Professional Development Report
2009 – 2010
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CRITERION 1: TEACHING

INTRODUCTION

The IFO contract states that: "For teaching faculty, effective teaching shall be the principal proportion of the five criteria considered in evaluation…Evaluation may address effectiveness in course development, curriculum design, instructional innovation, ability to organize, analyze and present knowledge, instructional advisement and other such related activities…Evidence may include, but is not limited to: Peer reviews, quality of syllabi, nature and quality of assignments, practices and quality for assessing student progress, timelines of evaluation of student performance, pedagogical approaches, attention to student advisement, nature and frequency of course development and timeliness of revision, timeliness of work assignments, and addressing multicultural perspectives in teaching methods."

This section includes a summary and discussion of evidence related to improved and effective teaching. I have used a course portfolio strategy to track revisions and materials for several courses. For example, I have portfolios for EEC 227, EEC 365, and EEC 412 that include intentional course redesign; old and new course syllabi; powerpoint presentations; and reflections about changes to instruction. My reflections about these portfolios are included in the last section of this section for Criterion 1: Effective Teaching.

GOALS AND DOCUMENTATION (Summary)

Goal 1: Successfully complete teaching assignments.
1.   MSU course schedule.
2.   MSU reports on student credit hour production.

Goal 2: Improve and strengthen my teaching and my courses by soliciting and reflecting on student feedback and evaluation of courses.
1.   Student evaluations show average at least a 3 on a 5 point scale in each of the classes taught for each year in service.
2.   Reflection on feedback from observation by Student Consultant on Teaching through CETL.

Goal 3: Re-design three courses.
1.   Ongoing course preparation and revision: old and new course syllabi; powerpoint presentation; reflection paper;
2.   Annual submission of assessment data from courses taught and field experiences supervised.

REFLECTIONS

Teaching Assignments

Documentation from the MSU Office of Institutional Research shows that I completed teaching assignments:

Table 1: Enrollment, Student Credit Hour Production,
and Description of Courses Taught AY10 by E. Sandell[1]

Sem	Yr	Course	Title	Enrl	Hrs	Role	Format
Fall	09	200-01	Intro to Elem Educ	22	66	Teacher	3.0 hr/wk class
Fall	09	227-01	Dev & Lrng in EC	26	78	Teacher	3.0 hr/wk class
Fall	09	365-01	Infant-Toddler	23	69	Teacher	3.0 hr/wk class
Fall	09	366-01	Infant-Toddler FX	23	23	Teacher	1.0 hr/wk field exp
Fall	09	412-02	Kindergarten	22	66	Teacher	3.0 hr/wk class
Spr	10	222w-02	Human Relations	25	75	Teacher	3.0 hr/wk class
Spr	10	245-01	Health, Safety, & Nut	24	72	Teacher	3.0 hr/wk class
Spr	10	368-01	Pre-Kindergarten	31	124	Teacher	4.0 hr/wk class
Spr	10	369-01	Pre-Kindergarten FX	31	31	Teacher	1.0 hr/wk field exp
Spr	10	499-14	Individual Study	2	5	Mentor	
				229	609		

In my experience, the EEC department could achieve some economies of scale. On example relates to EEC 222w, Human Relations in a Multicultural Society. This 3-credit course is also a writing-intensive course that requires a high level of instructor response and feedback on student work. For Fall 2010, I was assigned to teach 3 sections of EEC 222w, along with one section of EEC 365 and one section of EEC 366. This meant that I carry 13 credits of work for fall semester. Since EEC 222w is a writing-intensive course, I suggested dropping one section and allowing 38 students in each of the other two sections, while still allocating work load and salary for 9 credits (equal to 3 sections of 3 credits). This allowed me to actively teach class fewer hours and use those hours for grading and feedback. If a graduate assistant were assigned to grading course assignments, I could still teach 3 large sections of EEC 222w. This may be valuable because the course is also a general education course and a diversity course – thereby greatly appealing to non-Elementary Education majors throughout MSU.

Student Feedback about Instruction

Student course evaluations were collected anonymously and compiled by the MSU Office of Institutional Research. I also used questions periodically throughout the semester to get student responses to course methodologies, scheduling, textbooks, etc. In addition, I was observed by a

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[1] Based on reports generated by Institutional Research, Minnesota State University, Mankato. September 3, 2010.

CETL Student Consultant on Teaching (SCOT), who also interviewed students for their feedback about my teaching.

Student Course Evaluations

According to the MSU Office of Institutional Research, these are the composite scores on student course evaluations this year:

Table 2: Mean Scores in Student Course Evaluations AY10 for E. Sandell[2]

Item	AY10
Course as a whole	3.97
Instructor's contribution to course	4.11
Use of class time	3.70
Instructor's interest in student learning	4.25
Amount learned in course	3.85
Evaluative & grading techniques	3.64
Clarity of student responsibilities	3.66
Course organization	3.75
Instructor's contribution to discussion	4.32
Instructor's use of examples	4.07
Quality of questions raised by instructor	3.87
Student confidence in instructor's knowledge	4.21
Instructor's enthusiasm	4.52
Encouragement for student expression	4.39
Answers to student questions	4.15

A comparison of student course evaluations shows consistent high scores, from a low of 3.64 to a high of 4.52 on a 5-point scale. Average student course evaluations for my teaching have always been above 3.5. This exceeded the average of 3.0 suggested in the EEC department standards.

Student Feedback

In addition to student course evaluations, I received student feedback during AY10, I received student feedback during an observation by a student consultant sponsored by the Minnesota State University Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). The Students Consulting on Teaching (SCOT) program involves specially-selected student consultants who are trained to gather data on classroom instructional activities. After the SCOTs observe the class and listen to the students (in the absence of the instructor), the SCOT provides the instructor with feedback. The program provides faculty members with information that helps them have a better sense of what is happening in their classrooms. The program is available to all instructors at the university. The SCOT student consultants are MSU students who are interested in the teaching and learning process. They provide valuable insights to supplement student evaluations and peer reviews.

