally compatible, and culturally relevant teaching.

graduating cohort received no formal training in dealing with cultural diversity. The 2002-03 cohort took an elective course in cultural diversity with no specific assignments addressing lesson planning from a culturally responsive position. The 2003-04 cohort took a required course where they designed lessons and classroom environments that showed their knowledge of a culturally responsive pedagogy.

This chapter provides background information regarding the study's research problem, that is, the notion that while today's classrooms are more varied than ever before, many teachers are unprepared for the challenge of effectively and equitably teaching students with diverse cultural needs. To contextualize the research problem, a brief history of K-12 public school reform with an emphasis on teacher accountability is included, beginning with the 1980's *A Nation at Risk* report through today's *No Child Left Behind* law. Recent higher education reforms and criticisms of teacher preparation programs offer additional support for the research problem. The remaining sections of the chapter describe the research problem, purpose of the study, theoretical framework, research questions, significance of the study, and finally, the researcher's assumptions are acknowledged and discussed.

### *Background*

According to the statement on the wall of the United States Department of Education in our nation's capitol, "the mission of education in the United States is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation" (United States Department of Education, 1995c, para. 1). This statement addresses the idea behind current school reform, that all students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, social class, or academic ability, should have equal opportunities to learn in the public schools (Bizar, Koerner, & Zemelman, 2004 , p. 1). On the contrary, however, as a consequence of structural inequalities

in access to knowledge and resources, “students from minority groups in the United States continue to face persistent and profound barriers to educational opportunity” (Darling-Hammond, 2004, p. 607). *The Conditions of Education 2002* report (Snyder, 2004) furnished the following data to support this assertion:

1. Between 1971 and 1988, reading scores of 17-year-old Black students increased, closing the gap between White students and Black students. However, between 1988 and 1999, the trend reversed itself, widening the difference between 17-year-old Black and White students to a gap similar to that of 1971 (p.55).
2. Fourth graders in schools where more than 75% of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunches did not perform as well in reading as fourth graders with lower percentages of students eligible for the program (p. 53).
3. Mathematics performance of White students in grades 4, 8, and 12 were higher, on average, than their Black, Hispanic, and American Indian counterparts (p. 57).
4. In all three grades, mathematics performance decreased as the percentage of students eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch increased (p. 57).
5. The average mathematics scores of all students in schools where more than 50% of their students were eligible for the free and reduced-price lunch program were lower than schools with 25% or fewer eligible students (p.58).
6. Whites in grades 4, 8, and 12 had higher average science scores than Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians in all three grades (p. 59).

In response to this disparity, Darling-Hammond (2004) declared, “If the academic outcomes for minority and low-income children are to change, aggressive action must be taken to change the caliber and quantity of learning opportunities they encounter”(p. 622). Brown and

Kysilka (2002) addressed the responsibility of teachers in bringing about this change when they urged that teachers must be a part of the solution. Culturally responsive pedagogy is one way for teachers to demonstrate they are part of the solution.

### *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy*

Teachers who are successful at providing equitable learning opportunities for students are those who are capable of teaching in a culturally relevant or culturally responsive manner (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Waxman & Padron, 2002). Nieto (2003) similarly wrote that culturally responsive pedagogy, an outgrowth of multicultural education, uses students' backgrounds as assets. Her assertion is that teachers from all backgrounds should develop the skills to effectively teach students with diverse needs.

Teachers who apply a multicultural approach or culturally responsive pedagogy to teaching have the skills to show caring for their students by honoring student diversity through promoting equal opportunity in the classroom and encouraging high standards for everyone. These teachers value communication and language acquisition for all students and they communicate in an effective manner with all students' caregivers. They plan curriculum around alternative points of view in order to make learning relevant to students' experiential backgrounds and do not reinforce stereotypes in their teaching. Additionally, their instruction builds on students' varied learning styles and skill levels (Cummins & Schecter, 2003; Gay, 1997; Waxman & Padron, 2002).

There are, however, several barriers to teachers' use of culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 1997; Waxman & Padron, 2002). Predominant among them is the fact that "most students and teachers live in ethnic and cultural enclaves relatively isolated from each other" (para. 9). Gay further asserted that instructional success depends on the capability of teachers in building

meaningful pedagogical bridges across different cultural systems and that this lack of cultural knowledge must be compensated for during teacher preparation programs. To supply a better understanding of the need for teacher training in and use of a culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom, the next two sections review recent public school and higher education reform measures.

### *Public Education Reform*

Beginning in the 1980s through the present day, the call for increased expectations and greater academic achievement for students has been at the forefront of educational reform in the United States (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983a; United States Department of Education, 2001a). During the 1980s, these reforms included *A Nation at Risk* and *The Governor's Summit*. The 1990s brought about the *America 2000* reform movement and the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*. The turn of the twenty-first century to the present has seen educational reform with the enactment of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. Each of these reforms in combination with changes in public school population demographics carried implications for teaching and learning in the public schools. These changes in the public school expectations in turn impacted teacher education programs and the training provided for prospective teachers.

*A Nation at Risk*. Beginning in the 1950s the United States began experiencing competition from other world powers, and education in the United States was called into question. In 1957, Russia had penetrated the world of space travel ahead of the United States with Sputnik. In the 1980s, the Japanese were making cars more efficiently than the United States, and the Germans were replacing the United States as leaders in the tool-making trade (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983a). Fueled by fear that education in the United States was inferior to that of other world powers, President Ronald Reagan formed the

National Commission on Excellence in Education (hereafter referred to as the Commission). The Commission, comprising between 12 and 19 public members who were knowledgeable about educational programs at various levels and aware of the status of education in the United States at that time (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983a), was charged with the task of exploring world phenomena taking place in the 1980s.

In 1983, the Commission shared its assessment of American schools in the report, *A Nation at Risk* (Mondale & Patton, 2001). As the title implied, the Commission's research ascertained that America's educational system was at extreme risk. Furthermore, the Commission determined that learning was the only way that this trend could be reversed. The Commission called for increased levels of achievement in standards and expectations with the recommendation "that schools, colleges, and universities adopt more rigorous and measurable standards, and higher expectations, for academic performance" (para. 6).

Justification for this call by the Commission was documented partially by statistics demonstrating that, in the decade preceding 1983, many 17-year-olds did not possess higher-order thinking skills (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983b). Data examined showed nearly 40% of 17-year-olds could not draw inferences from written material, only 20% could write a persuasive essay, and only 33% could solve a mathematics problem requiring several steps (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983a). Furthermore, results from the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT) demonstrated a constant decline in scores from 1963 to 1980 (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983a). With SAT scores ranging from 200 to 800 points, average verbal scores of 478 in 1964 dropped to 424 in 1980 (Winn, 2002). Based on these and similar findings, the Commission declared, "All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for

developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost (p. 1).

In order to achieve the goal of providing all children in the United States a more effective education, the Commission made five recommendations. The Commission called for the public to strengthen high school graduation requirements, increase college admission requirements, devote more school time to the learning process, hold educators responsible for increased student achievement, and improve the preparation of teachers (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983b). The Commission did not, however, include suggestions for accomplishing the recommendations. While The Commission's report alluded to student diversity, cited lack of achievement by this segment of the population, and made the statement that recommendations were based on the belief that everyone can learn (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983b), the expectation that teachers would meet the educational needs of diverse learners was not specifically addressed. Neither were guidelines provided for colleges of education to follow in preparing new teachers to meet the needs of all learners, as The Commission advocated. Therefore, although the Commission's *A Nation at Risk* report alerted citizens to the need for revitalization of education in the United States, no plan was put into effect on a nationwide basis.

*Governors' summits on education and Goals 2000.* In 1986, The National Governor's Association took notice of the fact that although education reform efforts were taking place in various states and districts, no action was occurring on the national level. The governors, concerned with international relations stated in their report, "Better schools mean better jobs. To meet the stiff competition from abroad, we must educate ourselves and our children as never before"(United States Department of Education, 1995a, p.1). For the next two or three years, however, reform continued to be confined mainly to state and local initiatives.

In 1989, with student achievement in the United States still a pervasive issue; President George H. W. Bush revisited national and state policies on public school expectations and academic achievement. In an unprecedented move, Bush, in response to the governors' voiced concerns, convened the nation's 50 governors to consider educational problems and broad strategies necessary to solve the problems identified in the previous reports on national educational achievements (Mondale & Patton, 2001). These governors, led by then governor of Arkansas, Bill Clinton, along with presidential education advisors, formed a National Education Goals Panel (United States Department of Education, 1996). This panel was charged with the task of refocusing public attention on increased expectations and improved achievement in the schools. Based on the findings of this panel, the report *America 2000* was drafted. *America 2000* contained six national goals; all directed at increased expectations or improved achievement in America's schools.

Similar to *A Nation at Risk*, *America 2000* noted educational excellence in a competitive global marketplace as a reason for establishing new and more rigorous goals (American Education Week, 1990). Unlike *A Nation at Risk*, however, *America 2000* delineated specific goals:

All children in America will start school ready to learn; the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90%; American students will leave grades four, eight, and 12 having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter; U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement; every adult American will be literate; and every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning (Landess, 1995, para. 5).

Following the publication of these goals, the nation in general, and educators in

particular, realized that public education in the United States was expected to equitably serve all children's academic needs. However, there was no widespread consensus regarding strategies to achieve these goals. All students achieving academic excellence was alluded to, but little emphasis was placed on changes in curriculum, instructional practices, or teacher education (Nieto, 2000). Again, specific reference to accountability was lacking in these goals. Further, there was no evidence that the nation as a whole was ready to adopt a uniform plan of action in order to achieve the National Goals by the year 2000. The White House and the Department of Education could propose solutions to perceived problems in education, the States and local school districts could accept or reject federal proposals (United States Department of Education, 1995b).

*Goals 2000: Educate America Act.* Following his election in 1992, President Bill Clinton continued to focus the attention of the American public on educational reform but with some distinctive differences from previous administrations. Clinton's administration reworded the first Bush administration's six educational goals of *America 2000* and added two new goals: "Teachers will have the knowledge and skills they need; and Schools will promote parental involvement and participation" (GovSpot.com, 1999-2002). The set of eight goals was titled *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (United States Department of Education, 2000b). The Clinton administration moved to ensure schools in the United States took action by signing the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Goals 2000) into law on January 25, 1994 (United States Department of Education, 2000a).

Unlike the *Nation at Risk* recommendations which had addressed academic achievement in general terms, *America 2000* specifically addressed achievement for all children, and the subsequent *Goals 2000* enacted into law by the Clinton administration created accountability and

responsibility for students and schools alike (United States Department of Education, 1995a, p. 3).

In the mid-1990s states were beginning to make progress toward higher standards and greater student achievement, and accountability was becoming part of the reform picture. Although federal legislation called for demonstration of achievement on the part of all students, it did not address meeting the needs of culturally diverse children so that all could achieve. While schools were held accountable by being required to report test score averages, they were not obligated to disaggregate the data according to discrete student populations. With the change of national leadership in 2001 came a change in the focus on education from the national level.

*No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. While *A Nation at Risk, America 2000*, and *Goals 2000* all moved toward setting greater educational standards, President George W. Bush's enactment of the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001*, in addition to addressing excellence in educational standards, brought accountability for meeting those standards for all children to the forefront. Under the new law, school districts were given flexibility in their use of federal education funds (United States Department of Education, 2001b, xi). NCLB gave more choice to parents whose children were not achieving in the school where they attended, and it targeted education dollars for research-based programs that had been proven to help most children learn. In return, it demanded stronger accountability by states and local districts for student academic achievement. To achieve the end of higher student achievement, NCLB required that all students make adequate yearly progress towards standards set by their states (United States Department of Education, 2002b) and that the data compiled from testing results be reported by specific student populations, not averaged for the entire student population at each grade level in the schools. If districts and schools are to achieve the criteria set forth by NCLB, then teachers within the public

school system must be prepared to address these challenges.

### *Higher Education Reform*

In 1991, as a result of the public K-12 education standards movement of the 1980s and 1990s, the National Council for Accreditation of Colleges of Teacher Education (NCATE), the national accrediting agency for many colleges in the United States, aligned their expectations for teacher candidates with public school standards (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2003). Colleges with whom they are affiliated are expected to meet the new standards in order to maintain their national accreditation.

NCATE strongly proposes that every candidate entering teaching be prepared to meet the needs of learners from diverse cultural backgrounds. NCATE clearly delineates these admonitions in its 2002 revised standards. Briefly stated, these standards address the areas of candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions; unit assessment systems and evaluations; field experiences and clinical practices; diversity; faculty qualifications, performance, and development; and unit governance and resources (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002a). While Standard 1, Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions, and Standard 3, Field Experiences and Clinical Practice, require that teacher candidates “demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all children learn” (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002a, pp.14 and 25), Standard 4, Diversity, specifically addresses the acquisition and application of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions. According to Standard 4, “The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn” (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002a, p.29).

In their 2003 summary report, *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children*, members of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) also accentuated the importance of providing teacher candidates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. Among the ten attributes the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future advocated for use as benchmarks in preparing highly qualified teachers, the number three priority was the criteria of "demonstrating teaching skills necessary to help all student achieve high standards" (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003, p. 5). The NCTAF chairperson strongly advocated that a new student right should be access to competent teachers and further noted that the success of any reform movement depends on the improvement of teaching (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2003). Both NCATE and the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future have called for teacher education programs to prepare prospective teachers to teach culturally different students. As will be seen, however, many pre-service programs have fallen short of this goal.

### *Statement of the Problem*

Although agencies such as NCATE and the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future admonished teacher preparation programs to better prepare candidates to meet the needs of diverse learners, researchers provided data suggesting that teachers considered themselves unprepared in this area (Institute of Education Sciences & United States Department of Education, 1998). A 1998 study conducted by the United States Department of Education found that nearly one out of five experienced teachers surveyed felt unprepared to address the needs of students who lacked proficiency in English or who came from diverse cultural backgrounds (Institute of Education Sciences & United States Department of Education, 1998).

Similarly, newer teachers felt unprepared to meet the needs of students with limited English acquisition and the needs of those from diverse cultural backgrounds. This same survey found that although 54 percent of the teachers taught limited English-proficient or culturally diverse students and 71% taught students with disabilities, 17% of the participating teachers felt that they were not prepared to meet the needs of these populations of students (Institute of Education Sciences & United States Department of Education, 1998, p. 6).

NCATE has stipulated multicultural education as a requirement for accreditation of teacher education programs since 1978, yet progress in that particular area has proven slow (King, Hollins, & Hayman, 1997). Sleeter (2001b) reported that predominantly White institutions had, in general, responded too slowly to the challenge of preparing teachers to meet the growing divergence between a predominately White teacher education population and a diverse public school system. Although programs attempted to provide multicultural instruction, by the time teacher candidates entered their practice teaching experience, those in predominantly White schools had “subordinated any interest in multicultural education to demands of their cooperating teachers” (p. 95). Sleeter further held that White pre-service teachers in urban schools experienced great difficulty because they were unprepared for the students and the setting in which they were assigned to teach. Thus, despite the current demand for teachers who can effectively and equitably facilitate learning for all students, many teachers are entering the field unprepared for the challenge of teaching culturally diverse students.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

This study was designed to gather data regarding the preparation of graduates from the Midwest Teacher Education Program (MTEP) in meeting the needs of diverse student populations. With their cultural diversity training based on the belief in the effectiveness of a

culturally responsive pedagogy, this study provided one means of determining the preparation level of teacher education program graduates in the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction (Gay, 2000).

### *Theoretical Framework*

Culturally responsive pedagogy, the lens through which findings from this study were examined, was developed out of concern for the serious academic achievement problems experienced by low-income students and students of color within the last 30 years (Gay, 2000). In the foreword of Gay's book, multicultural education expert James Banks noted that "within the last three decades, a group of insightful and committed scholars and researchers—including Kathryn Au, Roland Tharp, A. Wade Boykin, Sonia Nieto, Lisa Delpit, Jacqueline Irvine, and Gloria Ladson-Billings" (Gay, 2000, p. ix)-- constructed the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy. Their purpose was to give guidance and hope to educators who are trying to improve the achievement of students from diverse backgrounds (Gay, 2000). This theory was based on the belief that rather than being viewed as deficits, students' backgrounds should be considered "assets that students can and should use in the service of their learning and that teachers of all backgrounds should develop the skills to teach diverse students effectively" (Nieto, 2002-2003, p. 6). Expanding on the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy, Gay defined four specific components around which a culturally responsive pedagogy is composed: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction. These components, briefly touched on at this point, will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

The first component of a culturally responsive pedagogy, *caring*, includes several aspects of Pang's (2001) caring-centered approach to multicultural education. Pang identified this approach as being "people-centered and culture-centered" (p. 53), built on the importance of

creating trusting relationships. Gay (2000) similarly described the caring component in a culturally responsive pedagogy as a concern for each person and his or her performance. She described this concern as being manifested through “teacher attitudes, expectations, and behaviors about students’ human value, intellectual capability, and performance responsibilities” (p.45).

The second culturally responsive pedagogy component addressed by Gay (2000) is *communication*, which features three interlocking elements: culture, defined for this study as all that is created by a group of people, including behaviors, values, attitudes, customs, viewpoints, and history (Valle, 1997); language and communication; and teaching and learning. Banks (2006) described the various elements of culture in a viewpoint similar to Gay’s and discussed the relationship between cultural awareness, languages and dialects, and their relationship to teaching and learning on the part of culturally diverse students. Blair (2003) also ascribed to the inter-relatedness of these three elements when he stated that “students will differ in terms of values, learning styles, communication patterns, orientation to schooling, to name a few. These differences not only affect how students will learn but also should indicate differences in how they should be taught” (p. 13).

*Curriculum*, the third component of Gay’s (2000) culturally responsive pedagogy, refers to content knowledge taught to students in a classroom. She stated, “Curriculum content should be seen as a tool to help students assert and accentuate their present and future powers, capabilities, attitudes, and experiences” (p. 111). While knowledge in itself may not be empowering, Teidt and Teidt (2005) noted that information and skills related to their aspirations, needs, purposes, desires, and interests do serve to empower ethnically diverse students. Similar to Gay, they described a multicultural curriculum as providing positive senses of self-esteem,

feelings of empathy toward others, and equitable opportunities for students of diversity.

The fourth component described by Gay (2000), *instruction*, ties together the other three components: caring, communication, and curriculum. Effective instruction honors the cultures of students by building on prior knowledge and setting realistic expectations for each individual. It communicates the appropriate curriculum using the best methods and materials for the culturally diverse students with whom the teacher is working (Tiedt & Tiedt, 2005). Because culture and language influences affect the way in which students learn, culturally responsive teachers employ various strategies to facilitate learning and provide opportunity for all students to succeed in their classroom (Brown & Kysilka, 2002; Cummins & Schecter, 2003).

Research questions guiding the study were designed to gain information related to the aspects of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction within specified classrooms and to explore how teachers and their supervisors perceive the existence of culturally responsive pedagogy in practice. Answers to these questions described the perceptions of recent teacher education graduates and their supervisors regarding the skills held by these recent graduates from Midwest College, a predominately White institution, for effectively teaching students from diverse cultural backgrounds. For the purpose of this study, cultural background is defined as the context of one's life experience as shaped by membership in groups based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, or language (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002a).

### *Research Questions*

The research questions that guided this study were written to specifically determine the level of pre-service teacher preparation related to the application of a culturally responsive pedagogical approach to teaching at a small, mid-western college with primarily White

graduates. The following questions were formulated to ascertain the perceptions of recent Midwest graduates and their supervisors of the effectiveness these beginning teachers experienced in applying the components of a culturally responsive pedagogy to their classrooms.

1. How do new teachers, recent graduates of the Midwest College teacher education program, perceive their preparedness in meeting the learning needs of all learners in the areas of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction?
2. How do supervisors of new teachers, recent graduates of the Midwest College teacher education program, perceive new teacher preparedness in meeting the learning needs of all learners in the areas of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction?

Looking at classroom experiences from the four aspects of a culturally responsive pedagogy, this study examined the perceptions of MTEP graduates and their workplace supervisors. It describes teachers' and supervisors' perceptions regarding teacher preparedness to meet the learning needs of all students: including those with special needs, those with different ethnic or racial backgrounds, those with limited English acquisition, and those from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

### *Significance*

The *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 declared that every child had a right to a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. It stressed that all children should have the opportunity to learn, regardless of income, background, or ethnicity. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future stated that the "law's goal goes to the root of education in a democratic society" (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003, p. 4). This study examined Midwest College's recent teacher education graduates' and their supervisors' perceptions of the level of preparedness of these teachers in implementing learning for all

students with widely diverse needs in their classrooms. This study has the potential to bring attention to the need for increased focus on providing culturally responsive instructional strategies within current teacher education programs.

The information generated by this study regarding new teachers' application of a culturally responsive pedagogy will be useful to the Midwest College Teacher Education Program as it seeks to improve the quality of preparation for teachers going into the field. Furthermore, it could be helpful to other departments of teacher education as they look for improved means in which to prepare teacher candidates with knowledge and skills necessary to meet the needs of all students in today's diverse society. The study could serve as motivation for teacher education programs to explore a culturally responsive pedagogy that includes the concepts of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction to prepare candidates to value, embrace, and effectively instruct students from diverse linguistic, racial, cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

In 2003, 35% of the nation's 53 million children were from racial or ethnic minority groups, 25% of school-age children lived in poverty, and more than 33% of children between the ages of 5 and 17 were of Limited English Proficiency<sup>3</sup>. By 2010, it is projected that over 40% of school age children will be from minority racial or ethnic groups and by 2050 that number will have reached 51% (Futrell, Gomez, & Bedden, 2003). *No Child Left Behind* (United States Department of Education, 2001a) has brought about demands for greater accountability on the part of educators. All school districts must prove on a yearly basis that all learners are achieving specific academic standards. Not all teachers are prepared to meet this challenge. This study

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<sup>3</sup> Limited English Proficient (LEP), English Language Learner (ELL), and English as a Second Language (ESL) are all used to define the same concept; little or no skill to communicate in English due to a predominant first language other than English.

could further serve as a call to school districts to provide in-service opportunities on culturally responsive pedagogy for established teachers who received their teacher training prior to the influx of diverse students into the general education population.

### *Assumptions*

In order to keep this study focused on the preparation of teachers for meeting the needs of culturally diverse students, it was necessary to narrow the scope of the plethora of information available on multicultural education. To achieve this end, the following assumptions were built into the study. The first assumption was that “race, ethnicity, culture, and social class are salient parts of U.S. society” (Banks, 2002, p. 1) and that cultural diversity enhances the nation and increases the ways that its citizens can perceive and solve personal and public problems.

The second assumption was that a cultural imbalance in numbers between teachers and students in the schools exists. For example, Sleeter (2001b) found that, in 1994, 87% of the teaching force was non-Hispanic White with only 13% being of varied minorities. School demographic information from the 2003-04 *Schools and Staffing Survey* showed a slight increase in minority teachers to 16.9%, with non-Hispanic White teacher numbers decreasing to 83.1% (Strizek, Pittsonberger, Riordan, Lyter, & Orlofsky, 2006). In stark contrast, however, in 1994, public school enrollment figures for White students were 72.3% and for total minority enrollment were 27.7%; by the year 2000, White student enrollment had decreased to 68.1%, and total minority enrollment had risen to 31.9 % (United States Department of Education, 2002a). Most recent figures from the 2003-04 *Schools and Staffing Survey* showed these same trends, with White non-Hispanic enrollment decreasing to 60.3%, and total minority enrollment increasing to 39.7% (Strizek et al., 2006).

A third assumption acknowledged is that opposing views to multicultural education exist.

Most critics take one of two opposing positions. Sleeter (2001a) described those two opposing camps as the conservative position that believes multicultural education is too radical and the radical leftist position that believes multicultural education is too conservative. As described by Gay (1994) conservative critics including Chester Finn, Dinesh D'Souza, Diane Ravitch, Arthur Schlesinger, and William Bennett profess current education in the United States to be "largely politically neutral and fair to all children" (p. 83). They believe that in the last two centuries, the United States has unified into a common culture. Their fear is that emphasis on cultural diversity within classroom settings could lead to divisiveness within the United States.

In direct opposition to the conservative view are the radical leftist critics of multicultural education in the schools. Their contention is that cultural diversity is a politically charged issue and that simply "advocating reduction of teacher prejudice as a solution to inequality" (Sleeter, 2001a, p. 90) is too simplistic. The radical leftists believe that multicultural education places too much emphasis on study of culture, race relations, and historical events, which deflects attention away from oppression and inequities experienced by minority groups as a result of White racism (Gay, 1994; Sleeter, 2001a).

Between the conservative and radical leftist positions are the thoughts of two other groups (Gay, 1994). The moderates are represented chiefly by the writings of John Ogbu. The moderate criticism of multicultural education includes the beliefs that multicultural education: (a) tends to ignore the responsibility of ethnic minority students for their own learning, (b) is usually not based on complete studies of minority groups within their own cultural communities, (c) does not distinguish clearly between minority groups who achieve academic success and those who do not, and (e) is not well informed about how the home cultures and languages of racial minorities affect their learning efforts and outcomes (Gay, 1994).

The second of the two middle groups is what Gay described as the “undecided” (p. 39). This population could be called more skeptical than critical and includes those who saw examples where the education system was not meeting the needs of some ethnically and culturally diverse students. These individuals, however, do not have the knowledge or skills to help, ultimately resulting in reactions of fear, denial of problems, and sometimes hostility on their part.

With these assumptions in mind, the fact remains that while cultural diversity is increasing in America’s public schools, students with prior experiences and learning styles different from their teachers have not been achieving in school as well as they should for many years (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Gay, 2000). Gay posited, “Teachers must learn how to recognize, honor, and incorporate the personal abilities of students into their teaching strategies” (p.1) and suggested that culturally responsive teaching may help to reverse the underachievement of culturally diverse students. Chapter 2 reviews literature supporting the concept of a culturally responsive pedagogy, the theoretical framework for this study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter addresses the factors identified in the literature that posit the need for new teachers to receive instruction in the use of culturally responsive pedagogy. Demographic changes among public education students and current pressure on public schools to equitably teach all learners have been influential reasons for calls for improvement in basic pre-service teacher preparation programs. Preparing neophyte educators who are of predominantly European-American ancestry to educate students from diverse cultural backgrounds has resulted in alteration of programs at numerous colleges of teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 2005). One option for change suggested by leading authorities in the field of multicultural education is the instruction of prospective teachers in a culturally responsive pedagogy, which means providing those individuals with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively educate the nation's diverse student population (Banks, 2002; Darling-Hammond, French, & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Gay, 2000; Gollnick & Chinn, 1986; Irvine, 2003; Lee, 1994; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 2001a).

The following narrative reviews various scholarly sources regarding the changing face of public education due to increased student diversity. Also addressed are the effects of NCLB on public schools and the changes NCLB has precipitated in teacher education programs as they prepare teachers to meet the diverse needs of all students. Included in the dialogue are descriptions of effective teaching and learning principles common to all classrooms and training programs, along with various ways in which multicultural education may be integrated into those principles within teacher education programs. Emphasis is placed on descriptions of the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy, which is viewed by many authorities in the

field of multicultural education as the most effective way for teachers to meet the needs of all students. Numerous authors (Banks, 2002; Darling-Hammond, French, & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Gay, 2000; Gollnick & Chinn, 1986; Irvine, 2003; Lee, 1994; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 2001a) cite the components of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction as necessary additions to teacher education programs in order to prepare teachers for the challenge of diversity in today's classrooms.

*The Changing Face of Public Education: Increasing Student Diversity*

During the past 20 years, school districts have had to respond to calls for higher expectations and greater academic achievement for all students, and increased accountability; all of which coincided with the change in composition of the student population (Blair, 2003; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2003). The two decades between 1983 and 2003 saw greatly increased diversity in America's classrooms. With eight million American children enrolled in nursery school and kindergarten, 33 million in elementary school, 16 million in high school, and 15 million in college, the 1999 school population was described as larger and more racially and ethnically diverse than the 1970s (Jamieson, Curry, & Martinez, 2001). Results of the 2000 Census showed one of every three students enrolled in an elementary or secondary school to be of racial or ethnic minority background with nearly one-fifth of all school age children coming from homes whose primary language was not English (Blair, 2003; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

In 1972, 79% of the student population was white non-Hispanic versus the 1999 count of 64% white non-Hispanic. In 1972, African-American students accounted for 14% of the school population. In 1999, the African-American population in the schools was at approximately 16%. While the white non-Hispanic school population decreased in numbers and the African-

American population saw little growth, the Hispanic population in the schools increased from 6% in 1972 to 15% in 1999, and the Asian and Pacific Islander population grew from 1% in 1972 to over 5% in 1999 (Jamieson et al., 2001). These numbers reflect the more than 13.3 million immigrants that entered the United States in the decade between 1990 and 2000 (Blair, 2003).

Along with race and ethnicity, diversity among school-aged children also included children of differing socioeconomic statuses. In 2003, according to the U.S. Bureau of Census, 17.6% of children under the age of 18 were at or below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau News, 2004). Nieto (2004) also noted that within the United States, 20% of the American population held 85% of the country's total household wealth, the result of which was "vastly unequal resources at different socioeconomic levels" (p. 51). Nieto further deduced that given this economic inequality, it was no surprise that school performance and educational attainment was highly correlated to socioeconomic level. Diversity issues, however, are not limited to ethnicity, race, or poverty.

Increased diversity in classrooms also includes students with special needs. Enacted in 1974, PL 94-142 brought handicapped students into the public schools to be educated in settings separate from students in the general education classrooms. The revised 2004 Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEIA) aligned federal special education law with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 by increasing accountability and curricular expectations for students with disabilities. IDEIA mandated that students who had previously been educated in settings separate from the general population of the schools be educated in inclusive classrooms and be held to the same standards as students in the general classroom population. As a result of IDEIA, classroom demographics presently include students identified with special needs but placed in

general education settings for the greatest amount of time beneficial to them (United States Department of Education, 2004).

These changes in educational demographics, “growing immigration, mainstreaming, and awareness of student differences, schools and classrooms” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002, p. 1) resulted in schools with more ethnic groups, increased variation of languages, wider socioeconomic statuses, and a greater gap in performance levels than ever before in the United States. The challenge at hand for public educators is “to prepare all children, regardless of their diversity, to become skilled planners and organizers, creative problem solvers, skilled communicators with highly developed interpersonal skills, and good thinkers and self managers with a willingness and ability to learn” (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997, p. 5). This imperative is in addition to that of setting high expectations for learning, providing challenging and rewarding educational experiences, and increasing educational achievement for all learners as decreed in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

#### *NCLB and the New Demographics of Public Education*

The No Child Left Behind Act gave greater impetus to public education to provide quality instruction for all children for whom the schools provided services. The accountability section of NCLB requires that individual states create their own standards for what a child should know and learn for all grades, and test every student’s progress toward those standards by using tests aligned with the standards. It also stipulates that districts and schools make adequate yearly progress toward meeting their state’s standards. School and district progress are measured by disaggregating test results according to economically disadvantaged students, racial or ethnic minority groups, students with disabilities, or those who have limited English proficiency. School and district performances are publicly reported in district and state report cards. If the

district or school continually fails to make adequate progress toward the standards, then they may be liable to actions and sanctions from an outside source (United States Department of Education, 2002).

Several phases were included in the NCLB accountability actions for schools where students continually fail to make adequate yearly progress toward state proficiency goals. First, the school will be targeted for assistance in the form of technical advice. The district or school is subjected to corrective action as the second step if progress is not made, and ultimately, restructuring of their program by outside sources could be ordered if failure to achieve adequate yearly progress is habitual (United States Department of Education, 2001).

Educational reform, improved student learning, and subsequent accountability, however, are contingent on good teaching that addresses the needs of all children. Darling-Hammond (Darling-Hammond, 1994) believed that transformation of schools would not take place through merely changing regulations. Authentic school reform will only be achieved through teachers, in collaboration with administrators and parents. Darling-Hammond further shared that without teachers who are well prepared to understand and meet the variety of needs brought about by children's diverse learning styles, family situations, beliefs about themselves, and the meaning of school, the concerns for students who "drop out, tune out, and fall behind" (p. 24) cannot be addressed. Members of the Kansas Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2000) also believed that the school reform movement had basically ignored the truth, that is, "what teachers know and can do makes the crucial difference in what children learn" (p. 8). Statements such as these gave impetus to the idea that schools of teacher education needed to examine their pre-service programs from the perspective of the public school needs.

