INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN ONTARIO:

THE FOUR-SEMESTER TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS AFTER FIVE YEARS

Editors:
Julian Kitchen
Diana Petrarca
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Edited by
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How can we prepare those who enter the profession to teach for deeper learning—and, in so doing, to teach for equity and social justice as well?

~ Linda Darling-Hammond and Jeannie Oakes
Preparing Teachers for Deeper Learning, 2019, p.4

Miigwech, merci, thank you to Ontario’s teacher educators who have tirelessly continued to redevelop, improve and implement teacher education programs so that our future teachers will be equipped to teach for deeper learning and to teach for equity and social justice.
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Anna Yashkina with Lindy Amato (OTF), Peter Bates (OSSTF), Joanne Languay (ETFO), Claudine Laporte (AEFO), and Susan Perry (OECTA)
I was very pleased when Drs. Julian Kitchen and Diana Petrarca asked me to write the foreword for their second examination of Ontario’s Initial Teacher Education reforms. Then, I received the manuscript and asked, what have I gotten myself into? Something very special and very important! It is not often that one has the opportunity to examine scholarship on reforms as they are being implemented.

The last two years, since March 2020 when COVID-19 disrupted in-person learning, have been an extraordinary challenge for K-12 students, parents, teachers, school board administrators, teacher candidates, and instructors in our teacher education programs. The responses to COVID-19 and its impact on our teacher education programs by all stakeholders—including the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME), the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), the Ontario Teachers Federation (OTF) and its affiliates—point to the resiliency and adaptability of Ontario’s schooling systems at all levels. These responses illustrated so much of what we, collectively, do well and what gaps exist. The public response, too, highlighted a newfound appreciation of the commitment and contributions of classroom teachers as well as how important, and difficult, educating children is.

In recent presentations to students entering in and returning to our Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program at Brock University, I paraphrased Deborah Britzman (cited in MacDonald & Frawley, 2021, pp. 34-35), when I asserted “that learning to teach (and teaching itself . . .) is a constant [process of] formation, [reformation and] transformation, [of assessment and constant] self-assessment, becoming, and striving to become[,]” of transition from learner to teacher but always remaining a learner, a student of pedagogy. This is true as well of those who designed and (re)form teacher education programs as well as those who teach in these programs and/or support them as deans, chairs, program directors, school board partners and associate teachers.

As an historian of education and, currently, as a dean of education, I am very conscious of how teacher education in Ontario has been transformed from the earliest “apprenticeships” through monitorial schools, model schools and normal schools of the nineteenth centuries, and the constant adaptations that the Ontario Ministry of Education made to meet the demands of labour mobility, world wars, depressions, teacher scarcity and surplus, and societal demands for teachers to reflect the communities in which they work.

In the current volume, Kitchen, Petrarca, and collaborators have opened the “black box” of initial teacher education programs and addressed the political and pedagogical foundations of the 2015 transformation of Ontario’s initial teacher education programs, including the important role of the Ontario College of Teachers in the initial transformation and continued governance of a network of initial teacher education programs at public and private universities in Ontario. I am particularly pleased that the editors reached out beyond the usual “public” faculties of education to include our private sector partners, as well as the Ontario Teachers Federation and the Ontario College of Teachers. Inclusion of all initial teacher education programs, the OTF and the OCT, as well as Broad’s “insider” perspective on policy development and implementation, allows us as scholars and practitioners to see all the moving pieces and how these intersect and/or diverge. The chapters on Tech Education and Indigenous Teacher Education remind us that not all teacher candidates have progressed seamlessly from public school to university to teacher education to teaching.
These chapters also highlight how much further we need to go, in the content and delivery of our ITE pathways and programs.

The initial chapters of this volume highlight continuity and change and seek to address one of the thorniest issues in all ITE programs, in Canada and internationally. Contributors examine and contest the theory-practice conundrum and clinical/practical experience versus in program courses related to the foundations of education, curriculum and instruction, Indigenous ways of knowing, amongst others. The mandated increase (doubling) of the “minimum” number of days of clinical practice has been welcomed by most (teacher candidates often see these in-school placements as the most valuable component of ITE programs) but, for teacher education faculties’ placement offices and our school board and union partners, it can be the most challenging, especially when faced with balancing “teachables” to associate teacher availability. These chapters on the clinical placements and theory-practice praxis, as well as the OTF and OCT chapters on recent graduates’ experiences, point to how much more needs to be done in our programs to not just link these critical components of our programs but to improve students’ experience in both.

The core of the volume is, of course, the chapters on each university’s ITE program and how those programs have evolved since 2015/2017. While sharing common elements, each program is individual, representing the experience and interests of the teams responsible for their creation and curation. Curation is more than simply putting random objects on display. Curation engages the critical faculties of organizers and those who experience an exhibition or performance. Faculties of education made, and continue to make, critical decisions on the content of our programs, adding value to the experience of our teacher candidates through thoughtful selection, organization and delivery of exceptionally high-quality teacher education. Collectively, these chapters build on the introductory chapters to provide for the policy maker, the teacher educator, and university leader, and the informed “average citizen” an extraordinary synthesis of the complexity of initial teacher education in Ontario.

Yet, teaching teachers-to-be is constantly forming, reforming, and transforming (MacDonald & Frawley, 2021). Teaching teachers-to-be continues to be a process of the teacher becoming the learner to become a better teacher of teachers. Initial teacher education programs are (re)learning environments, since the K-12 classroom is never static and is constantly changing to welcome new and highly diverse students and their learning needs, to meet parental and societal expectations, and to respond to political agenda. “In the final analysis, education is a human, societal, and political process” (Earl, 2007).

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REFERENCES


SPECIAL NOTE ON CHANGES IN EDUCATION IN ONTARIO

There have been a number of delays in completing this book during two years of the Covid-19 crisis. The authors in this volume, particularly those involved in teacher education program leadership during the crisis, have had to deal with sudden changes—e.g., shifting from in-person learning to online learning and back again—and many pressing concerns such as ensuring teacher candidates meet the required practicum accreditation requirements while navigating in-person and online practica experiences. The CATE volume Crisis and Opportunity: How Canadian Bachelor of Education Programs Responded to the Pandemic, edited by Danyluk, Burns, Hill, & Crawford (2022) provides deeper insight into some of the issues faced by initial teacher education programs in the country during the pandemic.

Between the time when first chapters were completed and a year or more later when later chapters were completed, the policy framework for teacher education has been quite stable. There have been, however, a few recent changes that may date specific points made in some chapters. These include the following:

MATH PROFICIENCY TEST (MPT)

Several authors refer to the successful completion of the Math Proficiency Test by teacher candidates as a new certification requirement legislated by the provincial government. Shortly before publication, however, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice – Divisional Court, ruled that the Math Proficiency Test was unconstitutional. The decision of the court is available at https://www.canlii.org/en/on/onscdc/doc/2021/2021onsc7386/2021onsc7386.html.

As a result, the Ontario College of Teachers has removed completion of the Math Proficiency Test as a certification requirement in Ontario. An appeal to a higher court is possible in the near future. More information on the issue can be found in this article from The Globe and Mail newspaper.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES UPDATE

Some Ontario initial teacher education programs offer Technological Education Teacher Education programs that prepares candidates to become certified to teach broad-based technologies in Ontario secondary schools. Within the context of Technological Education programs, The Ontario College of Trades has been referenced in this volume. In June 2021, the provincial government passed Bill 288, Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act (see https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/s21028). Through this legislation, the government abolished the Ontario College of Trades, the regulatory body governing skilled trades in the province of Ontario. Bill 288 covers trades and re-establishes the former Ontario College of Trades as Skilled Trades Ontario (STO), a new crown agency that will
oversee the development of a modern apprenticeship system to meet the needs of workers and employers.

PROVINCIAL ELECTION IN JUNE 2022

The four-year mandate of Premier Doug Ford’s Progressive Conservative government expires when citizens of Ontario go to the polls on June 2, 2022. A new mandate or a new government could lead to changes in the policies guiding education in Ontario.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book would not be possible without the support, hard work, and dedication of many individuals.

We wish to thank, first and foremost, all of the authors who contributed to this book. The education system is indebted to you for sharing your experiences and perspectives regarding the enhanced Bachelor of Education Program in Ontario and your insights into practice teaching and other field experiences. Your commitment to teacher education as both practitioners and scholars is deeply appreciated! The resulting collection offers rich and detailed accounts of teacher education programs in action, as well as insights into recent reforms in Ontario. We thank you for your patience as we navigated the delays and challenges of the pandemic to complete this important work.

We would also like to thank our editorial team support team for their efforts over several years and many complications due to Covid-19. You meticulously edited chapter manuscripts and attended to the countless details of pulling together the complete manuscript. Your attention to detail and dedication to this project is greatly appreciated. Thank you to members of the Ontario Tech University interns, Tyler Filo-Carroll and Jennifer Birnie, and to Molly Gadania and, who took the lead role in the editorial process, along with Jenna Dierick of Brock University. Thank you to Robyn Ruttenberg-Rozen for supporting the editorial process.

Thank you also to Michael Owen, Dean of Education at Brock University, for providing your perspective and insight in the foreword to this book.

We are grateful to the Canadian Association of Teacher Education (CATE) for supporting this work and allowing this book to become the 12th volume within a polygraph series devoted to Canadian research in teacher education. We are honoured that our volume sits alongside polygraphs of our esteemed colleagues across Canada, contributing to the Canadian teacher education scholarly landscape. The guidance of the executive members of CATE for making our volume come to life is truly appreciated.

Julian Kitchen and Diana Petrarca
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Julian Kitchen is a Professor in the faculty of education at Brock University. Along with Diana Petrarca, he edited the first volume of Initial Teacher Education in Ontario in 2017. He is the lead editor of International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices (Second Edition), Mindful and Relational Approaches to Social Justice, Equity and Diversity in Teacher Education, Narrative Inquiries into Curriculum-making in Teacher Education, Self-Study and Diversity II, Self-Study and Diversity III, and Canadian Perspectives on the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices. In addition, he is the author of Relational Teacher Education, editor of Writing as a Method for the Self-Study of Practice, and lead author of Professionalism, Law and the Ontario Educator. Professor Kitchen is co-editor of the Studying Teacher Education journal and editor for Springer’s Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices series.

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Diana Petrarca is a founding member of the Faculty of Education at Ontario Tech University (University of Ontario Institute of Technology) and an Associate Professor. During her time at Ontario Tech University, she has held numerous administrative roles including Practicum Coordinator, Bachelor of Education Program Director, and Assistant Dean in the Faculty of Education. Her research has evolved from exploring how to support classroom teachers who work with teacher candidates in the field via web-based learning tools, to exploring more deeply how initial teacher education programs enhance teacher candidate critical thinking, creativity, and learning. She is currently on a mission to (un)make teachers by exploring the conceptions and/or misconceptions of teacher candidates as they progress through initial teacher education programs. Along with Julian Kitchen, she edited the first volume of Initial Teacher Education in Ontario in 2017.

Many thanks to all of our contributors from across Ontario.

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Lindy Amato is Director of Professional Affairs at the Ontario Teachers’ Federation (OTF). In this capacity, Lindy holds responsibility for teacher professional issues including pre-service, in-service and ongoing professional learning. She liaises with numerous stakeholders including the faculties of education and related government ministries, influencing policy decisions and conducting research. Over the course of her tenure at OTF, Lindy has steered numerous professional learning projects including the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP), Survive and Thrive, and OTF’s Special Education Gateway. Her responsibilities also include supporting beginning and occasional teachers, anti-racism, and aboriginal education. As well, she supervises OTF’s international assistance program.
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Donald Kerr is Chair of Undergraduate Studies, and Associate Professor, in the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University, where he has also served as Chair of Professional Development in Education and Acting Chair of Aboriginal Education. Among other professional associations, he is a former President of the Canadian Philosophy of Education Society. He has published widely on ethics, teacher education, and philosophy of education, and recently co-edited, with Wayne Melville, Virtues as Integral to Science Education: Understanding the intellectual, moral and civic value of science and scientific inquiry (Routledge, 2021). He formerly taught high school math in Ontario and British Columbia, and has served as an elected school board trustee.

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Clare Kosnik is a professor at the University of Toronto/Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She teaches graduate program courses on teacher education and in literacy methods courses in the preservice program. She has won awards for her teaching, research, and doctoral supervision. Professor Kosnik has held a number of leadership positions: Director of the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study at the Ontario Institute for Study in Education, Director of the Master of Teaching program, Director of the Elementary Preservice Program, and Director of Teachers for a New Era (at Stanford University). Her area of research is teacher education, which she has systematically studied. She has published over 10 books and dozens of refereed journal articles, book chapters, and conference papers on teacher education. She is now conducting a large-scale study of 58 literacy/English teacher educators in four countries and a longitudinal study of 40 teachers over 15 years.

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LANGUAY, JOANNE
Joanne Languay is recently retired as an Executive staff member at the ETFO provincial office in Professional Learning/Curriculum Services where she spent 16 years advocating for teacher professionalism in various ways. Her portfolios included Teacher Education, work with the Ontario Faculties of Education, ETFO AQ courses, and new and occasional teacher member programs. Before ETFO, she was a teacher and curriculum consultant for the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. Joanne also did some writing and evaluating for publishers and the Ministry of Education in the area of mathematics.

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Laurie Leslie is a Professional Experiences Coordinator at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Laurie holds a PhD in literacy education. Her areas of research include teacher preparation for teaching literacy; use of picture books for teaching issues related to social justice; and teacher education practicum experiences, including faculty support for teacher candidates in remote placement settings. Prior to completing post-graduate studies, Laurie was an elementary teacher in the primary and junior-intermediate divisions, as well as a literacy consultant, special education teacher, and teacher-librarian.
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Terry Loerts is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at Redeemer University in Ancaster, Ontario since 2014. Terry has also been an elementary school teacher in the junior-intermediate division. During her Redeemer tenure, she has taught courses on Curriculum and Pedagogy, Literacy, Classroom Management, and the Arts. In addition, she is currently the Practicum Supervisor for teacher candidate placements. Terry has been actively involved in Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada, previously serving as chair of the Master’s Research Award. Her areas of research include multiliteracies practices and pedagogy in higher education, multiliteracies practices in elementary classrooms across disciplines, and teacher education practicum experiences.

MARTIN, ANDREA K.
Andrea K. Martin is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario. She has a background in education and social work and has taught and worked with children and youth at the elementary and secondary levels with a particular focus on supporting exceptional learners, including the at-risk population. Her research interests focus on teacher education, with an emphasis on the quality and impact of practicum learning experiences, on the process of collaboration and school-university partnerships, and on inclusive education and differentiating instruction for struggling readers with exceptionalities within the context of the regular classroom.

MELVILLE, WAYNE
Wayne Melville is the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University. Before taking on this role in 2019, he was Assistant Dean and Chair of Undergraduate Studies. He is a Professor of Science Education and currently serves as a Co-Editor in Chief of the Journal of Science Teacher Education. From July 2021, he is also a member of the Executive Committee of the Ontario Association of Deans of Education. Before starting at Lakehead in 2005, he taught science and mathematics for 17 years in Australian secondary schools. Over the course of his career he has published over 60 refereed articles, seven book chapters, and four books. His latest book, Virtues as Integral to Science Education: Understanding the intellectual, moral and civic value of science and scientific inquiry, is co-edited with Dr. Don Kerr. In 2017 he was awarded Lakehead’s Distinguished Instructor Award.

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Richard Messina is the principal of the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study (JICS) Lab School, an elementary school that is part of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto. With a mandate to “explore what is possible” the JICS Lab School exists to make a difference in the public domain by providing new insights into research, teacher education, and student learning. Richard Messina is an award-winning teacher and researcher (2007 Outstanding Journal Article in the Field of Instructional Design presented by the Design and Development Division, AECT) and he taught for many years in the JICS Lab School and in the public school system. He was a lead instructor at the Klingenstein Summer Institute, Teachers College, Columbia University for 10 years and has presented at AERA, NAIS, and at conferences in Canada, the U.S., South America, Europe, and Asia.
MOONEY, CLAIRE
Claire Mooney is Acting Dean of Education, Teaching and Learning at Trent University. At heart, Claire is an educator who strives to build communities of learners, to ensure agency and give voice to students. She is interested in mathematics education and the experience of preservice teachers as they rediscover and explore this subject. She has written professional texts to support students in their endeavours. She also enjoys music and the creative arts and recognises the importance of creativity in all aspects of learning. Beyond this, Claire is interested in educational leadership and how this impacts the work of faculty within higher education.

MUELLER, JULIE
Julie Mueller is a Professor in the Faculty of Education at Wilfrid Laurier University’s Waterloo campus. Julie helped to establish the Bachelor of Education program and has been with the faculty since its inception in 2007, most currently serving as Associate Dean and Coordinator of the Bachelor of Education from 2019-2021. She has been an active member in the Canadian Association of Teacher Education (CATE) since 2001 and served as Vice President-President-Past President from 2012-2018. Dr. Mueller is an executive member of Laurier’s Centre for Leading Research in Education (CLRiE) and Director of the Learning to Teach in A Digital World research lab. Julie’s research broadly investigates the impact of technology on learning and teaching with her most recent grants and publications exploring the relationship between computational thinking and problem solving and how these global competencies are represented in the K-12 curriculum and addressed in preservice teacher education.

NELSON, CARLA D.
Carla D. Nelson is the former and founding director of the preservice teacher education program at Tyndale University in Toronto, Ontario. As well as being an in-classroom teacher and school-based psychologist for many years, she coordinated Canadian teachers to participate in programs of professional development for teacher peers in Kenya. She has also contributed to the resourcing of teachers in Rwanda, Bolivia, and India. Under the supervision of D. Jean Clandinin, Carla earned a PhD in Elementary Education from the University of Alberta in the area of teacher formation. Her international involvement with educational initiatives continues.

NG-A-FOOK, NICHOLAS
Nicholas Ng-A-Fook is a Professor of Curriculum Theory and Vice-Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Ottawa. He is the former Director of the Teacher Education and Indigenous Teacher Education Programs at the Faculty of Education. His teaching and research are situated within the wider international field of curriculum studies, history education and life writing research. Dr. Ng-A-Fook is currently part of several SSHRC grants that seek to disrupt settler colonialism, systemic racisms, and inequities across the school and university curriculum. He recently created the FooknConversation podcast to address these challenges with colleagues, community activists, artists, educational leaders, and teachers. Nicholas Ng-A-Fook has co-published several award-winning books such as, but not limited to Oral History and Education: Theories, Dilemmas, and Practices; and Provoking Curriculum Studies: Strong Poetry and Arts of the Possible in Education.

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Blair Niblett is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at Trent University. His research and teaching span a broad range of topics all related to social and ecological justice education,
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Mary Ott is a research associate in Western University’s teacher education program and coordinator of the mentor-led research and assessment course. Her SSHRC-funded doctoral research explored formative assessment pedagogies in elementary literacy education, and this interest in assessment for and as learning continues to influence her research in teacher inquiry in diverse contexts, from literacy education to medical education. Mary is also an assistant professor in the Faculty of Education at St. Francis Xavier University, teaching courses in research, curriculum theory, and literacy.

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PERRY, SUSAN
Susan Perry, M.Ed., is currently Department Head of the Professional Development Department at the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association (OECTA). Susan leads OECTA’s collaborations with the teaching community, including the Ministry of Education, faculties of education, other teacher affiliates across the country, and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation. She also sits on numerous committees that discuss and address the current issues affecting Catholic education. Her experience includes teaching both elementary and secondary in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Ontario, where she taught for the Durham Catholic District School Board and served as an elementary consultant.

PHILLIPS, PATRICK
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RAGUNATHAN, SARAN
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Tom Russell is Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Education, Queen’s University. He retired in 2019 after 42 years at Queen’s. His teaching focused on secondary school science (physics in particular) and the improvement of teaching. His research focused on reflection-in-action, how individuals learn to teach, learning from experience and self-study of teacher education practices. He was a co-editor of the 2004 International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices and served as co-editor of the journal Studying Teacher Education during its first 15 years of publication. He has published numerous book chapters and co-edited more than a dozen books. Since his first visit to Chile in 2010, he has been involved in a variety of efforts to improve the quality of learning in the teacher education practicum and to introduce self-study of teacher education methodology in collaboration with the Santiago office of Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos.

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SALINITRI, GERI
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VAN NULAND, SHIRLEY
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**WILLARD-HOLT, COLLEEN**

Colleen Willard-Holt served as Inaugural Dean of the Faculty of Education at Wilfrid Laurier University from 2008-2019, during which she also served as Chair of the Ontario Association of Deans of Education for one year and on the Executive Board of the Canadian Association of Deans of Education for two years. Prior to commencing decanal duties she was an Assistant, then Associate, Professor of Education at Penn State University for 14 years, where she also served in administrative roles. Her research mainly focuses on gifted education, twice-exceptional students, and teacher education in a broad sense, but has expanded in recent years to design thinking, peace education, and teachers of racialized and/or Indigenous backgrounds.

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**YASHKINA, ANNA**

Anna Yashkina is an independent researcher. She has (co)led numerous research projects commissioned by the government, teacher federations, universities, and school boards. Anna has presented and published in the areas of educational leadership, teacher learning and development, and school improvement.

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Kelly Young is a Professor at Trent University’s School of Education and Professional Learning. Her areas of research include language and literacy, curriculum theorizing, leadership in eco-justice environmental education, and arts-informed writing pedagogies. She is the founder of the Learning Garden Alternative Settings Placement Program that was developed through a partnership between Trent University and GreenUP/Ecology Park in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada. She co-edited (among other collections) *Contemporary studies in environmental and indigenous pedagogies: A curricula of stories and place* (Brill/Sense, 2013).
CHAPTER 1

ENHANCING TEACHER EDUCATION IN ONTARIO: SHARING OUR STORIES

Julian Kitchen & Diana Petrarca

Brock University & Ontario Tech University

There are many examples of quality research and innovation in teacher education across Canada. The next step is to link these individual efforts so that findings and practices are disseminated and built upon. (Kosnik, Beck & Goodwin, 2016, p. 293)

INTRODUCTION

Teacher educators are engaged in the vitally important work of preparing classroom teachers to educate 21st century learners in an increasingly diverse and rapidly changing world. Given that “teachers confront complex decisions” every day, the National Academy of Education argued that “teachers need a new kind of preparation—one that enables them to go beyond ‘covering the curriculum’ to actually enable learning for students who learn in very different ways” (Bransford, Darling-Hammond & LePage, 2005, pp. 1-2). Teacher educators have not ignored the calls for change and, as Kosnik, Beck, and Goodwin (2016) wrote, “teacher educators already do much good work, and we must acknowledge and build on this foundation” (p. 267).

In Petrarca and Kitchen (2017), Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs, we offered descriptions and accounts of teacher education programs that were redesigned in response to the Ontario government’s decision to ‘enhance’ teacher education by extending it from two semesters (one year) to four semesters (over 16 months or two years). Chapters written by teacher educators involved in the delivery and, often, the administration of university-based teacher education programs were rich in detail on the organization and vision of their programs, the challenges of designing programs in a short time, and the ways in which the ‘enhanced’ programs used the added class time to improve teacher preparation. This second volume, by picking up the story four years later, captures ongoing program refinements and pays particular attention to the role of field experiences in enhancing teacher preparation.
While teacher education programs are doing fine work, there is always room for growth. Our review of the international teacher education literature, “Approaches to Teacher Education” (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2016), led us to conclude that, while “most large-scale teacher education programs claim to address all facets [theory, practice, and reflection],” much work still needs to be done in order “to develop integrated, rigorous programmes” (p. 137). Indeed, despite the deep commitment of teacher educators who design and lead programs, institutions often struggle to deliver coherent visions that are embraced by an eclectic range of instructors ranging from full-time teacher educators to academic specialists (e.g., psychology) to education specialists (e.g., literacy) to current or retired teachers and school administrators. As instructors enter with different assumptions and largely work autonomously in “balkanized structures” with “little opportunity for collaboration”, “the construction of community” is challenging (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, p. 454). This is compounded by a dearth of full-time teacher educators, as faculty typically have graduate and research responsibilities and programs typically “hire large numbers of adjunct faculty members who come and go, making it difficult to develop consistent and coherent curriculum across programs” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, p. 454).

These challenges are persistent if not perennial in teacher education around the world. Yet we remain optimistic that teacher education is improving and that reform is ongoing. We are hopeful that steady reform is possible by “studying our practice closely and deliberately, deepening our understanding of the circumstances in which we work, and finding small and sustainable ways to improve” (Kennedy, 2010, p. 19). This hope led us to edit Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs as a means of sharing examples of program design and a variety of ways of attending to the challenges of preparing teachers at a time of great change.

In 2015, Ontario initial teacher education programs officially moved from a two-semester post-baccalaureate degree to a four-semester post-baccalaureate degree. In response to this legislated change, faculty and staff in initial teacher education (ITE) programs in Ontario worked extremely hard against the backdrop of tight timelines, reduced funding, and the drastic changes in course content and practicum requirements to meet the 2015 implementation deadline. At that time, information about ITE in Ontario programs was difficult to obtain and typically articulated in various terms specific to each higher education institution (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2015). In the previous volume, we attempted to address this gap by bringing together authors from every public ITE program in Ontario to share how their institutions responded to the drastic change in Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs. The 2017 edited volume, part of the “polygraph” series for the Canadian Association for Teacher Education, included chapters from each of the public universities in Ontario offering ITE programs and detailed the individual journeys in creating and implementing the new four-semester model that began in 2015. The chapters outlined the opportunities and challenges universities faced throughout the change process, and provided rich descriptions of the resulting new ITE programs, highlighting innovative features specific to each program. Other chapters offered insights into the role of the Ontario College of Teachers, admissions, and STEM programs. The opening chapters provided context and identified themes across programs, while the conclusion reflected on future directions.
WHY A SECOND VOLUME?

While the 2017 volume stands on its own as a rich description of teacher education programs, its position in the midst of change invites a follow-up volume on how teacher education in Ontario is evolving now that the dust has settled and universities have had time to refine their programs. For this volume, we invited authors to provide updates on their respective ITE programs now that five years have passed. The previous volume was a response to Crocker and Dibbon’s (2008) claim that there was a lack of useful program descriptions in the literature generally, and Canada in particular. This volume is intended to render a more complete portrait of four-semester teacher education in Ontario, with particular attention to practicum and field experiences, which are too often invisible in the literature.

It is our hope that Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs after Five Years continues the knowledge sharing necessary to enhance the quality of teacher education in Ontario, not just extend its duration. We fast forward to 2020, when the enhanced ITE completed its fifth year of operation. On the one hand, five years have afforded institutions with opportunities to refine the programs established on tight timelines. On the other hand, universities continue to deal with cuts to funding relative to inflation and cope with new directives from a Progressive Conservative majority government seeking ‘efficiencies’ in education at all levels. In “Moving Forward: The Future of Teacher Education in Ontario,” the conclusion to the previous volume, we commended “faculty and staff [who] came together to create robust programs to effectively serve their students, communities, and K-12 students” (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2017, p. 351). We also suggested the need for a follow-up volume to render a more complete portrait of four-semester teacher education in Ontario. We hope this volume continues to provide a robust snapshot in time of ITE programs in Ontario.

As you will see in the chapters that follow, the diversity of teacher education programs and program components in Ontario is quite intriguing, especially given the same accreditation requirements that all institutions must include in their individual programs. We are interested in sharing accounts and identifying patterns across Ontario teacher education programs, not in judging them. We leave it to the readers to engage with the accounts of university programs and the other chapters with intellectual humility and with an eye to what they might take away as they continue to enhance their practices and programs.

Kosnik, Beck and Goodwin (2016), in “Reform Efforts in Teacher Education,” offered Canada’s education system as evidence that “draconian ‘reforms’ by government are not necessary” for effective reform (p. 293). “Respect for teachers and teacher educators, a level of autonomy, and tailoring programmes to specific communities,” they argue, “can be the basis for quality teaching and teacher education” (p. 293). The chapters in this second volume are representative of these characteristics of Canada’s decentralized approach. By being receptive to the chapters in this volume, teacher educators can learn from various approaches and innovations. By viewing our own practices and programs with a critical eye, while considering other approaches, we can continue to improve our approaches to preparing future teachers.

We hope that this volume will continue to deepen understanding of teacher education across the province and lead to similar sharing by teacher educators in other provinces. We believe the volume will be of interest to all who are interested in knowing more about the variety of teacher
education programs in Canada, with particular interest coming from Ontario teacher educators and policy-makers.

This introductory chapter will next provide a brief update regarding the recent changes to the process of becoming an Ontario-certified teacher. For a more in-depth history of ITE in Ontario prior to the 2013 legislated changes, readers are encouraged to revisit Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs. We then give an overview of the book’s organization, as well as the methodology or process implemented to create this second volume, including how we gathered support, the call to authors, and how we gathered and analyzed chapter contents to summarize key themes and questions that emerged as we read the submissions. We hope that by providing insight and transparency (as we did in the first volume), educational researchers in other provinces might also find this helpful should they also choose to compile a similar book for CATE’s polygraph series. We conclude the chapter by addressing several limiting factors that might influence our summaries of common themes extracted from the chapters.

**BECOMING A TEACHER IN ONTARIO**

To teach in a publicly funded school in Ontario, teachers must be certified by the Ontario College of Teachers, a regulatory body that “inspire[s] public confidence by protecting the public interest” (OCT, 2020) through licensing teachers, accrediting initial teacher education programs, approving additional qualification courses, and investigating and resolving complaints. The College accredits over 50 initial teacher education programs (e.g., full-time and part-time, concurrent, consecutive, various divisions, Indigenous, Technological Education) in 16 institutions in Ontario (13 public and 3 private).

The professional requirements vary (e.g., language requirements) depending on where teachers obtained their initial teacher education or certification but we focus only on the Ontario context. To be certified, Ontario teachers must have an undergraduate degree (minimum three-year degree) from an acceptable post-secondary institution and must successfully complete the four-semester initial teacher education program. Graduates then must apply to the College for certification, and pay the registration and annual membership fees. One change to certification requirements since our initial volume published in 2017 is the Math Proficiency Test requirement. On August 20th of 2019, the Government of Ontario filed Ontario Regulation 271/19: Proficiency in Mathematics, which now requires all teacher applicants to successfully complete a mathematics proficiency test (MPT).

**HOW THIS BOOK IS ORGANIZED**

**PART ONE: SETTING THE STAGE**

The first five chapters provide a contextual overview for the volume. This first chapter, “Enhancing Teacher Education In Ontario: Sharing Our Stories,” offers an overview of the book, including how one becomes a teacher in Ontario and a summary of broad changes to ITE in Ontario since 2015. “Enhanced Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: Revisiting Patterns of Continuity and Change Five Years Later,” the second chapter, provides a perspective across programs on admissions, program offerings, noted patterns over the past five years, and several case studies...
from conventional and smaller initial teacher education programs, and it concludes with consideration of challenges, opportunities, and next steps. The third chapter, “Practicum in Ontario’s Teacher Education Programs: Identifying Practices that Enhance Deeper Learning,” begins with accreditation requirements and regulations related to the practicum within the Ontario context and is followed by a review of the teacher education practicum literature, including characteristics of effective practa within the framework of deeper learning as described by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019); including examples drawn from Ontario’s teacher education programs. Part One continues with “Practicum in Ontario: Patterns Across Programs”—the fourth chapter—by identifying patterns across practicum experiences with a view to disseminate knowledge and promote innovation. We conclude the first section with a chapter by veteran teacher educators and researchers Tom Russell and Andrea Martin, who challenge us to reconceptualize our understandings of practicum and field experiences.

PART TWO: ONTARIO’S TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The second part contains chapters from each university with a teacher education program. In addition to the 13 public universities offering ITE programs, for this volume, we invited Niagara University, Tyndale College and Redeemer College (private universities with religious affiliations) to report on their programs. There are separate chapters for the Masters of Education (M.Ed.) and Masters of Teaching (M.T.) programs at the University of Toronto. These teacher education program chapters are followed by specialized chapters on Technological Education and Indigenous Education across institutions. The chapter on Indigenous teacher education provides an overview of programs across the province, with detailed descriptions of the offerings at Lakehead and Trent universities. Also added is a chapter on the new technological education programs at the secondary level.

PART THREE: OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVES

The book concludes with chapters offering perspectives from outside teacher education programs. A chapter on the difference between policy intended and policy lived by Kathryn Broad, a teacher educator who was seconded to work in the Ministry of Education during the implementation of the four-semester program, provides insights into the dynamic process of educational reform. A chapter from the Ontario College of Teachers offers a perspective on the regulatory body’s shift from being lead partner to being one of many ongoing program stakeholders in teacher education. A chapter on research conducted by the Ontario Teachers’ Federation contributes useful data from the field.

METHODOLOGY/PROCESS

GATHERING SUPPORT

Similar to our processes for the first volume, we reached out to the executive members of the Canadian Association for Teacher Education (CATE) once again to seek support for a follow-up edition to Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs. Following the approval from CATE, we reached out to the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE) and outlined our intentions to follow-up with individuals at their respective universities to continue to tell our institutions’ stories five years after
the historic and immense changes to Ontario’s initial teacher education (ITE) programs. We stressed the need to continue to document Ontario’s history of teacher education and to expand the body of knowledge garnered from the collective so that we could mobilize our lessons learned not only to Ontario’s teacher educators and researchers but to the broader teacher education community in Canada and beyond. We once again reassured the OADE that the purpose of this volume was not evaluative in nature but rather descriptive so that each institution could share their institutional journeys now that the dust has settled after a whirlwind of (re)designing, (re)developing, seeking various levels of university approvals, and implementing our “enhanced” four-semester programs. Once again, the deans were supportive and some even recommended authors, or agreed to participate in writing their university’s chapter, or offered to share the call for chapters with their institutions. While we provided the authors a wide range of flexibility regarding the contents of their chapters, we did provide some suggestions as seen in the excerpt from the call to authors below:

A typical chapter on a teacher education program might include:
• An overview of the programs in the university: concurrent, consecutive, alternative;
• Changes since 2017’s chapter;
• Divisional offerings, including enrolments in P/J, J/I, and I/S;
• Vision of teacher education articulated in key documents and processes;
• A deeper description of one particular program or program area, (e.g., secondary consecutive);
• How the particular program curriculum is organized, with reference to components discussed in the previous volume;
• Organization of field experiences, including nature, sequence, field support/supervision, mentors, and unique features;
• Focus on the field experience in greater depth; this might be focused on a particular innovation or feature in a particular cohort, stream (e.g., elementary) or across the whole program.
• Insights, challenges, or processes experienced during this transition period. Authors are encouraged to make connections to the wider Canadian teacher education context.

INFORMATION COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

As chapters arrived in our in-boxes, as co-editors, we each read the chapters and provided initial feedback related to content before returning to authors for consideration. Subsequent drafts underwent a more thorough editing process. The chapters came in at various times and in several instances due to personnel changes in the ITE programs or in the university, we experienced some challenges in obtaining some of the chapters within our desired timelines. We did not want to exclude any of the programs so we provided additional time. As we awaited some of the revised drafts and first drafts, the global pandemic due to the COVID-19 virus struck Ontario and the rest of the world, forcing us all to stay at home and pivot to online learning experiences. Needless to say, faculty members and administrators (including us) in ITE programs experienced additional challenges, resulting in delayed completion of this volume.
Much like we did in our first volume, we used WeftQDA (Fenton, 2006), a free open resource for qualitative data analysis, to attach in vivo and descriptive codes to text-based data, based loosely on the suggested topic areas as a guide. We followed an iterative process of revisiting the chapters by coding and re-coding using the emergent list of codes within the broader suggested topics. We then collapsed the many codes into broader themes; however, as described in the subsequent limitations section, this was not always possible. We also used the teacher education research as a basis for noting best practices as described by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) as we reviewed the chapters in an iterative manner once again drawing examples from the various institutions in a balanced manner.

In addition to using the chapters as a source of information to comment on patterns and as a basis for short descriptive vignettes, we also gathered ITE program information from publicly available information web-based resources. Some of these resources included the Ontario Universities’ Application Centre (OUAC) and its Teacher Education Application Service (TEAS), the Ontario College of Teachers, university websites, and Ontario’s online law website. We used the information gathered from additional resources and from our authors to fill in gaps from submitted chapters or to serve as a data-verification strategy.

**LIMITATIONS**

Several limitations potentially affect our summaries, descriptions, and examples obtained from the chapters. As previously mentioned, while we provided authors with suggested topics to consider in their chapters, we did not want to be overly prescriptive and wanted authors to have autonomy regarding their selected areas of foci in their respective chapters. Another limitation is the data we obtained from publicly available sources at the beginning of 2020. Given the described delays, some of this information may be outdated but we did attempt to mitigate potential misinformation by asking authors to verify program information in the tables we created in chapters two and four. A third limitation we identified is the actual process of authors sharing information regarding their own ITE programs. We realize that authors risk potential exposure depending on what information is disclosed in their respective chapters. Authors may or may not have included information in their respective chapters due to potential risks or due to their levels of access to information at their individual institutions. For example, an assistant professor may have different access to information that may be readily available to a Dean or Director of a program. We greatly appreciate the willingness and candour with which our authors approached their stories and we are honoured to share them in this second volume of *Initial Teacher Education in Ontario* as we explore our four-semester ITE degree programs five years upon initial implementation.

**REFERENCES**

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CHAPTER 2

ENHANCED INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN ONTARIO:
REVISITING PATTERNS OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE FIVE YEARS LATER

Diana Petrarca and Julian Kitchen
Ontario Tech University and Brock University

INTRODUCTION

The individual chapters in this second volume of Initial Teacher Education in Ontario each tell a story of initial teacher education (ITE) five years after the legislative changes that led to the expansion from one-year (two-semester) to two-year (or four-semester) programs. These stories can be read in conjunction with accounts from those same institutions four years earlier. Taken together, across many institutions, these individual stories provide a rich account of ITE in Ontario five years after the 2015 implementation, and four years after the first volume. Most of the chapters build on the stories told in the first volume (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017a), with a few new voices added to the conversation. Collectively, these individual studies constitute a group portrait of ITE in Ontario.

In this chapter, as in the second chapter of the first volume, we stand back from the individual stories to provide important contextual information and identify patterns of continuity and change. We hope that this effort to frame the collection will both help situate the individual chapters and offer a sort of group portrait. As this is a second volume, we see ourselves as revisiting and reinforcing impressions from the first collection. In the third and fourth chapters, we pay particular attention to the field experience component of ITE.

In 2017, the second chapter of Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs focused on providing an overview of the themes, patterns, and unique features emerging from Ontario’s publicly-funded ITE programs from a broader provincial perspective. We concluded that Ontario’s ITE programs still reflected the “diverse curricular organization” (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017b, p. 17) that we noted in our review of the previous one-year programs (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2015), even though all ITE programs were newly required to incorporate core content in Schedule 1 within Regulation 347 (Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs, 2002). We also expressed relief that, despite new ITE requirements around program content (including a minimum of 80 days practicum experiences), ITE programs still organized their courses, practica, and semesters in diverse ways that reflect their respective and
various guiding mission/values statements and goals, conceptual frameworks, and other institutional uniqueness. We continue to believe the diverse manner in which our Ontario ITE programs organize learning experiences for our teacher candidates is something to be celebrated and shared. We encourage readers to revisit Chapter 2 in Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017a) for an extensive compilation of how curriculum was organized in Ontario’s publicly funded universities at the onset of the four-semester program. We recognize that this compiled information did not include privately funded ITE programs; however, the chapters on programs at Niagara, Redeemer, and Tyndale universities in the current volume provide rich descriptions of these programs. Rather than focus on the patterns within the curricular organization of the ITE programs that have typically not changed drastically since the implementation of the 2015 program, we focus instead on the commonalities related to responsiveness and challenges as described by our authors five years after implementing the four-semester program.

Before launching into ITE program commonalities, we begin the chapter by establishing context through a compilation of Ontario’s ITE program offerings in Appendix 1. Data obtained for this table came from several sources, including Ontario’s University Application Centre (OUAC)/Teacher Education Application Service (TEAS), Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), and individual authors. Next, we review the historical data related to ITE admissions and only for ITE programs that use the TEAS via OUAC. Although the Bachelor of Education degree is a post-baccalaureate degree, it is still considered an “undergraduate” degree and TEAS only processes applications for publicly funded and undergraduate degree programs in Ontario. This means that the data from neither our privately-funded universities (i.e., Niagara, Redeemer, Tyndale) nor from graduate degree programs leading to teacher certification (i.e., M.Ed., M.T.) offered by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto are available via TEAS. Regardless, the application and admissions data still tell an interesting story. Next, we delve into two broad themes emerging from our submissions: (1) the responsive nature of ITE program educators and administrators; and (2) the challenges confronting Ontario’s ITE programs.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS IN ONTARIO

Appendix 1 provides a compilation of ITE program offerings in Ontario, which includes some of the data from our 2017 volume for comparison purposes. In the first volume of Initial Teacher Education in Ontario, we compiled ITE program offerings from 2013 and 2015 and noted three interesting themes. First, we noticed a decrease in Technological Education programs, divisional offerings, satellite campuses, and alternative programs (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017). Second, we observed an increase in programs focused on Indigenous content. Third, we observed creative approaches to programming for grand-parented concurrent education students from the former two-semester program and other changes such as cancellation of concurrent programs or shifts to advanced acceptance to the consecutive program from secondary school. Additional background information regarding these findings can be found in the second chapter of the first volume. We now examine divisional offerings, Indigenous content, technological education, and French as a Second Language (FSL) Primary/Junior B.Ed. Programs.
DIVISIONAL OFFERINGS

As seen in Appendix 1, the divisional offerings remain relatively consistent with those in 2015. The Primary/Junior (P/J) Division program remains the dominant program. All universities offer the P/J Division program whereas not all universities offer the Junior/Intermediate (J/I) or Intermediate/Senior (I/S) programs. Specifically, three universities offer only P/J and J/I programs (Redeemer, Tyndale, Wilfrid Laurier) and five universities offer only P/J and I/S programs (Lakehead, Niagara, Ontario Tech, Queen’s, Trent). The remaining nine universities offer P/J, J/I, and I/S programs, although one of the two programs at OISE (the M.A. in Child Study) is only P/J.

INDIGENOUS CONTENT

As we observed upon implementation of the four-semester program, there continues to be an increase in programs focused on Indigenous content as per Appendix 1. Since 2015, several new Indigenous B.Ed. programs and/or cohorts have been established in the province: Trent began an Indigenous B.Ed. program in 2016; a new Aboriginal B.Ed. cohort began at Brock in 2017; and York started a Waaban Indigenous Teacher Education cohort in partnership with Toronto District School Board in 2019. In addition to the new specialized Indigenous programs and/or cohorts, curriculum related to Indigenous perspectives, cultures, histories, and ways of knowing continues to expand in our programs either via dedicated courses or workshops and/or integrated throughout other courses. More information on Indigenous education is available in a dedicated chapter in this volume (see Desmoulins and Bell).

TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

One unfortunate trend we noted in the first volume of *Initial Teacher Education in Ontario* was the decrease in technological education program offerings in 2015 (and resulting admissions), demonstrating that “one of the unintended consequences of the speedy transition to a four-semester program was a marked decline in technological education offerings and admissions” (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017a, p. 21). Figure 1 displays the data for the number of confirmed acceptances for B.Ed. programs in Technological Studies obtained from the Teacher Education Application Service (TEAS) (OUAC, 2020). The post-2015 increase in confirmed acceptances for Technological Studies reflects the increase in program offerings as seen in Appendix 1, where, currently, Technological Education Degree streams are offered by Brock, Queen’s, and York and Technological Education Diploma streams are offered by Brock, Queen’s, and Windsor. In addition, Queen’s also offers Technological Education Multi-Session Programs, giving individuals working in the skilled-trades opportunities to continue working while completing a Degree or Diploma option in a blended format. More information on technological education is available in a dedicated chapter in this volume (see Brushwood Rose and Figg).

PRIMARY/JUNIOR FRENCH PROGRAMS

Another interesting occurrence we noted in the chapters since the first volume is increased program offerings for French as a Second Language (Ontario, 2020) at the Primary/Junior levels. This is not surprising given the high demand and shortages for both French first language teachers (Ontario, 2018) and French as a Second Language (FSL) teachers in Ontario schools (OCT, 2020b). Laurentian authors suggest that the enhanced employment opportunities for FSL teachers
Figure 1

Number of Confirmed Acceptances to Technological Studies Programs

Note. Data obtained from TEAS website. Data reflects confirmations for Technological Studies Programs as of September each year.

...may be partially responsible for the substantially increased number of requests for practicum placements in FSL classrooms by their English-language concurrent education program students. To ensure teacher candidates have the appropriate background for such placements, Laurentian instituted a written French test in Fall 2018 for all potential candidates who made FSL classroom requests.

While Ottawa and Laurentian offer B.Ed. programs fully in the French language, other universities (Brock, Lakehead, Nipissing, Queen’s, Trent, Western, WLU, Windsor, and York) offer French as a Second Language (FSL) as a teachable subject in their J/I and/or I/S B.Ed. programs. In addition, the number of FSL Primary/Junior B.Ed. programs have increased since 2015 and are currently offered by Western, York, Nipissing, Ottawa, and Tyndale.

ITE PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

Admissions to Ontario’s publicly-funded ITE programs are centralized through Ontario’s University Application Centre (OUAC). OUAC is a not-for-profit division of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), and it functions to process admissions applications for undergraduate, law, medical, rehabilitation sciences, and teacher education programs offered by Ontario universities (OUAC, 2021a). OUAC also compiles application statistics for these programs as well as confirmation statistics for ITE programs.

The Teacher Education Application Service (TEAS) is part of OUAC and deals only with applications to the four-semester Bachelor of Education consecutive programs at an Ontario publicly funded university (OUAC, 2021b). Applications for concurrent education programs are...
not processed through TEAS but rather through OUAC’s undergraduate program applications. The admissions data shared in this chapter are specific to the four-semester consecutive ITE programs. Other ITE programs offered in Ontario (and included in this volume), but excluded from the TEAS data, include the graduate ITE programs offered at OISE and three private ITE programs (i.e., Niagara, Redeemer, Tyndale).

APPLICATION NUMBERS

Pre-2015 Applications
In 2017, we noted a steady decline in the number of TEAS applications and applicants across the province from September 2007 to September 2013 with a slight increase in both number of applicants and applications for September 2014. We speculated in the initial CATE volume that the overall decrease of TEAS applications in the province from 2007 to 2014 could have reflected the “dismal job prospects for beginning teachers in the province” (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017b, p. 18), and as a result of the “heightened awareness of the more competitive teacher employment market in Ontario, the number of applicants to Ontario’s consecutive teacher education programs declined” (OCT, 2015, p. 3). In 2017, we also hypothesized that the slight 3% increase in the number of TEAS applications from 2013 to 2014 may have reflected the desire of applicants to enter Ontario’s ITE programs in the final year that ITE programs offered acceptances to the former two-semester consecutive programs. In 2017, we indicated a slight decrease in the number of applicants from 2013 to 2014 but based on the most up-to-date numbers on the TEAS website, we can now confirm that there was a .6% increase in the number of applicants, as corrected in Figure 2 (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017).

2015 Applications
In 2015, the number of applications, admissions, and confirmations to ITE programs for the enhanced four-semester program declined significantly from 2014. In the 2017 CATE volume, we identified a 54% and 57% decline in the number of September TEAS applicants and applications (respectively) from September 2014 to September 2015. We suggested this significant decline was due to the provincially imposed 50% reduction of Bachelor of Education admissions, the extension of the two-semester program to four semesters, and the exclusion of applications to the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) as they shifted to offering only a graduate Masters of Arts or Masters of Teaching degree-based ITE program, and thereby no longer used the TEAS service, which is dedicated only to B.Ed. Program admissions in Ontario’s publicly funded universities.

Post-2015 Applications
With the exception of a slight dip in applications in 2016, as seen in Figure 2, the number of applications and applicants steadily increased from 2015 to 2019 by 47% and 63% respectively. A possible explanation for the steady increase of applications/applicants to TEAS is the improving job prospects for new early-career teachers reported in OCT’s Transition to Teaching (OCT, 2019). Transition to Teaching refers to OCT’s annual survey of early-career teachers in Ontario with the purpose of providing an overview of the teaching landscape for various sub-groups of early-career teachers who are licensed to teach in elementary and secondary schools in Ontario (OCT, 2020a). The number of applications and applicants via TEAS dipped from 2019 to 2020.
by 13% and 14% respectively even though the labour market for early-career teachers continued to improve as reported in the most recent *Transition to Teaching* (OCT, 2020b).

We speculate that this dip may have been a response to labour unrest in the education sector and diminished employment prospects during those years. Another potential theory contributing to the reduction of ITE program applications in 2020, as seen in Figure 2, is the introduction of the Math Proficiency Test (MPT). In August 2019, the provincial government announced the MPT to an unsuspecting pool of applicants who had already confirmed their spots in Ontario’s ITE programs for 2019 (EQAO, 2019). Despite this uncertainty, the overall number of applications/applicants from 2015 to 2020 still increased by 30% and 40% respectively.

It is important to note that some ITE program applications remained open well after the posted deadline and so the data may not reflect the full picture. Coupled with this limitation is the number of applicants who apply to the two programs at OISE as well as candidates who apply to the three private ITE (i.e., Niagara, Redeemer, Tyndale) programs in Ontario. While the data present an incomplete picture of the number of applicants to ITE programs in Ontario, we can still note general trends in increases and decreases to programs, providing a general snapshot of applications and applicants to Ontario’s ITE programs at a specific point in time (i.e., April) over the years.

**Figure 2**

*Number of TEAS Applicants and Applications (April 2011 – April 2020)*

![Number of TEAS Applicants and Applications](image)

*Note.* Data obtained from TEAS website.

**CONFIRMED ACCEPTANCES**

Figure 3 provides a summary of the total number of acceptances in Ontario’s publicly funded consecutive B.Ed. programs confirmed as of September from 2014 to 2020. As seen on their website, OUAC typically provides this data anywhere from September 2nd (as seen in 2015 sources) to September 13th (as seen in 2017 sources) (OUAC, 2020). Once again, while Figure 3
does not present a complete picture of the total number of confirmed acceptances to ITE programs in the province, the data do provide a snapshot of trends in Ontario’s publicly funded B.Ed. programs. The 55.6% drop in total confirmed acceptances from 2014 to 2015 occurred when the province legislated Ontario’s programs to move from the two-semester ITE program to a four-semester program. As we speculated in the first volume of Initial Teacher Education (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017b), the overall decrease in confirmed acceptances to Ontario’s publicly funded ITE programs could be due to several reasons. First, at the time of this major transition in Ontario’s ITE program history, the provincial government imposed a 50% reduction/restriction on admissions to all B.Ed. programs in Ontario. The decrease in total number of confirmed acceptances could also reflect the lack of overall full-time job prospects for B.Ed. graduates at that time. The additional two semesters might have also dissuaded potential candidates who may not have been fully committed to becoming a teacher but might have considered attending a two-semester program, and who may not have wanted to put in an additional commitment to the program. And, to a lesser degree, the decrease in overall confirmed acceptances might also reflect the exclusion of OISE’s confirmation numbers, which TEAS no longer processes due to OISE’s decision to no longer offer a B.Ed. program and move to the M.T. program, thereby moving admissions to the institution.

Figure 3

Total Confirmed Number of Acceptances to Ontario’s Consecutive B.Ed. Programs (September 2014 – September 2020)

Note. Data obtained from TEAS website.

Not unlike our first volume, the application and confirmation numbers do not include application and confirmation numbers for OISE’s two graduate ITE programs and the three private ITE programs in Ontario. Based on the submitted chapters (or author confirmations) from OISE, Niagara, Redeemer, and Tyndale, we estimate those programs accepted approximately 720 students in 2019. This number, coupled with the confirmed acceptances from the TEAS data (Figure 3), allows us to provide a rough estimate of 4,221 teacher candidates enrolled in Ontario’s ITE programs as of September 2019. Figures 4 and 5 display the confirmed acceptances for English language and French language consecutive B.Ed. programs organized by divisional
offerings respectively. In Ontario, ITE programs leading to certification with OCT offer programs in two consecutive divisions: (1) Primary/Junior or P/J (Kindergarten to Grade 6); (2) Junior/Intermediate or J/I (Grades 4 to 10); and (3) Intermediate/Senior or I/S (Grades 7 to 12).

**Figure 4**

*English-Language Consecutive B.Ed. Program Number of Confirmations by Division (September 2014 – September 2020)*

*Note.* Data obtained from TEAS website.

**Figure 5**

*French-language Consecutive B.Ed. Program Number of Confirmations by Division (September 2014 – September 2020)*

*Note.* Data obtained from TEAS website.


Teacher Supply and Demand in Ontario

It is evident that the Primary/Junior (P/J) program is still the most popular program in both English and French; however, as seen in Appendix 1 above, this larger number could also reflect that all publicly funded ITE programs offer P/J programs. The I/S program occupies the second highest enrolment in English B.Ed. programs and J/I consistently places third. The French B.Ed. programs, as seen in Figure 5, have greater J/I program enrolments and fewer I/S program enrolments, reflecting offerings available in the province, which are considerably fewer in number compared to the English programs and pose challenges for school boards requiring French-language teachers. In 2020, teacher shortages in French language have continued to pose challenges for school boards who require both first language teachers and French as a Second Language (FSL) teachers throughout the province (OCT, 2020b). As reported by OCT, many French-language teachers in Ontario complete their teacher education outside of Ontario:

…an average about 100 newly licensed teachers complete their teacher education programs in other provinces and countries prior to obtaining an Ontario Teaching Certificate with French-language basic qualifications in some combination of primaire, moyen, intermédiaire and/or supérieur. (OCT, 2020b)

Figure 6 (excerpted from Transition to Teaching, 2020 courtesy of the Ontario College of Teachers) shows the past, current, and projected annual number of newly licensed teachers in comparison to the number of annual retirements of teachers in Ontario. It is evident that the employment landscape for newly licensed teachers is changing and as noted by OCT, reflects “a radically different balance of new teacher supply and replacement demand from that experienced over the past 20 years” (OCT, 2020b, p. 8).

In fact, in addition to the French language teacher shortage, the most recent Transition to Teaching report (OCT, 2020b), suggests teacher shortages in other areas are also expected.

Unless some increase occurs in one or more of the various sources of Ontario teacher supply, teacher shortages will be much broader than the French-language and French as a second language teacher shortages experienced over the past several years. (OCT, 2020b, p. 6)

The above mentioned “increase” regarding sources of Ontario teacher supply may eventually fall back on the ITE programs that suffered a 50% reduction of annual admissions in 2015, along with the additional financial cuts that piggy-backed the move from the two-semester program to the four-semester program. In-depth information regarding the transition from ITE programs to the teaching profession falls beyond the scope of this chapter; however, additional details regarding 2020’s (and previous years) Transition to Teaching are readily available via the OCT website (OCT, 2020a).
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ONTARIO

Most teacher education in Ontario takes place in *conventional programs* (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2016). Conventional teacher education programs are defined as “typically either traditional undergraduate programs that combine subject knowledge and pedagogical courses or post-baccalaureate programs that follow the completion of a degree program” (p. 138). These programs are recognizable as being university-based, offering a range of courses, and providing teacher candidates with experiences in the field. They cover theory, practice and reflection in broad terms, with variations in emphasis and integration. These similarities may be in part due to common Ontario College of Teachers accreditation requirements. More likely, based on our survey of the international literature (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2016), they are reflective of general patterns in teacher education across jurisdictions.

Conventional programs are, in many respects, like grocery stores. Big or small, they offer similar content, though selection, quality, local adaptations, and customer service may differ. Courses are often similar across programs. This is evident from the “Curricular Organization” table in the previous volume (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017b, pp. 35-52). For example, educational psychology is typically the focus of dedicated courses. While the structure may differ—e.g., several short courses
at Brock University and longer duration courses at University of Windsor—and the packaging may vary—e.g., Psychological Foundations at Queen’s University and Learning Theories and Practices at University of Ottawa—they are easily recognizable. In some places, these courses are bundled with other content, such as Inclusive Education at Lakehead University, which combines psychology with special education. Others offer distinct packages, such as Ontario Tech University’s Mental Health Issues in Schools, in addition to more typical courses. Courses related to developing pedagogy vary more across institutions, with each offering its unique packaging of beginning repertoire, lesson and unit planning, classroom management, and assessment. A cluster of universities cover much of this material in full-courses (72 hours or more)—e.g., Fundamentals of Teaching and Learning in University of Toronto’s M.T. program—while others divide them into specialized courses such as assessment and law. In most cases, there is a mix of both, with variations in what is included in bundles or packaged separately. In many cases, these components are connected to courses related to practicum (e.g., Trent University) while others offer more narrowly defined practicum courses (e.g. York University). While the ‘aisles’ may differ from university to university, the experiences are similar. Even smaller programs with specific visions (e.g., Wilfrid Laurier University) or small religion-oriented programs (e.g., Niagara, Redeemer, and Tyndale universities in this volume) deliver comparable components in broadly similar ways. Conventional programs in Ontario deliver sound initial teacher education to prospective teachers, but their structure and scale often make it difficult for them to consistently attain excellence. In our view, the best hope for reform is the development of “integrated programmes that simultaneously address key elements in coherent ways [to] make a positive difference” (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2016). As Kosnik and Beck (2011) argued:

Learning to teach is a difficult and never-ending task; but a pre-service program that is prioritized, integrated and connected to practice — and that embodies its own priorities — can significantly enhance teachers’ effectiveness in their initial years and beyond. (p. 11)

In “Approaches to Teacher Education,” we wrote:

Kosnik and Beck (2011) make the case that teacher educators “often try to do too much” by covering “the waterfront in almost every subject” and, thus, “[s]tudent teachers are inundated with so much information that they have a difficult time organizing it both conceptually and physically” (p. 2). Conventional programs are often problematic. While claiming to address all dimensions of education, often they are critically flawed on conceptual and structural grounds. As Feiman-Nemser (2001) highlighted, they often have weak relationships between courses and field experiences, offer fragmented pedagogy, limited subject matter knowledge, lack teacher educators who practice what they preach, fail to link theory to practice, and do not “cultivate habits of analysis and reflection through focused observation, child analysis, analysis of cases, microteaching, and other laboratory experiences” (p. 1020). (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2016, p. 138-139)

After reviewing a range of theory-oriented, practice-oriented and reflection-oriented programs, we considered the merits of integrated programs. Such programs are typically small in scale, but the success of integrated teacher education in Finland suggests that conventional programs too can become integrated. In our conclusion, we wrote:
The challenges of delivering high quality, integrated teacher education on a large-scale in conventional comprehensive universities are great. Developing better individual courses is relatively easy to achieve, but relationships across a program, with teacher and school, and in communities is daunting. This is especially true given the multiple duties of teacher education and the focus on research and graduate studies… [T]eacher educators and their institutions need to develop new visions for teaching and learning that serve as the foundational element that guides how we do teacher education (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowdon, 2007).

We need to recognize the limits of current practice and find ways to break down the barriers to more practical elements, deeper theory, richer reflection, and integration. If we do not take up the challenge to respond to legitimate criticism, then calls for alternatives such as school-based teacher training will continue to grow. The best way to counter the neo-liberal agenda is to improve the work we do. In doing so, we also improve student learning, schools and communities at a time when education is critical to living in a diverse and changing world. (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2016, p. 179)

In the subsections that follow, we (1) reflect on the inherent challenges of conventional teacher education on a large-scale (drawing on Julian Kitchen’s experience at Brock University), and (2) consider the lessons we can learn from small-scale Ontario programs that are more integrated.

THE CHALLENGES OF CONVENTIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION

Julian Kitchen has been a professor at Brock University since 2006, after being seconded to the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto as a teacher educator for seven years. As program chair for teacher education, he was the team lead for the development of the enhanced teacher education program at Brock. As is evident from the Brock chapters in the first volume (Kitchen & Sharma, 2017) and this volume, Julian is committed to the Brock model and invested in delivering it in a meaningful way. At the same time, he is aware of the inherent challenges and of the compromises involved in delivering quality and coherent programming. We use Brock as an example not to criticize its program but to illustrate the challenges we all face as teacher educators in conventional programs.

Conventional programs vary in terms of vision, approach, personnel, and location, but a large program typically lacks a narrow and strong vision that guides the entire program and is embraced by all instructors and teacher candidates. This is not a criticism of programs but, rather, an acknowledgement of their contextual realities. Among the factors that make coherence and consistency challenging are the sheer number of teacher candidates, the large number of sessional or part-time instructors (compared to the number of full-time tenured/tenure track instructors) that typically teach in ITE programs, and under-funded and under-resourced programs.

The initial teacher education program at Brock has a coherent philosophy that emphasizes the importance of becoming critical, reflective, caring, equity-oriented practitioners (Kitchen & Sharma, 2017) and a robust Triple-C Model that connects cohort, coursework, and community (Brown & Kitchen). Although the Triple-C Model guided program design, the program is not as integrated as Julian and his colleagues had hoped. While there was substantial buy-in by tenure-track faculty in the program, professors typically teach only a minority of classes. While they are
knowledgeable and passionate about their courses, their time and energy are not entirely focussed on delivering their program. Julian, for instance, juggles his teacher education teaching load with graduate teaching, program leadership, research, editing and writing. Indeed, it is fair to say that tenure-track faculty in most universities are part-time teacher educators.

Certainly, most teacher education is delivered by part-time instructors, with the bulk of courses being delivered by sessional instructors and graduate students. At Brock, most teacher education courses are taught by retired teachers and principals. These highly capable individuals bring to the program deep knowledge of their subjects combined with hands-on experiences delivering curriculum and pedagogy to diverse students. Individually, they deliver their courses with skill and insight, yet most of them teach only a few classes. In larger programs, typically, they are neither fully invested in the program as whole nor knowledgeable about how their courses are related to others. Indeed, many faculty members are not familiar with the curriculum in other courses. Also, sessional instructors are largely unaware of the Triple-C Model or the vision for the program; this diminishes program cohesion and limits opportunities for integration. Furthermore, for the large number of students in the concurrent program, there is not a broader concurrent program vision that connects their first four years as undergraduates with the approach taken in the final two years in the accredited professional program. Most instructors of courses in the two-year professional program teach their courses with little awareness of the overarching philosophy or how their courses fit into the larger package. Also, there are differences in priorities between more academically-oriented faculty who lead subject teams and the retired teachers and administrators who deliver most of the courses as sessional instructors. These sessional instructors, while broadly accepting the university’s priorities, are more likely to be guided by their experiences in the field than by guidance from the academy.

Fewer people teaching more courses would increase cohesion within course clusters and probably increase awareness and engagement in the larger program. It would not necessarily increase integration. Integrated teacher education is challenging as it extends beyond assembling all the necessary components to carefully weaving them together so that the components inform each other in deep and meaningful ways. In Kitchen’s (2020) study of exemplary integrated programs, he noted that their carefully selected instructors shared common visions and met regularly to reinforce connections across courses, integrate assignments where possible, and make meaningful connections with experiences in the field. Also, most instructors participated in practicum supervision in order to strengthen theory-practice connections. Such integration, which is challenging at the best of times, is virtually impossible given the part-time commitment of almost all instructors. When Julian was a classroom teacher, it was possible to meet colleagues during common preparation time or after school. In teacher education at Brock, this is not an option. As team leader for I/S social justice courses, he struggled to integrate a major assignment with one in instructional technology. Although everyone was enthusiastic, it was hard to communicate with multiple instructors, with different contracts, and across two campuses. His solution was to divide elements of the assignment so that the social justice instructors approved topics for online learning teams and evaluated rationales/critiques, while technology instructors assessed technological and lesson planning dimensions. On a larger scale, integration is even more challenging. P/J/I assessment was introduced in an 18-hour course with reinforcement to occur in course on school curriculum. Julian, who facilitated the design of the enhanced program, recalls warning at the time that this would require considerable coordination and communication. He was assured that
elementary instructors were committed to integration. While they undoubtedly are, the communication has proved challenging and teacher candidates in exit surveys expressed dissatisfaction with coverage of assessment. This has led to a doubling of hours for the assessment course and further efforts to divide assessment topics across subject areas. While the details are particular to Brock University, the part-time nature of teacher educator work is a challenge common to large conventional programs.

Underpinning the challenges of part-time teacher educator work are our under resourced ITE programs. As noted in the chapters, provincial cuts and university constraints give rise to many challenges that directly oppose what we know exemplary ITE programs should be doing. For example, reduction in funding has spurred class size increase, decreased personnel, and loss of resources that affect important partnership building, associate teacher training, and modelling sound pedagogies. For example, it is extremely challenging to model the provision of frequent and targeted feedback to teacher candidates when the class size is now larger due to fiscal constraints. In other situations where support staff, such as advisors or practicum or program support, is decreased or eliminated, the important relationship building between schools and the academy are compromised or additional responsibilities are downloaded to the program directors or chairs who in some instances may only receive one course release due to the university’s one-size-fits all policies, thereby creating additional constraints, challenges, and stress.

