

The SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
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### Project ENRICH at UNCG— Evaluating the Re-visioning of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) Teacher Education Undergraduate Programs through a Teacher Quality Partnership Grant (TQP)

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## Project ENRICH at UNCG



[http://www.uncg.edu/soe/project\\_enrich/](http://www.uncg.edu/soe/project_enrich/)



## Educational Network for Renewal, Innovation, Collaboration and Help - ENRICH

- Outgrowth of the partnership between the [Winston-Salem/Forsyth County \(NC\) Schools](#) and The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
- Conceived for the purpose of simultaneous improvement of teacher education and PK-12 education.
- Project ENRICH is funded by the United States Department of Education – Teacher Quality Partnership Funding.
- Total federal funds awarded are \$6,948,132 (66% of total costs). The recipient non-federal contribution is \$3,595,106 (34% of total costs).



## The UNCG ENRICH Program

- Implement and evaluate two innovative approaches to preparing teachers for successful work with students in high need schools and with diverse populations.
- Altogether expected to prepare approximately 475 teachers during the five year period
- 100 Teachers Residents (Masters level) in math, science, special education and English Language Learners
- 375 undergraduates in a variety of fields that include elementary, middle and secondary teachers from multiple areas: math, science, English, social studies, foreign languages as well as music, art, physical education, literacy.



## UNCG ENRICH—Re-visioned Undergraduate Program

- In January of 2008, the North Carolina State Board of Education adopted a proposal for a new teacher preparedness program approval process.
- As part of the new process, institutions of higher education (IHEs) were required to modify their current teacher education programs and to submit "blueprints" of their redesign.
- UNCG was to submit their blueprint draft to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction by July 1, 2009 and to implement their revisions by fall 2010.



## Blueprint Components

- A discussion of how the new program would reflect the new set of standards. Emphasis on students acquiring 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and knowledge.
- An indication of how partner schools would be involved in the re-visioning process.
- A timeline for implementation.
- Each IHE was also required to submit "six evidences" as documentation of meeting the new standards. The documentation must include a description of the evidences, the elements included in the evidence, and an indication of how the evidence will be evaluated.
- The evidences were then to be used by the program to determine a candidate's proficiency.



## The Evidences

- **Evidence 1**–Content Knowledge: Evidence that demonstrates breadth of content knowledge in the specialty area.
- **Evidence 2**–Content Knowledge: Evidence that demonstrates candidate depth of understanding and application of content knowledge in the specialty area.
- **Evidence 3**–Pedagogical and Professional Knowledge Skills and Dispositions: Evidence that demonstrates effective design of classroom instruction based on research verified practice.

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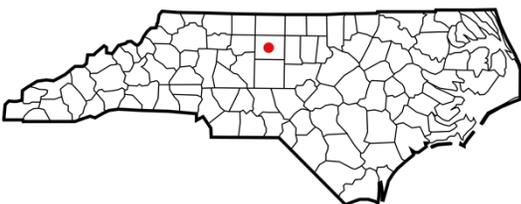
## The Evidences (cont'd.)

- **Evidence 4**–Pedagogical and Professional Knowledge Skills and Dispositions: Evidence that demonstrates knowledge, skills, and dispositions in practice.
- **Evidence 5**–Positive Impact on Student Learning: Evidence that demonstrates impact on student learning.
- **Evidence 6**–Leadership and Collaboration: Evidence that demonstrates leadership and collaboration.

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## External Evaluators - SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro



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## SERVE Center Work



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## SERVE Center

Mission is to foster empowered, information-rich educational systems by:

- finding and translating the best current knowledge,
- generating new knowledge, and
- partnering with stakeholders to identify and apply best evidence to practice.

PEOPLE \* POSSIBILITIES \* PROMISE

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## SERVE Center – External Evaluation of UNCG ENRICH Project

At the request of the UNCG School of Education, SERVE agreed to act as the external evaluator for this project (although SERVE is affiliated with UNCG's School of Education, SERVE is not directly involved with any departments within the School).

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## Purpose of Evaluation Activities – Formative Evaluation

- To examine the implementation of the re-visioned (redesigned) teacher preparation programs for program improvement.
- Identify specific strengths or challenges departments encountered with the implementation of the 'blueprints'.

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## Methodology

- SERVE and ENRICH staff members met to develop a standard protocol for conducting interviews with UNCG department chairs and faculty regarding the curriculum redesign blueprints.
- The purpose of the interviews was to:
  - ✓ Identify the stage(s) departments were in implementing the redesigned blueprints.
  - ✓ Learn about the challenges of implementing the redesigned blueprints.
  - ✓ Discover how students were transitioning into the redesigned curriculums/programs.

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## Interviews with UNCG Department Chairs and Faculty Members

- The ENRICH Project Director sent an e-mail to UNCG Department Chairs and faculty explaining the purpose of the interviews and informing them that they would be hearing from a SERVE staff member and SERVE staff scheduled the interviews.
- Interviews with 24 departments at UNCG were conducted within a three-week period in the spring of 2011.
- All interviews were held face-to-face and lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour.
- Most interviews were with the Department Chairs.
- A total of 28 interviews were conducted.
  - Only one interview was not conducted due to illness.