*The Changing Landscape of Teacher Education: Meeting the Needs of Diverse Students*

Goodlad (1994) suggested that one of the reasons educational reform throughout the twentieth century had not produced the desired results is that it was seldom connected with the reform of teacher education. He stated, “We are not likely to have good schools without a continuing supply of excellent teachers” (p. 1). Darling-Hammond (1994) also concluded that preparation of highly trained teachers, equipped with skills to meet the needs of not just some but all children, is a major force in bringing about greater productivity in American schools.

The challenge of educating students to function in a pluralistic society increased as the nation’s ethnicity changed (Banks, 2002). The old cliché of America as a “melting pot” could no longer be applied. The United States of America could more accurately be described as an amazing mix of “cultures and races, old and new immigrants, exceptionalities and talents” (Futrell, Gomez, & Bedden, 2003, p. 1). One of the many implications accompanying the shift in demographics in schools in the United States is the challenge and responsibility of teacher education to train new educators to be both “culturally sensitive and culturally literate” (Taylor, 1999, p. 3).

Preparing future teachers to meet the needs of a diverse body of students has become one of the most daunting challenges of the 21st century (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Futrell et al., 2003). Regardless of the social, ethnic, or racial background of prospective teachers, they need to have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to work with all students (Ladson-Billings, 1994). An effective 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher education program equips all teachers with a pedagogy that helps them work effectively with students from diverse social, ethnic, racial, or ability groups (Banks, 1991).

To address these concerns, during the 1990s as part of their revised program standards, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002a) provided the following definition of diversity: “Differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area” (p. 53). NCATE demonstrated its commitment to diversity by devoting one of its six standards directly to the preparation of the nations’ teachers to meet the diverse needs of today’s diverse learners. NCATE Program Standard 4, Diversity, explicitly states that any teacher education unit will design, implement and evaluate “curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn” (p. 29). Demands from public education and requirements for continuing accreditation put the onus on teacher education programs to provide preparation for prospective teachers of public school classrooms that would ready them to effectively educate this century’s diverse student population for life in a diverse nation. Doing so begins with teachers gaining the foundational knowledge of effective learning and teaching principles.

#### *Effective Teaching and Learning Principles for Teacher Education Programs*

The acquisition of effective learning and teaching principles for general education is the foundation of all teacher education programs. Berliner (2000) credited Jere Brophy (1999) with identifying twelve general education effective learning and teaching principles. The principles delineated by Brophy and posited by Berliner included the ideas that students learn best within cohesive and caring learning communities; they learn more when most of the classroom time addresses curriculum-related activities and the classroom management system keeps students focused on those activities; when curriculum components are seamlessly aligned for

accomplishing instructional purposes and goals; and when teachers prepare students for learning by clarifying outcomes and emphasizing desired learning strategies. Brophy (1999) also believed that to create meaningful learning and retention, teachers should clearly explain content and emphasize its structure and connections, plan questions that engage students in discussions structured around powerful ideas, supply students with sufficient opportunities to practice and apply their learning, deliver improvement-oriented feedback, and provide students with adequate support to help them engage in productive learning activities. Brophy further argued that teachers should model and instruct students in learning and self-regulation activities, give students opportunities to work in pairs or small groups to promote understanding or to help one another master skills, use a variety of formal and informal assessment methods to monitor progress, and establish and follow through on appropriate expectations for learning outcomes.

Multicultural education places general ideas about teaching and learning into the framework of “different racial, ethnic, and social groups, cultures, and experiences . . . along with those of the middle-class, European-American dominant groups in our society” (Gay, 2001, p. 7). Effective teaching strategies and culturally responsive instructional practices can serve to positively influence the educational outcome for culturally diverse students (Morey, Bezuk, & Chiero, 1997). Culturally responsive teaching comes under the broader rubric of multicultural education.

### *Multicultural Education*

Multicultural education is one approach to responding to an increasingly changing cultural context in the public schools. One of the major aims of multicultural education is to create equitable educational opportunities for students from diverse ethnic, racial, social-class, and cultural groups (Banks & Banks, 2001). Another aim is to assist all students, including those

from the white mainstream, to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to participate in “cross-cultural interactions and in personal, social, and civic action” (Irvine, 2003, p. x) which would help make the United States a more democratic and just nation. Yet a third goal is to help students gain greater self-understanding by viewing their own life from the perspectives of other cultures (Banks, 2002). Therefore, in addition to acquiring knowledge and skills in the use of effective learning and teaching principles, prospective teachers need to develop a theoretical framework that will prepare them to work with cultural, economic and language minority learners, as well as with middle class, standard English-speaking students of white European descent (McFarland, 1999).

In an analysis of literature on multicultural education, Gay (2001) noted that although there are differences in basic philosophies, areas of emphasis, and orientations of constituent groups, a high degree of consensus exists among multicultural experts regarding the “major principles, concepts, concerns, and directions for changing educational systems to make them more representative of and responsive to the cultural pluralism” (p. 27) that exists in the United States. Sleeter and Grant (1999) demonstrated this convergence of opinions, concepts, and principles with their compilation of five approaches to multicultural education.

Although many approaches to multicultural education are described within the literature, Sleeter and Grant (1999) synthesized them into five categories: *Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different*, *Human Relations*, *Single Group*, *Multicultural Education*, and *Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist*. These five different approaches to multicultural education are detailed in the next section.

*Teaching the Exceptional and the Culturally Different*

*Teaching the Exceptional and the Culturally Different* (Sleeter & Grant, 1999, p. 37) was

initially delineated by Pratte (1983) and Gibson (1976) in separate studies and proposes that disabilities and cultural differences be accepted and their assets built on in order for culturally diverse students to participate successfully in the mainstream of education. Advocates of this approach believe that the primary goal of education is to assimilate students into American society, preparing them to hold jobs and function within society's parameters. This approach involves students' academic achievement being made possible through modifications to classroom instruction, general education content, or program structure.

### *Human Relations*

The second approach, *Human Relations* (Sleeter & Grant, 1999, p. 76), advocated providing more love, respect, and effective communication within the schools to provide closeness for people with differences. Proponents of this theory believe that helping students learn to tolerate people different from themselves will reduce prejudice in the United States. Advocates see this approach as most effective if attempted on a school-wide basis. For example, a school working to promote social acceptance of students with mental retardation would be working at cross-purposes if, while lessons in social studies in one classroom were aimed at prejudice reduction other classes within the school used ability grouping placing mentally retarded students in the lowest learning group. Critics of the *Human Relations* approach see the major drawback as lack of attention to academic achievement on the part of all students. While the first two approaches called for remediation of the individual so they can "meet a majority norm" (Bizar, Koerner, & Zemelman, 2004, p. 2), conflicts among groups is often ignored and a critical examination of race, class, and gender oppression does not take place (Grant & Tate, 2001). The next three approaches address inequalities within the system and look at ways to undo the imbalances.

### *Single Group Studies*

The third concept to emerge from Sleeter and Grant's (1999) synthesis of the research, *Single Group Studies*, was described by Gay (1977) as mono-minority studies. Sleeter and Grant depicted this approach as characterized by attention to a single group—for instance, women, Asian Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Appalachians, people with disabilities, gay people, or people of the working class. The *Single Group Studies* approach to education is intellectual in nature but is also connected to political struggles within individual groups. The focus of *Single Group Studies* often reflects the make-up of the population of the school in which they are taught. Gay further described the goal of this concept as promoting knowledge among students that makes them willing to work toward social change that benefits a specific group. Teacher education programs that place a majority of their graduates in one particular geographic area or ethnic community may stress this approach to multicultural education within their program (Grant & Tate, 2001).

### *Multicultural Education*

The fourth approach is derived from a combination of previous work accomplished by Gibson (1976) and Pratte (1983). Developed by educators who were dissatisfied with earlier attempts, *Multicultural Education* works toward linking together the different cultures in a classroom (Sleeter & Grant, 1999). Proponents of the *Multicultural Education* approach often compare the cultural pluralism present in the United States to a tossed salad or a patchwork quilt, with each ingredient being dependent on the others while also maintaining its uniqueness. This theory implies that together the ingredients form a “collective total” (Sleeter & Grant, p. 153) that is distinguished by its diverse contributions. According to Grant and Tate (2001) proponents of this approach believe:

Future teachers learn how gender-biased socialization and race and social-class oppression get transmitted to their own teaching practices, and pay attention to how males and females from different ethnic backgrounds are socialized. They learn how to build on K-12 students' learning styles, adapt to their individual skill levels, and involve students actively in thinking and analyzing. (p. 147)

Classroom efforts focus on learning to support and respect the diversity that exists in American society rather than suppressing and denying it.

*Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist*

*Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist*, the fifth and final approach presented by Sleeter and Grant (1999), teaches prospective educators how to move *Multicultural Education* into the arena of social action. It focuses on preparing future citizens with the skills and knowledge to persuade today's society to better serve all groups of people, and was also influenced by the works of Gibson (1976) and Pratte (1983). Pratte expressed:

One's own society and its foundation must have authority for the individual. And when this is achieved, it is easy to connect oneself to other cultures worldwide, helping not only to gain some distance from one's own heritage but to others in the general human condition. But when one's culture does not have authority there is no ground for respect, and education loses its legitimacy. (p. 32)

Leaning heavily on democratic ideals, *Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist* develops social action skills in students. It focuses instruction on issues within students' lives, including "race, class, and gender inequalities in the students' everyday world" (Sleeter & Grant, 1999, p. 204). A curriculum based on this type of belief system is designed to be transformative in nature and assist students in developing the knowledge, skills, and values

necessary to become socially critical and able to make reflective decisions and implement their decisions with effective personal, social, political, and economic acts (Banks, 1993).

Sleeter and Grant (1999) made it clear that the five categories they identified were not mutually exclusive. They further indicated that a good multicultural education program might include portions of any or all of the five approaches. While a plethora of approaches to multicultural education are available most teachers enter public school classrooms unprepared for the diversity they encounter (Parsons, 2005).

A need remains to connect the changing demographics and requirements of public schools and the preparation of prospective teachers to meet those changing needs (Goodlad, 1994). Goodlad further stated that research on prospective teachers showed their concern over perceived inadequate preparation to manage diversity of student population and communication with parents of those students. Thus, an onus has been placed on teacher education programs to prepare prospective educators:

To create an educational system that will educate all children in our society, to permit them to develop to the greatest extent of their potential, so they can participate fully in what the world has to offer, to contribute to the world and to benefit from the best resources of the world. (Tiedt & Tiedt, 2005, p. 3)

However, in order for future teachers to put into effect any of the approaches to multicultural education, they must be aware of them and be prepared to implement their use in the classroom.

### *Multicultural Education in Teacher Education*

In order to bring about needed changes in multicultural education within public schools and give all students the skills to participate in society in culturally appropriate ways, Irvine (2003) believes that teachers entering the field of education need to develop the skills to “build

bridges between the instructional content, materials, methods, and cultural background of their students” (p. 74). Numerous other authors on multicultural education have echoed these same sentiments. Banks (2002) argued that effective multicultural teachers have acquired an understanding of the major paradigms in multicultural education. Equally, they have an awareness of the major concepts in multicultural education, have knowledge of the major ethnic groups in America, and have the skills to adapt curriculum and instruction “to the unique needs of students from diverse cultural, ethnic, and social-class groups” (p. 49). Shade et al. (1997) identified five similar goals for teachers. These authors argued that effective teachers understand cultural backgrounds, know how culture influences student motivation, realize the impact of student culture on learning, are cognizant of ways in which to structure a culturally compatible classroom, and utilize culturally compatible strategies.

According to Nieto(2004), two primary concerns exist within teacher education. The first of Nieto’s concerns extends beyond instructional practices and addresses education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist (Sleeter & Grant, 1999) with the recommendation that teachers be prepared to provide students in their classrooms experiences that would allow them to become critical and productive members of a democratic society. Irvine (2003) echoed this thought when she argued that colleges of education should produce teachers who are “culturally responsive and advocates of social justice” (p. xix).

A second concern, following Sleeter and Grant’s (1999) *Multicultural Education* concept, reiterates the writings of Irvine (2003), Diaz (1992), Banks (2002), and Shade et al. (1997) for teachers to have adequate knowledge of appropriate pedagogy in order to raise the achievement of all students and to provide them with a high quality, equitable education. Gay (2000) added to this line of thought by suggesting that teachers should be capable of cultivating academic

success, while at the same time enhancing the cultural identity of ethnically diverse students. Lee (1994) advocated that teacher preparation programs supply prospective teachers with the ability to view each student as a unique individual, taking into consideration common experiences as a human being and specific experiences that come from each student's cultural background, while preservice teachers remain in touch with their own "personal and cultural experiences as a unique human being who just happens to be an educator." (p. 32)

To this end, the first essential precursor to successfully meeting the needs of multicultural learners in the classroom is for the teacher to develop and understand his/her own personal cultural identity (Banks, 1991; Lee, 1994; Zeichner, 1993). One of the greatest obstacles to teaching effectively in culturally diverse schools is that most teachers haven't explored their own attitudes toward students and families who have backgrounds different from theirs (Kugler, 2002). With most teachers in today's educational field coming from European-American cultural backgrounds (Nieto, 2003; Zeichner, 1993), cultural scripts (each individual's different ways of thinking, feeling, believing, and acting, which automatically preserve their cultural backgrounds) function "to preserve White socioeconomic and political privilege in the existing hierarchy" (Lea, 2004, p. 116). Zeichner (1993) suggested, in addition to gaining an understanding of their own culture, prospective teachers re-examine the values and attitudes they hold toward other cultures. Banks (1991) wrote that teachers in training:

[N]eed experiences that will enable them to learn about the values and attitudes they hold toward other ethnic and cultural groups, to clarify and analyze those values, to reflect upon the consequences of their values and attitudes, to consider alternative attitudes and values, and to personally confront some of their latent values and attitudes toward other races. (p. 141)

In addition to examining their own attitudes and values towards other cultures, prospective teachers should provide an atmosphere of high expectations for students and offer scaffolding, a set of supports on which students build new learning on prior cultural experiences (Stronge, 2007; Zeichner, 1993). Within the scaffolding are two elements that prove critical for teachers wishing to provide a positive learning environment for all students. First, the use of the students' languages and cultures can support academic learning and cultural identity (Cummins & Schecter, 2003; Hollins & Spencer, 1990), and second, teaching the culture of the classroom or hidden curriculum (Cushner, 1999; Delpit, 1995) can allow students to participate successfully in the mainstream classroom culture (Zeichner).

Zeichner (1993) also advocated that for teachers to successfully implement cultural inclusion in their classrooms, they must have general cultural knowledge about the ways that socioeconomic conditions, language, and culture shape school performance and educational achievement. They also need specific knowledge of the languages, cultures, and circumstances of each of the students in their classrooms. He further elaborated that future teachers must be aware of instructional strategies that create opportunities for culturally diverse students to “learn to use, try, and manipulate language, symbols, and information in the service of making sense or creating meaning” (p. 9).

In order to bring about changes in teacher behaviors and equip prospective teachers with the tools to successfully engage all students in learning, it is incumbent on teacher education programs to make changes. They must be prepared to provide teacher candidates a framework through which changes in thinking, feeling, believing, and acting in regard to issues of teaching and learning in a culturally diverse setting can occur.

### *Theoretical Framework: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy*

One option for colleges of education that want to produce teachers with the capacity for becoming multicultural educators is to build their program around the theoretical framework of culturally responsive teaching (Banks, 2002; Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 2004; Pang, 2001; Sleeter, 2001b). Designed to assist educators desiring to meet the needs of culturally diverse children in their classrooms, this framework is composed of four aspects: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction (Gay, 1994).

#### *Caring*

The first of the four concepts, caring, was addressed by Pang (2001), who believed that when teachers operate from the care ethic, they make a conscious “moral commitment to care for and teach students and develop reciprocal relationships with them” (p. 55). Gay (2000) further identified caring teachers by their “high performance expectations, advocacy, and empowerment of students as well as by their use of pedagogical practices” (p. 62) that help to facilitate school success. Moreover, Blair (2003) suggested that in order to provide prospective teachers with tools to implement culturally responsive teaching, teacher education programs must assist in the development of the component of caring, i.e. a teachers’ sensitivity toward and understanding of students’ cultural backgrounds and their ability to hold high expectation for all students.

Before prospective teachers are capable of becoming caring multicultural educators with an understanding of students’ cultural backgrounds, they must first become, themselves, multicultural people (Banks, 1991; Nieto, 2004; Zeichner, 1993). Nieto pointed out that most people in teacher education, instructors and prospective teachers alike, are educated in “monocultural environments” (p. 383). She suggested the achievement of three goals would be

required to overcome this obstacle. First, in order to become multicultural in nature, prospective teachers must learn more about pluralism; second, they must be given the opportunity to confront their own biases; and third, they must learn to see reality from a variety of perspectives.

Gay (2000) reiterated these points. She cited “racial identity, gender, ethnicity, social class, and home language” (p. 53) as primary factors affecting teacher/student classroom relationships, none of which has to do with student academic abilities. She further included physical appearance as a condition that was known to affect teacher opinion and expectations of students. In supporting these analyses of the origins of teacher expectations, Nieto (Nieto, 2004) explained that nearly all teachers carry biases with them and that these biases can easily be carried over to the classroom and to students in the classroom. A teacher’s expectations of students can therefore serve as self-fulfilling prophecies (Blair, 2003). Blair believed that teachers must be made aware of the biases they carry and, further, that colleges of teacher education communicate to prospective teachers that effective teachers hold and communicate high expectations for their students as well as believe in themselves and their abilities. Teacher education programs must establish this background of knowledge for prospective teachers in order to instill a base for this type of caring. This would give prospective teachers the skills to establish personal connection with their students by acknowledging their presence, honoring their intellect, respecting them as human beings, and making them feel important (Blair, 2003; Irvine, 2003).

Not only were caring teachers seen as acknowledging and honoring cultural diversity within their classrooms, Gay (2000) also found that teachers who genuinely cared were academically demanding of their students. Citing findings from her research, Irvine (2003) stated that students did not necessarily equate caring with teachers being nice or friendly. Students in

her research equated caring with firmness, fair discipline, high expectations and a teacher's unwillingness to let students get by with less than their best.

In addition to an appreciation of cultural differences and the need to hold high expectations for all students, Blair (2003) and Gay (2000) suggested that teacher education programs instill in prospective teachers the general traits of a caring teacher. These traits included teachers assuming personal responsibility for the progress of their students, putting a high degree of effort into their planning and instruction to bring about higher student achievement, and believing that all students can learn and communicating this expectation to their students.

### *Communication*

Communication, equally as important as the caring component of a culturally relevant pedagogy (Blair, 2003; Gay, 2000), is the second of the four components comprising culturally relevant teaching. Communication has three elements: the aspects of culture, language, and teaching and learning. Gay addressed the close relationship between and among these three when she explained that “communication cannot exist without culture, culture cannot be known without communication, and teaching and learning cannot occur without communication or culture” (p. 77).

*Culture and communication.* As a basis for effective communication, an understanding of culture is vital for prospective teachers as they prepare to enter the profession. Cushner (1999) related Triandis's (1972) theory of objective and subjective culture to an iceberg. Cushner described the 10% of the whole above the surface of the water as being the objective culture: artifacts, food, or clothing. The subjective portion of the iceberg, the 90% hidden beneath the surface of the water, was described as that which is most important and therefore carefully

navigated. The deep dimensions of a culture described by Triandis and demonstrated by Cushner included the attitudes, values, and beliefs held by individuals within that culture.

These subjective areas of culture often lead to most misunderstandings between the cultures of the teacher and the student (Cushner, 1999). Delpit (1995) elaborated on this phenomena when she explained that a considerable difference between students' cultures and the school's culture could cause a teacher to misread "students' aptitudes, intent, or abilities as a result of the difference in styles of language use and interactional patterns" (p. 167). When these cultural differences are present, teachers might use instructional modes and/or types of discipline that are contrary to those within the student's community.

In support of teachers acquiring knowledge of the subjective areas within their students' cultures, Banks and Banks (1997) deemed it imperative that teachers be educated to "understand the differences in cultural values and behavioral codes between themselves as middle-class European-American and students of color" (p. 220). Banks and Banks further advocated that once teachers understand the meanings behind these cultural behaviors, they would be able to improve the quality of learning experiences for all students as they design more culturally responsive instructional opportunities.

Pang (2001), too, asserted that teachers who value their students and their respective cultures are culturally responsive in their teaching. She specified six reasons why it was important for teachers to consider students' home cultures in the classroom: (a) real-life experiences give meaning to learning; (b) students can apply prior knowledge if their cultural knowledge is used as a scaffold; (c) bridges to new concepts are formed through the use of cultural models and analogies; (d) knowledge of cultural practices in the home can provide basis for new learning at school; (e) student behaviors, values, and motivation may be interpreted

through the understanding of a student's culture; and (f) important educational, emotional, and motivational foundations for learning are formed when children believe that the teacher values them and their culture.

While understanding of students' home culture is vital to creating a culturally responsive environment (Banks & Banks, 1997; Cushner, 1999; Delpit, 1995; Pang, 2001), it is only one part of effective communication within a multicultural classroom (Gay, 2000). Language and communicative styles are also integral parts of the communication system for which teachers must be prepared (Nieto, 2002-2003).

*Language and communication.* Ovando (1997) described the importance of language in the classroom as more than a set of words or grammar rules. He perceived language as a "forceful instrument" (p. 272) used by cultures, institutions, groups, and individuals to communicate their attitudes, values, skills, and aspirations. Beyond the more commonly known language components of phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon are the more subtle aspects that are culturally conditioned or predicated. He described the lesser known areas (outside of linguistics) are (a) discourse, the way in which language is organized in speech or writing; appropriateness, the way language is adjusted according to a social situation; (b) paralinguistics, the distance between speakers, the intonation, volume, or pitch of speech, and other nonverbal signals; pragmatics, the interaction of the three elements of discourse; and finally, (c) cognitive-academic language proficiency, the mastery of language skills necessary to be successful in a school or business setting.

Similar to Ovando's five categories, Payne (2001) described three language patterns that are often different for students from poor and minority backgrounds than for middle class students. Her work is premised on the five patterns of language identified by Joos (1967), which

he called language registers. According to Joos, every language worldwide contains these five registers. The first, the frozen register, is where language is usually the same, for example in the Lord's Prayer or wedding vows. The second register, the formal register, uses standard syntax and word choice, and is found in schools and in many places of work. The third, the consultative register, is similar to the formal register but is used in conversation and is less direct than formal. The fourth, the casual register, is the language used between friends, often with limited vocabulary and incomplete sentence structure. The last register, the intimate register, is the language of lovers or twins. Payne (2001) contended that language patterns used in schools and businesses are in the formal register and that use of that formal register is a "hidden rule" (p. 43) of the middle class. Children from poverty and those from minorities or with English as a second language frequently do not have the background vocabulary or the awareness of sentence structure and syntax of the formal register as found in the schools. Riessman (1962) similarly noted the hidden rule challenges faced by disadvantaged students in the schools. Describing these children as lacking "school know-how" (p. 31), he explained that a student might not know how to ask or answer questions, not have an understanding of common phrases used in the classroom, or simply not possess the knowledge of procedures in the school that a middle-class child usually learns from his or her everyday environment.

Payne (2001) further asserted that "discourse" (p. 44) patterns differ between persons who have access to standard formal register and those who do not. The discourse pattern for the formal register of English used in schools brings one straight to the point, while the casual register discourse pattern within the English language tends to be less direct. Indirectness may also be found within the formal pattern of many languages, a further factor influencing classroom discourse. Cummins and Schecter (2003) noted that classroom instruction involving

effective second language instruction focuses initially on meaning or messages with focus on the formal features of the language being taught. He expanded on this notion when he stated that the “development of language awareness includes a focus not only on formal aspects of the language but also on the development of critical language awareness that encompasses exploration of the relationships between language and power” (p. 13).

The third pattern noticed by Payne (2001) was that of “story structure” (p. 46). The formal register story structure is chronological in order, including a beginning, middle, and end to the story. The casual register story structure tells the story in vignettes and may begin with the end of the story. Characterization, Payne emphasized, is the most important part of the story.

Differences in patterns of language are major causes of problems for children from homes with English as a second language (or Limited English Proficiency, LEP) or for students from poverty, regardless of the language spoken at home (Cummins & Schecter, 2003; Payne, 2001). Tasks that students are asked to complete at school have very little meaning to them when requested in the formal register of the English language if they are not familiar with that form of communication. Likewise, parents and teachers may misunderstand each other when one uses a casual register discourse pattern and the other a formal register discourse pattern. Finally, if story structure is presented in a manner infrequently practiced outside of school, it may hold little importance to the student (Cummins & Schecter, 2003; Payne, 2001; Riessman, 1962) .

It is not acceptable to blame a student’s genetic, environmental, cultural, or linguistic background for lack of academic success in the classroom (Nieto, 2002; Ovando, 1997; Riessman, 1962). Instead, professional educators, most of whom come from predominantly European-American, middle class, English-speaking backgrounds must become aware of the different perspectives of language and not assume that everyone operates from the European-

American point of view (Sands, Kozleski, & French, 2000). Since language diversity in the public schools is no longer confined to urban school systems but has moved to small towns and rural areas as well, all teachers must be equipped to deal with this phenomenon. They must be prepared to view language diversity as a resource rather than a deficit (Cummins, 2003; Nieto, 2003). Culturally responsive educators have developed the characteristics shared by effective cross-cultural communicators. That is, they respect individuals from other cultures, attempt to understand the world from others' perspectives, are open to new learning, are flexible, have a sense of humor, tolerate ambiguity well, and have a desire to learn from others (Lynch & Hanson, 1998).

*Teaching and learning and communication.* In addition to knowledge of the importance of culture and the impact of language and communication in a multicultural classroom, a teacher preparation program still must ensure pre-service teachers secure a solid knowledge base of the concepts of teaching and learning (Gay, 1994). Gay defined these concepts as beliefs “about the best ways to facilitate learning of the knowledge and skills essential for socialization, citizenship, and human development” (p. 23). Included in these concepts are common themes that describe learning activities designed to actively engage students in learning based on prior experience, build self-esteem through success, promote student interaction, and generate inquiry and thinking through writing and talking (Stronge, 2007; Tiedt & Tiedt, 2002).

Teaching and learning that occurs within a culturally responsive environment adheres to the aforementioned principles with the following caveat. If educators believe that “good teachers anywhere are good teachers everywhere” and that good teaching “transcends place, people, time, and content” (Gay, 2000, p. 22), they fail to recognize that their standards of teaching and learning are determined by the cultures from which they came and are not the same for all.

Culturally responsive teachers have the understanding that enables them to cross the cultural boundaries that separate them from their students, see differences in students as resources for learning rather than problems to be solved, see learning as an active process in which learners give meaning to new ideas and information, are familiar with their students' prior knowledge and beliefs, and design instruction that builds on what students already know while taking them to new heights in learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The following characteristics (Gay; Taylor & Whittaker, 2003) further expand on these beliefs about teaching and learning in a culturally responsive classroom:

1. Curriculum content and teaching strategies are more meaningful when they are referenced through students' cultural backgrounds.
2. The teacher recognizes the value of teaching from the perspective of other cultures, and that students' attitudes and learning styles are influenced by their cultural heritage.
3. Classroom learning is built on the scaffold of home experiences and relates curricular concepts to students' real world experiences.
4. Varied learning styles are addressed with a wide variety of teaching strategies.
5. Affirmation of students' cultures takes place in a culturally relevant classroom.
6. Curriculum, materials, and resources used in classroom instruction incorporate multicultural information.

The scope of the three elements composing the communication aspect of a culturally responsive pedagogy is vast. Teachers must be aware of and value all their students' cultures, understand the many aspects of language application among and between themselves and their students, and have a firm grasp of ways in which they can meet the varied learning needs of their

students. In other words, “they must know their students well and have the skills to transform what they know about the students into appropriate classroom practices” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 92).

### *Curriculum*

Integrally tied to the component of communication within a culturally responsive pedagogy framework is the third component: curriculum (Gay, 2000; Taylor & Whittaker, 2003; Tiedt & Tiedt, 2005). The use of curriculum is the basis for implementation of effective strategies for teaching and learning in a culturally responsive classroom (Koppelman & Goodhart, 2005; Pang, 2001). Gay (2000), too, specified curriculum content as central to empowering diverse students. She advocated that knowledge, taught through curriculum in a way that is connected to students’ lives and their experiences outside of school, allows culturally diverse students “academic success, cultural affiliation, and personal efficacy” (p. 111).

Several authors noted, however, that teachers too often considered the textbooks supplied for courses in the schools as the curriculum (Brown & Kysilka, 2002; Gay, 2000; Sleeter & Grant, 1999). Brown and Kysilka contended that use of textbooks as curriculum is problematic and that textbooks more often than not reflect the perspectives, in this country, from a European-American middle- or upper-class Christian male point of view.

Sleeter and Grant (1999) agreed. After reviewing 47 elementary and middle-level textbooks produced in the United States, they reported finding that European-Americans were featured predominantly in all of them. Although more recent textbooks showed some improvement in the representation of cultures other than white European-American, Sleeter and Grant found the textbooks they examined typically provided insignificant coverage of other cultures. For instance, little African-American history and few illustrations of contemporary

African-American life were covered, Asian-Americans were mainly projected as background figures with virtually no “history or contemporary ethnic experience” (p. 22), and Native Americans were portrayed primarily as figures in history.

Miller (2001-2002) asserted that teachers can overcome this inadequacy in current textbooks with the development of curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view. Expanding on ten checklist points developed by the Council on Interracial Books for Children (Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, 1974), Brown and Kysilka (2002) suggested that teachers evaluate children’s textbooks and literature for multicultural concepts by checking illustrations, looking at story lines, reviewing lifestyles, weighing the relationships between people, and noting the heroes in textbooks and literature. These five points were seen as effective strategies for use by teachers to raise questions “about stereotyping and marginalizing of people of color and females” (p. 122) in classroom literature. A sixth point, examining the effects textbooks or literature contents might have on a child’s self-image, stressed the importance of being aware of student backgrounds and how they might perceive the book through the lenses of their respective cultures. The seventh and eighth points, reviewing the author’s or illustrator’s background and being aware of their perspective, allows a teacher to consider whether the author is relating to the reader as a member of a cultural group or is writing as an outsider about another culture. The ninth point on the checklist assists the teacher with recognizing the author’s choice of words in reference to specific cultural groups or in the use of pronouns to label or exclude a gender. Finally, Brown and Kysilka concluded that implementing the tenth point, looking at the copyright date of a book, is a reminder to teachers that more recent publications may project more sensitivity to multicultural concerns.

While Brown and Kysilka (2002) looked at measures teachers can take to ensure that student diversity is addressed through multiculturally appropriate texts and literature, they also emphasized that “in order for multicultural curriculum development to occur, teachers must grasp the essential concept of a text not being the curriculum itself” (p. 122). In answer to this challenge, Banks (2002) looked at strategies teachers could use for curriculum reform. He delineated four approaches for the infusion and transformation of curriculum to accommodate multicultural classrooms. The first two levels, considered by Banks to reflect an ethnocentric point of view, progress from the superficial addition of bits and pieces of cultural material in the contributions approach, to the additive approach where ethnicity and racial events are recognized without changing the original curriculum. These models often reflect “the norms and values of the dominant culture rather than those of cultural communities” (p. 31).

As an alternative, Banks (2002) declared that transformation and social action approaches allow students to view curriculum from the points of view of various cultures. The transformation approach gives students the opportunity to “read and listen to the voices of the victors and the vanquished” (Banks, 2002), as well as to analyze and critically evaluate the topic. Implementing the social action approach takes the transformation approach a step farther by adding the aspect of the teacher helping students to become informed members of society, allowing them to strive for changes, both personal and societal. In the social action approach, the curriculum becomes “the process, progress, and product of making a better world for all” (p. 117). When actual curriculum transformation occurs, Banks expressed the belief that students and teachers make shifts in their paradigm and view American and global experiences from perspectives of different cultural, racial, ethnic, or gender groups.

Curriculum, however, does not exist solely in the planned messages contained in

textbooks and classroom materials. The classroom's hidden curriculum (Banks, 2002; Brown & Kysilka, 2002; Pai & Adler, 1997; Tiedt & Tiedt, 2002) is seldom recognized and is almost never assessed. The hidden curriculum can be defined as the indirect way that teachers and schools portray the values and ideals of their society, with each teacher and student bringing the norms of their various cultures into the classroom (Delpit, 1995; Pai & Adler, 1997; Ware, 2006). Thus, schools and teachers, who traditionally operate from middle-class norms, use the hidden curriculum of middle class. Hidden curriculum or rules may, therefore, be imbedded in student/teacher interactions within the classroom. Examples of some classroom interactions conveyed by Payne included the teacher interpreting and enforcing rules in a fair manner, calling on students of different gender or ethnicity for answers in an equal fashion, equitably modeling respect and caring for students in the classroom, or even as subtly as the diversity of displaying pictures on bulletin boards or walls. Tiedt and Tiedt (2002) cautioned educators to be aware of the type of thinking that causes people to rely on stereotypes. This behavior, they warned, has often been the cause of teachers assuming that all children have the same resources or that everyone in their class has similar values.