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[2] Reports generated by Institutional Research, Minnesota State University, Mankato. August 31, 2010.

Students Consulting on Teaching, 2009 – 2010
Photograph used by permission, CETL, MSU, Mankato

During the last 15 minutes of class, I left the classroom while the SCOT observer conducted interviews with students to assess how well they are learning and how they perceive the class. The observers asked the students to respond verbally and in writing to questions such as:
- o   What helps your learning in this class?
- o   What hinders your learning in this class?
- o   What suggestions do you have for this class?

For more information: http://www.mnsu.edu/cetl/programs/SCOT_Faculty_Handbook.pdf

Here are the comments from the SCOT observation .

What helps students learn in this class:
a.   Organization
b.   Hands on activities (19)
c.   Instructor's attitude (2)
d.   Explanation of standards (2)
e.   Power points on D2L (1)
f.   Examples of past students work shown in class (2)

What hinders students learning in this class:
a.   Unsure of due dates (3)
b.   Not having enough guidance on assignments (8)
c.   Lesson packet can be confusing (5)*
d.   Other people talking (5)
e.   Lack of new material/repetition from other classes (2)*

Suggestions the students have for improving this class:
a.   Not having the class so much, it could be 2 days per week* (6)
b.   Have this class offered on-line/more on-line time (4)
c.   Put the course packet online to save paper (1)
d.   Be able to do work days at home (3)
e.   Let students pick their own partners (3)
f.   Less video (6)
g.   Longer time between lesson plans (4)*

h.   Provide a table of contents for the lesson packet*

Transitions
a.   They connect the material well (12)
b.   They need a little bit of work (4)

Learned:
a.   How to write a more detailed lesson plan (6)
b.   Good activities to bring to the class room (3)
c.   Creative curricular (1)
d.   How to bring in health snacks and a variety of choices to bring in (9)
e.   Songs to use in my classroom (4)
f.   How to apply standards (4)

What I observed:
a.   Students had a lot of side conversations at some tables and not much at other tables
b.   Students had very little (if any) use of electronics such as cell phones or computers.
c.   Professor had very neat handwriting on the board
d.   Professor had good connections/transitions to material learned
e.   About ½ of the students took notes during class
f.   Fun and interesting learning environment.

Course Revisions

Here are some ways in which I have changed my instruction policies and strategies based on student evaluations and feedback.

Instructional Hours: Each of my course syllabi since AY08 has included a paragraph about the number of hours that a student should expect to put into work for each class. Here is an example from a 3-credit course:

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This course includes hours 135 hours of learning experiences. This is based on 3 hours each week of learning in organized instructional time (in class and in field observations) and 6 additional hours each week of learning outside organized instructional time. The instructional strategies for this course will include various methods and strategies for enhancing learning: cooperative large and small group activities, role-playing, simulations, assigned and elective readings, lectures, multi-media presentations, guest speakers, field trips, field experiences, and inquiry-oriented discussion circles. (EEC 412 Syllabus, Fall 2009).

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At the beginning of each semester, I review this information with students and remind them that organized instructional time may be in a classroom setting or outside a classroom setting. Also, at the beginning of each semester, I negotiate with students such that we usually do not take 10-minute breaks every hour. Students have the opportunity during small group activities to excuse themselves if they need a break. Consequently, we usually complete the class

meeting 20 to 30 minutes before the posted time. For some courses, we may have fewer meetings on campus.

During Fall semesters, students seem to feel disconnected from many campus-based courses. This may have been due to some of the scheduling issues this class experiences that are related to the Block I field experiences. During Fall 2009:
October 23 was a faculty duty day, with no classes at MSU.
On-campus classes did not meet on October 30, November 6, and November 13, because students were off-campus for Block I field experiences.
November 26 was a holiday with no classes at MSU.

Class continuity is disrupted regularly because of the department's approach to cancelling all campus-based classes during field experiences. In the past, this has been complicated because the dates for Elementary Education Block I field experiences are different than the dates for Primary Block field experiences. Since there sometimes are students from both blocks in EEC 412, some students are off-campus when others are on-campus.

Course Assignments: During Fall 2009, students expressed some concerns about EEC 227: confusing assignments, additional last-minute requirements, the purpose of the "museum in a suitcase," the review of student presentations, requirements for initial course readings, and email communications.

The syllabus and material for EEC 227 included detailed information about all assignments: general description, instructions, rubric, and announcements. I also provided several updates during the semester by email announcements. In the past, when students needed academic help, I occasionally referred them to the Center for Academic Success (CAS). The CAS staff members usually ask for the instructions and rubrics related to the assignments. I have had compliments from the CAS staff members about the clarity and thoroughness of the instructions for my assignments.

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From the Syllabus: This is an individual assignment. You will plan, prepare, and demonstrate a suitcase of interactive activities to foster development and learning in early childhood. Your material should be documented with plans, artifacts and student reflections. Include a variety of activities around the selected theme. Your collection should include a list of materials needed, instructions to parents, etc. You will have an expense "account" to collect the materials for $10.00 or less from The Neighborhood Thrift Store. Save and turn in your receipts. Demonstrate the activity in class. Creativity and good use of time will count!! Materials will be donated to a not-for-profit infant/toddler program after the semester. (Course syllabus, EEC 227, Fall 2009)

From D2L: Each "Museum in a Suitcase" will be a small, rolling suitcase filled with educational games, toys, manipulative resources, books and supplies… enough for groups of ten children and adults. They should make great center activities, or

they can be designed to enhance whole group instruction. Each suitcase has a different theme, but the possibilities are endless! (EEC 227, Fall 2009)

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The grading rubric for this assignment included points for theme and content appropriate for the ages of children using the materials; use of artifacts and materials; citation of resources; planning and instructions for adults interacting with children around materials in the suitcase; and professional presentation, delivery and language.