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## Interview Questions

1. How is your program different as a result of implementation of the blueprint?
2. What have been some of the challenges to implementation of the blueprint?
3. How is your program dealing with issues of transitioning students from the previous program to the new program?
4. How are you evaluating the implementation of your new program?

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## Interview Questions (cont'd)

5. What have been some of the strengths of your revised program?
6. What would you think are the biggest lessons learned from this process of re-visioning and implementation of your program?
7. Describe how a student gets from starting the program to being able to produce the six evidences. Where do they get the content, knowledge and skills to produce the evidence? (Ask specifically about each of the six evidences.)
8. Are there examples of documentation available to review changes made to the curriculum; e.g., new syllabi, orientation materials, major assignments, etc.?

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## Data Analysis

- All interviews were audio taped; and tapes were subsequently transcribed, coded using ATLAS.ti software, and analyzed for themes and specific quotes to illustrate the themes.
- To develop codes, two team members read through the transcripts, making notes to identify key themes and subtopics, specific concepts, and commonly used words that could be organized into specific codes.
- To support reliability, two transcripts were selected and coded by both team members. They then met to discuss codes and resolve any discrepancies.
- Once the set of codes was established, the team members coded each transcript using the qualitative software, ATLAS.ti.

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## Results

- The results were broken down into major themes and ideas to capture how departments handled the curriculum design process. Major themes:
  1. Changes to programs
  2. Challenges encountered
  3. Transitioning students
  4. Program strengths
  5. Evaluating new programs
  6. Process for making revisions to program
  7. Faculty and response to the new program

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## 1. Changes to Programs

- Most changes departments reported involved changes to coursework. This involved modifying or adapting existing courses to meet the new standards. Some departments added labs to certain courses. Some departments chose to combine courses or "re-sequence" existing courses.
- Some departments created new courses, others reported they elected to eliminate courses.
- One significant change was with regard to the requirement that programs had to focus on evidence-based outcomes. Students are now required to submit their accomplishments (evidences) in an electronic portfolio.
- Some departments reported that students are now spending more time in the schools.

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## 2. Challenges Encountered

- One-half of the interviewees indicated that the process of redesigning had been incredibly time and labor intensive.
- One-third of the faculty interviewed said the most significant challenge was ensuring that the students had accrued the minimum amount of credit hours and coursework necessary to meet the evidences.
- One-third of the interviewees indicated there were challenges with the online modules.
- For departments outside of the School of Education, there were additional challenges. Some felt they had little control over, or input into, some aspects of the student's program. Better communication between departments was needed.

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## 3. Transitioning Students

- The re-visioning was particularly difficult for students who were in the middle of their program coursework.
- Changes in courses created some confusion and anxiety for students who may have needed one of the eliminated courses for graduation. This was handled on a case-by-case basis with faculty assisting the student in finding a substitute course.
- Course advising was used as a method to inform the students of the changes and to assist them with the transition.

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## 4. Program Strengths

- Most departments felt their students will be better prepared as a result of the curriculum redesign (new program).
- Re-visioning process has helped to ensure the programs are delivering effective coursework to their students.
- Almost half the departments thought the additional field experience was a strength of the new programs. Students are out in the field much earlier and have an opportunity to work with a broader range of students.
- The additional field experiences required have encouraged the faculty to reconnect with the field.

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## 5. Evaluating New Programs

- Most departments have focused on the implementation issues of the new blueprint within their departments.
- A few programs have begun to develop a more formal process for examining the implementation (i.e., the prospect of evaluating courses in greater depth than in prior years).
- Some departments have discussed using student input and indicators of student success as another means of program evaluation (i.e., tracking students' GPA, course completion, and program completion, conducting student exit interviews and focus groups).

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## 6. Process for Making Program Revisions

- Some departments suggested the need to gather additional information from the site(s) where students conduct their internships. This would involve follow-up with principals and on-site supervisors to determine how well UNGC students are prepared to work in the classroom and to address any concerns.
- Three departments mentioned tracking students after graduation and trying to find out how their former students are performing. They would also solicit input from the graduates regarding what additional training or preparation would have been helpful while they were working on their degrees.

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## 7. Faculty Response to the New Program

- Overall, the faculty were enthusiastic and positive about the re-visioning process and the resulting changes to their programs.
- Almost half of the interviewees stated that the process of examining their programs and determining what changes were needed had been extremely valuable.
- The main drawback to the curriculum re-visioning process was the short timeline and push to implement the changes.
- Only two interviewees indicated that their faculty (or department) had a negative response to the re-visioning process.

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## Lessons Learned

- Interviewees indicated that one of the key lessons learned by the UNGC faculty and Department Chairs has been the need for them to stay connected with the field.
- The re-visioning process provided the faculty and department chairs the opportunity to look critically at their programs and decide what type of coursework and experiences are needed to produce the most effective teacher(s).
- There is a need for faculty to maintain good communication with the on-site teacher educator (OSTE) and to ensure the OSTEs have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities to student teachers. This may involve more training time with the OSTEs.

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## Recommendation:

- Conduct a follow-up evaluation in one to two years with students who are the first cohort to be affected by the revised (redesigned) programs and collect both outcome data as well as survey data on their experiences with the new program.

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