While keeping in mind the nuances of the hidden rules and curriculum within a classroom, teachers have the responsibility to gather resources and materials to present the content for which they are accountable. Tiedt and Tiedt (2002) suggested three goals to keep in mind when preparing curriculum for a culturally responsive classroom. The first goal is that educators must acknowledge the importance of recognizing student self esteem. The second goal directs educators to guide students towards empathy for others, and the third goal advocates providing equitable opportunities for each student within the classroom. They noted, however, "in the classroom, the curriculum and the teaching are indivisible. It's not possible to have

teaching without a curriculum behind it, or a curriculum without knowing how it is going to be implemented through teaching” (p. 31).

### *Instruction*

With appropriately prepared curriculum as the basis for a culturally responsive classroom, Gay (2002) emphasized instruction as the “actual praxis” (p. 148) for culturally responsive teaching. Instruction combines the components of caring, communication, and curriculum and activates them into action to advance learning in the classroom. For instruction to take place, interaction must occur, and the classroom climate results have to be integrally related to the interpersonal connection between student and teacher (Irvine & York, 1995). Sands et al. (2000) suggested four questions for teachers to ask themselves as they apply culturally responsive pedagogy to select and use appropriate instructional methods:

1. How can we meet the needs of all our students?
2. How can we be strategic in the way that we plan for the individual needs of all students?
3. What types of instructional methods will address the needs of our students?
4. Are our instructional approaches helping students reach important school and curriculum outcomes? (p. 331)

While the above questions should be asked by all teachers as they plan to meet the needs of all students, Pang(Pang, 2001), in keeping with Gay’s contention (2000) that instruction is the praxis for culturally responsive teaching, specifically recommended that teachers use the following instructional practices to make their classroom culturally responsive:

1. Include themes or threads in curriculum that focus on language, culture, power, and compassion.

2. Use a comparative orientation of study presenting diverse perspectives on the issue, theme, event, or concept.
3. Employ an issues-centered orientation.
4. Restructure existing units by using a culture/caring/social justice filter.
5. Teach by example. (Pang, 2001, p. 204)

Koppelman and Goodhart's (2005) description of a teacher who utilizes a culturally responsive pedagogy in his or her classroom clearly depicts the components of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction. They suggested that culturally responsive teachers emphasize analysis of curriculum content and critical thinking activities as they respond to students' learning styles and achievement levels. These teachers instruct in Standard English while also promoting respect for and use of other languages and dialects. Their classroom walls displayed posters and bulletin boards that reflected diversity as represented by race, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, and other groups. Finally, issues discussed and illustrated in the classrooms of culturally responsive teachers reflected individual student interests.

The changing population in schools and increased expectations for public education systems to meet the needs of all learners calls for major changes in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of new teachers entering the educational field. Even with the revision of NCATE standards in 2001 to include greater emphasis on training new teachers to provide for the needs of all learners, many colleges of education have failed to meet that goal (Sleeter, 2001a; United States Department of Education, 1998). Authorities in the field of multicultural education (Banks, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 1994, 2002; Delpit, 1995; Gay, 1994; Golnick, 1986; Irvine; 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Nieto; 2004; Pang, 2001; Shade et al., 1997; Sleeter, 2001b) have argued that preparing new teachers to address multicultural education in their

classrooms is imperative for schools of the twenty-first century. Many of these authors also suggested that one means by which colleges of teacher education can equip prospective educators with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to provide an equitable education for children of differing races, ethnicity, language, exceptionalities, and socioeconomic status is by teaching them how to employ a culturally responsive pedagogy within their classrooms.

The literature reviewed provided evidence that the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy—caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction—when applied within an educational setting, can have positive effects on learning for all students. The research design discussed in the next chapter of this study describes data collection procedures that show the perceived effectiveness of instruction in the classrooms of first-year practicing teachers whose teacher education program, depending on their year of graduation from the Midwest College Teacher Education Program (MCTEP), may or may not have included training in culturally responsive pedagogy.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design and methodology selected to best meet the intent of the study. Seven sections are included. The first section discusses the research design selected for this study. Sections two through five relate the strategies used for data collection, analysis, and reporting, while the fifth section illustrates the processes incorporated to ensure trustworthiness of the data collected and analyzed for this sequential, mixed methods qualitative case study (Creswell, 2003b). The sixth section discusses the aspect of confidentiality that undergirds the entire process, and the final section describes the study's limitations.

#### *Research Design*

The following question guided this study: What is the perception of first year teachers and their supervisors with regard to new teachers' preparedness in meeting the learning needs of all students in the classroom? Four pre-determined components of a culturally responsive pedagogy were selected as the categories in which data would be collected and analyzed: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction (Gay, 2000). With the idea that, in this instance, the problem under study required more than one method of inquiry (Patton, 1990), a mixed method, case study design was selected. Thus, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed sequentially. Quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, which was followed by qualitative data. Although both quantitative and qualitative methods were used, the study is qualitative in orientation, and employed purposive sampling and other methods typically associated with qualitative research.

Case studies often focus on "contemporary events" (Yin, 1994, p.6) and provide a description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam, 2001). These descriptors closely

matched the study's purpose to determine perceptions of new teacher preparedness to meet the needs of all children in their classroom, prompting the selection of a case study. Use of the information found in this study could ultimately prove helpful to institutions of teacher education as they seek ways to prepare teachers for culturally diverse classroom populations.

### *Case Study*

Merriam (2001) emphasized the reasoning behind use of case studies, describing their characteristics as “particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic” (p. 29). These aspects are described below in relation to this study. Case study was an appropriate choice in that the research was *particularistic*. That is, it focused on a question that could be examined from within the boundaries of one particular program. Midwest College's Teacher Education Program provided the boundaries required for this particular case study. This case study is also *descriptive*. The participants provided detail from within the context of their respective classrooms to provide shared experiences for the readers (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998b; Creswell, 2003a; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). As referenced by Merriam (2001) this research reflects the descriptive aspects of a case study, as it illustrates the complexities of meeting the needs of all students along with the many factors, including cultural diversity, which contributed to meeting those needs. The study had the advantage of hindsight but was relevant in the present, and presented information from the viewpoints of different groups.

Finally, a case study was a suitable choice because of its *heuristic* quality, a helpful means for arriving at a solution through one's own investigation (Houghton Mifflin, 1993). Merriam (2001) stated that some of the heuristic aspects of a case study are: explaining the reasons for a problem; discussing why an innovation worked or failed to work; discussing and evaluating alternatives not chosen; and evaluating, summarizing, and concluding, thus increasing

the study's potential for application by readers. The heuristic qualities of this particular case study allow the reader to view the perceived preparedness of new teachers in meeting the learning needs of a diverse student population from the perspective of those teachers and their supervisors. It also provides opinions of participants, new teachers and their supervisors, as to the reasons for those perceptions.

### *Sequential Mixed Methods*

While a case study often uses only qualitative data, this case study employed a sequential mixed methods (Creswell, 2003b) design and benefited from both quantitative and qualitative aspects. A sequential form of mixed methods refers to the fact that one type of data collection preceded another. In some sequential mixed methods studies, either the quantitative or the qualitative method is given greater importance in the study. In this case, both are equally important. The quantitative method allowed the numerical examination of teachers prepared in a culturally responsive pedagogy from the perspective of teachers and their supervisors. The qualitative data collection provided textual descriptions for the numerical perceptions of graduates from the Midwest College Teacher Education Program and their first year supervisors. Analysis of data obtained from extant documents brought to light both quantitative and qualitative perceptions from outside sources as to the MCTEP's preparation of teachers to meet the needs of all students.

This sequential, mixed methods case study of the Midwest College Teacher Education Program was conducted in three phases. Quantitative data, Phase 1 of the study, were collected through responses entered by program graduates and their supervisors into an on-line *Preparation for Diversity Survey* (Appendix A) that was constructed around the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Phase 2 consisted of follow-up interviews with selected

participants and was used, along with the qualitative data from Phase 1, to determine reasons that teachers and supervisors perceived the teachers' readiness levels as prepared or not prepared. Phase 3 consisted of a documents review that provided both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data reviewed included MCTEP departmental survey results. The program's accreditation reports from two of the three years of the study (2002 and 2004) provided the qualitative data that were reviewed. Each of the three phases is described in greater detail later in the chapter.

### *Researcher*

As the primary instrument of data collection for this study (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2001), it was my responsibility to gather, analyze, evaluate, summarize, and derive conclusions that would develop shared understanding (Erlandson et al., 1993) with the readers. Erlandson et al. noted that in order for the researcher to construct shared realities with readers, "personal capabilities and professional experience should be taken into consideration in determining a research problem" (p. 45). With my extensive background in the field of education, as a classroom teacher, a school administrator, and a college pre-service teacher education professor this shared reality was established. The research problem and design were selected partially because of my avid interest in improving the preparation of teacher candidates for meeting the needs of students in the ever-changing, increasingly diverse population of today's schools. Because the participants and I spoke the common language of education, I was able to reconstruct the data contributed by participants in a way that was easy for them to verify.

*Research Site: Midwest College*

Midwest College<sup>4</sup> is a small, private Christian school that draws students from many areas of the United States. The student body consists of approximately 6% African Americans, 4% Americans of Hispanic heritage and 2% Native American, Asian, or Other heritage. White non-Hispanic heritage provides approximately 85% of the average enrollment at the college.

Students of White non-Hispanic backgrounds are even more predominant in the education program. Of the approximately 550 students enrolled at Midwest College, a little over one-fourth of them participate in the teacher education program. Nearly 90% of the graduates from the teacher education program are of White non-Hispanic descent.

While little ethnic and racial diversity exists among the students at Midwest College, even less religious, socio-economic, and ability-level diversity is present. Since the college is based on Christian doctrine, nearly all the students profess Christianity as their faith. In addition, while there is some disparity between the socio-economic classes of students attending the college, with some students on scholarship and others on full tuition, most arrive at Midwest College with middle to upper class values. Along those same lines, few students in the teacher education program have experienced serious learning problems. Candidates are required to have requisite skills before acceptance and must achieve and maintain a minimum grade point average while in the program. Although studies are more difficult for some, academic achievement is relatively high for teacher education candidates.

The composition of faculty and staff at Midwest College is also lacking in diversity. While the female/male ratio on campus is fairly even, ethnic diversity is at a minimum

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<sup>4</sup> Midwest College is a pseudonym used for purposes of the study.

throughout. Of the 67 faculty at the institution, the predominant race is White non-Hispanic representing 98% of the population. Following that, Asians comprise 2%.

The teacher education faculty at Midwest College provides even less diversity. During the three-year span of this study the four full time faculty members were all White, and varied from four females to three females and one male. The department's administrative assistant and four adjunct faculty were all of White European descent. The gender make-up of the adjuncts varied from all females to 50% females and 50% males.

Having moved from jobs within public education to teaching at the college level within the past six years, all of the MTEP faculty members provide a solid grounding for teacher candidates. Background instruction and opportunity for application are provided through coursework that addresses teaching and learning styles, content acquisition, preparation and planning, instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, and awareness of professional responsibilities. Teacher candidates apply the knowledge and skills from their pedagogy courses mentioned above as they participate in technology classes, methods instruction, field experiences, and clinical teaching.

*Cultural diversity course.* Beginning with the 2002-03 interterm, a three week period between fall and spring semester during which students can opt to take one course and attend daily three hour classes, a class on cultural diversity was included in the program's coursework. From that point forward the course was offered each year at Interterm and during spring semester. The Cultural Diversity in Education syllabus for Interterm and Spring 2003 stated the course objectives:

- Determine individual cross-cultural sensitivity.

- Identify attributes and qualities that characterize the concept of culture.
- Gain understanding of how various socializing agents form attributes and qualities into cultural identities.
- Explore the relationship between cultural values and American schools and how these values may be changing.
- Demonstrate understanding of the barriers to dealing with diversity in an educational setting.
- Identify the 18 concepts that cut across diversity and impact interpersonal interaction and learning.
- Develop knowledge and skills to understand and positively promote cultural diversity in the classroom. (Ritterhouse, 2002, p. 1)

The three focal points for the class as described in the syllabus included “Getting to Know Culture of Self,” “Getting to Know Culture of Others,” and “Modifying Curriculum and Instruction to address the Goals of Diversity” (p. 4). While the course was offered that year as an elective; it was not required of teacher candidates until the following year, 2003-04. Offered in January Interterm and spring semester, the spring 2004 syllabus contained the same objectives and focal points as the 2003 course. One objective had, however, been modified and two others added.

The final objective from 2003 stating that teacher candidates would develop knowledge and skills to understand and positively promote cultural diversity in the classroom was modified to say that prospective teachers would develop knowledge and skills necessary to create a culturally responsive classroom. Two other objectives, to gain an understanding of how professional educators interact with school personnel, parents and others and to develop an

understanding of how poverty issues impact education and learning, had been added (Babbie, 1998, p. 179).

The Midwest Teacher Education Program formed its cultural diversity training for prospective teachers around Gay's (2000) culturally responsive concepts of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction. Having recently been affiliated with public education, faculty members felt this addition was necessary to assist teacher candidates in meeting the needs of the diverse learners they would confront as they moved from field experiences into clinical teaching and, eventually, their own classrooms.

### *Selection of Participants*

A total of 33 individuals participated in the study, which included 22 teachers, 9 males and 13 females from both elementary and secondary levels along with 11 of their supervisors. This section describes the process for selecting the teachers and supervisors who participated in the study. "The idea behind qualitative research is to . . . select participants . . . that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (Creswell, 2003b, p. 185). Purposive or purposeful sampling, the selection of a sample based on the knowledge of a specific population and the purpose of the particular study (Babbie, 1998, p. 179), was used to identify MCTEP graduates and their first-year supervisors. Participants for this study were thus selected with these criteria in mind: their ability to add relevant details to the study of teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse students and the years within which the teachers completed their training at Midwest College.

On-line survey participants were purposively selected from each of two categories: graduates of the Midwest College teacher preparation program and these same graduates'

supervisors from their first-year teaching positions. The names of 45 graduates<sup>5</sup> who completed the teacher education program between fall semester 2001 and spring semester 2004 were obtained from college records.

In mid June, 2005 attempts were made to e-mail the 45 graduates from Midwest College who met the purposive selection criteria described earlier (Appendix B: Initial e-Mail Contact Letter-Teacher). These graduates were asked to complete a self-administered (Babbie, 2001) on-line survey (Appendix A: *Preparation for Diversity Survey*). One of the survey questions asked if teachers would be willing to provide their first-year supervisor's name and contact information so supervisors could be contacted. Teachers could choose to participate in the initial phase of the study by completing the survey but could elect not to provide their first-year supervisor's contact information, thus ending their future participation in the study.

Of the 45 potential participants, 12 graduates responded by the end of June, 2005 to the first e-mail and one responded by regular mail, for a total of thirteen. For the person responding via regular mail, I entered the hard copy data into the on-line survey form using the individual number the participant had been asked to enter into his or her survey. A second contact was made at the beginning of July, 2005 to the remaining 33 prospective participants, which garnered seven more responses. A third and final contact in late July, 2005 secured three additional respondents, for a total of 22 program graduate participants, and a response rate of 49%.

#### *Data Collection Strategies*

As previously noted, data collection was accomplished in three phases. Phase 1 involved collection of both quantitative and qualitative data through the use of an on-line *Preparation for Diversity Survey* (Appendix A) after which participants were given the option of providing

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<sup>5</sup> This number included all graduates who were currently teaching and whose contact information was available.

comments. Phase 2 data was qualitative in nature, gathered through interviews with purposively selected participants who had completed the survey. In Phase 3, both quantitative and qualitative data were examined as documents were obtained from the Midwest College Teacher Education Program.

### *Phase 1: Preparation for Diversity Survey*

The primary intent of the on-line *Preparation for Diversity Survey* was to gather quantitative data regarding program graduates' perceptions of their preparation to teach for diversity. The survey also served two other purposes, to narrow the field of prospective participants from whom individual data would be gathered and to obtain information for the construction of the one-to-one interview questions.

*Survey Development.* The survey administered to teachers and their first-year supervisors was developed around the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction (Gay, 2000) (Appendix C: Survey Sources). Prior to its use in the study, the survey was subjected to a process ensuring validity.

Validity (Babbie, 2001), or the accuracy of the survey's use for measuring teacher opinions on these statements, was determined in the following manner. First, higher education colleagues who had not taught in the public schools where cultural diversity was integral to student learning examined the document. These individuals determined that ease of reading and clearly understood statements established face validity (Rymarchyk, 2006).

Two school administrators and six teachers with whom I had previously worked in the public schools also piloted the survey. These professional educators were aware of a teacher's need for understanding and using a culturally responsive pedagogy. They ascertained that the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* met content validity (Rymarchyk, 2006; Statistics.com, 2006)

and was appropriately worded to specifically gain information from teachers and their supervisors. Although I had planned to revise confusing statements or those in need of rewording following the pilot experience (Merriam, 2001), the pilot group indicated that in their professional opinions, no changes were necessary for participants to understand the intent of the survey.

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Components.* The first section of the survey, based on the works of Banks (2002), Blair (2003), Gay (2000), Pang (2001), Nieto (2004), Sleeter and Grant (1999), and Zeichner (1993), addressed the concept of caring. This section included statements pertaining to first-year teachers' understanding of their own biases, their respect for cultures other than their own, and their expectations for students of varying cultures. These statements were:

1. The teacher (I) understood and valued pluralism, the right for people to maintain their languages and culture while combining with others to form a new society reflective of all differences.
2. The teacher (I) was aware that he/she (I) may have held biases and stereotypes toward other cultures.
3. The teacher (I) viewed classroom situations from cultural perspectives other than his/her (my) own.
4. The teacher (I) believed that diversity issues may keep some children from learning successfully.
5. The teacher (I) understood and valued the cultures (including race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, and language) of all students in his/her (my) classroom.

6. The teacher (I) assumed responsibility for the progress of all his/her (my) students regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language.

The second section of the survey, based on information from the writings of (Cummins & Schechter, 2003), Gay (2002), Ovando (1997), and Payne (2001), related to the communication component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. These statements were relevant to participant perception of communication encountered in the classroom and with parents. To assist participants in the understanding of communication as perceived in the study, the following descriptions of the formal and casual language register were provided prior to the participants input:

Formal language register: The standard sentence syntax and word choice of work and school. Has complete sentences and specific word choice.

Casual language register: Language between friends and is characterized by a 400-800 word vocabulary. Word choice is general and not specific. Conversation is dependent upon non-verbal assists. Sentence syntax is often incomplete. (Payne, 2001)

The following statements asked for participants' perceptions regarding communication in their classrooms:

7. The teacher (I) recognized that the formal register of language is found at school and in work places.
8. The teacher (I) recognized barriers that existed between home and school regarding formal and casual language registers.
9. The teacher (I) attempted to reach children and families despite language barriers.
10. The teacher (I) taught the formal language register at school while honoring the

casual language register of the home.

Section three of the survey, following the work of Gay (2000), Ladson-Billings (2001), Shade and Oberg (1997), Taylor and Whitaker (2003), Teidt and Teidt (2002), and Villegas and Lucas (2002), asked for first-year teachers' and their supervisors' perceptions of the use of curriculum designed to meet the diverse needs of all learners via the following statements:

11. The teacher (I) put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction to help all students learn.
12. The teacher (I) structured learning experiences to accommodate the different cultures represented in his/her (my) classroom (race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language).
13. The teacher (I) built bridges of meaning between home and school experiences.
14. The teacher (I) used a wide variety of teaching strategies that addressed different learning styles.
15. The teacher (I) helped students to know and affirm their respective cultures.
16. The teacher (I) incorporated multicultural information, resources, and materials into his/her (my) teaching.

Finally, the last section of the survey, designed around information from the works of Blair (2003), Brown and Kysilka (2002), Cushner (1999), Gay (2000), Irvine (2003), and Sleeter and Grant (1991), addressed the perceived readiness of first-year teachers to incorporate instructional adaptation for cultural differences, as teachers and supervisors responded to the final three statements:

17. The teacher (I) followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum.
18. The teacher (I) adjusted curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view.
19. In order to present curriculum in the most effective manner, the teacher (I) implemented methods of instruction that met the needs of all his/her (my) students.

Upon receipt of the hyperlink via email, participants were asked to reply to each of the 19 statements by selecting one answer from a simple index Likert-type scale with six responses available: strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree (Merriam, 2001). Opportunity for comment was provided after each section of the survey.

*Participants.* The survey was presented to 45 MCTEP graduates. Of these 45, 22 teachers chose to complete the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* via a link to the Midwest College website where college faculty are offered the opportunity to utilize “Survey-A web-based survey tool” for professional purposes. The website offered each prospective participant a more complete description of the study, a consent form (Appendix D: Teacher Consent Form), and the survey. The consent form indicated that participation in the study was voluntary, that participant input would remain confidential, and that, even if they agreed to participate, the participant had the right to withdraw from the study at any time if he/she chose to do so. The consent form also stated that completion of the attached survey would assume consent by the participant.

*Teachers.* The self-administered, on-line survey asked for the following demographic information from each participant: gender, year of completion of the teacher preparation program, endorsement level at the time of graduation, average size of the teacher’s first-year class, percentage of diversity in the first-year classroom, and request for permission for the

participant's first-year supervisor to take part in the study. If the answer to the question regarding supervisor participation was in the affirmative, the teacher was asked to supply the supervisor's contact information. To keep track of the return of responses and to aid in comparison of teacher and supervisor responses, each participant was assigned a number, which they were asked to enter into the survey form.

Of the 22 survey respondents, 16 gave permission along with names and information for their first-year supervisors to be contacted. The implication was that if teachers supplied the name of their first year supervisor, that if selected, the teacher would then be willing to participate in further one-to-one interviews.

*Supervisors.* Using contact information the 16 teacher participants provided, phone calls were made to their supervisors by mid-August, 2005. Fifteen of the 16 first-year supervisors were reached by phone (Appendix E: Supervisor Initial Phone Contact Protocol). Numerous attempts were made to contact the 16<sup>th</sup> supervisor but to no avail.

Upon their agreement to participate, the 15 supervisors were told they would receive an e-mail containing a letter of explanation, a consent form, and a link to the website where they could complete a survey similar to the one completed by teacher participants (Appendix F: Initial E-Mail Contact Letter – Supervisor). The e-mails to supervisors were sent in late August, 2005. For purposes of matching teachers and their respective supervisors, supervisors were assigned a number corresponding to that of their recommending teacher. Eleven of the 15 supervisors contacted by telephone completed the supervisor survey for a response rate of 73%. The supervisor survey was identical in content to the teacher survey with the exception that where teacher statements were worded with “I. . .”, supervisor statements were worded as “The teacher... ” (Appendix G: Supervisor Consent Form ; Appendix H: Supervisor Survey). After

completion of Phase 1 data collection, Phase 2, the collection of data from one-to-one interviews, was implemented.

### *Phase 2: Interviews*

Creswell (2003) suggested that the researcher within qualitative research use multiple methods for data collection that are “interactive and humanistic” (p. 181). He further noted that in today’s world qualitative data collection methods have grown beyond the traditional realms of observation, interview, and document review. He acknowledged that additional data collection methods to facilitate sensitivity to the study participants’ needs could include such things as “sounds, e-mails, scrapbooks, and other emerging forms” (p. 181). For this study, in addition to the comment sections on the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*, and comments secured from MCTEP documents, qualitative interactive data collection strategies included e-mail or telephone interviews with purposively selected study participants following their completion of the on-line *Preparation for Diversity Survey*. Interviews provided an effective research tool for collecting data reflecting participants’ perceptions and attitudes (Erlandson et al., 1993; Weiss, 1994) regarding the preparation of teachers and their subsequent success in working with culturally diverse student populations.

For this study, a general interview guide format (Patton, 1990) was used to gather data from participants. The general interview guide approach involves collecting general areas of information from each interviewee but with a degree of freedom and adaptability on the part of both the interviewee and the interviewer to expand on the questions asked. The use of a general interview guide within a semi-structured interview format allowed for the use of a mix of more or less structured questions, which elicited similar kinds of information from all participants (Merriam, 2001).

Electronic mail interviews and telephone interviews were used to deepen the understanding of participants' perceptions, perspectives, and viewpoints regarding the preparation of teachers from Midwest College and their subsequent success in working with diverse student populations in their classrooms. Questions on the follow-up e-mail or telephone interviews (Appendix I: Teacher Interview Questions; Appendix J: Supervisor Interview Questions) were developed as areas for deeper exploration emerged from the survey data. All questions pertained to one of the following foci, the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy—caring, communication, curriculum, or instruction. Questions were formulated to gain participants' perceptions regarding the provision of instruction during teachers' pre-service experience for development of the skills necessary for teachers' success in the education of culturally diverse learners. Interviews were used to gather viewpoints, perceptions, and perspectives of 6 participants in the study; 4 teachers and 2 supervisors.

*Interview participant selection.* The final step in the purposive selection of teacher/supervisor participants for the one-to-one interviews was achieved through the selection of teacher/supervisor pairs from each of the 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04 cohorts. Two factors guided the selection of final teacher participants and their respective supervisors. First, at least two teachers from each of the attendance years represented in the original group were selected for participation. Second, classroom diversity was considered. Based on the rationale that the greater the diversity in a classroom the more insight that a teacher/supervisor pair might provide regarding their perceptions of the Midwest College Teacher Education Program final selection was based on the reported diversity level in prospective participants' classrooms.

Based on the above criteria, a total of 14 interviews were planned with seven teachers and their supervisors. Five (5) teachers whose classrooms showed greater than 25% diversity levels,

along with two (2) teachers whose classroom diversity ranged from 5% to 20%, were selected (Appendix K: Teacher/Supervisor Selection). These teachers, (Appendix L: Teacher Interview Contact) along with their respective supervisors (Appendix M: Supervisor Interview Contact) were contacted via e-mail or phone for participation in one-to-one interviews. Out of the seven selected, four teachers participated in one-to-one interviews, one from the 2001-02 cohort, two from 2002-2003, and one from 2003-04. Two of the seven supervisors selected also completed the follow-up interviews, and represented teachers from the 2002-03 and the 2003-04 cohorts. Of these, only one supervisor was matched with a teacher who also participated in a one-to-one interview. Interviews with three of the teachers and supervisors were conducted in April and May 2006. In October 2006 the last three interviews with teachers and supervisors were completed.

Three of the seven teachers selected did not participate in the final one-to-one interview phase for various reasons. One teacher simply did not respond to the request. The second teacher indicated he wanted to complete the interview via phone, but numerous attempts to contact him were unsuccessful. The third teacher and her supervisor both agreed to participate via e-mail correspondence, but even with repeated effort to contact them, they never responded. Two of the teachers who did not participate in the follow-up interview were from the 2001-02 cohort of graduates. The third was from the 2003-04 cohort.

Five of the seven supervisors selected did not participate in the one-to-one interview process. They either did not respond after repeated attempts to contact them or they declined to participate.

*Electronic mail interviews.* Two considerations prompted the use of a relatively new form of interview for gaining teacher and supervisor participation in the study—electronic mail (e-

mail). First, participants for this study were located in numerous school settings throughout the United States, making face-to-face interviews improbable. Second, the participant educators were extremely busy individuals, whose time constraints often restricted the completion of face-to-face and telephone interviews.

In comparison to traditional face-to-face interviews, e-mail interviews were different in that they were conducted not only from a distance but also through the medium of screen-based text that was asynchronous (Wright, 2001); that is, conducted with pauses of varying lengths between bursts of communication. While there can be pauses in face-to-face interviews, delay in interaction between researcher and participant in an electronic interview may range from seconds to minutes to hours or even days.

The asynchronicity of e-mail responses carries both positive and negative connotations. According to Wright (2001), e-mail interviews, although less intimate, offer some clear advantages. On one hand, they not only allow participants to complete their responses at a time convenient for them, but the e-mail text also provides its own exact transcription of conversations. In addition, participants are given time to thoughtfully construct responses to questions and perhaps lose some of the nervousness that can be associated with interviews. On the other hand, the delay in answering could result in some responses containing a lack of spontaneity (Bampton & Cowton, 2002), perhaps keeping persons from sharing their actual feelings. An additional drawback is that body language and facial expressions are lost in an e-mail interview (Bryman, 2001). Bryman noted “qualitative researchers are frequently interested not just in *what* people say but also in the *way* that they say it” (p. 321). Thus, I attempted to overcome these particular shortfalls of e-mail interviews, lack of spontaneity, and absence of body language through thought-provoking probes and follow-up questions and to carry out e-

mail conversations within one month of their initiation.

*Telephone interviews.* While e-mail was one tool employed for interviews, telephone interviews were utilized, as well. Creswell (1998) suggested that when the researcher does not have direct access to the individual, telephone contact is a good source of information. Thus, when e-mail interviews were impractical and time and distance precluded the use of face-to-face interviews the telephone interview offered a viable option. Although Weiss (1994) noted that contacts with telephone respondents are many times briefer, he also reiterated that having participants acquainted with the researcher, as was the case in this study, was a benefit when it came to completing the interview in an effective manner. Telephone interviews were initiated when e-mail addresses were not available or when participants preferred communicating orally rather than in writing.

Although conversations were not recorded, with the permission of the participants, notes were taken during telephone interviews and transcribed into Microsoft Word at the conclusion of each conversation. E-mail communications were saved into separate electronic files for each person interviewed. Copies of these saved files were transferred into an electronic word processing program to facilitate data analysis.

With completion of the interview process, Phase 3 of the study was implemented. Bureaucratic organizations such as schools “have reputations for producing a profusion of written communications and files” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998a). Therefore, a review of documents provided a third avenue of discovery, adding depth of insight to the study from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives.

### *Phase 3: Documents Review*

Bogdan and Biklen further suggested, “Juxtaposing...records with interviews... can

prove to be revealing” (p. 138). Thus, Midwest College education department records that could elicit perceptions regarding the teacher preparation program were requested. The documents shared by the college included MCTEP faculty meeting minutes (which provided no relevant data), Accreditation Team Final Reports completed during on-site accreditation visits to MCTEP in September 2002 and October 2004, and data from surveys collected by the Midwest College Teacher Education Program upon the completion of clinical teaching and again after program graduates have one year of teaching experience. The survey data represented perceptions from cooperating teachers, administrators, and teacher candidates regarding the preparation level of clinical teachers from MCTEP. The document reviews, added to the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data and provided triangulation, or the examination of equivalent data from different sources using different methods, for the study’s results.

*Midwest College Teacher Preparation Survey.* The quantitative portion of data collected from the MCTEP documents consisted of responses to a survey sent out by the teacher education program 1) following each program graduate’s clinical teaching experience for the years 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04 and 2) after a graduate has been teaching for one year. The survey was used by MCTEP as a means of providing data for teacher education program improvement purposes, not as an evaluation of specific clinical teacher performance. Respondents for the survey completed upon conclusion of clinical teaching included the teacher candidates themselves, their cooperating teachers, and principals in the buildings where clinical teaching was accomplished. For evaluation purposes, responses from cooperating teachers and principals were combined by MCTEP. Respondents to the survey sent out upon completion of graduates’ first year of teaching included the graduate and his or her immediate supervisor.

Six of the statements on the survey completed by Midwest College Teacher Education

Program completers and their cooperating teachers and principals or teacher graduates and their supervisors matched descriptors in the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy.

These six statements included the following (presented here as they related to the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy):

Statement 3: (Caring) MCTEP prepares teachers who know how people learn and develop and how to identify diverse learning styles.

Statement 6: (Communication) MCTEP prepares teachers who know effective communication techniques.

Statement 12: (Communication) MCTEP prepares teachers who demonstrate effective communication skills in the classroom.

Statement 10: (Curriculum) MCTEP prepared teachers who use the appropriate teaching models to articulate the lesson content, to meet students' needs, and to adapt to classroom situations.

Statement 8: (Instruction) MCTEP prepares teachers who command a repertoire of best teaching practices and use these to instruct students.

Statement 9: (Instruction) MCTEP prepares teachers who can provide learning opportunities that support students' diverse learning styles.