More broadly, limited integration among theory, practice and reflection affect the teacher candidate experience. Conventional teacher education, as Hagger and McIntyre (2006) state, typically does not recognize that “classroom teaching expertise cannot in principle be derived from theoretical or idealized views of teaching” (p. 11) and “classroom teaching expertise is necessarily complex, subtle and sophisticated” (p. 6). The key to addressing these challenges is to work more closely with associate teachers and partner schools. Teacher educators at Brock and other institutions are increasingly aware of the benefits of strong connections with the field, both from their own experiences and literature on the practicum (e.g., White & Forgasz, 2016; Petrarca & van Nuland, 2020). We realize that conventional teacher education that is grounded in the practice of teaching is associated positively with teacher candidate achievement (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb & Wyckoff, 2009).

The Brock program was designed to bridge theory and practice through a cohort course that connects coursework with the community. The model for practicum, particularly the initial internship outlined by Brown and Kitchen in this volume, anticipated stronger relationships with associate teachers in carefully selected partner schools. This partnership, however, has only had limited success thus far at Brock and in other large programs; smaller programs such as the P/J/I program at Wilfred Laurier University and the Master of Arts at the University of Toronto have had more success in this regard. The main challenges appear to be the large-scale of most programs, schools accepting teacher candidates from multiple universities, and the move towards centralized placements in most large school boards. We often find ourselves managing as best we can within structures that we know are less than optimal. Even with strong school-university partnerships, connecting theory to practice would still present real challenges, but many of us in teacher education across the province are committed to trying. We take comfort in knowing we are doing a good job, even as we aspire to do more.
LEARNING FROM SMALLER TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Most teacher education programs in Ontario are large, graduating several hundred teacher candidates a year. A few are small, either a small faculty of education or a distinct program within a larger faculty. While smaller does not mean better, it does offer the potential for greater integration across program components. Such programs are more likely to have a common vision, teacher candidates who share that vision, instructors who teach across curriculum areas, and instructors who also supervise field experiences. Thus, we can learn much from such programs that explicitly and effectively develop integrated teacher candidate experiences as we strive to promote deeper learning in large-scale programs.

In “The Pedagogy of Teacher Education in Exemplary Programs,” Kitchen (2020) looked closely at three such programs. These three were a specialized education college (Bank Street College), a specialized social justice themed program in a small university (Mills College), and a cohort program within a large conventional university (Midtown Option at University of Toronto). Such exemplary programs are particularly effective in addressing theory, practice, reflection and integration, while also building community and influencing teacher education within their institutions, in schools and through contributions to research. The insights offered in Darling-Hammond and Oakes’ (2019) Preparing Teachers for Deeper Learning draws from research on seven exemplary small programs.

All ITE program chapters included some description or mention to varying degrees regarding the interplay of theory and practice in their programs and efforts to enhance program coherence or integration. In this section, however, we draw on chapters from two small programs in order to understand how they take up the challenge of bridging the theory-practice divide through integration. The first program is at Tyndale University, a small, privately-funded, Christian university. The second, the Master of Arts in Child Study and Education (MA-CSE) program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, is a distinct and long-standing program within the very large University of Toronto.

*Tyndale*

Tyndale’s small teacher education program (around 50 graduates) has a strong and coherent vision guided by a combination of Christian values and social constructivist teaching. At its heart is Karen Hume’s (2008) framework for understanding differentiated instruction, which has been adapted to a religious context. Central to Hume’s model is attending to teacher beliefs and knowledge, something that Connelly and Clandinin (1999) identified as crucial to curriculum planning. As Birch and Nelson wrote in their chapter:

> Not only is this kind of reflection accessible, it is crucial for fully understanding one’s own teacher identity and the impact that identity has on learners in the classroom. Hume’s model therefore aligns with our institution’s grounding in foundational beliefs.

A strong vision, according Kosnik and Beck (2011), “pulls together the other components, providing an overview and integration of them” (p. 107). A workable vision for teacher education, however, must offer “a vast network of ideas, principles, and images touching on theory and practice” (p. 114-115). Tyndale’s adaptation of the model, as outlined in its chapter in this volume, is both broad enough to address the complexities of teaching and learning and narrow enough to
offer cohesion. This approach is consistent with one of Beck and Kosnik’s (2006) insights into exemplary programs:

The whole program has to have a strong inquiry emphasis so students come to understand in depth what the approach is and feel supported in pursuing it in both the campus program and the practicum. This in turn requires that certain conditions be in place: a supportive program, an integrated program emphasizing inquiry throughout, connections between theory and practice, and a non-authoritarian approach. (p. 55)

Program coherence around this model is achieved through various means, including spiralling curriculum across courses. Examples include examining assessment systematically and in parallel across several courses and designating a particular subject course for teaching a specific set of skills (e.g., unit planning in social studies). This integrative approach strengthens cohesion and reinforces learning throughout the program.

Another feature of Tyndale, and many successful smaller programs, is integration between coursework and field experiences (Beck & Kosnik, 2006). Tyndale assigns a single faculty advisor to supervise a teacher candidate over all three practicum placements. Course instructors meet regularly with faculty advisors to co-plan learning sessions for teacher candidates, thus bridging the gap between university and school. This allows, as Russell and Martin propose in their chapter in this volume, for “actively integrating practicum experiences into each and every university course.” These features are consistent with the exemplary programs studied by Kitchen (2020) and Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019).

Attention to reflection by teacher candidates helps strengthened integration in the program and, presumably, in the minds of teacher candidates. Instructors and faculty advisors place a strong emphasis on Connelly and Clandinin’s (1999) conception of teachers as “knowers of themselves, of their situations, of children, of subject matter, of teaching, of learning” (p. 1). They also place great emphasis on the “curriculum of lives” (Clandinin, 2006) in schools, rather than mechanically transferring theory from courses into practice in schools. This is consistent with Russell and Martin’s call in this volume for teacher education that respects the craft knowledge of teachers in authentic situations more than the mechanics of lesson planning and classroom management. To make this explicit, practicum components are interspersed with coursework components, including reflective practice and conversations with advisors.

These qualities that give cohesion to the Tyndale program are hard to replicate in programs of several hundred teacher candidates, but more effort can be made to integrate elements. Large conventional programs offer quality ingredients, but artful teacher education involves blending them together to create meaningful learning and teaching experiences. One approach is to establish specialized cohorts or programs within faculties of education, as has been done with the MA-CSE program at the University of Toronto.

Master of Arts in Child Study in Education at the University of Toronto

Learning to teach is a difficult and never-ending task; but a pre-service program that is prioritized, integrated and connected to practice—and that embodies its own priorities —
can significantly enhance teachers’ effectiveness in their initial years and beyond. (Kosnik and Beck, 2009, p. 11)

The University of Toronto has attempted to address the challenges of large-scale teacher education through the establishment of regional and thematic cohorts, which, guided and researched by Kosnik and Beck, demonstrated that such cohorts could be successful when led by teacher educators with a deep commitment to integrated teacher education. As Kitchen (2020) wrote:

The small faculty team was able to integrate theory, practice and reflection by teaching across courses and supporting pre-service teachers in field placements. With a core faculty team, according to Beck and Kosnik (2006), “greater program coherence can be achieved, community building can be coordinated, and students can identify with a group of instructors” (p. 78). The two professors, along with the coordinators, ensured adherence to this philosophy over many years. They also nurtured a community dimension, both within the cohort’s supportive learning environment and through carefully selected partner schools in Toronto’s ethnically and racially diverse urban core. (p. 1166)

The Midtown Option ended with the move to a two-year Master of Teaching (MT) program but the MT program, which is described by Hewitt et al. in this volume, continues to be cohort-based.

Kosnik and Beck moved to the Master of Arts in Child Study in Education (MA-CSE), a well-established and highly-regarded specialized program based in the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study (JICS). While the MA-CSE began in 1997, the program’s historical roots at this laboratory school date back to 1925. The program accepts 65-70 teacher candidates per year, divided into two cohorts. The program “has evolved over the years; however, it has remained true to its roots where the focus is on children’s well-being and is research-informed” (McDougall, et al., 2017, p. 162).

The MA-CSE, like the Tyndale program, has a clear vision shared by a committed group of instructors. The program is “intended to produce teacher-leaders who can apply research and theory in child study to their careers as educators” through “experience and direct observation,” mainly at the laboratory school staffed with exemplary educators who apply the program’s theory in this practice setting. The MA-CSE, like the master’s programs at the highly-regard Bank Street College and Mills College (Beck & Kosnik, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Kitchen, 2020), combines daily observation and teaching (half-days) with university classes to bridge theory and practice. Throughout, teacher candidates are “exposed to research on children’s learning through their coursework and via their interactions and observations of teaching practice in the Laboratory School” (Kosnik et al.).

The factors contributing to the success of the MA-CSE at the University of Toronto are consistent with Darling-Hammond and Oakes’s (2019) accounts of exemplary teacher education programs at institutions such as Stanford University and University of Denver.

Connections: Implications for Conventional Teacher Education Programs
Many conventional programs offer cohorts—e.g., Brock University, York University, and the MT at University of Toronto—that aid with guiding principles, connections across courses, and
integration with practicum. The level of integration at MA-CSE at JICS, however, cannot be easily replicated. Specifically, connections to the field will remain particularly challenging until schools and school districts become full partners in the design and delivery of meaningful and integrated field experiences. For example, Wilfred Laurier’s B.Ed. program is grounded in a Professional Development School (PDS) model where meaningful and ongoing partnerships between the program and schools within five area school boards are developed. Schools apply to become PDS partners and interact with the program in a variety of ways such as providing input, research activities, and hosting teacher candidates for the duration of the school year to encourage an authentic school community experience for teacher candidates and all who are involved with the PDS partners.

Ontario’s faculties of education have taken advantage of their relative autonomy to explore a range of program innovations, many of which were highlighted by Petrarca and Kitchen (2017a) in our first volume. This current volume features institutions not included in our first volume—Niagara University, Redeemer University and Tyndale University—each of which offers interesting approaches to teacher education. Also, the chapters on Indigenous education and technological education, which explore innovations that serve the needs of very different teacher candidates, offer ideas that may be transferable to conventional programs. The diverse approaches of Ontario universities to practica and field experiences are highlighted in the section below.

TEACHER EDUCATION IN FOUR CONSECUTIVE SEMESTERS

Most ITE programs in Ontario chose to deliver their enhanced programs over two years (Fall and Winter semesters), giving incoming students in September a summer break after completing undergraduate programs and between second and third semesters. This approach fits conveniently with the traditional academic year in universities and the typical workflow of university instructors.

Several universities—Ontario Tech, Queen’s, Tyndale—opted for sixteen-month B.Ed. programs that either (1) started in the summer (with only a short break for incoming teacher candidates moving directly from undergraduate programs); (2) continued with only short breaks until the end of the next summer); (3) led to overlapping groups in the summer; or (4) a need for program staff and leadership to be available all year. Chapters in this volume, and particularly in the first volume (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017b), discuss the challenges of developing and managing this innovation.

Peter Chin, the author of the Queen’s University chapter in this volume, devotes considerable attention to the challenges of developing, managing, and revising a new 16-month program. As Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies in the Faculty of Education, then and now, he is well-positioned to offer insights into 16-month programs. While the province of Ontario was slow to finalize the duration of “enhanced” ITE programs, it was known in 2012 that the government was contemplating extending program length. Chin and his colleagues used the time to let ideas “gestate” and “think in ways outside of the traditional “fall-winter” mode of academic years.” The Strategic Re-envisioning Committee (SREC), struck in January 2013, took a broad view of its mandate to improve ITE. They were also very aware of the additional complexities of modifying “a large well-established concurrent education program” and quickly recommended the closure of joint concurrent programs with other universities. They also had to grapple with the government’s implicit assumption that programs were all consecutive or, if concurrent, had few courses in the
OCT-certified portion of the program prior to the fifth year. They deliberated with tight time constraints as the developed program needed to be approved by the Faculty Board in December and approved by the University Senate in April 2014 for an early start in May 2015 (as opposed to September for most programs). The challenges of, and pathways to, revised consecutive and concurrent programs are described in detail, including charting of the program sequence. Ultimately, four straight terms were chosen for both concurrent and consecutive programs as that offered a “clear point of differentiation” and “resulted in … concurrent education teacher candidates graduating nine months before” others, thus making the program particularly desirable “for direct entry from high school.”

Similarly, the Ontario Tech chapter provides a detailed description of their 16-month B.Ed. structure along with the evolution and rationale of their third spring/summer semester, which was designed upon inception of the enhanced B.Ed. to take place in an online synchronous and asynchronous manner in May and June of each year. Part of the rationale for Ontario Tech’s 16-month format was to enhance access to a B.Ed. program for second-career teacher candidates who, in the past with the two-semester program, often took a year leave from their employment. The York chapter also describes potential access issues and created a consecutive four-semester schedule of the B.Ed. program for some teacher candidate groups in their program.

The Ontario Tech authors acknowledge that while feedback from teacher candidates regarding the fully online and third spring/summer semester is mixed, the majority of the teacher candidates still appreciated completing the program within 16 months and valued the opportunity to seek employment in January following the completion of the program the previous December. Another benefit of the structure frequently cited in teacher candidate feedback is the opportunity to experience online learning as a “student” during the third spring/summer semester. Many teacher candidates expressed that the third semester “provided an opportunity to experience various synchronous and asynchronous learning platforms, and they appreciated experiencing firsthand the affordances and challenges related to fully online learning environments”.

Tyndale’s ITE program also spans 16 months where teacher candidates begin the program at the beginning of August and finish the following November. The Tyndale authors provide additional insights regarding the benefits of their timeline, including opportunities for teacher candidates to be in classrooms the first week of September following coursework focusing on creating inclusive learning environments and differentiation in August.

REVISITING PROGRAMS

All ITE program chapters described some type of re-examination or review of their four-semester program either formally (e.g., for OCT accreditation or institutional requirements or research) or informally (e.g., questionnaires, focus groups) for program improvement purposes. This is not surprising given the very tight timelines and other constraints ITE programs faced in (re)developing their two-semester programs to meet both the new OCT accreditation requirements of the four-semester program and other required approvals from various bodies within the university by the legislated 2015 implementation timeline. The ITE program chapters are chock-full of examples of how and why programs reviewed various aspects of their program organization, processes, and content to improve teacher education.
Rather than provide a long list of adjustments made to ITE programs these past five years, we attempted to differentiate the “revisiting” of our ITE programs by purpose rather than outcome. We realize program improvement is the likely overarching and driving motivation for colleagues around the province to revisit their ITE programs these past five years; however, we also noted subtle variations in terms of rationale for revisiting programs. For example, programs revisited their four-semester programs in response to stakeholder feedback or in response to institutional initiatives, guiding visions / conceptual frameworks, or bodies of teacher education or related research. We also noticed colleagues across the province revisited their programs to conduct formal research not only to improve programs but to also contribute to the growing body of teacher education work in Canada and internationally. We also recognize that some of the described post-2015 activities related to revisiting program organization, processes, and content could fit into multiple or all sub-categories of program improvement, formal research or in response to other initiatives, frameworks, or research. Realizing the potential for considerable overlap in categorizing the various reasons “why and how” ITE programs revisited their programs, our decision-making for sorting in particular ways is based on the desire to highlight some of the rich examples provided by our authors.

**Responsiveness**

Throughout this volume, authors describe processes whereby these past five years, ITE programs responded to insights from student, faculty, and stakeholder feedback for program improvement purposes. Ontario Tech authors captured their ongoing efforts to improve programs—a sentiment expressed by many of our authors.

As we progressed/progress through each semester and with each cohort, we continued/continue to monitor, made/make some adjustments, took/take the pulse again, and started/start again. At times it felt/feels like the “stable state” (Schön, 1971, p. 30) would/will never be attained by the B.Ed. program, but we have come to realize that for an organization to continually learn, it must also continually respond to the collective learning and adjust. Learning, an ongoing process, will thereby require the constant “lather, rinse, repeat” cycle of what at times, seemed/seems like an endless loop of monitoring, listening, sharing, and adjusting. (Petrarca et al.)

In the case of Ontario Tech, changes related to addressing curricular gaps, the order of courses from one semester to the next, and semester structure for the fully online third semester are examples of how the iterative process of seeking feedback, collaborative problem-solving, and implementation has led to program improvement to enhance the overall program. This iterative nature of revisiting programs in response to feedback to improve programs is echoed in the Nipissing chapter: “This has been shown in the number of revisions, reconceptualizations, and compromises that have been seen over the past five years.”

The Brock and Ottawa authors also give details regarding their responsiveness to regular feedback processes such as teacher candidate questionnaires for program improvement purposes. The Brock chapter describes how teacher candidate feedback, coupled with instructor concerns and stakeholder consultation, helped foster the evolution of their four-semester program. Changes such as the order in which courses were offered, the overall flow of the program, and timing issues that could potentially extend the semester due to practica, putting an additional financial burden on
teacher candidates, were eventually made to enhance their program and teacher candidate learning growth. Similarly, Ottawa’s ITE program gathered feedback in a variety of ways for program improvement purposes. Feedback was gathered from the university’s student satisfaction and graduate surveys and course evaluations, but additional feedback was garnered from supplementary surveys administered twice a year to both first- and second-year teacher candidates. Ottawa authors also mention the program had established regular monthly town hall meetings where teacher candidates could express concerns and ask questions. The feedback coupled with faculty and staff observations helped identify program areas for continued efforts and program improvement.

The Lakehead authors describe similar data collection strategies, such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, and open forums to seek feedback from their teacher candidates, faculty, and school partners such as associate teachers for program improvement purposes. The comprehensive review of their ITE programs between 2017 and 2019 provided them with additional feedback regarding enhanced coherence and wider inclusion of inquiry-based approaches.

The Nipissing authors offer additional examples of their review processes and provide a fulsome description of their experiences as they revisited and re-examined several areas post-2015 implementation of the four-semester consecutive program. They chronicle several adjustments such as the addition of courses to address noted gaps (e.g., classroom management, literacy, numeracy), the pivot of some courses from compulsory to elective, and the revisiting and readjustment (as needed) of courses within the program map and flow of the semesters. Their chapter also makes note of the complexities and realities of competing priorities, debate, discussion, and the desire for cohesive ITE programs that many teacher educators may find familiar.

Other chapters from ITE programs provide detailed descriptions of how they also applied similar ongoing and iterative feedback processes post-2015 implementation of the four-semester program, via a team or collaborative approach. For example, Queen’s professional studies committee, chaired by the Associate Dean of Teacher Education, was tasked with monitoring ongoing feedback collected via exit surveys and focus groups about the new program. For the first few years, any adjustments were limited to the summer semesters because of the grand-parented concurrent education students. Some minor program adjustments to the summer semesters’ components, including scheduling of the semesters, class length, and course order, occurred at that time. In 2018, prior to the 2019 inclusion of the first group of concurrent education students entering the enhanced program, Queen’s established a new B.Ed. revision committee to revisit the program prior to the 2019-2020 academic year. Additional adjustments continued, including the addition of an additional week of practicum in the fall and minor program scheduling regarding Fall semester start-up and semester breaks. In addition, individual course enhancements included additional mental health and equity, diversity, inclusion, and indigeneity infusion within program courses. To meet the increasing French as a Second Language (FSL) demands, Queen’s also received approval from OCT to offer a concentration in FSL in the Primary/Junior program.

Western’s chapter provides a detailed description of a comprehensive “backward mapping” process via a Teacher Education Design team made up of full-time and part-time faculty and staff. The team was tasked with examining how to improve their ITE program with respect to teaching
and learning as well as institutional structures such as room availability, scheduling, and accountability mechanisms. After a complex process, including consultations with teacher candidates, board partners, instructors and the community, the extensive backward mapping process proved complex and helpful in identifying areas of change for improvement including a shift from grades to pass/fail assessment practices. In their review of their four-semester program, the Western authors reveal how institutional assessment practices can actually be “counterproductive to our shared goals of nurturing the intellect of our teacher candidates while fostering critical self-regulation and self-assessment capabilities”. The Western chapter provides readers who are interested in examining their own institutional assessment practices with a rich description as a starting point for reference.

Another team and collaborative approach for program improvement purposes is described by OISE’s MT program authors, who preface their description of post-2015 changes within a context of “progressive improvement”, a sentiment echoed throughout this volume’s chapters, that guides the program’s continued growth and improvement. One administrative strategy implemented by the OISE MT program over the past five years is the creation of a Leadership Team (comprised of seven individuals) that oversees the daily operations of the program. Like others in this volume, the OISE MT Leadership Team gathers data about the program from teacher candidates, associate teachers, faculty advisors and other stakeholders; reflects on the findings; implements changes; and reassesses. They write, “Through this collaborative process of data-gathering, reflection, and experimentation, the Leadership Team works to continually strengthen the program by increasing coherence, improving communication, and enhancing our teacher candidates’ academic and practicum experiences”. Through this iterative process, the team has addressed various priorities including: (1) developing a teacher-as-researcher stance during practicum; (2) renewing curriculum by aligning the program vision with the program/course expectations; (3) developing elementary teacher candidates’ math content knowledge; (4) enhancing greater racial equity; and (5) establishing a culture of research among teacher candidates to prepare teacher-scholars (Hewitt et al.).

The Wilfrid Laurier authors describe how they also implemented a comprehensive curriculum mapping process and how the process played an important role in the design of new courses and/or redesign of others. Like other ITE programs, the WLU adjustments made post-2015 were in response to identified gaps and/or overarching program goals. Some of the changes included additional content (e.g., assessment and evaluation), adjusting course order within the program map, and adding courses in equity and diversity. The WLU authors stress the ongoing nature of gathering data, reflecting on outcomes, and responding to challenges for continuous improvement.

The gathering and use of feedback for improvement purposes was emphasized in most chapters. The following excerpt from the Wilfred Laurier chapter depicts this sentiment:

The planning and implementation of the first five years of the two-year program highlighted the need for reflection, assessment and evaluation beyond the accreditation and review processes already in place. A key insight from writing this chapter was the importance of gathering evidence and taking time for analysis and synthesis of how that evidence informs practice.
The Trent authors also describe their continued efforts towards and commitment to growth by engaging in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis where faculty, staff, and students contributed to the process. They write:

The SWOT analysis involves a review of the strengths and areas for improvement in the program. This is ongoing. The process, like the intended outcomes, is designed to ensure that all members of the School of Education have a voice.

Many authors also provided rich descriptions of how they revisited their programs in response to institutional initiatives, guiding visions / conceptual frameworks, or bodies of teacher education and/or related research.

Several ITE program authors reference guiding conceptual frameworks or visions as they framed their initial (re)development of their four-semester programs and subsequent revision processes that ensued these past five years. For example, Redeemer authors describe in detail how their program philosophy and conceptual framework served as the foundation for their four-semester ITE program. Their chapter highlights how each aspect of their mission statement: Teacher education for faithful, effective, reflective, professional practice—in conjunction with related teacher education literature—guided their (re)development of the four-semester program. Similar to what our authors from publicly-funded ITE programs described in our first volume of *Initial Teacher Education in Ontario*, the Department of Education at Redeemer made deliberate efforts to question and analyze their pre-2015 program in light of the new provincial requirements, the related literature and their conceptual frameworks. The Redeemer chapter highlights processes that resulted in the adoption of “new approaches in three important areas: technology, Indigenous education, and mental health”.

The Tyndale authors also describe their deliberate efforts in (re)developing the enhanced program using their guiding vision, conceptual framework, and various theoretical frameworks grounded in research that continue to inform their ongoing program practices. For example, Tyndale’s ITE program is grounded in the Christian faith and embodies the university’s overarching mission of “advancing Christian education and community service”. In their chapter, Tyndale authors provide a comprehensive description of what we found in 2017, when publicly funded ITE programs described in detail how their conceptual framework guided their program (re)development. The Tyndale chapter provides a comprehensive description of how Hume’s model of differentiated instruction (2008) aligned with Tyndale’s vision for teacher education and guided (and continues to guide) their program in meaningful ways.

The Brock authors provide a detailed account of how their Triple C Model: Coursework, Cohort, and Community permeates all aspects of their program and continues to serve as a framework for ongoing review and adjustments. In addition, Brock responded to the teacher education literature specific to exemplary programs that are grounded by a vision of good teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Their chapter provides a detailed description of their “re-imagined image of an ideal graduate” and it is this central image that helps guide their work.

The University of Ottawa chapter also describes efforts made to use their conceptual framework to guide their work. The authors report they are creating a series of graphics and templates to help
instructors explicitly connect program learning outcomes, content, assignments, and the conceptual framework. They write, “This mapping process is designed to support new and more experienced professors in the development of their course syllabi and content for their courses, and to build a more cohesive learning experience for candidates.”

The Windsor chapter includes an overview and analysis of their specialized programs: Leadership Experience for Academic Direction (L.E.A.D.), Reciprocal Learning Program (RLP) and Global Community Engagement Program (GCEP). Their chapter describes the program’s collective and targeted response to the “changing global society and [to] better prepare our teacher candidates for the socio-political-economic elements of the learning environment (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012)”.

Each program is described within the context of the related theoretical framework that guides the particular program, key activities, and feedback from teacher candidates and other stakeholders.

The Laurentian chapter provides an example of responsiveness to the diverse range of students in their programs with respect to the overarching program vision. The Laurentian authors describe how since the implementation of the four-semester program, they slightly modified their vision statement to better reflect their changing student base. The noted steady increase of students who completed their undergraduate degree in another country enrolling in their L’École des sciences de l’éducation (ÉSÉ) served as the impetus for revisiting their guiding vision. Their vision, which already focused on the francophone community, now includes “celle de la francophonie mondiale” to acknowledge the “worldwide francophonie” in their programs.

The Trent University authors also describe how they have revisited and updated their conceptual framework in response to their university’s strategic mandate agreement, resulting in principles and practices informed by research, theory and the Professional Standards that guide their Bachelor of Education program. They write, “Drawing upon these 10 principles, our program is deeply guided by a philosophy of sustainability and eco-justice pedagogies, social justice, and infusion of indigenous perspectives and knowledge, recognition of learner diversity, and a commitment to professional practice.”

The York chapter provides an example of how they revisited particular elements within the context of their program goals. The authors explain that since the implementation of the four-semester program, while some program adjustments were made to practicum, class scheduling, and the semester calendar (for some cohorts), their Faculty’s work remains guided by three overarching goals of “(1) community-centric pedagogy (James, 2012); (2) recognition of and preparation to engage with a diverse student population; and (3) diversifying the teaching profession”. For example, the overarching goal of “diversifying the teaching profession” guided program improvements to minimize potential issues of accessibility created by the four-semester program for second-career candidates. Second-career candidates who might have previously taken one year off from full-time employment potentially faced challenges with the extended time required to complete initial teacher education in Ontario. To address potential access issues, York has now created a summer-fall-winter-summer schedule for some cohorts of teacher candidates. In addition, the calendar has been modified to enhance flexible scheduling, and class schedules have been adjusted so that most classes end earlier in the day to accommodate part-time employment.
Similarly, Laurentian responded to the needs of students who are unable to access full-time programs over the duration of four-semesters due to other obligations such as family or employment. In the Spring of 2020, their L’École des sciences de l’éducation (ÉSÉ) now offers a new J/I B.Ed. en mode hybride. The program creatively piggybacks the consecutive program and eligible candidates who may not have otherwise been able to complete a B.Ed. could now complete their programs from a distance and over a greater period of time.

Niagara authors frame their post-2015 changes as both exogenous and endogenous in nature, bringing to light the need to respond to changes that are sometimes beyond our control, and to adjust in ways that are best for our programs within the limiting constraints. The Niagara chapter details various examples of not only the changes they faced at the onset of the four-semester program and the five years following, but also how they responded. Examples include the move to the four-semester program—which also reflects what our publicly-funded institutions described in our initial volume—as well as the varied placement policies and procedures of partnered school boards, adjustments in personnel, physical space constraints and Ministerial consent.

The Lakehead authors provide an in-depth overview of how as a program they responded to helping their beginning teachers better understand the complexities of teaching practice by incorporating and supporting High Leverage Practices (HLP) (developed at the University of Michigan) and Essential Skills (as per the entry-to-practice skills established by the Ontario Association of Deans of Education—OADE) following the implementation of the four-semester program. The Lakehead chapter provides the rationale for supporting these initiatives, as well as an overview of the implementation. The following excerpt from the Lakehead chapter demonstrates how adopting HLP also responds to the ongoing and sometimes challenging responsibility of helping teacher candidates make meaningful theory/practice connections: “The Faculty believes that this initiative, which also reflects a commitment to ongoing professional learning, will provide greater opportunities for students to integrate theory and practice”.

As seen in the above examples, Ontario’s ITE programs have been busy these past several years following the implementation of the four-semester program in 2015. The examples we have highlighted, however, are only snapshots of the many ways in which teacher educators, administrators, and support staff across the province have continued to revisit their programs to reflect, reconsider, re-examine, and (re)develop ITE programs in response to feedback from various stakeholders and to institutional initiatives, guiding visions / conceptual frameworks, or bodies of teacher education or related research. The next section provides snapshots of how some ITE programs revisited their programs by conducting formal research on programs or on elements of programs.

**Formal Research**

Formal research on teacher education programs and practices was also identified as a priority in several chapters. Several teams of authors described formal research activities within their programs, not only for program improvement purposes but to also contribute to the growing body of teacher education literature in Canada and beyond.

The Niagara authors, for example, describe how the implementation of the four-semester program prompted them to explore how the teacher candidates and their broader education community are
better served with the implementation of the enhanced program. Their mixed methods study and findings have allowed the Niagara team to formally explore their teacher candidates’ growth and development while bringing to light additional areas for further research. Similarly, Tyndale authors also provide excerpts from several data sources obtained from their ongoing research study, “Storying Tyndale’s B.Ed. Program”, a qualitative inquiry examining teacher candidate learning, growth and development as teachers.

Authors from OISE’s MA-CSE program also describe in detail their ongoing program research, providing readers with “a snapshot of the MA-CSE graduates and their views on certain aspects of the program”. One of their findings highlighted how the program’s overarching vision and space actually served as “pedagogical tools” that enhanced coherence throughout their program.

In addition to other research projects, the OISE MT program authors describe a study funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) that explores teacher candidates’ math content knowledge (MCK). Their chapter provides an overview of their research, their findings and implications for developing teacher candidates’ MCK in teacher education. With the recent changes to certification requirements (Bill 48) requiring teacher candidates to successfully complete a math proficiency test (MPT) in order to become fully certified to teach in Ontario, colleagues across the province who may be grappling with similar issues related to MCK may find this work helpful.

The Windsor authors provide powerful excerpts of perspectives shared by teacher candidates who participated in their L.E.A.D. (Leadership Experience for Academic Directions) program and related study. The L.E.A.D. program provides teacher candidates with opportunities to:

- develop leadership skills that will prepare all students especially those who are deemed in risk of not graduating due to factors related to socio-economic status, challenges with academic achievement, social integration and mental health, to become healthy and productive citizens of their community.

Feedback from their participants has provided researchers with insight regarding the positive impact of the L.E.A.D. program on teacher candidate development, especially with respect to learning about what the authors describe as “in-risk” students.

These examples, along with many other research projects over the past five years, convey a commitment across programs to research-based program development and to teacher education as a site for faculty members to contribute to the growing knowledge base regarding teacher education. The accounts in this volume, along with the research mentioned in individual chapters, will ultimately benefit the field in Canada and beyond. In addition, the Ontario Teachers’ Federation (OTF) chapter describes formal research conducted by the OTF and its four Affiliates – l’Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO), the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO), the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association (OECTA) and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation (OSSTF). The research study builds on a 2008 study commissioned by the Ministry of Education and explores how ITE program graduates understand the skills and knowledge teachers need to be successful in Ontario schools.
within their first five years of teaching as well as exploring graduates’ (year to year) perceptions regarding how their programs prepared them for entering the teaching profession.

**CHALLENGES**

In our 2017 volume of *Initial Teacher Education in Ontario*, we also noted several common challenges echoed by teacher educators across the province.

*Challenges for Teacher Education Programs*

While each ITE program experienced unique challenges related to its institution, challenges related to reductions and human strain materialized throughout the chapters. Reductions related to provincial funding, coupled with the 50% reduction of students by the province, created a ripple effect that seeped into many areas of our programs in 2015. In addition to the drastic provincial cuts in funding and admissions, ITE programs had limited time (approximately 15 months) to (re)develop the two-semester programs to four-semesters. The dedication of faculty and staff to plan programs (courses and practica), obtain required approvals, and make changes to related policy and practices by the legislated 2015 implementation date was admirable; however, it came at a cost to the individuals who worked on the development of the four-semester programs, especially those in smaller faculties.

It is important to note that faculty members who were part of the planning teams, generally had to also maintain their ongoing teaching, research, and service responsibilities. The human strain also includes the additional burden on students and their families, as noted by the Trent authors, due to the additional cost and time; this could have a negative effect on enrolment by minority students. (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017a, p. 31)

Ontario’s ITE programs still face challenges related to reduction and human strain; however, the circumstances are no longer directly situated in the (re)development of an entire program that is double the original length of its previous program, within tight timelines, and with reduced funding. In 2017, we wrote about the great efforts Ontario’s faculty members made to make the most of this challenging time, described by Windsor authors as “fundamentally seismic”, to transform teacher education. In geology, earthquakes create aftershocks, and aftershocks in turn cause additional aftershocks. While the primary episode of seismic waves agitating the very foundation of our ITE programs may have passed, ITE programs in Ontario are still recovering from the aftershocks and navigating the continuous push and pull and readjustment due to the principal quake we experienced several years ago.

Some of the terminology used in this volume to describe some of the challenges included words or phrases such as: volatile climates, struggle, ever-tightening budgets, budget cuts, turbulence of political environment, retraction of funding, uncertainties, constraints, lack of resources and other related terms. These words and other synonyms were scattered throughout the chapters from various ITE programs and in a variety of contexts including staffing, admissions, government policies, and funding. We now provide several specific examples of challenges gathered from the ITE program chapters.

Many authors spoke of the ongoing challenges related to creating and/or maintaining tight program cohesion and integration, reflecting what the OISE MT authors describe as “the messy and
unfinished nature of renewal and pursuing coherence”. Much has been written about the importance of creating cohesive and integrated experiences between courses and between coursework and practicum (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Levine, 2006) within teacher education programs to foster deeper learning (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019); however, as noted by our colleagues, it is challenging to achieve and sustain.

Some of the coherence-related challenges described in the chapters resulted from the relatively fewer number of full-time faculty teaching in ITE programs compared to the greater number of part-time instructors. Full-time faculty typically have other responsibilities within their institutions including teaching and/or supervising research in graduate programs, conducting research activities, and completing other service-related work reflecting the typical tenure-track / tenured 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service workload formula. Working collaboratively and closely with colleagues to coordinate learning experiences that enhance cohesion and integration may not be easily achieved when a large component of ITE program instructors work at our institutions on a part-time basis. Part-time faculty may have other commitments to fulltime employment or to additional part-time positions at other ITE programs or elsewhere, or they may simply not be available to exert the additional time and effort required to enhance program cohesion and integration.

Another similar challenge identified by the Ontario Tech authors was the enactment of the ITE program’s conceptual framework as designed by full-time faculty yet carried out by many part-time instructors:

What we did not account for was the very small number of full-time faculty who taught/teach in the B.Ed. program. In an already very small faculty, the actual implementation of the B.Ed. program in the manner it was initially envisioned by the program developers (and comprised of full-time faculty/researchers), required rigorous and labour-intensive hiring, and induction practices for part-time instructors, stretching an already small faculty well beyond their limitations.

Other challenges gathered from the chapters were associated with difficulties in implementing best practices in teacher education as described in Chapter 3. For instance, as institutions increased some class sizes as cost-saving measures, modelling pedagogically-sound instructional and assessment practices as recommended in the literature became increasingly challenging.

Other authors described how some of the government policy changes such as curriculum (e.g., the roll-back of Health and Physical Education curriculum) or certification requirements (i.e., Math Proficiency Test) with very little consultation created additional issues. One specific example of the identified challenges included navigating the disconnect between the HPE research and government decision-making coupled with the implications for educators. Another government policy that authors identified as a challenge was the new certification requirement—the Math Proficiency Test (MPT). A few authors described the heightened anxiety demonstrated by some teacher candidates in response to the announcement by the province requiring candidates to successfully complete the MPT in order to be certified by the Ontario College of Teachers. At the time of the announcement, ITE programs were faced with many questions by teacher candidates and little information regarding the details of the MPT implementation.
Unpredictable confirmation rates for some ITE programs fluctuated greatly and created additional planning and scheduling challenges. Similarly, I/S teachable subject admissions continued to be unstable in some of the subject areas, possibly creating scheduling issues and unbalanced workloads where low or high enrolments exist.

Challenges related to lack of resources resonated throughout the chapters, including decision-making guided by financial constraints rather than what is best for programs based on ITE program research. Some examples of such decisions include creating larger class sizes or not replacing vacant full-time positions due to retirements and/or faculty departures or modifying the faculty supervisor role in the practicum as cost-saving measures. Lastly, during these past five years, some ITE programs were still faced with the complexities of offering the two-semester B.Ed. program for concurrent education students who were grand-parented under the former accreditation requirements.

We conclude this section by offering a quote from Laurentian authors that encapsulates some of the challenges we all face:

[Initial teacher education programs] have been buffeted by the winds of change – with dramatic sways in supply and demand for Bachelor of Education graduates, shifting Ministry directives on B.Ed. requirements, constant administrative restructuring at the university, and ever-tightening budgets. This volatile environment shows no sign of immediate let up. In April 2019, the newly elected Progressive Conservative government in Ontario suddenly announced larger class sizes from K-12, and plans for expanded online learning, which could reduce the number of employed teachers in the province by more than 9,000 in the next few years (Herhalt, 2019).

The advocacy group People for Education (2019) predicted at least $986.8 million would be removed from the public education system as a result of those changes, which will naturally affect graduates of initial teacher programs across the province. Based on prior experience, as detailed below, Laurentian University will likely weather the latest storm of change by adapting as required, and by continuing to offer potential students innovative programs despite the constant turmoil. But it also seems safe to say that the years immediately ahead may be particularly trying.

Challenges for the Ontario College of Teachers
In the first volume, Michael Salvatori (2017) outlined the role of the Ontario College of Teachers in teacher education reform. In “The Ontario College of Teachers and Enhancing Teacher Education Through the Lens of Risk,” their contribution to this volume, Salvatori and colleagues retrospectively consider how a risk mindset was applied to the program development and implementation process. Their discussion of risk-based regulation and the application of risk-based tools offers unique insights into regulatory approaches generally and particularly as they apply to the teaching profession. Central to the challenges the College faced was how to deal with limited evidence of compliance with accreditation requirements by September 2015 and how to balance its customary focus on “strict compliance” with regulations while trusting that faculties of education would adapt in time for the delivery of the new program. They were guided by a
commitment not to let “compliance... become the enemy of innovation.” Also, they note, the “College is also able to tolerate risk at a higher level due its dual accreditation and certification mandate,” as “the certification backstop” enabled them to manage compliance later in the licensing process.

CONCLUSIONS AND MOVING FORWARD

Over the past five years since the implementation of the four-semester initial teacher education program, colleagues across the province have been attentive—to their students, to the broader needs of their communities, to the research literature, and to visions of good teaching and learning. By being attentive, those individuals who teach, research, organize, and lead in ITE programs continue(d) to revisit, re-examine, and reflect upon various aspects of their ITE programs in an ongoing manner since the inception of the four-semester program in 2015 in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons. Those individuals have revisited programs to re-examine what was implemented in 2015 and (re)develop and/or refine elements in response to: internal and external changes, guiding visions/missions/goals/conceptual frameworks, feedback, and research.

A persistent theme in chapters of this volume is that Ontario’s ITE programs have encountered many challenges since the announcement of the new four-semester program by the province. The challenge of rapidly re-imagining and continuously revising their programs has imposed considerable strain on instructors, staff and, particularly, formal and informal program leaders, who have made many sacrifices for the good of their teacher candidates. A range of financial constraints, affecting teacher education specifically or universities generally, have compounded these challenges.

With the implementation of the four-semester program in 2015, amongst other funding cuts, we also saw a provincially-imposed 50% reduction in admissions to ITE programs. This cutback brought with it a drastic decline of technological education program offerings across the province and a decrease of French-language program offerings – both areas of need in the province at the time. Ontario’s ITE programs have responded to these areas of need and five years later, we have seen an increase in both technological program offerings and FSL program offerings for the P/J division. In 2015, we also saw an increase in Indigenous content in our ITE programs and five years later we continue to see additional Indigenous-based programs created in the province, as well as a continued focus on Indigenous content throughout our programs. ITE programs must continue to be responsive and continue to commit to ongoing efforts to take action, as per the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) Calls to Action (TRC, 2015). “Indigenous Initial Teacher Education in Ontario” by Leisa Desmoulins and Nicole Bell is an interesting overview of the field, one that also offers insights into alternative ways of serving racialized communities and attracting teachers from within those communities. Another area of high need, which (like Indigenous teacher education) is funded outside the funding cap, is technological education. Chloë Brushwood Rose and Candace Figg, in “Technological Education Teacher Education: Program Development and Innovation in Ontario,” shed light on the innovations in this area in response to the launch of four-semester teacher education that put such programs at risk. They explain how each institution adapted to “different local demands, needs, and constraints, while also grappling with the unique complexities of technological teacher education itself, including, for example, on-going recruitment challenges and a shortage of school placements.” The solutions generated by these
specialized programs offer lessons for teacher education more broadly as they respond to specific demands and areas of need.

The provincially-imposed admission reductions in 2015 also resulted in a significant decrease in the number of applications and applicants to ITE programs for the 2015 academic year. Since 2015, however, we have seen a steady increase in the number of applicants and applications to ITE programs, and given the potential teacher shortages forecast in the Transition to Teaching report (OCT 2020b), we wonder about the implications for ITE programs. With the shifts in Ontario’s teacher supply, ITE programs may be required to shift once again to meet the expected need for more Ontario-certified teachers. We caution against reverting back to one-year programs or lurching in a dramatically new direction. Instead, we suggest increasing the number of government-funded teacher education spaces to reflect the increased need in schools. There may be a place for targeted initiatives, such as reserved spots for French or Science specialized cohorts in special education or French immersion.

The complexities and disruption that stem from dramatic change should be factored into planning by government. Kathryn Broad’s chapter, “From Policy Intended to Policy Lived: Inside the Ministry of Education During Teacher Education Reform,” offers an interesting perspective on policy to practice, based on her experiences during her secondment from the University of Toronto to the Ministry of Education to work on the ITE file during the time of transition from two to four semesters. Among the lesson she learned about teacher education reform are: evidence matters, collaborative professionalism exists, resilience and creativity can challenge pressure, together is better. One enduring lesson she captures—thinking outside of the box while working within it—resonates throughout this volume. In Broad’s insightful commentary on the complexities of policy development and implementation, Kathryn Broad summarizes:

I have learned to approach structural or design changes circumspectly with a view to unintended consequences to the overall program architecture. I have learned that important design elements shift and change with new learners, new knowledge, new technologies, new tools, new social and political moments, and contextual changes. I have learned that any program is continually being constructed by teacher candidates, instructors, field partners, program leaders and communities, and that all of these partners shape and are impacted by the policy ‘lived’.

Provincial decision-makers would be wise to attend to the issues she raises, alongside recognizing the insights and innovations described in the chapters in this volume. We believe the deliberate way Ontario’s ITE programs continue to revisit their programs to further improve teacher education provides perspectives for not only our provincial colleagues but for other initial teacher education programs in Canada and internationally. By gathering insights from individuals in varied settings and coming together in this volume, we hope to harness the power of the collective. By sharing the data regarding our program offerings, admissions, confirmations, and emerging themes drawn from ITE program chapters, we hope this chapter would provide a snapshot of Ontario’s ITE programs. This snapshot, coupled with our descriptive vignettes of several teacher education programs, provides a group portrait or, perhaps, a composite photo of ITE programs in Ontario’s 13 publicly-funded and three private universities—a composite that reflects a united desire to ultimately provide prospective teachers with a solid foundation for future learning. “Together is
better,” Kathryn Broad wrote. As we wrote in the first volume of *Initial Teacher Education in Ontario*, we have much to learn from one another about what works and what can be improved in Ontario initial teacher education.

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<th>University &amp; Location (parentheses denote additional program locations)</th>
<th>Concurrent Program</th>
<th>Consecutive Primary Junior (K-6)</th>
<th>Consecutive Junior Intermediate (4-10)</th>
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*St. Catharines; Hamilton*** | X | X | X | X | X | X | 2 | 2 |
| Lakehead  
*Thunder Bay* | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Lakehead  
*(Orillia)* | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Université Laurentienne / Laurentian University  
*Sudbury* | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Technological Education was on hold until 2017; Technological Education Degree and Diploma streams offered (hybrid of online and on campus++);¹ Aboriginal B.Ed. cohort began 2019; Consecutive Years 1 - 4 in St. Catharines and Years 5 and 6 in both St. Catharines and Hamilton.

HBEd Aboriginal Degree Program was established in 2007

Consecutive is offered only in French language; Concurrent is offered in both French and English but only since 2020 in French; Part-time French Language program discontinued in 2015.
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<td>Niagara University in Ontario</td>
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<td>Offer one degree program leading to certification: Bachelor of Professional Studies (BPS) in Teacher Education in Primary/Junior and Intermediate/Senior divisions;</td>
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<td>One post-certification MSEd degree in Educational Leadership in Ontario; Ontario-based AQ, ABQ, PQP I and II, and SOQP courses online.</td>
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<td>Nipissing (North Bay)</td>
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<td>Final cohort from Brantford location graduated in 2019; Aboriginal Teacher Certification Program; Teachers of Anishinaabemwin as a Second Language Program</td>
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<td>Nipissing – French as a Second Language</td>
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<td>OISE – Bachelor of Education program</td>
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<td>B.Ed. program leading to certification was discontinued in 2015.</td>
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<td>Concurrent and Technological Education parts of the program were also discontinued.</td>
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| OISE - Master of Teaching program  
*Toronto* | | | | | 3Originally a two-year (four-semester / 16-month) program launched in 2000.  
3In 2015, the MT program was extended to 20 months and four new half-credits were added. | | |
| OISE - Master of Arts in Child Study and Education (MA-CSE) program  
*Toronto* | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | | | | | 3Originally a two-year (four-semester / 16-month) program.  
3In 2015, the MA-CSE program was extended to 20 months and four new half-credits were added. | | |
| Ontario Tech University  
(University of Ontario Institute of Technology)  
*Oshawa* | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | | | | | 4Restructured from an advanced acceptance to consecutive from secondary (Concurrent) or from 2nd & 3rd year Ontario Tech (Connected)  
5Connected program now renamed Concurrent | | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University &amp; Location (parentheses denote additional program locations)</th>
<th>Concurrent Program</th>
<th>Consecutive Primary Junior (K-6)</th>
<th>Consecutive Junior Intermediate (4-10)</th>
<th>Consecutive Intermediate Senior (7-12)</th>
<th>Additional notes</th>
<th>Technological Education</th>
<th>Indigenous Education Program</th>
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<td>No concurrent programs FSL Program (P/J level)</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Ottawa – French as a Second Language Ottawa</td>
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<td>Consecutive Junior Intermediate (4-10)</td>
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<td>Technological Education (Degree and Diploma Streams); Technological Education Multi-Session Program (Degree and Diploma Streams) began in 2020 and is located in the Greater Toronto Area.</td>
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<td>6Also offer Outdoor &amp; Experiential Education, Artist in Community Education, and Indigenous Teacher Education programs. French as a Second Language P/J concentration began in 2019.</td>
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CHAPTER 3

PRACTICUM IN ONTARIO’S TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS: IDENTIFYING PRACTICES THAT ENHANCE DEEPER LEARNING

_Diana Petrarca and Julian Kitchen_

Ontario Tech University and Brock University

The practicum is a vitally important component of initial teacher education (ITE) programs—one that offers the teacher candidate opportunities to participate in classroom experiences and to hopefully engage in the interplay of theory and practice within the contextual realities of classrooms and schools. The importance of the practicum was also noted in the research shared by the Ontario Teachers’ Federation in a chapter by Yashkina and colleagues exploring the perceptions of ITE program graduates and newly hired teachers in Ontario regarding a range of skills and knowledge as well as their perceptions regarding how “initial teacher education programs prepared them for entry into the teaching profession”. Analysis of responses from 1,026 graduates from Ontario and non-Ontario ITE programs and/or those who had employment as teachers/occasional teachers in Ontario within a six-year span (between 2013-2014 and 2018-19) found that these graduates and/or teachers from both the former and “enhanced” ITE programs considered the practicum to be an invaluable experience. For these reasons, teacher candidates tend to identify it as the most valuable portion of their teacher education programs. While recognized as important, the practicum is often taken for granted as a space in which “the individual student alone can and will generate explicit and appropriate connections between book knowledge and craft knowledge, between courses and practicum experiences, and between the authorities of reason and position and the authority of experience,” according to Russell & Martin in this volume, who make a case for teacher educators “being actively present in student teaching” by “actively integrating practicum experiences into each and every university course.”

In their examination of how seven exemplary ITE programs educated teacher candidates for the 21st century classroom, Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) investigated these programs via a lens of learning sciences with a focus on deeper learning. They stressed that “[o]f all the ways that these programs support learning to teach for deeper learning, perhaps the most important is how they structure clinical work” (p. 140). Given its importance in the “learning-to-teach” process, we devote this chapter to the practicum, beginning with an overview of the accreditation requirements and regulations related to practicum within the Ontario context. This is followed by a review of the teacher education practicum literature: (1) terms of reference, (2) practicum models, (3) best practices, and (4) challenges. We then situate the practicum in Ontario universities within the
context provided by the literature on the practicum. Particular attention is given to key practices that foster teacher candidates’ deeper learning, as identified by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019), and examples from Ontario universities to illustrate these key practices in action. Our intention is not to evaluate initial teacher education (ITE) programs but, rather, to use examples to illustrate the best practices as described in the literature. In Chapter 4, we probe more deeply to identify patterns across Ontario’s varied approaches to the opportunities and challenges of field experiences in schools.

PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS IN ONTARIO

The Ontario College of Teachers (referred to as the College and OCT) is responsible for accrediting and reviewing all initial teacher education programs that lead to professional certification in Ontario. The chapter in the first volume on the College outlines the crucial role played by the College as an accreditation and certification body (see Salvatori, 2017), while the chapter in this volume on the College applies a risk lens to their role in the system (see Salvatori et al.). While all of Ontario’s ITE programs comply with the criteria of the Ontario College of Teachers for recognized practicum experiences, there is considerable variety in the approaches taken by various programs.

In Ontario, Regulation 347/02, Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs (2002), establishes the requirements for ITE programs. Regarding the practicum, this regulation stipulates that all Ontario ITE programs must include “a minimum of 80 days of practical experience, appropriate to the format and structure of the program, in schools or in other situations approved by the College for observation and practice teaching.” In addition to the minimum duration of the “80 day practical experience” in the four-semester program (up from 40 days in the one-year model) in schools or other situations approved by the OCT that use the Ontario curriculum, the practicum must include periods of observation and teaching in appropriate grades and/or subject areas depending on the program’s division and teachable subject areas where appropriate. Regulation 347/02 also requires that an experienced and certified teacher in good standing with the College supervises and assesses the practicum, and each teacher candidate is appointed a faculty member to serve as an advisor while in practicum.

The concept of practicum within Ontario’s legislative requirements is further expanded in the College’s Accreditation Resource Guide (OCT, 2017), demonstrating both the complexity of practicum as well as the underlying purpose:

The inclusion of a lengthened practicum is intended to highlight and strengthen the theory-practice interconnections that are possible when considering course work and fieldwork as linked and mutually supporting, with the intent that, ultimately, all aspects of knowledge and skill will be connected to, and reflected in course work and the practicum. The intent is also to support development of a vision of the profession, meta-cognitive understanding of critical elements, and evidence-informed and effective practices that can be used and adapted for groups of students and individual students’ strengths and needs in particular contexts. To be useful and effective, it is crucial for the practicum experience to be interwoven into faculty courses and inclusive of the core content described in this guide. (p. 38)
Throughout the Accreditation Resource Guide, the College accentuates the interconnectedness of practicum within ITE programs; the practicum is referenced within the more detailed descriptions of each core content area from Schedule 1 of Regulation 347/02, Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs. We will not compare the pre- and post-legislative changes to practicum, as this was addressed extensively in our first volume where we described the changes as Ontario moved from the two-semester to four-semester program. We encourage readers who wish to learn more about the detailed changes to refer to Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Program by Petrarca and Kitchen (2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is rich literature on field experiences in teacher education, including practicum placements, such as those experienced by teacher candidates in Ontario. The ITE programs draw both from this literature and their own past practices to develop rich and varied opportunities for teacher candidates. Many chapters in this book make explicit the theoretical underpinnings of their approaches to the practicum experience.

In this chapter, we review the literature, highlighting some important ideas worthy of consideration in coming to understand the practicum or considering adjustments or reform. As one of the challenges in reviewing programs internationally and even in Ontario is that the nomenclature varies from institution to institution and within the literature, we first establish terms of reference.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Initial teacher education programs vary widely with respect to guiding principles, strategies, goals, content and processes (Darling-Hammond, 2006), and the same holds true for practicum models (Allen 2003; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Kitchen & Petrarca, 2016; Wenglinksy, 2000; Wilson et al., 2001; Zeichner, 1993). These varied models are also reflected in the diverse ways in which practicum, an integral element of programs, is termed and defined in the literature and in ITE programs. For example, what we term “practicum” may be referred to as field experience, field-based learning, clinical experience, internship, residency, or apprenticeship. A commonality across terms is that they typically refer to opportunities for teacher candidates to observe and/or teach in field-based settings, usually classrooms. While the practicum concept might seem clear-cut and relatively simple to outsiders, “teacher educators recognize that it is fraught with complexities and conundrums that have the potential to shape teacher candidate learning both positively and negatively” (Petrarca & Van Nuland, 2020, p.8). For the purpose of this chapter, we will refer to school-based learning opportunities in ITE programs as practicum. We refer to the students in ITE programs as teacher candidates, but they are also referred to by other terms, most commonly student teachers. The classroom teacher, an Ontario College of Teachers certified teacher hosting and supervising the teacher candidate in a placement, is referred to in this chapter as the associate teacher; however, in the literature and in this volume, this role has been referenced as the cooperating teacher, master teacher, host teacher, mentor teacher, and other associated monikers. Lastly, we refer to the university representative who provides supervision of the teacher candidate while in the practicum as the faculty supervisor; however, other common terms for this role are the faculty advisor or university supervisor or university liaison and other related designations. We now examine some of the literature specific to practicum models, desired elements, and challenges.
PRACTICUM MODELS

Mattsson et al. (2011) remind us that there exist many diverse models of practicum in ITE programs and that “[d]ifferent educational arrangements for practicum learning are formed by different historical, political and organizational processes in different national settings” (2011, p. 1). In their examination of how practicum learning was organized within ITE programs around the globe, Mattsson and colleagues (2011) categorized their findings within nine general models, including “master-apprentice, laboratory, partnership, community development, integrated, case-based, platform, community of practice, and research and development” (pp. 8-9), and suggested these models could be combined in a variety of ways.

Kitchen and Petrarca (2016) examined a range of international teacher education programs and also found a variety of models in ITE programs—including the practicum. Rather than categorize the programs and practicum approaches into various models, we offered multidimensional continua comprised of reflection, theory, and practice, as a tool for teacher educators to examine ITE programs’ orientations, overarching goals, requirements, and organization. We suggested that while most ITE programs and practicum experiences sit somewhere along each continuum, ITE program members might consider the multidimensional model as a tool for analysis and reflection in decision-making within practicum, courses, and program systems in general.

The above theory-to-practice position is often referenced in the literature as one desired component within ITE program practica (Levine, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007) amongst others identified in the literature as contributing to effective ITE programs. Beck et al. (2004) described practica centred solely on the application of theory to practice as a technical-transmission approach, “whereby individuals merely apply knowledge cultivated in university to a professional context” (Petrarca & Van Nuland, 2020, p. 5). The theory and practice relationship has long been an area of tension within ITE programs and practicum (Beck et al., 2004; Russell, 2017). Russell (2017) eloquently summarizes this tension from a university practicum supervisor perspective:

Practicum supervision immerses a supervisor in the familiar tension between theory and practice, between what is taught explicitly in education classes (typically grounded in texts and research findings) and what is learned in practicum schools (from experienced teachers and from first-hand personal experience). (p.194)

Some ITE scholars maintain a self-study of teacher education practices (S-STEP) approach to practicum—where self and professional practice are studied in context (Kitchen & Russell, 2012)—that can enhance learning for teacher candidates as well as for those who work with teacher candidates (Bullock, 2017; Dillon, 2017; Martin, 2017; Russell, 2017; Thomas, 2017b). Although the practicum still merits deeper exploration through S-STEP (Beck et al., 2004; Petrarca & Van Nuland, 2020; Thomas, 2017a), this approach to practicum has brought to light promising findings and could benefit ITE programs overall.

In their chapter in this volume, Russell and Martin challenge common theory-into-practice assumptions and suggest reframing the theory-into-practice model to include the nature and importance of craft knowledge—knowledge that is tacit in nature and learned only by practice. They offer a compelling argument regarding the need for teacher educators to examine, challenge,
and adjust their assumptions regarding teacher candidate learning in the practicum. Most teacher education programs are grounded in the assumption that the formal learning-to-teach process begins with learning about theory followed by the application of theory in practice within the practicum setting. This reframing can begin “by making explicit the differences between declarative knowledge and craft knowledge and by instantiating these differences as a major theme of a teacher education program”. Russell and Martin acknowledge the challenges that reframing the theory-into-practice assumption presents, and provide a list of hypotheses emerging from their extensive practicum research about how we might improve the quality of professional learning in ITE programs. These hypotheses offer valuable insights regarding how and why we need to consider our underlying assumptions regarding how teacher candidates “learn to teach”. Practicum is not simply a space where theory is applied into practice but rather a space where teacher candidates can learn from experience. A central theme of Russell and Martin’s chapter focuses on moving away from expecting the teacher candidate to make connections between course work and practicum experiences, and moving towards the inclusion of all teacher educators in helping and leading teacher candidates to make explicit and appropriate connections by deliberately integrating practicum experiences into all courses. Five years after the initial implementation of Ontario’s enhanced ITE programs, Russell and Martin maintain that although our programs have increased in overall duration, content, and time in practicum, these changes do not necessarily enhance the quality of ITE programs:

If teacher educators are to enact an improved program, they must study and improve their own craft knowledge, which they display to teacher candidates in university classrooms. This also requires that the metacognitive moves that they would like to see their candidates make must also be made by teacher educators themselves. Reframing and repracticing must go hand-in-hand to enhance the quality of teacher education programs in Ontario.

PRACTICUM BEST PRACTICES

Within the various ITE program models, there are several key characteristics that exemplary ITE programs share. In an examination of initial teacher education programs in the United States (Darling-Hammond, 2006), several common attributes related to enhancing teacher effectiveness emerged:

Three critical components of such programs include tight coherence and integration among courses and between course work and clinical work in schools, extensive and intensely supervised clinical work integrated with course work using pedagogies that link theory and practice, and closer, proactive relationships with schools that serve diverse learners effectively and develop and model good teaching. (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 300)

Similarly, Levine (2006) identified cohesion and coherence between courses and practicum as a commonality amongst exemplary teacher education programs whereby there existed “a close connection between the teacher education program and the schools in which students teach, including ongoing collaboration between academic and clinical faculties” (p. 81). Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) described the ideal practicum placement as follows:

Typically, the ideal has been a placement in which student teachers are supported by purposeful coaching from an expert cooperating teacher in the same teaching field who
offers modeling, co-planning, frequent feedback, repeated opportunities to practice, and reflection upon practice while the student teacher gradually takes on more responsibility. (p. 409)

Recently, a focus on deep learning has been a topic of interest within educational circles (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019; NPDL, 2016; McTighe & Silver, 2020). While many educators have long realized the importance of moving beyond memorization and disconnected rote learning, with the acceleration of new knowledge, technology, and an ever-changing world, the need for educators to foster critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills are more important now than ever. Deeper learning “is both a new and old idea, rooted in the findings of research on learning over the past century, yet also aligned with the needs of twenty-first-century students” (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019, p. 4). The concept of deep learning has been described as “active meaning making that leads to deeper understanding of “big ideas,” and building the ability to apply, or transfer, learning to new situations both within school and beyond” (McTighe & Silver, 2020, p. 2). It has also been described around six key areas: creativity, critical thinking, communication, character, citizenship, and collaboration (NPDL, 2016). Regardless of how deeper learning is described, key tenets are based on “powerful learning experiences focused on the demands of life, work, and citizenship—deeper learning—which will enable students to think critically, solve problems, use knowledge for new purposes, and learn how to learn” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019, p. 1). This is a tall order for teachers—especially those just entering the profession. It becomes imperative then for ITE programs to provide their teacher candidates with deeper learning opportunities so that they can then foster deeper learning in all students they face in their diverse classrooms (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019).

Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) stressed the need for ITE programs—including practicum—to prepare teacher candidates for their roles as future teachers to provide “deeper learning experiences for every student in every school” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019, p. 1), reinforcing the need for ITE programs to teach for social justice and equity so that deeper learning opportunities are available for all students with whom our future teachers will work. The Learning Policy Institute (n.d.) frames deeper learning around:

the understanding and use of complex content knowledge as it is applied to new contexts and situations. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment focused on deeper learning seek to support students’ development of skills—such as collaboration, communication, and creative problem solving—required by life in the 21st century. (para. 1)

Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) also put forth five dimensions of deeper learning within ITE program contexts to serve as a framework for not only teacher education but for teaching and learning in general. These five dimensions are:

- Learning that is developmentally grounded and personalized;
- Learning that is contextualized;
- Learning that is applied and transferred;
- Learning that occurs in productive communities of practice; and
- Learning that is equitable and oriented to social justice (pp. 13-14).
To achieve deeper learning for all students in schools, Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) identified specific content and practices that distinguished exemplary ITE programs from other more traditional programs and reflected the above dimensions of deeper learning. The content or curriculum of exemplary ITE programs reflects the National Academy of Education’s (2005) framework for understanding teaching and learning, organized around three broad bodies of knowledge that enhance beginning teachers’ success with their students (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005). Briefly, the three knowledge areas include knowledge of: (1) learners and learning (human development, language, and social contexts of learning); (2) subject matter content and skills (curriculum goals, social purpose of education); and (3) teaching within the context of content, pedagogy, and diverse learners (assessment, classroom environments).

These exemplary ITE programs also shared the following key practices that enhanced deeper learning:

- Mission-aligned processes for recruiting and selecting candidates;
- Integration of coursework and clinical work;
- Modelling of deeper learning pedagogies;
- Applying knowledge in practice;
- Engaging in inquiry and action research;
- Collaboration in productive learning communities;
- Feedback that supports reflection on teaching;
- Authentic assessments of progress; and
- Well-designed clinical apprenticeships, developed in partner schools.

(Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019, p. 99)

CHALLENGES IN PRACTICUM

In their examination of practicum within an S-STEP context, Petrarca and Van Nuland (2020) revisited Beck et al.’s (2004) exploration of why the practicum is still not explored as widely as other topics via S-STEP methodology. Unfortunately, 15 years later, the requisite conditions that foster S-STEP in the practicum are still difficult to achieve. Challenges such as the traditional nature of practicum and university settings; teacher candidate positioning; general lack of support for initial teacher education programs within universities; absence of the university instructor in the practicum; and the pressure of a climate of criticism and conflicting demands that schools face, continue to serve as obstacles to not only taking a self-study approach to practicum, but to also achieving conditions that foster best practices in practica. Furthermore, the necessary conditions for addressing the challenges preventing an S-STEP approach to practicum are also required to implement practicum best practices that enhance learning experiences within the practicum in general. Some of these necessary conditions include satisfactory practicum settings, appropriate practicum activities, teacher candidate support, and the integration of the campus program and the practicum. Some of these well-documented challenges are also reflected in Russell and Martin’s chapter in this volume where they further explore the longstanding challenges related to the underlying assumptions regarding the theory-into-practice model of practicum learning.

In this section, we briefly highlighted the varied ways in which practicum within ITE program settings are described and conceptualized in the literature. We also provided an abridged overview of best practices and challenges that contribute to the complexity of the practicum. Particularly
useful are the key practices identified by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) within the framework of deeper learning. We explore these practices a little more closely and provide specific examples drawn from the ITE program chapters.

BEST PRACTICES IN ACTION IN ONTARIO’S ITE PROGRAM PRACTICA

In this section, we draw on examples from Ontario’s ITE program practica to illustrate best practices for fostering deeper learning identified by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019); we skip the first practice as it is not relevant to the practicum experience. Before beginning, however, we acknowledge the limitations related to attempting to summarize, describe commonalities and differences, and provide examples from ITE programs in Ontario. When we share specific examples drawn from the submitted chapters, we are not suggesting that other programs do not follow these key practices. Although we provided guidelines to authors regarding the content of their chapters (including additional practicum information), we were not prescriptive in how or what authors shared. The examples, spread across universities, are intended to be illustrative of the key themes.

INTEGRATION OF COURSEWORK AND CLINICAL WORK

To enhance teacher candidates’ deeper learning, exemplary ITE programs make intentional connections between practicum and coursework grounded in teaching and learning research and theories. Such integration allows teacher candidates “to understand the practical relevance of theory and how to theorize practice so that their actions are grounded and principled” (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019, p. 107).