In EEC 227, we discussed the "Museum-in-a-Suitcase" assignment repeatedly in class throughout the semester. As I reviewed materials that students were drafting and bringing in for discussion during the semester, I realized that students were just creating fun activities, without any thought to why and how those activities were related to children's development and learning. Students had not made the link themselves, so I sent the email and asked them to be sure to clarify their thinking before they made their presentations in class. There was nothing in that email that we had not already discussed during class. It was not <u>another</u> assignment; it was an opportunity for them to <u>make</u> <u>improvements</u> in a previously described assignment.

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Plan to send me an email to tell me:
1) the theoretical basis of your suitcase.
2) how the activities in your suitcase are related to at least one of the theorists that we have studied in class.
3) how parents, teachers, and children can use the materials in your suitcase for learning and for fun.

As I mentioned in class last week, I do want to see your suitcase products. However, we know that you may want to make improvements for a better grade after your presentation this week. So, you may choose:
1) turn in everything (including the email mentioned above) this Thursday, Nov. 12 OR
2) make improvements and turn in everything on or before Friday, Nov. 20.

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The "Museum in a Suitcase" was designed as a capstone project for the course… a way for students to put into practice what they learned about theories of children's development and learning. In EEC 227, we discussed this assignment repeatedly in class throughout the semester. Peter Olson, Director, Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota, visited class to explain how such interactive activities were valuable to families in the community and how such activities needed to be soundly based in theories of child development and learning (the topic for EEC 227).

EEC 227 does not have a field experience built into the class or related directly to the class. Several students have told me how much they appreciated the Suitcase project. One student wrote me in an email:

From: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
Sent: Sunday, January 10, 2010 12:36 PM
To: Sandell, Elizabeth Jill
Subject: RE: EEC 227 grading

Hi,

Hope you had a good break!

I loved the Museum in a Suitcase project! It gave me a chance to explore some ideas and come up with a creative project for the local community to take part in. It is a wonderful opportunity for future educators to take part in. It gives us the chance to brain storm, create, and present our ideas like we will eventually to our own classroom some day!

Peter Olson and Board members from the Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota were present for student presentations and helped give students feedback about their work. This provided more objective and "real-world" feedback to students. The presentations happened on a class date when I was in Australia for a professional conference. However, a graduate student helped to organize and monitor the class meeting. Peter and the CMSM Board members were ecstatic to be involved in this project. The CMSM started to really use the students' work in CMSM activities beginning in November, 2009.

Initial Course Readings: I use the first day of class meetings to actually teach and discuss, not just to go over the syllabus and then dismiss the students from class. I learned this during my experience in the Faculty Teaching Certificate Program through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Starting strong may involve some initial reading. Here is a summary of what I sent out for reading assignments:
    EEC 200: preface and chapters 1 and 2
    EEC 227: Puckett and Black, chapters 1 and 2; Mooney, chapter 1
    EEC 365/366: no advance reading
    EEC 412: chapters 1 and 2

Email Communications: I have found that it is useful to students to hear from me before the first day of class. I send emails with a summary of the course content and objectives, the required textbooks, the use of D2L, instructional strategies, how to reach me, information about related field experiences, and other information about the first weeks of classes. In the past, I have received positive feedback from students about this type of communication. However, sometimes students respond negatively to the email messages. Here is one message that caused some reactions:

From: elizabeth.sandell@mnsu.edu [elizabeth.sandell@mnsu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2009 6:28 PM
Subject: EEC 412 assignments for this week
There is a lot going on this week. I know it is a lot, but these are drafts, and you will get your team members' feedback so you can revise them again, just as you did for the previous sections.

Prepare these items before class this Friday:
Read Chapter 7
Bring 1 cup of cereal to contribute to the cereal snack mix
Drafts for ITI project: (10) Artistic Expression Lesson Plans; (6) Multimedia Anthology, (7) Literature Bibliography, (12) Literacy Plans

The rubrics for these sections are on the D2L assignment "ITI Instructions and Rubrics." If you write <u>one</u> lesson plan that includes <u>two</u> domains (e.g., artistic expression and literacy), that lesson plan will count for <u>both</u> domains and <u>both</u> assignments. Be sure to read the instructions and the rubrics.

Artistic Expression Lesson Plans (section 10) Create <u>two</u> lessons for artistic expression which relate to your ITI project using the lesson plan outline provided.

Literacy Lesson Plans (section 12) Create <u>five</u> lessons for literacy and phonics which relate to your ITI project using the lesson plan outline provided.

Multimedia Anthology (section 6) 1. Identify the multi-media resources for the project2. List at least <u>two</u> resources in each of <u>four</u> categories. These categories can include, but are not limited to: video recordings, DVD, software, websites, music, or other multi-media resources.3. Write a brief description of each resource. You do not have to write a lesson plan that includes the item... just make a list with descriptions of the resources.4. Correctly cite each resource using APA style.

Literature Bibliography (section 7) 1. Identify the literature resources for the project2. List at least <u>two</u> resources in <u>each</u> of the following categories: non-fiction children's books; fiction children's books; and teacher resources. 3. Write a brief description of each resource. You do not have to write a lesson plan that includes the item... just make a list with descriptions of the resources.4. Correctly cite each resource using APA style.

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Technically, students had known about this deadline from the beginning of Fall semester. These were to be first drafts. Students would get feedback from their peer teams during class and then have opportunities to revise their drafts into better work products. None of the information in this email was new to students. It had already been posted on the course syllabus, announced in class and noted on D2L. This email simply repeated what students had been told earlier in the semester.

My practice is to send a reminder email at some point during the week between class meetings. In the past, students have told me that they like getting these emails because the messages remind them what they have to work on before the next class meeting. In follow-up emails, I reminded students that these assignments were clearly indicated on the course syllabus.