Response choices for persons completing the MCTEP survey included Not Prepared (N), Adequately Prepared (A), and Highly Prepared (H). Responses to the six statements relating to a culturally responsive pedagogy were compiled in tables for comparison of responses between the three years represented at the conclusion of clinical teaching and the 2001-02 and 2002-03 program graduates with one year experience.

*Accreditation Team Final Reports.* Further documents viewed included Accreditation

Team Final Reports completed by accrediting agencies during their on-site visits in September 2002 and October 2004. Specific to the study, these documents were examined for references to new teacher preparation with regard to diversity and assessment of candidates' ability to meet the needs of all students.

Information from the on-site Accreditation Team Final Reports proved helpful. Completed for the Midwest College in September 2002 and again in October 2004 these reports provided additional qualitative data for the study. Colleges of Teacher Education are visited periodically, usually every 5-7 years by state or national accrediting agencies. In the case of MCTEP the visiting teams in 2002 and 2004 were from the Kansas State Department of Education. The teams spent 4-5 days on the college campus examining documents and interviewing students, professors, and public school personnel in an effort to ascertain MCTEP's skill in the preparation of teachers. Three of the six standards examined addressed the preparation level of teacher candidates in meeting the needs of all students. The first, Standard 1 - Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions, assessed MCTEP on their ability to ready teacher candidates to promote equitable learning for all students. The second standard assessed was Standard 3 - Field Experience. This standard addressed whether or not teacher candidates were provided adequate opportunity to work with diverse students. The third area investigated, Standard 4 - Diversity, looked at whether teacher candidates received adequate instruction in pedagogy that prepared them to effectively teach all students. Excerpts taken from both visit's reports representing each of the three standards were entered into a table. Comments were divided and analyzed according to the year in which they were shared, the standard that they addressed, and whether the comment gave the perception of MCTEP either preparing or not preparing prospective teachers for meeting the diverse needs of all students.

### *Data Analysis*

Quantitative data collected in Phase 1, the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*, were first analyzed along with the quantitative data collected in Phase 3, the documents review. Subsequent to the examination of quantitative data, qualitative data gathered in all three phases, comments from surveys, interviews, and documents, were examined. Creswell (2003b) suggested that the process of data analysis and interpretation in a consistent and uniform manner is often enhanced by the use of software programs, thus FileMaker Pro was utilized. Use of this type of software, while often used for classifying qualitative data, was used to sort quantitative as well as qualitative data in this study.

#### *Quantitative Data*

Quantitative data was obtained from two different sources. Foremost was the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* from which the majority of quantitative data was obtained. Data secured through review of MCTEP documents, while fewer in number, provided triangulation for survey data.

*Preparation for Diversity Survey*. Quantitative data from the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* were analyzed as they related to each of the components in the culturally responsive pedagogy; caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction. Within each of the components, statement responses were examined within the discreet categories of Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree (Appendix N). When it was determined that a majority of responses fell into the outer four categories of Strongly Agree/Agree and Disagree/Strongly Disagree, the decision was made to combine the Somewhat Agree and Somewhat Disagree responses with their two respective categories. For purposes of the study, the Strongly Disagree, Disagree, and Somewhat Disagree responses were grouped into

a broader category of Not Prepared. Responses of Somewhat Agree, Agree, or Strongly Agree were combined into an encompassing Prepared category. In order to summarize *Preparation for Diversity Survey* quantitative findings in a convenient, usable format, data were placed into tables that were hand-calculated. These hand-calculated descriptive statistics (Babbie, 2001) indicated the percentages of teachers and supervisors finding first year teachers as Prepared or Not Prepared on each of the 19 statements in the survey.

*MCTEP Teacher Preparation Survey.* A modicum of quantitative data was found in documents reviewed for the study. Surveys conducted by MCTEP following the completion of each semester's clinical teaching experiences provided some unsolicited information regarding perceived preparation levels of prospective teachers. This data was entered into tables that separated clinical teacher responses from those of cooperating teachers and principals. It was also categorized according to the three cohort years; 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04. Data tables were examined for similarities and differences of perceptions between program completers and their cooperating teacher/principals and to look for differences in perception between program completers who had just completed their clinical experience and teachers who had taught one year. Data from teacher graduates and their first year supervisors were similarly sorted. The responses from first year teachers and their supervisors were compared for likenesses and differences. Data gathered from first year teachers was further compared to data obtained from the surveys completed by those same cohorts of teachers upon finishing their clinical experiences.

#### *Qualitative Data*

Along with comments from the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*, e-mail and telephone interviews yielded valuable qualitative data. Documents reviewed also provided qualitative data

for the study in the way of unsolicited comments from visitors to the Midwest College Teacher Education Program.

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Comments.* Each section of the Preparation for Diversity Survey; caring communication, curriculum, and instruction was followed by an invitation for respondents to share comments. These comments added depth to the quantitative data gathered from the survey responses (Appendix O). Survey comments were unitized, or broken down into the smallest pieces of information able to stand alone in the absence of other information (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 132).

*Interviews.* Qualitative responses from interviews were sorted into the four categories of a culturally responsive pedagogy; caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction. Similar to survey comments, interview responses were unitized. Using FileMaker Pro, units of data from both survey comments and interviews responses were sorted as to whether the respondent was a teacher or a supervisor; the year the teacher completed the program; which theme of a culturally responsive pedagogy the data addressed; and whether the unitized comment gave the perception of a teacher appearing to be prepared or not prepared to meet the needs of a diverse student population within their classroom setting. As the process of data collection progressed triangulation continued to occur.

*Accreditation Team Final Reports.* Qualitative data collected from Accreditation Team Final Reports also served as a source to confirm or challenge findings from other areas of the study (Erlandson et al., 1993). Three of the six standards examined by the visiting Accreditation Teams related to preparation of teachers to meet the needs of all students. Team comments for each of these three standards, Student Learning, Field Experience, and Diversity, were examined from the visits that took place, both in the fall of 2002 and the fall of 2004. Qualitative data

pertaining to the teams' perceptions of the preparation of MCTEP teacher candidates to meet the needs of all students in a culturally appropriate manner were extracted from the documents (Appendix P). The data was subsequently sorted as to whether the perception of the Accreditation Team was that the MCTEP teacher candidates appeared to be prepared or not prepared to meet the diverse needs of all students.

### *Data Reporting*

As quantitative and qualitative data were gathered and analyzed, findings were compiled for the purpose of reporting data to others interested in learning the perceptions of first year teachers and their supervisors regarding teacher readiness for meeting the learning needs of all students. Babbie (2001) outlined some basic considerations that must be taken into account as reporting is accomplished. First is the reading audience. Although the topic might appeal most clearly to educators, care has been taken to explain and describe any terms and assumptions in detail so that readers outside the venue of education are able to read the document with greater understanding. The second point suggested by Babbie (2001) is to determine the "aim of the report" (p. A18). This report was written with an explanatory focus. Therefore, care has been taken to explicitly describe the sample population, as well as to share detailed accounts of participant and document input leading to the findings of the study, which will be described in Chapter 4.

### *Trustworthiness of Data*

Trustworthiness in this study was established by the use of techniques that provided "truth value through credibility, applicability through transferability, consistency through dependability, and neutrality through confirmability" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 132). How these elements were addressed is detailed in the following sections.

### *Credibility*

Credibility for the study was established in a multi-faceted manner. Member checking, giving participants the opportunity to check for accuracy of data, was one strategy selected for ensuring credibility and was referred to by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as the most important technique for establishing credibility within a qualitative study. Member checking was implemented during the study as participants reviewed their contributions for accuracy immediately following the interviews and reviewed data collected at an earlier date as subsequent interviews took place (Erlandson et al., 1993).

Transferability, another method for establishing credibility, was defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as the extent to which a study's findings can be applied within other contexts or with other respondents. Data collection procedures were described in detail to allow for "transferability across contexts that may occur because of shared characteristics" (Erlandson et al., 1993). Due to the bounded nature of the case in this study, the findings cannot be generalized to other contexts, but other programs might find them useful.

A third approach used to guarantee credibility was triangulation of data, "a process that is carried out with data from one source checked with data from other sources" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 142). Triangulation was established among the data sources and collection methods as the study progressed. Creswell (1998) suggested that the process of triangulation "involves corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective" (p. 202). Triangulation of data collected within this study was based on different or multiple sources of data; teachers, teachers' first year supervisors, and documents secured from MCTEP. Alternate elicitation methods were also utilized including surveys, comments accompanying the surveys, and e-mail and telephone interviews (Denzin, 1970). Patton (1990) noted, however, that

triangulation seldom leads to one consistent picture. He asserted, “the point is to study and understand when and why there are differences” (p. 467). As the study progressed, this thought by Miles and Huberman (1994) proved meaningful:

Triangulation is not so much a tactic as a way of life. If you self-consciously set out to collect and double-check findings, using multiple sources and modes of evidence, the verification process will largely be built into data collection as you go. In effect, triangulation is a way to get to the finding in the first place-by seeing or hearing multiple *instances* of it from different *sources* by using different *methods* and by squaring the finding with others it needs to be squared with. (p. 267)

Triangulation was accomplished as data were received from surveys, comments, interviews and document reviews, and analyzed for findings.

#### *Dependability*

Dependability of the study was determined by processes implemented to establish credibility. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested that the underlying issue with dependability relates to “whether the process of the study is consistent, reasonably stable over time and across researchers and methods” (p.278). In order to provide consistency, an audit trail was maintained (Erlandson et al., 1993). This was accomplished as the question was clearly stated and the study was designed to answer that question. Further, working documents established a record of the method for selection of participants along with detailed descriptions of data collection including raw data, data analysis products, data reconstruction products, materials depicting intentions and dispositions, and any instruments developed for use in the study (Erlandson et al., 1993).

#### *Confirmability*

An audit conducted by an external auditor assisted in determining the credibility and

dependability, as well as the confirmability, of the study (Erlandson et al., 1993). To assure confirmability, the audit trail, including the working documents and descriptions of data collection and interpretation, allowed the auditor the ability to follow the sequence of “how data were collected, processed, condensed/transformed, and displayed for specific conclusion drawing” (Miles, 1994, p. 278) and to determine that results were integrally linked to collected data.

### *Confidentiality*

Overarching the trustworthiness of data was the trust established between the participants in the study and myself. Weiss (1994) expressed that “one element of the implicit research partnership we establish with a respondent is a commitment that the respondent will not be damaged because of his or her participation in the interview” (p. 131). I was proactive in guaranteeing participants confidentiality and the absence of damage. This was accomplished by assuring participants through explanations in an introductory letter and in the consent form that participation in the study was voluntary, that names and locations would not be used when reporting data, and that data collected during the course of the study were kept confidential. Prior to commencing data collection activities for the study, approval was received by the Wichita State University’s Institutional Review Board, which ensures steps are taken to protect research participants.

### *Limitations*

Some limitations, or potential weaknesses (Creswell, 2003a), were determined during the course of the study. The first concerned the number of subjects selected for the study. The subjects chosen to participate in this study were teachers who had graduated from the Midwest Teacher Education Program during a specific timeframe, along with their first year supervisors.

Therefore, the number of participants was limited to the number of teachers completing the program during that time, the number of teachers who were willing to have their supervisors participate, and the number of supervisors who were willing to participate (Midwest College Teacher Education Program, 2004).

A second limitation to the study involved the analysis of survey responses. First, the study was intended to be primarily qualitative in nature, so quantitative data from the survey results were simply presented as descriptive statistics in the form of percentages. Additionally, to assist in presentation of data gathered on the six-item scale from the survey, results were dichotomized into Prepared and Not Prepared. A majority of responses fell into the strongly agree and agree categories or the strongly disagree and disagree categories on the survey. Therefore, the slightly agree responses were combined with strongly agree and agree responses into a Prepared category and slightly disagree was combined with disagree and strongly disagree into a Not Prepared category. The full range of survey responses is shown in Appendix N.

The third limiting factor, which could also be viewed as a strength, involved my personal relationship to Midwest College. As an instructor in that setting, I had personal interaction with the graduates who were selected for the study. It was, therefore, necessary that I remain aware of any biases I might have held regarding the program or its graduates and that an external auditor be used extensively to alleviate possible tainting of the data.

Several factors contributed to the fourth limitation, which was the amount of time taken to complete the study. The teachers and supervisors selected for the study were extremely busy people. Finding mutually convenient times to answer and discuss questions via e-mail or telephone conversation was difficult. Additionally, the initial contacts were conducted during summer months when some teachers or their supervisors were not available for participation.

Repeated attempts to contact individuals throughout the study helped to control this limitation. Additionally, extra response time during the interviews was allowed participants if they needed it in order to overcome this limitation. Adding to the time issues encountered in the course of the study were delays in the research process prompted by unavoidable situations encountered in my personal life. These limitations, however, did not adversely affect the design and subsequently the results of the study, which are described in Chapter Four.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides results of analysis of data collected to address the study's guiding question: How do new teachers, recent graduates of the Midwest College teacher education program (and their first year supervisors), perceive their (the teachers) preparedness in meeting the learning needs of all learners in the areas of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction? Findings were derived from the analysis of data from three sources. Primary to the study was an online *Preparation for Diversity Survey*, which included an opportunity for comments following each section. This particular survey addressed the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy; caring communication, curriculum, and instruction (Gay, 2000), and was designed especially for the study. Also included in this chapter are analysis of data derived from e-mail and telephone one-on-one interviews with teachers and supervisors from the Midwest College Teacher Education Program (MCTEP) following completion of the on-line survey. The final sources of data analyzed were collected from MCTEP documents; the MCTEP *Teacher Preparation Survey*, which was completed by teacher candidates, their cooperating teachers, and administrators immediately upon completion of clinical teaching experiences and Accreditation Team Final Reports from September, 2002 and October, 2004. Specific data from the *MCTEP Teacher Preparation Survey* dealing with the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy were utilized along with statements from the Accreditation Team Final Reports for purposes of the study. Data from the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* along with accompanying comments are first discussed followed by data garnered from the one-to-one interviews. Subsequently, data retrieved from the *MCTEP Teacher Preparation Survey* is examined along with that acquired from the Accreditation Team Final Reports.

### *Results of the Online Preparation for Diversity Survey*

The online *Preparation for Diversity Survey*, completed by 22 teachers and 11 supervisors, provided a majority of data utilized for the study. Survey data were sorted and analyzed from two perspectives. First, teacher responses from the combined cohorts were examined and compared with the supervisor responses from the three cohorts. Then, data were further disaggregated according to teacher and supervisor responses and the years in which the teachers completed their teacher preparation program; 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04. The purpose of this strategy was to determine if teachers and supervisors from the 2003-04 cohort perceived teachers as more prepared to meet the needs of culturally diverse students than those of earlier program completers. All teachers from the 2003-04 cohort had been required to take a cultural diversity class where a culturally responsive pedagogy was stressed. The cultural diversity class was not required, but was available, for teachers from the 2002-03 cohort, while nothing specific on cultural diversity was offered for teachers in the 2001-02 cohort.

In July 2005, 22 teachers from the selected graduating years completed an on-line *Preparation for Diversity Survey*. By August of that same summer, the first year supervisors of teachers who had given contact information had been telephoned and e-mailed, as well. Nineteen (19) statements, presented in four sections, were on the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*. The first section of six questions addressed the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. The next section, comprised of four statements, regarded the communication component, the third section of six statements pertained to curriculum issues, and the final section contained three statements that asked for responses regarding instruction. Following each section participants were given an opportunity to make comments regarding perceptions of their preparation in that particular component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Participants were

asked to respond to the survey from the perspective of each teacher's first year of teaching. The survey gave each participant a choice of six responses in a simple index format. The choices included: Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Because the total numbers of responses in each category was different for each year of the study, these figures were given both numerical and percentage values throughout the study.

Unless otherwise stated the numbers of supervisors and teachers for each cohort were as follows:

2001-02	Supervisors = 3	Teachers = 9
2002-03	Supervisors = 3	Teachers = 7
2003-04	Supervisors = 5	Teachers = 6

Survey responses were examined by first looking at the 19 individual statements and whether teachers and their supervisors had Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Somewhat Agreed, Somewhat Disagreed, Disagreed, or Strongly Disagreed with each statement. Responses were then combined into two broader categories. Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree became an indication that the teacher or supervisor perceived a teacher to be Prepared. Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree indicated the perception that a teacher was Not Prepared. From that broader perspective, responses were examined to determine whether the teachers' and supervisors' perceptions showed that teachers from Midwest College were overall Prepared or Not Prepared to meet the needs of all learners in their classrooms in each of the four components of a culturally responsive pedagogy, those of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction. Comments from each of the four sections of the survey; caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction were entered into a Filemaker Pro database as Prepared or Not Prepared according to the respondent's comments on their perspective of teacher preparation for diversity. Survey responses were sorted by individual statements, looking at whether the teachers

and supervisors’ perceptions showed that teachers from Midwest College viewed teachers as generally Prepared or Not Prepared to meet the needs of all learners in their classrooms.

Survey responses and comments were also reviewed from the aspect of the level of diversity present in the respective classrooms. This was included in order to determine if this factor had any influence on the supervisors’ and teachers’ perceptions of preparedness in a culturally responsive pedagogy.

*Culturally Responsive Caring: Aggregate Survey Findings*

Statements 1-6 pertained to the culturally responsive concept of caring and are shown in Table 1. For ease of comparison, teacher and supervisor responses are presented in the same table. As illustrated in the table, supervisors nearly always perceived teachers to be better prepared than did teachers themselves.

TABLE 1

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Supervisor and Teacher Aggregate Responses–Caring*

	Prepared		Not prepared	
	#	%	#	%
1. I (The teacher) understood and valued pluralism, the right for people to maintain their languages and culture while combining with others to form a new society reflective of all our differences.				
Supervisor Response	10	91	1	9
Teacher Response	21	95	1	5
2. I (The teacher) was aware that I may have held biases and stereotypes toward other cultures.				
Supervisor Response	11	100	0	0
Teacher Response	12	55	10	45
3. I (The teacher) viewed classroom situations from cultural perspectives other than my own.				
Supervisor Response	10	91	1	9

Table 1 (continued)

Teacher Response	17	77	5	23
4. I (The teacher) believed that diversity issues may keep some children from learning successfully				
Supervisor Response	11	100	0	0
Teacher Response	20	91	2	9
5. I (The teacher) understood and valued the cultures (including race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, and language) of all students in my classroom.				
Supervisor Response	11	100	0	0
Teacher Response	22	100	0	0
6. I (The teacher) assumed responsibility for the progress of all students regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language.				
Supervisor Response	11	100	0	0
Teacher Response	20	91	2	9

While nearly all supervisors (10 or 11) agreed that the teacher under their supervision was prepared to provide a caring environment for students, a number of teachers doubted their preparedness in two specific areas (statements 2 and 3). Forty-five percent (45%) or 10 of 22 teachers surveyed perceived themselves as not prepared on statement 2, indicating that they may have held biases and stereotypes toward other cultures. Similarly, 23% (5 of 22) of the teacher respondents perceived themselves as unprepared to view the classroom from perspectives other than their own (statement 3).

#### *Culturally Responsive Caring: Survey Findings Disaggregated by Cohort*

Information from the Preparation for Diversity Survey was further disaggregated to determine responses according to the teachers' year of program completion. Table 2 illustrates

the way in which the teachers from the three cohorts and their respective supervisors perceived teacher preparedness. This table does not give the complete narrative from each of the 19 statements from the survey, but refers to them by number and a brief beginning phrase. The complete statements may be found in Table 1. Prepared/Not Prepared are referred to in following tables as P=Prepared and NP=Not Prepared. Findings from the numerical data for each group are directly followed with analysis of any comments respondents contributed. Comments were entered into Filemaker Pro in accordance to the statement section that they followed. The comments for each section were sorted according to the cohort years and the varying levels of diversity in the schools at which the responders supervised or taught. For purposes of the study and the survey teachers and supervisors were asked to consider the areas of ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, exceptionalities, and language when looking at diversity within their classrooms.

TABLE 2

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Supervisor and Teacher Responses By Cohort-Caring*

	2001-02				2002-03				2003-04			
	P		NP		P		NP		P		NP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1. I (The teacher) understood and valued pluralism...												
Supervisor Response	2	66	1	33	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	9	100	0	0	7	100	0	0	5	83	1	17
2. I (The teacher) was aware that I may have held biases...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	4	45	5	55	6	85	1	15	2	33	4	66
3. I (The teacher) viewed classroom situations...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	9	100	0		4	57	3	43	4	66	2	33

Table 2 (continued)

4. I (The teacher) believed that diversity issues...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	8	89	1	11	7	100	0	0	5	83	1	17
5. I (The teacher) understood and valued the cultures...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	9	100	0	0	7	100	0	0	6	100	0	0
6. I (The teacher) assumed responsibility for the progress...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	8	89	1	11	6	85	1	15	6	100		

*Supervisors: Cohort 2001-02.* While a majority of supervisors of teachers from the 2001-02 cohort perceived their teacher as prepared for meeting the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy, not all were in agreement. One of the three responding supervisors from that cohort indicated that the teacher under his/her supervision was not prepared to understand and value pluralism in the classroom (statement 1).

Aligned with their perceptions on the survey the two comments from the 2001-02 supervisors deemed their teacher prepared in the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. One supervisor whose teacher had greater than 25% diversity in her class shared that the “teacher had an awareness of the need to meet the needs of diverse students” and the teacher attempted to use strategies she had been taught. The second supervisor, with the teacher claiming between 16-20% diversity in the classroom, indicated that the teacher “Seemed prepared,” but then stated, “We don’t have much cultural diversity,” suggesting that the supervisor may not have had a full understanding of the definition of diversity used in the study.

*Supervisors: Cohort 2002-03.* According to their survey responses, all three participating teacher supervisors from the 2002-03 cohort found their teacher prepared to meet the needs of students in the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. In contrast to the 100% agreement of the survey responses, however, one 2002-03 supervisor shared the following comment regarding the caring component of teacher preparation. With class diversity greater than 25%, the supervisor expressed that while the teacher understood and recognized (cultural) differences, he could have “benefited from having more researched tools for addressing such diverse needs.”

*Supervisors: Cohort 2003-04.* Similar to the other two cohorts’ supervisors, supervisors of teachers from the 2003-04 cohort perceived their first year teachers from that cohort were well prepared

Supporting these five supervisors’ agreement on teacher preparation for the caring component one supervisor, whose teacher’s classroom hosted 11-15% diversity among her students stated, “I feel that she had an awareness of the need to meet the needs of diverse students and that she attempted to use strategies that she had been taught.” Supervisors were, for the most part, positive in regard to their teacher’s preparation to meet the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. A number of teachers, on the other hand, were more critical of their preparedness.

*Teachers: Cohort 2001-02.* Five of the nine (55%) teachers from the 2001-02 cohort felt that they were unprepared in one area of the caring component of a culturally responsive. They perceived they may have held biases and stereotypes toward other cultures (statement 2). Teachers in this cohort perceived themselves as prepared on all other statements in the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy.

Eight of the nine respondents who completed their teacher preparation program in 2001-02 shared comments regarding their perceptions of preparedness to provide an equitable environment of caring for all students in their classroom. Of these, five individuals felt they were prepared. One of these individuals documented his class as having less than 5% diversity and a second teacher who perceived herself as prepared said her class had greater than 25% diversity. A third teacher shared that he had a “relatively good understanding of respecting other cultures from the training and experiences that I took from Midwest College.” He had a classroom diversity level of 16-20%. These comments seem to reinforce the general perception of preparedness as reported in the survey responses. Two teachers who expressed the perception of being prepared went on to share that being raised in a culturally diverse community was the primary reason for that preparedness. Their classrooms represented varying amounts of diversity, 5% and 25%. Three teachers expressed feeling unprepared for diversity in their classrooms. These teachers, too, had classroom diversity levels ranging from 5% to over 25%.

*Teachers: Cohort 2002-03.* One of the seven survey respondents from the 2002-03 cohort felt unprepared because he or she might have held biases and stereotypes toward other cultures. A greater number, three out of seven teachers (43%) from this cohort, felt that they were unprepared to view classroom situations from cultural perspectives other than their own (statement 3). These teachers’ perceived themselves prepared for caring on statements 1, 4, and 5.

All seven teachers from the 2002-03 cohort contributed comments after completing the caring portion of the survey. Two of these teachers who reported 5-10% diversity in their classrooms shared they could not judge their preparedness because they did not deal with much diversity. A third teacher documenting a classroom with more than 25% diversity said that

although he “did not experience a great deal of diversity” in his teacher preparation program he believed that he had an outlook that was effective in teaching culturally diverse students. Two individuals, one with classroom diversity greater than 25% and the other less than 5%, expressed a perception of preparedness but gave credit to their special education training. One person shared she felt “well prepared to meet the need of all students” in the classroom, which had between 5-10% diversity. She attributed her preparedness to field placements during her teacher preparation program in schools with diversity. The seventh individual sharing comments had classroom diversity greater than 25%. He wrote,

I felt I had plenty of intellectual knowledge, but very little experiential knowledge on dealing with diverse students. It is a shock to me when I see some children come to school. Once I got over the shock of their situation, I was fine. I was confident in strategies to help them, it was getting over the initial awe that all those things I learned about in class were actually true.

The first two cohorts with little exposure to cultural diversity in their training program shared comments giving the impression they saw themselves as generally well prepared to provide a caring environment for their students. The assumption was that teachers in the 2003-04 cohort would also perceive themselves as well prepared because of their participation in a cultural diversity class during their teacher preparation program. This was not indicated in their survey responses.

*Teachers: Cohort 2003-04.* The 2003-04 cohort of teachers also perceived themselves as not well prepared to meet the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Six teachers from the 2003-04 cohort responded to the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*. One teacher (17%) saw him or herself as unprepared to understand and value pluralism (statement 1) and 4

teachers (66%) perceived that their lack of preparation may have allowed them to hold biases or stereotypes toward other cultures (statement 2). On statement 3, I viewed classroom situations from cultural perspectives other than my own, 2 teachers (33%) reported they were unprepared, while one teacher (17%) felt not prepared to understand and value the cultures of all students in their classroom (statement 4). Only the responses to statement 5 indicated that all six teachers perceived themselves as being prepared to assume responsibility for the progress of all students regardless of their diversity.

Five of the six respondents from the 2003-04 cohort shared comments following the completion of the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*. Contrary to their survey responses, all teachers communicated through their comments that they perceived themselves as prepared to provide a caring environment for their students. This perhaps indicates that their involvement in a preparation course addressing culturally responsive pedagogy had at least raised their awareness of their responsibilities to culturally diverse students. Two of the teachers with classroom diversity between 5-10% wrote about using strategies and techniques learned in the Cultural Diversity class to meet the diversity needs in their classrooms. A third teacher, whose classroom also had 5-10% diversity, had the opportunity to do her clinical teaching in an urban area and thus felt prepared to meet the needs of diverse students in her classroom due to that experience. Two teachers with classroom diversity levels greater than 25% both expressed that they were well prepared for the diversity in their classrooms with one sharing, “My class was very diverse in race and special needs. I feel I integrated my lessons to cover many areas that helped reflect each student’s culture.”

#### *Culturally Responsive Communication: Aggregate Survey Findings*

The second component of a culturally responsive pedagogy is communication and

statements 7-10 on the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* addressed that area. Prior to completion of the Communication section of the survey, participants were furnished the following definitions of registers of language as suggested by Ruby Payne (Payne, 2001), who was influenced by the work of Joos (1967):

Formal language register: The standard sentence syntax and word choice of work and school. Has complete sentences and specific word choice.

Casual language register: Language between friends and is characterized by 400-800 word vocabulary. Word choice is general and not specific. Conversation is dependent upon non-verbal assists. Sentence syntax is often incomplete. (Payne, 2001, p. 42)

Results of the communication component of a culturally responsive pedagogy are illustrated in Table 3.

TABLE 3

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Supervisor and Teacher Aggregate Responses—Communication*

	Prepared		Not Prepared	
	#	%	#	%
7. I (The teacher) recognized that the formal register of language is found at school and in work places.				
Supervisor Response	11	100	0	0
Teacher Response	17	77	5	23
8. I (The teacher) recognized barriers that existed between home and school regarding formal and casual language registers.				
Supervisor Response (only 10 responses)	10	91	1	9
Teacher Response	21	95	1	5
9. I (The teacher) attempted to reach children and families despite language barriers.				
Supervisor Response	10	91	1	9
Teacher Response (only 21 responses)	21	95	1	5

Table 3 (continued)

10. I (The teacher) taught the formal language register at school while honoring the casual language register of the home.				
Supervisor Response	10	91	1	9
Teacher Response (only 21 responses)	20	95	1	5

Of the four items in the survey section on communication, the perceptions of supervisors and teachers differed the most on Statement 7, “The formal register of language is found at home and school.” All supervisors reported teachers were prepared in that area whereas nearly one-half of the teachers felt they were not prepared. One teacher from the 2002-03 year reported that he could not remember “ever discussing casual and formal language registers in class”. On each of remaining statements, only slight differences were noted in responses, with one supervisor and one teacher responding that the teacher was not prepared.

*Culturally Responsive Communication: Survey Findings Disaggregated by Cohort*

Further disaggregation of data into cohort years found slight differences in both supervisor and teacher responses. This table does not give the complete statements from the survey, but refers to them by number and a brief beginning phrase. The complete statements may be found in Table 3. Prepared/Not Prepared are referred to in following tables as P=Prepared and NP=Not Prepared.

TABLE 4

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Supervisor and Teacher Responses By Cohort-Communication*

	2001-02				2002-03				2003-04			
	P		NP		P		NP		P		NP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
7. I (The teacher) recognized that the formal register...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0

Table 4 (continued)

Teacher Response	6	66	3	33	5	72	2	28	6	100	0	0
8. I (The teacher) recognized barriers that existed between home and school...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	2	66	1	33	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	9	100	0	0	6	85	1	15	6	100	0	0
9. I (The teacher) attempted to reach children and families...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	2	66	1	33	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	8	89	1	11	7	100	0	0	6	100	0	0
10. I (The teacher) taught the formal language register at school...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	2	66	1	33	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	8*	100	0	0	6	85	1	15	6	100	0	0

\*only 8 responses

*Supervisors: Cohort 2001-02.* Three supervisors of the teachers in the 2001-02 cohort responded to the survey. Those individuals perceived their teacher as prepared for communication in a culturally responsive classroom in all areas addressed on the survey. In the comments section, one supervisor reiterated the preparedness of the teacher to meet the communication needs of students in a classroom with more than 25% diversity. The other two supervisors suggested there was not much opportunity for the teacher to demonstrate preparedness in this area in their schools. One classroom to which they referred was listed at 16-20% diversity and the other was reported to be less than 5% diversity.

*Supervisors: Cohort 2002-03.* The 2002-03 cohort also had three supervisors respond to the survey. All three of them agreed with statement 7 that the teacher was prepared to recognize that the formal register of language is found at work and at school. Statements 8, 9,

and 10, however, had one supervisor finding the teacher under his/her supervision unprepared in those areas.

One supervisor in the 2002-03 group noted the teacher under his or her supervision demonstrated a willingness to reach all students. One supervisor stated that their school had diversity greater than 25% and had no students with language barriers. The third supervisor with classroom diversity of less than 5% stated, “We try to teach correct language communication and discourage that which is not appropriate...things like Eubonics [sic] would not be acceptable.”

*Supervisors: Cohort 2003-04.* Supervisors of the 2003-04 cohort were in agreement on all statements regarding teacher preparedness for culturally responsive preparedness in the area of communication. All five supervisors responded that teachers were prepared to meet the communication needs of diverse students in their classrooms.

The five supervisors from the 2003-04 cohort shared no comments to either uphold or refute their survey perceptions that their teacher in the cohort was prepared to communicate with students and families in a culturally responsive manner.

*Teachers: Cohort 2001-02.* Contrary to the perception of their supervisors, 1/3 of the nine teachers in the 2001-02 cohort perceived themselves to be unprepared to recognize the formal register of language as found at school and work (statement 7). One of the nine teachers also reported feeling unprepared to attempt to reach children and families as a result of language barriers (statement 9).

Seven of the nine teachers in the 2001-02 cohort shared comments about culturally responsive communication. One teacher with less than 5% diversity in the classroom believed she was prepared but also reported little language diversity. Another teacher with less than 5% diversity in the classroom shared he was “somewhat” prepared for language barriers. Only one

teacher with greater than 25% diversity in her class felt prepared to teach proper English to students. Four teachers expressed the concern that they did not have training in English as a Second Language (ESL) and their classrooms had a number of students and families who did not communicate well in English. One of those teachers commented, “Our language barrier for the most part was ESL families!” All but one of the four teachers mentioned above expressed being prepared but still lacking in the area of ESL training. One teacher, with classroom diversity between 21- 25%, expressed her frustration of not feeling prepared to meet the communication needs of her students when she shared, “I was not prepared and need interpreters often.”