Examples of Integration in Ontario

In our first volume, the chapter submissions from Ontario’s ITE programs described rigorous efforts to create intentional opportunities for teacher candidates to connect practicum and coursework in some manner. In this volume, many authors describe these connections and improved practices to enhance cohesion between courses and practicum. It is important to note that while analyzing the chapters for patterns within the province, we found that each of the ITE program chapters mentioned the intentionality behind some type of programming decision related to enhancing the integration of coursework and field experiences. Such intentionality may not be obvious to the non-teacher educator/researcher; however, what is evident is that in spite of the continued barrage of resource challenges, Ontario’s ITE programs continue to find creative attempts to integrate course and field work.

Several programs now have dedicated courses connected to the practicum experience or assignments in a wide range of courses that are intentionally connected to the field. For example, Queen’s University offers Professional Studies courses that link the program to the practicum, where the instructor is also the faculty member who conducts school visits during the practicum. Similarly, Ontario Tech University’s series of three Foundations of Teaching and Learning courses are specifically structured so that teacher candidates are grouped in smaller cohorts that remain together throughout the series. Each of the three courses is connected to each of the three practicum placements and while in the field, teacher candidates are overseen by their Foundations of Teaching and Learning cohort instructor throughout the practicum. Niagara University emphasizes their intentional efforts to strengthen the theory and practice connections between
courses and practicum experiences through the addition of Professional Seminars to the program to address what teacher candidates experience during field work.

Another example of how programs in Ontario integrate coursework with practicum is by providing faculty members with opportunities to observe teacher candidates in the field setting first hand. The Redeemer authors acknowledge the documented challenges of integrating theory and practice and share how they respond:

To mitigate this, full-time faculty at Redeemer regularly serve as faculty associates during practicum placements in all four semesters of the program. This enables faculty to see what is happening in the field in order to support candidates. It also enables candidates to connect theory with practicum experience.

Other programs provide opportunities for the integration of coursework and practicum by providing structured activities to connect numeracy or literacy learning with field-based experience. For example, Trent’s Supporting Literacy and Learners with Special Needs course, offered in the first year of the program, is coupled with a literacy tutoring placement in schools. This course and accompanying field work provide teacher candidates with opportunities to learn about literacy and learners in both coursework and in the classroom, where they work one-on-one with two students in schools twice a week for a specified period of time with each student. By engaging in this work, teacher candidates have opportunities to think more deeply about their tutees’ learning while being introduced to the teaching profession within the school and classroom environment. As described in a subsequent section, Lakehead also provides opportunities for teacher candidates to learn about literacy and numeracy in courses that take place onsite within the school environment with opportunities to work with students in targeted ways.

MODELLING OF DEEPER LEARNING PEDAGOGIES

Modelling of deeper learning pedagogies refers to the explicit modelling of pedagogies that foster deeper learning in both coursework by faculty and within the practicum setting by practicum partners, including the faculty supervisors and associate teachers. This is not a new concept within ITE programs, as we aspire for all of our practicum partners to model practices that optimize student learning. We realize, however, that the manner in which associate teachers are selected is not always ideal and some may not model the desired pedagogies. As noted by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019), ITE programs are often not structured to support the ideal selection and training of associate teachers and faculty supervisors. This is seen in some of our programs in the province where, as much as we try to be explicit regarding the desired experience and qualities of selected classroom teachers (or schools), oftentimes the selection process is completed centrally via school board personnel and may or may not include desired partners.

Modelling of deeper learning pedagogies may also refer to faculty supervisors modelling for associate teachers how to facilitate post-lesson reflection for teacher candidates as they unpack their learning. This would require programs to ensure that all faculty supervisors are also enacting practices that foster deeper learning. By working as a collaborative triad, the faculty supervisor and associate teacher not only model professional dialogue, but also build mentorship capacity (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019).
Examples of Modelling in Ontario

One example of building mentorship capacity drawn from the chapters is the “faculty liaison” role at Lakehead University. Lakehead’s first year practicum occurs in locally-situated schools in Thunder Bay so that the faculty supervisor and faculty liaison can support both teacher candidates and associate teachers. While the faculty supervisors support a cohort of teacher candidates, faculty liaisons visit their assigned schools weekly to build and foster relationships between the program and school partners. Amongst other responsibilities, part of the faculty liaison role includes mentorship where “incidental professional development on mentorship for associate teachers” can occur.

York’s “host school” model in the practicum also serves as an example of building mentorship capacity. The York authors describe how the Practicum Facilitator establishes and strengthens relationships with cohort schools within the six school boards that host teacher candidates. At each host school, a dedicated teacher serves as the site coordinator and works with a team of associate teachers who host and work with teacher candidates. Their chapter describes in detail the roles of the site coordinator and Practicum Facilitator, which include activities that enhance mentorship capacity.

OISE’s MA-CSE program and Wilfrid Laurier’s Professional Development School (PDS) model offer other ways in which ITE programs and practia can be fundamentally structured and organized to enhance opportunities for teacher candidates to experience explicit modelling of pedagogies that foster deeper learning in the practicum setting. For example, OISE’s MA-CSE program provides unique opportunities for teacher candidates to observe “pedagogy in action” on almost a daily basis given the shared spaces afforded by the program’s unique partnership with the Dr. Eric Jackman Laboratory School. In addition to shared spaces, the lab school teachers also share OISE’s guiding vision, which centres on the child. All lab school teachers also serve as associate teachers and embody the shared vision. As noted by Kosnik et al., for the most part, their associate teachers participate in “educative mentoring” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) by making their pedagogical decision-making processes explicit to teacher candidates.

Wilfrid Laurier intentionally grounded its ITE program (first offered in 2007) on the PDS model given its potential for enhancing both school improvement and teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 2005, 2016). The very nature of the PDS model, as conceived by the Holmes Group (1986), lends itself to explicit modelling of deeper learning pedagogies as well as other deeper learning opportunities for teacher candidates, teachers and students:

>The term is meant to convey a school devoted to the development of both novice and experienced professionals. In such schools, experienced teachers, conscious of membership in a profession, help teach and induct new members. Also, by pulling together and demonstrating their know-how, by questioning their assumptions and routines, by taking part in research and development projects, they keep on learning to teach. They contribute their experience and wisdom to the profession's systematic fund of knowledge. (Holmes Group, 1995, p. 15)

Laurier’s ITE program requires schools within their five partnered school boards to apply to become PDS partners and to establish partnerships that are sustained and collaborative in nature.
Laurier authors emphasize the meaningful and ongoing partnerships that embody teacher inquiry, ongoing professional development, and the theory and practice connections.

**APPLYING KNOWLEDGE IN PRACTICE**

Similar to the integration of coursework and practicum, the application of knowledge in practice refers once again to the deliberate opportunities for teacher candidates to engage in authentic application of their learning within their classrooms (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019). Creating assignments connected to the practicum as well as providing opportunities for teacher candidates to self-assess and develop their meta-cognitive skills are examples of the application of knowledge in practice.

*Examples of Applying Knowledge in Practice in Ontario*

Almost all ITE program chapters mentioned the deliberate attempts to provide opportunities for teacher candidates to intentionally apply their knowledge within the field experiences, either through program organizational decisions or in individual courses. For example, Brock authors describe the purposeful sequencing and timing of each semester to support the “spiral movement of theory to practice in all semesters”. The Brock ITE program is deliberately organized to focus on Mathematics and Language Arts at the onset of the program so that in the first practicum placement, teacher candidates could experience teaching one of these two subject areas.

Similarly, the Redeemer chapter describes program design elements related to scheduling particular courses before and after specific practicum placements. For example:

The six-week practicum placements in semesters 2 and 3 are scheduled so that they occur immediately after methods courses that correspond with the division the placements are in. For example, candidates in the Primary/Junior division take courses in literacy and math for the primary grades in the first half of semester 2, and this is followed immediately with a placement in the Primary grades in the second half of semester 2. Candidates in the Junior/Intermediate division take courses in their teaching subject area just prior to their Intermediate placement in Semester 3. The same alignment occurs for junior and intermediate literacy, as well as primary, junior, and intermediate math.

Another example of intentionality in connecting theory and practice is the University of Windsor’s Leadership Experience for Academic Direction (L.E.A.D.) program that deliberately focuses on providing teacher candidates with opportunities to work with vulnerable student populations. Teacher candidates not only learn about theories of social learning, resilience, teaching personal and social responsibility, restorative practices, and motivation, but they are also immersed in practicum experiences that allow them to work directly with students and teachers in those “in-risk” populations by conducting a needs assessment with the student success team and then developing, implementing, and assessing the impact of a school community program. Such intentional opportunities to link learning opportunities in the field via assignments reflect best practices as described by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) that foster deeper learning in ITE programs, as well as the deliberate efforts made by teacher educators to help and lead teacher candidates to make explicit and appropriate connections between theory and practice as described by Russell and Martin in their chapter.
ENGAGING IN INQUIRY AND ACTION RESEARCH

Engaging in inquiry and action research further enhances deeper learning as a means to guide reflection and to analyze practices as described by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019), as “…an inquiry approach gives candidates experience asking the types of questions they will need to ask when they encounter novel teaching challenges, diverse student populations, and different school and community contexts” (p. 121). By engaging in inquiry and action research, teacher candidates are encouraged to pose questions and conduct action research based on their teaching practices and dilemmas. Once again, by actually experiencing inquiry-based approaches themselves, teacher candidates are encouraged to use similar approaches with their own students in the field.

Examples of Engaging in Inquiry and Action Research in Ontario

Since the inception of the four-semester program, Ontario’s ITE programs have noted increased attention to action research and inquiry-based approaches within coursework—through a distinct course devoted to research and inquiry, assignments that take teacher candidates’ wonderings into consideration within a variety of courses, or through an integrative approach within the program usually guided by the conceptual framework.

For example, the Trent authors describe a multidisciplinary approach in their newer undergraduate Teacher Education Stream (TES) program. Throughout their undergraduate degree, students take a range of elective courses in the School of Education as well as education courses with accompanying placements where “the emphasis is on critical thinking and inquiry within a multidisciplinary approach”.

The University of Ottawa authors describe the importance of providing teacher candidates with opportunities to question, investigate, analyze, collaborate, and share in an ongoing manner throughout their time in the program, including during their own teaching. The authors explain that taking an “inquiry stance” within professional learning communities frames both program design and approaches within courses and in practice:

We view the teacher education program as an opportunity for beginning teachers to engage in a dynamic and iterative cycle of inquiry within a variety of communities. It is within these communities that our teacher candidates are exposed to ideas of teaching and learning, engage in discussion about these ideas, and are provided with opportunities to test out their professional knowledge and practice in a variety of settings.

Two specific course examples of engaging teacher candidates in the inquiry process provided in the Ottawa chapter include Becoming a Teacher Through Inquiry in Practice and Enacting Collaborative Inquiry in Professional Practice. These courses were reconceptualized and intentionally designed to help teacher candidates foster theory and practice integration through professional inquiry on their own praxis. Teacher candidates then share their inquiries via poster sessions within their professional learning communities.

The Nipissing chapter provides a detailed account of the evolution of their Curriculum Design and Inquiry course that was created in response to new content requirements, as in Schedule 1 of Regulation 342/02, and to a plethora of supporting research on effective practice. The course provides teacher candidates opportunities to “develop the skills to reflect on their practice, as
teacher-researchers, and connecting theory to practice”, thereby enhancing deeper learning opportunities. This chapter highlights an array of factors to consider when creating and implementing a course grounded in inquiry and action research. The authors document the course intentions, the evolution of the course and use of research and inquiry in the program, as well as other considerations such as faculty input, teacher candidate workload, implementation logistics, ethical considerations, and the actual action research project parameters including successful accounts of teacher candidates sharing their final projects with colleagues.

A program-wide initiative to help teacher candidates engage in inquiry and action research is explained in the OISE-MT program chapter. The authors describe the deliberate efforts made to foster a “teacher as researcher stance that is critical for successful and effective 21st century teachers”. This is achieved by having the teacher candidates create a learning plan that is structured as a self-directed inquiry during their first weeks of the initial practicum so that they begin to take responsibility for their growth and development as teachers by exploring, analyzing, and reflecting upon questions regarding students, classrooms, schools, and community contexts. The teacher candidates are presented with prompts to guide their individualized and open-ended inquiries to facilitate the theory and practice connections, reflecting the “connective tissue” Martin and Russell (2016) maintain is necessary in our ITE programs as “it is not enough to leave integration of program elements to the individual learning to teach” (p. 147).

COLLABORATION IN PRODUCTIVE LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Collaboration in productive learning communities refers to the deliberate efforts ITE programs make to infuse and establish professional learning communities in course and practicum experiences. In the practicum setting, it is not uncommon for teacher candidates and teachers to foster authentic relationships within collaborative learning communities where teacher candidates can participate in learning experiences through observation, sharing, planning, and solving problems with colleagues (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019).

Examples of Collaboration in Productive Learning Communities in Ontario

Each chapter submission from ITE programs in Ontario cited an element of community or collaboration within learning communities, ranging from building learning communities within courses to creating smaller learning communities within the practicum environment with partnered schools or within a smaller group supervised by the faculty supervisor. Cohort models, early observation periods at the beginning of the school year, and opportunities for collaborative teaching are just a few examples of how Ontario’s ITE programs design ways to foster productive learning communities within the practicum context. We now examine a few more specific examples.

Brock’s Triple C model (coursework, cohort, community), in conjunction with its conceptual framework, guides the program’s map and integration. The model embodies the notion of learning within professional communities in courses and practicum. Teacher candidates are grouped into cohorts, which serve as the base community within the Teaching in the Ontario and Professional Collaborative Community courses in first and second year respectively. To further foster the productive learning community, the courses are instructed by the same individual who serves as the faculty supervisor during practicum. Similarly, Windsor offers a mandatory Teaching Practice course where each teacher candidate is part of an advisory group and led by a faculty supervisor.
The Windsor authors describe the advisory group as a community of learners that meet regularly as a seminar class to prepare for practicum, reflect on practicum, and share teaching and learning praxis experiences.

There are plenty of examples in this volume of collaborative opportunities within learning communities. For instance, Laurentian University’s French language teacher education program intentionally creates opportunities for teacher candidates to collaborate with their associate teachers by devoting the first practicum to the observation of multiple classroom dimensions with a focus on the associate teacher’s planning and instruction. The program expects its teacher candidates to co-plan and co-teach with the associate teacher, cultivating opportunities for productive collaboration and learning to occur. Other collaborative opportunities for working within productive learning communities are described in the OISE – CSE program chapter. The program shares both a space and vision with the Dr. Eric Jackman Laboratory School, uniquely positioning teacher educators, teacher candidates, classroom teachers, and researchers together within a community working together towards similar goals.

Queen’s community-based Aboriginal Teacher Education Program exemplifies the notion of collaborative learning communities. In this program, teacher candidates specialize in Indigenous education and spend some of their time in Kingston as well as in one of three Indigenous community settings. Courses reflect the local contexts and provide opportunities for teacher candidates to apply Indigenous perspectives and world views to theory and practice within the local community setting. The program provides both increased Indigenous and Northern content in courses as well as opportunities for teacher candidates to actively learn within the community by connecting to their culture and the land via activities such as sweat lodges, powwows, medicine walks, Ojibwe language instruction, and other activities approved by the Elders. Similarly, Trent authors describe their ongoing collaborative community partnerships with The Youth Leadership in Sustainability Program at Trent’s School of Education and their chapter describes their deliberate efforts made to integrate professional learning communities within this and other community contexts.

At the University of Ottawa, the notion of community is integrated throughout the program and in multiple contexts to “represent the multiple communities that teacher candidates and faculty members engage with during the preparation of new teachers”. Examples include course classroom communities, practicum communities, global communities, virtual communities, cohort communities and more. The authors explain the foundation of the community-focus is grounded in Lave and Wenger’s (1991) and Wenger’s (1998) “work on situated learning and communities of practice which suggests that social practice is the primary, generative source of learning”.

**FEEDBACK THAT SUPPORTS REFLECTION ON TEACHING**

ITE programs that foster deeper learning incorporate “instructional conversations that provide candidates with ongoing feedback and support for structured reflection on teaching” (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019, p. 126) in both coursework and practicum. Reflective practice features prominently in the exemplary programs identified in the literature, where teacher candidates are encouraged to engage in processes such as the teaching/learning inquiry cycle (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019). In practicum, the cyclical process where teacher candidates plan, teach, gather
evidence and feedback, monitor, and adjust as needed provides teacher candidates with structured opportunities for ongoing feedback and reflective practice.

Examples of Feedback that Supports Reflection on Teaching

Reflective practice also features prominently in Ontario’s ITE programs—embedded in vision/mission statements, conceptual frameworks, or goals; infused within courses; included in program maps as a dedicated course; and expected within practicum. In their chapter, Russell and Martin stress the need for teacher education to reframe reflective practice as learning from experience as opposed to everyday musings or ruminations, reflecting the ongoing nature of reflection on teaching described above.

The Redeemer authors also acknowledge the potential for “reflection” to be overused and misunderstood as well as how they explicitly “provide candidates with tools for and experiences in reflection and also view learning within the larger context of future educational and personal development”. One example they provide is the selection and analysis of an artefact (e.g., lesson plan, video clip of teaching, assessment tool) where teacher candidates analyze the artefact within the context of the Standards of Practice (OCT, 2020) during a dedicated Professional Teaching Seminar and Reflective Practice course. This provides teacher candidates with structured and intentional opportunities to make explicit connections with their teaching experiences and obtain feedback throughout the course.

As noted by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019), reflective practice allows teacher candidates to direct their learning through data collection, analyses, discussions and input from associate teachers, instructors, and faculty supervisors, as well as to adapt their practices accordingly. An example of intentional and structured opportunities for teacher candidates to engage in the teaching/learning inquiry cycle is seen in Nipissing’s ITE program, specifically the evolution of the Curriculum Design and Inquiry course, partly designed to help teacher candidates see themselves as teacher-researchers. The course evolved in that teacher candidates were encouraged to engage in the teaching/learning inquiry cycle whereby they collected data to inform their practice via reflective practice and observations while in the field.

Niagara University’s chapter includes a description of the Field Placement Standards used for teacher candidate assessment in the practicum setting. One of the standards—Professional Development—explicitly connects reflective practice with the continual process of examining and evaluating the impact of choices and actions made by teacher candidates on students, parents, and other professionals in their communities.

Similarly, York University’s ITE program deliberately implements opportunities for instructional conversations and structured reflective practice via the associate teacher. The associate teacher’s role is explicitly described for the classroom teacher and includes elements that encourage instructional conversations grounded in “authentic opportunities to integrate theory and practice” via planning, instruction, analysis of student work, and daily reflection. Associate teachers are expected to provide feedback on teacher candidates’ portfolios, which document their achievement of the learning objectives.
The Lakehead authors provide an example of the structured opportunities for reflective practice within their Professional Program Onsite Delivery initiative where course and field work are integrated one day a week at a local elementary school. One of the Lakehead instructors provided a description of the intentional efforts made to help teacher candidates gather student diagnostic mathematical data, develop a learning plan, implement activities, assess, analyze, and debrief their experiences with peers and course instructors in an ongoing manner.

Tyndale authors also refer to the reflection-in and reflection-on-practice (Schön 1983, 1987), in their chapter, describing how they foster reflective practice individually and within a learning community. The Tyndale lesson plan template includes a section on reflective practice to help teacher candidates explicitly consider their teaching. In their smaller cohorts, the learning communities also engage in reflective practice by considering how they individually fulfill collective commitments through a variety of practices such as community circles, online polls, peer sharing, and self-assessment. Tyndale also offers a Reflective Practice course where teacher candidates have structured opportunities to examine and analyze their practice via several lenses: philosophical, political, pedagogical, professional, parental, and personal.

The Western authors provide another way they incorporate “instructional conversations” (see Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019, p. 126) to provide ongoing feedback to support teacher candidate reflection and learning. The Western chapter describes the redesign of an existing and large-group Research and Assessment course to a smaller professional learning community format led by Master Teacher Mentors (MTM): “MTMs provide the relational modeling and coaching for teacher candidates to document their learning through coursework and practicum experiences within OCT domains of practice” in their Professional Practice Records (elaborated upon in the next section). The MTM groups provide opportunities for teacher candidates, under the mentorship of their MTMs, to “inquire together on ways to improve their practice, incorporate feedback from instructors and associate teachers, consider research and resources, and identify next steps for professional learning in their placements and course work”, thereby supporting teacher candidate reflection on teaching.

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS OF PROGRESS

Within the practicum, to enhance deeper learning, teacher candidates should have opportunities to engage with a wide range of feedback in an ongoing manner. Examples include regular and ongoing feedback from the associate teacher as well as informal feedback from the university supervisor during regular visits to the field. In addition to informal assessments, teacher candidates also have more formal opportunities for evaluation via some type of standards-based or benchmark assessment focusing on specific skills. Teacher candidates are also encouraged to use formalized evaluation tools to self-assess their progress, reflect on their growth and development, and establish goals for improvement.

Examples of Authentic Assessments of Progress in Ontario

Ontario ITE programs have a wide range of assessment practices and tools for teacher candidates in the field. Several examples already mentioned in this chapter also reflect the “range of authentic assessments [that] allow for the application of skills and knowledge and offers opportunities for feedback and reflection” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019) within the practicum context. We draw
from the chapters to provide a few more examples of ways in which Ontario’s programs provide opportunities for authentic assessment of progress.

Since the implementation of the four-semester program, Western University has engaged in an extensive program mapping exercise resulting in significant changes regarding assessment throughout the program. The Western authors spend considerable time in their chapter describing the rationale and mechanisms that guided the program decision to go “gradeless” via a pass/fail system—a system that was already in place for the practicum component of the program. The authors suggest that the move to pass/fail provides an opportunity to further align their program. The Western chapter also expands upon the implementation of a Professional Practice Record (Lowenberg Ball, Ben-Peretz, & Cohen, 2014) or PPR, which serves as a personal growth plan for each teacher candidate monitored over the four semesters. The electronic PPR provides a space for teacher candidates to regularly review the Professional and Ethical Standards (OCT, 2020) and program competencies, establish goals, identify areas for growth, and include artefacts from the practicum and courses that demonstrate growth, similar to the Annual Learning Plan process in place for Ontario teachers.

Many chapters describe how the faculty supervisor serves as support for teacher candidates (and associate teachers) during the practicum. Laurentian authors describe how while the associate teacher provides the summative assessment for the teacher candidate’s practicum experience, faculty supervisors still observe their teacher candidates in classrooms and provide formative assessment to foster teacher candidate learning and improvement. Ontario Tech describes a similar process whereby the Foundations instructor, who also supervises their cohort in the field, provides feedback based on classroom observations; however, they also provide formative and summative assessment of the teacher candidates’ digital field experience binder. The “binder” sits in a shared university drive and allows the faculty supervisor to view and provide feedback on their teacher candidates’ lessons, observations, and other required materials.

WELL-DESIGNED CLINICAL APPRENTICESHIPS

The previous practices were identified by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) as helpful overall program practices that foster deeper learning in teacher candidates. We used those practices to identify how they are enacted in practicum; however, the final “best practice” to foster deeper learning as identified above is the inclusion of well-designed clinical apprenticeships.

One of the most important aspects that supports deeper learning within ITE programs is the structure of the practicum. Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) describe the ideal practicum based on their in-depth study of seven exemplary programs that support deeper learning:

In contrast, these seven programs all work to structure extended clinical placements so that candidates become apprentices to accomplished teachers in classrooms that instantiate the practices described in their tightly connected coursework. In these apprenticeships, they can watch excellent modelling of instruction and learn how to emulate it step-by-step, with explanations about decision-making that support their own developing abilities to make complex judgements about practice. (p. 140)

Practicum experiences that promote deeper learning, such as those described above, share several
common characteristics. First of all, to enhance teacher candidate learning, practicum placements are carefully selected, take place over an extended period of time, and are well-supported by expert associate teachers who model high quality teaching. ITE programs that foster deeper learning carefully seek and select such associate teachers to serve as partners in the education of teacher candidates. Associate teachers not only model practices that foster deeper learning in their own students but they also provide teacher candidates with explanations regarding their instructional choices and practices. These expert teachers understand and model effective assessment practices, demonstrate strong classroom management, understand their learners, and are open to both allowing teacher candidates to take over their classes and to continuing to learn and grow themselves (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019). Exemplary ITE programs that stimulate deeper learning also support their associate teachers via training in a variety of ways to foster their mentorship skills as they work with teacher candidates. These ITE programs not only work with individual associate teachers but with their partner schools as true communities of learning so that teacher candidates can see deeper learning in action. The school site’s relationship with the university is one that extends beyond the practicum and reflects a community of learning (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019).

Lastly, the university supervisor plays a prominent role in the practicum in these exemplary ITE programs. The supervisor typically supports a small number of teacher candidates during the practicum by meeting with them regularly in the host schools and sometimes in small groups. This provides opportunities for discussion, sharing, reflection, and making connections between coursework and practice in the field. The university supervisor also works with the associate teacher and ultimately serves as the “bridge between the program and the school site: they discuss candidates’ experiences, help them connect theory to practice, support ongoing problem solving, and communicate regularly with the school-based mentor through emails and phone calls, on top of their in-person interactions” (p. 142).

We now discuss these aspects of well-designed “clinical-apprenticeships” that foster deeper learning within the Ontario context. Given the potential for considerable overlap with earlier examples shared in this chapter, rather than share examples of how Ontario’s ITE programs design practica that foster deeper learning, we discuss instead some of the challenges that may prevent ITE programs from enacting components of the ideal practicum, which we have loosely categorized by financial and institutional constraints.

PRACTICUM DESIGN IN ONTARIO

Although the Ontario College of Teachers has detailed program requirements regarding program content and practicum days, each institution is provided with flexibility in how they attend to these requirements. As is evident from the examples above, and abundantly clear when reading the chapters from each faculty of education, Ontario’s ITE programs exhibit a wide range of ideologies, strategies, program organization, and systems in their efforts to support teacher candidates’ deeper learning in both course and practicum work. This volume’s authors are deeply committed to initial teacher education and serve as instructors or researchers or administrators—or a combination of these roles—within their own ITE programs. They are well-versed in the teacher education literature and the subject areas addressed in Ontario’s ITE programs. They understand the critical role that practicum plays in the formal learning-to-teach journey for teacher candidates and we hypothesize that many would not disagree with the manner in which an “ideal”
Practicum is described by Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019). Despite our best efforts as teacher educators, researchers, or administrators, however, several challenges prevent the ideal practicum from occurring on an ongoing and regular basis in Ontario. Petrarca and Van Nuland (2019) suggest that identified challenges—such as the traditional nature of the university and practicum settings, absence of university instructors in the practicum, the conflicting demands faced by schools, and the climate of criticism in schools—impede the creation of optimal conditions for teacher candidate learning in practicum. To create optimal conditions, ITE programs need rich practicum settings, appropriate practicum activities, more support for teacher candidates, and integration of the campus and practicum programs (Petrarca & Van Nuland, 2020).

FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

The drastic funding cuts by the province in 2015 impacted all areas of our programs including practicum—making the “ideal” even more challenging to achieve:

The reduction in funding also limited opportunities for reform. Most notably, this may have limited reforms to field experiences, particularly structured practica. The gradual release of responsibility, in a better funded environment, might have led to more faculty advisor time in the field to support teacher candidates in the early stages. In our own faculties, we had to constrain our field support in order to make the program sustainable with reduced funding. (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2017, p. 350)

In this volume, over half of the chapters from ITE programs mentioned again—to varying degrees—challenges due to provincial and/or university budget limitations. These constraints created a ripple effect and further burdened programs as seen in reorganizations or cuts in practicum support staff, increased faculty service or workload, and decreased resources to name a few. Some of the chapters described cost-saving measures implemented by universities that directly affected the practicum.

For example, the role of the faculty supervisor was mentioned several times in chapters as being impacted as a result of the financial constraints on ITE programs. As mentioned earlier, oftentimes ITE programs hire retired school administrators or teachers to serve as the faculty supervisor who supervises and supports a small group of teacher candidates. As seen in the pages of this volume, the role varies widely depending on the program and could include responsibilities such as visiting the school to build relationships, observing lessons, providing formative (and sometimes summative) assessments, supporting the associate teacher, and addressing issues as they occur. While variations exist, faculty supervisors hired only to supervise teacher candidates are typically paid a nominal amount, and receive some type of remuneration via mileage compensation or a per diem payment. While this may not seem like an onerous expense, we need to consider the total costs of hiring these faculty supervisors for multiple practicum placements, and for many teacher candidates, resulting in a significant budget line in an already under-resourced ITE program budget.

Given the budgetary challenges, some ITE program chapters describe how the faculty supervisor role was modified post-2015 by either reducing the number of faculty supervisors hired to supervise teacher candidates, creating an additional/alternative role, or modifying the role to make it less onerous given the reduction in resources. In some instances, the number of supervisees may
have increased or the number of school visits were reduced as cost-saving measures. In other instances, the faculty supervisor role became more reactive in nature rather than one that may have previously fostered relationship building and partnerships with school communities and potentially prevented issues in the field from arising. In some cases, practicum setting locations needed to be reconsidered in order to save costs related to faculty supervisors travelling to distant school boards for visits. Still in other instances, reductions were made at the practicum administrative level where coordinators, specialists or directors and support staff do the heavy lifting in securing and organizing practicum placements as well as cultivating partnerships with schools.

In addition to providing remuneration to faculty supervisors, typically, ITE programs also provide some type of compensation to school partners either directly or indirectly via associate teacher honoraria or a reduction or waiving of fees for professional development or graduate courses offered at the university; or some type of payment to school board, school or onsite coordinator depending upon the ITE program’s practicum model. We are unaware of any cuts made to school or associate teacher compensation; however, we felt it worth mentioning to remind readers of the high costs incurred by the practicum components of ITE programs. Associate teacher training sessions where release time provided by the university for classroom teachers to attend are no longer feasible. Programs that rely on the faculty supervisor role to work closely with associate teacher partners to enhance mentorship capacity may be impacted if the role of the faculty supervisor has been altered as a cost saving measure.

INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS

While some ITE programs in Ontario are fundamentally structured in a manner that supports school partnerships described in the literature, it is challenging to develop the “ideal” conditions described above in a consistent manner, particularly in larger programs. We acknowledge that financial constraints play a role in preventing the cultivation of partnerships with our schools; however, institutional constraints within both universities and school boards also play a role. We describe institutional constraints as structures or systems in both university and school board organizations that prevent the “ideal” practicum as described above from flourishing.

Some chapters mentioned the practicum placement process as one that is situated and centralized at the school board level, which poses challenges when carefully selecting those expert associate teachers who model practices that foster deeper learning. We realize that a centralized process, especially in larger school boards, may prevent individual schools from being inundated with requests from various ITE programs but centralization could also prevent partnerships from being cultivated to their full potential. We also realize that school boards have commitments to multiple ITE programs and that issues related to selecting teachers who model high quality instructional practices become tricky to navigate. Coupled with this complexity, we must remember the conditions that Ontario teachers face in their own school settings where larger class sizes, a wide range of student needs, and reduced funding create additional challenges for classroom teachers who also serve as associate teachers and may not have the time to provide teacher candidates with the desired level of support.

Some ITE chapter authors shared challenges related to full time faculty teaching and supervising in ITE programs due to competing interests and responsibilities related to the typical 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service component of most tenured and tenure-track positions at the
university. Some ITE program chapters described the challenges related to the part-time nature of the instructor positions in their programs. It becomes increasingly challenging to develop meaningful partnerships when many of the instructors are part-time employees and paid on a course-by-course basis.

We realize that institutions and ITE programs have their own unique set of challenges and constraints that may prevent the design and implementation of the “ideal” practicum; however, we hope that some of the ideas and innovations shared by colleagues in this volume spark discussions with an eye towards improvement.

CONCLUSIONS AND MOVING FORWARD

Ontario’s initial teacher education practica are influenced by a wide range of accreditation requirements and regulations, institution-specific directions, evidence-based practices informed by research, and systemic and financial constraints at both the university and K-12 levels. As seen in this volume, innovative practicum-related activities that embody the tightly connected coursework, modeling of high-quality instruction, and overall mentorship of teacher candidates described earlier are happening in the province.

We also realize that some of the desired components of how our practica are structured and carried out in Ontario are not consistently implemented for a wide range of reasons often related to financial and / or institutional constraints. Rather than collectively toss our hands up in the air and give up due to the exhausting and frustrating limitations imposed upon ITE programs, members of Ontario’s ITE programs have continued to forge ahead and attempt to find creative ways to design experiences that foster teacher candidate (deeper) learning. But at what cost? How do we foster general wellness in overstretched faculty, program administrators, and support staff who continue to work tirelessly to implement ITE programs, in spite of the bombardment of the “do more with less” messages we have unfortunately become accustomed to?

We turn to Kathy Broad’s chapter, in which she describes lessons learned from her personal experiences of “policy intended” to “policy lived” as a reminder of the “incredible power of individual and collective agency in varied settings,” including ITE program settings in Ontario. Perhaps further discussions and continued sharing within our own professional and research communities in the Canadian Association for Teacher Education might stimulate future research and space to further consider and explore how we might enhance deeper learning practicum experiences for our future teachers. As Broad reminds us, “No matter how challenging the circumstances or the limitations of ‘materials’ and human resources our construction is strongest, most inclusive and most enduring when we undertake renovation and continuous renewal in authentic, learning-focused collaboration and partnership”.

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CHAPTER 4

PRACTICUM IN ONTARIO: PATTERNS ACROSS PROGRAMS

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INTRODUCTION

There is considerable variation in teacher education, in Ontario and across Canada, including many examples of innovation (Kosnik, Beck & Goodwin, 2016). In the first volume of Initial Teacher Education in Ontario, we identified patterns across programs and mapped out where many course components were placed in various universities. In this chapter of the second volume, we provide an overview of the practicum experience in Ontario. Again, as in previous chapters, the focus is on identifying patterns across practicum experiences with a view to disseminating knowledge and promoting innovation.

PRACTICUM OVERVIEW

As outlined in the previous chapter, teacher candidates in Ontario are required to complete a minimum of 80 days of practice in Ontario certified schools over the course of their program, and depending on the program divisions in which they are enrolled, additional requirements related to the grade level and/or subject area are required (OCT, 2013). All teacher education programs satisfy this requirement, but there is considerable variation in how they attend to it.

This section of the chapter offers an overview of how the practicum experiences are organized in relation to academic programs. “Teacher Education Field Experiences at a Glance” (see Appendix) provides an overview of each university’s practicum experiences across the two years of the program. As we compiled the information for the Appendix, we noticed the overarching theme of intentionality weaved throughout each of the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program chapters. ITE programs in Ontario have made deliberate efforts to incorporate teacher education research, vision statements, conceptual frameworks, and stakeholder feedback to guide decisions regarding overall program improvement and/or (re)development in various contexts including practicum. The chapters are full of examples regarding the “why and how” of decision-making regarding program/practicum structures, organization, courses, assignments, and teacher candidate activities to enhance learning opportunities during the practicum. We encourage readers to learn more about the rationale for the duration, structure, scheduling, and activities related to practicum within the respective chapters.
In the subsequent section, we have attempted to capture the essence of the noted intentionality—either explicitly explained or inferred—described in the ITE program chapters within the following three broad themes: (1) organization of practicum placements (i.e., duration, structure); (2) alternative placements; and (3) cohesion efforts (i.e., cohorts, the university supervisor role, targeted connections). Once again, we remind readers that the omission of an institution within one of the thematic topics does not necessarily mean that the program does not include the particular area, but rather reflects the content within the submitted chapters as well as our efforts to balance examples from the ITE programs across the province. To enhance the reliability of the information, we shared the Appendix with authors to verify the collated data.

ORGANIZATION OF PRACTICUM EXPERIENCES

As you will note in the Appendix and in the chapters that follow, ITE programs organize their practicum experiences in diverse ways. The practicum experiences are differentiated by where practica are situated in the four-semester schedule, the duration of the experience, the number of experiences, and the activities that occur within a practicum. Below we explore some of the patterns we identified across ITE program chapters.

Duration of Practica

All Ontario ITE programs meet the 80-day practicum requirement, and range in duration from 80 to 181 overall days, depending on how practicum is organized, named, or “counted” towards the accreditation requirements, thereby creating challenges when trying to compare the duration of each program’s practica.

Depending on the nature of the type of the practicum context (e.g., Trent’s Literacy Tutoring), a portion of the practicum experience is represented in hours, days, or weeks (which may include statutory holidays such as Victoria Day). Regardless, calculating the exact number of practicum days for each ITE program, including descriptive statistics such as the mean, median or mode, would be challenging and, if possible, would still provide an incomplete picture of the practicum experience.

Many programs require teacher candidates to spend time in schools each day or each week for varying amounts of time in addition to a block of time (i.e., practicum block); however, some of this time in a field setting might may or may not be considered part of the 80 days depending on the circumstances. As mentioned by several of our authors, increasing the number of days spent in the field must be accompanied by sound practices to enhance teacher candidate learning. Chapter 3 describes desired practices within practicum settings to enhance deeper learning, including “well-designed clinical apprenticeships” (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019) where teacher candidates:

…become apprentices to accomplished teachers in classrooms that instantiate the practices described in their tightly connected coursework. In these apprenticeships, they can watch excellent modelling of instruction and learn how to emulate it step-by-step, with explanations about decision-making that support their own developing abilities to make complex judgements about practice. (p. 140)
The move to 80 days (from 40 days in the former provincial requirements) in practicum also provided ITE programs in Ontario with opportunities to reflect on practicum learning within the context of the entire program and design and implement its structure and practices accordingly based on each institution’s unique needs and foci. We encourage readers, after examining the Appendix, to consult the respective chapters in this volume for additional background regarding the rationale for the number of days and the deliberate manner in which they are organized. We now share some practicum structure observations gleaned from the chapters.

**Practicum Structure**

As seen in the chapters in this volume, and much like we saw in our first volume, the practicum requirements as per the accreditation requirements remain flexible in that ITE programs in Ontario are still able to organize, structure, and implement their practicum experiences in a manner that is appropriate to their unique programming needs. In this section, we share some of the structural elements of practica, including examples of factors that guide or contribute to practicum structures, followed by ways in which the practicum days are organized.

**Factors Contributing to Structure**

Much like other program components, the practicum structure decisions described in the chapters reflect a wide range of models, and authors typically described how some of the practicum decisions were guided by the program’s overarching vision, mission, values, teacher education literature, stakeholder feedback, and organizational policies. For example, Niagara University authors describe how the community service component of their IMPACT field work is guided by the university’s values that centre on the tradition of St. Vincent de Paul. In that spirit, teacher candidates are encouraged “to serve all members of our society, especially the poor and oppressed, in local communities and throughout the world.” Similarly, the York chapter stresses how their community practicum experience reflects the program’s overarching belief that recognizing and engaging with community is essential to teaching. The Nipissing chapter provides another example of how institutional theoretical foundations might shape program elements. The Nipissing authors acknowledge that their conceptual framework has guided their program design (including practicum components and activities) and course offerings these past five years. OISE’s MA-CSE chapter also includes explicit examples of how their guiding vision drives program decision-making to foster a more coherent experience for teacher candidates.

Other examples of factors that shaped the practicum structure are evident in the teacher education (and related) literature that fills the chapters that follow, as authors describe how evidence-based practices inform the activities that occur during the practicum. Chapters two and three (and this chapter) capture examples of how teacher education and related literature underpin decisions related to practicum activities including its structure. Many chapters, such as the Redeemer chapter, cite the importance of coherence and the importance of “extensive, well-supervised clinical experience linked to coursework using pedagogies that link theory and practice” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 307).

In other instances, some practicum (and program) decisions are driven by broader forces beyond our control. Several authors describe innovative solutions to implementing what we know reflect best practices in teacher education; however, the organizational constraints, such as financial constraints, school district limitations, and other university policies, prevent the full
implementation of desired practicum structures from materializing. For example, the Niagara authors describe how their initial pre-practicum placement design needed to be readjusted due to school district changes and inconsistent availability of space in schools. The Laurentian authors provide yet another relatable example of the challenges involved in having full time faculty serve as practicum supervisors given the competing commitments related to research. They describe an innovative solution where full-time faculty could opt to serve as practicum supervisors as part of the faculty’s workload.

As noted by the Nipissing University authors, the practicum is seen as the “pedagogical cornerstone of any teacher education program” and that “it must be acknowledged as an administratively complex undertaking”. Some chapters, like the Nipissing chapter, provide a glimpse into the types of decisions and decision-making processes used as they worked through the structure and organization of the practicum, which many ITE programs might find relatable. In the case of Nipissing, the complexity is compounded as the ITE program continued to allow its teacher candidates to complete practicum placements in any of Ontario’s 52 publicly funded school boards and seven First Nations education systems.

We now describe several ways in which practica are organized, grouped loosely by how the classroom time is organized within the four semesters.

Daily and/or Weekly Practicum
Some ITE programs structure the practicum so that teacher candidates spend some time in schools each day or each week for extended periods of time. Teacher candidates in OISE’s MA-CSE program spend mornings in practicum classrooms during the first year of the program in three 12-week blocks and spend afternoons in their program courses. OISE’s MA-CSE program shares space with the Dr. Eric Jackman Laboratory School, where every classroom teacher serves as an associate teacher. In the second year of the program, teacher candidates complete a 13-week internship for the duration of the first semester and this is followed by a semester of coursework in the second semester. Niagara University also describes its original first-year pre-practicum placement design where cohorts were organized by AM and PM groupings so that placement would take place for one half of the school day and classes would take place in the other half of the day. Given the school space limitations, Niagara eventually needed to readjust the schedule so that teacher candidates would spend 2.5 days per week in placement schools and the other 2.5 days would be spent in courses rather than the half-day every day. The pre-practicum placement hours serve as community service and do not “count” towards the 80 mandatory practicum requirements as per the OCT accreditation requirements.

As part of its Professional Development School (PDS) model, Wilfred Laurier requires teacher candidates to spend one or more days per week in their placement school, which is then followed by the larger extended blocks of time. York’s ITE program also provides teacher candidates with opportunities to observe and learn in classrooms and communities on a weekly basis. Other programs— such as Brock, Lakehead, and Ontario Tech—build in somewhat regular weekly time for teacher candidates to visit their practicum sites where they serve as helpful guests or observers in their practicum classrooms or school communities throughout the semester prior to the larger block. For example, Brock devotes one day per week, beginning mid-September until the first block of time in the class in December, to practicum days and Ontario Tech’s Foundations Fridays
are devoted to either classroom observations or professional development opportunities on campus throughout the semester prior to the larger block.

Other programs that allow teacher candidates to complete practicum placements in non-local school boards (i.e., far distances from the campus) may not have the option of giving teacher candidates opportunities to visit their placement schools on a daily or weekly basis and therefore rely on large block practica to build in observation days and a gradual increase in responsibility over the duration of several weeks. We now share describe some of the ways in which ITE programs organize practicum blocks.

**Practicum Blocks**

All programs have teacher candidates in school placements for extended periods of time or practicum blocks. Practicum blocks range from two to 13 weeks but again, the number of weeks within an extended block of time, as well as the number of practicum blocks, must be considered within the context of the program’s overall content, structure, and conceptual framework. As seen in the Appendix, many programs spread their practicum experiences fairly equally across two years (or four semesters). For example, some programs, such as the MT program at OISE/UT, the French-language program at Laurentian University, Nipissing University, and the University of Windsor, feature evaluated four- to five-week practicum blocks each semester. Others spread practica across three dedicated blocks of time. Tyndale, for example, offers one five-week block in the first year followed by two in the second year, whereas Ontario Tech University begins with four weeks, followed by five and then six for approximately 86 days. Both are 16-month programs and offer course work during their spring or summer semester. Queen’s also has a 16-month program; however, practicum experiences are still scheduled within the four semesters.

Most programs offer distinct practicum experiences in several different classrooms or schools for each of their practicum blocks; however, other programs place their teacher candidates into the same classroom or school for the duration of the school year. For example, the Nipissing program splits the first 8-week practicum block into two 4-week practicum blocks during each of the first two semesters, while other programs situate the teacher candidate within one partnered school for the duration of the year but organize the time in schools weekly or daily, as described earlier, followed by an extended block.

Another interesting practicum block feature in several programs, such as Nipissing, Ontario Tech, Tyndale, and WLU, is scheduling part of the practicum during the first week of school in September. Tyndale authors describe the dual benefit of placing teacher candidates in schools during that first week so that they could not only observe the establishing of culture and routines but also have the opportunity to become part of that class and school community. Nipissing authors describe a similar benefit but also illustrate how teacher candidates use the opportunity to consider an action research topic with their associate teachers during that critical first week. WLU teacher candidates spend part of the last week in August (before Labour Day) and the first two days of the academic school year at the PDS site so that they can participate in classroom preparations before the first day of school as well as observe how the teachers build rapport with their new group of students.
Observation

All universities employ observation days as a means of easing transitions and becoming familiar with schools. These days may take place during the first week of a practicum block or occur over several weeks prior to a block via dedicated observation days, as seen in the programs at Brock, Lakehead (during the first year), and Ontario Tech. These days may count as ‘practicum’ days, as field experience days, or a combination of both. In programs where teacher candidates spend dedicated amounts of time daily or weekly in classrooms, observation also plays a dedicated role as teacher candidates progress through the program.

The ITE program authors provide thoughtful insights regarding the purpose and inclusion of dedicated observation time in the practicum, as well as the desired activities that take place during these dedicated periods of observation. The authors draw from the teacher education and related literature, respective feedback from stakeholders, as well as limiting factors that prevent desired observation-related practices from being implemented. We provide examples from several chapters to illustrate the intentional efforts and rationales for creating educative observation activities in practicum.

The Laurentian authors describe how in the previous two-semester program, they also scheduled part of the practicum block during the first week of school to provide teacher candidates with opportunities to experience community and culture building during the first week of school; however, the enhanced program created scheduling issues with the concurrent candidates who were already scheduled in university classes during this important time, preventing the desired observation time within the practicum structure. Tyndale University, which offers three practicum placements of five weeks each, places a great emphasis on additional ‘practicum’ observation days in schools. One purpose of observation days is to develop a broader understanding of school communities through activities assisting librarians, special education teachers, guidance counsellors and administrators; attending team meetings, school council meetings and parent nights; and assisting with co-curricular activities and school excursions. This ‘observation/participation phase’ offers teacher candidates opportunities to reflect on connections between theory and practice. This extra time with the associate and the school community eases the transition into the five-week teaching blocks.

Still other ITE programs, such as York, intentionally provide time and space for teacher candidates during their weekly community and classroom practicum experiences to observe both classroom interactions as well as the communities in which they teach. Similarly, the WLU authors describe the importance of providing teacher candidates with opportunities to conduct targeted observations during their dedicated weekly field days, which continue into the broader practicum block.

During this block, teacher candidates are required to complete deliberate, intentional observations according to specific topics, and debrief their observations daily with the associate teacher for the purpose of developing an awareness and understanding of the many complex activities a teacher must consciously plan for and implement.

Brock’s observation days leading up to the practicum block are named “structured experience” (SE) days, denoting the intentionality of those individual practicum days. The SE days are structured and intended to help teacher candidates make targeted observations related to student
engagement, inclusion, and the Standards of Practice. The dedicated observation opportunities for teacher candidates are also embedded in practicum blocks. For example, the authors from Windsor and Laurentian describe the incremental increase in teaching expectations, including the valuable role of observation.

Practica in Programs with Four Consecutive Semesters

The government’s mandate of four semesters of ITE opened the doors for universities, such as Ontario Tech University, Queen’s University, and Tyndale University, to opt for consecutive semesters over sixteen months, rather than eight months each year with a four-month break in between. Reconfiguring field experiences, particularly the minimum 80 days of teaching in schools alongside an Ontario-certified teacher within the consecutive semesters could present additional challenges. Peter Chin, in “Initial Teacher Education at Queen’s University: How We Developed Our Initial Teacher Education Program,” highlights some of the challenges and describes how his university addressed them.

One challenge was the fact that two semesters take place in the summer, when schools are largely empty. Queen’s decided to establish a three-week practicum placement in May of Summer One and a four-week placement in May of Summer Two. In order to fit these in, they needed to schedule them for May, while elementary schools were active and before secondary school exams. As the practicum courses are sequenced for increased responsibilities, “resulting in a more gradual immersion into practice teaching,” teacher candidates are exposed to classroom learning early in Summer One, with the Summer Two block giving them an intensive experience in school before the final consolidation of learning in classes at the Faculty. As the program design was new and in response to data from surveys and focus group interviews, ITE leaders shifted the Summer Two one-week term break to immediately after the four-week May practicum block. The rationale is related to transit between Kingston and other locations (placement schools and home), but it is also a needed respite after intensive work in schools.

Ontario Tech also opted for a 16-month B.Ed. program. Teacher candidates begin the program in the Fall and complete the program by the following December, completing the third semester fully online in May and June. In their chapter, Petrarca and colleagues provide specific examples related to the ongoing refinement of the third and fully online semester, describing the challenges, opportunities, and rationale in offering a fully online semester during the Spring/Summer semester. Teacher candidates have July and August “off” from coursework; however, because all second-year teacher candidates are in practicum at the beginning of the K-12 school year in September, some teacher candidates do assist in preparatory work before the Labour Day holiday, depending on the placement and the associate teacher.

Technological and Indigenous Programs

The teacher education programs in technological education serve prospective teachers who may also be working in trades while taking teacher education courses. As there is a great demand for technological education, those candidates who are already teaching in schools on Letters of Permission are able to count these as practicum hours (see Brushwood Rose & Figg’s chapter on technological education in this volume).
Indigenous teacher education programs, as outlined in a separate chapter in this volume (see Desmoulins & Bell), offer interesting twists on usual practicum approaches, including placements in First Nations community schools. At Trent University, faculty advisors and associate teachers work alongside Elders, traditional knowledge keepers, and community members to help “Indigenous teacher candidates conduct themselves with traditional Indigenous protocols, and professional ethics and standards in mind teacher candidates.” At Lakehead University, which offers several Indigenous programs, teacher candidates “need to complete a supervised practical experience within an alternative and informal instruction setting (e.g., Friendship Centres, Shkoday Abinojiwiak Obimiwedoon)” and may select “two formal placements in public, separate, urban Indigenous, or on-reserve schools,” including in remote or First Nations communities (Desmoulins & Bell).

ALTERNATIVE EXPERIENCES

As we noted in the first volume of this polygraph, most teacher education programs in Ontario have opted to exceed the number of field experience days mandated by the Ontario College of Teachers and have moved to include additional experiences within alternative settings. As seen in the Appendix, the nature, duration, and structure of alternative experiences are wide and varied. Several ITE programs require all candidates to participate in alternative experiences in a wide range of settings (e.g., Nipissing, Queen’s) whereas some programs make the alternative practicum experience optional and available to teacher candidates via application upon successful completion of a minimum of 80 required practicum days (e.g., Lakehead, Redeemer). In other situations, such as the internship described in the Ontario Tech chapter, the required alternative experience is connected to a course for all I/S teacher candidates and the associated field work is connected to an area of inquiry, and not counted towards the 80 required practicum days in school settings.

Once again, programs have carefully and intentionally considered the purpose, rationale, and types of activities that would occur within the alternative experience rather than haphazardly creating a field-based experience outside of the OCT requirements. For example, the Windsor authors describe in great detail how their alternative practicum experiences not only enhance the teacher candidate experience, but also serve local and global communities. The increase in the number of practicum days from 40 to 80 days was intended to increase experiential learning and better prepare teacher candidates for the classroom. While all faculties accept the need for more experiential learning, the Windsor authors question merely increasing time in schools. Beckford, Salinitri and Xu write, “Doing more of the same or increasing the number of practicum days does not necessarily improve the teaching experience.” They argue for alternative approaches “to meet the needs of our changing global society and better prepare our teacher candidates for the socio-political-economic elements of the learning environment.” While conventional in-school practicum placements form the bulk of field experiences in Windsor’s teacher education program, the program also features mandated service-learning that offers teacher candidates non-traditional field experiences and alternative placements designed to “extend their range of experiences and enrich their professional and personal development,” including “a number of international opportunities” and “service engagement.” The Windsor chapter describes opportunities provided in three innovative experiential programs: Leadership Experience for Academic Direction (working with vulnerable student populations), Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program (learning in international and intercultural contexts), and Global Community Engagement Program (learning through community engagement).
Niagara University also describes its intentional efforts to continue to honour “service” in the tradition of St. Vincent de Paul and encourages teacher candidates to:

- serve all members of society, especially the poor and oppressed, in local communities and throughout the world. Community service is another way to connect with the students and families of our school communities. The community service component of IMPACT is organized by each Teacher Candidate and is an opportunity to continue to volunteer with a community organization or begin a new relationship within a service community. Opportunities might include volunteering at a local school, coaching a sport, helping at a food bank, running after-school programs, or volunteering at a senior’s center.

Lakehead authors describe the need for a range of optional alternative placements in non-traditional, remote, or international contexts. According to Socha and colleagues, Lakehead’s alternative options:

- now include over 200 traditional and specialized classrooms (i.e., K to Grade 12; special education; Indigenous language; culinary arts) and non-traditional settings (i.e., museum, art gallery, and community/cultural-support organization), within and beyond Ontario, including remote northern Ontario placements, traditional and non-traditional placements in other provinces, as well as international teaching opportunities in China and the United Kingdom… Plans are presently underway to expand international, and out-of-province traditional and non-traditional placement offerings, while increasingly attending to the specific alternative placement requests expressed by individual students.

Intentionality is also woven throughout the York authors’ descriptions of their alternative practicum experiences. York University front-end loads alternative field experiences in its program. A key goal is community-centric pedagogy, which “recognizes the ways in which schools are situated in community through the students’ daily experiences, the school’s history in the community and parent and community members’ stake in their children’s success” (Barrett et al.). These weekly field experiences in the first year of the program support and mentor teacher candidates in community settings such as community centres, libraries, after-school programs, outdoor education centres, and parenting centres. Community-based experiences, which had been part of the concurrent program for years and were then expanded to all teacher candidates in the two-year program, take place in almost 200 community organizations. In order to sustain this model in a large university, York has partnerships with 200 community organizations. In line with the program’s vision, community experiences involve reflection, holism, diversity, and equity. Candidates select their preferences from a range of offerings and are supported and monitored by practicum course directors. According to Barrett and associates, “This reflects the Faculty’s belief that recognition and engagement with community is essential to teaching” and the hope that initial experiences in community settings will foster “culturally relevant and responsive curriculum and pedagogical approaches to teach and support in increasingly diverse contexts.”

WLU’s teacher candidates also participate in a three-week mandatory alternative placement (AP) in non-traditional settings within and beyond Ontario; however, they may also opt to complete their APs in secondary school settings outside of the P/J/I divisions. Like other authors who
describe their alternative practica, the WLU authors also provide background of the AP as well as the intentional efforts to enhance teacher candidate learning and accountability.

Nipissing’s international practicum experience was originally created in 2003 to provide teacher candidates with opportunities to enhance their social conscience as global citizens. In the four-semester program, this international practicum was folded into Nipissing’s new required community service learning component—the community leadership experience (CLE). The CLE provides opportunities for teacher candidates to further explore service within local community organizations via a 60-hour residency or via the international practicum experience.

Trent teacher candidates are required to complete a 75-hour placement in an alternative setting. The authors provide a rationale for opportunities in various contexts, including alternative placements offered by the faculty. They also describe examples of alternative settings, including faculty initiatives, such as Teaching of The Fire and Learning from Our Elders, Camp fYrefly, international teaching, Sex Education: Getting Serious About Sex-Ed, Kawartha Food Share, and game-based learning, provide teacher candidates with experiences to enhance their learning in a wide range of contexts. Again, intentionality is evident in the descriptions and rationale provided by the authors as seen in the following excerpt describing the rationale for the Teaching of the Fire and Learning from our Elders alternative experience:

In the process of hosting social fires, teacher candidates develop leadership skills through modeling proper use of the Traditional Area and mentoring volunteer fire keepers. This experiential learning placement is grounded in Indigenous pedagogies of reflective action and writing. Teacher candidates connect their learning of Indigenous Knowledge and practices to their role as educators.

In most cases, teacher candidates are responsible for arranging their own alternative practicum placements. At the University of Ottawa, teacher candidates in their second year of the program create their own alternative experiences in a range of settings such as international placements, First Nations communities, or special education classes to name a few. As noted by the Ottawa and Queen’s authors, these alternative experiences provide teacher candidates with opportunities to participate in educational activities within non-traditional settings, allowing teacher candidates to explore more deeply areas that are of interest to them. Similarly, Western’s authors describe how teacher candidates work towards achieving their personal and self-identified learning goals as they complete two full-time alternative field experience (AFE) placements so that they could gain unique perspectives in community-based settings to enrich their overall learning. Western teacher candidates complete two full-time AFEs in local or international community settings related to service learning, non-traditional classroom settings, and working with educational leaders to name a few. The authors stress how perspectives gained in these alternative settings can provide a “unique, enriching or even life-changing experience” for teacher candidates and “broaden their experience and knowledge and support future teaching”.

Like the “regular” practicum, the duration of the alternative experiences varies widely and, depending on how the alternative experience is situated within the program, the duration is expressed in hours, days, or weeks. For example, such alternative experiences have been described
in the chapters as ranging from 20 hours to 210 hours or in other instances described in days or weeks.

Other programs have taken an optional approach to alternative placements. For example, after three successful practica, teacher candidates at Lakehead may apply to undertake an alternative placement experience in the final practicum block. Similarly, Redeemer provides teacher candidates with an option to complete an alternative practicum experience in the fourth semester of the program. Redeemer teacher candidates must first successfully complete the required 80 practicum days as per OCT accreditation requirements before applying for an alternative placement in semester four. If desired, teacher candidates could complete their final practicum in semester four in a regular school placement or they could let their Practicum Coordinator know of their interest in completing a placement in an alternative setting. Some examples of alternative practicum settings include independent faith-based schools or international settings such as New Zealand, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

COHESION EFFORTS

A final commonality noted in all of the chapters from ITE programs in Ontario is a continued effort to enhance cohesion throughout their respective programs and/or between the academic program and the practicum. As emphasized by Russell and Martin, as teacher educators we must find ways to help teacher candidates make explicit and appropriate connections between the coursework and the practicum experiences. From this perspective, we examined the chapters with an eye towards the intentional efforts ITE programs made in assisting teacher candidates make connections between their coursework and practicum experience and found many examples of these efforts to enhance cohesion. Although there is some overlap, we attempted to cluster the examples within three broad themes: (1) cohorts; (2) faculty supervision during practicum; and (3) targeted connections such as thematic organization of semesters and/or practica and dedicated courses and coursework.

Cohorts

In the 1980s and 1990s, teacher education programs were critiqued for their fragmentation of content, disconnection with the field, and lack of reflection (e.g., Holmes Group, 1986; Goodlad, 1991). Innovators, such as Fullan (1993) at OISE/UT, reformed programs to integrate coursework, build closer partnerships with schools, and increase reflection by teacher candidates. A key feature of reform at OISE/UT in the late 1990s was the establishment of regional and thematic cohorts, each partnering with a collection of schools aligned with their cohort (Kosnik & Beck, 2002). The cohort model continues to be a key element of OISE/UT field experience in both the MT and MA-CSE programs. The MT program groups teacher candidates in cohorts of 25-30 with each cohort regarded as a learning community. By taking much of their program together and with the support of cohort leaders, OISE/UT increases coherence and benefits from closer connections with partner schools. The 65-70 teacher candidates in the MA-CSE program are divided into two cohorts; as they split their days between schools and university classes, these teacher candidates have ample opportunity to connect field experiences with learning in their cohort and classes.

Teacher education at Brock University has been guided for decades by a Triple-C model of coursework, cohort and community. According to Brown and Kitchen, a cohort is “viewed as crucial to building community among teacher candidates, linking theory to practice, and
connecting the university to community partners.” Cohort leaders have played an important role as a bridge between the university and the field. Prior to the enhanced program, the bridge took the form of a cohort course designed to link program themes to practicum experiences. In the enhanced program, the connection has been tightened with the development of more substantive content in first year cohort courses, namely Teaching in the Ontario Context in P/J/I and Professionalism, Law and Principles of Teaching in I/S, led by instructors who also serve as practicum supervisors during placements in the community. The cohort leaders remain with their teacher candidates in the second-year Professional Collaborative Communities seminar and support them while in practicum placements. This model effectively connects program elements and reduces fragmentation.

York University, like the University of Toronto, relies on cohorts to build community and diversify its programming. As Barrett and colleagues write, York “continues to do practicum with six school boards only, emphasizing building and maintaining relationships in partner schools” and “engages practicum facilitators who are active and visible in schools to provide support to both mentor teachers and teacher candidates” in select cohort schools. Practicum facilitators support teacher candidates and their mentors and work closely with school liaisons to foster learning conversations with school partners. In addition to conventional cohorts, York has also further diversified through the development of six cohorts with specific concentration—French, Technological Education, Catholic, Jewish Teacher, Early Childhood, and Indigenous—which are detailed in the chapter.

The Ottawa authors also provide examples of the deliberate efforts made to create professional learning communities within the following five themed cohorts within their ITE program: Comprehensive School Health; Second Language Education; Imagination, Creativity and Innovation; Urban Education Community; and Global Perspectives in Education. Each cohort community provides a unique focus including professional learning opportunities specific to the theme. The following excerpt from the Ottawa chapter highlights the role of cohorts in the inquiry process:

Through engaging in cycles of inquiry, cohort members are invited to consider and explore in-depth issues arising from practice beyond the scope of their on-campus courses. Thus, participating in cohort initiatives, assisting in the development and organization of workshops, and engaging in school-based cycles of inquiry encourages a more nuanced understanding of teaching practices, supports the exploration of relationships between information and experiences, and enhances peer support.

Tyndale University employs the term cohort to identify its graduating class of up to 66 teacher candidates, who are divided further into P/J and J/I groupings. Birch and Nelson write that Tyndale’s “program design includes the intentional development of cohort community” collectively and within streams from initial meetings of the school community and through the “collaborative exercise of establishing Collective Commitments.” Tyndale recognizes that while small size engenders familiarity, building cohorts into positive learning communities requires effort. The explicit nature of their community building is reflected in “opportunities for developing collegial relationships,” such as “two ‘Thank You’ rocks that travel among the cohort as a means for them to express appreciation to one another, as well as the practice of attending chapel services together.”
Niagara University also continued its cohort model during the 2015 transition to the four-semester ITE model, stressing the importance of creating smaller collaborative communities while teacher candidates progressed through the program. Such smaller collaborative communities are also offered via more specialized groupings based on program concentration such as the Aboriginal Teacher Education, Artist in Community Education, and Outdoor & Experiential Education programs offered at Queen’s University.

The importance and support of a learning community is emphasized even at other institutions where full cohort models may not exist, yet these programs make deliberate attempts to organize teacher candidates into clusters or smaller cohorts for practicum support. The University of Windsor, for example, assigns teacher candidates to advisory groups to discuss issues related to transitioning to practice in schools. These advisory groups are also connected to alternative field experiences, including three formats outlined in detail in Windsor’s chapter. Ontario Tech University also organizes smaller cohorts within the respective P/J and I/S divisions through the three Foundations of Teaching and Learning courses that take place in the first, second, and fourth semesters. Each cohort is taught by the same instructor for each of the Foundations I, II, and III courses in an effort to create smaller safe learning communities within the larger teacher candidate population. In the first year of the program, Lakehead University situates the teacher candidates locally, allowing a faculty advisor who is assigned to a student cohort to supervise and work with the smaller group of teacher candidates.

WLU also provides opportunities for smaller cohort groupings within the practicum context. The authors refer to their conceptual framework where community and reflective practice feature prominently and emphasize the importance of creating reflective opportunities within learning communities for teacher candidate identity development (Izadinia, 2013). The Laurier Professional Placement (LPP) provides opportunities for teacher candidates to “meet in small seminar groups on a regular basis with their field supervisors to reflect on their practice and construct professional knowledge as a community of learners”.

As seen in several examples within this section, the faculty supervisor plays a critical role within some of the cohort models in creating a smaller learning community and providing a space for support and mentorship. We now examine this role more deeply as another way in which ITE programs have made efforts to enhance cohesion within the programs via the faculty supervisor.

Role of Faculty Supervisor

A key player in carrying out the efforts to enhance cohesion is the university representative who provides supervision of the teacher candidate while in practicum as the faculty supervisor. As noted in the previous chapter, the faculty supervisor has been referred to in the literature and in the chapters as the faculty advisor, university supervisor, university liaison, field supervisor, and other derivatives of this role. In many of the chapters, the rationale for how the role is organized and implemented reflects the intentional efforts made by ITE programs to enhance cohesion between the course and practicum work via the role of the faculty supervisor. While staff generally make field experience placements, professional educators typically help prepare teacher candidates for their placements and offer support to them and their associate teachers. The support can range from advising to supervision and evaluation. Faculty supervision varies widely across initial teacher

education programs in Ontario. In broad terms, there are three general types of supervisors—
instructors, faculty advisors, and part-time consultants.

At one end of the continuum are faculty advisors who only provide support. At OISE/UT, associate teachers are solely responsible for grading the teacher candidates on their performance. Associate teachers, who mentor teacher candidates in all aspects of their instruction, are assisted by faculty advisors who visit from OISE on two or more occasions to observe and offer feedback and advice. In cases where teacher candidates are at risk of failure, a practicum coordinator intervenes to assist the teacher candidate, associate teacher, and faculty advisor with devising a plan to help the teacher candidate improve their practice.

