

Appendix B

Teachers for a New Era: Stepping Up to the Future

The University of Washington is ready to reinvent the way it prepares teachers. Despite decades of dramatic social, cultural, economic, and intellectual changes, teacher preparation looks remarkably like it did fifty years ago. Yet we have learned a great deal from research about the dynamics of schools, classrooms and communities, learning, and what teachers need to understand and be able to do. We know also that teachers benefit from opportunities to integrate theory and research with clinical practice. Further, they must continue to learn across their careers, drawing from new knowledge and adapting to their ever-changing socially and culturally diverse classrooms. Teachers need support to continue learning after they graduate.

The University of Washington proposes to undertake all of these: redesign curriculum, expand contexts for learning, extend support to teachers beyond graduation, and then to evaluate results. To do this demands a restructuring of the leadership of teacher preparation, moving it from the exclusive domain of the College of Education to a University entity, the *Washington Center for Teaching and Learning*. Symbolically, this communicates to internal and external constituencies that teacher education is the responsibility of the entire University and its partner schools. Functionally, it provides an administrative “middle ground” where faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), CE, other University units, and P-12 schools can collaborate to shape and delivery the program and evaluate their efforts. The Center will be led by the Associate Provost and co-directors from the Colleges of Education and Arts and Sciences.

To ensure that we do not mistake good intentions for results, we will subject our efforts to the tough test of classroom results: at the end of the day, what are the P-12 pupils learning, and how has that changed? Analysis and assessment will be at the core of this effort. To continually review and renew the program, we will establish an Evaluation of Learning Team, as well as draw upon the expertise of an external evaluator.

Sustained Teacher Education Program (STEP). Teachers require an integrated system of support that extends from the beginning of teacher preparation and into the early phases of their careers. The University of Washington is creating such a system through STEP, focused on the continuing development of subject matter knowledge, evidence-based learning, and inquiry into culture and context. This requires the combined resources from a partnership of the University administration, the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Public Affairs, Engineering, and Education, and the P-12 schools, community organizations, and local businesses.

STEP I – Preservice. This new program begins with an undergraduate degree that: (a) recruits a diverse student body from the undergraduate population and from community colleges; (b) integrates educational foundations into undergraduate coursework; (c) creates coherence between subject-matter majors, education courses, and clinical experiences; (d) helps prospective teachers to understand their own learning; and (e) accommodates late deciders.

The program extends for four quarters after prospective teachers earn their B.A. in an academic field and addresses: (a) development of pedagogical content knowledge, (b) practical knowledge of the embedded pedagogical issues; (c) attention to learning and evidence thereof; (d) the skills to teach in an a complex, underserved context; (e) the development of departmental versus individual mentoring; and (f) connecting university classrooms to public school classrooms via technology; and (g) learning opportunities for P-12 mentoring departments in partner schools with support from both arts and sciences and education faculty.

STEP II – Induction. Our graduates begin their teaching careers in underserved settings with a two-year induction program that has three components: in-person, on-site mentoring by experienced, successful teachers; on-line and teleconferenced study groups provided by COE and A&S faculty to address both content and pedagogical issues; and an on-going seminar for mentor teachers.

STEP III – Professional Development. We will gather evidence that enables our teachers to plan their own professional development aimed at their students' needs. At the University we will model the use of an evidence-driven system by establishing data collection, analysis, and feedback loops to continuously review and strengthen our own program.