The syllabi for my courses clearly state that the schedule is tentative and subject to change. Prior to this communication, I had postponed due dates for several assignments. These due dates were imminent, along with due dates for other assignments that had already been scheduled. When I change due dates, it is usually to the students' advantage. In other words, assignments are due later (not earlier) than originally posted on the syllabus, so that students have more time. Near the end of the semester, students do have questions about final projects. However, especially in EEC 412, there were assignments throughout the semester that required students to complete and review draft sections of those projects. They should have had minimal questions at the end of the semester. The lesson that I am learning is to no longer be flexible about due dates, but to strictly interpret the timeline set at the beginning of the semester.

Course Syllabi

The appendixes to my report include the syllabi for the courses that I taught at MSU in AY10 (one syllabus per course): EEC 200, EEC 222w, EEC 227, EEC 245, EEC 365/366, EEC 368/369, and EEC 412.

I tend to divide my course syllabi into 7 or 8 sections, because some of my course syllabi would be many pages long if I submitted complete versions. I learned in the CETL Faculty Teaching Certificate Program that a shorter version is less intimidating to students when they arrive on the first day of class. So, I divide material from my syllabi into sections including course description, BOT Teacher Standards, course policies and procedures, course calendar, course assignments and grading, and others.

Integration of Board of Teaching Standards

The BOT standards for licensure are referenced in all my course syllabi that are related to teacher licensure preparations. Evidence included with course syllabi illustrates several ways in which I integrate standards into the courses that I teach.

In each course syllabus, I always list the approved standards that are assigned to each course. I refer to this list during the opening meetings of each course so that students can see how the course relates to their teacher preparation program.

I also include learning activities in which students reflect and document their progress on reaching those standards through the courses that they take from me. Here is one example:

Assignment: Course Portfolio (10 points) Collect all the products that you generated in this course. Include artifacts, either scanned or photocopied or .jpg images. Include your reflection about how you have acquired skills as directed by the Board of Teaching licensure standards assigned to this course. You may submit your material in a three-ring binder for evaluation, OR

you may earn extra credit by submitting your material through your eFolio web site. Creativity and presentation will count!!

Integration of Technology

As most professors, I have incorporated PowerPoint presentations into my classes. One of the most useful for me has been the PowerPoint about Friedrich Froebel, the "inventor" of kindergarten. I have used this in EEC 412 each time I teach it. I have also presented it for colleagues who were assigned EEC 412 and wanted me to introduce the history of kindergarten. Finally, I have also used it for presentation at conferences, including the Minnesota Kindergarten Association conference in 2006 at MSU, Mankato. I used student input about the Friedrich Froebel/Kindergarten History PowerPoint presentation to revise the actual presentation each year. This demonstrated to the students that I took their critique and suggestions seriously.

Here is a summary of the technology policies that I established for my courses.

> All students enrolled in the course have access to University email and are expected to check it for information related to this course. Please be advised that the instructor will only use the University-assigned email address. If you use a commercial email provider, and forward your email from the University address, it may be flagged as spam and may not be delivered to your mailbox. You will want to periodically check your system for undelivered mail.
>
> The course instructor will use the Desire2Learn course site for course communications and access to course material. Desire2Learn may also be used to document and to reflect on field experiences. When you enroll/register for the course, you automatically have access to the course in Desire2Learn. The internet address for Desire2Learn is: https://d2l.mnsu.edu/.
>
> The use of cell phones, beepers, or other communication devices is disruptive, and is therefore prohibited during class. Except in emergencies, those using such devices must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period.
>
> Students are permitted to use computers during class for note-taking and other class-related work only. Those using computers during class for work not related to that class must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period. Laptop computers may be used for appropriate note taking, but improper use of computers in class (surfing the net, e-messaging, checking e-mail, etc.) will result in the loss of the privilege of having computers in class.

This strategy proved very beneficial for several reasons:
1. Money was saved (for faculty and for students) by not photocopying all distributed materials for the courses.
2. Course contents were readily accessible to students at any time.
3. Course contents were readily accessible to the instructor while actually teaching the courses in "smart" classrooms on campus or in other locations throughout campus.
4. Course contents could be duplicated and easily revised from semester to semester.
5. Student lists were available for group emails for the instructor or for students.

Beginning in AY09, I gave students with the opportunity to earn extra credit by uploading their course capstone project to their efolio site. For example, in EEC 412, this was an Integrated Teaching with Inquiry Project/Portfolio. This helps students understand and value their projects for their future teaching careers.

During Fall 2009, I received feedback from students who thought that I was not understanding of several students who had "lost" their homework when their computers crashed. Since that time, I have included a new paragraph in my course syllabi:

> At MSU, there can be no excuse about "losing work" because of computer crashes. Requests for additional time to turn in assignments that were lost due to "computer crashes" will not be considered. Such an excuse amounts to "the dog ate my homework." Every student at MSU has space on the MSU MavDisk, a server that is secure and routinely backed up. Every student at MSU has access to this space on campus and at home. Every student at MSU has access to D2L on campus and at home. Every student will be asked to upload their work-in-progress to D2L drop boxes. At the beginning of the semester, every student will be informed about the instructions and the due dates for the assignments in this course.

Integration of Culturally Responsive Teaching

The students enrolled in MSU's initial teacher licensure programs are predominantly white, female, middle class, and from southern Minnesota. Therefore, the teacher training curriculum must be adapted to reflect an understanding of different cultures. Respecting and having a curiosity in each other's cultures are ways to break the disconnection in the teacher-student relationship.

"InTime: Integrating New Technologies Into the Methods of Education" (2009). [Retrieved February 5, 2009 from http://www.intime.uni.edu/multiculture/curriculum/ culture/Teaching.htm.] defines Culturally Responsive Teaching as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them" ("Intime" par. 1). Being mindful of this type of teaching requires "teach[ing] to and through the strengths of students" ("InTime", 2002, para. 1) by using "multicultural information, resources, and materials in all subjects" (para. 1).

Curriculum is everything that goes on in the classroom: materials, teaching strategies, discipline, projects, languages spoken and written, family involvement, foods served, and community connections. A tourist-curriculum approach emphasizes the "exotic" differences between cultures and avoids the real-life daily problems and experiences that unite us. Tourist-curriculum is likely to teach about cultures through holiday celebrations and through cultural artifacts, such as food, traditional clothing, and household implements.