Several other ITE programs follow a similar model where the university supervisor role is filled by retired school administrators or teachers, serving as a support to the associate teacher and teacher candidate, and providing formative assessment. The Laurentian authors describe the supervisor’s role as being “able to help students when they need to navigate the education system; they are the bridge between the school and the ÉSÉ”.

At the other extreme, faculty supervisors are actively engaged in supporting and assessing practica. For example, at Redeemer University, full-time faculty conduct field supervision as a means of making deliberate connections to the academic program. Laurentian’s full-time faculty also have the option to supervise teacher candidates in the field as part of their course load but, as noted by the authors, other commitments related to research and service typically prevent full-time faculty from serving as university supervisors in the field.

We also noted deliberate efforts by ITE programs to enhance connections between teacher candidates and their faculty supervisors. For example, Brock’s faculty advisors supervise and teach the same cohort of students throughout the duration of the four-semesters. Other variations of this model include dedicated series of courses, seminars, or organized meetings where instructors who also serve as supervisors in the field meet regularly with their group of supervisees. WLU’s teacher candidates “meet in small seminar groups on a regular basis with their field supervisors to reflect on their practice and construct professional knowledge as a community of learners”.

The least common is supervision by faculty or sessional instructors. Redeemer University decided that having “full-time faculty also do field supervision allows this to occur in a meaningful way across a variety of content areas” (Teeuwsen, Belcher & Lorerts). This choice enables instructors to make a “deliberate connection for practicum to be discussed across our learning content within curriculum delivery”. This model, made possible by the small size of the program, reinforces the integration of theory and practice in program design. Similarly, in the French language teacher education program at Laurentian University, each faculty member supervises 10 to 20 teacher candidates, with the remainder overseen by ‘placement consultants’.

More common is the faculty advisor model in which practicum support is provided by sessional personnel who are also connected to a practicum-related seminar or course. This supervision model is associated with most cohort-based programs. As seen in the Appendix, other programs also connect their faculty supervisor to a practicum course or seminar, and this will be described in the subsequent section. For example, at Lakehead University, in addition to faculty advisor for each
cohort, there is also a faculty liaison who supports teacher candidates and associate teachers within a family of schools. Socha and colleagues write:

The faculty liaison role originated at the Thunder Bay campus, and provides triage support to first-year students. The role supports relationship-building between faculty and school boards, school communities and associate teachers, and fosters incidental professional development on mentorship for associate teachers amid ongoing fiscal restraints. Faculty liaisons visit assigned schools weekly, mentoring and problem solving with associate teachers and students, observing lessons, and reporting on student progress to faculty advisors, and professional experience coordinators. The faculty liaison role complements the faculty advisor role.

The third type is supervision by part-time consultants. Laurentian University uses the term consultant for most of its English-language supervision and part of its French. These supervisors are typically retired educators with curricular and/or administrative expertise who are available to work part-time either piecemeal or with a cluster of teacher candidates. This model is especially helpful when placements take place far from the host university site, as is the case with Laurentian, Lakehead, and Nipissing universities. While this model can pose challenges in connecting theory with practice, it does ensure that qualified educators are readily available and allows instructors to teach more sections and, hopefully, make connections across courses. This is also the case at Tyndale, where most supervision is conducted by retired principals, many of whom offer guest lecture or facilitate ‘lunch ‘n learn’ sessions. By leaving supervision to these people, Tyndale instructors are able to integrate practicum experiences across courses. Similarly, larger universities can also better deploy instructors by not engaging them in supervision. The opportunity cost, as Russell and Martin state, is diminishment of “craft knowledge that is learned from experience when acquiring new propositional knowledge with a view of adjusting practice accordingly.”

**Targeted Connections**

Targeted connections refer to intentional efforts made by ITE programs in assisting teacher candidates with making connections between their coursework and practicum experiences that may not have been captured in the above examples. Some of these connections are made through dedicated courses, seminars, or assignments directly connected to the practicum, while other connections are made through thematic organization of semesters or practica.

**Thematic Organization**

Several chapters in this volume describe the intentional efforts ITE programs have made to enhance cohesion using organizational frameworks such as overarching conceptual frameworks, guiding visions, and other organizational structures to cluster together topics and activities by themes informed by teacher education literature. For example, the Laurentian and Brock programs have assigned themes to semesters or practicum experiences to enhance connections between coursework and practicum. Laurentian’s four foci *(observation et co-enseignement, planification, gestion, évaluation)* provide a structure for guiding the teacher candidates’ observations and activities:

> During the first placement, students are encouraged to focus on observing the multiple dimensions of the classroom, in particular how the host teacher plans and delivers the
learning material. There is an expectation that the student will be co-planning and co-teaching during this time, but no expectation of the student teaching without the guidance of the associate teacher. The second placement places more emphasis on the planning of the lessons that the student then executes. During the third placement, the focus is placed on classroom management. This permits the student to observe and later apply a variety of strategies in order to ensure the best possible learning environment for all. The last placement puts a focus on evaluation. The student can see the different approaches to formative and summative evaluations, and then later on apply these skills in front of the classroom. The expectation is to have the student offer around 150 minutes of instruction per day during the last three weeks of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th placements.

Similarly, each of Brock’s four semesters in the P/J program is guided by a theme that is integrated throughout the semester’s program, including practicum, and framed around their Triple C Model (coursework, cohort, community). For example, Brock’s first semester is themed The Beginning Teacher – Understanding Teaching Practice, and the in-school practice is organized (i.e., structured experience days) to help teacher candidates connect their in-course experiences with in-school practice alongside their associate teachers.

**Dedicated Courses and/or Coursework**

In “Rethinking the Role of the Practicum in the Enhanced Ontario Teacher Education Program: A Guide to the Way Forward” in this volume, Russell and Martin articulate many of the challenges of making meaningful connections between the university program and practicum experiences in schools. Bridging this gap between “theory” and “practice” is a challenge even for programs identified as exemplary (e.g., Darling-Hammond & Oakes). All the chapters on individual teacher programs, as well as the chapters on Indigenous and technological education, refer to the importance of the theory/practice relationship, and many articulate efforts to bridge this gap. Below, we highlight examples of how ITE programs have attempted to do this through dedicated courses or coursework directly connected to the practicum.

Tyndale’s *Professional Seminar*, scheduled after the conclusion of each practicum placement, was created to give teacher candidates opportunities to discuss, as a community, their developing understanding of who they are as educators. Windsor’s mandatory *Teaching Practice* course includes both a practicum and course component where every teacher candidate is part of an Advisory Group and assigned a Faculty Advisor. The Advisory Group meets regularly as a seminar class “to prepare for and reflect on field placements specifically and share ideas and experiences about teaching and learning praxis, more generally.” Queen’s also includes a *Professional Studies* course that directly connects the program to practicum, whereby the course instructor also serves as the university supervisor while teacher candidates are in the practica. Ontario Tech also follows a similar model with the three *Foundations of Teaching and Learning* courses. The three courses were not only created to deliberately create smaller cohorts but to also enhance the connections between theory and practice. The first part of each *Foundations* class is taught by a full-time instructor, allowing the teacher candidates to experience the broad applicability of weekly topics across all divisions. The latter half of each class is then organized into smaller cohorts by program division and geography and led by part-time instructors who also supervise their teacher candidates during the practicum.
Still other programs offer derivations of these connected courses. Trent authors describe explicit efforts to bridge coursework and authentic experiences in their Literacy Tutoring program. All teacher candidates complete the *Supporting Literacy and Learners with Special Needs* course that address topics related to the “general knowledge of diverse learning abilities, differentiation, and cross-disciplinary literacy strategies” in the first year of the program. The course is connected to a literacy tutoring placement that requires teacher candidates to spend the equivalent of 10 days meeting with two students at local schools for individual tutoring experiences. Another example that embodies the targeted connections we noted across chapters is Lakehead’s Professional Program Onsite Delivery (PPOD), an initiative for all first-year P/J teacher candidates, deliberately designed to tighten coherence across course and field work. During the first two semesters of the program, P/J teacher candidates take their university courses within a local elementary school setting one day each week. The coherence is described by the Lakehead authors:

Students learn about the theories, approaches, tools, and strategies associated with numeracy/literacy education, and then practice implementing these with their colleagues, while receiving immediate, actionable faculty advisor and mentor teacher feedback. Scaffolding of PPOD experiences supports ongoing learning and development of teaching, learning, relational and reflective, classroom management, assessment, developmental, and other theories and practices in real time contexts.

Another example of intentional efforts to help teacher candidates make connections between coursework and practicum experiences within an alternative setting is drawn from the Queen’s chapter. Queen’s offers teacher candidates a two-course combination of a theoretical Educational Studies (EDST) course and a practice-oriented Focus (FOCI) course coupled with the mandatory alternative practicum experience to form a concentration. Examples of FOCI courses include: *Educators Abroad, Exceptional Children, At-Risk Youth, Leadership in Education, Assessment and Evaluation*, and *Environmental Education*. While the EDST course “focuses more on the relevant theory and research in the area”, the FOCI courses allow opportunities for teacher candidates to “explore practice-based applications of professional knowledge developed in the EDST course. Teacher candidates arrange an alternative practicum placement related to their concentration”.

The practicum model for the Master of Arts: Child Study in Education at the University of Toronto further illustrates a model that reflects deliberate efforts to enhance connections between course and practicum work. It involves half-day splits with practicum experience in the morning and the academic program in the afternoon. This approach, which is used in a number of exemplary programs (e.g., Bank Street College in Darling-Hammond and Oakes, 2019), has the advantages of connecting theory to practice on a daily basis and developing a strong relationship with associate teachers and students over time. Also, because a small and distinguished program can carefully select its associate teachers, there is greater consistency between the pedagogical messaging in the two sites. While such an approach is not possible at a large scale, the model offers insight into what greater integration between academic and school-based learning about practice can offer teacher preparation.

Other examples of targeted connections are seen in some of the assigned work teacher candidates complete while in practicum. Brock’s initiative, the series of “structured experience” days
described earlier in this chapter, serves as an example of how programs might help teacher candidates pay particular attention to areas that they may not have intentionally considered without the prompting or “structured” format. Structuring the early observation days with guided activities to consider while in the field may help teacher candidates “unpack their beliefs and reflect critically” (see Brock chapter) in their own practice. Ontario Tech teacher candidates must also complete targeted, deliberate, and intentional observations while in the field to focus their observations on various elements of the class and school community in order to intentionally focus their attention on areas that they may not have considered without faculty-driven prompts. During their weekly time with their PDS partners, WLU teacher candidates complete connected assignments, such as running records or targeted observations specific to topics provided by the faculty, which are later debriefed with their associate teachers and instructors.

Making the practicum a seamless component of meaningful teacher education is daunting, particularly with financial constraints, centralized placements, and courses delivered largely by part-time instructors. Authors from Western University summarize challenges that many ITE programs in Ontario have faced:

Despite consistent calls for improved cohesion in ITE (Darling-Hammond, 2006), the retraction of university funding led to further difficult decisions that eroded continuity and cohesion across the program as we engage with our educational partners with whom we collaborate to fulfill the practical experiences required.

Nonetheless, as Kosnik, Beck and Goodwin (2016) note, Canadian teacher educators are doing well and motivated to do even better. This chapter has provided examples of how ITE programs have implemented deliberate approaches and innovations to help make practicum experiences more educative; however, these intentional approaches to ITE are not always possible due to organizational or fiscal constraints such as those seen in Ontario’s ITE programs.

CONCLUSIONS AND MOVING FORWARD

An overarching theme we addressed in this chapter and emphasized in the teacher education literature is the need to connect theory to practice in schools. While the tension between theory and practice exists in all facets of teacher education, it is particularly evident in field experiences. Cochran-Smith and Villegas (2016) frame the field experience problem as “one of dissonance between universities and schools regarding educational philosophies and goals, with views of learning often generating conflict” (p. 481). The most popular approach to bridging this gap has been increasing field experience days, as occurred in Ontario with mandated practicum days doubling. Social constructivist teacher educators committed to student-centred approaches are positioned as in conflict with “transmission views of instruction” (p. 481) in schools regarding teacher preparation. Innovative teacher educators, more “concerned with the quality of field experiences, particularly practicum,” suggest that more time in schools is not sufficient. They advocate for “a fundamental rethinking of the student teaching experience to make it more educative” (p. 481). We largely agree with this critique; however, rethinking the “student teaching experience” is a complex undertaking that involves many moving parts, including the collaboration of stakeholders working within several systems.
When teacher education shifted from normal schools and teachers’ colleges to universities, the Royal Commission on Learning in Ontario (1995) and other stakeholders feared that universities “hold closely to the notion of university autonomy and, in the opinion of many observers, do only what they please,” (v. 3, p. 13). Gannon (2005) attributed this tension to the struggle for control of professionalization between faculties of education, which focus on the “relationship between scientific research and practice” (p. 110) and teacher unions, which focus on teacher autonomy and working conditions. While universities were successful in wresting control, teacher education was “largely seen as an irrelevant or hopeless player in educational reform” and a place where “theory and research appear more important than practice” (p. 90). The desire among stakeholders for an Ontario Council for Teacher Education “to increase the sense of professional control of teacher education, and to do so in a collaborative way” (Fullan, Connelly & Watson, 1989, p. 74) led the Royal Commission to recommend the establishment of the Ontario College of Teachers, which, among other duties, accredits teacher education programs. While the College provides oversight, universities remain vigilant in defending their autonomy.

This autonomy has led to much program innovation (Kosnik, Beck & Goodwin, 2016), but at the expense of collective commitment to bridging the gap in understanding between universities and other stakeholders. Stakeholders graciously continue to accept thousands of teacher candidates into classrooms and schools, but we as faculties of education should be engaging them in deep and respectful dialogue with teacher educators in order to enhance field experience outcomes. While teacher educators often try to build partnerships, these efforts are largely thwarted by structural impediments. Increasingly, placements are centrally assigned by school district staff, even though research demonstrates the importance of appropriate matches and school partnerships. Also, federations eager to protect their members from administrative pressure restrict our contact with principals and teachers. Fullan, Connelly, and Watson (1989) challenged faculties of education to accept responsibility and meet the challenge for “not only the viability of teacher education institutions but the long-term health of our teachers and our schools” (p. 100). Thirty years later, echoing that challenge, we urge deans of education and leading scholars to engage school districts and federations in dialogue that might lead to increased local collaboration and practicum placements that better serve all stakeholders. We realize this is happening in various parts of the province; however, with the continued constraints and challenges ITE programs have experienced these past several years, achieving the desired collaboration and coherence amongst the many moving parts in practicum becomes even more difficult to achieve and maintain. As teacher educators, however, we might also consider rethinking our own notions of the practicum within our own courses and work with teacher candidates.

In their chapter in this volume, our colleagues Russell and Martin ask teacher educators to:

reject the deep-seated assumption that the individual student alone can and will generate explicit and appropriate connections between book knowledge and craft knowledge, between courses and practicum experiences, and between the authorities of reason and position and the authority of experience.
They suggest that all teacher educators actively integrate practicum within their respective courses and help teacher candidates interpret their practicum experiences and new-found perspectives.

Developing knowledge-in-action is tacit rather than explicit and requires those learning to teach to recognize the unfamiliar authority that can only be gained through experience. Making that authority more familiar requires what we are calling *metacognitive moves* in the analysis of experience. (Russell & Martin)

The vision articulated by Russell and Martin may seem like an unrealizable Platonic ideal at the moment, but aspiring to achieve it will make our teacher education better.

Shawn Bullock (2017), a protégé of Tom Russell, offered a modest strategy to help move in this direction as a teacher educator. He acknowledged the “presence of the unseen cooperating teacher” (p. 181) in his ITE curriculum methods courses. He “was particularly struck by the ways in which the lived experiences of teacher candidates were fraught with conflicting messages from cooperating teachers, peers, and teacher educators” (p. 181). By listening to teacher candidates and recognizing the power of practicum learning, Bullock made explicit efforts to reflect upon and change his own teaching practice in response to his students’ practicum experiences. Drawing from physics, Bullock compared his work as a teacher educator to the concept of action-at-a-distance, which calls attention to the particles in matter that can still influence one another even if they are not touching: “Given the importance of the practicum for teacher candidates; I ignore – even tacitly – action-at-at-distance forces such as the relationship with cooperating teachers at my own peril” (p. 190).

The intentionality to enhance practicum learning opportunities described in the chapters is not limited to broader program or practicum elements. By acknowledging the power of practicum learning and the “action-at-a-distance” forces emanating from the practicum in our own work as teacher educators, we may better help the teacher candidates in our classrooms navigate their learning. As teacher educators, we simply cannot ignore the power of practicum.

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Brown, H. & Kitchen, J. “Continuity and Change: Teacher Education at Brock University” (Chapter 6).

REFERENCES


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<th>Additional Explanatory Notes Related to Practicum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brock University</td>
<td>105 days</td>
<td>Semester 1: Weekly in school SE Days (structured experience days mid-Sept. to mid-Dec. followed by 2-week Internship) Semester 2: 5 weeks Semester 3: 6 weeks Semester 4: 6-weeks</td>
<td>Chapter mentions optional “alternative approved placements, such as museums and outdoor education sites.”</td>
<td>Faculty advisor typically supervises and teaches the same cohort of students for the duration of the professional program</td>
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<td>Lakehead University</td>
<td>80 to 105 days</td>
<td>Semester 1: 5 once-weekly days in schools (begins October), followed by 5-week block Semester 2: 5 once-weekly days in schools (begins February) followed by five-week block Semester 3: 5 weeks Semester 4: 5 weeks (or Alternative Placement)</td>
<td>After 3 successful practica (80 days), TCs may apply for an Alternative Placement experience during the final practicum block.</td>
<td>Faculty advisor – assigned to a student cohort in year 1 (in locally-situated settings); supervises individual students Faculty liaison— assigned to a family of schools, and supports the students and associate teachers within group of schools; complements faculty advisor role</td>
<td>Localization of the practicum is designed to afford easier access for students and associate teachers to in-field support from faculty (advisors and liaisons). In Year 2, assuming a student has successfully completed their two first-year practicum experiences, students choose from a range of opportunities for practicum three and four, selecting from over 50 partner boards located across Ontario, in urban, rural, and/or remote settings.</td>
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<td>Université Laurentienne</td>
<td>ÉSÉ 100 days</td>
<td>ÉSÉ 85 to 87 days in SOE program</td>
<td>No alternative experience</td>
<td>Practicum supervisor – full-time faculty have the opportunity to supervise (as part of workload); usually responsible for 10 – 20 students.</td>
<td>Many placement consultants have been hired throughout the province to also supervise (e.g., retired principals, vice-principals)</td>
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<td>Semesters 1, 2, 3 &amp; 4: 5-week placement block in each term</td>
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<td>SOE – Initial Practicum in May (4 to 5 weeks)</td>
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<td>Professional Year 1: Nov-Dec (6 weeks)</td>
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<td>Professional Year 2: March-April (6 weeks)</td>
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<td>Niagara University</td>
<td>100 days + 150 hours</td>
<td>Semester 1: Pre-Practica Placement: IMPACT (75 hrs. min., involving both classroom and community service; e.g., classroom assistant, coaching, tutoring, helping with special projects)</td>
<td>During Semesters 1 &amp; 2, alternative experiences are possible; e.g., in arts-based community centers, local museum educational centers, and international school placements (e.g., Dominican Republic).</td>
<td>Coordinator of Field Experiences oversees the Practicum Field Supervisors, including 2 full-time. Supervisors and up to a dozen part-time Practicum Field Supervisors.</td>
<td>The community service component of IMPACT is organized by each Teacher Candidate and is an opportunity to continue to volunteer with a community organization or begin a new relationship within a service community. Opportunities might include volunteering at a local school, coaching a sport, helping at a food bank, and running after-school programs.</td>
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<td>Semester 2: Pre-Practica Placement: Teaching Assistantship (75 hrs. min., classroom placement, including one full week in the classroom with an OCT-certified teacher).</td>
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<td>Niagara University</td>
<td>95 days (19 weeks)</td>
<td>Semester 1: 4-week practicum          Semester 2: 4-week practicum          Semester 3: 5-week practicum          Semester 4: 6-week practicum (+ 3-week CLE)</td>
<td>Community Leadership Experience (or CLE) was added to the program; TCs complete a 60-hour residency in an organization unrelated to the public school system. The international teaching experience is now considered community service and is folded into this category.</td>
<td>Contract field advisors (no longer full-time faculty)</td>
<td>During the second term, candidates return to the classroom in which they were teaching in the first term.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Institution¹</th>
<th>Duration²</th>
<th>Semesters Offered</th>
<th>Alternative Experiences</th>
<th>University Supervision³</th>
<th>Additional Explanatory Notes Related to Practicum</th>
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<tr>
<td>OISE/University of Toronto – MT Program</td>
<td>80 days (16 weeks)</td>
<td>Year 1 Semester 1 (Fall): 4-week practicum Year 1 Semester 2 (Winter): 4-week practicum Year 2 Semester 1 (Fall): 4-week practicum Year 2 Semester 2 (Winter): 4-week practicum</td>
<td>A limited number of placements are sometimes available at an Indigenous partner school in northern Ontario.</td>
<td>Faculty advisors supervise teacher candidates and conduct school visits. FAs are drawn from full-time faculty members, sessional instructors, and outside educational consultants (e.g., retired principals, vice-principals). Second year teacher candidates may opt for virtual FA supervision in their second practicum.</td>
<td>In coming years, they plan to replace the two four-week practica in second year with a single eight-week block placed at the very end of the program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OISE/University of Toronto – MA-CSE Program</td>
<td>36 weeks x ½ days + 13 weeks</td>
<td>Year 1: 3 x 12-week blocks Year 2: 13-week internship for an entire semester</td>
<td>No alternative options but program shares space with Dr. Eric Jackman Laboratory School and all teachers are expected to serve as associate teachers; teacher candidates become part of entire school community</td>
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<td>In placements in the morning; academic courses in the afternoon. In Year 2, one semester is devoted to 13-week internship and the other semester is academic course work</td>
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<td>Institution1</td>
<td>Duration2</td>
<td>Semesters Offered</td>
<td>Alternative Experiences</td>
<td>University Supervision3</td>
<td>Additional Explanatory Notes Related to Practicum</td>
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<td>Ontario Tech University (University of Ontario Institute of Technology)</td>
<td>86-92 days</td>
<td>Semester 1: 27 – 30 days (includes 5 – 7 observation days interspersed throughout the semester on Fridays) Semester 2: 30+ days (includes observation days interspersed throughout the semester on Fridays) Semester 4: 30+ days (includes observation days on Fridays throughout semester and first week of school after Labour Day)</td>
<td>20-hour mandatory internship experience as part of the Inquiry and Internship Course for I/S teacher candidates</td>
<td>University Liaison (who also serves as the Foundations of Teaching and Learning series of courses—I, II, and III) who supervises and teaches the same cohort of teacher candidates</td>
<td>Practicum connected to Foundations of Teaching and Learning series of courses (Foundations + practicum not offered in Semester 3, which is a fully online spring/summer semester)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queen’s University</td>
<td>90 days</td>
<td>Summer 1: 3 weeks Fall: 7 weeks Winter: 4 weeks Summer 2: 4 weeks</td>
<td>Mandatory 3-week alternative practicum that takes place in Winter semester; teacher candidates explore education outside of traditional K-12 classroom settings; associated with their concentration or program track.</td>
<td>Faculty Liaison is responsible for 18-20 teacher candidates. Faculty Liaisons teach a course that meets weekly throughout the year with the same cohort of teacher candidates. Faculty Liaisons also visit these teacher candidates in the schools. Each teacher candidate is seen in classroom settings at least once in the fall and once in the winter.</td>
<td>Teacher candidates are placed in regular practicum in associate schools, and typically complete their fall, winter, and summer 2 placements in the same school. The 15 alternative practicum days are in addition to the 90 regular practicum days.</td>
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<td>Semesters Offered</td>
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<td>Redeemer University</td>
<td>110 days</td>
<td>Semester 1: 4 weeks</td>
<td>TCs have the option to apply for alternative practicum experience after semester 3 if they successfully meet the 80-day OCT practicum requirement.</td>
<td>Practicum Supervisor (done by full-time faculty) / Faculty associates. Also hire other faculty associates to help with on-site visits to support candidates in the field.</td>
<td>Alternative practicum can occur in independent faith-based elementary schools for semester 4; other possibilities that have taken place in semester 4 are overseas placements. For example, candidates have had placements in schools in New Zealand, Honduras, and Nicaragua.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trent University</td>
<td>90+ days</td>
<td>Semester 1: 4 weeks + 10 days (equivalent) of one-on-one tutoring in the Supporting Literacy and Learners with Special Needs program. Semester 2: 5 weeks Semester 3: 4 weeks + first week of school after Labour Day Semester 4: 5 weeks</td>
<td>Mandatory 15 days of placement in a school or 75 hours in a non-school setting. These placements take place locally, nationally, or internationally.</td>
<td>Faculty advisor supervises and teaches a cohort of about 15 Teacher Candidates. These groups change between year 1 and year 2 of the program. Full-time faculty have the opportunity to act as faculty advisors as part of their workload.</td>
<td>In the first year of the program, all teacher candidates must complete the course Supporting Literacy and Learners with Special Needs, and its accompanying literacy tutoring placement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tyndale University</td>
<td>110 days</td>
<td>Semester 1: 30 days</td>
<td>A dedicated Faculty Advisor is assigned to supervise a teacher candidate for all three of their practicum placements, for the duration of the program (Each FA supervises 5-10 TCs)</td>
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<td>Program length is 16 months, with teacher candidates beginning in August, and if the program is followed as planned, completing the program the following November.</td>
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<td>Institution</td>
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<td>University of Ottawa</td>
<td>A minimum of 90 days</td>
<td>Year 1: a minimum of 45 days Year 1: a minimum of 45 days</td>
<td>Community engagement is a strong component of the program as it links to the “communities of inquiry” conceptual framework. In Year 1, candidates are encouraged to be involved in their practicum school communities and to participate in Community Service Learning (CSL). In Year 2, candidates participate in a two-week (70-80 hours) Alternative Experiential Learning (AEL) opportunity. This can be school or community based.</td>
<td>Each year a dedicated Faculty Supervisor is assigned to supervise practicum. This professor also teaches the professional inquiry course. Placements occur only in the Ottawa/Carleton area with their 4 partner boards of education.</td>
<td>Practicum placements are closely related to their Community Service Learning (CSL) activities and overseen by the professor responsible for PED 3150 Becoming a Teacher through Inquiry in Practice in Year One and PED 3151 Enacting Collaborative Inquiry in Professional Practice in Year Two.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western University</td>
<td>95-100 days</td>
<td>Four practicum placements, two in each year: Year 1: Fall - 4 weeks Spring - 4 weeks Year 2: Fall - 6 weeks Spring - 5 weeks</td>
<td>Alternative Field Experiences (AFE) where candidates are encouraged to explore an area of education that’s new to them (e.g., different curriculum, grade, subject, special education, community supports, etc.) Practicum coordinator available during all practicum blocks to supervise. Practicum consultants on call during all practicum blocks to advise in areas of concern. In year 2, practicum consultants visit once for general</td>
<td>Practicum coordinator available during all practicum blocks to supervise. Practicum consultants on call during all practicum blocks to advise in areas of concern. In year 2, practicum consultants visit once for general</td>
<td>All candidates are also part of a Master Teacher Mentor group (small groups of no more than 12 candidates, led by a master teacher mentor) that meets throughout the two years of the program. MTMs are available for practicum support and focus on practicum-related matters when they meet.</td>
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| Western University (continued) | 94 days | Semester 1: 24 days  
Semester 2: 23 days  
Semester 3: 24 days  
Semester 4: 23 days  
In all semesters: following 9 weeks of classes, TCs complete practicum blocks | Mandatory 210 hours total, the equivalent of two 18-hour courses | observation and preparation of a report. | Some variation depending on concentration (e.g., TCs in L.E.A.D. program spend Fridays in their schools) |
| University of Windsor | 181 days | Semesters 1 to 4: 1 to 2 days per week during course time followed by blocks  
Year 1: two block practicum placements (5 weeks in total)  
Year 2: two block practicum placements in the fall term; courses in the first five weeks of the winter term and then engage in ten-week | Service-learning learning experiences locally and internationally; (e.g., SWU China for about three months; other uncommon experiences locally and internationally. | Faculty Advisor (FA) | |
| Wilfrid Laurier University | 181 days | Semesters 1 to 4: 1 to 2 days per week during course time followed by blocks  
Year 1: two block practicum placements (5 weeks in total)  
Year 2: two block practicum placements in the fall term; courses in the first five weeks of the winter term and then engage in ten-week | Mandatory 15-day alternative placement (generally completed at end of Year 1) | All practicum placements, including the LPP, are supervised both by associate teachers and field supervisors who are part-time faculty members. A majority of the field supervisors employed by the Faculty of Education were formerly school principals or consultants with local | PDS model working with geographically close school board partners (originally 4 boards, since increased to 8). TECs are situated in the same school for the entire first year. In the second year of the program, each TEC changes to a second school, intentionally varied by demographics, unique programs, or other features, to provide a broader perspective on the continuum of schools in the province. |
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<th>Institution 1</th>
<th>Duration 2</th>
<th>Semesters Offered</th>
<th>Alternative Experiences</th>
<th>University Supervision 3</th>
<th>Additional Explanatory Notes Related to Practicum</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wilfrid Laurier University (continued)</td>
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<td>Laurier Professional Placement</td>
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<tr>
<td>York University</td>
<td>minimum of 80 days</td>
<td>Semesters 1 and 2: 1 day a week September – first week in April, followed by 2-weeks of culminating practicum days in April Semester 3: 2 days a week followed by a 2-week practicum block Semester 4: 6-week practicum block</td>
<td>Semesters 1 and 2: teacher candidates are required to participate with a community organization or education-related institution in a community practicum experience (once a week).</td>
<td>Practicum Facilitator - supports teacher candidates and their mentor teachers in local schools. Site Coordinator - school staff member who is appointed to support the placements of all assigned candidates at the school and act as the liaison between the school and the Practicum Facilitator/Faculty of Education.</td>
<td>The community practicum experience reflects the Faculty’s belief that recognition and engagement with the community is essential to teaching. During their first two terms in the program, teacher candidates are required to participate with a community organization or education-related institution in a community practicum experience (once a week), which is designed to broaden the importance of education and pedagogy beyond the traditional locus of the school and into other contexts.</td>
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1 Practicum days within conventional P/J/I division programs (i.e., non-specialty programs)
2 Approximate – depending on the academic year, the number may vary slightly; includes individual days in schools and practicum blocks; alternative practica are not included in this number
3 Refers to the individual(s) from the university who supervise(s) the teacher candidates during the practicum (i.e., the individuals who supervise, the name designated to the role, any other relevant information related to the role)
CHAPTER 5

PRACTICUM IN ONTARIO’S TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS: IDENTIFYING PRACTICES THAT ENHANCE DEEPER LEARNING

Tom Russell and Andrea K. Martin

Queen’s University

This chapter focuses on the role of practicum experiences and the relationship of those experiences to education courses in Ontario’s teacher education programs. The enhanced Ontario program is longer but it is not obviously better; there are many more courses and there is more practicum time, but there is little or no attention to longstanding issues, including the disconnects between “theory” and “practice.” Our central argument is that improvements are needed and making those improvements requires us to first examine and modify our assumptions about what and how teacher candidates learn from practicum experiences. Underlying almost all teacher education programs is the assumption that learning to teach begins with learning theory and then putting it into practice. Our goal is first to examine a range of arguments and cases of learning from experience that challenge that pervasive and longstanding assumption and then to suggest strategies for improving programs by moving beyond that assumption.

OUTLINE OF THE ARGUMENT

Much of our argument involves a reinterpretation of what many teacher educators have been saying over several decades; the novelty resides in the organization and interpretation. We connect a range of literature with insights from our own teaching and research experiences to indicate ways in which the contribution of the practicum to the enhanced program in Ontario could and should be improved. In this chapter we suggest a variety of ways for taking action to resolve the challenges inherent in this longstanding issue. Then we argue that learning from experience develops craft knowledge, knowledge that is partly tacit and often difficult to recognize and validate. For decades, many researchers in teacher education have pointed to the importance and value of craft knowledge learned from experience, yet little has changed.

THE CONTEXT: ONTARIO’S “ENHANCED” TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

In the Ontario College of Teachers’ (n.d.) brief account of the enhanced teacher education program (which began in September 2015) for those preparing to teach, the word practicum appears only once, in the context of doubling the number of required days (from 40 to 80, with no reference to the structure of initial and successive practicum placements). The enhanced program requires
many new university courses, apparently making the assumption that propositional knowledge must precede experience and is then easily transformed into the craft knowledge that guides actions. We wonder to what extent the experienced professionals who constructed the new program requirements continued to overlook the challenges of putting theory into practice. Clues are available in a second document, the *Accreditation Resource Guide* (Ontario College of Teachers, 2017):

This guide is designed for the use of accreditation panels who will be seeking evidence of sufficiency and currency with the required core content outlined in the regulation, and by programs undergoing accreditation… There is also an intention that all aspects of knowledge and skill will be connected to and reflected in both course work and the practicum. In each case within the guide, the notion is that theory and practice must be strongly linked… The intention of the inclusion of required core content, a practicum of at least 80 days, and this guide itself is to foster a deep connection between theoretical and evidence-based knowledge and teaching practice. (p. 5)

In our view, the words are clear but neither the details for making strong links nor the need for significant changes in our underlying assumptions about content and experience are clear. Of 32 pages of content (pp. 9-40), only the last three pages (pp. 38-40) speak to the practicum. The most relevant paragraph seems to be the following:

The inclusion of a lengthened practicum is intended to highlight and strengthen the theory-practice interconnections that are possible when considering course work and fieldwork as linked and mutually supporting, with the intent that, ultimately, all aspects of knowledge and skill will be connected to, and reflected in course work and the practicum. The intent is also to support development of a vision of the profession, meta-cognitive understanding of critical elements, and evidence-informed and effective practices that can be used and adapted for groups of students and individual students’ strengths and needs in particular contexts. To be useful and effective, it is crucial for the practicum experience to be interwoven into faculty courses and inclusive of the core content described in this guide. (p. 38)

Here again, the words are clear and impressive, but the challenges implicit in a “meta-cognitive understanding of critical elements” and the practicum being “interwoven into faculty courses” are not clear.

Hagger and McIntyre (2006) have argued that there are fundamental flaws in assuming that ideas are easily put into practice:

The theory-into-practice conception of ITE [initial teacher education] that dominated the twentieth century is fundamentally flawed and needs to be replaced. The notion that student teachers should learn good theoretical ideas in universities, and then put them into practice in schools, is flawed in many ways but most obviously in that it is based on quite false conceptions of the nature of teaching expertise and of how such expertise is developed. (p. 158)
A major theme of this chapter concerns the nature and importance of craft knowledge that is learned from experience when acquiring new propositional knowledge with a view to modifying practice accordingly. To set the stage for what follows, we begin with an historical view of the place of the practicum in teacher education.

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF THE PRACTICUM IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Vick (2006) reported an analysis of teacher preparation programs in England and in Australia in the period 1900 to 1950. He makes it clear that teaching practice was considered an essential element of such programs and the tension between theory and practice was prominent throughout that period. The following extract from his report sets the stage for discussion of the nature and role of the practicum in 2020, some 70 years later:

Over the first half of the twentieth century, the practicum formed a key component of what was intended [to] be an integrated package that balanced theory and practice, so as to prepare teachers who might enter classrooms adequately equipped to deal with immediately [sic] challenges, but with the richness and depth of understanding to generate better practices than those already in place. Securing the balance between theory and practice, and ensuring that students gained maximum benefit from the practical components was beset by difficulties. These called forth a wide range of responses from both administrators and lecturing staff. These in turn gave rise to new problems, in a dynamic of critique and innovation. Yet, there was no suggestion that either the theoretical or the practical components of the program should be abandoned, that either should dominate, or that they should be separated from each other. This analysis shows how long standing and deeply entrenched are many of the problems that contemporary reviews, debates, strategies and policy formulations seek to address… It suggests that such problems may, in fact, be inherent in the model of a balanced combination of on campus theoretical studies and school-based practice that has dominated the past century of teacher education. The range of responses of administrators and lecturing staff … over half a century suggests that those advocating radical reform of teacher preparation ought to be somewhat modest in their claims about how boldly new their proposed reforms really are. (Vick, 2006, pp. 194-195, emphasis added)

We concur with Vick’s suggestion that the “model of a balanced contribution” of on-campus studies and practice in schools is a significant, if not inherent, part of the challenge faced by teacher education programs. The contributions of each are powerfully different in kind. Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) described findings that they attributed to the period 1950 to 1990; we believe they continue to be true in 2020. Particularly relevant to the present argument are the statements about “fieldwork.”

A number of studies in the 1980s and 1990s documented a set of longstanding problems in teacher education… These problems with the traditional teacher education design that predominated between 1950 and 1990 include:
**Fragmentation.** Key elements of teacher learning are disconnected from each other. Coursework is separated from practice teaching; professional skills are segmented into separate courses... Would-be teachers are left on their own to put it all together.

**Uninspired teaching methods.** In order for prospective teachers to learn active, hands-on, and minds-on teaching, they must have experienced it for themselves. But traditional lecture and recitation still dominate in much of higher education, including ... some teacher education courses.

**Superficial curriculum.** “Once over lightly” describes the curriculum. Traditional programs focus on subject matter methods and a smattering of educational psychology. Candidates do not learn deeply about how to understand and handle real problems of practice. (p. 447)

In addition, many have charged that **fieldwork** has had inadequate attention in program design. While it is often a core portion of student teachers’ experiences and has a strong influence on teachers’ thinking about teaching and learning (Guyton and McIntyre, 1990), fieldwork has often been divorced from coursework, inadequately designed, and placements have often failed to reflect standards for good teaching. (p. 448, emphasis added)

These three problems—fragmentation, uninspired teaching methods, and superficial curriculum—may also be inherent in the model of a balanced contribution suggested by Vick (2006).

All this calls for a major reframing of the theory-into-practice model. To do so, reframing can begin by making explicit the differences between declarative knowledge and craft knowledge and by instantiating these differences as a major theme of a teacher education program. It may not be easy, but it is important to make informed efforts to try.

**A TEACHER CANDIDATE DEFINES THE ISSUE**

One individual enrolled in a preservice teacher education program captured the value of learning from experience in the following words:

> Immersing myself in the field of education through my practicum has given me more knowledge and experience in teaching than I have accumulated in my academic experience thus far. My past week has been filled with new realizations, struggles, and learning opportunities. Every day in school has revealed to me how different learning about the theory of teaching and actually teaching can truly be. I have started to grasp the subtle complexities that are sometimes overlooked in university courses, such as the importance of classroom management and teaching a class with a wide range of cognitive abilities. (A. Rafih, personal communication, November 14, 2017, emphasis added)

In the third year of a four-year B.Ed. program, and writing after only one week in a practicum context, this individual had already realized that learning to teach from experience is truly different in kind from learning to teach in university classrooms.
THE CHALLENGES INHERENT IN LEARNING TO TEACH

We recently constructed the following argument to emphasize the complexity of the process of learning to teach. During this process, it is virtually without exception that those learning to teach report that their practicum experiences were the most valuable element of their program.

Teacher education asks those learning to teach to learn in two very different contexts – university classrooms and school practicum placements – usually without exploring and explaining the differences and how two quite different modes of learning can productively interact. Teacher candidates enter a program of teacher education believing in a single epistemology: first theory is learned (in university classrooms) and then applied in practice (in schools). Their apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) as students in schools has provided few, if any, insights into how teachers learn from experiences of teaching. They and their teacher educators speak all too easily of a gap between theory and practice; occasionally, a few teacher educators have forthrightly challenged this perspective, but this view has gained little traction. (Martin & Russell, 2020, p. 1052)

Two decades ago, Bryan and Abell (1999) argued that one cannot learn to teach solely by attending classes and developing propositional knowledge:

The heart of knowing how to teach cannot be learned from coursework alone. The construction of professional knowledge requires experience… Experience plays a significant role in developing professional knowledge. It shapes how teachers see their practice and what they hear from their practice. (Bryan & Abell, 1999, p. 121)

We call special attention to the emphasis on how experience influences the unique nature of this learning process, shaping both what teacher candidates do and how they do it. Learning from experience is truly different in kind from learning from spoken and written words.

The extensive emphasis on reflection by teacher candidates has not resolved, and perhaps has aggravated, the tension between theory and practice, in large part because the widespread and diverse uses of the term reflection typically do not consider the underlying epistemology of learning from experience. Schön (1995) provided the following account of the tacit nature of professional knowledge gained from first-hand experience:

When we go about the spontaneous, intuitive performance of the actions of everyday life, we show ourselves to be knowledgeable in a special way. Often we cannot say what we know. When we try to describe it, we find ourselves at a loss, or we produce descriptions that are obviously inappropriate. Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action… It seems right to say that our knowledge is in our action. And similarly, the workaday life of the professional practitioner reveals, in its recognitions, judgments, and skills, a pattern of tacit knowing-in-action. (p. 29) … I submit that such knowing-in-action makes up the great bulk of what we know how to do in everyday and in professional life. (p. 30)

Not only is developing knowledge-in-action tacit rather than explicit, it requires those learning to teach to recognize the unfamiliar authority that can only be gained through experience. Making
that authority more familiar requires what we are calling *metacognitive moves* in the analysis of experience. We not only learn from experience, we also need to learn to think about our learning from experience.

**CRITICAL QUESTIONS: WHY IS THEORY-INTO-PRACTICE SO PERSISTENT?**

- For how many decades has teacher education struggled with, but not resolved, the tension between theory and practice?
- For how many decades have preservice teachers reported that practicum experiences are more valuable than their learning in education courses?
- To what extent can today’s teacher education programs in Ontario be characterized as contexts of productive professional learning?
- Why do these issues seem to go unrecognized, if not ignored, in the structure of teacher education programs?

To explore these questions with Vick’s (2006) perspective as background, we turn first to Cochran-Smith (2004, p. 295), who has argued that teacher education has been conceptualized in three major ways in the last 50 years: as a matter of training, as a matter of learning, and as a matter of policy. How the preservice teacher candidate thinks of learning to teach—as any or all of these three or in other ways—may be even more important than how teacher educators think of learning to teach. We have been particularly struck by the apparent absence of conversations between preservice teachers and teacher educators within our own Faculty of Education about how teacher education is conceptualized. To readers, we would ask, “How frequently do such conversations occur in your university?”

The constraints of candidate expectations, government regulations, university structures, and practicum requirements may make it impossible to achieve a teacher education program that successfully models a context for productive learning. We often turn to Sarason (1993) for trenchant insights into achieving the goal of productive learning. Here he stresses the importance of beginning with direct experience of classroom life:

>The preparation of educational personnel inadequately prepares them for what life is like in real classrooms in real schools and leaves them unable to capitalize on opportunities to be consistent with the primary aim [of education: “to nurture the sense of discovery and growth in students and teacher”]. The preparation of such personnel should begin *not* with theory or history or research findings or pedagogical technique but with concrete issues of classroom life: the practical, inevitable, action-requiring issues on the basis of which the would-be teacher can judge and utilize theory and research. (p. 137, emphasis added)

It apparently is easy for the teacher of teachers to forget that the would-be teacher is not without experience or assets. That individual has been a student for years and can identify those contexts in which he or she experienced discovery and growth, the difference between values espoused and values practiced, the teachers whom he or she trusted and the ones who were feared, and the difference between having one’s feelings sought and understood and having them ignored or misunderstood. Far from being without assets, the
would-be teacher has loads of assets that the teacher of teachers should help the student recognize, mine, articulate, and apply.

It is not only the teacher of teachers who sees the student as having no assets, however. That is the way most students see themselves: empty vessels possessing the understandable “deficit” of ignorance and inexperience, waiting to be filled with facts, knowledge, wisdom, and technical skills. (pp. 137-138)

If schools themselves are to create contexts of productive learning for children, then the goal of productive learning for teacher candidates must not be overlooked as part of the overall picture to which all teacher educators must contribute. The seemingly innocuous assumption that teacher candidates begin a program as empty vessels is part and parcel of the assumption that theory must be learned before acquiring experience.

A CASE STUDY IN PROGRAM CHANGE AND THE PERSISTENCE OF FAMILIAR PRACTICES

It is never easy to change our unexamined assumptions about how practice is learned and improved. In the period 1997-1999, the teacher education program at Queen’s University followed a dramatically innovative program structure that had been piloted in 1996-1997. After an intensive week at the university, teacher candidates began the practicum on the first day of school in September. After a week or two of gradual introduction, they continued to teach until the end of December, returning to the university near the midpoint of the four months for two weeks of intensive analysis of their experiences. Education classes filled most of the second half of the program, which concluded with a four-week practicum to consolidate all that had been learned. Interestingly, at a meeting of faculty and staff shortly after full implementation of the first year, a decision was taken to abandon most of the innovations after 1999. It seemed that many faculty were neither able nor willing to reframe and repractice quickly enough. Familiar teaching practices were less than successful for the very different students who entered their classes with such extensive first-hand experience. In the absence of faculty-wide discussions of epistemological issues and of the very different way in which the revised program viewed the importance of learning from extended, first-hand experience, familiar teacher education practices persisted. This outcome was entirely consistent with what Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992, pp. 389-390) describe as the conservative tradition in thinking about craft knowledge and traditional patterns of pedagogy. It is our impression that this conservative interpretation of craft knowledge helps to explain the conservative nature of many teacher educators’ practices.

TEACHER CANDIDATES’ PERCEPTIONS OF THEORY IN THE PRACTICUM CONTEXT

Inexperienced teachers’ perceptions of the role of theory in their daily teaching range from “if only I had time to think about it” to “the theory learned in training is impossible to put into practice” (Carré, 1993, p. 201). An oft-repeated refrain of teacher candidates declares that there is too much theory in university courses and that real learning takes place in real classrooms during practicum experiences. Consider the responses of two participants in Segall’s (2002) ethnographic study of the perspectives of six teacher candidates in a social studies methods course:
We learned so much more in the short practicum than we did in the whole semester at [the university]… The first semester of this program is just all theory and we need to get more practical. Until we get more practical in the program, the theory will still just be a washout. (p. 155)

No real learning takes place, I think, until you get into your practicum… [Instead of] just getting bombarded with all this theory [at the university], I think we should spend more time in the schools so we can apply that theory and so it can become more relevant… I mean, you need to learn by experience. (p. 155)

Here we see one teacher candidate bemoaning a semester that is all theory while another reveals the familiar assumption that practice involves the application of such theory.

FINDING A MIDDLE GROUND

In the absence of classes that model the integration of practice with theory, it is not surprising that those learning to teach may turn away from theory and seek more practicum experience in schools. This would be an unfortunate mistake. Quality in teacher education requires teacher educators to find that middle ground between a two-step (theory first, then practice) process and learning by trial and error. To do so, we are suggesting that craft knowledge must be embedded within a teacher education program as firmly as propositional knowledge always has been. The two must work together coherently and in genuine partnership.

When we seek to understand quality in teacher education, we must be attentive to the culture of schools generally and to the culture of teacher education particularly. Segall (2002) framed the challenge with these words:

Because prospective teachers are not invited to critically examine the underlying assumptions in educational conventions and practices (Kincheloe, 1993), they tend to ignore not only how those aspects impact their own education as students but also how they will structure their own classrooms in the future. As a result, … student teachers become more interested in learning how to perform expected actions than in analyzing those actions or the expectations that generate such actions. (Segall, 2002, p. 159)

Here we see Segall describing the impact of unexamined cultural assumptions in schools and teacher education programs. Without ongoing, metacognitive analysis of teaching practices, both in school classrooms and in teacher education classrooms, teacher candidates lose essential opportunities to learn to think like a teacher.

TWO EXAMPLES OF THE RETURN TO BOOK KNOWLEDGE AFTER PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

Matthew Brown provided the following analysis of his first experience of practice teaching and the way it inspired him to return to the world of ideas, with subsequent impact on further teaching experience:
During my first practicum I really embraced active learning … and I incorporated several [new] procedures into my lesson plans. Sadly, when I got back to classes at Queen’s I couldn’t say how much my students had actually learned. That insight was very disorienting. What grounded me again was a connection to Hattie’s (2012) description of how a “passionate, inspired teacher” (p. 24) plans lessons: by focusing on the learning that needs to happen before thinking about how to conduct the lesson. Accordingly, for my next practicum I consulted the Science curriculum document (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2008) to find the expectations that I would be responsible for teaching. Then I focused on having “the mind frame to foster intellectual demand, challenge, and learning” (Hattie, 2012, p. 35). And… it worked! Students learned [the topic of] Relativity well. I became a focused, determined, exhausted teacher. With all my focus on the learning, I had lost sight of the various methods of teaching. Still I had made tremendous strides towards connecting with the students. (M. Brown, personal communication, 12 February 2013)

Once he had his first practicum experience, he was in a much more informed position to make sense of the literature to which he had been introduced previously. Thanks to experience, he was beginning to see the importance of creating a context of productive learning for his students.

Daniel Harrison found that teacher education classes before his first practicum placement had little impact on his thinking but the time between the first and second experiences of teaching were very productive:

Despite being exposed to large quantities of information in education coursework prior to my first field placement, I arrived to the classroom with essentially the same understanding of teaching and images of self as teacher as when I entered the program. It seems quite apparent in hindsight that my heavily entrenched beliefs about teaching—or apprenticeship of observation—acted as a filter to the initial program content, and therefore, at the time, my default strategy was to lecture, but of course, to do so in an interesting and engaging manner.

The time between my first and second field placements gave me ample opportunity to reflect on my experiences and determine exactly what I had learned, if anything at all. I believe it was during this time that I began to develop a more sophisticated understanding of what it is to teach. I cannot entirely describe this process or explain it succinctly in words, but the result was ultimately a radical shift in my thinking about teaching and learning by putting the needs of learners front and centre. One important factor in this transformation involved my introduction to a teacher educator who took a very different approach to teaching than I had experienced in the program before. The approach this educator took was one I will describe as teaching how to teach through example. Rather than simply tell me how to teach, this educator showed me how to teach through the experience that was created for me as a learner, and I was able to feel what that was like. (Harrison, 2014)

Here we see that the time in education classes between practicum placements was qualitatively different from the time before the first practicum experience. Encouraged by the modeling
provided by one teacher educator, Harrison’s ways of thinking about teaching and learning changed in very important ways.

SIGNPOSTS AND STRATEGIES ON THE WAY FORWARD

To begin a discussion of possible ways forward for dealing with the issue of craft knowledge in teacher education programs, we set the stage with a recent passage of our own. Particularly relevant here is the reminder that how individuals learn to teach is very poorly understood; when teacher educators focus on the content of learning to teach and pay little attention to what is learned from practicum experiences, the quality we desire in our teacher education programs remains elusive.

Feiman-Nemser and Remillard (1996, p. 78) set the issue of quality in the context of familiar views that fail to consider what meaning teacher candidates take from their various learning experiences. They framed the challenge thoughtfully in the following words:

We have separated the “what” from the “how” of learning to teach in order to focus on the question of what teachers need to learn. Ultimately, content and processes of learning to teach must be brought together, since how teachers learn shapes what they learn and is often part of what they need to know. Unfortunately, we know even less about the processes of learning to teach than we do about the content.

Conventional teacher education reflects a view of learning to teach as a two-step process of knowledge acquisition and application or transfer. Lay theories assume that learning to teach occurs through trial and error over time. Neither view captures the prevailing position that learning occurs through an interaction between the learner and the learning opportunity. If we want to understand how and why teachers learn what they do from a given learning opportunity, we have to investigate both what the experience was like and what sense teachers made of it. (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1996, pp. 79-80, emphasis added)

Quality in teacher education will remain elusive until we move beyond practices grounded in “learn first, then apply” or learn by trial and error. As Feiman-Nemser (2001) subsequently noted, the challenges to achieving quality begin in preservice programs and continue beyond:

The problems of preservice preparation, induction, and professional development have been documented. The charge of fragmentation and conceptual impoverishment applies across the board. There is no connective tissue holding things together within or across the different phases of learning to teach.

The typical preservice program is a collection of unrelated courses and field experiences. Most induction programs have no curriculum, and mentoring is a highly individualistic process. Professional development consists of discrete and disconnected events. Nor do we have anything that resembles a coordinated system. Universities regard preservice preparation as their purview. Schools take responsibility for new teacher induction. Professional development is everybody’s and nobody’s responsibility. (p. 1049)
Thus, developing “connective tissue” is one of the many challenges to achieving quality in teacher education. While many mission statements proclaim coherence, it is not enough to leave integration of program elements to the individual learning to teach. (Russell & Martin, 2016, p. 147).

We believe that teacher candidates are too well aware of the lack of coherence and connective tissue in their experiences of our programs. We also believe that the goals of coherence and connection will not be achieved until teacher educators move beyond the “learn first, then apply” assumption and see the development of craft knowledge, as well as propositional knowledge, as a program responsibility that necessarily must pervade all aspects.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER EDUCATOR IN A REFRAMED PRACTICUM

The following statements are from literature published between 1980 and 2010 by a range of people who have conducted research on teacher education and made observations about the role of the teacher educator. *These statements highlight the central obligation of the teacher educator to enact that role in ways that contribute to the overall quality of a teacher education program.* Each statement highlights a different aspect of the teacher educator’s role, reminding us of the multi-faceted nature of the quest for quality and coherence.

- Lanier and Little (1986) succinctly framed the issue of being prepared to learn:

  The problem is not that field experience cannot be valuable, but that its value is dependent on prospective teachers being properly prepared to learn… In a survey of the student teaching programs at a number of colleges and universities, Griffin (1982) similarly found little to indicate that the curriculum surrounding student teaching was arranged to provide the knowledge and inclinations needed for an intellectual career in teaching. If anything, prospective teachers were encouraged to maintain their narrow view of teaching. (pp. 551-552)

- Leinhardt, Young, and Merriman (1995) challenged the theory-into-practice assumption by naming the problems associated with integrating declarative professional knowledge learned at the academy with procedural professional knowledge acquired in practice:

  [It] involves examination of the knowledge associated with one location while using the ways of thinking associated with the other location by asking learners to particularize abstract theories and to abstract principles from particulars. The task before us, then, is to enable learners to make universal, formal, and explicit knowledge that often remains situational, intuitive, and tacit; and to transform universal, formal, explicit knowledge for use in situ. (p. 403)

- Feiman-Nemser (2001) offered this challenge concerning the beliefs held by teacher candidates when they enter a teacher education program:

  Unless teacher educators engage prospective students in a critical examination of their entering beliefs in light of compelling alternatives and help them develop powerful
images of good teaching and strong professional commitments, these entering beliefs will continue to shape their ideas and practices. (p. 1017)

- Haigh and Ward (2004) considered the teacher educator’s role with respect to the practicum:

We believe that the decisions being taken regarding teacher education practicum processes and structures should be academically anchored and firmly evidence based. We must, therefore, continue to question the taken-for-granted and carry out research in the area of practicum so that our new understandings help us to challenge the status quo in teacher education. Only then will the practicum and the manner in which it is perceived and conducted be more than simply a site for practising teaching. (p. 146)

- Nuthall (2005) reviewed his career in teacher education and research and drew these insights:

It is important to search out independent evidence that the widely accepted routines of teaching are in fact serving the purposes for which they are enacted. We need to find a critical vantage point from outside the routines and their supporting myths… The approach I have learned to take is to look at teaching through the eyes of students and to gather detailed data about the experiences of individual students. (p. 925)

- Raelin (2007) sets the problem in the context of issues of how we know:

The dominant empiricist epistemology governing our educational enterprises in higher education … leads us to separate theory and practice in an aspiration to define the best conceptual models to map external reality. (p. 496)

- Loughran and Russell (2007) reviewed their own roles as teacher educators and reached these conclusions about the complexity and responsibilities of the role of teacher educator:

Thinking and acting like a teacher requires students of teaching to seek to identify and make sense of the complexity inherent in any classroom. Perhaps more than anything else, identifying complexity requires the skills of listening to learners, reading each one’s behaviour for clues to unique learning needs and responses so that innovative teaching actions can be created to address those unique needs. For students of teaching to begin to think and act in such a way requires much more from teacher preparation than training; it requires educative experiences purposefully embedded in meaningful pedagogical situations. (p. 222, emphasis in original)

- Zeichner (2010) found it very challenging to encourage colleagues to address the issue of connections between school experiences and university content:

One of the most difficult challenges for me over the years has been to mobilize intellectual energy in my department around strengthening the connections between
what our student teachers do in their school and community placements and the rest of their teacher education program. (p. 90)

Despite a range of teacher educator-researchers making these and similar statements over an extended period, the assumption of theory-into-practice as the basic mode of teacher candidate learning persists. This reminds us that this assumption is deeply seated in teacher educators’ own learning experiences and belief systems and will not be altered by minor or modest interventions. The following words of a cognitive scientist who has written specifically for teachers (and, by association, for teacher educators) highlight the challenge:

People do not spontaneously examine assumptions that underlie their thinking, try to consider all sides of an issue, question what they know, etc. These things must be modeled for students, and students must be given opportunities to practice—preferably in the context of normal classroom activity. (Willingham, 2007, p. 18)

This is also an appropriate moment to recall that it is a cultural trait to mistrust personal experience.

The separation of knowledge and experience has led to an enormous rise in information, the spread of science, but it has a dark side because of the discounting of experience. The very process that separates knowledge from experience—a process that concentrates knowledge in books as well as in experts—has led to the fact that people find their own experience occasionally untrustworthy and very often not required. (Franklin, 2014, p. 150)

Trusting professional experience often requires simultaneously challenging our personal, often unexamined assumptions about the relationship between knowledge and experience. As Argyris and Schön (1974) explained and illustrated so carefully, the culture in which we live (termed Model I in their analysis) consistently encourages us not to reconcile our theories-in-use (expressed in our actions) with our espoused theories. In the Model II world that they sought to encourage, such reconciliation would require identifying the implicit assumptions embedded in our professional actions. We believe that teacher education programs have not carried out such reconciliation efforts, and here we argue that improving the value of the professional practicum in Ontario’s teacher education programs requires identification and reframing of the assumptions implicit in the outline of the enhanced program. It is important that both teacher educators and those learning to teach appreciate that professional craft knowledge is embedded in and revealed by our professional actions.

HYPOTHESES ABOUT IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Our research in the period 2011-2017 generated a list of hypotheses about the learning from experience that happens in practicum placements. Data contributing to the development of these hypotheses came from a range of different strategies for listening to the practicum experiences of teacher candidates in Québec, Ontario, and British Columbia.

- If on-campus studies do not reach a metacognitive level, then a metacognitive stance toward professional learning should not be expected in practicum experiences.
The likelihood of risk-taking in a practicum setting increases when candidates’ practicum moves can be explored retrospectively on campus before commencing another practicum placement.

Reframing is particularly difficult on one’s own when one is new to the actual experience of teaching.

The more that teacher education classes focus on curriculum content and prescriptions for pedagogy, the less those classes are likely to attend to the emotional aspects of teaching.

Richer and more complex perspectives on learning are needed if teaching practice is to be transformed and the quality of professional learning improved.

Candidates need a less academic and more professional context to develop practice and the analysis of practice, as aspects of an academic context can work against a process that is necessary for transformative growth.

Without metacognitive supports, there is a danger that practice could plateau as candidates continue to work within familiar and unexamined frames of understanding.

If teacher educators have a limited understanding of what teacher candidates learn from practicum experiences, then their ability to link classes to practicum is compromised.

If a candidate experiences difficulties in the practicum, then the experience may be framed as a situation to survive rather than as a situation that can be remedied.

The quality of the relationship with the mentor teacher is a significant factor in determining the quality of a teacher candidate’s learning experience during a practicum placement. (Bullock, Dillon, Martin, Russell, & Thomas, 2015)

These conclusions are stated as hypotheses that are difficult to confirm in an empirical sense; nevertheless, taken as a whole, they point to many significant shifts needed if the underlying assumptions about how teacher candidates learn to teach are to be confronted and challenged.

REFRAMING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AS LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

Successful new practices will not happen without first reframing how teacher educators and teacher candidates understand learning from experience. Reflective practice needs to be seen as more than everyday reflection, just as the practicum must be seen as learning from experience, not putting theory into practice. Reflective practice, or reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983), involves careful and deliberate attention in the moment (in action) to personal teaching experiences that generate puzzling, surprising, and unexpected responses from students.

For both teacher educators and those learning to teach, the next step is repracticing based on the reframing—in other words, risking new practices inspired by a new way of thinking about how teachers learn to teach. We are not proposing gradual or radical changes; we are arguing that changes will not resolve the theory-practice issue until teacher educators reframe their assumptions about the unique ways of learning that occur in the practicum. We use the word repracticing to emphasize that reframing must be followed by new practices and to acknowledge that new practices are always challenging for the teacher educator. If new practices are introduced and, optimally, identified on the first day of a course, the challenge for teacher candidates of adjusting to new practices is also minimized (Russell, Martin, & Loughran, in press).
Metacognition is an important issue at all levels of education. Children who understand how and why they are learning are likely to be much more successful in their studies. The same applies to teacher candidates, who have focused primarily on learning declarative or book knowledge and have little formal experience of understanding the nature of professional learning or craft knowledge. The following responses were offered by teacher candidates who were asked to comment on the value of regular, end-of-class discussions of what had been learned and how it had been learned:

I value the discussions because it allows for time to touch on the main points over again. Personally, I find I remember more from these discussions than I do for any other class because we have time to understand, think, and discuss what we have learned.

The discussions have helped me to recognize different perspectives on learning and thus moved me to deeper levels of reflective practice. Also, the discussions allow me and other teacher candidates a sense of ownership in the class and learning. With that, I feel more engaged in learning.

In so many other courses there are pressures to withhold one’s true feelings about a certain topic or how they’re feeling. I think these ending discussions provide an exceptional environment where we, as teacher-candidates, can speak freely about what we find useful and find a support system that validates our feelings/anxieties about teaching. (Russell, Martin, & Loughran, in press)

Thus, we recommend an additional element of metacognitive skill development that relates particularly to teacher candidates’ practicum experiences. Those learning to teach have spent years becoming experts in the role of a student, generally enjoying classroom learning so much that they have decided to continue to work in classrooms but in the role of a teacher. Teaching in practicum placements requires a very unfamiliar skill—learning from experience systematically rather than haphazardly. Teacher candidates learned the authority of reason as they learned from textbooks and arguments; they learned the authority of position as they took direction from parents, teachers, and now mentor teachers guiding their practicum experiences. Teacher education programs require them to develop skills of learning from experience in order to develop that personal sense of the authority that comes with experience seen systematically through a metacognitive lens.

Listening to one’s own experience is not the same as listening to the experience of others, and the students seem to indicate that they still place much more authority with those who have experience and with those who speak with confidence about how teaching should be done. They seem reluctant to listen to or to trust their own experiences as an authoritative source of knowledge about teaching. We wonder how and to what extent they will begin to hear the voice of their own experiences as they begin their teaching careers.

The basic tension in teacher education derives for us from preservice students wanting to move from being under authority to being in authority, without appreciating the potential that the authority of experience can give to their learning to teach. The challenge for teacher education is to help new teachers recognize and identify the place and function of the
authority of experience. If this is not done, the authority of experience can fall victim to the danger that accompanies all versions of authority: mere possession is not enough because authority can be abused. (Munby & Russell, 1994, pp. 93-94)

Until teacher education programs come to terms with the fundamental importance of experience and the authority that comes with experience, program structures are likely to contradict their research-based premises and rhetoric, leaving candidates to continue to discount the significance of their formal courses in education because many teacher educators inadvertently persist in maintaining the separation between theory and practice, knowledge from books, and knowledge from experience.

CHALLENGING THE THEORY-INTO-PRACTICE ASSUMPTION: CRAFT KNOWLEDGE AS TACIT KNOWLEDGE THAT CAN ONLY BE LEARNED IN PRACTICE

Teacher education programs seem to implicitly assume that learning in university classrooms and learning in the practicum are similar processes easily connected by those learning to teach. We challenge that assumption by arguing that the tacit, craft knowledge developed in the practicum is different in kind from the propositional knowledge developed in courses. Thus far, we have refrained from introducing the concept of craft knowledge in detail in order to provide context and background.