*Teachers: Cohort 2002-03.* Similar to the previous cohort, two of the seven teachers (28%) in the 2002-03 cohort perceived themselves as unprepared to recognize the formal register of language as found at school and work (statement 7). One teacher also reported she was unprepared to recognize the barriers that existed between home and school regarding formal and casual language registers (statement 8) and to teach the formal language register at school while honoring the casual language register of the home (statement 10).

Four of the six teachers who wrote comments felt unprepared for meeting the communication needs of students in their classes. One of these, with classroom diversity greater than 25%, expressed the lack of ESL training was a drawback to the teacher training he received with the statement, “Through my student teaching experience I taught a limited number of ESL students. I did not, however, receive any ESL training at Midwest College. I believe some type of ESL course should be provided.” Another teacher, also with greater than 25% diversity, cited having never being exposed to the formal and casual language registers during his training. A third teacher with less than 5% diversity in the classroom noted that most of her ability to work with diverse language learners was attained in her special education training, not in the general

education teacher preparation program. The fourth teacher, also with diversity of greater than 25% in her class expressed not being prepared to meet the communication needs of students in a way unique to her situation. She shared, “Coming from a student teaching experience in a low income school, it was a bit of a shock to adjust to the culture of the very wealthy class that I found myself teaching.” She further stated that while she was well prepared to work with students who were non-verbal or had limited ability to communicate, she had underestimated the need to learn the culture, including the language, of the upper class.

One teacher from the 2002-03 cohort with classroom diversity between 5-10% said she had no bi-lingual students or parents, and therefore believed she was prepared to meet communication issues in her classroom. One teacher with classroom diversity of 5-10% perceived herself as well prepared to meet the needs of the English language learners in her classroom due to fieldwork she had experienced during her teacher preparation program.

*Teachers: Cohort 2003-04.* The 2003-04 cohort was the only cohort of teachers completely in agreement with their supervisors. All six teachers who completed the survey perceived themselves to be prepared in the area of culturally responsive communication.

Teachers in the 2003-04 cohort all shared comments that supported the survey responses indicating preparedness on their part. Their comments indicated they felt prepared to provide culturally responsive communication for students in their classroom. Some of their comments included, “I felt that I was adequately prepared to handle diverse language learners” and “I took into consideration the different languages but also taught the importance of English grammar in speech and writing.”

#### *Culturally Responsive Curriculum: Aggregate Survey Findings*

Curriculum is the third component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Statements 11-16

of the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* were directed toward the curriculum found in a culturally responsive classroom. Table 5 shows the cumulative supervisor and teacher responses for statements 11-16.

TABLE 5

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Supervisor and Teacher Aggregate Responses –Curriculum*

	Prepared		Not Prepared	
	#	%	#	%
11. I (The teacher) put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction to help all students learn.				
Supervisor Response	11	100	0	0
Teacher Response	21	95	1	5
12. I (The teacher) structured learning experiences to accommodate the different cultures represented in my classroom (race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language).				
Supervisor Response (only 10 responses)	9	90	1	10
Teacher Response	22	100	0	0
13. I (The teacher) built bridges of meaning between home and school experiences.				
Supervisor Response	10	91	1	9
Teacher Response (only 21 responses)	20	95	1	5
14. I (The teacher) used a wide variety of teaching strategies that addressed different learning styles.				
Supervisor Response	11	100	0	0
Teacher Response	21	95	1	5
15. I (The teacher) helped students to know and affirm their respective cultures.				
Supervisor Response (only 10 responses)	9	90	1	10
Teacher Response	18	82	4	18
16. I (The teacher) incorporated multicultural information, resources, and materials into my teaching.				
Supervisor Response	10	91	1	9
Teacher Response	21	95	1	5

Supervisors' for all three cohorts agreed on statements 11 and 14 with the perception that the teachers under their supervision were prepared for teaching a culturally responsive curriculum. Each of the 11 respondents felt that their teacher was prepared to put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction to help all students learn and that he or she was prepared to use a wide variety of teaching strategies that addressed different learning styles. On the remainder of the statements, no more than one supervisor felt that a MCTEP program graduate was not prepared to teach a culturally responsive curriculum.

The 22 teacher respondents agreed on only one statement, which was statement 12. They all felt prepared to structure learning experiences to accommodate the different cultures represented in their classrooms. The only statement that garnered more than one teacher's perception of being not prepared was statement 15. Four (18%) of the 22 teachers surveyed saw themselves as not prepared to help students know and affirm their respective cultures.

#### *Culturally Responsive Curriculum: Survey Findings Disaggregated by Cohort*

A closer look at individual cohorts showed that supervisor's perception of their teacher being not prepared to teach culturally responsive curriculum (statements 12, 13, 15, and 16) all came from the 2003-04 cohort. Table 6 provides more information on supervisor responses and teacher responses, as well. This table does not give the complete statement for each survey item, but refers to each by number and a brief beginning phrase. The complete statements may be found in Table 5. Prepared/Not Prepared are referred to in the following tables as P=Prepared and NP=Not Prepared.

TABLE 6

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Supervisor and Teacher Responses By Cohort-Curriculum*

	2001-02				2002-03				2003-04			
	P		NP		P		NP		P		NP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
11. I (The teacher) put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	8	89	1	11	7	100	0	0	6	100	0	0
12. I (The teacher) structured learning experiences to accommodate the different cultures...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	2*	100	0	0	4	80	1	20
Teacher Response	9	100	0		7	100	0		6	100	0	
13. I (The teacher) built bridges of meaning...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	4	80	1	20
Teacher Response	8**	100	0	0	5***	87	1	16	6	100	0	0
14. I (The teacher) used a wide variety of teaching strategies...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	5	100	0	0
Teacher Response	9	100	0	0	6	85	1	15	6	100	0	0
15. I (The teacher) helped students to know and affirm their respective cultures.												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	2*	100	0	0	4	80	1	20

Table 6 (continued)

Teacher Response	8	89	1	11	5	72	2	28	5	83	1	17
16. I (The teacher) incorporated multicultural information, resources, and materials...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	4	80	1	20
Teacher Response	9	100	0	0	6	85	1	15	6	100	0	0

\*only 2 responses  
 \*\*only 8 responses  
 \*\*\*only 6 responses

*Supervisors: Cohort 2001-02.* Supervisors of teachers from the 2001-02 cohort perceived that their teacher was prepared to present curriculum in a culturally responsive manner. Two supervisors from the 2001-02 cohort used the comments section to provide additional input. One supervisor from the 2001-02 cohort commented on a teacher with greater than 25% diversity, “During her first year I noticed that the activities that she had planned were at a primary level. After we had some time to discuss moving her activities to a higher cognitive level she did very well.” A second supervisor simply stated that the teacher with a diversity level between 16-20% was “Well prepared.”

*Supervisors: Cohort 2002-03.* All three supervisors agreed with all statements in the culturally responsive curriculum section of the survey. While not all supervisors of the 2002-03 teachers responded to statements 12 and statement 15 on the survey, the consensus of those who did respond was that their teacher was prepared to teach curriculum that met the needs of all learners in their classrooms.

Only one supervisor from the 2002-03 cohort shared comments on teacher preparedness for using culturally responsive curriculum. That individual wrote the following comment regarding that teacher’s preparation, “This teacher’s preparation level was above average and impressive as a first year teacher, not just culturally specific, but in general. He was very diligent and held a deep and wide vision for the success of all students.” That particular teacher had a classroom diversity level greater than 25%.

*Supervisors: Cohort 2003-04.* Supervisors of teachers from the 2003-04 cohort agreed on statement 11. All five supervisors perceived that their teacher put a high degree of planning and instruction to help all students learn. They also agreed that their teacher used a wide variety of teaching strategies that addressed different learning styles (statement 14). Statement 12, the

teacher structured learning experiences to accommodate the different cultures represented in the classroom; statement 13, the teacher built bridges of meaning between home and school experiences; statement 15, the teacher helped students to know and affirm their respective cultures; and statement 16, the teacher incorporated multicultural information, resources, and materials into their teaching each drew one supervisor's perception that their respective teacher was not prepared in those areas. The teachers whose supervisors offered these perceptions had classroom diversity levels of 5-10%.

One supervisor from the 2003-04 cohort shared a comment regarding a teacher with between 5-10% diversity in their classroom. That supervisor wrote, "She was very prepared and is an excellent teacher."

*Teachers: Cohort 2001-02.* One teacher in the 2001-02 cohort reported feeling not prepared to put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction to help all students learn (statement 11) and to help students know and affirm their respective cultures (statement 15). The remaining eight teachers perceived themselves as prepared to provide culturally responsive curriculum for all students in their classroom.

While teacher responses on the survey indicated that they nearly all perceived themselves as prepared in the area of providing culturally responsive curriculum for all students, their comments told another story. Of the seven comments shared by members of the 2001-02 cohort, only one was of a positive nature. One teacher with a classroom with less than 5% diversity indicated she felt prepared. The other six, one with less than 5% classroom diversity and the rest ranging from 16% to greater than 25% diversity levels in their classrooms shared thoughts on their lack of preparation to meet the needs of all students. One of the teachers questioned his ability to make learning a reality for students in his classroom. He indicated seeking out the

wisdom of more experienced teachers and spending long hours making sure his plans met the needs of all students. Two of the teachers wrote about not feeling competent to teach curriculum in a culturally responsive manner. They both indicated MCTEP should have provided more training in planning lessons for culturally diverse students, with one teacher writing, “I feel that I could have used more training in lesson planning for the culturally diverse. We go into the field with nothing in our hands and are expected to create wonderful things.” Another teacher also referred to the time and effort she placed into planning activities for cultural diversity. She indicated that if her district had not placed such a high priority on cultural diversity she would not have put forth as much effort. Another of the 2001-02 cohort teachers shared how difficult it was to be prepared for the diversity found in today’s classrooms. Her solution was to do the best she could in planning activities that met the needs of the students. Finally, one teacher with between 21-25% classroom diversity simply stated, “I was overwhelmed...”

*Teachers: Cohort 2002-03.* The seven respondents in cohort 2002-03 agreed they felt prepared on only two statements. They saw themselves as prepared to put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction to help all students learn (statement 11) and to provide structured learning experiences to accommodate different cultures (statement 12). Two of the teachers perceived themselves as unprepared to help students know and affirm their respective cultures (statement 15). One or the other of those same two teachers saw themselves as unprepared in statements 13, 14, and 16.

Comments written by teachers in the 2002-03 cohort supported their perceptions of not being prepared in all areas of a culturally responsive curriculum. Five of seven teachers offered comments in this area. One teacher with classroom diversity between 5-10% felt especially well prepared to teach reading at the elementary level. Three of the teachers indicated they felt

prepared, but then went on to say it was due to their personal experiences or their special education training, not because of their preparation in the Midwest College teacher preparation program. One of these three teachers with less than 5% classroom diversity said,

I felt prepared to give my students, including any culturally diverse students, effective learning experiences. This came from personal experiences of teaching ESL in South Korea, private tutoring a wide variety of culturally diverse students, and having grown up in many different places in the United States. As for being prepared by the Midwest College Education Program? They perhaps enhanced the experiences I already had.

Another teacher, who indicated that his preparation level was “fine,” went on to share that he felt “slapped in the face by statements on the survey” because he hadn’t been doing as much as he should. He indicated he found himself working during his planning time just to keep his programs running, let alone trying to incorporate this kind of planning into his teaching. This teacher had a classroom diversity level greater than 25%. Another teacher, also with student diversity greater than 25%, shared much the same thoughts with this statement, “My first year of teaching was an attempt to survive! I embraced the cultural differences of my students, but I was not knowledgeable about them enough to incorporate them into my classroom activities.”

*Teachers: Cohort 2003-04.* Statement 15, helping students to know and affirm their respective cultures was the only area in which any of the 2003-04 cohort respondents perceived themselves as unprepared. In response to all other statements, teachers saw themselves as prepared to provide culturally responsive curriculum for their students.

All six teachers in the 2003-04 cohort contributed comments. Two teachers, both with classroom diversity greater than 25%, indicated they felt well prepared by the Midwest College teacher preparation program to teach the curriculum in a culturally responsive manner. One of

those two teachers wrote, “We were prepared very well on planning at any level. I felt very prepared to teach any lesson and I think that my diverse class responded well.” Another teacher with classroom diversity between 5-10% described how she integrated cultures into her teaching through literature, guests, and field trips. Two other teachers from the cohort, both with classroom diversity between 5-10%, noted feeling unprepared at the beginning of the year, but as they learned about their students they were better able to plan curriculum that met all student needs. One teacher explained, “As the year progressed, I began to better understand what my students needed, and was therefore, able to meet their needs.” One individual whose classroom diversity was less than 5% simply stated that there was little cultural difference in his classroom.

#### *Culturally Responsive Instruction: Aggregate Survey Findings*

The final three statements on the survey dealt with instruction, the fourth piece of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Statement 17 was worded in a way that, if a teacher was actually prepared the respondent would have checked Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree. The statement asked supervisors and teachers to give their perception as to whether teachers followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum. Research shows that textbooks are seldom culturally diverse (Brown & Kysilka, 2002) so responses of Somewhat Agree, Agree, or Strongly Agree would have indicated the teacher was Not Prepared. To align these responses with others throughout the survey, the responses have been reversed for reporting results. On the other two statements, Strongly Disagree, Disagree, and Somewhat Disagree were reported as Prepared. Strongly Agree, Agree, and Somewhat Agree were reported as Not Prepared. Table 7 gives supervisor and teacher responses to statements 17-19.

TABLE 7

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Supervisor and Teacher Aggregate Responses—Instruction*

	Prepared		Not Prepared	
	#	%	#	%
17. I (The teacher) followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum.				
Supervisor Response	5	46	6	54
Teacher Response	11	50	11	50
18. I (The teacher) adjusted curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view.				
Supervisor Response	10	91	1	9
Teacher Response	16	73	6	27
19. In order to present curriculum in the most effective manner, I (the teacher) implemented methods of instruction that met the needs of all my students.				
Supervisor Response	10	100	0	0
Teacher Response	22	100	0	0

Responses to the statement asking whether or not the teacher followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum (statement 17) were the most divided responses on the entire *Preparation for Diversity Survey*. Five (46%) of the 11 participating supervisors viewed their teacher as prepared while six (54%) of the supervisors perceived their teacher as not prepared. Statement 18, on the other hand, had only one supervisor (18%) with the perception that a teacher was not prepared to adjust curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view. Statement 19 brought 100% agreement from all supervisors in their perceptions. They saw the teacher they supervised as prepared to present curriculum in the most effective manner by implementing methods of instruction that met the needs of all students in their classrooms.

Similar to their supervisors, teachers were equally divided in their perceptions on statement 17. Eleven teachers perceived themselves as prepared while the same number saw themselves as unprepared to teach outside the textbook in order to bring in diverse views of the curriculum. Although nearly all supervisors perceived their teachers prepared in response to statement 18, six teachers (27%) perceived themselves as not prepared to adjust curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view, a greater number (73%) agreed with supervisors and saw themselves as prepared. All 22 teachers responding to statement 19 had the same perception as supervisors who responded to that same statement, that teachers were prepared to present curriculum in the most effective manner by implementing methods of instruction that met the needs of all learners.

*Culturally Responsive Instruction: Survey Findings Disaggregated by Cohort*

Disaggregation of data by year of program completion, as illustrated in Table 8 gave further perspective to teacher responses. This table does not give the complete statements from the survey, but refers to them by number and a brief beginning phrase. The complete statements may be found in Table 7. Prepared/Not Prepared are referred to in following tables as P=Prepared and NP=Not Prepared.

TABLE 8

*Preparation for Diversity Survey Supervisor and Teacher Responses By Cohort-Instruction*

	2001-02				2002-03				2003-04			
	P		NP		P		NP		P		NP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
17. I (The teacher) followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	1	33	2	66	1	20	4	80
Teacher Response	4	45	5	55	3	43	4	57	3	50	3	50
18. I (The teacher) adjusted curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	3*	75	1	25

Table 8 (continued)

Teacher Response	6	66	3	33	4	47	3	43	6	100	0	0
19. In order to present curriculum in the most effective manner...												
Supervisor Response	3	100	0	0	3	100	0	0	4*	100	0	0
Teacher Response	9	100	0	0	7	100	0	0	6	100	0	0

\*only 4 responses

*Supervisors: Cohort 2001-02.* All three supervisors for teachers in the 2001-02 cohort had the perception that their teacher was prepared to provide instruction in a culturally responsive manner. These supervisors did not perceive their teacher to use only the textbook for instruction (statement 17) but perceived him or her as prepared to use outside resources, as well. They further perceived their teacher as adjusting curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view (statement 18), and they agreed in the perception that in order to present curriculum in the most effective manner, their teacher implemented methods of instruction that met the needs of all students (statement 19).

Two of the three supervisors of teachers from the 2001-02 cohort submitted comments in this section. One supervisor whose teacher's classroom had less than 5% diversity shared, "I have appreciated the caring nature of this teacher. She truly has a concern for each one's growth" and the second supervisor sharing comments said the teacher under her supervision had an awareness level of the need to meet the needs of diverse students, then went on to say, "As is true with all first year teachers, having it all come together and make sense takes some time. She was very well prepared on a beginner's level in all areas." The classroom diversity level for this teacher was reported to be greater than 25%.

*Supervisors: Cohort 2002-03.* Perceptions of the three supervisors of the 2002-03 teachers differed from their 2001-02 colleagues on statement 17. The majority (66%) of that group of supervisors perceived their teacher was not prepared to teach curriculum using anything other than the textbook as a resource. The 2002-03 supervisors did, however, view their teacher as prepared to adjust curriculum to reflect other than a European-American point of view (statement 18), and to present curriculum effectively using methods of instruction appropriate for all students (statement 19). There were no comments shared by supervisors of teachers in the 2002-03 cohort.

*Supervisors: Cohort 2003-04.* Four of the five (80%) supervisors of teachers in the 2003-04 cohort showed they believed their teacher was not prepared on statement 17. Their perception was that the teacher, for the most part, followed the textbook, assuming that it offered diverse views of curriculum. Statement 18 drew survey responses from only four of the five supervisors of 2003-04 teachers. One of those four (25%) perceived their teacher as unprepared to adjust curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view. All of the 2003-04 supervisors, however, perceived their teacher as prepared to present curriculum in an effective manner by implementing methods of instruction that met the needs of all students (statement 19).

One teacher's supervisor from the 2003-04 cohort included a comment following this section of the survey. Although the teacher had indicated the classroom had between 16-20% diversity, the supervisor wrote "the classroom did not have much diversity," but he believed that the teacher was, nonetheless, well prepared.

*Teachers: Cohort 2001-02.* Teacher responses in the 2001-02 cohort gave the perception that a majority of teachers were unprepared for culturally responsive instruction. Four

responses (45%) indicated teachers taught curriculum strictly from the textbook, assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum (statement 17). Three teachers (33%) from that same cohort also perceived themselves unprepared to adjust curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view (statement 18). Statement 19, presenting curriculum in an effective manner by implementing methods of instruction that met the needs of all students was the only statement for which all teachers from the 2001-02 perceived themselves as prepared.

Several teachers from the 2001-02 cohort shared comments regarding their preparation to instruct in a culturally responsive manner. One teacher with 16-20% diversity in the classroom shared “I basically followed the other English teacher's guides. I did what they did the first year.” Another, with 16-20% diversity in the classroom, shared that as a first year teacher she had many things to learn about curriculum and spent many hours making sure plans would meet all of the students’ needs. A third teacher indicated she was prepared, but because of her special education background, as she noted, “Since I teach students with many exceptionalities all of the instruction was individualized. I felt very prepared to meet the many diverse needs of my students.”

*Teachers: Cohort 2002-03.* Over half (57%) of the teachers in the 2002-03 cohort shared they were unprepared on statement 17. Four of the seven teachers indicated that they followed the textbook, assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum. Nearly half (43%) of the teachers perceived themselves as not prepared to adjust curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view (statement 18). This cohort of teachers, along with their colleagues in cohorts 2001-02, perceived themselves as prepared to present curriculum in the most effective manner by implementing

methods of instruction that met the needs of all their students (statement 19).

Teachers in this cohort also shared comments following the section on culturally responsive instruction. Some, such as the following, expressed the need for more preparation. “The regular education program at Midwest College did provide for us a class introducing special needs of students. However, pursuing a minor in Special Education helped so much more” and “After discussing many of the above issues the past two years with colleagues I have found that no matter where you went to college it is impossible to have been prepared for what you encounter in our schools.” Yet other comments gave the impression that teachers felt prepared for culturally responsive instruction to meet the needs of all students. Examples included one that shared she did not use textbooks and another that overall she felt very prepared to meet the diverse needs of their students. Yet another teacher expressed feeling prepared to provide instruction in a culturally responsive manner when she related, “My preparation allowed me to realize that I can start with small adjustments to curriculum and delve deeper as students' interest and needs widen.”

*Teachers: Cohort 2003-04.* Teachers in the 2003-04 cohort, as did teachers in the other two cohorts, perceived themselves as not prepared on statement 17. Three teachers (50%) indicated that they followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum. On statements 18 and 19, all teachers perceived they were prepared to adjust curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view (statement 18) and to present curriculum in the most effective manner by implementing methods of instruction that met the needs of all students (statement 19).

Teacher comments from the 2003-04 cohort ranged from a few who reported feeling unprepared to a greater number that expressed feeling well-prepared. Examples of the comments

shared include the one from a teacher with a diversity level between 5-10%. That teacher indicated that the first year of teaching was spent preparing for the overall teaching of the class and “adjustments for cultural diversity” were not there. Another teacher, with between 5-10% diversity in the classroom noted there was little need to make many adjustments in instruction but found help from peers when changes were necessary and a third, also with between 5-10% diversity in the student population expressed a feeling of preparation for all but the gifted students in the classroom. Two teachers, both with greater than 25% diversity in their classrooms, who perceived themselves well prepared to present curriculum and to instruct students in a culturally responsive manner wrote, “I don't think all the textbooks can cover the needs and cultures in any classroom. I did assignments to extend the teaching in the book in order to more accurately and thoroughly meet the academic needs of my classroom” and “We didn't have text books, but many of the books we read were full of various diverse topics and lessons. My kids gained quite an understanding for different kids' their age and the different cultures.”

#### *Results of the Follow-up Individual Interviews*

A limited number of supervisors and teachers participated in individual interviews following the completion of the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*. Four teachers; one from the 2001-02 cohort, two from 2002-2003, and one from 2003-04 were interviewed. Two of the seven supervisors selected also completed the follow-up interviews, and represented teachers from the 2002-03 and the 2003-04 cohorts. Of these, only one supervisor was matched with a teacher who also participated in a one-to-one interview. Most of the participants elected to complete the interview via e-mail correspondence while two opted for telephone interviews. Because there was only one teacher respondent from the 2001-02 cohort and because the total numbers of

supervisor and teacher participants were minimal for all cohorts, the results were aggregated for supervisors' and teachers' responses within each of the components of a culturally responsive pedagogy: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction.

Responses were examined as they pertained to each of the culturally responsive components and placed into a database, FileMaker Pro. Sorting the various responses was accomplished by labeling them Prepared or Not Prepared, according to the perception of the respondent. Classroom diversity levels were also taken into consideration for this portion of the study. This section of the findings will be in narrative format as no numerical value was attached to the various responses. Caring was the first component to be examined.

#### *Culturally Responsive Caring: Interview Findings - Supervisor*

Comments from both supervisors in the one-to-one interviews reiterated the perceptions expressed in the survey responses. All comments were positive in nature. Among the comments about the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy were the teachers these supervisors worked with took time with students who were academically challenged, and that the teacher met the kids wherever they were academically and moved forward from there. One supervisor further shared that the teacher to whom he referred "also does a good job of checking for understanding."

Supervisors were asked to share what could have been provided in a preservice training program that might have provided further preparation toward demonstrating the component of caring in a culturally responsive classroom. One shared that his district had provided teachers training on working with socio-economic differences based on Ruby Payne's work. He noted that "this has been very helpful and I would highly recommend her books to you."

*Culturally Responsive Caring: Interview Findings - Teacher*

All four teachers participating in the individual interviews had greater than 25% diversity in their classrooms. These teachers gave the impression they were generally well prepared to provide the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. One teacher, who believed she was well prepared, shared a description of her approach to students' cultures that was more superficial than genuinely culturally responsive. She responded that her school's population included "children from Mexico, Russia, and India. My first year I invited parents to come in on holidays that were important to their culture. They would share about the holiday, bring food from their country and often wore unique clothing." The teacher felt this promoted a sense of belonging and acceptance for all students as parents shared their cultural background. On the other hand, that same teacher shared that she had high expectations for all students in her classroom, a strong characteristic of a culturally responsive pedagogy. She set individual goals for everyone in her class. Another teacher talked about how she worked closely with socio-economic diversity in her classroom. Her caring for students was illustrated as follows,

My class is largely high income. Our school allows the students to wear jeans (not uniforms) once a month if they bring a dollar or donation to the charity or cause of the month. I have one student who always wears his uniform on this day due to the fact that a donation is out of the question for their family economically. He told me that he doesn't own any jeans so it really didn't matter. I try to remember this and wear my uniform or dress clothes on these days so he won't feel bad.

Another teacher shared examples of ways he provided a caring environment including occasionally teaching a lesson that focused on a culture other than European-American and inviting students to share their perspective on a topic. He went on to say that he "knew what

needed to be done but wasn't sure how to get it accomplished." He further shared that he felt prepared but needed to focus on *how* (his emphasis) to do what he knew to do.

None of the teachers interviewed indicated they perceived themselves as unprepared to provide a caring environment for students in their classrooms. When queried as to what might be added to the teacher preparation program at Midwest College, one teacher thought prospective teachers should be placed "in higher and lower economic schools when they do their visits." Another shared more time in classrooms actually experiencing the differences in students would be most helpful; and a third shared that planning for diversity besides students with special needs should be a focus of the Midwest Teacher Education Program.

*Culturally Responsive Communication: Interview Findings - Supervisor*

Both supervisors interviewed perceived their teachers as prepared to communicate with students and parents in a culturally responsive manner. One supervisor shared that the teacher was open with parents and had built a strong rapport with both students and parents. Another talked of the teacher calling on the telephone to problem solve academic or behavioral issues with parents. When asked what further action could be taken by the Midwest Teacher Education Program to better prepare teachers to be culturally responsive in the area of communication one supervisor noted that it might be a good experience for prospective teachers who grew up in a community of "middle class-white families" to experience an entirely different culture in their teacher preparation program.

*Culturally Responsive Communication: Interview Findings - Teacher*

Interview responses supported teachers' survey perceptions that they felt prepared to provide culturally responsive communication in their classrooms and with families of their students. The four teachers talked a great deal about how they built communications with

parents. One discussed how he tried to pay attention to parents' socio-economic situation when recommending the purchase of an instrument for band. He also shared that he "made sure that parents and students understood what was said" by watching how he "phrased things while still being honest" about student achievement or behavior. Another teacher wrote about the newsletter that was sent home at the beginning of the year, and periodically throughout the year, explaining classroom expectations for their children. Still another teacher shared information about a survey he distributed to parents in December and again in May to monitor parent satisfaction and get ideas for improvement. In asking for input, this teacher felt parents were given a feeling of value in the classroom. One teacher who had students with severe language delays talked of setting up communication notebooks that went back and forth daily between the teacher and the parents. Another teacher noted that she used "many phone calls, e-mails, and notes mailed home" to successfully communicate with families of her students.

Although some mention was given to English as a Second Language Learners, contrary to teacher responses on the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*, no teacher completing the interviews expressed having experienced challenges in this area. One teacher explained that, while she had several bi-lingual students, they were all proficient in English. Another teacher noted that he had several students who spoke Spanish but that he was proficient in the language so had no problem communicating with students or families. One teacher, when asked what might improve the Midwest Teacher Education Program had only one suggestion; that more attention should be given on how to communicate with non-English speaking students and parents. The teacher went on to say, "I would truly have to figure out what to do if I had a non-English speaking student in my class." Another teacher added that three aspects of the Midwest Teacher Education Program were very helpful to her in providing culturally responsive

communication in her classroom. The first was learning the laws about ELL students and being informed of the resources available to assist in communication (translation websites and support groups) and the second was class discussions on how to include students with diverse backgrounds in classroom activities. The third area she mentioned was observations, as she “saw both positive and negative examples of how communication should be handled.” One individual stated “I do not remember any classes that addressed the need specifically.”

*Culturally Responsive Curriculum: Interview Findings - Supervisor*

Only one supervisor responded to the e-mail interview regarding culturally responsive pedagogy in the area of curriculum. He remarked that the teacher met curricular needs of students by understanding “that not all students learn at the same pace –he goes slower with academically challenged students.”

*Culturally Responsive Curriculum: Interview Findings - Teacher*

In the area of culturally responsive curriculum, teacher responses were few, but revealing. One of the four teachers explained that her attempts to make the curriculum appropriate for all students in the classroom included having dancers from another culture come to the school to perform, inviting one student’s parent into the classroom monthly to help the class learn words from another culture, and observing holidays from the angle of different cultures within a Christian community. Another teacher shared that he followed the textbook and displayed diversity topics as the textbook indicated. All of these examples are superficial attempts toward presenting curriculum in a culturally responsive manner.

When asked what aspects of the Midwest Teacher Education Program were most helpful in the area of feeling prepared for teaching culturally responsive curriculum, one teacher replied, “Although we briefly addressed this topic, I really don’t feel that I was prepared to address this.”

She went on to share that she felt the need to be made more aware of how her personal views inform her teaching and to understand some of the preconceived ideas she had regarding cultures other than her own. A second teacher, when asked what changes in the Midwest Teacher Education Program might improve teacher preparation for teaching culturally responsive curriculum, shared that while he was comfortable with making curricular adjustments for students with identified special needs, he was not confident with adjusting curriculum to meet the needs of students with other types of diversity, for instance language or ethnic diversity. He went on to say that he felt there was a lack of cultural diversity training at Midwest College. A third teacher, in response to what improvements in the teacher preparation program at Midwest College would better prepare teachers to teach curriculum in a culturally responsive manner, similarly replied that she would like to see several units on different cultures so that teachers would have a better understanding of students from the different areas without being “caught off guard the first day of school.”

*Culturally Responsive Instruction: Interview Findings - Supervisor*

One of the two supervisors shared responses in this portion of the e-mail interview. As far as being prepared to instruct in a culturally responsive manner, he noted that the teacher with whom he worked provided many hands-on activities for students and did some projects in which students picked topics to research.

*Culturally Responsive Instruction: Interview Findings - Teacher*

Some comments from the four teachers who responded to the interview questions articulated views of teachers feeling prepared, while other comments gave indication that teachers felt unprepared, to instruct in a culturally responsive manner. One teacher shared that during her first week of school she did a survey of her students to see how they perceived

themselves as readers. One of her questions asked “What would help you be a better reader?” One of the children responded that she could be a better reader if “she wasn’t so hungry all the time.” This teacher went on to say that it was then she realized that if the basic needs of her students were not being met, they had little chance of learning. She indicated she did everything in her power to give her students a “level playing field” in which to learn. She also indicated that in every lesson she examined what the students needed to know and changed the lesson structure accordingly. At the same time, this teacher indicated that in her first year of teaching she did not consciously plan lessons from cultural perspectives other than her own except at Christmas when many of the students did not celebrate Christmas. At that time she had students share what their religion believed about Christmas. A second teacher briefly stated that if a student couldn’t meet the expectations set for him or her, this teacher made accommodations for that student.

Teachers shared the areas of the Midwest College Teacher Education Program that were most helpful to their preparedness to instruct in a culturally responsive manner were becoming knowledgeable about different learning styles, participating in case studies, and being involved in classroom observations. One teacher also noted that learning to prepare different types of lesson plans was most beneficial as this helped her to “reach outside the box and look for ways to benefit every student,” not just the ones who learned in the same way as that teacher. As for areas of improvement that might be implemented by Midwest College in order to improve teacher preparation to instruct in a culturally responsive manner, one teacher shared that more case studies, examples, and assignments involving modifications for cultural diversity would be helpful. Another recommended that teachers in training read Ruby Payne’s book, *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. She said that the training she received in her district was most helpful and gave “amazing insight.” One teacher noted he would like to have had the teacher

education program prepare him for the need for researching and understanding his students' cultures "before they walked through the door." Finally, one teacher shared during his interview that in his teacher preparation program he should have "been taught how to create a learning environment that all children can succeed in. He felt "where there is *not* (his emphasis) cultural diversity in the classroom the teacher should make it a point to teach from a culturally diverse perspective so kids could have a better understanding of other cultures." He stated strongly that this should be a focus of coursework in the Midwest College Teacher Education Program.