Teachers need to understand how to research the cultural norms of their students. In general, students' behavior in classrooms will "depend upon cultural norms regarding what is polite or respectful, [even] culturally accepted gender roles" (para. 7). If one is to incorporate cultural sensitivity in his or her teaching, "lesson plans need to blend information on how students can

become comfortable with American culture with ways that other students can become culturally responsive to members of diverse cultures" (para. 7).

In my active learning strategies, I have tried to incorporate some characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching, such as:
- "Acknowledg[ing] the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum
- Us[ing] a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles
- Teach[ing] students to know and praise their own and each others' cultural heritages" ("InTime," 2002, para. 2).

Here is an example of the material that I include in my syllabi that relates to diversity in the courses:

> As a requirement of this course, students participate in field experiences and service learning activities with diverse groups of children, youth, and adults. Students work in cooperative groups to develop and deliver class presentation and address the values, norms, religion, culture, contributions, oppression, and teaching applications about a diverse group. Students reflect on other class presentations on diverse groups.
> College of Education graduates value diverse cultures and communities, seeking to help all students achieve the knowledge and skills needed to flourish as successful members of a pluralistic society. They work to form broad-based, inclusive learning communities which engage in respectful and relevant conversations that promote shared understandings. College of Education graduates value multiple perspectives and use culturally relevant strategies in their work. They guide and nurture individuals with whom they work to live and thrive in a diverse and open society.
> The Minnesota Board of Teaching sets standards for licensed teacher that include competencies for working with diverse populations: Teacher candidates need to develop proficiencies for working with students from diverse backgrounds and with exceptionalities to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn. (Standard 4)
> The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system recognizes and respects the importance of all similarities and differences among human beings. The system and its institutions are committed, through their programs and policies, to fostering inclusiveness, understanding, acceptance and respect in a multicultural society. Diversity includes but is not limited to age, ethnic origin, national origin, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, religious beliefs, creeds and income. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system's commitment to diversity compels it to confront prejudicial, discriminatory or racist behaviors and policies.
> Some groups of underserved students have been traditionally excluded from full participation in our society and its institutions. The basis of exclusion has primarily been race and color including African Americans/Black, Asian, Hispanic, American Indian and multiracial. Underrepresented student groups include underserved students (African Americans/Black, Asian, Hispanic, American Indian and multiracial) plus first generation students and low income students. (In specific instances, other groups of students may be

considered underrepresented. For example, in a traditionally female discipline, males may be considered underrepresented.)

Minnesota State University expands on the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities definition of diversity to promote a learning environment that celebrates differences. MSU Mankato defines diversity as: Diversity at Minnesota State University Mankato is a commitment to create an understanding and appreciation of diverse peoples and diverse perspectives; a commitment to create an academic, cultural, and workplace environment and community that develops mutual respect for all and celebrates our differences. (See http://www.mnsu.edu/cultdiv/reports/annualreport2008.pdf)

It is one of my goals to provide undergraduates with learning and cultural understanding of the cultural communities in our own region. I believe firmly that including relevant native perspectives will help the College of Education produce graduates with:

(1)   Increased adaptability
(2)   Reduced stereotyping
(3)   Increased understanding of other cultures
(4)   Increased preparedness for multicultural public schools
(5)   Enhanced global-mindedness

Although I prefer to avoid the tourist-curriculum, sometimes I am not the best person to provide understandings of other cultures, and I want my students to participate in special cultural events as part of the intentional instructional design. During the past three years, I have been networking with David Larsen, Assistant Director of American Indian Affairs, Office of Multicultural Affairs. I learned that none of the other EEC faculty members were incorporating the Mahkato Wacipi into their courses during Fall semester. This is an opportunity too good for our students to miss. David Larsen inspired me to consider the event as an opportunity for the entire class. In several course syllabi, I include the opportunity for students to earn extra points by attending special events, such as the Mahkato Wacipi. This shows that I considered such events to be valuable even from the very beginning of the semester.

After the 2009 Mahkato Wacipi, David Larsen told me that MSU President Davenport and his wife, along with Provost Scott Olson, had also attended the Mahkato Wacipi. They joined with the other dignitaries during the Grand Entrance and also invited Dakota elders to the President's home for a gathering after the Mahkato Wacipi.

Education Day at the 2009 Mahkato Wacipi was an important opportunity for our EEC students. I think I was appropriately flexible. I allowed the EEC students to choose when to attend the Mahkato Wacipi – at their convenience during our regular class time (Friday afternoon) or that Friday morning or even on Saturday. I allowed them to use a number of hours equivalent to the class period (about three hours) and to include travel time in that period, so it would not require more time than a regular class meeting.

Here are some of the comments from MSU students about what they learned at the 2009 Mahkato Wacipi:

"I got a first-hand look at the culture, traditions, dress, and so much more of the Native American ways. The Mahkato Powwow was originally created to honor

the thirty-eight hanged on December 26, 1982, but has grown to become an experience for people of all races to encounter."

"I used all five senses to pull in every bit of information I could in understanding the Native American people."

"It was a great listening and learning experience."

"As I continued to learn more about the Native American peoples, I realized I was oppressing this group simply by being ignorant. I knew nothing, so I was stepping on traditions and being ignorantly rude."

"This information will help me later in life as a teacher. I will try to understand the traditions and reasoning of the children ... who are Native American, and I can now share my experience with them and try to connect personally with that child [in my classrooms]."

"Many artifacts were presented which was very useful. It truly was a cultural experience and showed diversity which we are told to present when we are in our teaching professions, but oddly enough we don't see it that much in our classes besides it being referenced."

"The 'treasure hunt' assignment was difficult in the sense that the answers were not obvious and could not be given just by sitting in on the stations, and when asking some male Dakotas, it felt like they did not want to answer (which could've been the wrong impression or just asked the wrong person at the wrong time)."