For teacher education and teacher education research, the irony of teaching is at first epistemological. To the uninitiated, teaching unfolds as sets of skills but, to the initiated, teaching depends on, is grounded in, and constitutes knowledge. The character of this knowledge poses the irony for teacher education: the knowledge is, in part, practical, and that part can only be learned in practice, the very setting over which teacher educators have little direct control. (Munby, Russell, & Martin, 2001, pp. 895-896, emphasis added)

Next we turn to an outstanding analysis of the concept of craft knowledge by Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992). In this passage they set the stage for the definition of craft knowledge that follows. Here they name the issue of whether a focus on craft knowledge would be productive:

That craft knowledge exists as a powerful determinant of teachers’ practice is neither new nor controversial. What is new is the possibility that such knowledge could become an integral part of teacher education; what is controversial is the debate over whether this would be a productive direction to take… In addition to codified knowledge bases framed around university-based research, teacher education could benefit from the contribution that craft knowledge can make to the formation of skillful, reflective, and empowered teachers. (p. 388)

While there must be many ways to define the concept of craft knowledge, their definition provides an excellent starting point:

Craft knowledge is essentially the accumulated wisdom derived from teachers’ and practice-oriented researchers’ understandings of the meanings ascribed to the many dilemmas inherent in teaching. As such, craft knowledge emphasizes judgment—often in aesthetic terms—rather than following the maxims of research-generated knowledge. It
relies heavily on intuition, care, and empathy for pupils. It is steeped in morality and ever critical in its search for meaningful schooling and benefit for pupils. Understandings derived from craft knowledge appear to revolve around the purposes of teaching, the context of work within which learning takes place, teachers’ sentiments about their role as facilitators of learning, and their need to be heard during a tumultuous time of restructuring. (pp. 428–429, emphasis added)

Here we see the more complete sense of the term craft knowledge, which includes the ideas of intuition, care, and empathy for students. The theory-into-practice assumption implicitly undervalues the complexity and significance of craft knowledge.

POINTING TEACHER CANDIDATES IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

The language we use in teacher education courses can make a profound difference. Introducing the terms book knowledge and craft knowledge on the first day of a curriculum course for physics teachers helped teacher candidates recognize that each type of knowledge involves a different type of learning. In the English language, craft knowledge seems to require little explanation; in other languages, translations of craft may have pejorative implications. Four months (including eight weeks of university classes and seven weeks of practicum teaching) after being invited to use these two terms (in place of theory and practice), the following comments indicate the positive nature of teacher candidates’ responses.

Table 1

Teacher candidate comments on replacing theory and practice with book knowledge and craft knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They both represent teachers’ essential knowledge, and understanding both terms gave me some ideas on what I should aim to learn and how I can learn them. Understanding Craft Knowledge helped me to transform everyday experience during the practicum into intuitive and reflective learning and thus bring positive changes and stronger results on my performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The terms Book Knowledge and Craft Knowledge have been critical to my understanding of the teaching process. This is because they delineate two concepts that are quite distinct, yet integral to the art of teaching… The concepts that we learned in class (Book Knowledge) could not impart Craft Knowledge, and this became clear immediately upon teaching my first lesson during my practicum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the terms Book Knowledge and Craft Knowledge has been helpful to me because they distinguish between two modes of knowledge that we use to help navigate the world of teaching. Craft Knowledge allows us to construct a model of how to teach from experience based on differing circumstances, whereas Book Knowledge is too vague to be of any sort of practical importance. At the point where Book and Craft Knowledge connect is where it has been most important for me as an educator.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The terms book knowledge and craft knowledge have helped to differentiate between the two types of knowledge that we are learning in the B.Ed. program. They are more helpful terms to understand the difference between most of what we are learning in class, versus the knowledge being learned while on practicum and also sometimes in class. They have provided a better way for me to understand the difference between theory and practice in teaching.

(Russell, Martin, & Loughran, in press)

THE AUTHORITY OF EXPERIENCE IS EASILY OVERLOOKED AND MUST BE ADDRESSED

Developing knowledge-in-action, which is more tacit than explicit, requires those learning to teach to recognize the unique but unfamiliar authority that can only be acquired from experience. During a preservice program, it is the teacher educator who must take an active and metacognitive role that helps teacher candidates make sense of what they are learning in practicum experiences. When Munby & Russell (1994) analyzed tensions in data from a group of teacher candidates, they contrasted the authority of reason and the authority of position with a third type of authority, the authority gained through personal experience.

We use the term authority of experience because of our concern that students never master learning from experience during preservice programs in a way that gives them direct access to the nature of the authority of experience. If Schön is correct that there is a knowledge-in-action that cannot be fully expressed in propositions and that learning from experience has its own epistemology, then our concern is that learning from experience is never clearly contrasted with learning that can be expressed and conveyed in propositions.

In their many years of schooling preservice teachers have seen two basic concepts of authority at work: the authority of reason, and the authority of position. While the goal of education can be cast in terms of establishing knowledge claims on the authority of reason, there are times when claims are seen to rest on the teacher's authority of position (Russell, 1983)... Unfortunately, school's preoccupation with the authority of reason and of position can cause teachers and students to ignore a type of authority lying at the heart of action and performance: the authority of experience. (p. 92, emphasis added)

They went on to point out that the inexperienced teacher may experience tensions between what is learned by listening to students and what is learned from more experienced teachers in the school:

Once on the job, the beginning teacher readily acquires experience but still may not come to understand the process of learning from experience or to recognize fully the authority of experience. There is a competing authority in long and short conversations with other teachers in the school, conversations expressing perspectives and practices shared by many teachers in the school. This competing authority may restrict the ability of the beginning teacher to listen to personal experience, including responses of students. Other teachers’ practical knowledge has an obvious authority of experience but it is expressed in words
and propositions most readily associated with authority of position, in this instance the position of having more experience. (p. 93)

Thus, there are at least three different sources of knowledge for teacher candidates and there is also competition among the three associated authorities. In addition to book knowledge (associated with the authority of reason) and the craft knowledge of more experienced teachers (associated with the authority of having more experience), there is the craft knowledge that each beginning teacher must construct personally (here associated with the authority of experience). While teacher educators and mentor teachers are often quite willing to try to share their book knowledge and craft knowledge, we must remember that many elements of craft knowledge are tacit; those with more experience who attempt to share their craft knowledge can often only do so incompletely because of its tacit nature.

As we conclude this reframing of practicum experiences based on our own teacher education experiences and associated teacher education literature, we remind readers of the valuable analysis of craft knowledge provided by Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992):

Craft knowledge, therefore, concerns itself both with teachers’ representations of the declarative knowledge contained in subject matter content and with teachers’ tacit instantiations of procedural ways of dealing rigorously and supportively with learners. As a form of professional expertise, craft knowledge is neither technical skill, the application of theory or general principles to practice, nor critical analysis; rather, it represents the construction of situated, learner-focused, procedural and content-pedagogical knowledge through “deliberate action” (Kennedy, 1987). (Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992, p. 393, emphasis added)

TEACHER EDUCATORS MUST TAKE THE LEAD

A central theme in all that we have written here leads to the conclusion that all teacher educators must reject the deep-seated assumption that the individual student alone can and will generate explicit and appropriate connections between book knowledge and craft knowledge, between courses and practicum experiences, and between the authorities of reason and position and the authority of experience.

By themselves, student teachers can rarely see beyond what they want or need to do or what the classroom setting requires… Teacher educators must be actively present in student teaching to give prospective teachers a concrete sense of pedagogical thinking and acting. (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987, p. 272)

For us, “being actively present in student teaching” also requires actively integrating practicum experiences into each and every university course. Thus, the challenge must be taken up not only by practicum supervisors but by all teacher educators. Eighty days of practicum experience is a start, but the length of each placement and the sequence in relation to courses are critical issues. Candidates’ perspectives are altered significantly by each placement, and each return to the university must acknowledge and help to interpret those new perspectives on what it means to be a teacher.
CONCLUSIONS

The profound qualitative tensions between in-class experiences as a student at the university and the personal experiences as a novice teacher in the practicum are recognized neither easily nor clearly and most preservice teacher education programs seem not to address them directly. Although the teacher candidate feels this tension, neither the teacher candidate nor the teacher educator (with a few exceptions) acknowledges and confronts this issue; teacher educators must expose the issues and lead the way.

The arguments we have presented indicate that preparation for the practicum could be much more productive if it refrained from focusing primarily on lesson planning and classroom management. Preparation for and analysis of practicum experiences calls for a *metacognitive turn* by teacher educators. One important focus involves taking a broader view by developing a big picture of the tensions between being a student in an education course and being an active teacher at the front of a classroom. It is also important to remind teacher candidates how much they already know about the student experience and the behaviour of their own teachers, including behaviours that do and do not promote productive learning.

The transitions between university classrooms and school practicum experiences are truly dramatic and need to be acknowledged as such. As we have argued, the nature of professional learning in the two contexts is profoundly different. We are hardly the first to acknowledge these differences, but we have worked to emphasize their importance. Our goal is to provide incentives for naming and acting on the transitions between university and practicum and to suggest ways of doing that, based not only on our understanding of relevant research but also on our own ongoing development of craft knowledge as practicum supervisors and as teacher educators in the university classroom.

The enhanced teacher education program in Ontario has doubled the content to be acquired and doubled the time to be spent in the practicum. This has successfully doubled the duration and the cost of qualifying to teach in Ontario; however, these enhancements have made no effort to produce a *qualitatively better* teacher education program. The enhancements have not addressed what experience and research have led us to see as the fundamental contradiction in virtually all programs: theory learned is not easily practiced, moreso when theory precedes practice. We have identified some of the challenges and we have suggested some practical strategies for developing better programs in Ontario. If teacher educators are to enact an *improved* program, they must study and improve their own craft knowledge, which they display to teacher candidates in university classrooms. This also requires that the metacognitive moves that they would like to see their candidates make must also be made by teacher educators themselves. Reframing and repracticing must go hand-in-hand to enhance the quality of teacher education programs in Ontario.

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CHAPTER 6

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE:
TEACHER EDUCATION AT BROCK UNIVERSITY

Hilary Brown and Julian Kitchen

Brock University

INTRODUCTION

Brock University’s teacher education program evolved from a Teacher’s College in the mid 1960s into a Bachelor of Education degree by the mid-1970s. This large-scale change signaled a shift from viewing teaching as a practical endeavour into one grounded in educational theory with the eventual goal of transferring theory into practice. The core elements of the teacher education program that were developed during this time were consistently adjusted to meet the sociocultural, political climate of the day. The Ontario government’s 2011 announcement that teacher education would be extended in length proved to be the catalyst for dramatic program reform by the Department of Teacher Education.¹

The process of re-imagining the Teacher Education Program in response to guidelines from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ontario College of Teachers was guided by a vision of the department as a learning faculty. This reflects what Lave and Wenger (1991) define as situated learning through legitimate peripheral participation, where “belonging is a crucial condition for learning” (p. 35). From 2013—with the official provincial announcement that the Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP) would be four semesters in duration—to 2015, faculty members engaged in a grassroots process to develop the new Brock program. The Program Committee, along with multiple subcommittees of instructors, reviewed all facets of the program—e.g., practicum, cohort course, foundations courses, and curriculum courses. On each

¹ In 2018, the Faculty of Education underwent major restructuring. Previously, the Faculty consisted of two departments. The Department of Teacher Education, led by a Chair, was responsible for preservice teacher education programs accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers. The Department of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies, also guided by a Chair, assumed responsibility for education courses taken by undergraduate concurrent education students during their first four years, prior to beginning the professional program. Now the Faculty of Education has a single Department of Educational Studies responsible for all academic programs. Responsibility for preservice teacher education rests with the Director of Teacher Education, while the Department Chair oversees undergraduate education courses in the first four years. Support services, including practice teaching placements, have been consolidated under the Associate Dean, Undergraduate and Professional Student Services. These structural changes, which may not be especially evident to teacher candidates, mean that some of the nomenclature has changed since Kitchen and Sharma (2017) reported on the program.
committee, faculty with common interests met regularly over the two-year period to develop a coherent vision that built on our traditional strengths while adapting to contemporary needs in a diverse and changing educational system. Each committee membership varied in “shape, degree, and texture” like any community membership, and the legitimacy of participation was experienced through each committee’s role contributing to the whole (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 35). This cycle of contributing, listening, reflecting, revising, and integration as a learning community led to an ETEP with a contemporary conceptual framework that incorporated the traditional strengths of the long-standing Triple C Model.

In “A Welcome Change: Brock University Embraces Teacher Education Reform,” Kitchen and Sharma (2017) provided a thorough description of the planning and implementation process of Brock’s teacher education program. While their chapter provided an overview of the program’s vision and structure, they drew on the Intermediate/Senior (I/S) Program to illustrate how the ETEP was enacted. In this chapter, we draw on the Primary/Junior and Junior/Intermediate (P/J/I) programs (which are very similar) as we review changes over the past five years. This account illustrates how our learning faculty reflexively implemented changes in response to the needs of the teacher candidates (TCs), in relation to contemporary understandings of learning, teaching, and teacher education. We conclude by highlighting the revisions we have made to the ETEP over the past five years in consideration of Brock’s image of an Ideal Graduate.

For Hilary, as the team lead of the elementary general methods course in the one-year program, the redesign process offered an opportunity to bring cohesion, coherence, and consistency between this general methods course and a separate practical cohort course. In the old program, they developed as two symbiotic courses that had a mutually beneficial relationship, one being the presentation of theory, and the other being the implementation of that theory into practice. However, cohesion in the implementation of the courses was lacking. As a contributing member of the P/J/I methods redesign subcommittee, Hilary facilitated the integration of both the method and practical courses into one course and shepherded this change through to implementation. As instructor and team leader over the years, Hilary offers an insider perspective on moving the program towards integration of theory with practice. In her current role as Associate Dean, Undergraduate and Professional Student Services, she continues to serve as leader to ensure that consistency is maintained.

Julian, as an instructor and team leader in the Intermediate/Senior (I/S) program, offers insights into how that program is similar in conception yet different in practice to P/J/I. He also highlights changes since the I/S program was described by Kitchen and Sharma (2017).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF TEACHER EDUCATION AT BROCK

Teacher education at Brock University is based on a clear theoretical framework. Each of our programs, Consecutive (P/J/I/S), Concurrent (P/J/I/S), and Technological Education (I/S), are informed and enriched by constructivism (Piaget, 1954; Dewey, 1938; Bruner, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978; Eisner, 1998), reflective practice (Schön, 1983; Brookfield, 1995), the learning community (Senge, 1994), situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and, most recently, culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Dei, 2000). Consecutive teacher education is made up of Primary/Junior (Kindergarten-Grade 6), Junior/Intermediate (Grades 4-10) and Intermediate/Senior (Grades 7-12) professional programs structured over two years (Year 1 and
Year 2). Concurrent education starts with undergraduate courses for the first 4 years with a sprinkling of education courses and a Year 3 half-credit teacher education course. It culminates in a Year 5 and Year 6 program that is essentially the same as the one offered to consecutive teacher candidates. Through courses, practical experience, reflection, and guidance, teacher candidates across all divisions develop and accept responsibility for their own understandings of teaching and learning by undergoing a purposeful spiraling sequence of coursework, cohort, and community, that loops back onto itself to reinforce professional understanding. As the previous chapter (Kitchen & Sharma, 2017) outlined program reform through the I/S cohort, this chapter draws on the P/J/I cohort experience to illustrate the ways in which the program currently prepares teachers in the Ontario context.

With a focus on subject matter and curriculum; learner-centredness; and the integration of teaching, learning, and critical practice through reflective and critical thinking, we began to spiral the content for the P/J/I Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP) around becoming culturally responsive. Within our constructivist framework, teacher candidates have opportunities to become aware of, address, and shape their professional concerns through courses and practica. They do this on a personal basis and in the community of other teacher candidates, experienced teachers, and teacher educators and this became a central feature when re-envisioning the P/J/I Program.

The Triple C Model (Figure 1) illustrates how this framework operates in the extended program.

Figure 1

*Triple C Model*

The Triple C Model complements the conceptual framework by establishing course sequence and program integration. Teacher candidates are guided through opportunities to study, experience, and practice in class and in field settings, and to reflect as they develop their own understanding of teaching and learning. The cycle refers to multiple opportunities to practice in a field setting and to build theory and practice on increasing insights and ideas. This fundamental pattern of the program, an integration of courses and field experiences (community), emphasizes Schöl’s (1982) conception of reflection in practice. Teacher candidates make connections between what they learn
in their courses at the university and what they see practiced in schools, classrooms, and alternative approved placements, such as museums and outdoor education sites. As there are three essential elements to the Triple C Model, coursework, cohort, and community, the following sections will define each element and the subsequent sections will provide a more in-depth explanation of the choices the program committee agreed upon in relation to the scaffolded learning experiences offered to a teacher candidate through each semester.

COURSEWORK

Academic courses have a purposeful spiraling sequence of course content, experience, and practical application culminating in practice during field placements. A set of courses considered foundation courses includes instructional methods; a blended course cluster for educational psychology and special education; assessment and evaluation; and professionalism and law. With reference to the Ontario curriculum, a second set of courses is the group of curriculum courses that introduces the subject matter teachers are expected to cover at each grade level in tandem with appropriate pedagogical strategies.

COHORT

The cohort model is the heart of the Brock teacher education program. It is a vital feature of the program as it connects community to coursework as well as being the organizing structure for the practica for every program. Each section of the required Year 1 Teaching in the Ontario Context course has in-faculty instruction as well as an accompanying practicum, which consists of up to 30 teacher candidates, guided and instructed by faculty advisors. The cohort functions as a base learning community and is the central course (in respective divisions and programs) that connects theory to practice in preparation for the practicum. In Year 2, the Professional Collaborative Community (PCC) course also has in-faculty instruction as well as an accompanying practicum guided and instructed by the same faculty advisors as in the Year 1 Teaching in the Ontario Context course.

COMMUNITY

Community is representative of associate teachers and administrators who mentor teacher candidates in the field. Through practica, teacher candidates apply what is learned at the university to schools and classrooms under the supervision of experienced associate teachers. This connects the university to the field. Teaching in the Ontario Context and PCC both emphasize theory to practice and become the link between university and field, which provides teacher candidates with an educational experience that is a unified and coherent program of theory and practice.

The Triple C Model has been a recurring feature of the Brock Teacher Education program. However, the enhanced two-year timeframe allows us to better realize and enact our vision and deepen the learning experience spiraled around constructivism, reflection, learning communities, and how to become culturally responsive teachers. The teacher candidate experience is central in this model as they learn how to integrate the theory from coursework and their Teaching in the Ontario Context and subsequent PCC experiences into their practical experiences in their field placements. In the next section, we will illustrate the four semesters spotlighting the P/J/I program.
A SPOTLIGHT ON THE PRIMARY/JUNIOR/INTERMEDIATE PROGRAM

The Ontario College of Teachers’ Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession and the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession informed the new content we developed. In tandem with the previously described theoretical framework and Triple C Model, the OCT requirements became a signal to re-envision Brock’s Ideal Graduate. From here, a 2-year program was established that spans over four semesters, which emphasizes the integration of knowledge (theory) with practical field experiences (practice).

In the Primary/Junior and Junior/Intermediate programs, the purposeful flow of foundation and methods course work with field placements provides an opportunity for teacher candidates to acquire and access an increasing body of skill and knowledge about teaching and learning in both university and field placement educational settings. Hence, the sequencing and timing of each semester of the program provides teacher candidates with skills and knowledge that will inform their teaching and learning practices during their practicum placements. The coursework that supports the spiral movement of theory to practice in all semesters consists of both method and foundation courses. Method courses in specialized subject curriculum are separated into P/J and J/I groups. The two groups, however, are mixed together for foundation courses.

Semester One, in the Fall of Year 1, is designated *The Beginning Teacher – Understanding Teaching Practice*. Semester Two, in the Winter of Year 1, is *Building Professional Knowledge about Teaching Practice – with a Specialization of Pedagogical Knowledge*. Semester Three in Fall of Year 2 is designated: *Professional Growth Through Ongoing Professional Development*. Finally, Semester Four in the Winter of Year 2 is *Making Connections through Learning Communities*. In order to exemplify key components of the P/J/I program, we frame the semester themes around the Triple C Model: coursework, cohort, and community.

SEMMESTER ONE: THE BEGINNING TEACHER – UNDERSTANDING TEACHING PRACTICE

The initial twelve weeks of Semester One courses focus on a broad understanding of teaching. Content such as child development and student learning needs; meeting learning needs through instruction; creating conditions for students to learn (cognitive, psychological, and physical development of children); planning: short term, and long term; lesson/unit planning; assessment and evaluation; classroom management; the OCT Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession; and development of a professional learning plan are the focuses of the coursework. In addition to in-class learning, Semester One has a field experience component made up of one day per week of structured in-school experience (SE) and two weeks of Internship in the teacher candidate’s placement school. From the outset, a focus on moving theory into practice is built into the structure of the program.

*Coursework*

In Semester One, mixed integrated groups of both P/J and J/I TCs undertake the following foundation courses: EDBE 8F01: Teaching in the Ontario Context (Consecutive Cohort) or EDBE 8P01: Teaching in the Ontario Context (Concurrent Cohort); EDBE 8P03 Cognition and the Exceptional Learner; EDBE 8Y01: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting; and EDBE 8Y08: Teaching Digital Learners in a Digital Age. In addition, they also undertake the following methods
courses but in segregated groups (P/J listed first then J/I for each): EDBE 8P34/EDBE 8P24: Language and Literacy Part 1; and EDBE 8P39/EDBE 8P29: Mathematics, Part 1. Finally, J/I TCs who have French as their teachable subject also take EDBE 8P07: French as a Second Language. All individual courses provide context for their curriculum content as it relates to the practicum.2

As a result of the re-visioning process, a course cluster for Educational Psychology and Special Education was designed and renamed Cognition and the Exceptional Learner. To reduce redundancy and streamline the course content in ETEP, teacher candidates receive both the psychological theory and special education foundations in a meaningful blended course offering. Cognition and the Exceptional Learner was designed and placed in Semester One to provide the cognitive and behavioural content base necessary for the Internship and the first practice teaching placement.

For the first six weeks of Semester One, the TCs enrol in Teaching Digital Learners in a Digital Age. This course offering exposes TCs to a variety of pedagogical technologies that enhance the teaching and learning process. For the final six weeks of the semester, the TCs switch over to take Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting. This course prepares the TCs with the groundwork for connecting curriculum to instruction with the eventual goal of assessing and evaluating student work. The next major re-visioning decision was creating two parts for both Language and Literacy and Mathematics curriculum courses. The Part 1 course was developed to prepare the TCs to teach either Math or Language Arts in their first field placement. This content is taught simultaneously with Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting, which prepares TCs with the basics needed for teaching, assessing, and evaluating students in their field placements.

Initially, the coursework was laid out to provide the TCs with a wide breadth of knowledge about teaching and learning. We organized Semester One by focusing on Math and Language Arts, with the intention for each TC to experience teaching one of the two curriculum areas in their first teaching placement. By additionally providing a blended course that offered both cognitive and behavioural content throughout the semester, we felt this would enhance the teachings from the assessment and evaluation course and also enrich the pedagogical teachings learned in the technology course. The cohort course, Teaching in the Ontario Context, begins by examining the personal and slowly connects it to the practical and this is the key element that differentiates the past program from Brock’s ETEP.

*Cohort*

EDBE 8F01: Teaching in the Ontario Context is the cohort course attached to practicum. It moves beyond preparing teacher candidates to learn the “practical” aspects of teaching and lays the groundwork for teacher candidates to explore what it means to be a culturally responsive and competent teacher learner. For the first half of the course, teacher candidates are encouraged to question their assumptions and beliefs and critically engage with content that questions socially constructed ideologies, stereotypes, and the ways in which they may fall into these ideologies and stereotypes to the benefit of some students and the exclusion of others (Samuels, 2014). We initially examined this through the old story/new story model (Drake, 2014) and most recently

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2 Please note that from here onwards, we will provide course titles for the foundation courses and only supply the name of the P/J method courses to save duplication. In addition, when we refer to the EDBE 8F01 cohort course, the points raised apply equally to EDBE 8P01, the equivalent concurrent course as stated above.
revised this through Standpoint Theory (Smith, 1987), which will be highlighted in the Revisions section at the end of this chapter. For the first six sessions, topics such as colourblindness, stereotype threat, implicit bias, and microaggressions challenge teacher candidates’ prior knowledge. In addition, the theories that underpin this course, such as critical race theory, privilege theory, and social identity theory, are unsettling for the majority of teacher candidates. Hence, teaching teacher candidates how to ‘move through and with’ their discomfort is as important as learning the theory that underpins becoming culturally responsive. Due to the nature of the content being learned, the cultivation of a positive and safe cohort learning environment is essential. Each group of TCs forms a cohort that is represented in the Triple C Model. Each cohort is supported by two teacher educators who we refer to as Faculty Advisors. Both supervise practice teaching. One is the practicum instructor (PI) teaching the course, and the other is the Practicum Advisor (PA) who co-teaches four sessions of EDBE 8F01. The four sessions include an initial class on the day Beginning of Program starts. The cohort is the only class scheduled on that day. Introductions and an overview of the entire program and the content of the cohort course is reviewed. The PA returns for Sessions Six and Seven where the focus is unit planning, lesson planning, and assessment in preparation for Internship and the first practicum. Finally, the PA returns in Session Twelve, the final class, which is focused on the expectations of Internship (two weeks in December) and the first practicum, which takes place after the winter break. In EDBE 8F01, an opportunity for teacher candidates to explore what it means to be a culturally responsive and competent teacher learner, as reflected in the OCT Standards and Ethical Standards of Practice, is provided. For the second half of the course, teacher candidates become immersed in the practical elements of teaching—i.e., lesson planning, unit planning (backwards design), assessment and evaluation in relation to lesson and unit planning, and daybook preparation. These practical elements are discussed in relation to two essential concepts the TCs have been tracking in their weekly in-school structured experience (SE) days: student engagement and inclusion. Expanding upon the TCs’ initial definition of student engagement and inclusion becomes the basis for potential transformation. Spiraling the practical with the theoretical over the final six classes culminates in the TCs’ ability to integrate this knowledge into creating lesson plans that meet the needs of all learners, which is assessed during the Internship. The goal of integrating theory into practice is interrogated further in Semester Two, when the cohort group reconvenes in EDBE 8P02 after their first field placement.

Community
EDBE 8F01 provides TCs with a Faculty Advisor (FA), as well as an Associate Teacher (AT), who support TCs throughout Semester One. The AT support helps TCs connect educational theory with in-school practice by providing meaningful experiences during structured experience days, mentoring TCs during the two-week Internship, assisting with preparation for the TCs’ microteaching, as well as providing critical feedback, guidance, and support during the six-week practice teaching experiences in schools.

In addition, building relationships between the FA and AT is an essential component of the community building process. Impromptu and formal meetings between the FA and AT help to bridge the gap in knowledge and experience between what an AT believes a TC should know and what a TC is actually learning at that juncture in their program. For example, if an AT thinks a TC should be capable of performing to a higher standard in Practicum 1, a simple reminder by the FA that a TC is at the assisted practice level in the first three weeks of Practicum 1 in Year One signals
the AT to provide the additional assistance the TC may require to become successful. These discussions can be invaluable as they foster a sense of support and commitment directed towards the TC’s journey to becoming a competent teacher.

Structured experience (SE) days take place from mid-September until the Internship begins in mid-December. Teacher candidates enter their placements one day per week with focused attention on concepts such as student engagement, inclusion, the OCT Standards and Ethical Standards of practice, and are ready to observe, assist, and plan with classroom teachers. The SE days offer regular opportunities for TCs to connect the theory in their coursework to practice in the field. For example, by observing diversity and inclusion in classrooms and schools, TCs are better able to unpack their beliefs and reflect critically on how to enact inclusion in their own practice. On SE days, FAs visit TCs in their host schools, introduce themselves to ATs and communicate the expectations for the Internship block. This informal drop-in meeting initiates the community building tone that Brock’s Teacher Education Program believes is essential in developing relationships with the experienced teachers that are supporting our TCs to apply their coursework learning to their classroom practice. SE days are significant opportunities that allow TCs to authentically engage concepts and strategies learned in coursework with teaching in classrooms.

The two-week Internship, in the same school as the SE days, takes place before the winter break. TCs are expected to prepare and teach one lesson per day during the second week of the Internship. During this time, the FA visits the school and informally assesses the TC during their microteaching. The microteaching is a focused learning opportunity whereby the TC teaches a lesson to a small group of his/her students in the presence of his/her practicum advisor and other TCs within the school setting. After the completion of the lesson, the TC participates in a debrief session where everyone present provides constructive feedback. At this time, the Faculty Advisor and AT have their first informal meeting, which initiates community building. This differs from the initial SE day meet and greet since by this time the AT has a better sense of the TC’s strengths and areas of need as they have had more time working with the TC (all SE days and at least half of the Internship days). At the end of the Internship, the Associate Teacher completes a mid-term evaluation in which the TC receives additional constructive feedback without a grade attached. The feedback is provided to prepare the TC for the upcoming practicum that takes place when the TC returns to their class immediately after the winter break. The Internship experience brings Semester One to a close with TCs having developed basic understandings of theory, students, classrooms, and their role in enacting these understandings in practice.

SEMESTER TWO: BUILDING PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TEACHING PRACTICE – WITH A SPECIALIZATION OF PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

Semester Two begins with a 5-week field placement and then moves into twelve weeks of coursework. The focus of the coursework is on specialized pedagogical practices for content areas; reflection on curriculum and teaching practice; teaching students with special needs and exceptionalities; social cognition; sociocultural diversity and ethnicity; gender; and development of professional learning plans.

Community

In EDBE 8Y02: P/J/I Teaching in the Ontario Context (Practicum), TCs move from assisted practice (in Week 1) to beginning of competence (Week 5) in relation to the following
responsibilities: teaching load, resources, planning, instruction, daybook, routines, classroom management, and student assessment and evaluation. A chart titled “Expectations through the Blocks: P/J/I Candidate Responsibilities in Years 1 & 2” outlines how these responsibilities are scaffolded over three practicum placements. For example, for the teaching load in Block 1, the focus is on Literacy and Math (connected with the coursework from Semester One, when a TC teaches from 50% to 75% of the AT’s workload by the end of the 5 weeks. This segues nicely from the Internship where TCs were tasked to prepare and teach one lesson per day during their second week. In Block 2, the TCs are expected to teach a minimum of 75% of all subjects, increasing to 100% by the end of the six-week practicum, while, in the final practicum, TCs are expected to teach 100% through the six-week block. In a further example under planning, in practicum 1, the TC moves from one lesson per day to grouping and sequencing lessons and developing mini-units by the close of practicum while also attempting to develop program modifications. Through the second and third practica, the expectations become more sophisticated as TCs begin to integrate curriculum using the Know/Do/Be framework (Drake, Reid, & Kolohon, 2014) by developing integrated units of study while also developing appropriate program modifications and accommodations for student success. Field placements are a signal moment in a TC’s Bachelor of Education experience. The Expectations through the Blocks chart allow clear expectations to be consistently communicated to assist both the Associate Teacher and TC. By communicating expectations for teaching load, resources, planning, instruction, daybook, routines, classroom management, and student assessment and evaluation, connections are seamlessly made by connecting the theory to practice divide; linking the university to the field placement in a tangible manner.

Halfway through Block 1, the AT completes a mid-term assessment. This is an ‘assessment for learning’ opportunity to offer critical feedback to the TC. When the FA arrives at the field placement for the formal evaluation, the TCs will have had three opportunities to incorporate feedback: two during the Internship (micro-teaching and the AT Internship Report) and the AT’s mid-block assessment. Near the end of five-week Block 2, two formal evaluations by the AT and the FA take place. The critical feedback, the formal evaluations, and the five-week teaching experience creates the foundation for a more tangible learning experience for the remainder of the program, as the TCs are now able to provide lived experiences from their own practical experience and delve differently into the theory they are continuing to learn in their coursework.

Cohort
After the practicum, the TCs remain with their cohort peers and FAs in a new course, EDBE 8P02: Integrating Teaching, Learning, and Assessment for twelve weeks. Within this two-semester cohort flow structure, TCs are provided with multiple opportunities to reflect, debrief, pose questions, and increase their store of knowledge and skills in a safe and inclusive environment. One of the initial exercises the TCs undergo is an activity identifying the gaps between theory learned in Semester One and what they actually experienced during their field placement. Areas of focus are: Differentiated Instruction, Assessment for Learning, Modifications/Accommodations/Alternative Expectations, Technology and 21st Century Skills, Inquiry, and Integrated Learning. In triads, the TCs recall and record: What the Theory Tells Us in one column, and in a second column they share: What Were the Challenges in Practice? These gaps that are identified are recorded by the instructor and woven into the topics of EDBE 8P02. Topics range from how to integrate and assess content for and about Mental Health and Well
Being; First Nation, Métis, and Inuit ways of knowing; and learning how to address the needs of English Language Learners. The richness of being able to utilize the TCs’ first practicum experience is invaluable.

Coursework
After the initial practicum, there are 12 weeks of coursework. In addition to EDBE 8P02, the coursework in Semester Two consists of a foundation course, EDBE 8P35: Exceptional Learner, and three methods courses: EDBE 8P09: Social Studies; EDBE 8P12 (P/J): Arts In and Across the Curriculum [Visual Arts and Music]; and EDBE 8P37: Science and Technology.

EDBE 8P35 Exceptional Learner, part of the re-designed course cluster including Educational Psychology and Special Education courses, benefits from being scheduled after the first practicum, as learning draws on the importance of socialization and communication issues that the TCs have now experienced.

The other three Semester Two courses help teacher candidates build professional knowledge about their teaching practice through subject-specific pedagogical knowledge. As they have observed this curriculum being taught during their practicum, TCs are better able to connect what they learned from practical observations to the theory presented in these Semester Two courses.

SEMESTER THREE: PROFESSIONAL GROWTH THROUGH ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
In the six-week Semester Three, coursework and time with Faculty Advisors are combined with professional development opportunities designed to deepen knowledge and skills. Some PD is required, but there are ample opportunities to participate in designated PD of their choice, and to have these recorded in their Experience Plus profiles.

Cohort
The cycle of theory to practice is intensified in Year 2, with a focus on professional growth through teacher development. During the six weeks, cohort groups continue to meet in EDBE 8P40: Professional Collaborative Community (PCC). There are five PCC classes—four in Semester Three and a final class in Semester Four. Each PCC is led by the previous year’s Faculty Advisors, each of whom support a cluster of fifteen TCs. The continuity of instructors capitalizes on the trust that was developed in Year 1. The model described here was revised in 2019-2020 (see Revisions to ETEP later in the chapter).

Coursework
Foundation and methods courses continue in Year 2. EDBE 8P42 (P/J): Language Arts, Part 2 is accompanied by EDBE 8P46 (P/J) Health and Physical Education; EDBE 8P08: French as a Second Language, Part 2 is taken in either the third or fourth semesters by the J/I TCs with French as their teachable subject. EDBE 8Y41: Professionalism and Law, a foundations course, rounds out their program. Semester Three coursework is immediately followed by practicum 2.

Community
Block 2, a six-week practicum, aims for demonstration of competence by Week 3 while TCs are projected to meet expectations with confidence and increased competence by Week 6. They are
also encouraged to implement more personalized resources (e.g., ELL, Mental Health, and Indigenous ways of knowing) showing initiative and creativity. In Block 3, during Semester Four, they shift to the identity of a professional who is able to analyze, evaluate and apply contemporary research through personalized action research. In Block 2, TCs are expected to independently apply differentiated instruction within individual, group, and experiential strategies. The two examples clearly demonstrate how the responsibilities of Brock’s teacher candidates are scaffolded in conjunction with coursework addressed in the semester.

SEMESTER FOUR - MAKING CONNECTIONS THROUGH LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Semester Four consists of six weeks of classes that focus on integrative and collaborative teaching, leading to a Capstone Project at the conclusion of the program. The Teacher as Researcher course is a critical component of the program, as it reinforces the importance of teacher expertise and encourages TCs to thoughtfully incorporate research into their practice and ongoing professional development.

Initially, the coursework in Semester Four began with three weeks of coursework followed by a six-week practicum and then culminated with a final three-week block of coursework. The goal was for teacher candidates to be able to clearly articulate their professional knowledge and their experience in the ETEP as a whole. The initial program design flow of coursework – practicum – coursework (as just described), was adjusted in 2018/2019. The motivation for this change will be discussed under Revisions to ETEP later in the chapter.

Coursework

Semester Four culminates with two method courses and two foundations courses. EDBE 8P44: Mathematics, Part 2 offers deeper insights into mathematics instruction while EDBE 8P48: Arts In and Across the Curriculum focuses on Drama and Dance, the final two Arts disciplines.

EDBE 8Y42: Programming for the Inclusive Classroom, the culminating course in the redesigned psychology and special education cluster, offers opportunities for TCs to apply concepts and theory to their experiences in the first two placements and in the final portion of this course in order to become more inclusive educators.

The culminating course, EDBE 8P43: Teacher as Researcher, was designed as Brock University’s capstone course that draws on action research to improve teaching practice. In the Teacher as Researcher course, TCs are introduced to knowledge that supports their ability to design an action research project during their final practicum. Upon completion of the final teaching experience, TCs are able to clearly articulate their professional knowledge and their experience in the ETEP as a whole. The content of Teacher as Researcher was revised due to the adjustment of course flow in 2018/19. This will be discussed in more depth under Revisions to ETEP later in the chapter.

Cohort

The fifth and final PCC takes place before the final practicum. In this session, teacher candidates review their field placement evaluations to date, two from FAs and two from ATs. From the data provided, they analyze and synthesize their strengths and areas of need and write an entry plan to be shared with their AT at the beginning of their final placement. This exercise sets teacher candidates up for a successful final placement.
Community
During the six-week final practicum, the TCs are solely evaluated by their AT, hence the necessity of cultivating a strong collegial relationship. The initial stage of this relationship is achieved by creating an open dialogue by initially sharing their entry plan, which addresses both the TCs’ strengths and areas of need. Through open dialogue and continuous critical feedback, the goal for all TCs is to demonstrate confidence and increased competence by Week 3, and a demonstration of increased self-reliance, complexity of teaching, and self-regulation being achieved by Week 6. These expectations have the potential to be realized if the TC creates a collaborative community with their AT.

Growing from learning how to plan and implement Language Arts and Mathematics lessons in semester one to using action-research to improve teaching practice and promote personal and professional growth by Semester Four scaffolds the learning to allow teacher candidates to move from beginning of competence to self-reliance that is developmentally sound. According to the most recent OCT accreditation in 2018/19, Brock University fully satisfied all the requirements. This substantiates that the format and structure of the Brock Teacher Education P/J/I Program is such that students develop and acquire an increasing level of knowledge about the complexities of teaching and learning in a highly diverse population.

REVISIONS TO ETEP
Over the past 5 years, Brock’s four-semester teacher education program has evolved in response to teacher candidate feedback, the concerns of instructors, and consultations with stakeholders. Annual online surveys conducted with TCs completing Year 1 and graduates at the end of Year 2 are a rich source of information on TC satisfaction and areas of concern. Overall, the surveys reveal a high level of satisfaction with the program and their professional preparation. These surveys have also revealed unevenness in workload across semesters, a desire for more coursework on assessment, and more sessions in the Year 2 EDBE 8P40: Professional Collaborative Community course. Similarly, instructors have offered suggestions on how to address other concerns. External forces, such as cuts in provincial funding and new provincial priorities, further complicate programming and prompt further adjustments. In this section, several revisions since the first year of ETEP are highlighted.

Flow of Semesters
The enhanced teacher education program was organized carefully to balance workload over four semesters. While the overall balance was good, teacher candidates found certain semesters more or less demanding. For example, I/S teacher candidates reported that their teachable subjects were much more demanding in second year; their recommendation to move School and Society from the second year to Semester Two resolved this concern.

The flow of Semester Four for P/J/I was adjusted in response to the financial burden TCs identified. As described earlier, in Semester Four there were three weeks of coursework, then six weeks of practicum, followed by a return to campus for three weeks to reflect on experiences and consolidate understanding. In 2014, when planning the ETEP, we envisioned that a Capstone Project initiated in the Teacher as Researcher course would help TCs synthesize their theory to practice experience over the two years. As the final three weeks of classes often necessitated paying additional rent for campus housing, many TCs who moved back home for placement, often out of our customary
regions, TCs proposed completing coursework prior to Block 3. Coursework bled into mid-May, and this caused many pragmatic issues for TCs, primarily financial. In addition, some instructors in Semester Four indicated that six consecutive weeks made for a better flow within their classes. On the other hand, this accommodation diminished opportunities to consolidate knowledge at the end of a two-year program.

**Course Changes**

In addition, some courses were moved to other semesters for better program flow. In P/I/I, Mathematics, Part 2 was moved from Semester Three to Semester Four. In the original conception of the program, Semester Three seemed the better fit for students. However, placing both the Year 1 and Year 2 Mathematics courses in the Fall semester made it difficult to staff the courses as the most suitable instructors were overloaded during the Fall. To maintain balance, Professionalism and Law was shifted to Semester Three.

**Additional Hours for Assessment and Evaluation**

The end of the year survey consistently indicated that P/I/I TCs wanted more hours of instruction in Assessment and Evaluation (A&E). As a result of this finding, which was reinforced in consultations with ATs, the P/I/I Coordinator and Assessment and Evaluation team leader advocated for action. Three documents were presented that outlined processes, challenges, and possibilities for revising how concepts and strategies presented in A&E were taken up in the multiple subject method courses. After a lengthy discussion, the Team Leads realized they were implicitly teaching A&E in all their courses and that they needed to be more explicit in their teaching. A document outlining key assessment and evaluation terms to be explicitly reinforced in methods courses led to modifications. While the results were positive, demand for more assessment knowledge persisted. As it was difficult to integrate more A&E into each methods course, we ultimately approved an additional A&E course in Year 2 starting in 2020. This change, which led to reductions in cohort hours, should enhance the greater spiralling of assessment through the curriculum as TCs move from theory to practice.

**Professional Collaborative Community (PCC)**

In January 2019, during the fourth year of ETEP, the Ontario Government made significant financial cutbacks to education. As a direct result, the Teacher Education Program had to find ways to work within a reduced budget. One solution at the P/I/I level was to not divide the cohort into two smaller PCC groups in Year 2. This change diminished the learning opportunities found in the original seminar-sized groups, but reduced the cost of staffing the course. One way this was counterbalanced was by offering the two FAs the option to split the PCC course between them at reduced pay. As FAs agreed to do this, the integrity of the initial vision was maintained. In I/S, a single FA conducts the PCC now, while both support the practicum attached to the course.

Being responsive to teacher candidate needs is imperative if we are to implement a teacher education program that encourages teacher candidates to become culturally responsive educators themselves. The changes we made reflect our commitment to being a learning faculty that attends to the concerns and suggestions of teacher candidates and other stakeholders.
A PEEK AT THE INTERMEDIATE/SENIOR PROGRAM

The Intermediate/Senior teacher education at Brock is built on the same conceptual foundation as the elementary programs. In “A Welcome Change: Brock University Embrace Teacher Education Reform,” Kitchen and Sharma (2017) drew on the I/S program to illustrate the approach to teacher education, just as we have done in this chapter through elementary program examples. In this section, we highlight continuity and changes in the I/S program since 2017.

The program structure has not changed significantly since its inception, although teams of instructors continue to refine the content of their courses. Professionalism, Law, and Principles of Teaching in Ontario Intermediate Senior in Year 1 is the I/S equivalent of the cohort-related course in P/J/I outlined above. The main difference is that the cohort course in I/S connects foundational content related to professionalism, law, and the organization of schooling in Ontario. Curriculum-related knowledge and skills are the focus of the two teachable subjects each teacher candidate takes in Year 1 (72 hours each) and Year 2 (36 hours) each.

The most notable changes are that, beginning in 2019, the entire program is two years in duration, with concurrent students no longer grandfathered into the one-year program, and, as a result, the two-year program is now offered at both the main campus in St. Catharines and in Hamilton in classes that blend together concurrent and consecutive teacher candidates. The School and Society course was moved from Semester 4 to Semester 2 to better balance teacher candidate workload.

The field experiences are similar to those in elementary, with most placements in local school districts, with the option of going further afield for the last placement. The Internship, which orients teacher candidates to classroom teaching and the school culture, now takes place in December followed by a practicum typically in the same classroom in April. While this gap enables teacher candidates to draw on these experiences in Semester Two, continuity of placements can be a challenge as teaching schedules in schools change between semesters. In Year 2, there are two placements, one each semester. Teacher candidates typically are placed in their preferred subject area for two of the three placements, and efforts are made to ensure teaching opportunities at both Intermediate and Senior.

Brock also offers a B.Ed. in Technological Education at the I/S level. This blended program, delivered in face-to-face and online formats over four terms, is offered as a consecutive model targeted at people with prior experience in technological fields. This program, which is described more fully by Brushwood Rose and Figg in “Technological Education Teacher Education: Program Development and Innovation in Ontario” in this volume, is adapted from the I/S program, with Teaching Technological Education, Grades 9 and 10 (Parts 1 and 2) and Teaching Technological Education, Grades 11 and 12 (Parts 1 and 2) taking the place of the subject teachables. This program is offered at various times based on demand, with some cohorts beginning in January and others in July. Also, as teacher candidates may reside anywhere in Ontario, placements are not confined to local school districts.

A RE-IMAGINED IMAGE OF AN IDEAL GRADUATE

The Enhanced Teacher Education Program is guided by an image of an Ideal Graduate. We envision that teacher candidates completing Year 1 will know how to plan and implement lessons...
in their teachable subjects; become aware of how to teach through an equity and diversity lens; add 21st Century learning to instructional practice; and enhance teaching by employing technological tools and applying assessment tools that match learning outcomes to student performance. They are also expected to demonstrate specialized knowledge about teaching and an understanding of the professional and ethical standards of Ontario teachers. The claims made in this chapter on developing the qualities of an Ideal Graduate though our Triple-C Model were validated by the Ontario College of Teachers’ accreditation panel in 2019. In its final report, under Requirement 2, the OCT panel cited numerous examples from our conceptual framework, interviews, and course syllabi. Under Requirements 3 and 3.1, which interrogate OCT’s Standards and Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession as well as the integration of theory to practice, the panel reported that our Triple C Model informs our theoretical frameworks (OCT Panel Report, 2019, p. 26) and that teacher candidates are encouraged to examine their experience through an equity and diversity lens (p. 28). Also, the panel confirmed that Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) is based on research faculty have conducted and that this research informs all our technology courses (OCT, p. 31) and that the very design of the consecutive and concurrent programs strongly reflects the integration of theory to practice (OCT, p. 31). At the end of the second year, according to the panel, graduates will be ready to be collaborative members of a professional learning community and able to apply pedagogy across a range of subjects while differentiating for a diversity of developmental and cultural needs. Again, the OCT report confirms this by highlighting our Triple C Model with specific reference to the Professional Collaborative Communities where teacher candidates collaborate, cohere, and deepen their connection to each other, to the field, and to their faculty advisor (p. 11).

The Ideal Graduate is also able to build specialized knowledge about programming instruction for inclusiveness and use action-research to improve teaching practice and promote personal and professional growth. In their final report, OCT made specific reference to P/J/I courses that deliver this specialized knowledge, such as Programming for the Inclusive Classroom and the capstone course, Teaching Research and Education Inquiry, to name but two. This validates the importance of having an action plan that identifies key issues in coursework combined with reinforcement by cohort leaders to ensure that teacher candidates implement these approaches during practicum placements (OCT, 2019). In I/S, equity and diversity are introduced in School and Society, then integrated with subject-specific knowledge and pedagogy in the two subject teachables each year, while action research is introduced in Teaching, Research, and Education Inquiry. Finally, the Ideal Graduate should continue to demonstrate knowledge of the professional and ethical standards of Ontario teachers, and accomplish this through the nuanced lenses of diversity, inclusion, awareness of Ontario’s colonial past, and recognition that they themselves must prepare their students to be future-ready learners. We hope that placing the TC at the centre of the Triple C Model, and establishing course sequence and program integration grounded in constructivism, reflection, learning community, and cultural responsiveness, provides matrices of experiences that nurture the qualities of the Ideal Graduate.

Teacher education programs at Brock University today continue to build on the Triple-C model of coursework, cohort and community, and are guided by a re-imagined image of an Ideal Graduate. While continuity has been maintained in the move to an extended program over two years, this chapter also highlights profound changes, notably in the greater emphasis on constructivism, reflection, learning community, and cultural responsiveness. Teacher education at Brock
University continues to change due to the reverberations of the introduction of a four-semester program. 2019-2020 is the first year in which all teacher candidates, from both concurrent and consecutive streams, are completing two years of professional certification. The cap of 735 funded teacher candidate places across P/J/I/S over two years makes it more difficult to run viable P/J, J/I and I/S programs, even with a few additional spaces not funded by the province. The reduced number of new teacher candidates each year, combined with the university’s decision to accept significantly more concurrent candidates straight from secondary school, poses challenges for some low-enrolment I/S teaching subjects and leaves limited spaces available for P/J and J/I consecutive candidates. The large number of concurrent P/J/I teacher candidates may also prompt consideration of separating the concurrent and consecutive streams. Finally, a growing number of technological education teacher candidates (three cohorts of under 30 TCs in 2019-2020) in a blended program exempted from the provincial enrolment cap offers interesting opportunities for growth and differentiation. In short, the perennial tension between continuity and change will continue to shape teacher education at Brock University.

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CHAPTER 7

PROGRESSIVE CHANGE AT LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY: TOWARD A PRACTICE-BASED MODEL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

The imperative for change

Teresa Socha, Laurie Leslie, Wayne Melville, and Donald Kerr

Lakehead University

INTRODUCTION

Change in teacher education is constant and essential for equipping students for the “complex, situated, and active” (Sinnema, Meyer, & Aitken, 2017, p. 13) practice of teaching to meet the dynamic needs of current and future learners. Significant reform to teacher education in Ontario was initiated by the Government on June 5, 2013, with the announcement of “enhancements” to initial teacher education programs, leaving faculties of education little time to develop and implement a four-semester program (Ministry of Education, 2013). While doubling program length had considerable potential for reform, and many significant and innovative changes were implemented in the development of the enhanced teacher education programs, the short timeframe impeded a comprehensive, transformational reform agenda at Lakehead University. Promoting faculty buy-in and an organizational culture to support such intense systemic change requires significant time and resources. The resulting two-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) professional program, which reflects its origins in a conventional program, was implemented in September 2015 (see Leslie, Socha, Berger, Kerr, & Melville, 2017).

Five years on, we have experienced moderate recovery in enrolment following a severe decline in 2015, graduation of the inaugural consecutive cohort in May 2017, and graduation of the final one-year cohort in June 2019. More notably, the Faculty endorsed implementation of a practice-based framework for teacher education (Forzani, 2014; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009), which led to subsequent revisions to the program learning outcomes, and to a number of program review initiatives between 2017 and 2019. These initiatives sought feedback and recommendations from various stakeholders for enhancing the existing program.

In this chapter, we expand on some of the above points, reflect on our progress during the last five years, and consider potential directions to move the Faculty beyond rhetoric reform and help narrow the proverbial theory-and-practice divide. We begin with a brief overview of current
education programs and enrolment, and highlight the substantive changes made since 2015, which have been guided by stakeholder feedback, recommendations, and the Faculty’s vision for teacher education as articulated in key university and Faculty documents. We then detail theory-practice integration initiatives in selected courses across divisions and field experiences and, finally, we conclude with considerations for future directions toward transforming teacher education at Lakehead University in our efforts to reach beyond the rhetoric of reform.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT PROGRAMS

The Faculty of Education offers the two-year B.Ed. professional program at both its Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses. Both campuses offer programs at the Primary/Junior (P/J, Kindergarten through Grade 6) division. As well, an Intermediate/Senior (I/S, Grades 7 through 12) division program is offered at the Thunder Bay campus. Programs at both campuses include concurrent and consecutive streams: concurrent streams are completed along with another undergraduate degree, while consecutive streams require successful prior completion of an appropriate undergraduate degree. The current B.Ed. professional program (or consecutive program) is two academic years in length. Concurrent programs add an additional two academic years to the normal length of a single undergraduate degree, and include three education courses (Introduction to Education, Introduction to Teaching that includes a 35-hour field placement, and an elective) prior to the final two years, which mirror the consecutive program, including the same practicum requirements. At the Thunder Bay campus, the Department of Aboriginal Education offers a five-year Honours Bachelor of Education program in Aboriginal Education, in the P/J division.

Introduction of the two-year B.Ed. professional program was accompanied by a precipitous decline in enrolment in the teacher education programs at Lakehead University. Combined with the competitive employment situation reported in the Ontario College of Teachers’ Transition to Teaching reports, the result was predictable: “...annual applicant numbers fell sharply to 4,300 in 2015, little more than one quarter the number back in 2007” (Ontario College of Teachers, 2018, p. 6). This perfect storm of factors had a significant impact on enrolment at Lakehead, particularly at the Thunder Bay campus.

In Orillia, average enrolment in the five years prior to the enhanced teacher education program was 289 (including students entering the final year of a concurrent program, and new students entering a consecutive program). In 2015–16, the first year of the two-year B.Ed. professional program, enrolment dropped by 45% from the previous academic year, resulting in a total of 159 incoming students (Table 1). Table 1 shows the number of new students entering the program in Orillia since 2015.

The Faculty experienced a sharper enrolment decline on the Thunder Bay campus, dropping in 2015 by 63% from the previous academic year. Average enrolment in our B.Ed. professional programs (a combination of new consecutive program entrants and students in their final year of the concurrent program) in the five years prior to the start of the two-year program had already exhibited a steady decline from 604 in 2010–11 to 390 in 2014–15. Table 2 illustrates the slow recovery in enrolment since the inception of the two-year B.Ed. professional program.
Table 1

Orillia enrolment of incoming students into a B.Ed. professional program from 2015 to 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1 Year B.Ed.</th>
<th>Year 1 of 2 Year B.Ed.</th>
<th>Total Incoming Students(^a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015–16</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016–17</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017–18</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018–19</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019–20</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)This number does not denote the total number of students in our B.Ed. professional programs in Orillia; the total number also includes students continuing into the second year of the two-year program after 2015–16.

Table 2

Thunder Bay enrolment of incoming students into a B.Ed. professional program from 2015 to 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>P/J</th>
<th>J/I(^a)</th>
<th>I/S</th>
<th>Total Incoming Students(^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Year B.Ed.</td>
<td>Year 1 of 2 Year B.Ed.</td>
<td>1 Year B.Ed.</td>
<td>Year 1 of 2 Year B.Ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015–16</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016–17</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017–18</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018–19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019–20</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)As described in Leslie et al., 2017, at the time we developed the two-year B.Ed. professional program we decided not to go forward with Junior/Intermediate (J/I) programming, as we did not believe the numbers supported it.

\(^b\)Total numbers of students in our B.Ed. professional programs in Thunder Bay includes students in our H.B.Ed. program (not shown here), as well as students continuing into the second year of their two-year program after 2015–16.
PROGRESSIVE CHANGE

The Faculty prioritizes the quality of its undergraduate program and is continuously developing new initiatives to target this focus. Some of these philosophical, programmatic, and pedagogic changes have coalesced recently into a number of key initiatives that springboard future reform. This section explains these key initiatives, how they came into being, and how we see them developing in the future.

PHILOSOPHICAL

The Faculty of Education approved its renewed Strategic Plan, 2018-2023, on October 10, 2018. Following an initial half-day consultation session with faculty and staff in August 2017, a Faculty of Education working group was struck and its eight members met throughout 2017-2018, “engaging in a broad-based iterative process of consultation and information-gathering” (2018, p. 1). The Plan articulates the following Vision and Mission Statements (p. 2):

Vision

Inspire, and be active and critical learners who are recognized for their leadership and commitment to research, teaching, and service in Education.

Mission Statement

The Faculty of Education offers innovative undergraduate, graduate, and ongoing learning opportunities that are grounded in research and a commitment to social and environmental well-being. We serve diverse communities through active partnerships and learner engagement.

The Faculty renewed its commitment to research, innovation, and social and environmental well-being within three strategic priorities: Academic Growth and Excellence, Values and Culture, and Relationships. The plan continues to guide future transformational reform efforts that include implementation of a practice-based framework for teacher education.

IMPROVING PEDAGOGY: FOR STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS

A key pedagogical shift in teacher education over the past decade has been an increased emphasis on reconceptualizing the education of novice teachers such that they begin to forge identities as adaptive experts (Timperley, 2013). Central to this conceptualization is the development of opportunities for novice teachers to work with, learn from, and begin to internalize the complex practices of teaching. Development of these opportunities implies that teacher educators are either already (ideally) modelling these practices, or are (more realistically) actively working to incorporate them into their instruction. To promote these opportunities, the faculty has begun incorporating High Leverage Practices (HLPs), as developed at the University of Michigan.

This conceptualization also implies that instructors possess the language to make practices explicit, given that much teacher knowledge is tacit (Sockett, 1993). Within the Faculty, elucidation of this tacit knowledge has been supported by the introduction of Essential Skills in 2018, and the HLPs as described below.
High Leverage Practices (HLPs)

Gaining international influence (e.g., Anthony & Hunter, 2012; Ingvarson et al., 2014; Reid, 2011), the HLPs are practices central to the activity of teaching, such as “implementing organizational routines”, or “leading a group discussion”. Identifying them, and developing novice teachers’ ability to enact them in context, helps to ensure our novice teachers are focused on advancing student learning and developing their classroom practices in intentional and productive ways (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Forzani, 2014). The Faculty believes that this initiative, which also reflects a commitment to ongoing professional learning, will provide greater opportunities for students to integrate theory and practice.

Implementation of the HLPs has followed a staged process to date, embracing the conceptual change model discussed by Posner, Strike, Hewson and Gerzog (1982). This model recognizes that learning takes time, is always a risk, and must be seen as worthwhile. For learning to occur, there must be dissatisfaction with the current situation, what is being proposed must be intelligible, and new ideas must be perceived as initially plausible.

Interest in a practice-based framework for teacher education originated with Dr. Deborah Ball’s research in mathematics education and her work in teacher education reform at TeachingWorks, University of Michigan. A two-day visit to the School of Education at the University of Michigan in November 2016 by three faculty and a local school board education officer allowed us to learn about their reform efforts and see practice-based teaching in action on campus and at a local school. The practice-based framework was then introduced to faculty in August 2017 with a two-day workshop led by Dr. Francesca Forzani, Associate Director of TeachingWorks at the University of Michigan.

A range of strategies has been used to introduce and share the work that instructors are currently doing with the HLPs. To date, groups of instructors in Language Arts, Math, and Science have begun experimenting with the HLPs, reporting their challenges and successes in a series of monthly professional learning sessions. These sessions are open to all, and are recorded and archived for ease of access. Data outlining the number of times these materials have been accessed suggests they serve as an important learning resource. Another strategy is the establishment of a program in which instructors visit each other’s classrooms and then discuss what they have learned. Finally, the Faculty has thus far sent six teacher educators to TeachingWorks’ Practice-Based Teacher Education Workshop in Ann Arbor, Michigan to “learn and try out new approaches for training novice teachers” (see https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2019-practice-based-teacher-education-workshop-registration-57738557580). The expectation is that these educators will incorporate these pedagogical approaches into their practice, and then communicate their work to the wider faculty, hence building the credibility of the HLPs.

Essential Skills

In a project spearheaded at Lakehead University, the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE) recognizes four entry-to-practice categories of skills as capturing the components necessary for the teaching practice:

- Communication skills;
- Intra- and inter-personal skills;
• Cognitive and metacognitive skills; and
• Supervision skills.

The full list of skills encompassed by these categories serve as benchmarks, outlining the minimum skill standards teacher candidates must demonstrate to ensure students’ safety and learning. Since approving the Essential Skills and accompanying procedures in 2018, the Faculty has been looking to proactively use them in order to:

• Provide information to prospective teacher candidates so they can make an informed choice regarding applying to a program;
• Guide teacher candidates’ efforts toward accomplishing the essential skills and performance expectations;
• Provide prospective and current teacher candidates with information to help them decide if they should register with Student Accessibility Services to support accommodations for learning;
• Help teacher candidates, student accessibility advisors, and faculty develop reasonable accommodations; and,
• Protect the safety of learners and their learning.

These categories represent reasonable and justifiable skill requisites for meeting the requirements of the professional program and the teaching profession. Over the past year, the Essential Skills document, and the processes we have developed to support it, has allowed instructors and students to work together to identify issues, set a timeline and implement strategies for addressing those issues, and enact the supports that students need to be successful.

As with the HLPs, a range of strategies have been adopted to promote proactive use of the Essential Skills. These include communicating reminders to instructors regarding the process for purposefully using the Essential Skills, the provision of exemplars of communications between instructors and students, and coordination of the work of instructors with individual students.

REFINING PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Even as the Faculty has worked to develop and enact these changes in philosophy, program and pedagogy, there has been a constant refinement of extant procedures, including the practicum experience. These refinements are discussed here.

Practicum Experiences

Students develop their professional knowledge through a blend of theory, practice, reflection, and analysis. Learning theorists (Dumont, Istance, & Benavides, 2010) emphasize the importance of linking new learning to authentic contexts; for example, preservice teacher exposure to how and what teachers teach, and how students learn. Timperley (2013) articulates a need to reconceptualize the skills and knowledge students acquire; to center professionalism around learner, instead of teacher, needs; and to associate teacher identity with the capacity for becoming an adaptive expert. According to Timperley (2013), the complexities and stresses of teaching become far more manageable when teachers associate learner successes with their own. Offering authentic, dynamic practice teaching experiences in diverse classroom settings and within a
supported/scaffolded context, the practicum affords opportunities for students to begin making connections across teaching and learning theories and practices. As such, the practicum is widely recognized as a core component of teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Grossman et al., 2009).

Organization of the Practicum
The structure of the practicum at Lakehead University, as previously described in detail by Leslie et al. (2017), remains the same. Briefly, since the inception of the two-year B.Ed. professional program, students complete a minimum of 80, and up to 105, practicum days in Ontario classrooms, Kindergarten to Grade 12—potentially exceeding minimum Ministry requirements by 25 days. Practicum days span two years, with four practicum blocks unfolding across the first and second years of the program.

Each first-year practicum is a combination of five once-weekly observation days, commenced in October (Placement One) or February (Placement Two), followed by a four-week teaching block in November/December (Placement One) and a five-week block in March/April (Placement Two). In Year 1, students complete their placements in proximity to the host campus (Thunder Bay or Orillia). Increased program enrolment, particularly in Orillia, has necessitated expansion of first-year, localized placements into additional neighboring regions. This adds new challenges to practicum supervision. Localization of the practicum is designed to afford easier access for students and associate teachers to in-field support from faculty (advisors and liaisons).

In Year 2, assuming a student has successfully completed their two first-year practicum experiences, students choose from a range of opportunities for practicum three and four, selecting from over 50 partner boards located across Ontario in urban, rural, and/or remote settings. Practicum three and four are each five weeks in duration. Students, with three successful practicum experiences, may apply to undertake an alternative placement experience in the final practicum block.

Alternative Placements
Not all education students seek to teach in traditional classroom settings within Ontario; some seek non-traditional, remote, or international contexts. Teaching and learning are complex and impacted by situational factors (Sangster & Green, 2012). In response to increased demand for alternative placements, the number and variety have been expanded since the early years of the enhanced teacher education program. Lakehead University’s alternative education placements now include over 200 traditional and specialized classroom (i.e., K to Grade 12; special education; Indigenous language; culinary arts) and non-traditional settings (i.e., museum, art gallery, and community/cultural-support organization), within and beyond Ontario, including remote northern Ontario placements, traditional and non-traditional placements in other provinces, as well as international teaching opportunities in China and the United Kingdom. Whereas a handful of students completed alternative placements in the first years of the two-year B.Ed. professional program, just under 50 students completed alternative placements in spring of 2019, with this upward trend expected to continue in the coming years. Plans are presently underway to expand international, and out-of-province traditional and non-traditional placement offerings, while increasingly attending to the specific alternative placement requests expressed by individual students.
The following opportunities are associated with alternative placements: (1) application of teaching-related skill sets and reflexive practices in new capacities (Purdy & Gibson, 2008); (2) critical reflection on one’s teaching experiences from a new cultural lens, giving thought to how one is perceived by, and engages with, learners who are culturally, linguistically, or racially distinct to oneself (Scoffham & Barnes, 2009; Williams & Grierson, 2016); (3) acquisition and sharing of new skills and understandings about teaching and learning (Scoffham, 2011); and (4) development of newfound confidence in one’s ability to teach (Scoffham & Barnes, 2009).

**Supervision**

Quality supervision during placement helps practitioners make sense of new, often challenging situations (Hay, Maidment, Ballantyne, Beddoe, & Walker, 2018). Whether in first or second year of the program, in traditional or non-traditional settings, students and their associate teachers/mentors are well-supported by a team of educators from the Faculty of Education. In Year 1, locally-situated students are visited regularly by their faculty advisor and faculty liaison. Whereas the faculty advisor is assigned to a student cohort, the liaison is assigned to a family of schools, and supports the students and associate teachers within. The faculty liaison role originated at the Thunder Bay campus, and provides triage support to first-year students. The role supports relationship-building between faculty and school boards as well as school communities and associate teachers, and fosters incidental professional development on mentorship for associate teachers, amid ongoing fiscal restraints. Faculty liaisons visit assigned schools weekly, mentoring and problem solving with associate teachers and students, observing lessons, and reporting on student progress to faculty advisors and professional experience coordinators. The faculty liaison role complements the faculty advisor role.

Several minor changes have been made to the practicum processes and assessment forms since the inception of the two-year B.Ed. professional program: (1) adjustments to the implementation schedule (students now receive earlier instruction on lesson and unit planning, and are expected to demonstrate these skills earlier in the program); (2) increased emphasis on proactive measures for supporting student development, particularly where a student is deemed ‘at risk’ (for example, earlier identification of student needs; invitation of students to enroll in the small-group remedial support course before potentially failing a placement; application of Essential Skills procedures); (3) additional in-the-field support for ‘at risk’ students and their associate teachers; (4) heightened supervisory training for faculty advisors and liaisons; (5) ongoing development of resources/modules targeting student and associate teacher understandings and building of relationships; and (6) revisions to international/non-traditional placement assessment forms (to facilitate ease of completion) and to the student e-portfolio (to expand on the modes through which students can demonstrate skill development on an alternative placement).