*Results of the Midwest College Teacher Education Program Document Review*

Examination of Midwest College Teacher Education Program's public records revealed some data relating to teacher preparation to teach in a culturally responsive manner.

*Midwest College Teacher Preparation Survey Following Clinical Teaching Experience*

One source pertinent to the study was information found in responses to the *Midwest College Teacher Preparation Survey*. The survey is completed each semester and assesses perceptions of the quality of the program for preparing teacher candidates for their clinical teaching experience. The survey was administered to MCTEP students, cooperating teachers, and administrators of the buildings where MCTEP students' clinical teaching was completed. (Administrator and cooperating teacher ratings were combined). While the survey consists of 18 statements, for purposes of this study six items pertaining to areas within a culturally responsive pedagogy were reviewed.

Table 9 shows results of the responses from those surveys for the three academic years included in the study 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04. The number of persons completing the survey included:

2001-02	Clinical Teachers = 18	Teachers/Administrators = 34
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2002-03	Clinical Teachers = 28	Teachers/Administrators = 47
2003-04	Clinical Teachers = 21	Teachers/Administrators = 44

For purposes of this table the following applies:

N = Not Prepared    A = Adequately Prepared    H = Highly Prepared

All responses are given as percentages.

TABLE 9

*MCTEP Survey Clinical Teacher and Cooperating Teacher/Administrator Responses: After Clinical Teaching by Cohort*

Selected Statements from the Survey:	2001-02			2002-03			2003-04		
	N	A	H	N	A	H	N	A	H
Statement 3: (Caring) MCTEP prepares teachers who know how people learn and develop and how to identify diverse learning styles.									
Clinical Teacher Responses	0	44.4	55.6	0	53.6	46.4	0	42.9	57.1
Cooperating Teacher / Administrator Responses	8.8	64.7	26.5	6.4	48.9	44.7	0	60.5	39.5
Statement 6: (Communication) MCTEP prepares teachers who know effective communication techniques.									
Clinical Teacher Responses	0	27.8	72.2	0	50	50	0	33.3	66.7
Cooperating Teacher / Administrator Responses	2.9	67.7	29.4	6.5	43.5	50	4.6	47.7	47.7
Statement 8: (Instruction) MCTEP prepares teachers who command a repertoire of best teaching practices and use these to instruct students.									
Clinical Teacher Responses	0	50	50	0	64.3	35.71	9.5	33.3	57.2
Cooperating Teacher / Administrator Responses	8.8	61.8	29.4	6.4	53.2	40.4	4.6	44.2	51.2
Statement 9: (Instruction) MCTEP prepares teachers who can provide learning opportunities that support students' diverse learning styles.									
Clinical Teacher Responses	0	27.8	72.2	0	53.6	46.4	0	52.4	47.6
Cooperating Teacher / Administrator Responses	11.8	61.8	26.4	6.4	40.4	53.2	7	55.8	37.2

Table 9 (continued)

Statement 10: (Curriculum) MCTEP prepared teachers who use the appropriate teaching models to articulate the lesson content, to meet students' needs, and to adapt to classroom situations.									
Clinical Teacher Responses	0	50	50	0	60.7	39.3	0	47.6	52.4
Cooperating Teacher / Administrator Responses	5.9	64.7	29.4	6.4	36.2	57.4	4.5	50	45.5
Statement 12: (Communication) MCTEP prepares teachers who demonstrate effective communication skills in the classroom.									
Clinical Teacher Responses	0	22.2	77.8	0	32.1	67.9	0	42.9	57.1
Cooperating Teacher / Administrator Responses	5.9	57.9	41.2	6.5	36.96	56.52	4.6	41.9	53.5

*MCTEP Survey Findings - Clinical Teachers: All Cohorts*

Statement 3 addressed the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Ten of 18 (55.6%) clinical teachers from 2001-02, and 12 of 21 (57.1) from the 2003-04 cohort perceived themselves as highly prepared to know how people learn and develop and how to identify diverse learning styles. Nearly half (13 of 28) of the teachers from the 2002-03 cohort also viewed themselves as highly prepared in this area.

The area of communication, the second component of a culturally responsive pedagogy, was seen in Statements 6 and 12. Over half of the clinical teachers in each of the cohorts perceived that MCTEP had highly prepared them to know effective communication techniques (statement 6) and to demonstrate effective communication skills in the classroom (statement 12).

Curriculum was addressed in Statement 10. In this area of a culturally responsive pedagogy, a majority of clinical teachers in two of the cohorts found their preparation to be in the highly prepared range. Fifty-two (52%) of the 21 clinical teachers in the cohort from 2003-04 felt the program had helped them to become highly prepared and 50% of the 18 clinical teachers in the 2001-02 cohort had this perception. Thirty nine percent (39%), or 11 of the teachers from the 2002-03 cohort, viewed themselves as highly prepared with the remainder judging their preparation to be adequate.

Instruction was the focus of two statements, 8 and 9. A majority of clinical teachers from 2001-02 (9 of 18 teachers) and 2003-04 (12 of 21 teachers) had the perception that MCTEP highly prepared them to use best teaching practices to instruct students (statement 8). Ten of the 28 teachers from the 2002-03 cohort viewed themselves as highly prepared while the remaining 18 perceived themselves as adequately prepared. Thirteen of the 18 clinical teachers from the 2001-02 cohort perceived themselves as being highly prepared to provide learning opportunities that support students' diverse learning styles (statement 9). Over 50%, fifteen of the 28 teacher candidates from 2002-03 and 11 of the 21 teachers from 2003-04, after completing their clinical experience, felt they were adequately prepared in this area.

*MCTEP Survey Findings - Cooperating Teacher/Administrator: All Cohorts*

While a majority of teachers felt they had been highly prepared to provide a caring environment, a majority of cooperating teachers and administrators had the perception that preparation was primarily in the adequate range when it came to knowing how people learn and develop and how to identify diverse learning styles. For example, 64% of cooperating teachers and administrators (22 of 34) in the 2001-02 cohort, 49% (23 of 47) in the 2002-03 cohort, and 60% (27 of 44) in the 2003-04 cohort viewed preparation in the caring component of a culturally

responsive pedagogy as adequate.

A majority of cooperating teachers and administrators from the 2001-02 (23 of 34) year evaluated MCTEP as providing adequate preparation in communication for teacher candidates on statement 6. More than 50% (24) of the 47 cooperating teachers and administrators from the 2002-03 cohort and 21 of the 44 cooperating teachers and administrators from 2003-04, on the other hand, found clinical teachers highly prepared to know effective communication techniques. Twenty-seven (27) of the 47 cooperating teachers and administrators from the 2002-03 cohort and 24 of the 44 cooperating teachers and administrators from the 2003-04 cohort felt that MCTEP produced teachers who were highly prepared to demonstrate effective communication skills in the classroom (statement 12).

Over 50% of the cooperating teachers and administrators from the 2002-03 (27 of 47) viewed MCTEP as highly preparing teachers to use appropriate teaching models to articulate the lesson content, to meet students' needs, and to adapt to classroom situations (statement 10). A majority of cooperating teachers and administrators from 2001-02 (20 of 34) and 2003-04 (22 of 44), however, viewed the program as providing adequate curriculum preparation.

The instructional portions of the survey were also evaluated by majority of cooperating teachers and administrators as adequate. Nearly 62% (21 of 34) of the 2001-02 cohort's and 53% (25 of 47) of the 2002-03 cohort's cooperating teachers and administrators found the program producing teachers who were adequately prepared to command a repertoire of best teaching practices and use them to instruct students (statement 8). The program was also judged as adequate on statement 9, that MCTEP prepares teachers who can provide learning opportunities that support students' diverse learning styles. Nearly 62% (21 of 34) of the 2001-02 cohort, 40% (19 of 47) of the 2002-03 cohort, and almost 56% (25 of 44) of the 2003-04 cohort, found

clinical teachers as adequately prepared.

*Midwest College Teacher Preparation Survey After One Year Experience*

Program graduates who had completed one year of teaching and their administrators were also sent and asked to complete the same survey regarding perceptions of the teacher's preparedness. Table 10 shows results of responses from the six items survey reviewed. Data was available for two of the three academic years included in the study, 2001-02 and 2002-03. The number of persons completing the survey included:

2001-02      Teachers = 11      Administrators = 4  
 2002-03      Teachers = 11      Administrators = 4

For purposes of this table the following applies:

N = Not Prepared      A = Adequately Prepared      H = Highly Prepared All responses are given as percentages.

TABLE 10

*MCTEP Survey Teacher/Administrator Responses: Cohorts 2001-02 and 2002-03 w/ 1 year experience*

Selected Statements from the Survey:	2001-02			2002-03		
	N	A	H	N	A	H
Statement 3: (Caring) MCTEP prepares teachers who know how people learn and develop and how to identify diverse learning styles.						
Teacher Responses	9.9	54.7	36.4	18.2	27.3	54.5
Administrator Responses	0	50	50	0	0	100
Statement 6: (Communication) MCTEP prepares teachers who know effective communication techniques.						
Teacher Responses	0	72.7	27.3	0	36.4	63.6

Table 10 (continued)

Administrator Responses	0	0	100	0	0	100
Statement 8: (Instruction) MCTEP prepares teachers who command a repertoire of best teaching practices and use these to instruct students.						
Teacher Responses	9.1	63.6	27.3	18.2	45.4	36.4
Administrator Responses	0	25	75	0	0	100
Statement 9: (Instruction) MCTEP prepares teachers who can provide learning opportunities that support students' diverse learning styles.						
Teacher Responses	9.1	54.5	36.4	9.1	54.5	36.4
Administrator Responses	0	.25	.75	0	0	100
Statement 10: (Curriculum) MCTEP prepared teachers who use the appropriate teaching models to articulate the lesson content, to meet students' needs, and to adapt to classroom situations.						
Teacher Responses	0	45.5	54.5	10	70	20
Administrator Responses	0	25	75	0	0	100
Statement 12: (Communication) MCTEP prepares teachers who demonstrate effective communication skills in the classroom.						
Teacher Responses	0	30	70	0	81.8	18.2
Administrator Responses	0	0	100	0	33.3	66.7

*MCTEP Survey Findings – Teachers: 2001-02 / 2002-03 Cohorts After 1 Year of Experience*

Responses of teachers with one year of experience to statement 3 on the survey, addressing preparation for the caring component of a culturally responsive curriculum were mixed. While 54.7% or 6 of 11 teachers in the 2001-02 cohort said MCTEP adequately prepared them to know how people learn and develop and how to identify diverse learning styles (statement 2), the same number, 6 of 11 teachers in the 2002-03 cohort perceived that they were highly prepared in that area. The telling factor, however, came in the fact that, while no teacher

completing their clinical teaching had found that the program had not prepared them, one teacher in the first cohort and two in the second cohort perceived the program as not adequately preparing them to know how people learn and how to identify diverse learning styles.

Statements 6 and 12 regarding communication found cohorts with differing views of how well MCTEP prepared them for culturally responsive communication, as well. Statement 6 which said that MCTEP prepares teachers who know effective communication techniques, drew adequately prepared responses from nearly 73% (8 of 11) of the 2001-02 cohort and highly prepared responses from over 63% (7 of 11) of the 2002-03 responders. On the other hand, 70% (8) of the teachers from the 2001-02 cohort had the perception that MCTEP highly prepared them to demonstrate effective communication skills in the classroom (statement 12), while 9 of 11 teachers from the 2002-03 cohort, perceived themselves as adequately prepared by MCTEP for that same task. No teacher from either cohort reported the perception not prepared.

On the topic of curriculum as addressed by statement 10 in the survey, cohorts again split their opinions of how well the teacher education program prepared them to use the appropriate teaching models to articulate the lesson. While 54% or 6 of the 11 teachers in the 2001-02 cohort saw themselves as having been highly prepared, 8 of the 11 (70%) teachers in the 2002-03 cohort had the perception that the program had provided adequate preparation. One teacher in the 2002-03 cohort felt the program had not prepared them to address curriculum issues.

Teachers from both cohorts reported very similar perceptions in the area of preparation for instruction. Statement 8 found 63% (8 teachers) of the 2001-02 cohort with the perception that they were adequately prepared and on teacher from that same cohort feeling that MCTEP had not prepared them to command a repertoire of best teaching practices and use these to instruct students. The perceptions of the 2002-03 cohort were similar for Statement 8 with 45.4%

(5 teachers) seeing themselves as adequately prepared and 18.2% (2 teachers) expressing that MCTEP had not prepared them. Statement 9 drew identical responses from the cohorts with the majority (54.5%) of both groups indicating that their preparation to provide learning opportunities that support students' diverse learning styles was adequate. One teacher from each cohort also reported that they felt that MCTEP had not adequately prepared them to support students' diverse learning styles.

*MCTEP Survey Findings – Administrators: 2001-02 / 2002-03 Cohorts After 1 Year of Experience*

Administrators for teachers in both cohorts were nearly in agreement that MCTEP had highly prepared teachers to meet the needs of students in all areas of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Statement 3 in regard to caring, teachers are prepared to know how people learn and develop and how to identify diverse learning styles, drew a 50% split between the four administrators of teachers in the 2001-02 cohort.

*Midwest College Teacher Education Program Accreditation Team Reports: 2002 / 2004*

Documents containing Accreditation Team Final Report findings from two consecutive visits to the Midwest College Teacher Education Program revealed valuable qualitative data relating to the programs' preparation of prospective teachers in a culturally responsive pedagogy. The visits were conducted within two years of each other; the first in September, 2002 and the follow-up visit in October 2004. The 2002 visit covered information relating to teacher preparation furnished by MCTEP for the 5 years prior to the visit (1997-98 through 2001-02). The 2004 visit furnished program data for the two years between visits (2002-03 and 2003-04). Thus, data from the Midwest College Teacher Education Program was examined from outside sources for each of the three cohorts; 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04. Data for the 2001-02

cohort were examined in the September 2002 visit and data from the other two cohorts were examined in the October 2004 visit.

Three of the six standards examined during each of the visits related to preparation of teachers to meet the needs of all students. The four specific components of a culturally responsive pedagogy; caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction were difficult to determine in the comments shared by the team so data were not disaggregated according to those criteria.

*Midwest College Teacher Education Program Accreditation Team Reports: 2002 / 2004*

Documents containing Accreditation Team Final Report findings from two consecutive visits to the Midwest College Teacher Education Program revealed valuable qualitative data relating to the programs' preparation of prospective teachers in a culturally responsive pedagogy. The visits were conducted within two years of each other; the first in September, 2002 and the follow-up visit in October 2004. The 2002 visit covered information relating to teacher preparation furnished by MCTEP for the 5 years prior to the visit (1997-98 through 2001-02). The 2004 visit furnished program data for the two years between visits (2002-03 and 2003-04). Thus, data from the Midwest College Teacher Education Program was examined from outside sources for each of the three cohorts; 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04. Data for the 2001-02 cohort were examined in the September 2002 visit and data from the other two cohorts were examined in the October 2004 visit. Three of the six standards examined during each of the visits related to preparation of teachers to meet the needs of all students.

*MCTEP Accreditation Team Final Report Findings – September 2002 /October 2004*

Examination and comparison of data acquired from documents from each of the two visit years revealed information relevant to the study (Appendix P). Data from the first visit found

teacher candidates to be less than prepared to meet the needs of all students in each of the three standards addressing that issue. Documents relating to the 2004 visit, on the contrary, found teacher candidates to be prepared for effective instruction of culturally diverse students in their classrooms.

*MCTEP 2002 Accreditation Team Findings: Standard 1*

Visiting accreditation team members comments for Standard 1 Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions, from 2002 indicated that MCTEP was not adequately preparing teachers for diverse populations. Reviewers reported that anecdotal evidence indicated “that candidates entering student teaching and graduates of the Teacher Education Program do possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for teachers.” Team members went on, however, to state that “limited data was available” to substantiate that candidates possessed the competencies necessary to positively impact the learning of all students. A total of six specific statements indicated the team’s perception that teacher candidates were Not Prepared with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to meet the needs of all learners.

*MCTEP 2004 Accreditation Team Findings: Standard 1*

In direct contrast, the 2004 visiting accreditation team found MCTEP teacher candidates to be prepared in Standard 1 Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions. Three comments supported this contention, including “Focus on student learning for the teacher candidates is systematically laid out during all five levels of MCTEP’s candidate performance assessment.” and “The candidates are able to appreciate the developmental stages of the students as well as environmental issues and thus ascertain that student learning is indeed taking place.” The 2004 visiting team found no evidence of candidates being Not Prepared with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to meet the needs of all learners.

*MCTEP 2002 Accreditation Team Findings: Standard 3*

Examination of Standard 3: Field Experience by the 2002 visiting accreditation team found MCTEP teacher candidates Not Prepared regarding their exposure to field placements allowing them to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Six comments were specific to the team's perception of lack of preparation for teacher candidates. Areas addressed as lacking included that no item on the clinical teaching observation form "focused on student learning" and that there were no "assurances that candidates have experience with students from diverse ethnic racial, and cultural backgrounds."

*MCTEP 2004 Accreditation Team Findings: Standard 3*

The 2004 visiting accreditation team found that in Standard 3: Field Experience MCTEP candidates, through their field experiences, were prepared with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to meet the needs of all learners. Three comments were shared on this particular topic with one stating, "The candidates have sufficient and varied experiences to be prepared to have a positive effect on the learning of all students." No examples of teacher candidates being Not Prepared in Standard Three were cited by the 2004 accreditation team.

*MCTEP 2002 Accreditation Team Findings: Standard 4*

After examining data for Standard 4 Diversity, the 2002 accrediting team noted one area in which they believed MCTEP teacher candidates were prepared. The team's perception was that "All candidates demonstrate dispositions that value fairness to all students." There were eight comments, however, indicating a perception of teacher candidates having not acquired and, therefore, being unprepared to apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Comments indicated the reasoning behind these perceptions as including, "The Department was not clear about the proficiencies related to diversity that candidates should

develop during their program.” “Candidates did not have an understanding of the importance of diversity in teaching and learning.” and “There is limited evidence that candidates are developing skills to incorporate diversity into their teaching.”

*MCTEP 2004 Accreditation Team Findings: Standard 4*

The six comments shared by the 2004 visiting accreditation team all indicated that the team perceived MCTEP teacher candidates as Prepared for Standard 4 Diversity. The team saw the candidates as having acquired and being able to apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to bring about learning for all students. Comments were particularly descriptive of the team’s perception of the preparedness of MCTEP teacher candidates in the area of diversity. The team saw candidates as having “multiple multicultural experiences as they progress through the four levels of the program: awareness of diversity, recognition of diversity, understanding bias, different cultures, diverse learners, multiple intelligences, learning styles, and class environment” and of being able to “leave the college culturally aware and able to work in diverse situations, whether the situation is with minority students, students of varied socio-economic status, or special needs students.”

This section provided the findings derived from data collected and analyzed regarding perceptions as to the preparation level of first year teachers to meet the culturally diverse needs of students in their classrooms. Data for the study was obtained from surveys, interviews and documents regarding preparation of teachers by the Midwest College Teacher Education Program. A discussion of these findings is contained in the next section.

*Discussion*

In this section, discussion of the aggregated survey, interview, and document review findings are presented as they relate to each of the four components of culturally responsive

pedagogy: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction.

### *Preparation for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy*

Teachers in the 2003-04 cohort who had received specific training in culturally responsive pedagogy did not perceive themselves to be better prepared than teachers who did not receive such training. However, teachers who did receive formal training were perhaps better prepared, and were certainly more aware of their weaknesses as teachers than program graduates who had no formal training. Consequently, teacher candidates leaving their clinical teaching may have a distorted view of their preparation level, perceiving themselves to be better prepared than they actually may be. Based on analysis of the MCTEP survey, at the end of clinical teaching teacher candidates rated themselves as better prepared than did the combined scores of their cooperating teachers and supervisors. After one year of teaching teachers perceived themselves as less well prepared to meet the needs of all students than they indicated at the conclusion of clinical teaching. This suggests that preservice teachers may not have a complete or realistic view of what is required for teaching culturally diverse students (Goodwin, 1994). It also may indicate that preparation programs are not considering that responsibilities in today's classrooms are greater than in the past. For example, on the *Preparation for Diversity Survey*, one new teacher commented that he felt "slapped in the face by statements on the survey." He shared that he hardly found enough time to keep his programs running, let alone incorporating culturally responsive strategies into his planning. The *Preparation for Diversity Survey* raised new teachers' awareness of what they lacked in their preparation program and illustrated the "survival mode" that new teachers often go into during their first teaching assignment.

According to comments accompanying *Preparation for Diversity Survey* responses, teachers who had received additional training in working with special needs students perceived

themselves to be better prepared to teach for diversity than those who only had training in general education pedagogy. Besides taking additional classes where they learned specific strategies to teach children with disabilities, these teachers had experienced an additional 45-50 hours of field placement during their preparation program (Associated Colleges of Central Kansas, 2007-2008). The additional hours of field experience seems to have made a difference, and is further evidenced by comments from *Preparation for Diversity Survey* respondents who acknowledged that more field experience would be beneficial. Having the knowledge base associated with special education combined with more opportunities to practice the skills acquired during coursework appears critical to preparing teachers who are able to engage with a culturally responsive pedagogy.

#### *Classroom Diversity not a Determining Factor in Perception of Preparedness*

According to the various teacher comments accompanying the survey and their interview responses, the percentage of diversity in classrooms has little effect on the teacher's perception of being prepared or not prepared to meet all students' educational requirements. Some first year teachers who reported classroom diversity levels ranging from less than 5% to 25% or higher felt that they were well prepared to respond to students' varying needs. Yet others who had classrooms with those same percentages of diversity in their classrooms felt ill prepared to teach diverse students effectively. According to comments received from surveys and interviews, the factor determining if a teacher feels prepared or not prepared to meet the learning needs of all children is whether or not they have acquired the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for them to teach in a culturally responsive manner regardless of the number of students of diversity in their classroom.

### *Culturally Responsive Caring*

As noted in the literature review, some common characteristics found in the literature about caring teachers include advocacy for the student, student empowerment (Gay, 2000), a sensitivity toward and understanding of their cultural backgrounds, and the ability to hold high expectations for all students (Blair, 2003).

Comparison of *Preparation for Diversity Survey* responses and comments between cohorts indicate that the more knowledgeable teachers became about the caring tenet of a culturally responsive pedagogy, the more critical they were of themselves as culturally responsive teachers. Successful teachers are those who provide sensitivity to cultural differences and a deep understanding of cultures outside of their own (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Yet, many new teachers are culturally illiterate, unfamiliar with basic ideas or events that reflect experiences and perspectives of people other than White middle class (Ladson-Billings). Because of this, many new teachers are unable to operate without bias and show respect for students' cultures as necessitated in the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Ironically, teachers from the earlier (2001-02 and 2002-03) cohorts had little or no coursework that addressed the caring component of a culturally responsive pedagogy, yet their survey responses indicated they perceived themselves as more prepared than teachers from the 2003-04 cohort who had received specific instruction. Although teachers from the 2003-04 cohort reported on the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* feeling unprepared in several dimensions of caring, in particular to view classroom situations from cultural perspectives other than their own, their comments indicated that the course they were required to take during their teacher preparation program did raise their awareness about culturally responsive caring.

### *Culturally Responsive Communication*

Gay (2000) described the three elements of culturally responsive communication of culture, language, and teaching and learning as being integrally intertwined. King et al (1997) noted “schools favor children who have acquired the linguistic and social patterns of the middle and upper class” (p. 41).

Explicit emphasis on teaching about culturally responsive communication made a difference in teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness in this component of culturally responsive pedagogy. Data from the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* responses and comments disaggregated by cohort indicated that teachers from the 2003-04 cohort perceived themselves as better prepared to meet the needs of all students in their classrooms than teachers from earlier cohorts. Teachers in the 2003-04 received formal training in the communication component of a culturally responsive pedagogy, including knowledge of formal and casual registers of language whereas teachers from previous cohorts did not have formal training. Because the duration of their instruction in a culturally responsive pedagogy was only one year, teachers from the 2003-04 cohort would most likely be in what King et al. (1997) described as the “transition stage” (p. 45) of cultural awareness. These teachers have begun to gain insight into the linguistics and cultures of their culturally diverse students but have not yet become “culturally aware teachers” (p. 45), able to incorporate students’ language and culture into teaching techniques and methods that are appropriate for English language learners.

The needs of English Language Learners are not accounted for in the communication component of MCTEP’s culturally responsive pedagogy framework. Recent statistics (Futrell et al., 2003) indicate a changing trend in public school demographics, including the increase of immigrants and, as a result of that, more students who are not English proficient. The state of

Kansas has followed that trend and teachers in both the 2001-02 and 2003-04 cohorts shared comments indicating that they perceived themselves as lacking the knowledge and skills necessary for working with English Language Learners (ELL) students and their families. Teachers who worked with English Language Learners during their first year of teaching emphasized in the comments accompanying the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* that they had not received adequate preparation for working with these students. Even those who had no experience with ELL students expressed concerns about their lack of training in working with students with language backgrounds other than English. This combination of results indicates that the Midwest College teacher training program is not adequately preparing new teachers to meet the needs of ELL students and their families.

#### *Culturally Responsive Curriculum and Instruction*

Although curriculum and instruction were addressed separately in the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* and interviews, instruction is the praxis through which curriculum is delivered to students. Therefore, these two components of a culturally responsive pedagogy have been combined for discussion.

A culturally responsive presentation of curriculum and instruction does not exclude textbooks, but goes beyond the text. Gay (2000) explained that in order to meet the learning needs of all students in a classroom, textbook curriculum and instruction must be expanded. It must be connected to students' lives and their personal experiences for students, particularly those with cultural and/or linguistic diversity, to provide equitable learning opportunities for all.

*Preparation for Diversity Survey* responses and accompanying comments from first year teachers in all three cohorts implied they were not adequately prepared to adjust their curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners. Teachers and their supervisors

reported via *Preparation for Diversity Survey* responses and comments, and interviews that the new teachers had acquired the knowledge and skills to present curricula in various ways. Yet when teachers were asked for examples of instructional modifications, what they shared revealed a superficial and limited understanding of their students' cultures and backgrounds.

#### *Supervisors Have Limited Understanding of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy*

Supervisors seem to have limited understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy as well as narrow definitions of diversity. For the most part, across all data collection instruments, supervisors viewed teachers as much better prepared overall to meet the needs of diverse learners than did the teachers themselves. This emerging pattern suggests that it is highly likely that most supervisors were unfamiliar with the language and concepts of a culturally responsive pedagogy and are therefore not looking for it in the classroom. On the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* and interviews, supervisors reported less student diversity in their schools than did their teachers. In some cases, supervisors indicated their school had little or no diversity whereas the teachers reported confronting considerable classroom diversity.

Additionally, supervisors and teachers differ in their comments and responses to the items on the specific components of the *Preparation for Diversity*. Whereas teachers looked at the items about caring to determine how well they were prepared to set expectations, demonstrate cultural awareness, or exhibit bias free treatment of students, supervisors tended to focus on a teacher's preparation to meet students' academic challenges. Likewise, supervisors' *Preparation for Diversity Survey* responses and their accompanying comments with regard to culturally responsive communication elicited high scores in teacher preparedness along with references to teachers sending newsletters or making phone calls as examples of effective interaction with parents. Moreover, although a number of teachers raised concerns about their

preparation to meet the needs of English Language Learners, no supervisor mentioned communication with English Language Learner students and/or families as an issue the teacher might be confronting. Supervisors addressed the components of curriculum and instruction in a similarly superficial fashion; that is on the *Preparation for Diversity Survey* they perceived first year teachers to be well prepared to make curricular and instructional adjustments for culturally diverse students. They offered few comments that either upheld or refuted their survey entries, nor did they expand on the issue during interviews.

Further support for supervisors' apparent lack of understanding of a culturally responsive pedagogy is found in responses to the MCTEP Survey completed by teachers and supervisors upon completion of clinical teaching and again after one year of teaching. Despite the fact that teachers lowered perceptions of preparedness to meet the diverse needs of all learners between the time they completed their clinical teaching and after one year in the field, supervisors' perceptions of teacher preparedness increased with most supervisors seeing teachers as highly prepared.

Between the 2002 and 2004 NCATE accreditation visits, MCTEP added culturally relevant pedagogy to its teacher education program. Although NCATE examiners decreed in 2004 that MCTEP was adequately preparing its teachers for diversity, the study raises some ongoing concerns regarding the preparation MCTEP teachers to meet the needs of all students. While this study examined the perceptions of graduates from one particular program, literature indicates that other teacher education programs are experiencing many of the same results seen in this report. Many preservice and beginning teachers understand the importance of being able to respond to diverse students needs but few are prepared for the diversity in today's schools (Kea, Campbell-Whatley, & Richards, 2004; Taylor, 1999). Although some teacher education

programs are responding to the call for changes within their curriculum and instruction for prospective teachers, others remain unconvinced of the merits of providing culturally responsive preparation for teacher candidates. Kea et al. noted,

Children from ethnically and linguistically diverse backgrounds will go unserved until schools and faculty acknowledge the need for culturally competent teachers in the classroom and the responsibility of teacher education programs to properly prepare these teachers. Coupled with this acknowledgement must be a willingness to truly value and celebrate diversity in programming and practices. (2004)

This chapter provided the results derived from data collected and analyzed regarding perceptions as to the preparation level of first year teachers to meet the culturally diverse needs of students in their classrooms. Discussion of conclusions and implications of this study were also shared.

Recommendations are found in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 5

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations derived from the findings of this study focus on two areas. Of primary concern and the first for which recommendations are shared are addressed to preparation programs for both teachers and administrators. What, if anything, can be changed within these programs to assist professionals entering the field of education to better meet the needs of their culturally diverse students? The second area in which recommendations will be offered is directly related to helping teacher preparation programs better prepare new teachers. The recommendation will discuss the need for and the direction of future research.

#### *Preparation Programs*

Although this study was directed toward the preparation of teacher educators in a culturally responsive pedagogy and most of the recommendations address those findings, one of the areas that emerged as an influencing factor in the study was that of participating supervisors' apparent lack of familiarity with the terminology and concepts affiliated with a culturally responsive pedagogy. Therefore, the first recommendation for preparation programs will be directed toward leadership training followed by recommendations for teacher preparation programs.

#### *Leadership Preparation*

Supporting the findings and conclusions from this study, a study conducted (Hughes, 2005) on educational leadership determined that many principals did not feel prepared to lead their schools to higher student achievement. Interviews, focus groups, and surveys from this study showed that principals were spending most of their time managing schedules, buses, food service, facility issues, athletics programs, or other matters dealing with discipline or safety in

their schools. Only 15 to 30 percent of their time was focused on improving instruction in their schools (Hughes, 2005). In direct contrast, effective school research reveals that leadership is one of the critical components of an effective school. School leadership has great impact on teachers and the teaching-learning relationship within a school (Blueprint for Government Schools, 2004). Researchers and school leaders should be adamant in recommending that current leadership programs focus on ensuring that current and future educational leaders have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to lead schools in ways that will make it possible for all children to achieve and be successful (Litchka, 2007). My recommendation is directed at these leadership training and in-service programs. In order to give current and future leaders the capacity to provide support and guidance to teachers working with increasingly diverse student populations, they should be provided training in culturally responsive pedagogy within their school leadership programs.

### *Teacher Preparation*

With the shift in demographics in the public schools, teacher preparation programs must do more than talk about preparing teachers to be able to respond to the wide diversity of backgrounds, experiences, interests, and abilities of the students they will encounter in their classrooms. They must get past the misconceptions that teachers can implement culturally responsive practices with little or no exposure to cultural diversity in their professional preparations programs and that “incidental, fragmented, and infrequent exposures to cultural diversity and multicultural education constitutes sufficient preparation”(Gay, 1997, p. 1). Studies indicate that the quality of preservice training teachers receive influences their attitude towards and expectations for students they teach. Schools of education therefore should redefine and restructure their curricula to guarantee that teaching and program content “mirrors what we

believe our graduates must know and be able to do in order to effectively teach students from a wide variety of backgrounds” (Futrell et al., 2003, p. 3). Townsend (2002) noted that in light of the academic and social failure experienced by minority students, culturally responsive pedagogy should be a required part of any teacher preparation program. Findings from this study support Townsend’s contention. First year teachers who had received training in and opportunity to apply a culturally responsive pedagogy during their clinical teaching and then in their first year of teaching perceived themselves to be better prepared to meet the needs of all learners than did their counterparts who had received little or no culturally responsive training. Additionally, the comparison of comments from Accreditation Team Reports for 2002 and 2004 showed that comments from the 2002 report indicated teacher candidates were not prepared to meet the diverse learning needs of all students, team comments from the 2004 report indicated teacher candidates were prepared. Data for the 2002 Accreditation visit were collected prior to 2002 when no cultural diversity training was available through MCTEP. Data for the 2004 Accreditation report were collected between 2002 and 2004, during which Midwest College Teacher Education Program had initiated a cultural diversity class that included aspects of a culturally responsive pedagogy. However, the study findings indicate that more work is needed to ensure teachers are adequately prepared to teach from a culturally responsive framework.