"Overall, I felt it was a positive trip and gave a different perspective on things. I also feel, that had it not been for this class, I never would have gone to the Pow-Wow on my own."

Another student pointed out ways to improve the experience of the Mahkato Wacipi Education Day for students in the EEC 412 Kindergarten Methods and Materials course:

"To me, it was somewhat interesting to learn about their culture, but I wish that it would relate more to kindergarten since this was Kindergarten methods class. For me personally though, having that for third graders was great for me to experience since I am very much interested in teaching third grade. If you could somehow relate this culture experience or "education day" to the ITI project [the course capstone project] as section of some sort, I feel that this day would have been more beneficial for everyone and the students would have taken it more seriously than some did, as i (sic) saw people trying to rush and get through the worksheet."

One student did use the experience at the PowWow as the basis for her entire EEC 412 capstone project about Native Americans. Here is how she introduced her project:

'The children will learn different information about the Native American culture including horticulture, music and instruments, literature and folk tales, and daily living routines. The children will learn about the whole culture and become familiar with different aspects that may be similar or different to what the children see and experience on a daily basis. This topic is an excellent topic to introduce because it talks about people. It talks about people who the children may or may not see on a daily basis. ... While the different curriculum areas are being covered, the

introduction that people are different and special in their own way will be intertwined throughout the entire topic and curriculum areas. ... The [kindergarten] students will develop a sense of self-worth and acceptance of others; it will also promote pro-social skills... "

While we were at the 2009 PowWow, I videotaped Joanne Zacharias reading her book, Taku Wadaka Te? What Do You See? You can see it on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxSPVDJ8mP8 If you watch it, please register some comments so folks pay attention to it. You can also watch it on MSU's streaming server: http://msustr0.campus.mnsu.edu:8080/coe/sandee1/EEC222/Zacharias.wmv

Incorporation of the COE Conceptual Framework

Each of my course syllabi includes reference to the College of Education's Conceptual Framework:

> Grounded in a vision of learning communities, the College of Education has at its heart collaboration and connectedness to students, schools, neighborhoods, and society. To achieve this vision, the College of Education seeks to graduate individuals with passion for and proficiency in content, with thoughtful and principled pedagogy, and a strong sense of educational purpose. College of Education graduates possess the attributes, knowledge, and skills to effectively promote the success of students, families, and schools. They see their own learning and the learning of others as occurring in a cycle of experience, reflection, and re-conceptualization—a process of seeking new knowledge that both fits into and changes existing understanding. Furthermore, College of Education graduates understand that individuals are embedded in family, school, and community systems, and they seek to foster positive systems change as well as individual growth.
> College of Education graduates value diverse cultures and communities, seeking to help all students achieve the knowledge and skills needed to flourish as successful members of a pluralistic society. They work to form broad-based, inclusive learning communities which engage in respectful and relevant conversations that promote shared understandings. College of Education graduates value multiple perspectives and use culturally relevant strategies in their work. They guide and nurture individuals with whom they work to live and thrive in a diverse and open society.

Based on the College of Education Conceptual Framework, I design my teaching with "the end in mind" … that we want to graduate individuals with specific characteristics, knowledge, and skills. Other sections of this report emphasize some of my strategies designed to reach that goal (see materials related to active learning, culturally responsive teaching, and course portfolios). Here is a list of some of the other strategies:

- Use multiple intelligences to address interests and learning styles of all students
- Peer evaluation on selected work and presentation

- Create learning portfolio
- Create focused collection of lesson plans
- Use variety of assessments including authentic, hands-on performance tasks and written responses that require application
- Reflect upon direct observations of children and infer and reason from these observations in collaboration with peers and instructors
- Discuss individual and group differences in the context of students' prior knowledge, learning, and motivation
- Discuss issues related to teacher expectations and beliefs
- Analyze experiences of diversity, difference, and privilege in schools
- Conduct field-based inquiry project using interview, observation, and document analysis
- Analyze case studies and write descriptions of solutions to challenges
- Complete instructional sequence which includes unit assessment that describes pre- and post-assessments
- Use small group/cooperative learning strategies to engage all learners
- Use course materials and assignments available on web sites and via email
- Complete journal entries
- Respond to comprehensive questions about course concepts

This report could just be a list of activities. The real meaning is in the results… in the characteristics of students that I teach. Here is part of a letter from one of my students. I think this gives some insight into the result of my efforts to inspire students to learn and grow in ways that are congruent with the Conceptual Framework:

Dr. Sandell was my professor in EEC 365/366, Teaching Infants and Toddlers. She was also my academic advisor for two and a half years. I feel very fortunate for the opportunity to learn from her through both of these experiences, and I would like to offer my insight about her as a teacher and an advisor. In her class, Dr. Sandell shows immense knowledge and passion for the field of Early Childhood Education, and she continuously encourages students' personal and professional growth. I particularly enjoyed her ability to engage the students by starting each class period through the exploration of questions related to Early Childhood Education. By doing this, students became not only engaged in the class, but also involved in their own learning, as well as passionate about their future field. She also held her students accountable for the knowledge and skills they attained through her class. Dr. Sandell gave a short quiz reviewing important content from the last class and reading assignments each class period. This was beneficial to me because it helped me not only retain the information better but also take the information and think about how I would apply it to scenarios when working with infants and toddlers. She … helped us reflect and analyze information and apply skills she had been teaching.

Integration of Field Experiences

A challenging situation arose in Fall, 2009, when I requested field placements for students enrolled in EEC 366. Two students requested placements at Bethlehem Child Care Center, located in a Lutheran Church. When the OFE staff members reviewed the request, the graduate assistant told me that Dr. Good said that students could not be placed in faith-based settings, but had to be placed in public settings. This appeared to me to be an arbitrary interpretation by another faculty member. If it was an arbitrary interpretation by another faculty member, then I was concerned about the OFE basing its assignments on that single faculty member. Dr. Ballard interpreted the situation as my request for field placements in "Christian-based settings." I was not looking for Christian settings; I was looking for quality programs that serve infants and toddlers. In the past, my understanding was that student teaching placements could not be made in faith-based settings. My understanding was that students in non-student teaching field experiences could be placed at their own request in faith-based settings – if that worked in partnership with the university. I learned this information from previous Board of Teaching communications (Ken Peatross, director).