In addition to these changes, an inter-campus committee, drawing upon expertise through our partnerships with various school boards and with the Ministry of Education, is presently developing the first of what is hoped will be a series of modules to target student and associate teacher understandings. Associate teachers receive little, if any, training to facilitate implementation of their complex role as mentors (Clarke, Triggs, & Nielsen, 2014). Facilitating meaningful interactions between students and their associate teachers has the capacity to enrich associate teachers’ mentorship approaches as well as associate teachers and students’ professional practices (Russell & Russell, 2011). Fostering strong relationships and communication between
faculty, students, associate teachers, and other board partners; an emphasis on co-planning and co-teaching early in the program; and informed mentorship remain at the heart of this practicum model.

In the next section, we describe an ongoing preservice education initiative, Professional Program Onsite Delivery, purposefully designed to provide opportunities for students to learn, understand, and experience what it means to be a teacher while supporting elementary learners and their school communities.

**Faculty Initiatives: Professional Program Onsite Delivery (PPOD)**

Overall effectiveness of teacher education programs is heightened by tight coherence and integration among courses and between coursework and fieldwork (Beck, Kosnik, & Rowsell, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2010), where fieldwork is not only “intensely supervised” (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 223) but also integrated with coursework informed by pedagogies that entwine theory and practice (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Hammerness, 2006). Seamlessness across university and field experiences helps students consolidate a clear vision of practice, one that guides their informed decision-making processes and prioritizes their own learning and that of their learners (Ghousseini & Herbst, 2016).

One initiative designed to foster tighter coherence and seamlessness across course and field work by entwining pedagogy and practice in a supervised setting is the PPOD model in which all first-year P/J students in Thunder Bay participate. In this specialized program, students learn and practice theory and pedagogy within a local elementary school. For the first two terms of their program, students undertake their university courses within a local elementary school setting one day each week. P/J students are assigned to a cohort with a focus on either literacy or numeracy. All students receive instruction in both literacy and numeracy; however, students within a particular focus receive heightened practical application opportunities with that focus prior to and throughout their first-year field experiences. As PPOD participants, students receive opportunities to observe the school environment and daily routines, and to teach elementary learners in supported, supervised small group settings within their host school classrooms. PPOD participants learn and practise the strategies, structures, theories, and management associated with being an effective teacher within an authentic elementary classroom. Further, the integration of multiple teacher preparation courses at the elementary school host site provides opportunities to implement HLPs (Ball & Forzani, 2009, 2010; Forzani, 2014) in meaningful contexts. An added value of the PPOD program from a board perspective is the one-on-one and small group additional support that elementary learners receive in their classrooms on PPOD days.

Faculty Advisor Heather Wark co-instructs a numeracy PPOD at an elementary school in Thunder Bay. This P/J numeracy PPOD integrates course and fieldwork by providing weekly opportunities for students to learn about numeracy and how to teach mathematics in their preservice teacher education classroom, then immediately applying their new understandings and skills within an elementary classroom setting, and consolidating their new understanding by reflecting on and debriefing their challenges and successes with peers and course instructors. Describing coursework content, and student application of that content, within host classrooms at the PPOD school, Wark explains:
For the last 3 years I have been teaching the PPOD at [school name] with a math focus, and so the work I do with the teacher candidates is around the theory and instructional practices that research has demonstrated are effective in math education. This year we were invited to team up with [names of two classroom teachers at the school] in support of their Teacher Learning and Leadership Program project. Through this partnership, teacher candidates were paired up with a student in Gr. 1 or 2 to support an individualized program in mathematics. The progression of the work followed this order:

- The teacher candidate conducted a diagnostic assessment in mathematics for their student and shared the results with [name of classroom teachers] through the use of Google Forms and Google Sheets.
- The teacher candidate used the diagnostic to develop a learning plan for the student using Dr. Alex Lawson’s (2015) “Student Continuum of Numeracy in Addition and Subtraction” from her book *What to Look For: Understanding and Developing Student Thinking in Early Numeracy*.
- After the diagnostic was analyzed, each Tuesday [PPOD day], the teacher candidate planned and played a game or instructional activity with their student to support the development of the next key mathematical idea or strategy.
- The teacher candidates took detailed anecdotal notes so that they could reflect on their student’s understanding and select and prepare a modified or different game the following week.

Through this progression, it was my hope that the teacher candidates would develop a clear picture of how to conduct a diagnostic assessment and use it to build a differentiated learning plan for an individual student. I also wanted them to learn how ongoing assessment can take place through games and activities and how that new knowledge could be used to inform their next instructional choices for those students. For [names of two classroom teachers], my hope was that the information in the diagnostic assessment that was conducted would be helpful and generated quickly and early in the school year, giving them a snapshot of their students’ understanding of counting, subitizing, place value, addition, subtraction and multiplicative thinking. I hoped that the weekly games and activities helped the students to begin to develop some of the key ideas and strategies that are likely their next stop on the continuum. (H. Wark, personal communication, 5 May 2019)

Faculty advisor Barbara Van Hatten co-instructs a P/J literacy PPOD situated at another school in Thunder Bay. As with their numeracy counterparts, student participants in the literacy PPOD spend one day each week at their elementary host school learning about planning, evaluation, and classroom management, and receive instruction in balanced literacy, language arts, and teaching literacy in place of mathematics.

Van Hatten describes how she and her teaching partner were able to model and explicitly teach toward the following HLPs:

- Make content explicit through explanation, modeling, representations, and examples;
- Design a sequence of lessons toward a specific learning goal;
• Teach a lesson or segment of instruction;
• Set up and manage small group work;
• Engage in strategic relationship-building conversations with students;
• Set long- and short-term learning goals for students;
• Appraise, choose, and modify tasks and texts for a specific learning goal; and
• Provide oral and written feedback to students on their work.

Using a language goal co-selected by the PPOD school’s junior teachers and herself, Van Hatten planned a series of three-part lessons for students in the PPOD to co-deliver. Lessons were scaffolded to support student understandings and skill development, and to give students first-hand experience supporting learner understandings, all within a guided framework. Lessons incorporated community building, classroom management considerations, pedagogically sound language practices, and assessment strategies in independent and small group contexts. Students practised each lesson with their teaching partner, and video recorded each other teaching the lessons in order to identify personal strengths and next steps. They also received feedback from the instructor prior to delivery of the actual lesson, and at various points in the year during the lesson. Gradual release of responsibility, along with increased familiarity with the classroom learners, helped students develop the confidence and skills to adjust and modify lessons in order to meet their learners’ needs.

Van Hatten recounted the following, noting that she was pleased to observe a student weaving course practice into her practicum:

While visiting teacher candidate Terri (a pseudonym), for a formal lesson observation during her final placement, the Grade 7 Associate Teacher told me the following:

• Terri arrived with an entire learning plan based on the novel he told her they would be using during placement.
• Terri greeted students as they entered each day, with a smile and inquired about topics she knew they liked.

During my lesson observation, I observed the following:

• Posted: a Prediction chart that had been modified each day following independent reading; a K-W-L chart that was also modified regularly; a Word Wall, designed with the help of the students, that T used actively during the lesson.
• Students arrived with three “promising questions” that they shared in their small groups, settling on one through the course of their discussions.
• The week’s learning goals and success criteria were posted and reviewed prior to the lesson. Each student had these recorded in their reading journal.
• Terri rotated while students worked, provided oral descriptive feedback and recorded anecdotal notes as she moved around the classroom.
• During independent reading, students recorded questions on post-it notes in the novel.
Immediately following the lesson, I met with Terri and she answered a “scaling” question that asked her to rate her lesson and suggest what she would do to “bump” the lesson up the scale. I built on Terri’s self-assessment and we co-constructed Terri’s next steps: use a strategy to facilitate small group discussions; develop promising questions that relate directly to characters and events so that learners can delve more deeply into the novel (many of the learners’ questions, although pertinent to the social justice topic, could not be answered using evidence from the novel to support learner thinking); and strengthen the lesson’s consolidation by having students identify information that might help answer their promising questions. (B. Van Hatten, personal communication, 10 June 2019)

Through mandatory involvement in the PPOD, P/J students engage in authentic action research early in their teaching program. Students learn about the theories, approaches, tools, and strategies associated with numeracy/literacy education, and then practice implementing these with their colleagues, while receiving immediate, actionable faculty advisor and mentor teacher feedback. Scaffolding of PPOD experiences supports ongoing learning and development of teaching, learning, relational and reflective, classroom management, assessment, developmental, and other theories and practices in real time contexts. P/J PPOD students report feeling more confident and better prepared about what to expect when entering their first placements.

In 2019/20, two first-year P/J PPODs are slated for emphasis on literacy, while a third PPOD will be structured around numeracy education. Faculty have expressed interest in adopting the PPOD model more widely, with potential uptake in Orillia, and/or also within the Intermediate/Senior division in Thunder Bay. The viability of extending this model is dependent upon building strong relationships with additional boards of education, as well as partner board space and commitment, among other factors.

BUILDING ON THE PAST, LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

“Overall. A huge emphasis on student centered learning is needed. Even with guidance, modeling and examples, [learning] from teach talk at [students] is not happening. Engaging kids, getting them interested, making them part of the learning…” (Principal, Lakehead Public Schools, personal communication, 3 December 2018).

The faculty has made advances in spanning the proverbial theory-and-practice divide as outlined in the previous section, yet as the above observation suggests, more needs to be done to narrow this gap. Timperley (2013) argues that “for any area of education, the issues are complex, but if we want to address them, we cannot continue with more of the same” (p. 4). More of the same is the perpetuation of the traditional theory-into-practice model that often results in students making claims that they learn more on practicum than in coursework, and typically requires students to navigate this disconnect largely on their own (Beck & Kosnik, 2002). Russell and Dillon’s (2015) survey of approximately 50 teacher education programs in Canada revealed a widespread reliance on a theory-into-practice design, largely dominated by coursework (course credit ratios from 2:1 to 5:1) that is front-end loaded to prepare students for practicum, and where practicum is primarily viewed as distinct from coursework. Such programming has been criticized for its ineffectiveness (e.g., Clift & Brady, 2005; Ball & Forzani, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Grossman et al., 2009; Timperley, 2013), and tends to result in students teaching as they were taught or becoming acculturated into the dominant classroom practices, good or bad (Cole, 1997; Russell & Dillon,
2015; Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004). Similar concerns have been raised internationally (Timperley, 2013; Jensen et al., 2008).

With the graduation of the first cohort of the two-year B.Ed. professional program in 2017, the faculty conducted a comprehensive program review at both campuses between 2017–19. Various data collection techniques, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and an open forum, were utilized to solicit feedback from students, faculty, and associate teachers. Among the recommendations was a call for greater coherence across courses and between coursework and field experiences, and a broader inclusion of inquiry-oriented approaches in teacher education. Given the faculty’s new strategic plan with a strong commitment to social justice, environmental sustainability, and Indigenous education; a faculty-approved set of revised program learning outcomes grounded in a practice-based framework; ongoing professional development initiatives to support the implementation of practice-based teacher education; and a change in leadership in the faculty, the timing is right for transformational reform.

Transformational approaches promote student- and learning-centred pedagogy that is situated in relation to a community’s specific contexts, and place greater emphasis on place- and/or land-based learning (see Darling-Hammond, 2006; Kretchmar & Zeichner, 2016; Lowenstein, Grewal, Erkaeva, Nielsen, & Voelker, 2018). A departure point for the faculty might be Timperley’s (2013) Learning to Practise conceptual framework. Based on the assumption that an inquiry stance is a key aspect of adaptive expertise, the “gold standard for becoming a professional” (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, & Brandsford, 2005, p. 360), this “bold” and ambitious framework captures the complexity of teaching decisions through professional inquiry, and conceptualizes students as “adaptive” rather than “routine” experts.

The framework integrates the Teaching for Better Learning (TBL) model, which structures teaching and learning processes around six interrelated inquiry elements: deciding on learning priorities, deciding on teaching strategies, enacting teaching strategies, examining impact, deciding and acting on professional learning priorities, and critiquing the education system (Sinnema et al., 2017). These inquiry elements are informed by a set of five resources aimed at strengthening the quality of inquiry and practice: education’s body of knowledge, competencies, dispositions, ethical principles and commitment to members of learning communities, and commitment to social justice. Students must draw on these resources to carry out a defensible professional inquiry that centres on core practices. The model aligns well with Grudnoff et al.’s (2017) six contextualized and interconnected “facets of practice for equity” (p. 305), derived from their international analysis of teaching practices that promote equity.

While research on how best to support the development of an inquiry stance in teacher education is scant (Parker et al., 2016 as cited in Anthony, 2018), recent research (Anthony, 2018) suggests that the TBL model can inform practice-based reforms and support the development of an inquiry stance and adaptive expertise. Anthony (2018) demonstrates how the TBL model was used in mathematics methods courses to afford opportunities for students to “model, practice, and engage in inquiry practices” (p. 3) within university-based coached rehearsals (Grossman et al., 2009) and subsequently with groups of students in classroom settings. Similar practice-based approaches have been used in our P/J PPODs, as described in the previous section, and would benefit from the
additional theoretical grounding that is offered by the *Learning to Practise* framework and the TBL model.

Practice-based approaches are not without their critics (e.g., Philip et al., 2019; Richmond, Bartell, Carter Andrews, & Neville, 2019; Zeichner, 2012), some of whom argue that reducing teaching to a set of practices runs the risk of “peripheralizing equity and justice” (Philip et al., 2019) and “repeating historically rooted injustices” (Richmond et al., 2019, p. 188). Yet a strength of the TBL model is how it undergirds practice-based teacher education with a set of resources and inquiry elements, including a commitment to social justice and critiquing the education system. Furthermore, the TBL model supports the integration of Grudnoff et al.’s (2017) six contextualized and interconnected “facets of practice for equity” (p. 305). Notwithstanding, much more is required to place “equity front and centre” (Nieto, 2000, p. 180) in teacher education (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016; Sleeter, 2017).

Undertaking programmatic reform is, at best, difficult, yet worthy of attention and effort to realize our strategic priorities. First, we need to heed the lessons from a recent failed attempt at reform in one Canadian teacher education program:

The focus on collaboration and coherence across university courses and field experiences was superseded by *turf protection* and the *constraints imposed by existing faculty’s expertise and pedagogical comfort level*. The interdisciplinary, integrated, and inquiry-based design of the new core courses was relatively quickly reconstructed towards a more traditional, and some would argue, a *more technical-rational approach* to acquiring provincially set outcomes and competencies. (Webber & Miller, 2016, p. 1062, emphasis added)

Incremental changes to educational programs, and supporting those responsible for enacting those changes, are important to achieving longer term goals. Relying on a staged restructuring of the program allows time for considering relevant data and research, the building of consensus and the necessary commitments and skills, and for the policy actors (see Ball, Maguire, Braun, & Hoskins, 2011) to make links between apparently disparate components of the initiatives.

**CONCLUSION**

A careful, steady approach to restructuring, rather than basing reform on a number of high profile, ideologically-driven innovations, is an important factor in the ongoing success of teacher education programs (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2010). Kitchen and Petrarca (2016) argue that “most large-scale teacher education programmes claim to address all facets of teacher education without making significant efforts to develop integrated, rigorous programmes” (p. 137). Our programs have been as guilty of this as any. Our current efforts, informed by research, feedback from stakeholders, discussions of our aims and values, and our work using the HLPs, demonstrate our commitment to the ongoing development of integrated and coherent programs. Given the turbulence of the current political climate in Ontario, attention to the incremental improvement of our programs would appear to be a reasonable path to tread.
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INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades, both the French- and English-language initial teacher education programs at Laurentian University have been buffeted by the winds of change – with dramatic sways in supply and demand for Bachelor of Education graduates, shifting Ministry directives on B.Ed. requirements, constant administrative restructuring at the university, and ever-tightening budgets. This volatile environment shows no sign of immediate let up. In April 2019, the newly elected Progressive Conservative government in Ontario suddenly announced larger class sizes from K-12, and plans for expanded online learning, which could reduce the number of employed teachers in the province by more than 9,000 in the next few years (Herhalt, 2019). The advocacy group People for Education (2019) predicted at least $986.8 million would be removed from the public education system as a result of those changes, which will naturally affect graduates of initial teacher programs across the province. Based on prior experience, as detailed below, Laurentian University will likely weather the latest storm of change by adapting as required, and by continuing to offer potential students innovative programs despite the constant turmoil. But it also seems safe to say that the years immediately ahead may be particularly trying.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Laurentian University, located in the municipality of Greater Sudbury, houses two schools of education in buildings that are situated across from each other on Voyageur Lane at the east edge of the campus. L’École des sciences de l’éducation (ÉSÉ) operates out of the recently renovated Alphonse Raymond Building, which first opened in 1974. Its English-language counterpart can be found in the School of Education (SOE), an $18 million building completed in 2008. In the last half-decade, the administration of the two initial teacher programs has migrated from the Dean of Professional Schools, to a Faculty of Education and Faculty of Health sharing an interim dean of Education, to an independent faculty with founding Dean Lace Marie Brogden arriving in July 2016.
ÉSÉ
Francophone initial teacher education in the Sudbury region has been established for almost sixty years. A burgeoning French-Canadian population in northeastern Ontario, along with a shortage of qualified instructors, prompted the creation of a Jesuit-run “École normale” for Francophones in Sudbury in September 1963. Just three years later, the provincial McLeod Report recommended the transfer of all “Teacher’s Colleges” to universities and, as a result, l’École des sciences de l’éducation (ÉSÉ) was established at Laurentian in 1974 (Sheppard & Demers, 2017, p. 108).

For the first quarter-century of its existence, the ÉSÉ provided initial teacher education to candidates at the primary/junior (P/J) and junior/intermediate (J/I) divisions. Finally, in 1989, an Intermediate/Senior (I/S) stream was added (École des sciences de l’éducation, 2015). The next innovation arrived in 2004. Due to the large number of Francophone teachers in the province operating under letters of permission, often in remote areas of Ontario, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) authorized a primarily online, part-time, B.Ed. alternatif stream. Due to concerns over the reduction in financial support that accompanied the enhanced B.Ed. in 2015, this initiative was phased out after more than a decade of operation with no new enrolments allowed after January 2014. Also, in addition to the consecutive B.Ed., ÉSÉ had a preparatory education program at the undergraduate level that operated for a half-century. The B.A.Éduc. was a three-year program that included 36 credits of education-related courses. Unlike a traditional concurrent B.Ed., this B.A.Éduc. did not lead to teaching certification or even advanced standing in a professional program. Nonetheless, originally the B.A.Éduc. was a popular option for those perhaps contemplating a consecutive B.Ed. in years to come. However, as time progressed, enrolment declined significantly (total graduates numbered 26 in 2009 and just 5 in 2015). As a result, the program ceased taking new admissions at the end of 2013 (Sheppard & Demers, 2017, p. 109).

The ÉSÉ has always remained small in size compared to the only other French-language teacher education program, which is located at the University of Ottawa. As Table 1 illustrates, over the last decade, Laurentian University has attracted a generally declining percentage of Francophone B.Ed. candidates in any given year (with the notable outlier being the last year before the expanded requirements were enacted in 2015). In particular, the proportion of students attending the ÉSÉ has declined noticeably since the enhanced program – with its doubling of credit requirements and time for completion – was enacted. This is partially a reflection of decreased demand across the province (total first year enrollment in French-language programs has dropped from more than 700 a year a decade ago to an average of less than half that – 340 – since the 60-credit B.Ed. was introduced). Only time will tell whether the intakes at the ÉSÉ will return to the heady days of the early 2000s. With strong job market demand for French-speaking teachers across the country, that remains a real possibility.

SOE
The English-language concurrent program owes much of its origins to the Ontario teacher shortage at the turn of the last century. Starting around 1998, retirements began to outpace the production of new B.Ed. graduates across the province. A recently introduced “85 factor” of combined age and service contributed to the exodus, and retirees were predicted to number about 7,200 per year.
Table 1

*September Confirmation Data - 2009-19 (compiled from Ontario Universities’ Application Centre)*.

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over the next half-decade (Ontario College of Teachers, 2018, p. 4). This made an English-language education program an enticing prospect for a northern Ontario institution faced with declining regional demographics. While the French teacher education program stretched back decades in Sudbury, Laurentian had recently lost its connection to an English B.Ed. program when Nipissing University College, located 125 kilometres east along Highway 17 in North Bay, ceased its quarter-century affiliation as a federated part of Laurentian and was granted a charter as an independent institution in 1992 (Nipissing University, n.d.). Inquiries about how the initiative could proceed were given a boost on April 12, 2001, when B. James Mackay, Director of the Universities Branch at the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU), informed Laurentian’s Office of the President that the institution did not need to formally apply for a second program in Education because the existing one that operated in French could simply add an English-language component (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2001). Buoyed by that information, on September 25, 2002, Vice-President Academic Douglas Parker informed the OCT that Laurentian would be seeking initial accreditation for a P/J and J/I B.Ed. stream in English as early as Fall 2003 (Parker, 2002). The application was made in February and within only two months, the OCT approved the initial accreditation of a concurrent, English-language Bachelor of Education – which was to include an “Aboriginally infused” curriculum – at Laurentian University (Falter, 2003). The university’s Academic Planning Committee (ACAPLAN) had reported to Senate in January 2003 that the expectation was to enroll 200 students per year into concurrent education but, with attrition, rather than 1,000 candidates over the five-year span, the school would likely have just 850. Plans for an I/S consecutive program, to begin sometime after 2010, were also sketched out. In the meantime, in the fall of 2003, the School of Education – housed then under the umbrella of the Faculty of Professional Schools – opened its doors on the 3rd and 5th floors of the university’s Parker Building. Just under seventy candidates – mostly first year students already enrolled at Laurentian – were granted admission to the concurrent B.Ed. at that point.

As seen in Figure 1, enrollment into the SOE (School of Education) quickly blossomed as an average of 180 newcomers annually entered the program during its first decade of operation. Almost all students chose the four-year undergraduate option, with under 5% choosing to pursue just a three-year associated degree, before completing the Bachelor of Education Professional Year
courses. As originally envisioned, approximately 200 students a year would enter Laurentian each fall to pursue a BA, B.Sc., or Bachelor of Physical and Health Education (BPHE), while also taking a handful of Education classes at the same time. Only students who had achieved at least a 75% high school average were to be admitted. Furthermore, over the course of their undergraduate work, students were expected to maintain that average in order to proceed into the final Professional Year of the program. The education portion in the earliest plans was limited (just three 3-hour colloquia for zero credit, and two 3-credit courses in educational psychology/special education and social foundations) while outside departments were expected to fill the need for knowledge on human development, mathematics, and technology. Thus, introductory psychology and statistics classes were made mandatory, and all students were advised to also take COSC 1701, a first-year computer science offering. The Professional Year was to involve a variety of Methods courses and a number of long-term placements in the local community. By the end of their program, candidates were to emerge four or five years after their arrival at Laurentian with both an undergraduate degree and P/J or J/I B.Ed. credentials (Sheppard, 2018, p. 4).

**Figure 1**

*SOE First Year Enrolment 2003-19 (Laurentian University, SOE records)*

Just as the SOE settled into operation, however, the supply/demand landscape shifted dramatically in Ontario. While the OCT had predicted as many as 78,000 teachers would retire between 1998-2008, the actual number was only 62,000. Unfortunately, that unexpected decline in retirements was accompanied by a massive oversupply of new teachers as faculties of education in Ontario were, by 2010, producing more than 9,000 B.Ed. holders. Outside sources – including border colleges in the United States – were adding hundreds more. As numbers climbed, recent graduates were increasingly unable to find jobs and the government was pressed to find solutions. Its first acts were to cut funding for 1,000 spots in 2010, and faculties were warned that hard caps and further cuts were soon to follow (MacDonald, 2011).
The shift to a 60-credit teacher certification in Ontario, rather than 30 credits, formally announced in 2011 and fully implemented in 2015, was one of the most daunting challenges faced by the fledgling SOE. Initially, the MTCU suggested a cap for Laurentian concurrent students of 64 per annum, but on 24 May 2011, that was revised to a cap of 87 in 2011-12 and then 84 total in the following years. Those shifting MTCU decisions had a dramatic impact on the SOE’s plans, with the most obvious result being that the proposed I/S option simply could not be instituted as the existing concurrent cohorts already filled the available funded positions. The I/S stream – which might have helped address the perennial lack of graduates and fill the SOE building to the brim – had already been offered initial accreditation in April 2010. When the full details of the enhanced B.Ed. became known (provincial funding for education students would be reduced by about a third while costs would rise due to a doubling of course and practicum requirements), the university notified the OCT in 2012 that it was no longer pursuing the option to provide I/S credentials at the SOE (Sheppard & Demers, 2017, p. 115).

While disruptive, the doubling of provincial requirements in the enhanced B.Ed. provided an opportunity to deal with several concerns (such as the absence of a mandatory mathematics-specific preparation class during the first degree, an Indigenous-infused curriculum that had not included a required course on Indigenous issues/languages, and the lack of a mandatory first-year education course), which SOE faculty had recognized as problematic for years. Prior to the implementation of the enhanced program, undergraduates were only required to earn six credits (two half courses) in Education. Education and Schooling and Educational Psychology/Special Education were, up until that time, the only mandatory education courses with credit value.

It should be noted that the last large group of “30-credit” candidates graduated in June 2019. SOE concurrent graduates have actually been earning at least 40 credits in the Professional Year since 2015 – and as many as 43 with the Roman Catholic option – well beyond the 30 credits needed under the old teacher education requirements. To permit a seamless transition between the old and the new versions of the B.Ed. program, it was decided to change the Professional Year immediately in September 2015. Because a handful of concurrent students have accommodations that must be honoured until 2022, the English-language program will still be graduating a few students classified as having completed a simple “30-credit” B.Ed. (via a grandfathered fee structure), although those students have actually earned somewhere between 46 and 58 education credits. This has presented some record-keeping difficulties, with the SOE consulting regularly with the Registrar to ensure that those students are charged the appropriate fees, and has meant we have also had to counsel those candidates to take additional courses in their undergraduate degree (such as social and legal issues) that no longer exist in the current Professional Year. Nonetheless, as of September 2019, candidates who have enrolled since 2015 will complete 60 or 63 Education credits (the provincial requirement is 60) and will have completed – depending on when school board holidays fall – 85 to 87 days of practicum placement (with a provincial minimum of 80 required).

Other significant changes have occurred at the SOE as well. From September 2003 through May 2019, for example, the concurrent B.Ed. had been either a four or five-year program. But in 2015, entrance into the four-year concurrent option was terminated since there was simply not enough time to complete 150 credits (e.g., 90 credits for the associated degree and 60 for the B.Ed.) in just
four years. Since this group was always a very minor part of the concurrent system, that decision has had no appreciable impact.

One of the SOE’s perennial concerns has been retention. As envisioned, starting in 2008-9, around 150-200 concurrent graduates a year were to emerge as newly-minted teachers since every September, roughly 200 first years were enrolling in the program.

**Figure 2**

*SOE Retention Rate (2008-2019). Percentage of first year students finishing program (from SOE records)*

![Graph showing SOE Retention Rate](image)

But until very recently, a majority of students have abandoned the combined degree, sometimes well before matriculation from the Education portion of their studies (although it should be mentioned that the bulk of the former B.Ed. candidates remained at Laurentian to complete their first degree). A combination of attrition caused by cumulative GPAs below 75%, which was required to enter the final year of the program, and self-selection out of concurrent education, meant that graduate numbers usually hovered around 50-90 per year rather than 200, and typical enrolment over all five years of the program was around 600, rather than 1,000. In fact, for the first five years of operation, only about one-third of candidates completed the concurrent program. Thus, while the founders of the program may have anticipated up to 1,700 B.Ed.-holders after the first decade of operation, only about 960 SOE alumni will actually exist as of summer 2020. It should be noted, however, that while enrolment declined significantly during the peak years of the teacher glut from 2013 to 2015, retention noticeably improved. As seen above in Figure 2, graduation rates have consistently risen since 2015, hovering over the last several years at 60-70%. Several factors have been at play here. The Faculty of Education has funded a 3-credit release for
an undergraduate advisor since 2015 and faculty who have held the position are routinely
counselling dozens of undergraduates who may be experiencing difficulties each term. In a related
vein, a greater range of optional Education courses available to undergraduates under the enhanced
program – even though the figures shown above deal with the old 30-credit system – means recent
concurrent students at Laurentian have generally had much more contact with instructors over the
last few years and thus opportunities for mentoring and making connections manifestly increased.
Finally, because of changes to its grade policies, the SOE now requires a simple “B” rather than a
strict 75% to enter the Professional Year.

For the first few years of its existence, the SOE mostly operated out of the fifth floor of the Parker
Building. Then, in 2008, a new ecologically friendly $18 million building was completed with
approximately two-thirds of the space dedicated to the concurrent program. The remaining space
was mostly occupied by the Department of Music and the School of Rural and Northern Health.
As the teacher glut led to declining B.Ed. enrolments, the university moved other departments into
the building starting in 2014, and a formerly dedicated space was eventually taken over by the
School of Social Work and several graduate programs. At this moment, the concurrent offices and
classrooms have been mostly relegated to the third floor of the building, as the Faculty of Health
has taken over a majority of the other available space. While it is an understandable reaction by
the administration to obviously declining B.Ed. enrolment that began in 2011-12, the School now
finds itself in a rather tenuous situation. The reduction in dedicated space means holding faculty-
wide events, or even normal Professional Year requirements (like the annual Federation Day), has
become a scheduling nightmare. And as B.Ed. applicant numbers have recently rebounded, the
timetabling committee has found the job of acquiring adequate space for some classes requiring
significant square footage (such as the first year lecture course Introduction to Teaching and
Learning or the Professional Year dance and health and physical education periods) particularly
challenging.

CHANGES SINCE 2017

ÉSÉ

As the number of overall students at the ÉSÉ has not increased significantly over the years since
our last chapter (Sheppard & Demers, 2017), there has been an opportunity provided by some
funding from the Ministry of Education to develop both a concurrent and an updated model of
ÉSÉ’s B.Ed. en modes alternatifs.

The previous iteration of the B.Ed. en modes alternatifs had been very good for enrolments at the
ÉSÉ. For the duration of that program, 3 cohorts were admitted every year, 2 at the P/J level, and
1 at the J/I. This represented nearly eighty new students per year, who were pursuing their degree
in a part-time, summer-intensive manner. This helped improve the enrolment woes at the ÉSÉ,
while at the same time not resulting in a space crunch.

As the rollout of the new enhanced program moved forward, the Ministry of Education saw that
the number of French-language candidates interested in the new program did not rebound as it did
on the English side, where a large number of candidates were applying at each institution around
the province. In order to alleviate this shortage, the Ministry of Education provided both the ÉSÉ
and the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa with some funds to develop and operate
a part-time program, loosely based on the previous *B.Ed. en modes alternatifs*. The Ministry insisted that there be no overlap or competition, and in the end, the University of Ottawa developed a program for P/J, and the ÉSÉ for J/I.

Laurentian’s J/I *B.Ed. en mode hybride* is based on the same curriculum as the enhanced consecutive program, but it proposes to offer some courses during the summer, as well as courses blending internet and/or videoconferencing. The program was approved by Laurentian’s Senate in 2019, and received OCT initial accreditation. The first cohort is planned for September 2020, and should help bolster the number of students at the ÉSÉ.

In parallel with this development, it was felt that having a stream of concurrent students would help stabilize enrolments in the long run. The program was also in no small way due to the success of the English-language concurrent program of the SOE. Given that the *B.Ed. en mode hybride* courses were being developed and that some of them are applicable to P/J, J/I, and I/S, it was felt that this addition would also help bolster enrolment and create synergies between the “normal” consecutive stream, the newer *mode hybride*, and the just launched concurrent program. It was also seen as an important development to help enrolments in the French-language courses of the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Architecture, where it is felt that most students will complete their undergraduate degree program. It is also the normal evolution of the *B.A.Éduc.* that was closed due to lack of interest and poor fit/articulation with the B.Ed. The concurrent program was approved by Laurentian’s Senate at the same time as the *mode hybride* program, and initial accreditation was also granted to this offering. The first cohort is also scheduled to begin in September 2020.

**SOE**

At first, the SOE had no students seeking immersion or FSL placements, but in recent years a very strong job market for graduates with those qualifications has emerged (Sheppard & Demers, 2017, p. 122). The OCT recently noted that unemployment for new teachers with those qualifications was now “negligible … down from 17 per cent for FSL-qualified graduates in 2013” (Ontario College of Teachers, 2018, p. 7). Guaranteed job prospects in that field, and Sudbury’s highly bilingual nature, mean that candidates who have the ability to study French at Laurentian have been increasingly selecting courses to bolster their bilingual abilities. In 2018-19, just over a quarter of the Professional Year students sought FSL credentials or immersion placements, and in 2019-20 the proportion has remained the same. Demand has increased so much that a written French test was instituted in Fall 2018 to ensure candidates actually had the background to justify requests for FSL or immersion placements.

In September 2018, the first trial group of ten combined Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and B.Ed. students was enrolled. The main impetus came from the School of Social Work, which has witnessed declining first year enrolment in recent years, and at the same time a highly competitive process to gain access to the last three professional years of the BSW. Demand for this innovative combination has been robust. It was initially expected that perhaps only five candidates would be admitted, but interest was so high the quota for Fall 2018 was doubled. The practicality in today’s schools of having teachers with an actual background in social work, as well as a B.Ed., seems obvious. But one issue that immediately arose was that these BSW/B.Ed. candidates must
complete two fairly demanding accredited programs at the same time, with one consequence that there are relatively few options for elective courses. For those hoping to acquire J/I qualifications, this has proven somewhat problematic. Our Intermediate teachables require 18 credits in particular subjects, and the BSW/B.Ed. students must select carefully to ensure their limited electives meet those requirements as well as cover the BSW requirements. Nonetheless, the innovation appears to remain popular and, in September 2019, fifteen more candidates for this stream arrived.

Lastly, along with most other initial teacher programs in Ontario, Laurentian’s English School of Education has recently seen a resurgence in applications. As the teacher glut hit its peak in 2013-14, applications for concurrent education at Laurentian began to fall precipitously, with fewer than 600 being made in some years (see Figure 3). That trend has very recently reversed itself as reports of a burgeoning job market and potential teacher shortages in Ontario have hit the news (MacDonald, 2019). For example, by May 2017, just 579 applications were submitted via OUAC for Laurentian’s concurrent program, but in spring 2019, that number amounted to 891 (a 54% increase in total applications). What impact the announced changes to public education - that have now prompted job actions by teacher federations - will have on this trend remains unclear at this point. Equally worrisome for many B.Ed. students are the government plans for a mathematics proficiency test, expected to be based on the grade 3 to 9 math curriculum, that new graduates starting in 2020 will have to pass within two years of finishing in order to keep their qualifications (Ministry of Education, 2019b).

**Figure 3**

*SOE Applications 2014-19 (data from Laurentian Institutional Planning)*
DIVISIONAL OFFERINGS AND ENROLMENTS IN P/J, J/I, AND I/S

ÉSÉ

Historically, under the 30-credit model, the interest in the different offerings has been reasonably steady, resulting in 5 distinct cohorts with typically 70 students in P/J, 70 in J/I, and 35 in I/S. On occasion, there have been 3 cohorts at the P/J level, and on a few occasions two cohorts of J/I.

The new enhanced model, which in effect halved the total number of permitted students, resulted in a choice by Laurentian University to limit its enrolments to one cohort for each division. Table 2 provides a clue as to the new reality faced by the ÉSÉ. At first glance, the good news is that the retention rate between year 1 and year 2 is very good, with only one or two students not returning on occasion. This seems somewhat intuitive as the students coming to this program have already earned a degree and are keen on teaching.

The second thing that is obvious from the data is that for years there has been very little interest in the I/S option, with only one year where there were over ten students entering. The cohort size has been set at 36 for the ÉSÉ, based on both classroom size and pedagogical concerns, so the P/J and J/I streams appear to be relatively healthy. At the same time, because of the new concurrent program and the B.E.d en mode hybride, the J/I numbers should be bolstered in years to come. The I/S, however, is likely not sustainable and is at risk of being cancelled. In fact, increasing concern over the lack of interest in the I/S divisions led the university to suspend admissions on December 2, 2019 (Leeson, 2019).

Table 2

Number of students by divisional offering (numbers from ÉSÉ records)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Admit type</th>
<th>2015F</th>
<th>2016F</th>
<th>2017F</th>
<th>2018F</th>
<th>2019F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P/J</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J/I</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Returning</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I/S</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Returning</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOE

One benefit of a concurrent program is that students have time to discover what sort of teaching might be best for them, and then tailor their credentials to meet emerging demands. While nominally choosing P/J or J/I designations upon entrance, all concurrent students make a final decision by December of their last undergraduate year. At that point they have had various field experiences on which to base the ultimate decision, and our placement personnel begin requesting Initial Practicums in May that, by legislation, must occur within appropriate divisions. Our first graduating cohort in 2008, for example, was split fairly evenly between P/J and J/I candidates. As
positions declined across the province in the former divisions, our candidates began switching to J/I as their preferred choice before embarking on their Professional Year placements. We quickly saw a shift to 1/3rd P/J and 2/3rd s J/I, and that trend has held steady for more than a decade.

VISION OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN KEY DOCUMENTS AND PROCESSES

ÉSÉ

The vision for the ÉSÉ continues to be focussed on the Francophone community. Since the new four-semester program has been offered, the vision has changed only slightly. Originally it noted:

La mission générale de l’École des sciences de l’éducation de l’Université Laurentienne consiste à assurer la formation initiale des futurs membres du corps enseignant pour les écoles de langue française de l’Ontario aux cycles primaire, moyen, intermédiaire et supérieur. Il s’agit alors de former des professionnels de l’enseignement capables d’agir de manière critique et réflexive afin de s’assurer de l’épanouissement et la vitalité de la culture franco-ontarienne. (École des sciences de l’éducation, 2011)

But now the phrase “et celle de la francophonie mondiale” – recognizing the “worldwide francophonie” – has just been added. This seemingly minor addition actually demonstrates the changing reality of the ÉSÉ’s student base. Over time, there has been a large increase in the number of students admitted to the ÉSÉ who have completed their undergraduate studies in another country. It also reflects the reality that new teachers will face in most urban classrooms, a reality where more and more students come from a background where their parents are new to Canada, or have been in the country for less than a decade.

SOE

The SOE’s conceptual framework dates from 2010, when the OCT, during its accreditation visit for the proposed I/S program, rightly noted the School was operating without one. Now that document can be found on posters in offices and hallways, as well as on all course outlines. Newly hired sessional faculty members are also made aware of the framework during their August and December orientation sessions. The final paragraph summarises the essentials:

Our Concurrent Education Program is thus conceptualized on the following components: an embedded Aboriginal focus with a concern for equity and sustainability; partnership with other key players in the teacher education continuum (EDU, OCT, OTF, superintendents); a rich, diverse practical engagement with teaching in multiple settings; conceptual underpinnings from both constructivism, and social reconstructionism with its emphasis on social and curricular equity, and engagement with the real world. (School of Education, 2010)
DEEPER DESCRIPTIONS OF INTERESTING INITIATIVES

ÉSÉ

One of the more innovative initiatives at Laurentian is the *J/I B.Ed. en mode hybride*. This program resembles the previous *B.Ed. en modes alternatifs*, which operated for nearly ten years at the P/J and J/I levels. The newer program’s most innovative aspect is that it is piggy-backing on the pre-existing consecutive program in order to have individuals be able to complete their studies from a distance, albeit over a longer timeframe. Over the years, in particular after the creation of the enhanced program, the eligible pool of candidates for the regular French-language program has diminished. This particular initiative will permit students who have other obligations – be they family or work – to gain certification with the OCT.

The *J/I B.Ed. en mode hybride* program, as it will start rolling out in Spring 2020, should attract a good number of students. One of the hopes is also to be able to increasingly combine the students from the regular consecutive program with the *mode hybride* students, in particular for their teachable. This is particularly important because the size of the teachable sections is often very small, and this grouping will permit better interaction between students themselves, as well as with the course instructor.

Aside from the notional student base that will be different, the rest of the hybrid program is very similar to the regular consecutive B.Ed. structure. All the courses are essentially the same between programs, which has simplified the accreditation process. Students are expected to complete the hybrid program in three years, which includes several courses taught in the spring and summer sessions. Some of those intersession offerings will make full use of technology by having part of the course taught through an asynchronous online delivery, and the other part being offered on site in Sudbury. This hybrid approach to the teaching and learning is what really sets this program apart.

SOE

The School of Education has a pre-practicum placement (PPP) system that is crucial to the success of the concurrent program. Since 2004, the PPPs have provided students with opportunities for learning in locations both inside and outside formal school settings. The majority of the PPPs take place within commuting/bussing distance of the main campus during the academic year. Originally envisioned as a series of short volunteer placements, which would occur in local classrooms that students would arrange themselves, this proved impractical from the outset as principals indicated they had little interest in dozens of individual pre-service candidates showing up on their doorsteps with requests to complete their PPP as soon as possible. In addition, without any form of oversight or final evaluation, some students simply failed to follow through in making arrangements (most being only 17 or 18 years of age when they first embarked on the endeavour), and many others never completed assignments given that they were not evaluated in those pass/fail courses.

Eventually a system was created with a PPP coordinator who oversaw and organized the process, and a body of part-time instructors who would meet several times a term with each of their charges. Prior to the 2015 enhanced program, the system saw each preservice candidate complete three 40-
hour zero-credit placements, mostly starting in second year (unless the student was pursuing a three-year undergraduate degree then the process had to begin immediately). Generally, the next PPP occurred during the third year, and the final one in fourth year. In the beginning, these placements often occurred in local schools, but as the concurrent program grew in size, neighbouring schools began to be overwhelmed. As one solution to lessen the load on the Greater Sudbury community, the third PPP was allowed to be done immediately after the second (so in the late spring before the final undergraduate year), with the student making contact with a teacher in their home community, and the final details being approved by the PPP coordinator. Since roughly two-thirds of the SOE students are from southern Ontario, this meant students had a chance to do a school-based placement, often with a favourite former elementary or high school teacher, and the schools in Greater Sudbury could be left for the Professional Years students who needed Associate teachers in the region to evaluate whole-class instruction practica.

The shift to the enhanced B.Ed. saw some minor tweaking of the field experience. Starting in 2015 the PPPs had a credit value (0.4 for the first, 0.5 for the second, and 0.6 for the third) with the placements being 40 hours, then 50 hours, then 60 hours. As the PPP is now organized, almost all students start the process by completing a session with a variety of organizations in the Sudbury region. Most placements involve elementary students, but not all. The candidates are asked to play a variety of roles during these PPPs (for example, assisting the anti-bullying program Cool Kids Lead run by campus recreation, working as tutors with the regional chapter of Frontier College, helping run the local YMCA’s children programs, assisting with Laurentian University’s English for Academic Preparation office, running youth drama camps held by the Sudbury Theatre Centre, aiding the poverty reduction “Circles Program” through the Sudbury and District Public Health branch, or helping coach in the Sudbury Youth Basketball League).

In the second PPP, all pre-service candidates are provided with fifteen hours of instruction by representatives from the Learning Disabilities Association before being partnered with a child in grades 6 to 11 who has been identified with a learning disability. The coaching program, which has been in operation for more than a decade, sees preservice candidates increase their knowledge of learning disabilities, which affect up to ten percent of the population, via one-on-one practical experience assisting students with an IEP. During the training period in the fall, SOE third year candidates attend weekly sessions that explain common learning disabilities, the basics of individual education plans, and accommodations. Laurentian coaches are then assigned a student who they normally meet in one of the branches of the public library system, or at Laurentian’s Desmarais Library, after school, or on the weekend (Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury, n.d.). Preservice candidates coach students on assignments, homework, or short lessons provided in the learning disability manual. An alternative is that students can be placed in a local elementary or secondary school, in a resource room or in a classroom where there are numerous students with learning disabilities. There they assist students one-on-one or help out in the classroom (Ontario College of Teachers, 2010).

CURRICULUM ORGANIZATION

ÉSÉ

The four-semester program, approved in May 2014 by the Laurentian Senate, is based on a model of four balanced fifteen-credit semesters. Whatever the division, students take four 3-credit
courses in the first 10 weeks, followed by a 3-credit, five-week placement in each term (amounting to 100 days of practicum by the end of the program). Foundation courses for all candidates include classroom management, school law, special education, human development, and educational technology. Methods courses – on literacy, numeracy, mathematics/financial literacy, arts, social studies, French, English, health, and physical education – are designed for each division (with all I/S candidates taking two teachable courses in addition to the above, and J/I candidates taking one teachable course in addition to the above).

As the program rolled out, there was the addition of Indigenous content throughout the curriculum. The Indigenous reality in the Francophone context is very different than in the Anglophone context, as the vast majority of Indigenous students in the province do not attend schools in French-language school boards. To that point, rather than having the same Indigenous approach as their colleagues in the School of Education, the ÉSÉ opted to incorporate Indigenous content in all of its methods courses, rather than creating a course in and of itself. The advantage of this approach is that the Indigenous content is not compartmentalized to a single course, but rather seen regularly. The disadvantage is that there is a risk that in some courses that students will encounter very little Indigenous content. As time progresses, the ÉSÉ will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach.

All courses in the program are mandatory for most students, but there are significant exceptions. At the Primary/Junior level, students must choose one of two courses, either Roman Catholic Education or Cultural and Ethnic Diversity. At the Junior/Intermediate level, students have the same choice as the Primary/Junior group, and so must choose between Roman Catholic Education or Cultural and Ethnic Diversity. At the Intermediate/Senior level, students have a choice of taking the Roman Catholic Education course or not. The Roman Catholic Education course is seen as important in the French-language Ontario context, as 8 of the 12 French-language school boards are Catholic and represent a large proportion of the students enrolled in French-language education in the province. This reality is the opposite of the English-language boards in the province, where only 29 of the 63 boards are Catholic, and where the Catholic boards are mostly smaller than their public counterparts (Ministry of Education, 2019a).

SOE

Prior to the Professional Year, all students in the expanded program must complete 20 Education credits concurrently with their associated undergraduate degree. This includes an Indigenous-related course (such as EDUC 1046EL Indigenous Ways of Learning, or others from a list of over 100 eligible Laurentian courses in a variety of departments), as well as the now-mandatory undergraduate mathematics refresher course (unless eligible to challenge out at a higher level of university mathematics). The rest of the programming includes educational psychology, social foundations, and school law. Credit value has also been added to field experiences, workshops, the expanded initial practicum (IP) preparation class, and a longer IP. Students in the enhanced program have the option to earn almost all these required twenty credits via online offerings in the spring/summer.

As noted above, the expanded Professional Year has been in operation since 2015, and all Laurentian students currently take four 18-hour courses in the arts: visual arts, music, drama, and dance. In previous iterations of the program, there was a 24-hour visual arts course, a 24-hour
music class, but no dedicated time for dance or drama. Other required topics, such as social studies, science, and mathematics have increased from 24 to 36 hours in the enhanced program. These lengthened courses mean candidates have more time in their Professional Year to become familiar with Ontario’s curriculum. For example, our graduates originally had only 18 hours of mathematics preparation in the Professional Year, but with the change to the enhanced program, the undergraduate and final year mathematics classes amount to 72 hours in total. To better meet changing OCT accreditation requirements, a three-credit course in Special Education/Mental Health is also now offered in the Professional Year, while reflection, lesson planning, and classroom management are taken up in instructional strategies classes offered over both Fall and Winter terms. For students who entered the professional year after September 2019, Social and Legal Issues will have been completed during their undergraduate program. This offering has been replaced by a Current Topics in Education course that addresses newer concerns such as financial literacy and environmental sustainability.

FIELD EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICUM

ÉSÉ

Under the old 30-credit program and over the years, the practicum format has changed, going from four 2-week placements to two placements of 5 weeks in length. That amounted to fifty days, or ten more than required by legislation at the time. One of the final iterations of the placements had students at the university for theoretical courses, after which they left for two weeks of observation in the classroom. The students then returned to the university for three or four weeks, and went back to the same classroom setting for a summative three weeks of placement. An alternative approach of having the formative and summative blocks fused into one 5-week block at the end of each academic term was then put into place. Candidates were evaluated via four levels of accomplishment with level 4 being exceptional performance, level 3 being normal, level 2 approaching acceptable, and level 1 being unsatisfactory. The enhanced program has continued with the last model, but represents a doubling of that requirement. There are now four 5-week placements over the course of two years that provide about 100 practicum days supervised by an OCT certified instructor.

Also of note is that each of the four practicum blocks now has its own focus (observation et co-enseignement, planification, gestion, évaluation). During the first placement, students are encouraged to focus on observing the multiple dimensions of the classroom, in particular how the host teacher plans and delivers the learning material. There is an expectation that the student will be co-planning and co-teaching during this time, but no expectation of the student teaching without the guidance of the associate teacher. The second placement places more emphasis on the planning of the lessons that the student then executes. During the third placement, the focus is placed on classroom management. This permits the student to observe and later apply a variety of strategies in order to ensure the best possible learning environment for all. The last placement puts a focus on evaluation. The student can see the different approaches to formative and summative evaluations, and then later on apply these skills in front of the classroom. The expectation is to have the student offer around 150 minutes of instruction per day during the last three weeks of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th placements.
It has been the case for at least the past three decades that students have the opportunity to do their placement in any French-language school in Ontario. This is in response to two realities: (1) the first was that there were not enough places for the candidates in schools in the Sudbury, or even the Greater Sudbury area; and (2) students came from many different regions of the province, and districts outside of Sudbury and Ottawa were experiencing a dearth of qualified candidates. Having students do a placement outside of Sudbury or Ottawa eased the load on Sudbury associate teachers, and also gave candidates better job opportunities.

In terms of supervision of practica, each full-time faculty member has the opportunity to incorporate some of it into their workload, usually three to six credits, representing 10 to 20 students. Given that not all faculty members at the ÉSÉ elect to do classroom supervision because of teaching or research obligations, a large number of placement consultants have been hired throughout the province to accompany students. These mostly include retired principals or vice-principals. Students are visited at least once by someone assigned from the ÉSÉ. That individual does not have a say in the grade obtained by the student as it is uniquely in the purview of the associate teacher. The practicum supervisor is able to help students when they need to navigate the education system; they are the bridge between the school and the ÉSÉ, and they provide formative feedback on the student’s performance after having seen him or her in the classroom.

SOE

As originally envisioned in the early 2003 submission to the OCT, Laurentian’s concurrent education program would involve three 40-hour PPPs during the initial associated degree. These “volunteer” placements were to occur at host schools where the teachers would provide informal feedback over the course of the year and the students would maintain a reflective journal and portfolio. In their last year of undergraduate studies, the students would complete a preparation course, dubbed EDUC 3004, that would prepare them for whole class instruction. They would then embark on a series of evaluated teaching situations beginning with the Initial Practicum immediately after the last series of undergraduate examinations. That rough plan has held true for the most part since the SOE began operations, but significant changes have occurred along the way. One of the first deviations was the abandonment of an early September PPP (the OCT submission envisioned at least one of the field experiences occurring during the first week of the school year so education candidates could see how teachers prepared for work in the fall). It quickly became apparent, however, that concurrent candidates were already enrolled in other courses at exactly that same time – whether it was History, Physical Education, Indigenous Studies or a myriad of other classes in dozens of programs – and simply could not be sent into the community at that time. Over time, other changes also occurred: the term “volunteer” was dropped immediately since that made the PPPs seem optional; the EDUC 3004 course was doubled in time to 18 hours since there was no way to teach the rudiments of classroom management, lesson planning, and curriculum in just 9 hours; and a series of consultants were hired to evaluate and organize the PPPs since having students complete portfolios with no assessment meant many did not actually complete them.

Practicum costs were severely underestimated in the original OCT proposal. It was thought that the field experiences would have no costs associated with them, given that PPP host teachers were not formally evaluating so they would not be paid. The eventual necessity to hire a PPP coordinator and a series of consultants at a total of more than $35,000 per annum was not planned.
for in setting up the SOE. On top of that, the actual cost of associates for the Professional Year was estimated to be only $60,000 ($300 times 200 students), plus $25,000 for travel costs, and another $5,000 set aside to hire advisors to complete all the evaluations required (Laurentian University, 2003). However, that $90,000 estimate rested on quite shaky foundations. First, there never would be a “Pro Year” class of 200 students, and the largest group was just 117, with most years prior to 2015 seeing about 80 graduates. While that should have reduced the costs substantially, a decision by the School in 2009 to match other Ontario publicly-funded faculties of education who had raised their per diem for associates to $8 ate up any potential savings. Under the old 30-credit program, practica costs amounted to roughly $1,000 per student, partly because the SOE practica amounted to nearly double the provincial requirement, and also because of significant travel costs. During its first professional year (2007-08), all supervised placements occurred in the Greater Sudbury region with faculty members having workloads that included completing practicum evaluations. The next year, the first out-of-town placements were organized as the Professional Year mushroomed from 13 to 58 students and the local community was unprepared to handle the burden of hosting nearly 60 Professional Year students on four long-term placements, while still accommodating hundreds of our undergraduate PPP candidates, and dozens of preservice students from other institutions (particularly Nipissing) who also sought Sudbury-area placements.

Originally, from 2003 to 2009, the supervised practicum days at the SOE involved a four-week (19 days) Initial Practicum, an October/November Pro Year placement of three weeks (15 days), a January/February placement of four weeks (20 days), and a final teaching session of four weeks (19 days), amounting to a total of 68 days. Beginning in 2009 and lasting until April 2019 as the final cohort of 30-credit students graduated, the number of placements was reduced to three (Initial Practicum, Professional Year I November/December practicum, Professional Year II March/April practicum) that normally amounted to 77 days – almost double the legislative requirement. The requirements for the expanded program (80 days minimum) has been accommodated by lengthening the final Professional Year practica sessions to 66 days altogether. Table 3 provides an overview of the number of days for each type of placement opportunity over the lifespan of the SOE.

Table 3

Number of Days for Evaluated Practica SOE (2003-20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Initial Practicum</th>
<th>Pro Year 1</th>
<th>Pro Year 2</th>
<th>Pro Year 3</th>
<th>Total days of evaluated practica</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-09</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 onward</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The practica under the expanded program is thus longer than it has previously been in order to meet the new accreditation standards, and it can still occur province-wide. As in the past, visits by part-time consultants are organized for all students in the May Initial Practicum, and for the November/December Professional Year placement as well. Only students who have encountered
some sort of difficulty are visited by Laurentian personnel for the last practicum starting in March. Since the implementation of the expanded program, which has seen classroom teaching loads double to 60 credits, full-time faculty have become minimal players in terms of visiting candidates. Instead, outside consultants, usually former principals mostly based in Sudbury, complete almost all the IP and PY evaluations. The overall cost of offering the practicum experience has risen sharply to almost $1,500 per student, primarily due to increasing fuel costs, hotel rates, and per diems.

CHALLENGES DURING THIS TRANSITION PERIOD

ÉSÉ

The greatest challenge faced by the ÉSÉ in this transition period has been the enrolment numbers. Before the transition to a four-semester program, the ÉSÉ had generally healthy enrolments, and these enrolments came with little or no recruitment efforts. All three options had, over the years, fulsome cohorts. With the new two-year requirement, and as illustrated in Table 1, the number of students interested in the program has plummeted, particularly for the Intermediate/Senior divisions, but also more broadly. This is putting a strain on an already challenged system, since financing from the province was cut by roughly a third during the transition. Recruitment efforts have generally yielded limited results, as the student population eligible for these programs is not as easily targeted as high school graduates.

More broadly, the government of Ontario is now imposing a harder cap on enrolment in B.Ed. programs throughout the province. Although this is affecting all faculties of education, it is affecting Laurentian University differentially. The SOE only has an English-language concurrent program, and the ÉSÉ only has a consecutive French-language program (although a concurrent stream and hybrid route are set to open shortly). This combination, unique in the province, makes meeting Laurentian’s official caps almost impossible. The actual number of incoming consecutive students in the Francophone stream is not known until early September, and the new concurrent students admitted annually at the SOE only really affect the cap 5 or 6 years later, and is highly dependant on the retention rate of students throughout the program. This is making a strategic enrolment management approach very challenging for the institution.

The last challenge worth mentioning during this transition period is the move from a model where there were two highly independent schools of education within a Faculty of Professional Schools, to a model where there are two schools of education within a dedicated Faculty of Education. Although this change has affected both the ÉSÉ and the SOE, we believe that the impact on the ÉSÉ has been greater, given its longer history within Laurentian. The founding Dean of Education started her mandate in July 2016, just as the two-year model had started. It has taken some time to create the structure, both within the faculty and within the university, to have the Faculty of Education recognized fully. The creation of this new entity, along with the move from a 30-credit program to a 60-credit program, has created a large number of changes for the faculty members in both units. After three years of a distinct Faculty of Education, that part of the transition has been mostly dealt with (still leaving some idiosyncrasies within the collective agreement) and collaborations (involving research, administration, and teaching) have begun to blossom. In the last few months, for example, staff and instructors on both sides have worked together to create a common professionalism policy for education students throughout the Faculty, and working
groups are now sharing promising ideas on how courses in one school might be offered in the other in the very near future.

**SOE**

The implementation of the enhanced requirements in 2015 has gradually placed immense pressure on the SOE in terms of teaching loads and budgets. The 2003 proposal submitted to the OCT suggested that a total of twelve full-time faculty members (with a quarter being from an Indigenous background) would be hired to teach in the SOE (Falter, 2003, p. 48). While the Indigenization aspect was not completely followed through (only two individuals self-identified as Indigenous scholars), by 2010, just before the provincial caps were imposed, the full-time faculty complement was 13 and the student population was about 600. At that time, the SOE was actively moving towards introducing a consecutive I/S stream of 200 students per annum and further hiring of full-time positions was expected. Over the course of the next few years, however, the I/S proposal was abandoned and because of retirements and departures - the full-time faculty complement was reduced to just nine by 2018. Yet, starting in 2015, the Professional Year course load nearly doubled (with up to 43 credits being taught in an 8-month Professional Year) and several new mandatory classes and workshops were added to the undergraduate stream to ensure candidates, starting in 2019-20, had completed the required 60 Education credits.

As noted earlier, applications and admissions have recently grown, while retention rates have skyrocketed, so in 2018-19 the student population returned to the 580 range which was common before the enhanced program was instituted, but only 9 full-time faculty members were there to run the school. As a way of compensating, the sessional roster has grown from 7 individuals in 2011-12 (Faculty of Professional Schools Annual Report, p. 1) to more than 30 part-time instructors and practicum consultants in 2018-19, taking up an increasing percentage of the teaching load. Even the hiring of all those sessional members, which is a process strictly governed by the collective agreement, is proving increasingly onerous as several minute hiring committee meetings need to be held each spring, and several more organized in the fall, in order to review the CVs and applications of the 50 or so individuals who are seeking to fill the available part-time positions. And once in the position, there is unfortunately very little support offered to these incoming part-timers. Brief welcome sessions have traditionally been organized for newcomers, but once the school year begins everyone is extremely busy teaching the classes required under the enhanced program. Most recently, the school council has been discussing a mentoring system so experienced full-time professors can offer advice on marking norms and professional year course expectations.

It should be mentioned that in early 2019, the SOE finally was granted a single full-time replacement for the four positions that had become vacant in the last few years (the other three positions remained unfilled) and the School naturally still faces tremendous labour pressures. With sabbaticals, and secondments to administrative positions occurring regularly (not to mention two imminent retirements), the essential teaching loads and governance duties continue to fall on too few full-time shoulders.

At the same time as the student population at the SOE has returned to its pre-glut peak, the university itself has been struck by a severe budget crisis. The combination of suddenly reduced provincial transfers and unexpected loss of overseas student revenue has compounded the problem,
and the institution is now seeking ways to quickly trim more than $10 million in expenses to deal with the deficit issue. As a result, the interim president bluntly announced in early 2019 that “there will be fewer faculty and staff going forward” (White, 2019). For the SOE, that means the administrative position that was devoted primarily to practicum affairs has been left unfilled after a recent departure and the school’s operating budget (exclusive of salaries and benefits) has been reduced by more than 40% from 2010 levels. This means replacing aging instructional infrastructure (such as our decade-old computer labs) is impossible at the moment.

CONCLUSION

A few years back the current authors predicted that a generalized province-wide teacher shortage would likely lead to increased applications at Laurentian’s Faculty of Education. Part of that prediction certainly came true. On the Anglophone side, applications by high school seniors for the concurrent program have slowly begun to rise to pre-enhanced B.Ed. levels. But the part we were most confident in, that very strong demand for Francophone teachers would lead to a quick rebound for the consecutive offering at the ÉSÉ, turned out to be less accurate than predicted. Enrollment in the French P/J and J/I streams now generally hovers well below 20% of the provincial total (when it was routinely 25 to 29 per cent before the 2015 doubling of requirements), but the I/S intake has been nearly non-existent. It appears the message that steady work may be available in the province’s school boards is perhaps more obvious to guidance counsellors in high schools, but ordinary university students may still believe there is a teacher glut. At any rate, both schools of education at Laurentian are facing similar challenges in regard to staffing and funding, and it seems likely that those issues are not going to change soon. Still, innovative solutions (including several new programs that are designed to meet our provincial caps) should help in the interim. But being successful in this regard may prove problematic. If the Education student body increases in total numbers as expected but budget shortfalls continue to bedevil the institution as a whole, the Faculty may find itself in the unenviable position of having increasingly unfavourable full-time professor/candidate ratios, along with a continued decline in resources needed to fund practicum costs and other essential expenditures.

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CHAPTER 9

ENHANCING TEACHER EDUCATION FIELD EXPERIENCES AT NIAGARA UNIVERSITY IN ONTARIO

Rob Leone and Carol Doyle-Jones

Niagara University

INTRODUCTION

Niagara University has had a long tradition of educating Canadian students. Its main campus is located in Lewiston, New York, about 3 kilometres from the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge. Due to its proximity to the Ontario, Canada border, some have dubbed it “Ontario’s other university.” Since its establishment in 1856, Niagara University has welcomed students from Ontario to its campus in Lewiston, NY. As a primarily liberal arts school with Vincentian Catholic roots, Ontario students have been travelling across the border to learn at Niagara for more than a century. It is an identity that is firmly rooted in the Niagara University DNA. An example of this can be seen when attending one of the many Niagara University Division I NCAA sporting events where fans and athletes are treated to a rendition of both the American and Canadian national anthems despite the fact that no Canadian teams play Division I sports. The university’s bi-national identity is deeply rooted.

INTRODUCING THE BACHELOR OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN ONTARIO

Some of the oldest and most popular programs for Canadian students are Niagara University’s teacher education programs. For decades, many Canadian students attended teacher education programs on the Lewiston campus. There are several popular programs from which to choose. Students can obtain a Bachelor of Arts in Teacher Education, which is a four-year undergraduate degree where students concurrently take teacher education with general arts and science education. There is also a post-baccalaureate degree, a Master of Education, which is an initial teacher certification degree, much like we are used to in the Canadian context. In addition to these, there is an MS in Education Leadership that is offered both in Lewiston and in Ontario. As mentioned, many Canadian students have travelled to Lewiston to take part in these education programs, which persuaded the university to consider offering courses and programs to Canadian students in Ontario. Today, the university offers both a Bachelor of Professional Studies (BPS) in Teacher Education and an MS degree in Educational Leadership in Ontario, which is why we are listed among Ontario’s teacher education programs. In fact, we join Tyndale University
and Redeemer University as forming three additional Ontario College of Teachers-accredited Teacher Colleges in Ontario in addition to Ontario’s publicly assisted university programs.

In 2000, the Government of Ontario enacted the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act. This legislation spelled out the rules by which formal consent could be granted for degrees to be conferred by institutions other than chartered public universities. It was at this time that Niagara University decided to submit an application to begin teaching Ontario teachers in Ontario. It was also the first time the university was formally recognized as an institution by the Government of Ontario. The initial teacher certification degree, the BPS in Teacher Education, was granted consent for the first time in 2006. Niagara University received organizational consent at the same time, which formally and legally allowed the institution to be called a university in the province. With this new-found status, the foundation existed for the university to be known for its bi-national roots in a formal way.

Today, Niagara University has more than 300 students in Ontario taking two degrees: the BPS in initial teacher certification (with 278 students) and the Master of Science in Education Leadership (with 20-30 students). This represents about 10% of Niagara’s total university enrollment on a yearly basis, making the education programs an important part of the university community. The university’s BPS program faces an annual semester I enrollment cap of 139 students, which was an outcome of the provincial government’s goal of slowing down the number of teacher education candidates and balancing the intake with the expected retirements that were forthcoming. Of the 139 news students admitted each year, four out of the five sections are for the Primary/Junior division and one out of the five sections is devoted to the Intermediate/Senior program. One of the policy benefits for the provincial government in moving to the two-year teacher education program is that it has worked to slow the total number of candidates seeking an education program that leads to initial teacher certification (Ontario College of Teachers, 2019).