My first recommendation in the area of teacher preparation is, therefore, that teacher preparation programs infuse their coursework with culturally responsive pedagogy. Villegas and Lucas (2002) suggest six characteristics that teacher preparation programs should integrate throughout their coursework, learning opportunities, and field experiences in order to “better prepare culturally responsive teachers to work successfully in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms” (p. 4). The first is *sociocultural consciousness* or understanding that the way

a person thinks and behaves is influenced by race, ethnicity, social class, and language. “Teacher candidates must inspect and confront any negative attitudes they might have toward cultural groups” (p. 4). The second characteristic is an *affirming attitude toward students from culturally diverse backgrounds*. Teacher candidates must understand the importance of respecting cultural differences and of presenting class work from the perspectives of other cultures. The third characteristic involves helping prospective teachers develop the *commitment and skills to act as agents of change* as they confront barriers to change and deal with the chaos that oftentimes accompanies schools becoming more equitable. The fourth characteristic teacher preparation programs must infuse into their programs is that of *constructivist views of learning*. Teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills to put constructivist learning into place in their classrooms are able to provide scaffolds between what students already know and what they need to learn. Thus, they are better able to promote problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration, along with the recognition of multiple cultural perspectives in their classrooms. The fifth characteristic necessary to effective teacher preparation programs involves teaching prospective teachers the importance of *learning about their students*. When a teacher is cognizant of a student’s past experiences, their culture, and their world they can incorporate this knowledge into the context of teaching and learning. Finally, the sixth characteristic noted by Villegas and Lucas (2002) as necessary for an effective teacher preparation program is providing teacher candidates with *culturally responsive teaching strategies* to support the constructivist view of knowledge, learning, and teaching. In this manner, “as teachers assist students to construct knowledge, build on their personal and cultural strengths, and examine the curriculum from multiple perspectives, an inclusive classroom environment is created” (p. 5).

Building on the infusion of culturally responsive pedagogy across teacher preparation

curriculum a further recommendation is to increase placement in diverse field experiences for teacher candidates. Study results indicated that graduates who had experienced additional field experience as a result of their special education training felt more prepared to meet the unique need of all learners in their classrooms. It stands to reason that given additional field experience in working with diverse populations, teacher candidates would increase their abilities to meet the diverse needs of all learners, as well. Berliner (2000) noted that even when future educators receive instruction in effective teaching methods at the university level, they have no place to study “how those methods work, why they work, and under what conditions they should be used” (p. 362). Additional field experience with diverse populations would give opportunity for teacher candidates to observe the modeling of teaching by master teachers and additional time to apply the skills they have acquired in classroom instruction.

The third recommendation to come out of this study is that opportunities to learn about and work with students of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) be emphasized more in teacher education programs. Studies show that when queried about the preparation of pre-service teachers to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students, 60% of the deans in the schools of education surveyed indicated that their programs did not provide that preparation (Futrell et al., 2003). Furthermore, in a 1999 self-appraisal 80% of the teachers survey indicated that they were not well prepared for several classroom challenges, one of which was working with students of Limited English Proficiency (Futrell et al., 2003).

The No Child Left Behind legislation with its emphasis on high stakes testing, combined with the increasing number of English Language Learners, has put more responsibility on today’s classroom teachers. Teacher preparation programs are now faced with the challenge of preparing new teachers to meet the diverse learning needs of students whose first language is not

English. According to the study completed at Midwest College, nearly all new teachers perceive themselves as prepared to provide their classroom students with effective learning conditions including utilizing students' prior knowledge, integrating factual knowledge with concepts to form deeper understandings, and being a facilitator for active student learning in the classroom (Cummins et al., 2005). These principles of effective instruction are especially important when it comes to English Language Learners. A student's first language is extremely important with regard to their learning experience, which is contrary to these false assumptions: (a) students' home language is, at best, irrelevant. At worst, it is an impediment to literacy development and academic success; (b) the cultural knowledge and linguistic abilities that English language learners bring to school have little instructional relevance; (c) instruction to develop English literacy should focus only on English literacy; (d) students can learn only what teachers explicitly teach; (e) and culturally and linguistically diverse parents, whose English may be limited, do not have the language skills to contribute to their children's literacy development (Cummins et al., 2005, p. 39).

Pre-service teachers need to be prepared to practice the idea that prior knowledge is not only acquired through formal instruction but includes experiences that have shaped the student's identity and learning abilities. These teachers should be knowledgeable of the fact that "pre-existing knowledge for English language learners is encoded in their home languages" (p. 38). Thus, teacher preparation programs should equip new teachers with the skills to teach in ways that will allow the transfer of concepts and skills from the student's first language to English. Teacher preparation programs should also stress to pre-service teachers the importance of engaging a child in learning through affirmation of their cultural identities. Further, a teacher preparation program should help the pre-service teacher to understand that engagement in

learning for the language diverse student is “fueled as much by affect as by cognition” (Cummins et al., 2005, p. 39).

### *Future Research*

Finally, while some research is available on meeting the learning need of culturally diverse students, there are few studies that focus on a culturally responsive pedagogy. There are many authors who advocate for the four components: caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction becoming a part of teacher preparation programs (Banks, 2002; Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 2004; Pang, 2001; Sleeter, 2001b). Although some research suggests that teachers who have had some training in multicultural teacher education “are less likely to embrace cultural deficit views” (Kea et al., 2004, p. 1), there are few studies that center on the learning that takes place in classrooms where teachers have received instruction in culturally responsive pedagogy during their teacher preparation programs. Sleeter (2001b) stated, “research in teacher education needs to follow graduates into the classroom, and our work needs to extend beyond preservice education” (p. 102). I agree. Until research determines that supplying preservice teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to provide a caring environment, communication with all students, curriculum adaptations, and instruction to facilitate learning opportunities for all students is effective, a culturally responsive pedagogy is simply another interesting sounding concept. This study has provided a small sample of the positive results that can be achieved when a culturally responsive pedagogy is intertwined in a teacher education program. Further research could provide affirmation.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### PREPARATON FOR DIVERSITY SURVEY - TEACHERS

#### Introduction

Research has found that despite the current demand for teachers who can effectively and equitably facilitate learning for all students many teachers are entering the field unprepared for the challenge of teaching students with diverse cultural needs. This study is one means of determining the preparation level of Sterling Teacher Education Program (STEP) graduates in meeting the needs of all students. The information generated by this study regarding STEP graduates' knowledge and skills in meeting the needs of all students could be useful to this, and other departments of teacher education, as they prepare future teacher candidates with knowledge of the concepts necessary for successful teaching in today's diverse society.

For the purpose of this study, student diversity is defined as: Cultural differences based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002a).

Using the above definition of diversity, with emphasis on the areas of: ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, exceptionalities, and language, please reflect on your first year of teaching and the skills with which you entered the teaching profession. Then complete the following confidential survey regarding your perception of your ability to meet the learning needs of a diverse student population during your first year of teaching after leaving Sterling College.

#### **PLEASE ENTER THE CODE INCLUDED IN YOUR E-MAIL**

Code Number

#### Survey - Part 1

In the first part of the survey, please check the appropriate answer.

For the remainder of the survey please choose the category that most agrees with your opinion regarding your first year of teaching.

Please share comments that help explain your answers.

#### **Gender**

female

male

#### **Year Program Completed**

2001-2002

2002-2003

2003-2004

#### **Endorsement level at the time of graduation**

K-9

7-12

P-12

**The average size of my first year class was:**

Less than 15

16-25

Greater than 25

**Considering these areas of diversity: ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, and language, the average total diversity in my first year class was:**

Less than 5%

5%-10%

11%-15%

16%-20%

21%-25%

Greater than 25%

Survey - Part 2

**1. I understood and valued pluralism, the right for people to maintain their languages and culture while combining with others to form a new society reflective of all our differences.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

**2. I was aware that I may have held biases and stereotypes toward other cultures.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

**3. I viewed classroom situations from cultural perspectives other than my own.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

**4. I believed that diversity issues may keep some children from learning successfully.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

**5. I understood and valued the cultures (including race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, and language) of all students in my classroom.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**6. I assumed responsibility for the progress of all my students regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

This first section has been devoted to your understanding of culture as a beginning teacher. Please comment on your perception of your preparedness to meet the needs of culturally diverse students.

**Comments:**

In preface to the next section of questions regarding registers of language in the classroom, please use the following definition furnished by Ruby Payne:

Formal language register: The standard sentence syntax and word choice of work and school. Has complete sentences and specific word choice.

Casual language register: Language between friends and is characterized by a 400-800 word vocabulary. Word choice is general and not specific. Conversation is dependent upon non-verbal assists. Sentence syntax is often incomplete.

**7. I recognized that the formal register of language is found at school and in work places.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**8. I recognized barriers that existed between home and school regarding formal and casual language registers.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**9. I attempted to reach children and families despite language barriers.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**10. I taught the formal language register at school while honoring the casual language register of the home.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

Please share your comments on your perception of your preparation level to meet the needs of diverse language learners during your first year of teaching.

**Comments:**

**11. I put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction to help all students learn.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**12. I structured learning experiences to accommodate the different cultures represented in my classroom (race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language).**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**13. I built bridges of meaning between home and school experiences.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**14. I used a wide variety of teaching strategies that addressed different learning styles.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree

Strongly Agree

**15. I helped students to know and affirm their respective cultures.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

**16. I incorporated multicultural information, resources, and materials into my teaching.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Please comment on your perception as to your preparation level as a beginning teacher to plan effective learning experiences for culturally diverse students.

**Comments:**

**17. I followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

**18. I adjusted curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

**19. In order to present curriculum in the most effective manner, I implemented methods of instruction that met the needs of all my students.**

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Please comment on your level of preparation as a beginning teacher to make curricular

adjustments for a culturally diverse classroom.

**Comments:**

If you have further comments on your perception of your preparation level for meeting the needs of diverse student learners, please feel free to make them below.

**Additional Comments:**

Submit

## APPENDIX B

### INITIAL E-MAIL CONTACT LETTER-TEACHER

Dear ,

I don't know whether you are aware, but I am working on my doctoral dissertation. In order to get my research completed, I need your assistance.

Let me explain...

The title of my dissertation paper is Does Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Prepare Beginning Teacher for the Diverse Needs of All Learners: Voices from the Field. Among other things, the results of this study may help Sterling College and other people reading the study make decisions regarding the type of curriculum they provide for their pre-service teacher candidates.

I am asking SC teacher education graduates from 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 to participate in this study, giving their perception of the training they received for meeting the diverse needs of all learners. In order to get more varied views of your preparation level for meeting the needs of learners from diverse situations, I am also asking that you give me permission to contact your first year principal or immediate supervisor for their perception of the same survey questions you answer. Granting permission to contact your first year principal or supervisor is NOT necessary for you to participate in completing the survey.

Keep in mind that all survey answers and comments will remain confidential. While I will know the identity of persons submitting their surveys and comments, no names or identifying factors will be released or used in the final publication.

In order to complete the survey please:  
go to the web link provided below  
read the consent form  
read the letter describing the study in detail  
enter the password: **Diversity**  
enter the Code number:

Please be honest and make any comments you feel will help give a better understanding to your answers.

You may access the survey at:  
<http://knox.sterling.edu:8080/survey/entry.jsp?id=1119212011891>

Thank you in advance for your assistance. It is greatly appreciated!

Gladys Ritterhouse

Director of Teacher Education  
Sterling Teacher Education Program (STEP)  
Sterling College

Sterling, KS

## APPENDIX C

### SURVEY SOURCES

The following sources pertaining to culturally responsive pedagogy were utilized in creating the survey for teachers and supervisors:

- Banks, J. A. (2002). *An introduction to multicultural education* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Blair, T. R. (2003). *New teacher's performance-based guide to culturally diverse classrooms*. San Francisco: Allyn and Bacon.
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- Ovando, C. J. (1997). Language diversity and education. In J. A. Banks & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (3rd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Pang, V. O. (2001). *Multicultural education: A caring-centered, reflective approach*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Payne, R. K. (2001). *A framework for understanding poverty* (New Revised ed.). Highlands, Texas: aha! Process, Inc.
- Shade, B. J., Kelly, C., & Oberg, M. (1997). *Creating culturally responsive classrooms*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

- Sleeter, C. E. (1991). *Empowerment through multicultural education*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Sleeter, C. E. & Grant, C. A. (1999). *Making choices for multicultural education: five approaches to race, class, and gender* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
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## APPENDIX D

### TEACHER CONSENT FORM

Department of Educational Leadership  
Box 142, Wichita, KS 67260-0142

#### CONSENT FORM

**PURPOSE:** You are invited to participate in a study of teacher education graduates from a small college in the central United States (Sterling College) and the degree to which they have been prepared to teach students with diverse learning needs. The end result of this research will focus on improving the way teacher education candidates are prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners.

**PARTICIPANT SELECTION:** You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a graduate of STEP or an immediate supervisor of the teacher graduate. Teachers selected for the study were teacher education graduates between the years of 2001 and 2004. The number of participants will depend on the number of education graduates identified, the number of graduates electing to participate, and the number of supervisors of these graduates willing to participate.

**EXPLANATION OF PROCEDURES:** If you decide to participate, you will be asked to respond electronically to a questionnaire containing questions regarding your perception of your preparation (or in the case of supervisors, the teacher under their supervision), upon entering the teaching field, to meet the needs of diverse learners. Based on answers to the questionnaire, follow up questions asking for your perceptions regarding the skills and pedagogy necessary to meet the needs of diverse learners in the classroom may be necessary. For persons wishing to participate but for who e-mail access is unavailable, telephone contact will be utilized. Telephone contact or face to face interviews may also be incorporated if verbal communication is likely to generate more in-depth, descriptive responses. The interview procedure will be limited to a two-week period. If, after sorting responses, follow ups are necessary, telephone contacts or face to face interviews will be utilized.

**DISCOMFORT/RISKS:** No risks are associated with the study. Information obtained through this study will not be used to evaluate teacher performance, but rather, to evaluate the program from which they received their training. The inconvenience of time constraints will be addressed through the use of e-mail, which will allow participants the ability to complete the questionnaire and respond to questions from me at their own discretion. Telephone and face to face interviews, if utilized, will be conducted at the convenience of the participants.

**BENEFITS:** Results of this study regarding beginning teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners could be useful to STEP and other departments of teacher education as they prepare teacher candidates with knowledge of the concepts necessary for meeting the needs of all students in today's diverse society.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Any information obtained in this study will remain confidential. Information from the study may be utilized by departments of teacher education to improve their program but names of participants will not be disclosed nor be included in any report attached to this research.

**COMPENSATION OR TREATMENT:** Wichita State University does not provide medical treatment or other forms of reimbursement to persons injured as a result of or in connection with participation in research activities conducted by Wichita State University or its faculty, staff, or students. If you believe that you have been injured as a result of participating in the research covered by this consent form, you can contact the Office of Research Administration, Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67260-0007, telephone (316) 978-3285.

**REFUSAL/WITHDRAWAL:** Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with Sterling College. If you agree to participate in this study, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions about this research, you can contact: Gladys Ritterhouse, Sterling Teacher Education Program, Sterling College, PO Box 98, Sterling, KS 67579. Phone (620) 278-4241 – work or (620) 278-2218 –home. If you have questions pertaining to your rights as a research subject, or about research-related injury, you can contact the Office of Research Administration at Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67260-0007, telephone (316) 978-3285.

You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your participation in the questionnaire indicates that you have read the information provided above and have voluntarily decided to participate.

Sincerely,

Gladys Ritterhouse

## APPENDIX E

### SUPERVISOR INITIAL PHONE CONTACT

Hello,

My name is Gladys Ritterhouse and I am calling with the permission of (name of teacher) who gave me your name as their first year supervisor.

I am a professor in the teacher education department at Sterling College where (teacher's name) graduated.

As part of my doctoral dissertation I am conducting research to determine the perception of new teachers and their supervisors as to the teachers' readiness to meet the needs of diverse learners in their classrooms during their first year of teaching.

(name of teacher) completed a survey giving me their perception and I wondered if I could send you a similar survey for you to answer. It should only take 10 or 15 minutes of your busy time, but I would greatly appreciate your input. Would you be willing to complete a survey if I e-mailed it to you? I need to verify your e-mail address. Is it.....

From the teams of teachers and supervisors that complete the survey, I would like to go more in depth with 6-7 groups. Would you be willing to answer some follow up questions via e-mail or telephone if you and (teacher's name) are selected?

I really appreciate your taking time to visit with me. I will be sending you an e-mail with a link to the survey for you to complete. I would like to have all surveys back by September 10 if that is possible for you.

Thanks again for your assistance. It was nice talking to you.

## APPENDIX F

### INITIAL E-MAIL CONTACT LETTER-SUPERVISOR

Dear [Supervisor's Name],

This is the e-mail that I promised when we visited via telephone a few days ago. I will recap the reason for me asking for your participation.

I am currently involved in the completion of my doctoral research. The title of my dissertation paper is Does Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Prepare Beginning Teacher for the Diverse Needs of All Learners? Voices from the Field. Among other things, the results of this study may help Sterling College and other people reading the study make decisions regarding the type of curriculum they provide for their pre-service teacher candidates.

I am asking SC teacher education graduates from 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 to participate in this study, giving their perception of the training they received for meeting the diverse needs of all learners. In order to get more varied views of their preparation level for meeting the needs of learners from diverse situations, I also asked that they give me permission to contact their first year principal or immediate supervisor for their perception of the same survey questions answered by the participating teachers. Thus, I am contacting you with the permission of the Sterling College teacher education graduate under your supervision.

Keep in mind that all survey answers and comments will remain confidential. While I will know the identity of persons submitting their surveys and comments, no names or identifying factors will be released or used in the final publication.

In order to complete the survey please:  
go to the web link provided below  
read the consent form  
read the letter describing the study in detail  
enter the case sensitive password:  
enter the Code number:

**DIVERSITY**

Please be honest and make any comments you feel will help give a better understanding to your answers.

You may access the survey at:

<http://knox.sterling.edu:8080/survey/entry.jsp?id=1125267932685>

Thank you in advance for your assistance. It is greatly appreciated!

Gladys Ritterhouse  
Director of Teacher Education  
Sterling Teacher Education Program (STEP)  
Sterling College  
Sterling, KS

## APPENDIX G

### SUPERVISOR CONSENT FORM

Department of Educational Leadership  
Box 142, Wichita, KS 67260-0142

#### CONSENT FORM

**PURPOSE:** You are invited to participate in a study of teacher education graduates from a small college in the central United States (Sterling College) and the degree to which they have been prepared to teach students with diverse learning needs. The end result of this research will focus on improving the way teacher education candidates are prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners.

**PARTICIPANT SELECTION:** You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a graduate of STEP or an immediate supervisor of the teacher graduate. Teachers selected for the study were teacher education graduates between the years of 2001 and 2004. The number of participants will depend on the number of education graduates identified, the number of graduates electing to participate, and the number of supervisors of these graduates willing to participate.

**EXPLANATION OF PROCEDURES:** If you decide to participate, you will be asked to respond electronically to a questionnaire containing questions regarding your perception of your preparation (or in the case of supervisors, the teacher under their supervision), upon entering the teaching field, to meet the needs of diverse learners. Based on answers to the questionnaire, follow up questions asking for your perceptions regarding the skills and pedagogy necessary to meet the needs of diverse learners in the classroom may be necessary. For persons wishing to participate but for who e-mail access is unavailable, telephone contact will be utilized. Telephone contact or face to face interviews may also be incorporated if verbal communication is likely to generate more in-depth, descriptive responses. The interview procedure will be limited to a two-week period. If, after sorting responses, follow ups are necessary, telephone contacts or face to face interviews will be utilized.

**DISCOMFORT/RISKS:** No risks are associated with the study. Information obtained through this study will not be used to evaluate teacher performance, but rather, to evaluate the program from which they received their training. The inconvenience of time constraints will be addressed through the use of e-mail, which will allow participants the ability to complete the questionnaire and respond to questions from me at their own discretion. Telephone and face to face interviews, if utilized, will be conducted at the convenience of the participants.

**BENEFITS:** Results of this study regarding beginning teacher preparation to meet the needs of diverse learners could be useful to STEP and other departments of teacher education as they prepare teacher candidates with knowledge of the concepts necessary for meeting the needs

of all students in today's diverse society.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Any information obtained in this study will remain confidential. Information from the study may be utilized by departments of teacher education to improve their program but names of participants will not be disclosed nor be included in any report attached to this research.

**COMPENSATION OR TREATMENT:** Wichita State University does not provide medical treatment or other forms of reimbursement to persons injured as a result of or in connection with participation in research activities conducted by Wichita State University or its faculty, staff, or students. If you believe that you have been injured as a result of participating in the research covered by this consent form, you can contact the Office of Research Administration, Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67260-0007, telephone (316) 978-3285.

**REFUSAL/WITHDRAWAL:** Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with Sterling College. If you agree to participate in this study, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions about this research, you can contact: Gladys Ritterhouse, Sterling Teacher Education Program, Sterling College, PO Box 98, Sterling, KS 67579. Phone (620) 278-4241 – work or (620) 278-2218 –home. If you have questions pertaining to your rights as a research subject, or about research-related injury, you can contact the Office of Research Administration at Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67260-0007, telephone (316) 978-3285.

You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your participation in the questionnaire indicates that you have read the information provided above and have voluntarily decided to participate.

Sincerely,

Gladys Ritterhouse

## APPENDIX H

### PREPARATION FOR DIVERSITY SURVEY - SUPERVISORS

#### Introduction

Research has found that despite the current demand for teachers who can effectively and equitably facilitate learning for all students many teachers are entering the field unprepared for the challenge of teaching students with diverse cultural needs. This study is one means of determining the preparation level of Sterling Teacher Education Program (STEP) graduates in meeting the needs of all students. The information generated by this study regarding STEP graduates' knowledge and skills in meeting the needs of all students could be useful to this, and other departments of teacher education, as they prepare future teacher candidates with knowledge of the concepts necessary for successful teaching in today's diverse society.

For the purpose of this study, student diversity is defined as: Cultural differences based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002a).

Using the above definition of diversity, with emphasis on the areas of: ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, exceptionalities, and language, please reflect on your teacher's first year of teaching and the skills with which he/she entered the teaching profession. Then complete the following confidential survey regarding your perception of his/her ability to meet the learning needs of a diverse student population during his/her first year of teaching after leaving Sterling College.

#### **PLEASE ENTER THE CODE FURNISHED IN YOUR E-MAIL**

Code Number

#### Survey - Part 1

In the first part of the survey, please check the appropriate answer.

For the remainder of the survey please choose the category that most agrees with your opinion regarding your teacher's first year of teaching.

Please share comments that help explain your answers.

#### **The average size of this teacher's first year class was:**

Less than 15

16-25

Greater than 25

#### **Considering these areas of diversity: ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, and language, the average total diversity in this teacher's first year class was:**

Less than 5%

5%-10%

11%-15%

16%-20%

21%-25%  
Greater than 25%

Survey - Part 2

**1. This teacher understood and valued pluralism, the right for people to maintain their languages and culture while combining with others to form a new society reflective of all our differences.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**2. This teacher was aware that he/she may have held biases and stereotypes toward other cultures.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**3. This teacher viewed classroom situations from cultural perspectives other than his/her own.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**4. This teacher believed that diversity issues may keep some children from learning successfully.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**5. This teacher understood and valued the cultures (including race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, and language) of all students in his/her classroom.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**6. This teacher assumed responsibility for the progress of all his/her students regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

This first section has been devoted to your perception of this teacher's understanding of culture as a beginning teacher. Please comment on your perception of his/her preparedness to meet the needs of culturally diverse students.

**Comments:**

In preface to the next section of questions regarding registers of language in the classroom, please use the following definition furnished by Ruby Payne:

Formal language register: The standard sentence syntax and word choice of work and school. Has complete sentences and specific word choice.

Casual language register: Language between friends and is characterized by a 400-800 word vocabulary. Word choice is general and not specific. Conversation is dependent upon non-verbal assists. Sentence syntax is often incomplete.

**7. This teacher recognized that the formal register of language is found at school and in work places.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**8. This teacher recognized barriers that existed between home and school regarding formal and casual language registers.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**9. This teacher attempted to reach children and families despite language barriers.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**10. This teacher taught the formal language register at school while honoring the casual**

**language register of the home.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Please share your comments on your perception of this teacher's preparation level to meet the needs of diverse language learners during his/her first year of teaching.

**Comments:**

**11. This teacher put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction to help all students learn.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**12. This teacher structured learning experiences to accommodate the different cultures represented in his/her classroom (race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language).**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**13. This teacher built bridges of meaning between home and school experiences.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**14. This teacher used a wide variety of teaching strategies that addressed different learning styles.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**15. This teacher helped students to know and affirm their respective cultures.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**16. This teacher incorporated multicultural information, resources, and materials into his/her teaching.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

Please comment on your perception as to this teacher's preparation level as a beginning teacher to plan effective learning experiences for culturally diverse students.

**Comments:**

**17. This teacher followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**18. This teacher adjusted curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

**19. In order to present curriculum in the most effective manner, this teacher implemented methods of instruction that met the needs of all his/her students.**

Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
Somewhat Disagree  
Somewhat Agree  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

Please comment on your perception of this teacher's level of preparation as a beginning teacher to make curricular adjustments for a culturally diverse classroom.

**Comments:**

**Additional Comments:**

If you have further comments on your perception of this teacher's preparation level for meeting the needs of diverse student learners, please feel free to make them below.

Submit

## APPENDIX I

### TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to help me with this portion of my study of pre-service teacher preparation to meet the diverse needs of all students. The survey you completed was fairly general in nature so I would like to ask you some more specific questions about your perceptions from your first year of teaching.

**Please keep in mind that all of your responses to these questions will be kept confidential.**

I would like to break ‘classroom cultural diversity’ down into four specific sections.

These will be:

1. academic achievement
  - a. learning styles (i.e. quiet environment v. music playing, etc.)
  - b. learning abilities (i.e. learning disabled/mentally handicapped v. gifted)
2. ethnic/racial background
3. English proficiency
4. socio-economic status (i.e. poverty v. wealth)

As we begin,

**What activities were you most proud of that you used to meet the culturally diverse needs of the students in your classroom during your first year of teaching?**

**1. In what ways did you meet the needs of students with diverse learning abilities or learning styles in your first year classroom?**

What aspects of your teacher preparation program were most beneficial in preparing you to meet the needs of students with diverse learning abilities or learning styles?

What could have been provided in your teacher preparation program to more adequately prepare you for meeting the needs of students with diverse learning abilities or learning styles?

*Other comments regarding meeting the diverse learning abilities or learning styles of students:*

**2. In what ways did you plan and prepare lessons from a perspective other than that of the European-American?**

What aspects of your teacher preparation program were most beneficial in preparing you to plan and prepare lessons from a viewpoint other than from a European-American perspective?

What could your teacher preparation program have provided to more adequately prepare you to plan and prepare lessons from a viewpoint other than from a European American perspective?

*Other comments regarding curriculum planning for students of various cultures:*

**3. In what ways did you meet the needs of students in your classroom with limited English skills or proficiency?**

What aspects of your teacher preparation program were most beneficial in helping you to meet the needs of students with limited English skills or proficiency?

What could your teacher preparation program have provided to more adequately prepare you to meet the needs of students with limited English skills or proficiency?

*Other comments regarding meeting the needs of students with limited English skills or proficiency:*

**4. In what ways did you successfully communicate with the students and/or their parents in your first year classroom?**

What aspects of your teacher preparation program were most beneficial in helping you to communicate successfully with students and/or parents in your first year classroom?

What could your teacher preparation program have provided to more adequately prepare you communicate successfully with students and/or parents in your first year classroom?

*Other comments regarding successful communication with students and/or parents?*

**5. In what ways did you provide effective learning opportunities for all socio-economic classes represented in your first year classroom?**

What aspects of your teacher preparation program were most beneficial in helping you to work effectively with all socio-economic classes?

What could have been provided in your teacher preparation program to more adequately prepare you to work effectively with all socio-economic classes?

*Other comments regarding student socio-economic status:*

*Overall:*

**6. Describe some ways that you displayed acceptance of all cultures represented in your classroom in your first year of teaching.**

**7. Describe some ways that you demonstrated high performance expectations for all cultures represented in your classroom in your first year of teaching.**

*In closing,*

**8. In what ways could you more effectively have met the culturally diverse needs of some students in your classroom during your first year of teaching?**

**9. What would you like to add?**

*Thank you for your candid replies. Your assistance is greatly appreciated!*

## APPENDIX J

### SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to help me with this portion of my study of pre-service teacher preparation to meet the diverse needs of all students. The survey you completed was fairly general in nature so I would like to ask you some more specific questions about your perceptions from your first year of teaching.

Please keep in mind that all of your responses to these questions will be kept confidential.

I would like to break 'classroom cultural diversity' down into four specific sections.

These will be:

1. academic                      learning disabled/mentally handicapped v. gifted
2. ethnic/racial
3. limited English
4. socio-economic              poverty v. wealth

Looking at each of the separate areas and thinking back to the teacher's first year of teaching please answer the following.

1. Was the teacher adequately prepared to meet the needs of students with diverse learning abilities or learning styles in his/her first year classroom?

If not, what could have been provided in his/her teacher preparation program to more adequately prepare him/her for meeting the needs of students with diverse learning abilities or learning styles?

2. Did textbooks (materials) present lessons only from a white European-American perspective?

Did textbooks (materials) present lessons from the perspective of other races and/or ethnicities?

If so, how often did the lessons represent other exceptionalities, races, or ethnicities?

If not, was the teacher prepared to plan and prepare lessons from a perspective other than that presented in the textbook?

If not, what could have been provided in his/her teacher preparation program to more adequately prepare him/her?

Other comments regarding curriculum and instruction for students with cultural diversity in his/her first year classroom?

3. Was the teacher adequately prepared to meet the needs of students in his/her classroom with limited English skills or proficiency?

If not, what could have been provided in his/her teacher preparation program to more adequately prepare him/her?

Was the teacher prepared to overcome language barriers between you and the students or their parents?

If not, what could have been provided in his/her teacher preparation program to more adequately prepare him/her?

Other comments regarding the language barriers he/she may have encountered in his/her first year classroom?

4. Was the teacher aware of the impact that socio-economic status could have on students in his/her classroom?

Could the teacher relate as well to the under-privileged as to the wealthy?

If not, what could have been provided in his/her teacher preparation program to more adequately prepare him/her?

*Overall:*

5. Do you think the teacher viewed student cultural diversity as a challenge to overcome or as a resource to use in his/her first year of teaching?

6. Do you think the teacher accepted all cultures represented in his/her classroom in his/her first year of teaching?

7. Do you think the teacher had high performance expectations for all cultures represented in his/her classroom in his/her first year of teaching?

*In closing,*

8. Would you be willing to share some practices that the teacher used to meet the culturally diverse needs of the students in his/her classroom during his/her first year of teaching?

9. Would you be willing to share some ways in which you think the teacher failed to meet the culturally diverse needs of some students in his/her classroom during his/her first year of teaching?