Furthermore, the interpretation of the words "public settings" and "public institutional placements" is problematic in infant-toddler care and education. The designation of "public settings" is ambiguous and open to interpretation. There are very few programs that are actually financed and sponsored by public agencies. The Children's House, Head Start, ECFE, and ECSE are the only ones that come to mind. And these programs have very limited space for students in experiences with infants and toddlers. The Children's House is the only program that has infant and toddler programming on-site. Organizations (other than those four listed above) sponsor infant-toddler care and education programs that are licensed by a state agency and often receive public money (for food nutrition programs, for special education support, etc.). These programs are "open to the public" and cannot discriminate among their participants.

The communications that I received from OFE staff members and the Dean referred to student teaching and public education. Since EEC 366 is not about student teaching and the meaning of "public" is ambiguous, I still did not understand their interpretations of the situation. In further discussion and clarification with OFE staff members, I came to understand that there was more recent information that prohibited MSU from placing students in faith-based settings. To date, I still have not actually seen the letter from the MN Attorney General that rules that state universities should not place students in faith-based settings. I would welcome this information so I can apply it to situations in the future.

Furthermore, during Spring, 2010, the OFE placed students from EEC 369 in at least two settings that were faith-based: Little Saints Preschool in St. Peter and Countryside Montessori School. I did not request these placements. I did not realize they were in faith-based environments until I did my observation site visits. These decisions were made by the OFE staff members.

Submission of Program Assessment Data

The Early Childhood Education program in which I have been teaching seeks to provide ECE students with a broad base of content and pedagogical knowledge in order that they become

skilled teachers in elementary and early childhood education classrooms. Therefore, we regularly assess ECE student learning outcomes related to domains of teaching responsibilities, such as planning and preparation, enhancing learning environments, teaching for student learning, professionalism, and knowledge of child development and learning. We also assessed student learning outcomes related to knowledge of child development and learning for the area of early childhood education.

As scheduled, I entered assessment data in the College of Education Survey Assessment System. I submitted data for assessments for:
          Teacher Candidate Credential Level II: EEC 366, 369, 413
          Professionalism: EEC 200, 222w, and 369
          Core Assessments: EEC 365, 368, and 412

Fa 2005 EEC 412 (01) Integrated Thematic Unit
Fa 2005 EEC 412 (02) Integrated Thematic Unit
Fa 2005 EEC 413 (01) Field Experience Level 2
Sp 2006 EEC 412 (01) Integrated Thematic Unit
Sp 2006 EEC 412 (02) Integrated Thematic Unit
Sp 2006 EEC 413 (01) Field Experience Level 2
Fa 2006 EEC 412 (01) Integrated Thematic Unit
Fa 2006 EEC 412 (02) Integrated Thematic Unit
Fa 2006 EEC 413 (01) Field Experience Level 2
Sp 2007 EEC 412 (01) Integrated Thematic Unit
Fa 2008 EEC 200 (03) Field Experience Level 1
Fa 2008 EEC 441 (01) Field Experience Level 3
Sp 2009 EEC 200 (03) Field Experience Level 1
Fa 2009 EEC 200 (01) Field Experience Level 1

For me, program assessment becomes simply part of the overall program cycle. Program leaders plan, do, review, and decide about programming. The process of program assessment occurs at every part of the programming cycle. When program assessment is well-thought-out, it can enhance each step of the cycle. Assessment can become part of the regular business of the program cycle, rather than being an "add-on" to the program.

These are my preferred methods of assessment. I am pleased that the COE Survey Assessment System provides for procedures that build from course-embedded assessments, such as:

      1.   Surveys or questionnaires: structured questionnaires to generate quantitative data. Surveys may be mailed, sent electronically, completed on-site, or through face-to-face or telephone interviews. Surveys may include behavior checklists, show of hands to answer question, and others.
      2.   Produced materials: collection of materials, including samples of work that encompass the breadth and scope of the program or activity being evaluated. Journals or diaries record events over time and reveal the personal perspective of the writer or recorder. Logs record chronological entries that are usually brief and factual. These methods can include participant logs, diaries or journals, photographs before and after, videotapes, artwork, etc.

3.　　Tests: assessments in which there are usually correct answers or standards of comparison. This method can include teacher-created knowledge tests, tests by health-care providers, etc.

4.　　Interviews: information collected by talking and listening to people, either face-to-face or by telephone. May be highly structured or conversational. These may be one-on-one interviews, group members responding to a series of questions, etc.

5.　　Case studies (record and date): in-depth examination of a particular case (such as a program, group of participants, single individual, site/location). Case studies use multiple sources of information and methods to provide as complete a picture as possible. Testimonials of people indicating their personal responses and reactions, may include participant self-reported anecdote, staff written success stories, life histories, etc.

Course Portfolios

I used the structure of the Course Portfolio to outline curricular changes and their effects on student learning. The procedure for producing a Course Portfolio included examining the course's history and my teaching philosophy and then identifying questions or issues to further investigate. These issues arose from student course evaluations, my owns reflection about the course, the process of creating the portfolio, as well as what I learned last year from "Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning" and "Intentional Course Redesign" development opportunities. I wanted to incorporate elements of these approaches into EEC 365, Methods and Materials for Teaching Infants and Toddlers.

For example, portfolios include intentional course redesign; old and new course syllabi; powerpoint presentation; and reflections about changes to instruction. These portfolios are included in a CD of material along with this application and report. My reflections about these portfolios are included in the last section of this section for Criterion 1: Effective Teaching.

Portfolio for EEC 227

EEC 227 Early Learning Development is designed to be a course in child growth and development, from the prenatal period through age eight years, for students instead of KSP 235 Human Development or FCS 301 Lifespan Development. The timing for offering EEC 227 on MSU's course schedule is a department preference, not necessarily a design factor.