Since inception, Niagara University’s Ontario-based teacher education program has had almost 2,300 students currently enrolled or graduated. Much like the current enrollment, most of the students in the teacher education program have taken the Primary/Junior program. When our enrollment numbers were lower, it usually was associated with the fact that our Primary/Junior program was experiencing low enrollment. Table 1 outlines the historical enrollment by cohort and by program. Overall, two thirds of our graduates or currently enrolled students are in the Primary/Junior program and one third are in the Intermediate/Senior program. During the first few years of our program, there was more balance between the cohorts than there is today.

To provide greater context to these numbers, the proportion of our P/J applications are proportionally higher than the I/S applications by roughly the same proportion as students enrolled. The acceptance rate is 25.8% out of 539 completed applications. This makes the Ontario-based BPS degree program one of the most competitive at Niagara University. This surprises many observers who sometimes brand private universities as accepting anybody that is living and breathing. This is simply not the case for Niagara University in Ontario. In fact, the Niagara BPS acceptance rate is close to the provincial average of 22% for confirmations per total applications (OUAC, 2020).
Table 1

*Historical Niagara University in Ontario BPS Enrollment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Primary/Junior Program</th>
<th>Intermediate/Senior Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 1</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 2</td>
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<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cohort 8</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cohort 9</td>
<td>126</td>
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<td>Cohort 10</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>Cohort 11</td>
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<td>105</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 14</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 15</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of our student body, while Niagara is a Vincentian Catholic university, it draws students from all faith backgrounds. The university has been making strides to ensure more multicultural diversification of its student body in line with its Vincentian values, which primarily aim to serve underrepresented and underprivileged students. One example of how the university does this is through a schedule (predominantly evenings and weekends) that permits working educators in non-teacher roles (for example, Registered Early Childhood Educators and Education Assistants) the opportunity to take the BPS program while they work. This has allowed many internationally trained educators to move from non-teacher to teacher roles. As a result, this has allowed the university to serve an ethnically, racially, and religiously diverse group who cannot afford to take two years off to train to become teachers.

In terms of partnerships with local school boards, we work with both Catholic and public school districts. Our students are placed in both systems as well as the occasional student finding their way to one of the French school boards if they took an undergraduate degree at a French-speaking institution. Before the move to Vaughan, the university’s programs were co-located in half-empty Catholic schools in both the Toronto Catholic District School Board and the York Catholic District School Board. Thus, Niagara’s first partnerships were with these two school districts, but they have since expanded to many more. Some students have been placed closer to where they want to live, and every effort is made to place them in those locations. In addition, students sometimes are placed at private independent schools as well. We have made a concerted effort to not focus on any one district, Catholic or public - we partner with them all!
OUR UNIQUE BI-NATIONAL IDENTITY

Since the enactment of the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000*, it is reasonably understood how non-public universities can offer degrees in Ontario. Any institution that wishes to offer degrees must be provided consent by the government and is subject to review by the Post-secondary Education Quality Assurance Board (PEQAB). What is certainly less understood are the nuances of operating in Ontario and New York State in a bi-national fashion like Niagara University. In essence, being an institution based in New York State, the university must be compliant with New York State laws and regulations in addition to being compliant with Ontario regulations and laws. In order to offer the BPS degree in Ontario, the program must first be registered with the New York State Department of Education’s Higher Education Office. In addition to this, the New York State Board of Regents provides institutional recognition to confer degrees. The steps in the process are not vastly different from the Ontario regulatory framework. Yet, there are some interesting nuances that are worth addressing. For example, New York State regulation provides specific delineations between when a university can call a location where it operates a “campus” vs. a “site.” A campus lists amenities typical of a university, including independent control of finances and student services, while a site simply is a place where some programming leading to a degree takes place. Wherever Niagara University is located, approval must be granted by the State of New York. This is one example of where bi-national regulations need to be met. The current location in Vaughan, ON is considered a site by regulation, even though it may grow it into a full campus in the future.

Another key issue is that any program that will be offered out-of-jurisdiction (i.e., outside New York State) must first receive approval from New York State before it can apply to offer the degree in the jurisdiction where it will be delivered. This is the reason why the teacher education degree offered in Ontario is called a Bachelor of Professional Studies in Teacher Education. The more traditional B.Ed. or M.Ed. cannot be used in Ontario because Niagara University offers a BA in Education and M.Ed. in Lewiston, NY, and these degrees are registered with the State of New York. Thus, a different name needed to be chosen in order to differentiate the degrees. The Ontario BPS degree is different from the Lewiston, NY degrees, as Ontario regulations for teacher certification and programs that lead to initial teacher certification are different, and so they could not have the same nomenclature. The university often receives questions about why the name of the degree is so different, and this is the answer.

In its most recent strategic plan, Niagara University has incorporated this bi-national identity as a key objective for the university. In the 2018-2025 Niagara University Strategic Plan, Strategic Objective V states: “Expand Niagara University as the premier bi-national university within the Province of Ontario, Canada through mission-based academic programs, improved branding, and the establishment of an Ontario NU campus” (Niagara University, 2017). Niagara University is the only Western New York institution with the consent to provide programming in Ontario, and it also is the largest foreign university operating in Ontario today. In terms of Ontario teacher education, Western New York teacher colleges have welcomed Canadian students for decades. It is a real differentiator for Niagara University to make the investment in Ontario and educate Canadian students closer to home.
AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, we will further outline Niagara University’s bi-national identity to provide a baseline understanding of the internal changes that have occurred to engage in a more methodic approach to educating teachers in Canada. We will then outline the origins of the Bachelor of Professional Studies in Teacher Education in order to understand the original design and the changes that occurred as a result of the province of Ontario moving from a two-semester teacher education program to a four-semester teacher education program. As the goal of this volume is to understand the changes that have taken place in field experiences as a result of provincial policy and regulatory changes, we will need to first understand field experiences that predated the change from the four-semester system before we get to understanding field experiences today. Once we explain the original design of the program, we can then appropriately reflect upon the changes to the four-semester program and the changes to field experiences that this has entailed.

The architects of the original BPS have long since departed the program. This means that a new generation of administrators and faculty have been deployed to continue the legacy of educating Ontario teachers at Niagara University in Ontario. Therefore, there is a need to understand whether the changes to the BPS degree are resulting from internal policy and organizational change, or whether provincial policy with respect to field placements have been the trigger for such changes. To assess this challenge, we will apply the framework on policy change (see Gornitzka, Kogan, & Amaral, 2005; Jones & Baumgartner, 2012; James & Lodge, 2003; Bennett and Howlett, 1992) to determine whether the changes we are discussing are exogenous or endogenous (Koning, 2016) to the program and the university. We will argue that both exogenous and endogenous program changes have led to the evolution of the BPS program as it currently stands.

While the topic of this volume is focused on field experiences, the central question that will be answered in this chapter is the following: Are Niagara University teacher candidates and the educational community being better served with the enhanced four-semester initial teacher education program? Based on the information and data presented, we argue that Niagara University teacher candidates are better prepared and are thus serving the educational community better today than before the enhanced program took shape. However, while we will argue that moving to the extra semester led to better prepared candidates, it also corresponded with other changes afoot at Niagara University that also contributed to this improvement. We ought to acknowledge that, much like the policy and regulatory environment, universities are themselves organizations that are also changing and evolving. Niagara University is no different.

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY’S LONG HISTORY OF SERVING ONTARIO EDUCATORS

Niagara University has always had ties to the province of Ontario. Unbeknownst to many, the people who were involved in starting the university in the 1850s also played central roles in developing the Ontario education system before, during, and since Confederation. Niagara University’s relationship with Ontario began at its inception in 1856. Much of the early history of Niagara University is chronicled by a variety of publications (Stranges, 2007; McKey, 1931). Before it officially received the name Niagara University in 1883, the institution began as a seminary originally located in Buffalo, NY. Originally named the College and Seminary of Our Lady of Angels, the first location in Buffalo was quickly deemed inadequate and thus a search for space led to the purchase of farm property where Niagara University currently sits on Monteagle...
Ridge. Rev. John Lynch and John Monaghan were the founders and first faculty members of the College and Seminary. Since inception, the institution’s location was meant to not only draw students from Western New York, but also attract students from Ontario. It became a place where people would come to learn and become professionals and priests.

Soon after establishing the College and Seminary, Rev. Lynch began to get the attention of the Toronto Diocese (Stortz, 1982). The Bishop of Buffalo at the time, the Most Rev. John Timmon, worked closely with Lynch as Lynch took up residence with Timmon at the beginning of establishing the College and Seminary. He no doubt recommended that Lynch be named as a possible Bishop in Toronto, which ended up happening in 1860. Thus, Niagara University’s first faculty member soon became the third person named Bishop for the Diocese of Toronto. As the Bishop of Toronto, Lynch was at the heart of a burgeoning Irish Catholic community, which was only eclipsed in membership by the Church of England in Toronto. The Most Rev. Lynch began aggressively expanding the Catholic congregation in Toronto and surrounding areas. So successful were his abilities that the Vatican elevated Lynch to become the first Archbishop of Toronto by 1870.

The timeline between Lynch becoming the Bishop of Toronto in 1860 and the time he was elevated to Archbishop of Toronto in 1870 is one that requires some more exploration. To begin with, Canada officially united as a country in 1867, and given the significant importance of churches to organizing communities in a nascent country, Lynch was a highly influential player in society and in the politics that shaped Canada. One of the most fascinating discussions around the politics and policies of the time pertained to the establishment of the separate school system, whereby the province would agree to set up public schools for the protestant students and a separate school for the Catholics. Archbishop Lynch was at the epicentre of that discussion. As French and English language and culture rights were being debated at Canada’s founding, Archbishop Lynch also sought protection for religious minority rights in the provinces by advocating for a separate school system for Catholic families in Ontario where there was a Protestant majority. That constitutional protection continues to shape the education system in Ontario and much of Canada.

Archbishop Lynch thus became an integral part of Canada’s founding, and helped support the major political leaders and decisions of the time. What is important for this discussion is simply to point out that Niagara University’s founder, in his successive roles as the Most Reverend John Lynch, helped shape the education system we still have today. It is a point that many at Niagara University fondly mention when discussing our roots in Ontario’s education: it dates back all the way to Confederation.

Niagara University has been offering education programs in Canada since the 1970s. The path that led the University down to offering programming had much to do with the people that worked for the University and offered the courses necessary for degrees. It was not just the university that desired to come to Ontario and offer programs. The Ministry of Education, seeing a lack of higher education support for school counselling, reached out to people who taught for the institution and thus a relationship between the province and the institution was forged. The first complete degree program taught in Canada was the Master of Science in Educational Leadership. This was a program designed to provide further instruction to teachers who wanted to move to leadership positions within their schools and boards. That program received its first formal permission to
exist in Ontario in 1984, when the government decided to approve programs that were accredited by a reputable body. The MSEd in Educational Leadership had NCATE accreditation, and so it was granted permission to be offered in Ontario.

Today, some of our 2,300 Ontario-educated Niagara University alumni join several thousand more who learned at the Lewiston main campus in a multitude of fields. Our alumni are teaching all over the province of Ontario and many of them have now taken leadership roles both in school board administration and higher education. Alumni have director/superintendent level positions at both Catholic and public school boards. Examples include Camillo Ciprano, currently the Director of Education at Niagara Catholic District School Board, and Dr. JoAnna Roberto who is currently the Director of Education at the Grand Erie District School Board. In fact, Dr. Roberto received her BA, MSEd and PhD all from Niagara University. Our graduates and our university continue to have a significant impact on the Ontario Education system.

The above history of Niagara University demonstrates that it is important to understand that Niagara University has a long history in the province of Ontario. That history has evolved as government policy has evolved. Many of the changes that have occurred are a result of these changes. However, the types of changes that could explain the transformations we see today are a result of internal changes. The team that developed and implemented the BPS program served up until 2016 and are no longer part of the program. We have a new Dean, a new chair, a new program director/associate dean, and we have a new field experiences coordinator. In many ways, having that complete turnover in 2016 may also explain the kinds of changes that have occurred since the development of the two-year, four-semester initial teacher certification program. Thus, in evaluating the question about how the enhanced teacher education program has changed the experiences of our teacher candidates, we must explore whether the changes instituted are from within the university or external to it.

THEORETICAL LENS

At this juncture, it is important for us to discuss the theoretical lens through which we are going to analyze whether change has come from within or external to the university. In order to do this, we will use policy change literature to establish the framework (see Gornitzka, Kogan, & Amaral, 2005; Jones & Baumgartner, 2012; James & Lodge, 2003; Bennett and Howlett, 1992). The most important element for the purposes of this chapter is to explore changes that are either endogenous or exogenous (Koning, 2016). Endogenous changes are those that occur from within the organization, typically as a response to internal policy or structural changes. Exogenous changes are those that occur externally from the organization changes that have occurred. We argue that while Field Experiences for Niagara University has changed, the fact that it has moved from a three-semester program to a four-semester program as a consequence of provincial regulation only partially explains those changes. Within the category of exogenous changes, moving to a four-semester program alone is not the only external change that has altered field experiences. It is thus worthwhile to explore some of the changes that have impacted Field Experiences and then discuss how our students are finding the new experience.

Using this framework, we focus on the following changes as they affect field experiences at Niagara University (Table 2). First are the exogenous changes to the enhanced teacher education program as it moved to four semesters, and the diverse school board placement policies and
procedures between placements. The endogenous changes include adjustments in personnel, physical space constraints, and Accreditation and Ministerial consent.

Table 2

| Exogenous Changes: | • Provincial move to four-semester Teacher Ed. program  
| | • School board placement policies and procedures between 1st year and 2nd year placements  
| Endogenous Changes: | • Personnel changes  
| | • Space constraints  
| | • Accreditation and Ministerial Consent  

EXOGENOUS CHANGES

In 2015, changes occurred to initial education programs across the province and we transitioned to a four-semester program to meet the requirements of Regulation 347/02 (Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs, 2002). This shift from a 30-credit to a 60-credit program featured more time for practical hands-on, integrated learning and field experiences, plus additional changes in academic courses. Changes to practicum placements and related courses continued to meet the OCT ‘look-fors’: summary reports from associate teachers and faculty advisors; lesson plans; reflections; practicum portfolios; and summative presentations. As Niagara’s program evolved from three semesters to four semesters of study, the cohort model remained, paving the way for teacher candidates to further bond as they collaborated and worked their way through the BPS program to develop as professional educators.

CHANGES IN FIELD EXPERIENCES

As noted in the Niagara University in Ontario Field Experiences Handbook (Niagara University, 2020), field experiences allow teacher candidates to learn and grow by experiencing the everyday realities of teaching in school settings. Niagara University’s field experiences currently require 150 hours of pre-practica placement experience plus two 50-day practica, enhancing the 80-day minimum OCT requirement by an additional 20 days in the second year of the program. These opportunities allow teacher candidates to observe and interact with students, teachers, and staff in a variety of school settings, as well as a chance for teacher candidates to be a valued member of a school community, while gaining important insights into the professional teaching community. Teacher candidates further develop their capacity to bridge theory and practice during their field experiences alongside support systems of methods courses and Professional Seminars, Supervisor and Associate Teacher connections, and collaborative opportunities with peers and experts in the education system.

Field experiences provide teacher candidates with opportunities for instructional experience in areas of concentration, as well as mentor teachers who provide professional collaboration and modelling in planning and teaching. A dedicated Coordinator of Field Experiences organizes placement and practicum experiences through formal partnerships with Ontario school boards for all teacher candidates. Coordinating classroom placements for Year 1 and Year 2 teacher
candidates is a complex process as every school board has varying requirements and procedures. Some of the factors that are included in this process are the availability of Associate Teachers at various grade levels and in subject areas, teaching areas of teacher candidates, and the Ontario College of Teachers’ (OCT) requirements.

As shared in Table 3, the pre-practica placement field experiences in semesters one and two continued into the enhanced program. Teacher candidates are required to complete a minimum of 150 hours of developmental field experiences in classrooms and through community service. The classroom placements are under the supervision and mentorship of experienced, OCT-certified mentor teachers, or Associate Teachers. These educational community experiences continue to include two placement opportunities in Year 1: IMPACT (involving both classroom and community service) in semester one and the Teaching Assistantship (a classroom placement, including one full week in the classroom with an OCT-certified teacher) in semester two. Each placement experience requires a minimum of 75 hours each semester. Previously titled Learn & Serve, IMPACT is an introductory exposure to the classroom experience. This can encompass a variety of activities under the supervision of the Associate Teachers, including observations, acting as a classroom assistant, helping with special projects, tutoring students or small groups, coaching, and assisting with co-curricular activities. Teacher candidates gradually become oriented with the various organizational structures within school environments and begin to develop an understanding and appreciation of the role of the classroom teacher and their commitment to the well-being and learning needs of each student.

Continuing in the tradition of St. Vincent de Paul, Niagara University encourages our teacher candidates to serve all members of our society, especially the poor and oppressed, in local communities and throughout the world. The community service component of IMPACT is organized by each teacher candidate and is an opportunity to continue to volunteer with a community organization or begin a new relationship within a service community. Opportunities might include volunteering at a local school, coaching a sport, helping at a food bank, running after-school programs, or volunteering at a senior’s center. Community service is another way to connect with the students and families of our school communities.

During the second semester of Year 1, further classroom placements provide opportunities to gain practical experience in schools. This second placement, the Teaching Assistantship, continues to present opportunities to observe and teach in a classroom, including lesson planning, design, delivery, and reflection. While the original Teaching Assistantship included teaching requirements, the enhanced version now includes a full week in the teacher candidates’ placement classroom. The Teaching Assistantship completes the minimum 150 hours of teaching preparation required to enter Year 2 of the BPS program.

Alternate opportunities to participate in educational settings outside the classroom can also occur during Year 1. Teacher candidates have completed placements in Arts-based community centers and local museum educational centers. International placement opportunities can also be accomplished in such places as the Dominican Republic, where a focus on fostering teaching skills and development as well as participating in service in international communities is experienced.
Field experiences in the final semesters of the BPS program continue to include more than the OCT requirements. The previous field experiences program included two 7-week practica (75-day minimum) in the final third semester, with one professional seminar attached to the teaching experiences. These practica, with a minimum of 37.5 days for each of the two sessions, exceeded the pre-2015 OCT requirement of a 40-day minimum. In the enhanced field experience, the final two semesters of the four-semester program are dedicated to practica, each at 10-11 weeks, with a minimum of 50 days each to complete the Niagara University BPS program’s 100-day requirement. Field experiences during Year 2 (Semesters 3 and 4) consist of transitioning from student to classroom teacher. During these two practica, teacher candidates continue to develop the competencies outlined by Niagara University and the OCT. Throughout the field experiences component, Primary/Junior teacher candidates will teach in each division, while Intermediate/Senior teacher candidates will have opportunities to practice their teaching in both of their teaching areas or in the intermediate grades (grades 7/8). Indeed, this revision for lengthened practica was intended to highlight and strengthen the theory-to-practice interconnections between teacher candidates’ coursework and fieldwork. The 100 days of teaching practica provide opportunities to practice and gain pedagogical knowledge and understanding in classroom and school environments under the mentorship of OCT-certified teachers and Niagara University field supervisors, who form an essential support network for beginning teachers.

### CHANGES IN ACADEMIC COURSES

Our cohort-based program consists of our teacher candidates attending courses and field experiences as a specific professional learning community. This diverse group of students works and learns together through structured class schedules and by teaching in a way that emphasizes collegiality. To mirror the work completed during the field experiences, Professional Seminars were added to both the third and fourth terms to embed topics related to becoming an OCT-qualified educator. Alongside the Seminars, four required courses were added, plus two electives offered from existing offerings. As noted in tables 4 and 5, the new courses focus on Educational Technology; Equity, Diversity, and Inclusive Education; Educational Research; Methods/Materials in Early Learning (Primary/Junior); and Middle School Philosophy and Practices (Intermediate/Senior). Currently, more electives are being designed and implemented. Each new element of the enhanced program creates further opportunities and experiences for bridging theory into practice for each teacher candidate. When teacher candidates
successfully complete their program requirements, they are eligible to have their BPS degree conferred and be recommended to the Ontario College of Teachers for certification in Ontario.

Table 4

*Year 1 Foundation Courses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 1: Foundation Courses</th>
<th>Semester 2: Foundation Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td>Intermediate/Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations and Legal Principles of Education in Ontario</td>
<td>Methods of Teaching Math &amp; Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations of Literacy Instruction</td>
<td>Methods of Teaching P.E. &amp; Health, and the Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Development, Learning and Motivation</td>
<td>Methods of Teaching Social Studies &amp; Language Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Students with Exceptionalities</td>
<td>Instructional Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of Teaching in the Primary/Junior Division OR Methods of Teaching in the Intermediate/Senior Division</td>
<td>Assessment of Learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

*Year 2 Academic Courses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 3</th>
<th>Semester 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td>Intermediate/Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Seminar</td>
<td>Professional Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Educational Research and Statistics</td>
<td>Introduction to Educational Research and Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods and Materials for Early Learning</td>
<td>Equity, Diversity and Inclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Niagara University in Ontario serves our educational community in many ways: by providing an opportunity for people wanting to teach in K-6 and 7-12 classrooms, by providing over 130 days of integrated field experiences in a variety of educational settings with a variety of Associate Teachers, and by being an integrated part of Ontario communities and schools. Over the years, Niagara University in Ontario has been co-located in schools in the Toronto area. This has strengthened our community involvement and has provided opportunities for some of our teacher candidates to complete field experiences in these schools. As the university ventures into its own permanent space, the connections we have made with local school boards will continue to evolve and help our teacher candidates further their professional development as educators.
ENDOGENOUS CHANGES

While many changes to field placements have occurred as a result of the policies of the provincial government and the varying degrees by which partner school boards process field placements, it is important to note that the field experiences process also evolved due to internal changes and pressures. The first of these involves personnel changes. By the 2016-2017 academic year, the Ontario program was under the direction of a new Dean, a new Ontario Director, and a new Field Experiences Coordinator all at the same time. The previous Dean, Dr. Debra Colley, became the Executive Vice President of Niagara University. Tom Donovan, who was previously the Director of Education for the Toronto Catholic District School Board, retired from his position at Niagara University as the program director. In addition, Paul Bottoni retired at the same time as Tom Donovan, which precipitated changes in the field placements coordination. Replacing Dr. Colley is the current Dean, Dr. Chandra Foote, and the authors of this chapter replaced Donovan and Bottoni. Both of the authors have now moved into academic roles.

These changes reflect an evolution of personnel that is quite normal in any program. Preceding the changes, the original team produced guiding documents like handbooks and the consent documents that formed the foundation of how field experiences were to operate. However, it also produced a series of challenges. Since the handbook, for example, had multiple versions, we were left to interpret why certain elements may have been excluded from the latest versions while also trying to understand why other elements were included. Without the benefit of legacy knowledge, we were left to decipher the intent of certain provisions in such documents.

Another legacy item that corresponds to this pertains to ways of working. The field experiences process relied upon a series of highly mechanical and manual data entry to enable placing candidates in the boards that they wished to be placed. Without a readily deployed IT structure to support this process, new individuals in the positions had to recreate methods and timelines to collect and disperse the information to the partner boards. This often resulted in unnecessary delays in processing field placements during the four-semester program because the timing of the information collection and when the boards required the information were not aligned, which further resulted in a great deal of frustration between students, administrators, and partner boards. Since Niagara University is a bi-national institution, there is also a Field Placements office in Lewiston, NY for Ontario teacher candidates. That office is fully automated and timelines that are more suitable to the timelines of partner boards were maintained. However, those processes were never adopted by the former team, and thus the new team spent a significant amount of time dealing with something when a solution to the problem already existed. We have since been able to overcome this challenge and are beginning the process of automating what we have been doing with sticky notes and recreations of spreadsheets. Suddenly, by realizing the bi-national aspects of the institution, our processes have become more harmonized between the locations. These are some aspects that might not be top of mind when understanding organizational change.

The second issue pertaining to endogenous change revolves around our space constraints. Up until the opening of our Vaughan facility in January 2019, the BPS degree in teacher education had been fairly nomadic. Our programs were run from partner Boards of Education and their empty, or partly empty, schools. Part of the philosophy that underpinned this idea was integrated learning whereby our candidates could integrate into our host schools and our faculty would help provide ongoing professional support to the school’s teachers. This concept was conceptually sound;
however, it was challenged by the fact that the “locked-door” regulations announced in 2012 by the Premier of Ontario had the unintended effect of shunning integration of Niagara University students with K-12 student populations. When the neighbourhoods in which our host schools were located gentrified, we were forced to move as the student populations rebounded. We were forced to move locations multiple times, and, as a consequence, our program was beholden by a key part of its design.

As the school population at our host schools changed, certain structural elements became more constrained. One example of this can be noted in our first-year field placements. The original design of our program had AM and PM cohorts. The intent is that students that would take class in the AM would do their IMPACT semester 1 placement and Teacher Assistantship semester 2 placement in the PM. Students that had class in the PM, conversely, would do their first-year placements in the morning. However, the problem is that the space we used was not always available to fulfill this potential schedule. To conserve space, we revamped the schedule so that classrooms per cohort would be needed for 2.5 days, which helped preserve the structure and delivery of the program as accredited. Today, students have benefited from this change. Whereas they initially would have had their field placements spaced out on half days, they can now devote whole days to their placement, which gets them more familiar with how the school day is structured before they go out on their full-time placement.

For second-year student placements, given the two large 50-day practice teaching blocks that exist, block teaching of courses occurs at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester to reinforce methods of teaching with the practice of teaching. However, space constraints also have needed to account for using times during off-peak times in the evenings and on weekends. This has not resulted in many changes during the second-year placements, except that scheduling the mid-way and end of semester courses has become a challenge due to space constraints. In sum, space constraints forced the program to adapt to the realities and have led to some innovations that creatively allowed us to meet the terms set out in our ministerial consent and accreditation documents.

The final endogenous pressure that is worth evaluating at this juncture is that of the process for Ministerial Consent. As we have discussed, the BPS program is accredited through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities via the Post-secondary Education Quality Assurance Board (PEQAB) and through the Ontario College of Teachers. These two regulatory bodies authorize Niagara University to provide initial teacher certification in Ontario. The BPS program is also accredited through the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in the United States. We have dealt with the nuances of the bi-national accreditation idiosyncrasies above. However, what is clear from a cultural perspective is that Niagara University does its best to go beyond the minimum with regard to its accrediting bodies. This means that the university has a habit of tightly defining its goals and objectives and has an expectation on faculty and administrators to live up to the standards as set out.

We pride ourselves on meeting high standards, but it does have an influence on how little latitude we give ourselves to deal with certain issues and how we market our program. The way the program is structured in a 60-credit manner, two 50-day practice teaching days take place during the second year of the program. Our program thus advertises our placements as a 100-day
placement. However, we also have 30 practice teaching days in year one, which would qualify as practice teaching opportunities for the purposes of meeting Regulation 347/02. Those first-year practice teaching opportunities are non-credit bearing components, but completing them is a requirement for successful completion of the BPS Degree. Many programs at other institutions in Ontario now have practice teaching for over 100 days, and whereas we were once market leaders in offering more practice teaching prior to the change to a four-semester program, the reality is that we still are likely leaders, “but” we do not market ourselves as such. The other issue worth mentioning here is that because we do not “count” our first-year practice teaching days, school boards do not prioritize these placements. This causes a fair degree of stress and anxiety for students and for the field placements team who are left scrambling trying to find first-year placements. The College of Education is currently devising plans to rectify these concerns in advance of the next round of OCT accreditation that is expected to come in Spring 2023.

As much as exceeding the minimum standards is part of the Niagara DNA, we also acknowledge that not boasting about our collective success is as much a part of that DNA. As a bi-national institution, the culture at the university is that we are visitors to the Ontario university landscape, and we do not want to outlive that invitation. This kind of quiet success has allowed the university to be a welcome addition to the teacher education landscape, even though it continues to enjoy a fairly sizeable enrollment and program size without being loud about how NU’s programs are different. While the university has always believed that our program exceeds minimum requirements, it is not something that tends make marketing materials.

**ARE STUDENTS DOING BETTER?**

Given the number of changes that have occurred, both endogenous and exogenous, we are confronted with the question of whether Niagara’s students are doing better in their field placements with the new four-semester program over our previous three-semester program. In order to make this assessment, we collected data from the students’ final report on practice teaching completed by their Associate Teachers, which is an arm’s length evaluation of progress through each of our cohort years from 2015-2019. We did not include 2020 statistics because of the incompleteness of the data related to factors associated with COVID-19. We used 2015 as a baseline year because it was the last year in which we had data for the field experiences under our previous three-semester program. Results for 2016-2019 represent data on field experiences in the new four-semester program.

During each field placement, the Associate Teacher completes a report on practice teaching according to 10 standards for field placements. These standards are located in Table 6. Associate Teachers score candidates according to four possible options ranging from unsatisfactory, which is the lowest score, to “making progress,” to “effective”, to outstanding, the latter of which is the highest score. For the purposes of this chapter, we are only taking the results of Associate Teachers who gave their student an “outstanding” score on the standards. The reason why we are doing this is related to the fact that it provides us with the clearest snapshot of student teaching excellence in field placements. The vast majority of host teachers either gave candidates a score of “outstanding” or “effective”. This points to the overall success Niagara students are having in field placements. However, we want to measure the candidates, who in the view of their Associate Teachers, really demonstrated excellence.
### Table 6

**Field Placement Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 1: Knowledge of Subject Matter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The candidate demonstrated an understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structure of the discipline(s) he or she taught and created learning experiences that made these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 2: Knowledge of Human Development and Learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The candidate demonstrated an understanding of how children/youth learn and develop, and provided learning opportunities that supported their intellectual, social, and personal development.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 3: Instructional Strategies for Diverse Learners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The candidate demonstrated an understanding of how learners differ in their approaches to learning and created instructional opportunities that were adapted to learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and with exceptionalities. The candidate demonstrated the ability to modify instruction for students with different learning needs.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 4: Multiple Instructional Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The candidate demonstrated an understanding of and used a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills. The candidate utilized resources, materials, and technology appropriate to learners and subject matter.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Standard 5: Motivation and Management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The candidate demonstrated an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior by creating a learning environment that encouraged positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation; utilized effective classroom management strategies.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 6: Communication and Technology</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The candidate demonstrated knowledge of effective verbal, non-verbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom; modeled effective use of standard spoken and written English and effectively managed time and pacing of lessons.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Standard 7: Instructional Planning</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The candidate planned and managed instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals. The candidate's plans reflected constructivist teaching practices, Ontario Curriculum Expectations, and student outcomes.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 8: Assessment of Learning</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The candidate demonstrated the ability to use multiple formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and to ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of his/her learners.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Standard 9: Professional Development</th>
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The candidate demonstrated the ability to be a reflective practitioner who continually evaluated the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively sought out opportunities to grow professionally. The candidate demonstrated professional commitment and responsibility and his/her attitude, demeanor, and appearance reflected professional behavior.

**Standard 10: School/Community Involvement**

The candidate communicated and interacted with parents/guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support the students' learning and well-being.

Figure 1 outlines the results for the candidates that achieved a score of “outstanding” from their Associate Teacher. The results are presented in percentage form due to the variation in class enrollments from year-to-year (covered above), which makes comparison by raw number of students ineffective. As previously mentioned, 2015 is the baseline year because it represents the last year of field experiences in the three-semester program. The results show almost uniform improvement in the number of outstanding results from Niagara teacher candidates out in the field according to their final report of their last practicum placement, which is the same final report given to teacher candidates at the end of their last field placement in 2015.

The interesting part about the data is the reasonable consistency among all the program standards. In all but one category – Standard 9 in 2017 – students have been performing better in their field placements. The major difference between 2015 and the years subsequent to it from a field experiences perspective is that students participated in an additional 50-day practicum placement. Having the extra practice allowed students to hone their skills and gradually grow as an educator. Furthermore, since the student is with an Associate Teacher for a full 50 days per placement, it very much allowed for true mentorship to take place.

While the improvements have been noticed by the aggregate tabulation of percentages presented in Figure 1, it is important to note that the qualitative feedback returned to the university from Associate Teachers has also verified this trend. The Associate Teachers had opportunities to provide feedback on their experiences both with their teacher candidate and about our program. The following examples are representative of the feedback received since 2015. While all names are pseudonyms, their school boards have been shared. Many of the remarks on the completed feedback forms contained positive remarks regarding the teacher candidates and how our Field Experiences program was implemented. Patricia, a grade 1 teacher with the Toronto District School Board, found that she valued “a 10-week practicum as it allows the students to develop a strong relationship with the teacher candidate”. Jane, a middle school teacher with the York Catholic District School Board, appreciated “the consistency of the day to day during this long practicum”. This sentiment was echoed by Nikky, a high school teacher in the York Region District School Board: “The length of this practicum placement was great! [The TC] had an opportunity to really get to know the students and grow professionally as a result”. But there were those who thought that the longer placement periods might be detrimental to some teacher candidates and their relationships with Associate Teachers, their students, and their schools. Dianne, an elementary teacher with the York Region District School Board, shared that, “it would be better if the 10-week practicum placement was divided into two 5-week placements so students can be exposed to a greater variety of teachers. And, while not the case with my student teacher, any
personality conflicts between the teacher and the student could be kept to a minimum”. Luckily, the majority of the Associate Teachers found the dedicated practica to be worthwhile for the teacher candidates and their host schools. Vinesh, an intermediate teacher with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, stated, “I believe that your teacher candidates are fortunate to get more classroom exposure than most other universities”. Given that Associate Teachers get to experience students from a variety of different university teacher education programs, their feedback about our program and the length of time our students are in placement has been overwhelmingly positive.

**Figure 1**

*Percentage of Niagara Teacher Candidates with Outstanding Progress on Final Field Experience Evaluation*

Based on the above data, Niagara University teacher candidates have benefited from the enhanced teacher education program, and as a result, they are also benefiting the wider education community. We have shown through the quantitative data that our students are performing better by the end of their time in the program. The qualitative comments we have compiled show that the education community appreciates the extra time the teacher candidates are spending in the classroom, and they point to the program design as being a key element of the reason when compared to similarly situated teacher candidates from other university programs.
CONCLUDING AND FUTURE THOUGHTS

Circling back to the original research question: are Niagara University teacher candidates and the broader education community better served by the enhanced teacher education program? The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that Niagara teacher candidates are performing better than they did in 2015, the last year of the original BPS degree. We were able to use data from field placement final reports to demonstrate the overall improvement. As well, qualitative comments were also provided to further reinforce the data and provide context to what the quantitative data are suggesting. Taken together, the data presented agree with the conclusion that Niagara University teacher candidates are indeed improving in their field placements.

There are program level improvements that will continue to evolve. One area is in preparation for field experiences. Achievement in the area of Professional Development, where teacher candidates develop the ability to be reflective practitioners, continues to be high. But there are two areas that require deeper analysis: Instructional Strategies for Diverse Learners and Assessment of Learning. Achievement in the Instructional Strategies for Diverse Learners standard showcases an understanding of diverse learners, including learners from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and learners with exceptionalities. Teacher candidates are expected to create differentiated instructional opportunities that lead to student success, including accommodations and modifications to instruction for students with different learning needs. By continuing to understand their learners’ development, TCs must also be able to demonstrate multiple formal and informal assessment strategies to achieve the Assessment of Learning standard.

This chapter has identified this problem in detail, as the BPS program has never analyzed field placements on an aggregate year-to-year basis. In order to address these challenges, faculty are considering program level tweaks to courses to further support students in their field placements. In addition, we have recruited front line teachers and principals to the BPS program’s Teacher Education Advisory Committee with the explicit intent to gather front line perspectives on changes that would help the program address these areas where students are not performing as well.

While the evidence presented in this chapter corresponds to an overall improvement in teacher candidate field placements, the other element that we explored was the degree to which the enhanced teacher education program led to better field experiences overall. On this point, the evidence presented in this chapter is inconclusive. In our discussion of endogenous and exogenous change, we highlighted that there was more than just a ministerial level policy change that took place during the 2015-2019 period covered by this study. There were changes to the program at the university and faculty level that also took place during that time. While we cannot be conclusive that the exogenous enhanced teacher education program was primarily responsible for better preparing students, Associate Teachers did find that the extra days in practice teaching certainly helped. However, other aspects, such as consolidating in-class days from half days to full days and new approaches from new personnel, may have also contributed to better preparation of teacher candidates as well.

Going forward, this research has provided us with the opportunity to assess how well students have done with the changes that took place over the past five years. We believe it is important to continue this work. Understanding the link between program changes and how well students are
doing is not something we do on a regular basis. One of the areas that we did not touch in this study was how entrance averages correlate to field experiences. In addition, Niagara University assesses candidate dispositions in the program, and it would be important to correlate the dispositional evidence with the field experiences. There are many possibilities for future research that can be overlayed with the work begun in this chapter, and we look forward to the opportunity to provide further insights on this topic. Changes to the enhanced program and improvements at Niagara University in Ontario continue to present diverse ways to serve our educational community.

REFERENCES

Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs. O. Reg. 347/02. (2002)
INTRODUCTION

From the time the North Bay Normal School was founded in 1908, through its transition to a teachers’ college in the 1950s, until its transformation into a Faculty of Education in 1973, this base of teacher education in “the North” of Ontario saw itself more as an extension of the Department of Education than any independent entity. The curriculum taught by the program was in line with, if not completely prescribed by, the central office in Toronto. Focused largely on discipline-based content from the outset, this program was only supplemented in later years with the eventual inclusion of some pedagogical techniques, educational psychology, and counselling. The instructors (or “masters”) who made up the school’s faculty were, in actuality, members of the provincial civil service, subject to the same hierarchy of power found within any branch of government. The school’s principal was also appointed by the Minister. Even its built environment was a complete product of the Department, with exact copies of the school found in other locations throughout the province.

It is no surprise, then, that when the teacher education program joined the newly incorporated Nipissing University College in 1973 (an affiliate of Laurentian University at the time), much of its standard operating procedure could be seen as a mere continuance of the normal school tradition. Most teaching masters endured as professors in the new Faculty, and the curriculum only gradually evolved over the next twenty years into something distinct from Ministry directives and policies. By the time Nipissing received its charter as an independent university in 1992, the Faculty of Education had finally achieved a good measure of success in preparing teacher candidates (or TCs) for the educational workforce using techniques based on theory and research. Soon, an Intermediate/Senior division was added to the program to cover the complete spectrum of grade-school teachers. With this came an array of innovations in subsequent years: A concurrent program to act as an alternative to the traditional consecutive one; courses dealing with curriculum integration (including language across the curriculum); amalgams of design and assessment; a shared computer program that involved “Teaching with Technology”; an extension of the
practicum duration to 12 weeks (4 more than officially mandated); and the introduction of international placements with classes concerning Comparative and Transnational Education.

This program’s long history, therefore, may be seen as a slow evolution from an apprenticeship model towards a greater leadership role in the promotion of educational advancement in the province. Up until 2015, one of the major roadblocks for further progress in the Faculty (and in most other teacher education programs in the province) had been the limited timespan (1 year or the equivalent of two terms) that the Ministry had maintained for graduation. However, with the official mandate to expand all consecutive programs in the province to four semesters, many members of the Faculty at Nipissing saw this as an opportunity to evolve from its rather rigid traditional roots with isolated disciplinary courses (that had been offered largely unchanged for a century) to one with more “cutting edge” offerings within a broader, unified focus. It was considered just the next natural step on the evolutionary path. This, indeed, was the hope as committees were formed within the Faculty to create the blueprints for a new program to be offered in 2015.

A REVISED AND EXPANDED PROGRAM


At the end of the summer of 2013, the new dean of the Faculty of Education presented the members with general parameters as the process for program creation. First, she indicated that the practicum experience for candidates would be expanded to 20 weeks over the duration of the program (its distribution to be determined by a practice teaching committee and ratified by the faculty), in line with Ministry directives. Accompanying this reform, the dean further determined that all courses on campus should be restricted to 36-hour, 3-credit offerings, consisting of three different types:

- **Core Courses**: Considered mandatory for all students (the dean strongly recommended that these courses all be cross-divisional);
- **Teachable Courses**: Based on subject areas (for example, Mathematics, Science, Language) these would be available for students depending on division and area of specialization;
- **Optional Courses**: An area highly emphasized by the dean; these electives would offer a variety of topic choices for candidates depending on their interests (with no extra tuition fees).

The Teachable Committee was created with a number of volunteer faculty members, and settled on specific courses that differed very little from those that had been offered previously, separated into 3 divisions of Primary/Junior; Junior/Intermediate; and Intermediate/Senior. As well, the originally separate Elective Course Committee soon merged with this group and played only a minor role in course creation. Once its report was submitted, this combined committee quickly disbanded.

The Core Committee proved to be the more experimental one with a fairly cohesive group visualizing and outlining the new courses. Perhaps its most radical decision was to agree to blend the previously separate courses for the P/J, J/I and I/S teacher candidates into combined ones.
Beyond this, some courses remained essentially the same or became expanded in focus, while other areas were completely reconceptualized:

**EDUC 4716 - Legal and Social Foundations in Education** carried on much of the work of its predecessor, *Education and Schooling*. However, rather than running the gamut of sociology, history, and philosophy of education, the focus settled on examining the legal position of the teacher in the field, and the recognition of social conditions for teaching. At the same time, the courses of *Educational Psychology* and *Special Education* were replaced with the less clinical **EDUC 4776 - Special Needs of Students**. A new course was created that straddled these three, now defunct, offerings: **EDUC 4726 – Diversity and Inclusion**. On the one hand, this course deals with social issues of race, multiculturalism, socio-economic disparities, and so on. However, it also deals with the inclusion of special education students in class (i.e., mainstreaming, etc.). It was thought, therefore, that these three new classes would not largely deviate from the previous offerings, but would do a better job of focusing each course, with less overlap than had been seen in the past.

For many years, Nipissing was seen as a leader in the use of technology in the classroom. Through its *I-teach* program, each student had received a laptop with connected software and workshops to aid in their knowledge. The Core Committee had seen that over recent years, there had been a shortchanging of this skill and a slow erosion of this program. To help buttress this skill, a new core course was created entitled **EDUC 4766 – Technology Enriched Teaching and Learning**.

Finally, a set of three new courses was created to bring together the previously scattered teaching of “Methods”. In the past, there was a great disparity of time between teaching in this area in P/J, J/I, and I/S. The Core Committee designed the three courses to unfold one after another, term after term, by having each be a prerequisite for the next. The first, **EDUC 4736 – Introduction to Curriculum Design and Teaching**, was designed to teach the principles of lesson planning and provide an introduction to the accompanying components to the running of a class (pedagogy, assessment, classroom management). This would be followed by **EDUC 4746 – Assessment, Evaluation and Communication of Student Learning**, which, as the title indicates, would familiarize the students with these related concepts (assessment “For, Of, As”, learning, grading, report cards, parent-teacher communication). Finally, scheduled for the second year, **EDUC 4756 – Curriculum Design and Inquiry**, was created with a dual purpose. It was to help students in long-range planning, and to begin to think of themselves as teacher-researchers (i.e., through action research and other forms of inquiry). In doing this, it was anticipated that these courses would gradually build up students’ knowledge from basic in the first term to advanced study in planning and teacher professionalism by the third term.

**THE REVISED PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE**

In Ontario, *the Practicum Experience* has been seen as the pedagogical cornerstone of any teacher education program. It must also be acknowledged as an administratively complex undertaking. This has held especially true at Nipissing where the program adheres to a continued practice of allowing teacher candidates to select one of 52 Ontario publicly funded school boards and seven First Nations education systems as their placement, allowing them the opportunity to gain teaching experience in a region of their choice. When the practicum was augmented to 20 weeks, a decision had to be made as to how it would be distributed over the timeline of the program. This task fell
largely to the already existing Practicum Committee who then presented a final report to be voted upon at Faculty Council. The committee entered the discussion split from the beginning, with half desiring an even distribution of practicum weeks spread over the 4 terms. Their reasoning was that it would make for better planning of coursework, and efficient “in-out” times of students at the university and in the field. This was countered by another faction of the committee, led by the dean, who desired to see minimal placement in the first three terms with no classes and all practicum in the final term. After much debate, the committee met in the middle with a gradual increase of placement time over the 4 terms. One initiative that remained from past practice was the desire to have students attend placement on the first week of school in September.

Another distinctive feature of Nipissing’s practicum experience is its long-standing practice of conducting optional three-week *ad hoc* international practicum experiences for teacher candidates. International practicum experiences were first initiated in 2003, when the Faculty of Education’s dean developed a partnership with a Canadian non-governmental organization (NGO) to facilitate an alternative international practicum (Miller, 2006). The dean at the time believed the benefit of this unique experience to be “a heightened social conscience and an understanding of their roles as teachers and as global citizens”; this notion was supported by faculty who volunteered their service (Miller, 2006, para. 23). International teaching experiences were soon held in Kenya, Ecuador, England, Cameroon, Jamaica, China, and Italy, and nationally, at various First Nations locations and in Trois Pistoles, Quebec for French immersion.

Finally, as part of the revisions, a community service learning experience component, named *Community Leadership Experience* (or CLE), was added to the program; here, teacher candidates complete a 60-hour residency in an organization unrelated to the public school system. The international teaching experience is now considered community service, and is folded into this category. At first, the 20 weeks designated for practicum included 18 weeks of placement in a publicly funded classroom and 2 weeks earmarked for the CLE; the third week of the international placement occurs during March Break. However, after additional debate, the Faculty finally settled upon 19 weeks of placement and 2 weeks of CLE, leading to 21 weeks all told.

After being passed through Faculty Council and Senate, the entire revised program was subsequently launched at the start of the next school year in September 2015.

**THE REVISED PROGRAM’S CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF TEACHER EDUCATION**

Creating specific groups to carry out separate revisions on various areas of the program, rather than any faculty-wide exercise, made it difficult to delineate any unified programmatic vision from the outset. Nevertheless, as the revised program was being put together, a series of overall images began to emerge from the mist. Eventually, these began to cross and connect to create a conceptual framework of sorts. By the time the Accreditation Committee of the College of Teachers submitted its report of “satisfactory” in 2017, its evidence indicated that all programs had “a clearly delineated conceptual framework which is characterized by six pathways” (OCT, 2017):

*Interdisciplinary:* Broad-based understandings, extensive course connections, and ongoing support and encouragement. The OCT committee referred especially to the employment of a program-based lesson plan and the preparation of teacher candidates for practice infused throughout the various courses;
Diversity: The development of professional knowledge, skills, values, and practice to support diverse learners and performance as their practical application to promote student learning. This was seen throughout the program, but especially in the earmarked core courses;

Performance: Practical application to promote student learning;

Self-Knowledge: The understanding of personal experience, preconceptions, and the role of self in the creation of supportive and inclusive learning communities;

Reflective Practice: An exploration of one’s knowledge and teaching practice. It was noted that this was maintained by teacher candidates through the practicum binder as they demonstrate the functions, responsibilities, and scope of teacher practice through observation and teaching lessons. This was also seen in the connections made (especially in the second-year courses) between theory and practice;

Professional Learning: The development of professional and technological knowledge, skills, and values to support effective practice with 21st century learners.

This conceptual framework has informed program design and course offerings in the past five years.

THEMES EMERGING FROM IMPLEMENTATION 2015-2020

Over the last five years, the Faculty has struggled with maintaining the two main goals of the revised program’s creation: First, it was hoped that our vision would develop a more unified, focused, and integrated vision; that courses would be interconnected. Second, it was hoped that the extended two-year program would allow more time to not only bring in more information, but to allow more time for candidates to digest and reflect upon their experiences; that the program would not be a phantasmagoria of exercises, cramming, and a blur of movement. It cannot be denied that while a good deal of its components have been successful (as shown by the various external reviews), there have been some factors that have acted as barriers and hobbles that have kept the Faculty’s plans from being truly realized. This has been shown in the number of revisions, reconceptualizations, and compromises that have been seen over the past five years. This section will first shine a spotlight on the various issues emerging from the implementation of the consecutive program, and then briefly touch upon some of the remaining aspects of the overall vision of the School of Education.

SPOTLIGHT ON REVISIONS TO COURSES IN THE CONSECUTIVE PROGRAM, 2015-2020

Debates have occurred periodically for a more fluid program of studies, with courses taught at any time over the duration of the four semesters. However, the faculty as a whole has stood pat in favour of a two-year program with specific courses given in earmarked semesters. The argument has always been that earmarked semesters would create a more stable and predictable format. It would allow for planning well in advance with the knowledge that certain courses would be given
at certain times. As well, it would give the students a reasonable period of time to integrate the material they are learning. Through the use of prerequisites, the program would build from an introduction to the teaching profession to increasingly advanced knowledge. Each semester, therefore, has certain identifiable components.

SEMESTER ONE (FALL, YEAR 1)

Since the implementation of the program in 2015, the first semester has always offered five courses and some options. To satisfy the core components, all students, regardless of division, took EDUC 4716 – Legal and Social Foundations in Education, EDUC 4736 – Introduction to Curriculum Design and Teaching, and EDUC 4726 – Diversity and Inclusion. Accompanying these core courses were two reachable courses: for P/J students this included EDUC 4717 – Language & Literacies in the Primary and Junior Divisions, and EDUC 4737 – Health and Physical Education (with an extra option for EDUC 4738 – FSL); for J/I students the first term included EDUC 4897 – Language and Literacies in the Junior and Intermediate Divisions, as well as an Intermediate Teaching Subject; for I/S students, a range of two Intermediate Teaching Subjects was open to them. Finally, all students were required to take the first four weeks of EDUC 4714 – Practicum I, which totals eight weeks in Year 1. Since then, the following addition has been made to Semester One as part of the program’s ongoing revisions.

Addition of a Core Classroom Management Course

After reading the Faculty submission, the 2017 OCT committee asked in a preliminary response how classroom management and mental health were addressed in the program. As part of the general response, the dean pointed to a number of courses including an optional offering entitled EDUC 4762 – Proactive and Inclusive Classroom Management attended by 50% of the Year 2 students, which emphasized “student well-being, student engagement, and academic/social achievement” (p. 3). While this “multiple course infusion” seemed to satisfy the OCT committee, as indicated in their subsequent report (see pp. 9, 15), the dean later argued that classroom management was a blind spot in the program and that an earmarked course was needed to shore up this weakness.

Rejecting arguments that an increased “infusion” approach could remedy the situation, a motion was put forward in the Fall 2018 Faculty Council that EDUC 4762 be remade as a Year 1 core course. A contentious and divisive issue, many felt that this was the “thin edge of the wedge” of the return to a program of silos, and rather than dealing with classroom management as something that should be part of the whole program, it would now be hived off to a specialist course. The motion to bring the core course into the program was argued at length and passed by a slim majority. With this course now in place for the Fall of 2020, it was realized that a good deal of material seemed to overlap with EDUC 4736 – Introduction to Curriculum Design, whose professors were then requested to remove aspects of management from their course. Nevertheless, this seems to remain as a tacit agreement as no intention has been expressed to make any formal changes to the course description.

SEMESTER TWO (WINTER, YEAR 1)

Two core courses were deemed appropriate for this particular semester. The first was EDUC 4748 – Assessment, Evaluation and Communication of Student Learning, considered a natural successor
to EDUC 4736 (before the 2015 revisions, they had actually been combined as a 72-hour course). The second was EDUC 4766 - Technology Enriched Teaching and Learning. Besides these two courses, students were given an array of teachable courses: PJ/J students were mandated to study the three subjects of Visual Arts, Science, and Math; J/I students were compelled to take Music, Social Studies, and Physical Education; I/S students studied Language & Literacy, Mathematics, and a more general course entitled EDUC 47122 – The Intermediate Learner. During the second term, candidates also completed the remaining four weeks of the eight-week EDUC 4714 – Practicum I by returning to the classroom in which they were teaching in the first term.

I/S Course Additions

The introduction of the courses EDUC 4877 – Language and Literacies for the Intermediate and Senior Divisions and EDUC 4887 – Mathematics for the Intermediate and Senior Divisions was a response to a perceived problem with the former one-year B.Ed. program. Candidates in the I/S division are qualifying to teach grade 7 and 8 where, as teachers, they may be expected to teach most or all subjects in the curriculum. Depending on the candidates’ teaching subjects, they could receive no preparation to teach the core subjects of Language and Mathematics. The Faculty decided to add courses in the two core areas of Language and Mathematics to better prepare our I/S candidates for intermediate teaching positions.

The Fall of Technology

Beginning in 2001, educational technology was a very important topic within the program. As mentioned earlier, an entire program had been set up (I-teach) to deal with this aspect. It reached its peak in the late 2000s/early 2010s, with each student receiving a laptop computer and taking special courses on its use. However, a cooling effect began to occur when the newly arrived dean expressed a loss of interest in the initiative. When student numbers dropped off by 2012 (and the I-teach logo dropped due to legalities), many aspects of the technology program were scaled back, along with most contract lecturers; the two full-time technology professors were soon deemed redundant. When the 2015 EDUC 4766 – Technology Enriched Teaching and Learning course was instated as part of the revised program, it was expected that these two professors (or at least one) would be rehired to jump-start this initiative once again. Unfortunately, this did not happen. Instead, as part of the above motion presented at Faculty Council in 2017, the dean proposed the elimination of Technology Enriched Teaching and Learning, so that EDUC 4762, the Classroom Management course, could be slipped into the core course category without making any other changes to the program. Even with impassioned pleas from the course leader and other members of the Faculty, the motion passed by a slim majority, and the technology course was reduced to an elective. This has had ironic consequences in the past year as virtual learning environment training should have been a key part of the program, while classroom management has been less of a concern.

SEMESTER THREE (FALL, YEAR 2)

Based on the above changes, a number of revisions have been made to the third semester, endeavouring to maintain continuity along with some hint towards the end of the program. Originally, Special Needs of Students was timetabled into this timeslot, then moved to semester 1, and has now settled into semester 2 (replacing Technology Enriched Teaching and Learning). The concern was finding the point in the program when students were experienced enough to better understand the situation of students with special needs and Individual Education Plans (central to
the course), while giving them the skills needed as early as possible to plan and teach these students. Presently, EDUC 4726 – *Diversity and Inclusion* has been slotted in as the third semester replacement. P/J students also take the three subject-centred courses EDUC 4747 – *Music*, EDUC 4777 – *Social Studies*, and EDUC 4727 – *Early & Emergent Literacy*. Similarly, the I/J student takes EDUC 4827 – *Mathematics*, EDUC 4847 – *Science and Technology*, and EDUC 4867 – *Visual Arts*. The I/S student makes the transition to the Senior level by taking two *teachables* at this level. I/S students may also take one elective course. EDUC 4855 – *Practicum II* entails a five-week experience. Finally, the core course EDUC 4756 – *Curriculum Design and Inquiry* (CDI) has been offered in this semester over the past five years, after students have passed the EDUC 4736 and EDUC 4748 prerequisites. It has proven to be one of the most fruitful, contentious, and vulnerable additions to the program.

**The Evolving Use of Research and Inquiry in the Program**

The supporting research for the creation of EDUC 4756 was overwhelming (e.g., Ax et al., 2008; Clayton & Meadows, 2013; Clarke & Fournillier, 2012; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2010, 2012; Perrett, 2003; Ponte et al., 2004), with recommendations from official documents dating back to 1996 (the Teacher Education Act) and beyond (Holdaway, 1976; Putman & Weir, 1925). More recently, Ontario teacher preparation programs were mandated to include “How to use educational research and data analysis” and “How to use inquiry-based research, data and assessment and the selection and use of current instructional strategies to address student learning styles” (OME, 2016; Schedule 1, O. Reg. 347/02, 2014). However, after a short time, it was realized that the design and roll-out of the course could have been clearer, as it would have led to less misunderstanding and subsequent debate.

An initial detriment to the course was the need to compromise on its name, *Curriculum Design and Inquiry* (rather than including any hint of “research” in the title). Inevitably, the course content was split into two halves: the first was “curriculum design” for longer range planning and the like; the second dealt with aspects of classroom “inquiry”, which could be interpreted as action research, narrative inquiry, or simply “reflection”. It was left vague so the professor teaching the course could have some leeway. Considering time constraints (36 hours), and a desire to align with the *Ontario College of Teachers Professional Learning Framework* (2016), the incumbent professor teaching the course chose to focus on action research. So, when the course began, students had little clue (from the course title) as to what they would face in terms of workload or personal initiative. This led to a great deal of consternation for the first cohort of teacher candidates completing the new program. This only subsided in subsequent years as students began to have some forewarning as to the parameters of the course.

**The Action Research Project**

One of the more radical aspects of the CDI course was the inclusion of an action research project (ARP) developed, implemented, and analyzed by the teacher candidate. Divided into two components made up of approximately 2,800 words combined, it included: Part A (introduction, the context, literature review, proposed method, references) due before the teacher candidates left for their 5-week placement; Part B (abstract, method, discussion of findings, implications, next steps, conclusion, and PowerPoint showing components from Part A and Part B) due in time for presentations during the last week of class. After coming to terms with the parameters of this project, teacher candidates were soon overwhelmingly positive about the opportunity to present
their action research project (ARP) in a round table format. The ARP presentations were 20 minutes, and each candidate was assigned a time and table to share their ARP (using their PowerPoint presentations created by turning their laptop around facing the audience at the round table). Presenters at five or six tables ran at the same time with about six people as audience. The audience completed a peer assessment and one person from each table collected and handed in the scoring sheets. Evidence of their interest in their peers’ presentations was the absence of personal devices during the presentations; rarely was a cell phone out during their round table presentations.

The Impact of Changing Practicum Weeks on CDI
In the first two years of implementing the CDI course, teacher candidates attended placements during the first week of school. Here, in getting to know their mentor and students, they became well acquainted with the context of their action research project. They came back to campus for four weeks and developed an action research proposal, having had the opportunity to discuss potential action research projects with their associate teacher (with whom they now had a personal association). The teacher candidate then attended five weeks of practicum, where they collected any proposed data and were back on campus for five weeks of classes. In 2018, the first week of school practicum week was moved from year two to year one. This change significantly impacted the action research project, as teacher candidates were now compelled to develop a proposal for a class they had not officially met. This runs contrary to the action research methodology that insists projects emerge from close connections to the location.

Ethical Considerations
Even before the first course began, the class instructor had to perform the task of passing the assignment through ethical approval from the university. This took into account not simply filling out paperwork but having to argue its case as a new type of research that had never been done at Nipissing at this level (B.Ed.). In the end, this was passed through ethics, but has had to be argued every subsequent year. As part of the ethics protocol, the instructor of the course meets with every teacher candidate (TC) before they submit Part A of their ARP and leave for their practicum. The candidates verbally share the purpose, research question, and proposed method for collecting data, ensuring each proposal is focused on their practice, ethically appropriate, and manageable for the limited time for data collection. Signatures of approval from the principal and their supervising teacher were required. Depending on the ARP, letters of approval from parents would also be required.

Faculty Debate since CDI’s Inception
Initially, a good deal of debate emerged from the faculty about this course. A number argued that the course was either too advanced for a B.Ed. program, a “luxury” when more pragmatic issues should be included in the program, or too open to students “fudging data”. As the main project was an action research assignment to include information from the practicum experience, some faculty members argued that classwork should not be required while students were on placement. Rather, they argued that teacher candidates should spend their time “teaching”. In the end, support for action research in the B.Ed. has run along a continuum from fully supportive, to wanting teacher candidates to use a more phenomenological or a more traditional approach to the research, to advocating for no research at all. Some faculty perceived action research as ‘entitled’, since teacher candidates were expected to collect data while on placement. Teacher candidates were encouraged to focus their research on something related to their teaching practice – not an
additional component (e.g., use of exit tickets to inform their practice, implement mindfulness breaks to improve students’ engagement, French conversation circles to encourage participation). They were to collect data purposefully to inform their practice. Lesson plan reflections and observations were often the main sources of data.

Over time, more professors have come to understand and accept action research as a legitimate aspect of the B.Ed. program. In the first year of implementation, three faculty members were assigned the same course and all three used different assignments, creating inconsistency in assignment expectations for the same course. Now, in the fifth year of implementation, three members teach the same course with the same assignment expectations. Recently, the action research component has received positive endorsement from external reviewers (IQAP & OCT). For example, the IQAP report (2019) noted, “We heard from students and faculty members that action research projects give students the opportunity to work on things that are valuable to them in their placements” (p. 2) and “The chance for students to take part in action research may be unique and prepares teacher candidates particularly well for learning throughout their teaching careers” (p. 10). The Ontario College of Teachers, in their 2017 examination report, stated, “Assignments in coursework make appropriate provision for the application of theory in practice … Action research projects that include data collection, analysis and presentation are completed in some sections of a curriculum design course” (p. 13).

SEMESTER FOUR (WINTER, YEAR 2)

In the final semester, teacher candidates complete the final six weeks of EDUC 4855 – Practicum II, the additional two/three-week (60 hours) “Community Leadership Experience”, and two “elective” courses on campus (three for the I/S level). These features have experienced some bumps along the way.

Rocky History of Electives in the Program

In the former one-year Bachelor of Education program, the Faculty of Education offered a selection of “option” courses dating back to the 1980s (namely, Religious Education in the Roman Catholic Separate Schools, and Education of Native Canadians), but only as extras to be taken by candidates beyond the program requirements. Candidates paid extra tuition fees for these courses and could add up to two option courses to their program of study. Over the years, the option course offerings expanded to include eight additional courses, developed because of expressed needs of candidates, governmental programs, or faculty initiatives. Kindergarten Curriculum Theory and Practice, for example, was developed to meet the needs of P/J candidates who wanted to focus on early years teaching. Mental Health Issues in School Populations was developed in response to a Ministry-funded research program into teachers’ awareness of mental health issues and preparedness to teach students with these issues. International Teaching was developed in the 2000s to prepare candidates for the new international practice teaching placements being offered by the Faculty.

When the “electives” premise was first decided upon, it was thought this would allow professors the freedom to create electives based on areas of speciality and share their passion for these topics. It also meant that candidates might gain insight into new areas of research, valuable especially for those intending to apply to graduate studies. For this reason, during the initial creation period, many professors answered the dean’s invitation for proposals and threw themselves into the
process of creating electives with great gusto. Some fashioned several variations on the area they proposed to teach. In the end, there was a great abundance of courses created - 27 in total – and hastily passed through Senate. Eagerly awaiting the 2016-17 academic year (the first year that candidates could select electives), many professors then anticipated the chance to teach these new selections.

Unfortunately, by this first year of “elective” offerings, student numbers had dropped so low that of the 27 potential offerings, candidates only had seven courses from which to choose. Compounding this issue (“no-choice” electives) was the realization that the practicum during this semester was simply all-encompassing for the candidate. Course times for electives were subsequently reduced from nine to six weeks, offered in January before placement begins. Added to this has been the constant suggestion by administration that these could easily be taught online, thereby allowing students to leave the campus before the start of the fourth term. While the faculty has resisted offering electives in this medium, one advantage of online electives would be the opportunity to recruit part-time instructors with expertise in areas lacking in the faculty at the moment.

Leading to further confusion has been the fact that professors who teach their core or teachable areas of expertise in ‘Year One, semester two’ inevitably have timetable conflicts with this compressed ‘Year Two, semester four’ schedule and are less likely to be assigned any elective courses. One solution that faculty have discussed is to balance elective offerings across the third and fourth terms so that more faculty members could teach the courses and potentially a greater variety could be offered. However, no motions to this effect have yet to be considered.

In the past five years, of the 27 elective courses that were created, only one (Teaching in Catholic Schools) has been offered every year. In the same time, five courses have been offered four of the five years. Others have been offered once or twice. According to university policy, if a course has not been offered in five years, it will be banked unless a convincing case can be made to keep it in the calendar. Eleven of the electives created for the new program are now in that position. Why is there this unbalance in course offerings – why are some offered while others sit idle? In some cases, professors who created the electives have now left the university and the expertise needed to teach the course is no longer available in the remaining faculty members. Or professors may be needed for required courses, or may have soured on the original creation. However, in the end, it cannot be denied that the administrative choice to run a course seems to depend more on the freedom of a professor’s workload than the need for variety. In fact, it appears that some electives were used to backfill a professor’s workload; if they needed another course due to a course cancelation, then an additional section of an elective they were scheduled to teach was an easy fix.

In retrospect, therefore, it must be acknowledged that because very little attention was focused on this area’s overall vision or role/function within the program from the outset, the electives have always seemed to be relegated to the role of an “add on”. This has been disappointing, as in order to gain these additional courses, a good number of older core courses (such as Educational Psychology and various language and literacy courses) had to be sacrificed.
**Community Leadership Experience**

In 2005, Nipissing University received a grant from the McConnell Family Foundation to support the development and inclusion of service learning in the university’s programs. As a member of the proposal’s writing team, Dr. Frost based its model on a longstanding service learning component in her special education courses. The subsequent program soon expanded its focus to at-risk students. As the service learning program matured, it then took on several iterations in the various programs and degrees at the university. In Education, the program became a course, *EDUC 4858 – Community Leadership Experience*, requiring 60 hours of documented participation. With a demand for study outside the university classroom, the course description stated:

> Teacher candidates apply pedagogical skills and theoretical knowledge in a self-selected, non-traditional community setting as a means to broaden practical experience and develop awareness of community-based programs that benefit from educational applications. Placement may include a Nipissing University supported teaching and leadership experience (e.g., Kenya, Costa Rica, Trois Pistoles).