10. What would you like to add?

*Thank you for your candid replies. Your assistance is greatly appreciated!*

APPENDIX K

TEACHER/SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW SELECTION CHART

TEACHER / SUPERVISOR DEMOGRAPHIC DATA								
Code	Gender	Cohort Year	Endorsement	Class Size	Diversity (%)	Supv. OK	Supv. Part.	Dist. Size
128	M	01-02	7-12	Less than 15	Less than 5%	No	No	x
104	M	02-03	K-9	16-25	Greater than 25%	Yes	No	20,440
143	M	01-02	K-9	16-25	16-20%	Yes	Yes	296
134	M	01-02	K-9	16-25	Greater than 25%	No	No	X
127	F	01-02	K-9	16-25	Greater than 25%	Yes	Yes	751
126	M	01-02	P-12	16-25	21-25%	Yes	No	751
136	F	03-04	K-9	16-25	Greater than 25%	Yes	Yes	private
113	F	03-04	K-9	Less than 15	5-10%	Yes	Yes	private
142	F	01-02	7-12	Greater than 25	Less than 5%	Yes	No	x
107	M	02-03	P-12	16-25	Greater than 25%	Yes	Yes	959
133	F	02-03	K-9	16-25	Less than 5%	Yes	Yes	private
121	M	03-04	7-12	Less than 15	5-10%	Yes	Yes	279
120	F	02-03	K-9	16-25	5-10%	No	No	x
130	M	03-04	K-9	Less than 15	Less than 5%	Yes	Yes	private
129	M	02-03	P-12	Less than 15	Less than 5%	Yes	No	x
141	F	02-03	7-12	Less than 15	5-10%	No	No	x
108	F	01-02	K-9	Less than 15	Greater than 25%	Yes	Yes	4874
123	F	02-03	K-9	16-25	Greater than 25%	Yes	Yes	30,959
135	M	03-04	K-9	16-25	5-10%	Yes	Yes	2475
138	F	01-02	K-9	Less than 15	Greater than 25%	No	No	x
102	F	03-04	K-9	16-25	Greater than 25%	Yes	No	1212
116	F	01-02	K-9	16-25	21-25%	No	No	x

(Administrators/teacher selected are highlighted)

## APPENDIX L

### TEACHER INTERVIEW CONTACT (E-MAIL)

Dear Teacher Name,

Last fall you were kind enough to complete an on-line survey for me regarding the teacher training you received at Sterling College and how well prepared you felt you were to meet the needs of all students in your classroom.

I am now in the process of gathering some additional data for my work and wondered if you would be again be of assistance to me. I would like to ask you some questions based on the results of the survey data that I compiled.

We could communicate via e-mail or, if you would prefer, by phone.

Please let me know if you would be willing to help me out. I would be most grateful.

Thanks.

Gladys Ritterhouse

## APPENDIX M

### SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW CONTACT (E-MAIL)

Dear [Supervisor's Name],

My name is Gladys Ritterhouse and I am working on completing my doctoral dissertation.

Last fall you were kind enough to complete an on-line survey for me regarding the preparation of a teacher from Sterling College (Student Name) who was under your supervision his/her first year in the field.

I am now in the process of gathering some additional data for my work and wondered if you would be again be of assistance to me. I would like to ask you some questions based on the results of the survey data that I compiled.

We could communicate via e-mail or, if you would prefer, by phone.

Please let me know if you would be willing to help me out. I would be most grateful.

Thanks.

Gladys

APPENDIX N

SUPERVISOR/TEACHER PREPARATION FOR DIVERSITY SURVEY RESPONSES

Year / Question Respondent / #		Number of Responses				
<b>Q.1</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) understood and valued pluralism, the right for people to maintain their languages and culture while combining with others to form a new society reflective of all differences</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	2	4	3	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	2	0	0	0	1
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	2	2	3	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	2	1	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	1	4	0	0	0	1
Supervisors=4	0	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Q. 2</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) was aware that he/she (I) may have held biases and stereotypes toward other cultures.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=8	0	2	1	1	2	2
Supervisors=3	0	2	0	1	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	1	3	2	1	0	0
Supervisors=3	1	0	2	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	0	1	1	1	3	0
Supervisors=5	0	5	0	0	0	0
<b>Q. 3</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) viewed classroom situations from cultural perspectives other than his/her (my) own.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	1	6	2	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	1	2	1	1	2	0
Supervisors=3	0	1	1	1	0	0

2003-2004						
Teachers=6	1	2	2	0	1	0
Supervisors=5	1	3	1	0	0	0
<b>Q. 4</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) believed that diversity issues may keep some children from learning successfully.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2001-2002						
Teachers=8	1	3	3	0	0	1
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
2002-2003						
Teachers=7	4	2	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	1	1	0	1	0	0
2003-2004						
Teachers=5	2	2	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=5	0	5	0	0	0	0
<b>Q. 5</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) understood and valued the cultures (including race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, and language) of all students in his/her (my) classroom.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2001-2002						
Teachers=8	5	2	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	2	1	0	0	0	0
2002-2003						
Teachers=7	2	3	2	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	1	2	0	0	0	0
2003-2004						
Teachers=6	2	3	0	0	1	0
Supervisors=5	3	2	0	0	0	0
<b>Q. 6</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) assumed responsibility for the progress of all his/her (my) students regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2001-2002						
Teachers=9	6	3	0	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	2	1	0	0	0	0
2002-2003						
Teachers=7	3	3	0	1	0	0
Supervisors=3	2	1	0	0	0	0
2003-2004						
Teachers=6	4	2	0	0	0	0

Supervisors=5	2	3	0	0	0	0
<b>Q. 7</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) recognized that the formal register of language is found at school and in work places.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	0	7	0	0	2	0
Supervisors=3	0	2	0	1	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	1	4	0	0	1	1
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	2	2	1	0	0	1
Supervisors=5	1	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Q. 8</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) recognized barriers that existed between home and school regarding formal and casual language registers.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	0	6	3	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	1	4	1	0	1	0
Supervisors=3	1	0	1	1	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	0	4	1	0	0	1
Supervisors=5	2	2	1	0	0	0
<b>Q. 9</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) attempted to reach children and families despite language barriers.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	1	5	2	0	1	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	1	5	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	2	0	0	0	0	1
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	2	2	1	0	0	1
Supervisors=5	1	3	1	0	0	0
<b>Q. 10</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) taught the formal language register at school while honoring the casual language register of the home.</b>						

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	0	5	3	1	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	1	2	4	0	0	1
Supervisors=3	0	1	1	1	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	1	2	2	0	0	1
Supervisors=5	1	3	1	0	0	0
<b>Q. 11</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) put a high degree of effort into planning and instruction to help all students learn.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	5	2	1	1	0	0
Supervisors=0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	3	3	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	3	0	0	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	3	2	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=5	3	1	1	0	0	0
<b>Q. 12</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) structured learning experiences to accommodate the different cultures represented in his/her (my) classroom (race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionalities/special needs, or language).</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	3	4	3	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	2	1	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	2	2	3	0	0	0
Supervisors=2	1	0	1	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	2	3	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=5	0	3	1	0	0	1
<b>Q. 13</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) built bridges of meaning between home and school experiences.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						

Teachers=9	2	4	3	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=6	3	1	1	1	0	0
Supervisors=3	1	1	1	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	3	2	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=5	1	1	2	0	0	1
<b>Q. 14</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) used a wide variety of teaching strategies that addressed different learning styles.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=8	2	4	2	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	2	1	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	3	3	0	1	0	0
Supervisors=3	1	2	0	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	3	3	0	0	0	0
Supervisors=5	2	3	0	0	0	0
<b>Q. 15</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) helped students to know and affirm their respective cultures.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	1	5	3	1	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	1	2	2	1	1	0
Supervisors=1	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	1	3	1	1	0	0
Supervisors=5	0	3	1	0	0	1
<b>Q. 16</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) incorporated multicultural information, resources, and materials into his/her (my) teaching.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	1	5	3	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						

Teachers=7	1	3	2	1	0	0
Supervisors=3	1	1	1	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	2	3	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=5	1	2	1	0	0	1
<b>Q. 17</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) followed the textbook assuming that it offered diverse views of the curriculum.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	0	4	1	0	4	0
Supervisors=3	0	0	0	1	2	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=6	0	3	1	1	0	1
Supervisors=3	1	1	0	0	1	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	0	2	1	1	1	1
Supervisors=5	1	3	0	0	1	0
<b>Q. 18</b>						
<b>The teacher (I) adjusted curriculum to reflect diversity from the perspective of populations other than the European-American point of view.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=9	2	3	2	1	1	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	2	1	1	0	3	0
Supervisors=3	1	1	1	0	0	0
<b>2003-2004</b>						
Teachers=6	2	3	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=5	0	3	1	0	1	0
<b>Q. 19</b>						
<b>In order to present curriculum in the most effective manner, the teacher (I) implemented methods of instruction that met the needs of all his/her (my) students.</b>						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2001-2002</b>						
Teachers=8	2	4	2	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	0	3	0	0	0	0
<b>2002-2003</b>						
Teachers=7	3	3	1	0	0	0
Supervisors=3	2	1	0	0	0	0

2003-2004						
Teachers=6	2	4	0	0	0	0
Supervisors=5	2	2	1	0	0	0

## APPENDIX O

### SUPERVISOR/TEACHER SURVEY COMMENTS

#### SUPERVISOR SURVEY COMMENTS – ALL COHORTS

##### **CARING**

Faced with many challenges during his first year, including a student with both arms broken, the death of a student, and a student suffering a seizure during class. Through all these events he kept his cool, was resourceful, and dealt very professionally with each issue.

The question on bias is hard to answer because bias is usually kept under lock and key in a person's mind. It's sometimes hard to see when it is being masked. Then how do you, as an observer, know it's there?

Hard to answer all questions when the data needed is not present. The cultures last year were pretty much identical.

We try to teach correct language communication and discourage that which is not appropriate. In our opinion, things like Eubonics would not be acceptable.

I feel that she had an awareness of the need to meet the needs of diverse students and that she attempted to use strategies that she had been taught.

During her first year, I noticed that the activities that she had planned were at a primary level. After we had some time to discuss moving her activities to a higher cognitive level she did very well.

She was very aware of the needs in this area.

As a beginning teacher, I feel that she was making attempts to make adjustments for a diverse classroom.

This teacher understood there were differences and recognized those difference. Not unlike many of us, he could have benefited from having more researched tools for addressing such diverse needs.

This teacher's preparation level was above average and impressive as a first year teacher, not just culturally specific, but in general. He was very diligent and held a deep and wide vision for the success of all students.

This teacher demonstrated a genuine willingness to reach students at whatever level might be necessary.

Adequately prepared, far and above when I came out of university as a first year teacher.

Willing to take risks. Willing to do creative problem solving

She was ready to address the needs of the student, regardless of any diversity.

Highly organized, very effective strategies used, willing to work with all academic abilities

### **COMMUNICATION**

There really was not much opportunity for this teacher to demonstrate her beliefs or feelings about this topic.

Behavior management was a serious issue for her.

Some of these questions were not clear. Hopefully I answered them correctly. Just to clarify, Catherine is a teacher who would meet the needs of all children.

We do not have students with language barriers.

Professional, knowledgeable, and a team player. I would like to clone her as she is an excellent staff member and an extremely hard worker.

Seemed prepared. We don't have much cultural diversity.

Well-prepared.

Not really applicable in our school.

He was well-prepared I believe. We just didn't have much cultural diversity in the school/classroom.

Very well prepared. Mature and responsible.

She was very prepared and is an excellent teacher.

### **CURRICULUM**

No comments

### **INSTRUCTION**

No comments

### **TEACHER SURVEY COMMENTS – ALL COHORTS**

#### **CARING**

I thought I was adequately prepared.

I was prepared but didn't really have any to deal with.

I thought I was prepared to deal with them in the classroom

Though I did not experience a great deal of diversity in my experience at Sterling, I do believe I came away with an outlook that was effective in teaching culturally diverse students. It is extremely difficult for any teacher education program to teach about diversity and social differences we encounter in our classrooms, it is something you must embrace as you go and find ways to adapt your instruction/management to best serve students.

Through my student teaching experience I taught a limited number of ESL students. I did not however receive any ESL training at Sterling College. I believe some type of ESL course should be provided, as well as a conversational Spanish course. These would be of great assistance to new teachers who may go to an area such as mine, where 60% of the students are Hispanic and many use a native language of Spanish

My first year of teaching was an attempt to survive! I embraced the cultural differences of my students, but I was not knowledgeable about them enough to incorporate them into my classroom activities. In the middle school math classroom, I find it somewhat difficult to do. If I was teaching reading or another subject with more flexibility, I would have done more to encompass the cultures that were present in my classroom.

After discussing many of the above issues the past two years with colleagues, I have found that no matter where you went to college, it is impossible to have been prepared for what you encounter in our school. The shortcomings of Sterling College are no different from other institutions in my mind, however I do believe that there are things that we could do to make the program stronger. I would love to see more of an emphasis on encouraging teachers to reach out and teach in a low SES district, rather than teach in the comforts of Christian private schools. An emphasis on multi-cultural courses, ESL, etc. could strike passion in those who want to go beyond their comfort level and make a difference. Those students in private schools will get their education, we need quality teachers from Sterling to enter the tough districts and truly "Change the World", not just find a job that won't challenge them to do so. I am not saying that I am doing a wonderful job of that, but my students could tell you that I truly care for them more than most teachers in my building. It is tough to be a Christian in my school. It rips your heart out to see the

things our students go through. But these students need strong teachers who truly care, not teachers who show up, put in their time, and disconnect from their students once 3:30 comes. If Sterling could produce more teachers for schools such as mine, we could make more of an impact on these students' lives

I feel that I had a relatively good understanding of respecting other cultures from the training and experiences that I took from Sterling College. Making sure to impart this wisdom to my students seemed imperative. Making sure my students felt comfortable and safe was one of the many ways that I promoted learning.

My first year class seemed to all come from rather homogeneous families. Speaking the same

language. This made for a rather easy transition in looking at other cultures because there were many things still unknown to my students about other cultures and languages

As a first year teacher, I had many things to learn and one of them was: How would I be able to make learning for a reality in my classroom. If I was able to do this I would ensure that no child would be left behind. I sought out the wisdom of more experienced teachers, spent long hours making sure my plans would meet all of my students needs and was flexible when they didn't.

I had many things to learn about curriculum. I spent many hours making sure my plans would meet all of my students needs, looking at them from every angle to ensure that higher level thinking would take place. I provide learning activities and situations in a variety of ways.

The classroom that I taught in was 98% Hispanic and 96% free and reduced, communication between parents was difficult because I didn't speak Spanish. I was able to use students and peers to assist in communication. Parents were wonderful and very supportive of their child's education, the language barrier was never a real issue.

I felt prepared to meet the needs of my culturally diverse students. I think my preparedness came from my background experience growing up in a culturally diverse community, as well as, my education.

I placed a lot of time and effort into planning activities for cultural diversity. My school district places a high priority on cultural diversity. If my school district had not had such high expectations, I probably would not have put forth as much effort.

I believe I was prepared to meet the needs of culturally diverse students through my course work at Sterling College. In addition, I was raised in a culturally diverse community and feel this has helped me as a teacher.

In physical education - language barriers can be overcome with teaching practices such as: Modeling (Model the skill or action you want the students to work on)

In addition, working in a culturally diverse school district, many students may be able to help the teacher. For example: a student that fluently speaks Spanish and has little or no vocabulary in English can be partnered with a student who is fluent in Spanish and English.

## **COMMUNICATION**

My class was very diverse in race and special needs. I feel I integrated my lessons to cover many areas that helped reflect each student's culture and strived to have every student with special needs in my class reach success.

I had a special needs student in my class who needed both my help at school and the help of his guardian (grandmother) at home. The grandmother did the best she could at home considering the student's needs and the fact that her education was not of a high level. I found that more of the weight to have this child succeed was put on my shoulders and that of the school due to the low educational level of the guardian. (The student did complete the 3rd grade with a B average)

which I was very pleased with.)

I think [Midwest] College helped me to see the importance of integrating subjects to cover all learning styles better. I use art a lot to get lessons across such as fraction bars or science landforms. By integrating subjects it also gives me the opportunity to explore the many cultures in my class. I would say 30% of my class was Hispanic and we did a lot to allow them to demonstrate and discuss aspects of their cultures.

I don't think all the textbooks can cover the needs and cultures in any classroom. I did many assignments to extend the teaching in the book in order to more accurately and thoroughly meet the academic needs of my classroom.

I had the opportunity to student teach in Chicago. Therefore, I believe that I was prepared. I had the assistance and support of other teachers during my practicum if needed to assistance. This opportunity gave me confidence as a first year educator going out into the field.

Again in student teaching, there were many different languages that were spoken by my students. I took in consideration the different languages but also taught the importance of English grammar in speech and writing.

I think that as an elementary educator it is easier to integrate different cultures through children's literature, guests, and field trips. The curriculum used at our school, Core Knowledge allows for MANY opportunities.

Again the scope and sequence of Core Knowledge ([www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org)) makes is extremely possible to discuss and teach about different cultures.

I do wish that I would have been more prepared to work with the gifted students.

I don't feel as though I was adequately prepared of meeting the needs of ALL my students during the first year of teaching. I don't think you learn how to be successful in the classroom until you are in the situation. If any extra help is needed, it would be extra student teaching in various fields of study to prepare you for all kinds of learners.

I feel that I could have used more training in lesson planning for the culturally diverse. We go into the field with nothing in our hands and are expected to create wonderful things. I believe it is the responsibility of the school to help to provide you with materials and supporters to encourage and help you. I thankfully had a wonderful team of people to help me plan.

I basically followed the other English teacher's guides. I did what they did the first year.

I felt I had plenty of intellectual knowledge, but very little experiential knowledge on dealing with diverse students. It is a shock to me when I see some children come to school. I once I get over this shock of their situation, I am fine. I have feel confident in strategies to help these students, it is just getting over the initial awe that all those things I learned about in class are actually true. While being very removed from my life, they are very real parts of some of my

students lives.

I don't remember ever discussing casual and formal language registers in classes. I am aware that they exist in society and when contacting a parent at home I attempt to use formal language in a succinct [sic] and non-threatening way. At school I use formal language.

All these answers are based off of my understanding (or lack thereof) of the registers from this survey.

I feel as though my preparation level was fine, but am slapped in the face by these questions because I haven't been doing as much as I should. I find myself working during my planning time on just keeping my programs running, let alone trying to incorporate this kind of planning into my teaching.

Again, I feel the level of preparation was fine, my time in planning to implement it all is not there. I feel as though I am just able to keep my head above water by accomplishing all the things I am supposed to.

From these questions I know I need to do more. Right now I am just trying to get the basics to work. For learning to take place and get through the day without anyone getting hurt and not letting myself burn out.

## **CURRICULUM**

The greater source of preparation for me in meeting the needs of my culturally diverse students came primarily from pursuing a minor in Special Education and from personal experience. I was minimally introduced to cultural diversity issues through the regular education program.

Most of my preparation for meeting the needs of diverse language learners came from Special Education classes and from personal experience. I was minimally introduced to working with diverse language learners in the regular education program.

I felt prepared to give my students, including any culturally diverse students, effective learning experiences. This came from personal experiences of teaching ESL in South Korea, private tutoring a wide variety of culturally diverse students, and having grown up in many different places in the United States. As for being prepared by the Sterling College Education Program? They perhaps enhanced the experiences I already had. The college provided the opportunity to teach overseas- definitely an educational experience!

I remember that through the Sterling College Education Program, I was given the experience to present lessons in a number of different methods. I was taught how to teach a concept several different ways in order to meet various learning needs. That was helpful!

Depending on the school one teaches at, it would be helpful to have an ESL certification of some sort. Taking Special Education classes helped me tremendously as I met a wide variety of learning needs. The regular education program at Sterling College did provide for us a class

introducing special needs of students. However, pursuing a minor in Special Education helped so much more.

Used techniques and strategies learned in Cultural Diversity at Sterling College, along with trial and error for ways to meet need of those students

With only a few students in each class, it was easier for me in my first year to be prepared for issue of diversity. Had opportunity to spend more one on one time with diverse students than I would have at a larger school

I need to do a better job of tying into the different backgrounds my students come from; I expected I guess to much from them to know the culture they are living in now

My first year was more of getting prepared for everyone, and the extra effort to make adjustments for the culturally diverse was not there. However that will come one with experience and two with the fact that I know have a set curriculum which I know works and can start to tie more things in as the years are collected under my belt.

I felt well prepared to meet the needs of ALL students in my classroom. My professors placed my observations in practicum at schools where I was able see several different dynamics. I also felt that if I ever had any questions I was blessed enough with my college experience to have a support staff of colleagues, professors, and cooperating teachers in which to direct questions

I felt well prepared to serve the two English Language Learners that I had in my classroom. During my practicum at Lyons and presentations from field teachers I was able to rely on my notes, experiences, and support teachers to meet this student's needs.

I was able to take all of the skills learned in Reading Methods to immerse the students in information and media.

A task that is not always easy! However, it is always an exciting challenge. My preparation allowed me to realize that I can start with small adjustments and delve deeper as students' interest and needs widen. While student teaching at Sterling I was lucky enough to participate in "text-book grading" as the school selected a new textbook series. Working with the criteria, I was able to look through my curriculum and decide what I needed to modify in order to meet the needs of my students

I had little exposure to cultural diversity in my first classroom.

There were no language barriers between myself and any of my students or parents.

There were very few differences in cultures of my students.

I did more adjusting for students' needs for learning rather than for cultural reasons.

I don't have many diversities in my classroom, but I do know I wouldn't have any problems if I

would.

I made sure that if I thought it was important that the student would see this at least four or five times so that it would be in their brain when I gave a test. I also did journals in junior high instead of tests. I also did speeches instead of tests in my health class for a chapter on drugs.

There is virtually no economic or racial diversity.

I had no bi-lingual students or parents.

I did not use a text book.

## **INSTRUCTION**

I feel I was prepared to meet the needs of culturally diverse students in my classroom.

I was prepared to teach proper English to my students in my classroom.

I think it is difficult to be prepared for all the kinds of diversity that I might experience in my classroom. I have to do the best that I can.

Since I teach students with many exceptionalities all of the instruction was individualized. I felt very prepared to meet the many diverse needs of my students.

Entering the classroom my first year, I felt confident in my ability to recognize the needs of diverse populations. Since my studies had been focused in special education; I was especially prepared to differentiate instruction for that population. Student teaching in a town with a large

Number of ESL students helped me learn to focus also on English Language Learners and incorporate them into my classroom.

Coming from a student teaching experience in a low-income school, it was a bit of a shock to adjust to the culture of the very wealthy class that I found myself teaching. While I was well-prepared to teach students coming from low-income and ESL homes, I underestimated the need to learn the culture of the upper class. Almost all the students I taught my first year had parents who were doctors, lawyers, executives and engineers. Most had minimal contact with parents and had very rarely ever been made to take responsibility for their actions. While there are very definite benefits to having kids come to school prepared to learn, I was overwhelmed at times with parents who expected their children to consistently perform several years above grade level. I was thankful for the Ruby Payne training that my district required before I began teaching and found some of the information in that program to be extremely beneficial.

Despite most of my students coming from high income homes, they also had severe needs. Many were non-verbal or had limited ability to communicate. I was well-prepared to meet the language needs of these students using a variety of interventions and augmentative communication techniques.

Since all my children were on an IEP, my entire focus was on individualized education. Each

night I reviewed the IEPs and kept data on the goals that I was working on as well as how they aligned with district and state standards. The needs of my students drove my planning and instruction on a daily basis. As I became increasingly proficient in this area, I was soon able to plan for the needs of other students who were not meeting standards but were not on an IEP. I was able to effectively include these students in my groups and lessons also as I taught inclusive units in the regular education classroom. I felt prepared for this kind of planning as I entered the teaching profession, but it became much easier with time and experience.

Since all of my students are below grade level, making adjustments to the curriculum was vital to their learning. Many of these adjustments included modifying tests and assignments, finding books at a lower reading level that still addressed the topic, and using alternate response methods such as written or oral responses, augmentative communication and power point. I was prepared to make these adjustments, but again, became more proficient as I learned about other resources that were available.

I felt the education that I received in college and the time spent in classrooms during college helped to prepare me to handle situations where diversity was present.

I felt that I was adequately prepared to handle diverse language learners. My skills in that area improved as the year progressed.

As the year progressed, I began to better understand what my students needed, and was therefore, able to meet their needs

I did not need to make too many adjustments, but with the help of peers in the building, I was able to make adjustments when they were needed.

**OTHER COMMENTS:**

I honestly didn't feel very prepared at all when I first started this job! I just had to learn from experience and the expertise of fellow teachers!

I think that I was prepared very well for the diversities that might be in a classroom situation. However, I was in a very low-income school and was very shocked at the socio-economic status in my school and my very own classroom. Having known that I was going to be in this situation, I would have really liked to have discussed with professors more intently on this form of diversity.

I was not very prepared for my experience at the school that I am at. It is very low income and mostly Hispanic. I have to have an interpreter at parent-teacher conferences, and the problems that the children have are very complicated!

Our language barrier for the most part was ESL families! I learned that you just treat everyone equally, and do your best to communicate effectively!

I had many special situations in my first year of teaching, that are very unique to any teacher let alone a first year one. There were situations that I would have never even thought to ask in a

diversity class. I think for an overall perception of Diversity, I was well prepared.

I was not prepared and need interpreters often. The children do not receive ESL help here!

Once again, I didn't feel all that competent in teaching multi-culturalism. It all came from experience once I began teaching. I think there should be more of an emphasis on this subject in college.

We were prepared very well on planning at any level. I felt very prepared to teach any lesson and I think that my diverse class responded well.

I was overwhelmed my first year with behavior problems here, and I was not prepared to provide language diversity.

I taught first grade and we didn't have text books, but many of the books we read were full of various diverse topics and lessons. My kids gained quite an understanding for different kids' their age and the different cultures. I didn't have much ethnic diversity, but lots of academic level and economic diversity.

I was not very prepared but handled lessons with a diverse attitude since a lot of my children did not speak much English at all!

Overall, I felt very prepared to meet the diverse needs of my students. However, the most vital skill I learned in the education program at Sterling College was not any particular method or research driven technique. I was constantly encouraged to research best practices on my own and study what I didn't know. As I began to teach, I was not confident that I knew everything (in fact I knew how much I needed to learn), I was confident though that I had the skills to continue my education. I have found that when a topic arises that I need more training on, I can find studies, books and workshops to educate myself. In this way, I can continue to learn to meet the needs of all my students.

APPENDIX P

ACCREDITATION TEAM FINAL REPORT COMMENTS 2002/2004

Standard 1. Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions: Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other professional school personnel know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002, p. 14).

September 2002 Comments from Accreditation Team Final Report (State Department of Education, 2002):

Prepared	Not Prepared
1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
(see matching comments below)	(see matching comments below)

October 2004 Comments from Accreditation Team Final Report (State Department of Education, 2004):

Prepared	Not Prepared
8, 9, 10	
(see matching comments below)	

Standard 3. Field Experience and Clinical Practice: The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school personnel develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002, p. 25).

September 2002 Comments from Accreditation Team Final Report (State Department of Education, 2002):

Prepared

Not Prepared

11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

(see matching comments below)

October 2004 Comments from Accreditation Team Final Report [State Department of Education, 2004 #619]:

Prepared

Not Prepared

17, 18, 19

(see matching comments below)

Standard 4. Diversity: The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates, and diverse students in P-12 schools (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002, p. 29).

September 2002 Comments from Accreditation Team Final Report (State Department of Education, 2002):

Prepared

Not Prepared

20

21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28,

(see matching comments below)

(see matching comments below)

October 2004 Comments from Accreditation Team Final Report (State Department of Education, 2004):

Prepared

Not Prepared

29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34

(see matching comments below)

Standard 1. Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions: 2002 Accreditation Team Final Report Comments (State Department of Education, 2002)

1. Anecdotal evidence indicates that candidates entering student teaching and graduates of the Teacher Education Program do possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for teachers (p. 15).
2. Although communication skills are addressed in more than one course, learning about families, community contexts, and diversity are included in a course that has not yet been offered (p. 13).
3. There was not assurance the candidates who have recently completed and who are currently in the program had sufficient information to address diversity in their roles as teachers (p. 13).
4. No items on the *Student Teacher Instructional Observation Form* specifically addressed impact on student learning (p. 15).
5. Limited data available was insufficient to document that the candidates possess these competencies and do positively impact the learning of all students (p. 15).
6. There is no assurance that candidates who have recently completed and who are currently in the program have sufficient information to address diversity in their roles as teachers. *While a course related to diversity is identified as a program requirement, the course has not been offered, and conflicting information exists related to the course title, description, and credit hours* (p. 16).

7. There is limited evidence that candidates can assess learning. *Although the Teacher Education Department's mission addressed student learning ("...development of life-long learners"), evidence to document candidates' abilities to do so was not included. (p. 16)*

Standard 1. Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions: 2004 Accreditation Team Final Report Comments [State Department of Education, 2004 #619]:

8. Unit goals II and IV (Classroom Environment and Professional Responsibilities) are the focus of candidates acquiring skills and knowledge in which they consider the school family and community contexts (p. 14).
9. Focus on student learning for the teacher candidates is systematically laid out during all five levels of MCTEP's candidate performance assessment beginning with differential instruction and then the planning of strategies that will enable them to meet the needs of every student (p. 17).
10. The candidates are able to appreciate the developmental stages of the students as well as environmental issues and thus ascertain that student learning is indeed taking place (p. 17).

Standard 3. Field Experience: 2002 Accreditation Team Final Report Comments [State Department of Education, 2002 #618]:

11. *Teacher Instruction Observation Form*. This instrument primarily assessed the candidate's performance; no item on the instrument focused on student learning specifically (p. 24).
12. Because of that lack of information, assurances that candidates have experience with students from diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds could not be made (p. 25).
13. The evaluations of student teaching focused on assessment of the candidate's

performance without an assessment of the candidate's effect on student learning (p. 25).

14. Opportunities for a range of field experiences including students with diverse learning needs and those from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds were limited (p. 25).
15. There is little evidence that assessment data are collected or used to determine candidates performance and effect on student learning. *Candidates indicated only a very general strategy for assessing student performance and no data were presented to show impact upon student learning (p. 26).*
16. There are limited opportunities for candidates to participate in field experiences or clinical practice that includes students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. *The area is not culturally diverse although the diversity of the area is increasing. In order to be prepared to work with diverse populations, candidates need classroom instruction and field experiences with students from culturally and ethnically diverse environments (p. 26).*

Standard 3. Field Experience: 2004 Accreditation Team Final Report Comments [State Department of Education, 2004 #619]:

17. Candidates develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions to help all students learn (p. 28).
18. Clinical Cooperating teachers report that candidates excel at adapting instruction for all students and that the candidate are better prepared for the clinical teaching experience than they were several years ago (p. 28).
19. The candidates have sufficient and varied experiences to be prepared to have a positive effect on the learning of all students (p. 28).

Standard 4. Diversity: 2002 Accreditation Team Final Report Comments [State Department of

Education, 2002 #618]:

20. All candidates demonstrate dispositions that value fairness to all students (p. 27)
21. The Department was not clear about the proficiencies related to diversity that candidates should develop during their program, and field experiences did not appear to be tracked or monitored in ways that guarantee students the opportunity to work with the most diverse student populations possible (p. 27).
22. There was little evidence that curriculum and field experiences for candidates are deliberately designed to prepare candidates to work effectively with diverse populations, and many candidates lacked an understanding of the importance of diversity in learning (p. 27).
23. There was no strong evidence that candidates were able to incorporate diversity in their teaching or that they were able to establish a classroom and school climate that valued diversity (p. 27).
24. No plan was offered to increase the opportunity for teacher candidates to work with more diverse faculty or school personnel, colleagues, or students in P-12 schools (p. 27).
25. Assessments of candidate proficiencies did not measure the candidates' abilities to help all students learn (p. 27).
26. Candidates did not have an understanding of the importance of diversity in teaching and learning (p. 28).
27. There is limited evidence that candidates are developing skills to incorporate diversity into their teaching (p. 28).
28. Assessments of candidate proficiencies did not provide data on candidates' abilities to help all students learn.(p.28).

Standard 4. Diversity: 2004 Accreditation Team Final Report Comments [State Department of Education, 2004 #619]:

29. The MCTEP unit has designed curriculum, field assignments and clinical experiences to insure that candidates develop a knowledge of understanding of and ability to incorporate appropriate learning styles and strategies in units and lesson plans that meet the needs of diverse students (p.29).
30. As candidates progress through the program the theme of “planning engaging instruction that addresses the needs of diverse students” is evident (p. 29).
31. Items in the rubrics require that the candidate has planned for accommodations or modifications in lesson plans (p. 29).
32. Candidates have multiple multicultural experiences as they progress through the four levels of the program: awareness of diversity, recognition of diversity, understanding bias, different cultures, diverse learners, multiple intelligences, learning styles, and class environment.( p. 29).
33. Interviews with host teachers and cooperating teachers affirm the ability of the candidates to work successfully with diverse learners (p. 29).
34. Even though Midwest College is not demographically located in an area of high minorities, the unit has provided candidates with a culturally responsive environment, knowing that candidates leave the college culturally aware and able to work in diverse situations, whether the situation is with minority students, students of varied socio-economic status, or special needs students (p. 32).