EEC 227 was offered for the first time in AY08. It was offered in Summer 2008 (for 10 students on-line) because it was part of my MSU Faculty Teaching Scholar grant project. Dr. Good taught EEC 227 in Fall 2009. I taught EEC 227 again in Fall, 2009 (for 26 students). In Fall, 2009, the class included students in Early Childhood Education as well as students in Elementary Education (to substitute for Psych 433) needed the course for their majors at that time to stay in sequence for their degrees.

EEC 227 is a 200-level course, with no prerequisites and no requirements for special applications or permissions. Education students can take the course before application to Professional Education. This makes it quite attractive to students in EEC as well as from other academic majors. I have had students from Social Work and from Psychology enrolled in my sections of

EEC 227. This could be a course that actually earns money for the College of Education if students in majors other than EEC take the course.

I do not think that advisors should allow a 200-level course to be such a specific part of a prescribed sequence that it would cause students would to get off schedule and experience advising problems. If our academic major is so prescribed that a sophomore-level course can get the sequence out of whack, then I think we are too prescribed and not flexible enough. Or maybe EEC should move to a cohort model, with once-a-year admission for ECE majors, similar to that model followed in Special Education.

For summer 2008, I was awarded a Teaching Scholar Fellowship from President Davenport. This project provided $6,300 for "A Cross-Cultural Instructional Redesign Project with North-Eastern International University, Magadan, Russian Federation: Incorporating Guided Inquiry Learning and On-Line Teaching Strategies in EEC 227 Early Learning and Development." The fellowship provided research and writing time to re-design EEC 227 to incorporate (a) cross-cultural instructional strategies; (b) on-line teaching strategies; and (c) process-oriented guided inquiry learning (POGIL).

EEC 227 explores child growth and development from prenatal through age eight years and introduces developmental theorists who have had an impact on American early childhood education. Among these developmental theorists are persons in the Russian Federation and other former Soviet Republics (e.g., Lev Vygotsky), about whom American educators know very little.

The work products that resulted from this project included:
1.   Revised course syllabus
2.   Revised materials with notes about cross-cultural instructional strategies, on-line teaching strategies, and process-oriented guided inquiry learning (POGIL); Russian theorists
3.   Application to the MSU IRB related to Global Guidelines Assessment
4.   Global Guidelines Assessment and related materials translated into Russian language
5.   Global Guidelines Assessment presentation at conferences in Russian Federation
6.   Philosophies of Teaching presentation at conferences in Russian Federation
7.   Institutional Review Board presentation at conferences in Russian Federation
8.   Impact assessment report based on data from three Russian-speaking teachers or faculty members and three English-speaking teachers or faculty members
9.   Final project report

My research on-site in the Russian Federation, as well as writing time in the US, incorporated knowledge and experience about a wider variety of theorists. Personal connections with Russian faculty members enhanced the cultural appropriateness of the interpretation of Russian theorists.

To complete the requirements of the 2008 Summer Teaching Scholar Fellow grant, I submitted complete reports to the Office of Academic Affairs and in my Professional Development Report for Academic Year 2008 – 2009. This material filled one three-ring binder. The EEC department chairperson assigned this course to Dr. Linda Good for the Academic Year 2008 – 2009.

I was not able to incorporate any planned changes until I was assigned to teach this course again in Fall, 2009. However, producing a Course Portfolio gave me a framework in which to refine the course. Although the methods I used seemed at first too scientific for a subjective area like teaching, the "Hypothesis, Data, Conclusion" structure allowed me to be more objective about my teaching. It is all too easy to get caught up in the personalities of students or blind arrogance about the quality of my work in the classroom. The more scientific structure allowed me to consider my preconceived notions about what I hoped would happen, look at student work as raw data and analyze the situation to come to an informed conclusion. The rigor of this structure kept me on track and provided a system for documenting student work and reflective comments. I plan to continue using this structure in some form to further refine the course each year.

Portfolio for EEC 365

To illustrate my ongoing course preparation and revision, I prepared a course portfolio for EEC 365, Methods and Materials for Teaching Infants and Toddlers. The portfolio includes old and new course syllabi, powerpoint presentations, and a reflection paper. Producing a Course Portfolio for EEC 365, Methods and Materials for Teaching Infants and Toddlers, gave me an opportunity to build on professional development experiences and continue to refine the course.

I used the structure of the Course Portfolio to outline curricular changes and their effects on student learning. The procedure for producing a Course Portfolio included examining the course's history and my teaching philosophy and then identifying questions or issues to further investigate. These issues arose from student course evaluations, my owns reflection about the course, the process of creating the portfolio, as well as what I learned last year from "Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning" and "Intentional Course Redesign" development opportunities. I wanted to incorporate elements of these approaches into EEC 365, Methods and Materials for Teaching Infants and Toddlers.

My Course Portfolio presents and analyzes new ideas that I added to the course in order to increase the students' study and understanding of methods and materials for teaching infants and toddlers. For a comparison of the course syllabi from Fall 2005 and Fall 2008, please see the course portfolio. The revised procedures were designed to make the students' progress more explicit for their own evaluation as well as mine as their instructor. The data I analyzed included student attendance and grades, student course evaluations, and excerpts from reflective writing.

As a result of work with POGIL, I made a few changes to EEC 365, Methods and Materials for Teaching Infants and Toddlers, including additions and alterations to assignments and procedures. Each of these changes related to my overall goal of developing a course that is intentionally designed to provide an intense, focused introduction to teaching infants and toddlers. The Teaching Portfolio approach has provided a structure for this continued inquiry and subsequent refinement of the curricula.
Revision 1: Use POGIL principles to organize students into teams for working in class and outside of class.
Revision 2: Weekly homework and quiz based on readings from the texts
Revision 3: During field experience students post observations and reflections on discussion boards on D2L and incorporate them into a final reflective paper.