Candidates arrange their own placements and submit work plans for approval by the practice teaching office. Placements must offer candidates the opportunity to create, contribute, and lead; in other words, to make substantial contributions to the organization. Duties such as answering telephones and making photocopies are not permissible. A variety of forms have been created for the various approvals and permissions needed. At the end of the experience, a report is filed by the supervisor of the Community Leadership Experience (CLE) indicating whether the candidate completed the proposed work satisfactorily. The two weeks prior to March Break are scheduled for CLE, to create a three-week block in which the 60 hours may be completed. Candidates may commence accumulating their hours at any time in the fourth semester, allowing participation in experiences that do not conform to the three-week block in March.

At this point, candidates have completed CLE placements in a wide variety of settings. Examples include: Big Brothers/Big Sisters; museums; English language learning programs; schools for the deaf; adult literacy programs; the Ministry of Education; libraries; music programs; parks and recreation centres’ programs for at-risk youth; programs for students with autism; and cultural centres.

**GENERAL ISSUES RELATED TO THE LARGER PICTURE**

After the general roll-out of the revised two-year program, a number of issues have come to the surface that have led to significant changes - not merely to isolated components of the program, but to the entire face of the Faculty itself. Whether this is a direct result of the abovementioned revisions, or if the revisions and issues are the by-product of larger forces, is not clear at this point. But the shifts are nevertheless clearly visible.

**FINDING A GOOD FIT**

Although a tension has existed since the inception of the Faculty of Education concerning the expertise of its members, with the launch of the revised program, a greatly renewed sentiment emerged (primarily from members of the administration) propounding that professors within the
B.Ed. program should be seen as generalists (with the ability to teach almost any course in the program) rather than specialists. As this belief seems to have strengthened over the past 10 years, retirements of tenured professors in key areas have simply not been replaced. At the same time, full-time contract members were terminated *en masse* during the time of transition, and no effort has been made to restore these positions. Instead, the demand for ever-increasing numbers of instructors for courses has been filled by part-time lecturers. Indeed, two shining examples of this situation have been made clear in recent years:

- No full-time professor (let alone an assessment expert) has taught the *Assessment and Evaluation* core course in years. Lack of leadership in this area has led to a patchwork quilt of approaches and foci. Confusing pedagogy with the actual curriculum itself, repeated comments have been made by the administration as to the weakness of the course, suggesting its imminent removal: The same argument that had been made to eliminate the Technology course.
- While its two sister courses, *Legal and Social Foundations of Education* and *Special Needs of Students*, have been grounded in some traditions and expectations, the *Diversity & Inclusion* course has found trouble in seeing where it fits within the curriculum. This has been exacerbated by the decision to place different professors in the course every year for the past five. At times, it seems the course is concerned with a “broad range of ideas and initiatives to create learning environments that are safe, inclusive and equitable for as many identities as possible” (Guilford, n.d.). At other times, it is treated as an extension of *EDUC 4776*, dealing with issues related to special education and mainstreaming. The course, therefore, depends greatly on who is chosen to teach it. In fact, depending on the professor chosen for the course, it can shift to various areas ranging from anti-racist education to aspects of educational psychology. The next step for this course will have to entail a revisioning so that it has a clear focus, and a specialized professor retained for its leadership.

Clearly, with a presently fifty-fifty ratio between part-time and full-time instructors, and with many faculty members approaching (or even past) the age of retirement, a breaking point is not far off. Decisions will have to be made as to new tenure-track or contract appointments. The question that should be asked is if the courses in place are worthy enough to be filled by experts in that field.

**THE COLLAPSE OF THE CONCURRENT PROGRAM**

It should be acknowledged that one of the results of the Ministry revisions, direct or indirect, hastened the demise of the concurrent program. Once a mainstay of the Faculty, it had expanded on campus, and had indeed been the sole path in the very productive Brantford campus in the years before 2015. However, the new dean envisioned one B.Ed. program, and, when student numbers began stultifying, chose to roll the concurrent program into the consecutive. Nipissing’s Brantford satellite was already in the process of shuttering when the 2015 revisions began. In the end, the concurrent program at Nipissing did not look dissimilar from the new two-year consecutive program. In fact, the “new” concurrent program seems to be merely a renaming of the Orientation to Teaching (OTT) program that has been in place since the late 1980s.

Candidates in the concurrent B.Ed. program fulfill their undergraduate degree requirements with the inclusion of four courses: the six-credit course *MATH 1070 – Fundamental Concepts of
Mathematics for Teachers or six credits of approved mathematics courses; the three-credit course ACAD 1601 – Academic Writing, the six-credit course PSYC 2020 – Developmental Psychology for Educators or six credits of approved psychology courses, and the non-credit course EDUC 0106 – Introduction to Teaching, which involves six hours of workshops and 30 hours of experience in a classroom setting. These program requirements are identical to the requirements of the former OTT program. The previous concurrent program also featured a blend of courses from Education and other degree programs, such as Arts, Science, and Physical Education.

While a subcommittee of the Faculty Council developed several models of concurrent programs that would incorporate the new two-year Education degree requirements, with one model being chosen, the president of the day famously indicated that we could pass the motions if we wished, but he would not implement our chosen concurrent program design. By 2018, the former concurrent programs at the now defunct Brantford and Bracebridge campuses as well as the concurrent program on the main campus were ostensibly merged into one, with only a few loopholes left to be dealt with and some dangling students left to be graduated.

THE COLLAPSE OF THE PROGRAM’S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The revisions to the program also hastened some organizational changes that spotlighted the dwindling importance of Education within the university. With the amalgamation of the various divisions in the core courses, the importance of the P/J, J/I, and I/S distinctions began to fade. Each division had a chair at this time, and each began to lose their focus. Soon, discussion emerged as to the importance of chair positions at all. Considering the professors teaching core courses had teacher candidates from all divisions, propositions were advanced to discuss whether or not chairs could be refocused to specialize in core, teachable, and elective subjects - but this talk soon faded. Finally, with the freezing of student numbers in 2016 and with only the first-year cohort coming in, the Vice-President, Academic & Research pushed through a structural change. Education lost its faculty status, to become a school within a larger Faculty of Professional Studies. Sharing equal status with schools much smaller, it lost all its chairs, dean, and associate dean. Practice teaching was allocated to the associate dean (who may or may not be a member of the new School of Education) and the B.Ed. program is now run solely by a director (who receives only 3 course releases).

CONCLUSION

It has now been over five years since the launch of the revised B.Ed. program at Nipissing, and with the benefit of hindsight, it is quite easy to see many of the flaws and gaps that were mishandled at the beginning of this journey. In retrospect, we can see that the creation of a program in isolated units has led to a sense of academic segregation. There has been a definite split between core subjects, teachable, and elective areas. Each faculty member teaches their course with little connection to the rest of the program. At the same time, an increased rift has been created between coursework and practicum experiences on the whole (especially as full-time faculty members no longer act as field advisors). Further, the increase of different and part-time faculty teaching core courses has led to inconsistencies in expertise in the content, instruction, and expectations for teacher candidates.
Nevertheless, these drawbacks must not blind us from the solid foundation created to support teacher candidates in the past five years. The trilogy of core courses provides a broad range of understandings and professional learning. *Introduction to Curriculum Design* introduces the (revised) program-based lesson plan; a problem-based template that continues to be a pillar of the program. The Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting course designated specifically to assist teacher candidates to use student evidence to inform their practice, and the *Curriculum Design and Inquiry* course, which allows teacher candidates the opportunity to develop the skills to reflect on their practice as teacher-researchers, and connecting theory to practice. Although some overlap may occur between *Special Needs of Students* and *Diversity and Inclusion*, they provide multiple perspectives on social issues of race, multiculturalism, socio-economic disparities, and the inclusion of special education students in class. An exceptional complement of faculty teach a broad range of *teachables* (language, literacy, English, math, sciences, geography, history, visual arts, etc.). The electives provide teacher candidates with some choice in topics of interest and the enhanced time of practicum experiences, with 19 weeks in the classroom and the community service experience, offers unique learning opportunities.

So, when one reads some of the missteps that were taken in our tentative beginning and over the years, one could throw up their hands and say, “the best laid plans of mice and men…”, anticipating to start from scratch once more. However, in looking at what we have accomplished, we think it better to closely examine the details of this enhanced program and attend to those small straws that may accumulate on the camel’s back.

**REFERENCES**


CHAPTER 11

THE MASTER OF TEACHING PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO: A COMMITMENT TO DATA-DRIVEN PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The University of Toronto offers two initial teacher education programs that lead to professional certification: the Master of Teaching (MT) program and the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study (JICS) program. These two programs are unique in Ontario insofar that they culminate in graduate degrees rather than a Bachelor of Education degree. To support a graduate-level focus on theory and research, both programs require five semesters to complete, rather than four. The book, Initial teacher education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017), documents the design and implementation of both five-semester programs in 2015. The current chapter updates this account by describing the initiatives and developments that took place in the Master of Teaching program in subsequent years (2016 to 2020). The next chapter in this volume, Interplay Created Through Shared Space and Shared Vision in the Master of Arts-Child Study Program Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto by Kosnik, Cleovoulou, and Messina offers perspectives on the JICS program.

The MT program is the larger of the two graduate-level initial teacher education programs at the University of Toronto. It was developed as an intensive teacher preparation program that combines teacher certification with advanced study of educational theory and an opportunity to conduct research. The program provides students with a strong grounding in curriculum; human development; ethics and educational law; equity, diversity, and inclusivity; Indigenous education; educational technology; instructional planning; instructional design; and learning theory. Students enjoy four practice teaching experiences in which they develop their skills as teachers and extend the theoretical and practical knowledge that they have acquired in the academic portion of the program. Upon successful completion of the program, students are recommended to the Ontario College of Teachers for an Ontario Teachers’ Certificate of Qualification, which qualifies them to teach in either the Primary and Junior (P/J) divisions, the Junior and Intermediate (J/I) divisions,
or the Intermediate and Senior (I/S) divisions of Ontario schools. Currently there are approximately 865 students enrolled in the program.

The MT program was developed in the late 1990s in response to a general dissatisfaction with the length of conventional B.Ed. programs (8 months at that time). We felt that a longer program, infused with the latest teacher preparation pedagogies and an active research component, would develop more effective and knowledgeable educators. To accomplish this, we developed a program that deeply infuses research and advanced theory with professional education.

Some of the more distinctive aspects of the MT program include the following (McDougall et al., 2017):

- **Master of Teaching Research Papers:** A focal part of the program is the pair of course-based research projects carried out by each teacher candidate. These projects familiarize the Master of Teaching candidates with different types of academic literature, engage them in the development of a literature review, and require them to carry out a small qualitative empirical study. Students produce two papers, one during each year of study.

- **Annual Research Conference:** MT candidates present their research annually at the Research Conference Day where faculty members and all teacher candidates gather to hear the research results of our graduates.

- **Online Journal:** The program has established an in-house online journal entitled “The Master of Teaching Research Journal” to serve as one of the venues for sharing MT research.

- **Faculty Qualifications:** Almost all instructors in the MT program have doctoral qualifications, and methods course instructors also have field experiences, teaching certification (e.g., classroom teaching, vice-principal, principal), and instructional leadership experience in their areas. This blend of research and teaching experience is further reflected in course readings that are taken from both academic and practitioner sources.

- **Graduate-Level Courses:** The content of all MT courses is research-based and meets the School of Graduate Studies’ criteria for graduate study. These courses are updated continuously to reflect new knowledge and trends in the field. For their two elective courses, MT teacher candidates take courses with MA, M.Ed., and doctoral students in other OISE graduate programs.

- **Five terms of study, rather than four:** Our efforts to engage teacher candidates in research and a deeper analysis of the educational literature are necessarily time-consuming. Consequently, our program involves five academic terms of full-time study rather than the four terms required for Ontario’s Bachelor of Education programs.
• **Opportunities for Doctoral Studies:** Through their coursework, MT candidates make contact with OISE research faculty. Some MT students decide to specialize further and apply to doctoral programs after graduation. Several dozen MT graduates have successful completed doctoral programs at OISE, as well as at other leading universities in Canada and abroad.

In these ways, the graduate dimensions of the program are deeply interwoven throughout the MT teacher candidates’ program experiences. The Master of Teaching program’s focus on graduate-level teacher education reflects our commitment to excellence and is intended to produce teacher-leaders who can utilize research and theory in their careers as educators.

**PRACTICUM**

The practicum block in the Master of Teaching program is an evaluated, 4-week, full-time experience in a classroom with an associate teacher. Teacher candidates have one practicum in November of each year and one practicum in February-March. In total, candidates enjoy approximately 88 days of field experience. Candidates are placed in schools in one of the 10 school boards in the greater Toronto area (Toronto, Toronto Catholic, York Region, York Catholic, Peel, Dufferin-Peel Catholic, Durham, Durham Catholic, Halton, Halton Catholic) or at an independent school in one of the partner boards. The MT program also has a special practicum partnership with Eenchokay Birchstick School in northwestern Ontario near the Manitoba border. Each year, 5 to 10 teacher candidates visit Eenchokay Birchstick School for their final practicum.

The majority of MT teacher candidates do not have an opportunity to take alternative placements (e.g., at science centers or other community-based sites). However, for the past three years, the program has experimented with a special practicum schedule that gives a small cohort of students (15-20) the option of completing their 80 classroom days prior to the start of their fourth and final practicum. This group of students is then free to take their final placement in a non-school setting. This arrangement is still experimental because it requires teacher candidates to adopt a much more time-intensive schedule in an already demanding program.

During practicum, teacher candidates are involved in a wide range of activities including observing the associate teacher, teaching the whole class, guiding small groups of students, and working one-on-one with a pupil. Generally, they begin with just a few lessons and then ease into fuller responsibilities over the 4-week placement. Details about the gradual increase in responsibility can be found on the OISE website at: https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/mtpracticum/Weekly_Expectations.html.

Associate teachers mentor the teacher candidate in all aspects of their instruction: planning, teaching, assessment, classroom management, and so forth. They are assisted in this endeavor by a faculty advisor from OISE who visits the classroom on two or more occasions, observes the teacher candidate in a teaching capacity, and offers feedback and advice. The role of the faculty advisor is purely one of support. The associate teacher is solely responsible for grading the teacher candidate’s performance during practicum. In cases where teacher candidates are at risk of failing their practicum, OISE will send a practicum coordinator to the school. At that point, the teacher candidate, associate teacher, practicum coordinator, and faculty advisor will jointly devise a plan to help the teacher candidate improve their practice.
RECENT CHANGES IN THE MT PROGRAM

In 2015, the Ontario Government announced policies that reduced enrolment in teacher education programs, decreased per-student funding, stipulated mandatory core content, doubled practicum to 80 days, and doubled program duration to a new four-term requirement for all initial teacher education programs. In response, the Master of Teaching program increased its length from four to five terms and added significant new research components that deepen the links between research and practice. Please consult the book chapter *Graduate Teacher Education at OISE: Transition to a Five-Term Program* (McDouggall et al., 2017) for a full description of these changes and the theoretical framework that guided, and continues to guide, our decision-making.

In the five years following the introduction of the new policies, the Master of Teaching program has continued to grow and improve, guided by a philosophy of “progressive improvement.” The day-to-day operation of the MT program is overseen by a seven-person Leadership Team who meet for two hours each week to coordinate all aspects of the program’s delivery. A critical aspect of the Leadership Team’s work is the ongoing process of identifying problems, gathering data to inform interventions, designing actions to remedy the problems, followed by measurements of effectiveness. Data collection plays a central role in the team’s decision-making. In a typical year, the Leadership Team will administer 8-10 online surveys, each of which prompt teacher candidates, associate teachers, faculty advisors, or other stakeholders to share their thoughts on a different aspect of the program. Through this collaborative process of data-gathering, reflection, and experimentation, the Leadership Team works to continually strengthen the program by increasing coherence, improving communication, and enhancing our teacher candidates’ academic and practicum experiences.

In this chapter, we describe five of the Leadership Team’s current list of priorities:

- Developing a teacher-as-researcher stance during practicum;
- Curriculum renewal: Aligning program vision with program expectations and course expectations;
- Fostering math content knowledge among elementary teacher candidates;
- Working toward greater racial equity;
- Preparing teacher-scholars: Establishing a culture of research among teacher candidates.

The aforementioned items represent five areas where the Leadership Team has invested considerable effort over the past five years. All of these priorities have been the subject of considerable data gathering, study, and iterative attempts at improvement. The following sections examine each of these priorities in turn.

PRIORITY 1. DEVELOPING A TEACHER-AS-RESEARCHER STANCE IN PRACTICUM

Ongoing development of the MT practicum is multi-layered, multi-pronged, and never-ending. Practicum development is multi-layered because the MT Practicum Team is simultaneously working on a variety of goals that are interconnected, including breaking down the theory-practice divide, enhancing the coherence of the program, developing stronger partnerships with boards and schools, and highlighting and facilitating greater reciprocity in the teacher candidate/associate teacher relationship. Working toward these multiple goals, as interconnected as they are, often
involves different initiatives projecting the program forward. This section will focus on one of these practicum-related initiatives that is closely connected to overall program goals.

One core objective of the MT program is to graduate teachers who bring a ‘teacher as researcher stance’ (Loughran, 2007) to their classroom practice. Rejecting notions of learning to teach through imitation or trial and error (Burn & Mutton, 2015), the MT program aims to support the development of inquiry-oriented teachers to build a profession “where practices and their impact are transparently tested, developed, circulated, and adapted [through] inquiry, improvisation, and experimentation” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 50). The opportunity to plant the seed of an inquiry stance in practice begins in practicum number one, when TCs’ foundational beliefs about what it means to be a teacher are challenged and developed.

Evolving out of many discussions across the first year of the new extended program, a plan was put in place to develop a tool to support the development of the ‘teacher as researcher stance.’ Using the Ontario Ministry of Education’s (2010) tools and templates for the Teacher Performance Appraisal System, a “Learning Plan for Year 1, Practicum 1” template was developed for use by TCs in their first practicum. The development of the Learning Plan included input from key stakeholders, including members of the MT’s Partnership Advisory Committee, which is comprised of partner school principals and associate teachers. A brief description of the Learning Plan is articulated at the top of the template:

The first two weeks of Year 1, Practicum 1 is an opportunity for every TC to explore and better understand the professional context of the practicum setting. This includes students, classroom, school and community contexts. The development of a learning plan focuses each TC on their individual questions, and acts as both a guide to seek out learning opportunities, as well as reflect on experiences and findings. As a self-directed activity, the learning plan situates responsibility for one’s growth and development as a teacher with each TC. Articulating questions at the beginning of a TC’s practicum journey, followed by exploration, analysis, reflection and goal setting reflects the teacher as researcher stance that is critical for successful and effective 21st century teachers.

Following the above description, the Learning Plan supports individualized and open-ended inquiry with the following prompts: “My questions”, “How might I learn about/explore these questions?”, “What did I find?/What did I learn?”, and “Reflections, new questions, next steps, goals.”

Discussions of the implementation of the Learning Plan often focused on how to achieve the goal of the plan across various stakeholders while avoiding it being perceived as busywork, or even worse, as not related to the work of practicing teachers. Introducing the Learning Plan across the MT community therefore required strategic communication with all involved, including teacher candidates, associate teachers, partner school principals, faculty advisors, and MT faculty.

Feedback data on the Learning Plan continue to inform the evaluation of this initiative and its ongoing development. Below are the key learnings from this data, along with the next steps taken to further develop the Learning Plan over the last few years.
When the Learning Plan was first introduced in 2016, there was a need to revisit the expectations of the first practicum to provide TCs with an opportunity to focus on the inquiry-oriented experiences of the Learning Plan. As a result, the early stages and expectations of practicum #1 were reframed as Inquiry, Observation and Active Engagement rather than a focus on lesson planning and teaching. This significant shift in expectations also provided a more gradual release of responsibility for TCs in their first practicum.

Survey data from the key stakeholders (TCs, ATs, and Faculty Advisors) following the first implementation of the Learning Plan in 2016 provided critical feedback used in the ongoing development of the Learning Plan. More specifically, although there was a high incidence of completion of the Learning Plan in the practicum by Year 1 TCs (92%), the data clearly demonstrated the need for more communication to all stakeholders about the nature and purpose of the Learning Plan.

Although the data from the first year were critical (e.g., the purpose of the Plan was unclear, some TCs felt the Learning Plan was not taken seriously because it was not formally evaluated, etc.), the feedback was extremely helpful in developing a detailed resource guide for future use titled Year 1, Practicum 1, Week 1 – INQUIRY, OBSERVATION AND ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT: What do TCs do? A Guide to Beginning the Practicum Journey. The resource guide was shared with Year 1 TCs and their associate teachers and faculty advisors. The critical feedback also prompted the development of a more visual Learning Plan template, using the metaphor of a journey along a path of stepping stones.

Feedback on the Learning Plan also propelled discussion about how to more explicitly connect the practicum-related Learning Plan to overall course experiences and learnings for Year 1 TCs. Adding an expectation to practicum, as rooted as it might be to program goals to develop a ‘teacher as researcher stance’, needed to include greater attention to coherence. In the second year of implementation, MT faculty of Year 1 TCs were encouraged to explicitly make connections to the Learning Plan in their courses prior to the first practicum. In the third year of implementation, instructors of the Year 1 research course saw very natural and meaningful connections to a variety of topics in their course, including observation, question development, teacher as researcher, analysis, and action research. Although all instructors of Year 1 courses were still encouraged to make connections to the Learning Plan, the instructors of the research course became responsible for a more formal introduction to the plan in classes prior to the first practicum.

Keys to the success of the Learning Plan to date include the ongoing evaluation and development of this initiative, introducing TCs to the practicum-related Learning Plan in their Year 1 research course, and continuing to work with school partners to develop a shared understanding of what it means to be an effective teacher. Evaluation and development of the Learning Plan will continue into the future, and feedback from a 2019 MT graduate suggests we are heading in the right direction:
In my first practicum of the MT program, the learning plan I shared with my AT helped us to form a much closer and more trusting rapport. The learning plan guided me in being more intentional when considering my own practice as an educator and considering more abstract research questions about education more generally. It provided a springboard for my AT and me to discuss my interests and observations and served to make me more reflective and open to discussing my experience as a TC with my AT.

Most teacher candidates reported on the survey that the Learning Plan had been a useful exercise for them.

PRIORITY 2. CURRICULUM RENEWAL: LEARNING AS A PROGRAM ABOUT LEARNING IN OUR PROGRAM

The Master of Teaching program faced a unique situation as a result of the enhanced Initial Teacher Education program requirements implemented in 2015 in responding to the change in policy while attending to the School of Graduate Studies’ requirements. Additionally, with the conversion to solely graduate teacher education at the University of Toronto, the program enrolment tripled to 800. In 2016, following accreditation by the OCT and an institutional review, it was determined that a visioning process might provide helpful information for the program as it addressed the new policy requirements while sustaining and strengthening its graduate nature.

One of the priorities for the MT program, emerging from departmental review and academic planning, was to “increase the coherence of our courses and reduce redundancy.” While this aim is central to any curriculum renewal process, it is complex in a large, 20-month, graduate entry-to-practice program comprised of twenty mandatory and two elective courses. However, coherence is one of the program’s seven core principles and is viewed as a process. Coherence is continually being made by the teacher candidates as they build their knowledge and connect theory, research, and practice through learning experiences across courses and across university and field (Honig & Hatch, 2014; Canrinus, Klette, & Hammerness, 2019). The pursuit of coherence and program-building through curriculum renewal is an ongoing, iterative, and living undertaking deeply connected to serving our teacher candidates and partner communities (Russell, McPherson & Martin, 2001).

The stated goals for the MT curriculum renewal were drawn from the MT Visioning Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (CTL, 2017), the OISE Academic Plan (OISE, 2017), and the Guide to Curriculum Renewal at the University of Toronto (UT, 2017). They are broadly defined as:

- to align, and as needed, revise course and program expectations in order to clearly articulate program learning goals for teacher candidates, field partners, colleagues;
- to utilize and respond to program data, candidate data, and contextual data to adapt and further develop the program’s content, design, and structure;
- to maximize and center research within the program;
- to strengthen coherence in the program content delivery, design, and structure to support candidates’ experience of coherence and knowledge construction;
- to develop mechanisms for continuous assessment of the expectations and program changes undertaken;
• to undertake research on the process and outcomes of the work that will be of value to other programs.

Curriculum renewal is founded upon student-focus, faculty collaboration, utilizing evidence, working at the program level, and committing to continuous improvement (UCD, 2016; Arafeh, 2016; Dyjur & Kenny, 2015). In the MT program, the mandated nature of the majority of the courses; the scale of the program; the number and variety of instructors; and incorporating OCT and provincial curricular foci and the requirements of graduate level education create unique conditions for the process.

The four-stage renewal process, comprised of Program Visioning, Program Expectation Review, Curriculum Mapping and Implementation and Action Planning, began in 2017 (UCD, 2016; Richards, 2018). Core to both curriculum renewal and coherence is a shared vision of effective teaching (Canrinus et al., 2017, 2019; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Hammerness, 2006). Collaboratively developing the renewed vision, seen below, was a critical first step.

*Teaching excellence and scholarly research are the mutually reinforcing pillars of the Master of Teaching program. Our graduates are outstanding teachers and future educational leaders who consult, critique, create, and mobilize educational research. As a community, our faculty, students and graduates share a deep commitment to all learners and the building of a more just, equitable and sustainable world.* *(https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/mtvisioning/Home.html)*

An extensive process of redeveloping Program Expectations followed. The Program Expectations Working Group (PEWG) was composed of program leaders with expertise in teacher education who represented our complementary faculty members, all divisions, and all program content areas. Over a twelve-month period, the group defined areas of knowledge, skill, and practice for graduates; developed expectation statements to reflect these areas; and painstakingly refined the expectation statements to create a clear listing to be shared across the program. With ongoing input from course leads, faculty and the visioning committee, and fruitful debate, PEWG winnowed the original forty-eight ideas to twenty-three program expectations.

Curriculum mapping has been a process of exploring the connections of the new program expectations to each of the 22 courses. Each course team has investigated the depth of engagement with various expectations and the teaching and learning strategies and assessments utilized to provide opportunities for demonstrating knowledge and skills. Evidence has also been collected from teacher candidates, teacher educators, and program graduates through surveys, meetings, interviews, and focus groups.

**WHAT HAVE WE BEEN LEARNING?**

*The Value of Continued Collective Reflection on Our Program*

Visioning and mapping have caused productive questioning and discussion. What does it mean to center equity, teaching excellence, and research-intensity? What are the consequences of varied pathways through the mandatory courses? As we have collaboratively examined where, when, and in what ways key areas such as assessment, technology, or Indigenous histories and pedagogies...
are taken up in the program, we have identified the need for greater cross-program communication and connection.

The Power of Intentional and Distributed Leadership
Course leads are faculty who support course instructor teams around course content, pedagogies, and policies to support teacher candidate learning. These leaders have been key in program expectation work and in facilitating conceptual coherence by assisting instructors to connect to the expectations, consider the use of research in their teaching, and see how different assessments and practices can meet the same course goals.

The Importance of Student Voice
Teacher candidates offer key sources of information about the programs they are experiencing (Canrinus et al., 2017, 2019; Worrell et al., 2014; Ludlow et al., 2008). Survey questions targeting coherence revealed successes and unintended consequences of program design. On one hand, candidates perceived that faculty understood and connected course knowledge to the field, emphasizing theory-research-practice connections. However, other answers indicated a lack of shared knowledge across courses, meaning that opportunities to extend or deepen concepts may be missed.

The Centrality of Researching and Using Research to Inform Program Renewal
We utilize exit surveys of our graduating students, mid-point surveys, and instruments focusing on elective courses, research pathways, and pilot projects. We also seek input from faculty and school partners in surveys, focus groups, and meetings. We continually mine the literature to learn from colleagues around the world who are pursuing coherence (Hammerness, 2006; Canrinus et al., 2017, 2019), centering equity (Grudnoff et al., 2017; Darling-Hammond, 2014), and using research meaningfully to develop teaching practice and programs (Burn & Mutton, 2015; Tatt, 2015).

The Messy and Unfinished Nature of Renewal and Pursuing Coherence
As we move further into mapping and identify areas for action planning, we are aware of the interdependence of the program elements that we have been researching. Renewal and change necessarily alter the process of coherence-making. We have learned that there can be unanticipated consequences when new structures and practices are implemented. By continuing to reflexively and collaboratively study our context, we hope to thoughtfully and responsively strengthen our program.

PRIORITY 3. FOSTERING THE MATH CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHER CANDIDATES
High quality math education holds major importance across the nation and beyond. In Ontario, the government announced its priorities on improving math skills, STEM education, and financial literacy (OME, 2019a). In line with its priorities, the provincial government also legislated Bill 48, in which teacher candidates (TCs) must successfully demonstrate proficiency in math through a content test prior to certification (OME, 2019b). With math education under the microscope, faculties of education bear a heavy responsibility in improving TCs’ math content knowledge (MCK) to positively impact their math knowledge for teaching. MCK is defined as math proficiency possessed by individuals considered to be mathematically literate, i.e., they use math
to understand, reason, and solve problems in a variety of situations (Reid & Reid, 2017). MCK is a critical component of math knowledge for teaching (Ball, Hill, & Bass, 2005; Dunekacke, Jenßen, & Blömeke, 2015; Lui & Bonner, 2016; Reid & Reid, 2017). With limited MCK, teachers are unlikely to possess the knowledge to effectively respond to students’ inquiries, present appropriate models, ask thought-provoking questions, or identify misconceptions (Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008). Lui and Bonner (2016) give evidence that deficiencies in MCK limit “mathematics teachers’ ability to readjust curriculum and instruction to fit students’ needs, regardless of teacher beliefs” (p. 9). In the MT program, MCK of TCs has been the focus of a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant. This section describes the outcomes of our SSHRC research and its implications on developing MCK in teacher education.

Since 2014, primary/junior and junior/intermediate TCs have participated in a diagnostic math test geared at grades 6 to 8, (see Table 1). In the first year of implementation, the assessment focused on grade 6 numeracy skills and all TCs participated in the pre- and post-test (n=151). In year one, approximately 22% scored less than 70% on the pre-test (n=33), and out of this group, about three-quarters remained below 70% on the post-test (n=25). In year two, grade 7 questions were added to the test to assess understanding of integers; and overall mean scores significantly decreased by 5.5%. In year three, no statistical difference was observed in the overall mean scores. In year four, the assessment was again modified to incorporate fraction operations (grade 7 and 8 skills). With this modification, overall mean scores dropped significantly. Results over the four-year period suggest that TCs require support in: order of operations, operation of fractions, decimals, percentages, and ratios. In an analysis of interview transcripts, TCs commonly stated they had forgotten the ‘formula’ or ‘algorithm’ and struggled to respond to test questions related to proportional reasoning. This data gives evidence that TCs relied heavily on procedural knowledge and lacked deep conceptual knowledge. This finding corroborates with the meta-analysis of MCK literature conducted by Thanheiser et al. (2014), in which they found that “most articles across the content areas show that preservice teachers tend to rely on procedures rather than concepts” (p. 433). Teachers need to be able to plan math instruction in ways that promote a balance of conceptual and procedural learning, and this would be a challenge if they themselves are procedurally dependent and lack conceptual understanding.

Table 1
Summary of Four Years of Diagnostic Math Test Results

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>2014</th>
<th>2015*</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017**</th>
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<td>267</td>
<td>239</td>
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<td>75.68</td>
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<td>64.19</td>
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<td>Max. Score</td>
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<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min. Score</td>
<td>36.07</td>
<td>21.21</td>
<td>21.21</td>
<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In 2015, five additional questions were added to assess TCs’ ability to work with integers. Based on an unpaired t-test for 2014 and 2015, the differences between the assessment outcomes were extremely statistically significant, i.e., P value < 0.0001. The assessment design of 2015 and 2016 remained the same, and the differences in student outcomes were not considered statistically significant i.e., P value > 0.5.

**In 2017, the assessment was again modified to include grade 7 and 8 math content. In comparing the 2016 and 2017 results, there was a difference of outcomes considered extremely significant, i.e., P value < 0.0001.
Further complicating this already challenging situation, many of the TCs showed high levels of math anxiety based on anxiety scales. Our research demonstrated a significant correlation between anxiety and math performance, i.e., the higher the anxiety, the lower the math test scores (Reid, Reid, & Hewitt, 2018). Every year, TCs were provided with individualized diagnostic reports of their math results. The reports directed TCs to online tutorials designed to fill gaps in their math abilities. TCs were also invited to the numerous math workshops offered by the university. Based on interviews of 24 TCs who scored below 70% over the four years, TCs in this group did not readily take advantage of these resources and rarely attended any supplementary math sessions. Essentially, the interview data illuminated TCs’ avoidance behaviour of math. Examples of such behaviour included TCs who avoided teaching math during practicum or TCs requesting to teach lower grades in fear of having to teach math at higher grade levels. It was evident that a major reason for TCs’ avoidance behaviour stemmed from their math anxiety. TCs indicated negative emotions towards having to learn and teach a subject with which they felt ‘lost,’ ‘nervous,’ or ‘disengaged.’ Our results echo the findings of others that illustrate how teachers with math anxiety tend to avoid further math professional development and routinely spend less time teaching math in their classroom (Beilock & Maloney, 2015). For these reasons, it was critical that the MT program implemented equitable ways to fortify TCs’ MCK and become successful at math. We needed to make programmatic changes that ensured TCs attain the necessary math skills in ways that were supportive, non-stigmatizing, and did not amplify TCs’ math-related anxiety.

One of our math goals for the MT program is to nurture a culture of ‘success for all’, where TCs support each other’s learning. We rejected the notion of a ‘high-stakes’ test as an entry or exit requirement because we strongly believe this would magnify math anxiety and deter potential candidates from entering the program who would otherwise be excellent teachers. In the fall of 2018, the MT program introduced a compulsory course for all incoming elementary TCs known as ‘MathPlus.’ The course covers core numeracy concepts (up to grade 9) and is comprised of many smaller assessments that afford TCs to master concepts, and progressively increase both their math skills and confidence. MathPlus involves two hours a week, for twelve weeks during year one of the two-year program. TCs in MathPlus complete weekly homework modules and short quizzes. TCs who struggle to pass any of the quizzes or homework modules are immediately matched with a one-on-one tutor to ensure MCK is supported. A minimum achievement of 75% in MathPlus is required to graduate. TCs were given the opportunity to write a grade 9 math test to be exempt from MathPlus. In 2018, 61 MT TCs attempted the grade 9 test, and 29 of them achieved the cut off of 85% to be exempt from the course.

Our SSHRC grant focuses on evaluating the efficacy of MathPlus by comparing pre- and post-test math results of the experimental group (TCs who took part in MathPlus) and the control group (previous year’s TCs who did not participate in MathPlus). For the experimental group, post-tests revealed significant gains in TCs’ MCK and significant reductions in math anxiety. After one year, TCs in MathPlus performed at a significantly higher level than the control group, at the same point in their program. This SSHRC research will continue over the next two years to further analyze other cohorts, collect more interview data of TCs who struggle with MCK, and ultimately better understand how MCK impacts TCs’ math knowledge for teaching. Our vision is for MathPlus to become an integral part of the teacher education program, in which MCK development is the normative culture and all TCs feel supported as math learners.
PRIORITY 4. TOWARD RACIAL EQUITY IN THE MT – A WORK IN PROGRESS

Like many teacher preparation programs, the MT has a great deal of work to do in terms of racial equity and inclusion. Although we have a long way to go, we have taken the first steps of this complicated, messy, and incredibly important journey. This section describes the motivation, goals, and substance of these efforts, currently in progress, within the MT program.

Within Canadian and many other education contexts, racialized and Indigenous peoples represent growing segments of the population, yet they remain underrepresented in universities (Henry et al., 2017; Battey et al., 2018). Within teacher preparation contexts, much of the scholarship and practice is done by and for White people (Kohli, 2009; Daniel, 2009), and most teacher candidates and teacher educators are White (Kohli, 2018a).

Teacher education programs (TEPs) are central sites of racial production and reproduction. Philip and Benin (2014) hold that racism is a situated idea, one that operates uniquely within specific contexts (e.g., TEPs). Thus, understanding how race and racism operate within teacher preparation programs is vital. Unfortunately, conversations on race and racism are not happening enough in TEPs (Hayes & Fasching-Varner, 2015, as cited in Kohli, 2018b), and when they are, they are often superficial with the intention of bolstering White teacher candidates’ toolkits for working with racialized students without examining how to uniquely prepare candidates of colour (Kohli, 2018b; Daniel, 2009). O’Brien (2009) holds that teachers are positioned as key agents of social change to work against racism, and need to be effectively prepared to do so. When our TEPs do not reach this goal, teachers may enter the workforce without the specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to do anti-racist work (O’Brien, 2009).

Recognizing the persistence of racism at the individual, institutional, and systemic levels; and driven by the anecdotal but persistent reports from students about their experiences and perceptions of in-program racism, the MT has undertaken a series of initiatives to promote racial equity and inclusion in the program. This work is broadly organized in six overlapping phases: (1) consultation, (2) data collection, (3) establishment of a steering committee and the identification of specific goals, (4) implementation of identified goals, (5) review of the efficacy and impact, and (6) identification of next steps. As of this writing (summer 2019), we are in the midst of phases three and four, working to identify specific steps in some areas, and implementing identified steps in others.

Phase One (consultation) involved communication with equity leaders in other professional programs at the University of Toronto and York University, as well as with senior equity leaders at two of the University’s three campuses. Additionally, we consulted internally with faculty experts at OISE/UT. A key learning from these meetings was the need to better understand our program in terms of racial demographics and in terms of student experiences of racial climate. At the time, there were no data collection tools in use to help us understand who was in our program or what it felt like to be in our program in terms of race and racialization.

Data collection work was the logical next step. Our mixed methods approach was guided by the literature in considering and attending to the following phenomena in our work: first, the significance of both conscious and unconscious racism (Godsil et al., 2014); second, the stance that experiential knowledge at the micro and macro levels is legitimate, appropriate, and necessary.
for understanding race and racism (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solorzano, 1997); and third, that race corresponds with advantage and disadvantage at the individual, institutional, and systemic levels.

Our first data collection activity was an anonymous online race climate survey, administered initially to all students (years one and two), with annual administration thereafter for year-one students only. The survey combined Likert scale, forced-choice questions with open-ended questions. The second data collection activity was a series of four small focus groups, with students recruited via the survey. Both activities focused on student perceptions and experiences of race and racism in various areas of the program, including interactions with colleagues, faculty, and staff; as well as in their practica. The final data collection activity was a class-by-class race demographic census using paper slips, following the same administration timetable as the climate survey.

As the data collection was beginning, we formed a steering committee to develop and guide our work. The committee includes faculty, students, senior staff at OISE/UT, stakeholders from other faculties, and a small group of experts from outside of the university. It is made up primarily of Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC).

Results from the data collection suggest racism likely plays a significant role in student experience in the MT. Based on the findings, the broader literature, and the consultations noted above, our work is currently focusing on program development in the following seven areas: anti-racism learning for instructors; anti-racism curriculum for students; admission processes to better support and encourage applications from under-represented populations; recruitment strategies targeting Black and Indigenous applicants; reporting mechanisms for incidents of racial inequity; fostering of communities of support for BIPOC students; and continued liaising with relevant stakeholder communities.

Work in each of these areas is guided by a subgroup of the larger committee that includes discipline-specific experts. As of this writing, some subgroups are still developing specific objectives, while others have moved into the implementation phase (including the preliminary plans for partnerships with other faculties in the university). Over the next two years, we will complete the development and implementation pieces, and then move to our review of the efficacy and impact, and the identification of next steps.

As mentioned, this is very much a work in progress. A more expansive discussion of this work would offer a deeper dive on the supports and challenges that surround this work, the details of the initiatives underway, and perhaps a description of the joy and excitement that has characterized our work to date.

PRIORITY 5. PREPARING TEACHER-SCHOLARS: RESEARCH IN THE MT PROGRAM

Teachers’ work is knowledge work. Teachers make decisions everyday around what knowledge to include and exclude in their teaching, and teachers’ own pedagogy and assessment practices communicate their beliefs about the nature of knowledge (i.e., what can be known and how). Every day, teachers communicate knowledge, apply their knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy, and critically engage and ask questions of knowledge together with their students. They share their observations with colleagues about ‘what works’ (and does not), and they reflect on their practice.
and adjust their teaching approaches when necessary. In these ways, despite longstanding perceptions of teachers as mere consumers and transmitters of knowledge, teachers also engage in knowledge production. Yet, despite having first-hand experiential knowledge of teaching and learning in schools and classrooms, university faculty members disproportionately produce the majority of knowledge and research on teaching and learning. The indelible divide between ‘research on teaching’ and ‘teacher research’ endures (Cochran-Smyth & Lytle, 1990; Korthagen, 2017; Zeichner, 1995).

**Beliefs and Approach**
Inquiry is a core value that underpins our Master of Teaching program. We recognize teachers as knowledge ‘workers’ and in turn believe that it is important to provide our teacher candidates with opportunities to learn how to access and critically assess educational research, to reflect on how their identities influence their engagement with knowledge, and to contribute to knowledge and research on teaching and learning. Our approach is twofold: (1) establishing a research culture through the integration and valuing of research across program courses and program activities, and (2) explicit course and program requirements focused on the development and application of research skills and the cultivation of a teacher-scholar identity. We believe both are vital to ensuring that our graduates are prepared to not only practice research-informed teaching but also contribute to educational research knowledge—now and throughout their careers.

**Establishing a Research Culture: Core Elements and Developments**
Two key factors that influence teacher candidate and teacher embrace of research include experiencing a research culture and observing teacher research in practice (Tatto, 2015; van der Linden et al., 2012, 2015). Experiencing a research culture first-hand is critical to developing positive beliefs about the value of research for teachers and to maintaining an inquiry stance throughout one’s teaching career (Alcorn, 2006). This approach is distinct from an additive approach to research requiring a single course credit and/or major research paper. Experiencing a research culture involves seeing and hearing research permeate throughout program courses and activities (Godfrey, 2016).

In the Master of Teaching program, teacher candidates experience a research culture through a number of concurrent activities: they hear their instructors drawing on research to support their own pedagogy and invoking research through curriculum integration; they are expected to consult and draw on research literature to support their instructional planning and decision-making; they learn how to design and carry out research studies; they observe their instructors conducting research and disseminating their findings; and they have opportunities to hear about and participate in research conferences, to attend research panels and presentations, to apply for research grants, and to be informed of avenues and opportunities for publication. Importantly, while we prepare our students to conduct research to improve their individual teaching practice (i.e., practitioner research), we also prepare them to produce and disseminate research that all teachers can use to improve their practice (i.e., teacher research) (see Willegems et al., 2017). Toward that end, in 2018 we established the *Master of Teaching Research Journal*—an avenue for showcasing MT research engagement and a forum for dialogue with field partners and the academic community. We envision the journal as a vehicle for boundary spanning work—challenging narrow conceptions about who is a teacher and who is a researcher (Vemic, 2018).
MT instructors themselves undertake research across a broad array of topics. One area we are currently developing is how to involve more TCs in faculty research so that they can be further enculturated into the field of education research. We have begun with a pilot initiative that invites faculty members to create postings for TC involvement on their research teams. In light of the fact that our TCs undertake their studies in a graduate department of education that is itself nested in a faculty of education uniquely devoted to graduate studies, we also continue to explore opportunities for cross-departmental involvement in our program and for our students to benefit from immersion in the broader research culture that permeates OISE. Some of the key challenges accompanying our efforts to enhance our TCs’ experience of a robust research culture includes not overburdening an already full timetable and workload, and the challenge of how best to respond to our students’ differentiated experience with and interest in research. The latter is a particular challenge given that a Master of Teaching degree opens a number of potential pathways for our graduates—from traditional teaching contexts to third sector opportunities to the possibility for further academic study.

**Specific Courses and Program Requirements**

While it is not uncommon for teacher education programs to promote the development of research-informed teachers, the inclusion of explicit and required courses in research literacy and/or research methods is less common. We believe that in addition to experiencing a research culture through an integrated approach, TCs also require explicit opportunities to develop a teacher-scholar identity and specific research skills. The approach we take is through two required courses in education research, and participation in our annual research conference.

In their first year of our program, TCs take *Education Research I*. This course is focused on research literacy and developing skills for accessing and critically engaging with education research, while also focusing on what it means to be a teacher-researcher and developing a teacher-scholar identity. Course content includes a survey of research paradigms and methodologies, the development of specific skills such as accessing research databases and writing a literature review, and attention to the politics of knowledge production with implications for equity. TCs learn how to be reflexive about their identities as knowers and are invited to pay close attention to what knowledge and whose ways of knowing they privilege and exclude, marginalize, recirculate, and foreground in their teaching and research practices. As a culminating product, teacher candidates prepare a major paper that elucidates their critical engagement with research literature on a topic of their choosing.

In their second year, TCs take *Education Research II*. This course is focused on the application of research methods, and students design and undertake their own small-scale qualitative research study. Drawing on the research literature in their chosen topic area, TCs establish a research problem and research questions, and they design and carry out a study. Through the course, TCs learn how to design research protocols, account for ethical implications of research, analyze data, and communicate research findings. Students submit a major research paper as their culminating product, and they share the findings from their research at our annual *Master of Teaching Research Conference*. The conference is an opportunity for students to disseminate their findings, and also to participate in discussions with colleagues, faculty members, and field partners about their research topics.
These required courses and program activities are accompanied by their own challenges. The first, inevitably, is time. In their second year, our students design and conduct studies within the parameters of a 36-hour course, *in addition to* their other course and practicum requirements. While this is feasible, it is not ideal in light of the iterative nature of research. Nevertheless, the limited timeline provides necessary and productive parameters for designing the course and assignments in such a way as to move students forward, allowing them to complete their research with consistent support and in a timely fashion. A further challenge is how to best support students’ individually chosen topic areas. While course instructors have expertise in the area of research methods, it is not feasible or possible for them to have content expertise across students’ range of topics. In light of this, we continue to explore creative avenues for restructuring the second-year research course.

**CONCLUSION**

As one of only two Master’s-level programs in Ontario that lead to teacher certification, the MT program is designed to appeal to people who are looking for a deeper and more extensive teacher preparation experience than can be provided in a typical four-term teacher education program. The vision statement’s dual focus on “teaching excellence” and “scholarly research” highlights the graduate-level nature of the program and our goal of developing teacher practitioners who can access, interpret, synthesize, and critically evaluate the educational research literature, and conduct research aimed at improving their own practice.

Implementing the vision statement has not always been easy. Maintaining the distinctive research-orientation of the MT program can be difficult at times. It is easy for faculty to slip into the practice of focusing their courses on practical pedagogical skills, to the neglect of the theoretical and research dimensions. Older faculty members who taught in the OISE Bachelor of Education program (which closed in 2015) are particularly susceptible to this problem, given their relative lack of graduate teaching experience. To address this concern, MT instructors regularly come together to discuss the research orientation of the program, share course outlines, and explore how they can more richly embed scholarly research into their courses. Through such initiatives, we feel the MT program offers teacher candidates a distinctive culture in which students regularly discuss recent research findings, debate the practical implications of evidence-based theory, and engage in research studies of their own design.

Consistent with the MT vision statement, our emphasis on research applies not only to teacher candidates, but also to the processes by which the program is improved over time. In the same fashion that teacher candidates are encouraged to conduct research on their own professional practice, the MT Leadership Team is continually studying the program itself. Each of the priorities that the Leadership Team has identified represents a challenging problem that is not easily solvable. However, through ongoing data-gathering, consultation, piloting, and review, the Leadership Team is making progressive, incremental improvements that strengthen the program and enhance the experiences of our teacher candidates.
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INTERPLAY CREATED THROUGH SHARED SPACE AND SHARED VISION IN THE MASTER OF ARTS-CHILD STUDY PROGRAM, ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION/UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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At the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study (JICS), “we value a deeply inter-connected community in which all members feel known, respected, and supported as active participants” (https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/jics/). Teacher education is often conceptualized as a series of academic courses and practice teaching placements in schools; however, the Master of Arts in Child Study and Education (MA-CSE), at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, has a fairly different approach. It occupies a unique space both physically and conceptually: housed in a building with the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School (nursery – sixth grade) and the Dr. R.G.N. Laidlaw Research Centre. Since the location – both physically and academically – is atypical it is worth studying graduates from the program. This chapter presents findings from a study of graduates from the MA-CSE focusing on two aspects of the data:

- Overall view of the Master of Arts in Child Study and Education (MA-CSE) program
- View of the program’s structure (e.g., practice teaching model and place of research)

The chapter has four sections: discussion of teacher education program structures; description of the MA-CSE program; findings from the research; and a discussion of the implications of the findings.

TEACHER EDUCATION: A THOUSAND FLOWERS HAVE BLOOMED

Loughran and Hamilton (2016) argue that since teaching “is so complex … learning to teach must indeed entail considerably more than a training regime” (p. 5). Student teachers are not blank slates since they come to the program with their own experiences that act as filters and frames of reference (Lortie, 1975). Kennedy (2006), in her seminal work on teaching the complexity of teaching notes that teachers must simultaneously attend to: “(a) covering desirable content, (b) fostering student learning, (c) increasing students’ willingness to participate, (d) maintaining lesson momentum, (e) creating a civil classroom community, and (f) attending to their own cognitive and emotional needs” (p. 205). Teaching is multifaceted and demanding. As a result,
learning to teach is not a “straight-forward” process. How can teacher education programs be designed to address the vast range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of teachers?

Craig (2016) notes that the structures of teacher education programs develop historically, culturally, and socially (p. 72). She suggests it is impossible to make “sweeping proclamations” about teacher education because it tends to be a “local and regional matter, common language with common terms to describe its various structures does not exist within nations, let alone across nations” (2016, p. 72). The plethora of programs has both strengths and weaknesses; on the one hand, they are rooted in the local community, which allows them to be responsive to particular needs, yet on the other hand, the variation makes advancing a research agenda on teacher education difficult. (See Craig, 2016, pp. 84-130 or Beck and Kosnik, 2006 for detailed descriptions of programs including courses and practice teaching components by country.)

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

There is massive variability in teacher education programs both nationally and internationally. For example, in England, “[p]rospective candidates can choose among an almost bewildering array of agencies and routes into teaching. The Training and Development Agency website (http://www.tda.gov.uk/) informs them, ‘No two courses of initial teacher training are the same’ – largely because no two ITT providers are the same. Universities, colleges and schools all display varying characteristics, strengths and entry requirements, not to mention course content and structure” (MacBeath, 2012, p. 68). Similarly, the United States has four-, five-, six-year, and alternative certification programs (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Ironically, as researchers are realizing the complexity of learning to teach, the United States has “witnessed private interests exerting their power in education, and alternative and for-profit providers of teacher certification proliferating, aided by increased funding and deregulation, even while university-based programs were increasingly regulated” (Kosnik et al., 2016, p. 219). A thousand flowers – teacher education programs - have bloomed but the bounty makes navigating teacher education challenging.

Although there are fairly significant differences in program structures, a common element is practice teaching where student teachers spend time in actual classrooms. Practice teaching can vary from one semester to one week (e.g., Japan). Some programs like Stanford have academic courses and practice teaching running simultaneously (Beck & Kosnik, 2006), while some programs have the bulk of practice teaching offered at the end of the program. The latter structure makes weaving theory and practice nearly impossible. Regardless of program length, literature on teacher education consistently reports that student teachers highly value the practice teaching component of their program (Goodwin et al., 2015; White 2016).

It is not just the timing of the placements that should be considered but also the significant role of cooperating (also known as associate or mentor) teachers. Once again there is tremendous variety. Some teachers apply to be cooperating teachers and are carefully selected (Goodwin et al., 2015), while in other cases they are chosen by the principal because he/she believes a teacher is struggling and would benefit from having a student teacher as an extra pair of hands (Kosnik & Beck, 2002). In addition to the problems created by this haphazard system for selecting cooperating teachers, Goodwin et al. (2015) found that most cooperating teachers focus on the technical or discrete skills and discuss instructional decisions rather than explain pedagogical choices. As a result, practice teaching becomes a way to learn to imitate what is in place. By contrast, Feiman-Nemser (2001)
suggests cooperative teachers should do “educative mentoring”, which is much more than simply hosting a student teacher. According to Feiman-Nemser (2001), “[e]ducative mentoring rests on an explicit vision of good teaching and an understanding of teacher learning,” in contrast with “approaches that emphasize situational adjustment, technical advice and emotional support” (pp. 17-18). Given the tremendous variety, it is not surprising that practice teaching is a challenging dimension to the program.

REFORM EFFORTS

Worldwide, teacher education is under scrutiny. As Furlong (2013) notes: “Something dramatic has happened to teacher education policy in the last 30 years. Up until the 1980s, in virtually every country around the world, teacher education was a relative backwater in terms of educational policy” (p. 29). There have been a variety of interventions in teacher education over the past two decades: professional development schools housing teacher education programs in an existing school (Hopper & Sanford, 2004; Zenkov, Shiveley, & Clark, 2016); action research being incorporated into a teacher education program (Kosnik & Beck, 2000; Kosnik, 2000; Kosnik, 1999; Mills, 2013); alternative certification programs truncating academic programs (Whitty, 2014); governments mandating the structure, location, and curriculum of programs (Furlong, 2013; Gilroy, 2014; Whitty, 2014); and exit portfolios (e.g., EdTPA) being imposed on programs (Dover et al., 2015). To what extent are these interventions improving teacher education?

There are many ways to approach teacher education – number of courses, length of practice teaching placements, degree requirements – each of these has value, yet when considered individually, this can lead to program fragmentation. Since teaching is a complex and dynamic enterprise (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Frey, Fisher, & Hattie, 2016; Kennedy, 2006, 2016), one step solutions or reforms are bound to fail. One way to overcome teacher education being a series of disconnected courses is to consider vision and space for the program.

VISION

Developing a vision for a program is difficult because of the many stakeholders and conflicting goals (Hammerness, 2006). Beck and Kosnik (2011) observe that when “a teacher or school has a well-developed vision that meets the needs of all members of the community, there is a sense that we are all pulling in the same direction” (p. 107). Many of the top-down reforms thrust upon teacher educators create confusion and tensions because they send mixed messages, have varied goals, and are not guided by a vision of effective teaching (Kosnik et al., 2016). In Darling-Hammond’s (2006) ground-breaking work on exemplary teacher education programs, she identified key elements that included: clear and repeated vision of what good teachers are; goal of the program is not ways to teach but ways to think about teaching; all value teaching and all value scholarship and research on teaching; and connections with schools that match their view of teaching. She went beyond simply a list of required courses but considered the overall vision for the program and a conceptualization of teachers.

Most vision statements tend to focus on the program and/or student teachers; however, Lee Kuan Yew, a pioneer in education from the National Institute of Education in Singapore, took a different stance. He argued that teacher education must aim to help student teachers understand children. The cornerstones of education – schools and teacher education – “should be seeing that every child
has his or her gift and we can help every child develop to his or her fullest” (Tan, 2017, p. 19). With this as the goal, the Singapore teacher preparation program has the child/learner at its centre. Emphasizing the need for a vision statement so squarely focused on children may seem like “splitting hairs.” Granted, teacher education programs are essentially geared to preparing student teachers to teach children; however, as Yew notes: “we see the ‘child’ as our purpose [and] the focus of all we do in education” (Tan, 2017, p. 22). With the child’s well-being as the goal of the teacher education program, the structure and content of teacher education may change significantly (e.g., alternative certification programs that do not provide sufficient time to learn about children’s development and to plan for age-appropriate lessons may be modified).

SPACE

Generally, the concept of space regarding teacher education is considered as something tangible – concrete, mortars, and physical location; however, space can be open to interpretation. The Reggio Emilia school system was one of the first to appreciate the power of space:

The physical environment is of fundamental importance to the early childhood program, and is often referred to as the child’s "third teacher". One of the aims in the design of new spaces - and the redesign of existing ones - is integration of the classroom space with the surrounding environment. (Reggio Emilia, 2016)

In the Reggio Emilia system, schools are integrated into the community. Building on this expanding concept of space, Kretchmar and Zeichner (2016) call for “new hybrid spaces where academic, practitioner, and community-based knowledge respect and interact to develop new solutions to the complicated process of preparing teachers” (p. 428). This approach to space conceptualizes teacher education occurring not just in academic courses and practice teaching but expanding to include the community. Kretchmar and Zeichner (2016) refer to this progressive view as Teacher Education 3.0.

Another aspect of space was identified by Kosnik et al. (2017) in their study of literacy/English teacher educators. Some teacher educators created “space” in their courses for discussion of issues, especially topics not easily resolved through readings and/or assignments. One teacher educator described the process of taking up difficult topics as “nerve-racking” but essential. She often discarded her lecture notes to address concerns raised by student teachers. By not tightly scripting her individual classes, she and her student teachers engaged in “conversational dialogue.” She admitted that at times this felt like a “digression,” but “sometimes those digressions [were] where some of the most powerful learning happen[ed]” (Kosnik et al., 2015, p. 147). Space in the three examples noted above was both tangible and intangible.

In many ways there are so many topics to be addressed in teacher education (Kennedy, 2006), each worthy in its own right. The complexity of the enterprise becomes more so when seen as an entire program. How do academic courses and practice teaching connect? Teacher education itself is pressure-packed because of the urgency to prepare teachers while stakeholders at times are working at cross-purposes. Government mandates to reform teacher education often undermine teacher educators who are trying to create space to explore in-depth teaching. A way forward is to consider teacher education programs that are “thinking outside the box” to prepare teachers.
DESCRIPTION OF THE MA-CSE PROGRAM

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto has two teacher education programs: Master of Teaching (MT) and Master of Arts: Child Study in Education (MA-CSE). The MT is also a two-year post-baccalaureate program, which has a more traditional structure (housed at the university, traditional blocks of practice teaching). This paper addresses the MA-CSE, a two-year post-baccalaureate program, admitting between approximately 65-70 full-time student teachers per year. Teacher educators, classroom teachers, and researchers work together, in the same space, with fairly common goals: understand issues in education, develop exemplary teaching, and disseminate relevant findings on teaching and learning. It should be noted that over the 25 years of this partnership, neither the program nor the school has labeled itself or been considered a Professional Development School. (See Zenkov et al., 2016 for characteristics of Professional Development Schools.)

The MA-CSE program vision is unusual because it is not just about teacher education program outcomes (e.g., learning goals) but is firmly focused on children. The vision statement is common to both the Dr. Eric Jackman Laboratory School and the teacher education program.

Children are challenged to think independently, use their natural curiosity to critically investigate the social and natural world, and to gain the skills to communicate with others, becoming engaged citizens. Every student is viewed as an individual, unique in her/his combination of developmental readiness, culture, lifestyle, learning approach, temperament, and special talents. (JICS, 2019)

The MA-CSE has an unusual model for practice teaching. In the first year of the program, student teachers do three practice teaching blocks (12 weeks each) where they are in placement in the morning and have their academic courses in the afternoon. Few teacher education programs have such a structure; typically, student teachers complete blocks of practice teaching for 4-6 blocks and do not return to the university during the practice teaching. In the second year of the MA-CSE, they do a thirteen-week internship for one semester and academic courses for the second semester. For the internship, all student teachers are in their placements prior to the start of the school (helping the teacher set up the classroom). All Laboratory school teachers are expected to act as cooperating teachers. Even those who teach specialty subjects (e.g., music) are involved with student teachers, thus the student teachers are part of the entire school, not simply relegated to one cooperating teacher.

Another feature of the MA-CSE program is that it advertises itself as research-informed with opportunities for student teachers to be involved in research. The website states:

The combination of teacher education and graduate degree training is intended to produce teacher-leaders who can apply research and theory in child study and education. It is an orientation that includes broad child development theories and methods along with individual children through direct observation and theory. Its combination of perspectives and approaches to understanding children includes skills and attitudes useful to both teachers and researchers. (JICS, 2019)
The MA-CSE has evolved over the years; however, it has remained true to its roots where the focus is on children’s well-being and is research-informed. It was one of the first interdisciplinary programs at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

**METHODOLOGY**

In order to conduct this research, a survey including both open and closed questions was used, which Punch (2014) refers to as a descriptive survey. “[I]ts purpose is mainly to describe some sample in terms of simple propositions and percentages of people …” (p. 216). Although graduates spanned 16 years, academic courses were taught by different instructors, and all did not have identical practice teaching placements, the structure of and vision for the program remained constant. We recognize these would have been interpreted and experienced differently by faculty, laboratory school teachers, and student teachers but there was a high level of constancy (e.g., low faculty and Lab School teacher turn-over). The goal of the research was not to compare the graduates from MA-CSE with graduates from another university nor was it a quasi-experimental study (Punch, 2014, p. 213) to examine the effects of a particular treatment. Since graduates arrived at the program with a range of experiences and are teaching in a variety of schools, it would be impossible to control for the many variables involved. As a result, this is “a simple descriptive study [that is] “concerned with individual pieces of information, which are studied one piece at a time. Variables as such may not be involved, and continuous variables …. are unlikely” (Punch, 2014, p. 216).

Not all aspects of teacher education could be addressed in a single survey; therefore, a few areas that frame the program were selected. The questionnaire had 47 questions divided into six sections: background (including grades taught); program satisfaction; academic program; practice; research; and ongoing learning. Most questions used a five-point Likert scale and there were four open-ended questions: What did you feel was missing or not emphasized sufficiently in the MA-CSE program? How could the MA-CSE program be improved? What elements/aspects of the MA-CSE program did you feel were **very** valuable? Participants were encouraged to share any other comments they had about the MA-CSE. For the most part, all participants completed all of the questions.

Given that the survey was conducted on Survey Monkey, graphs were developed in Excel for the quantitative questions. Following Hutchison (2004), “survey results can be analyzed by a variety of statistical methods, from basic descriptive statistics such as frequencies and means … if used within a qualitative study, data will be analyzed verbally, through examination of themes and patterns in the responses” (p. 297). Given that the purpose of the study was to acquire an understanding of graduates’ views of the program, we chose at this first stage of data analysis not to “conduct fairly complex procedures, including multivariate analysis of variance, factor analysis, and structural equation modeling” (p. 297).

The data analysis began by considering the quantitative findings on specific topics then delving deeply into the qualitative data to expose particular perspectives, nuances, experiences, and details. The quantitative data provided a general direction for analyzing the open-ended responses but did not preclude other findings from emerging. NVivo was used for analysis of the open-ended responses. The first level of analysis, “open coding” (Strauss & Corbin, 2000), was used to examine properties of the data (Creswell & Miller, 2000) by identifying salient words and phrases.
relating to the research questions and any other category or theme that emerged. For example, the practice teaching model was viewed favorably by many graduates and the qualitative data helped explain why and allowed for some descriptive explanations and detail. By gathering and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data, the findings are both rich and in-depth.

Approximately 59 nodes were generated. Some of the nodes were: program structure, program coherence, research to inform teaching, social justice, and realities of teaching. Nodes such as practice teaching that had a variety of information were subdivided into sub-nodes such as: positive experiences, suggestions for improvement, model, and cooperating teacher. Many of the quotes were double and triple coded, thus providing deeper analysis. Once all of the open-ended questions were coded, axial coding was done.

In order to distribute the survey, email addresses of the graduates were gathered from existing lists and the university alumni database. The invitation to participate in the survey was sent to approximately 400 individuals; however, it is unknown how many of the email addresses were still functional. There were 224 responses.

FINDINGS

When participants were asked if they would choose the MA-CSE program again, the results were overwhelmingly affirmative. See Figure 1.

Figure 1

*Would you Choose MA-CSE Again?*

One explanation for this positive response was found in the open-ended responses, which was the sense of community in the MA-CSE. Although the survey did not have specific questions on community, there were a significant number of references to community in the open-ended questions (e.g., strength of the program). Respondents noted that faculty and classroom teachers made a concerted effort to create a community. One respondent observed that “community-building began at the program orientation and continued over the two years. I felt so welcomed and included instantly.” Building community was intentional; the leadership team of the program and the school were instrumental both in individual courses and in the overall experience. Graduates felt they were included in the overall life of the community – both academically and socially.
Professors and the classroom teachers’ pedagogies supported an academic community because “issues of education could be openly discussed”, which in turn increased knowledge of teaching. The safe community made it possible for a range of views to be shared and explored, not just the professors’ views. “Class discussions led by amazing teachers after reading insightful articles. Small classes made this possible, as well as a close sense of community. … Feeling like you are in a close community and knowing that this support group is always there for you, even years after you have graduated.”

As analysis continued, three additional features of the MA-CSE program emerged as reasons for the high satisfaction rate: shared space and vision; practice teaching model; and research-informed courses.

SHARED SPACE AND VISION

Although the MA-CSE is a university-based program, it shares space with Dr. Eric Jackman Laboratory School. This unique setting opened possibilities to support student teacher learning. Darling-Hammond (2006) noted that it is difficult to teach in a way that you have not experienced first-hand or observed. The shared space between the MA-CSE and Laboratory School allowed student teachers to overcome this challenge because they were able to observe excellent practice on a near daily basis. (It should be noted that the Laboratory School has won international awards for their teaching.)

Visions statements can often be artificial or a series of platitudes; however, graduates from the MA-CSE did not feel this was the case because the Laboratory School teachers and academic faculty use it as a “touchstone to frame their courses,” “use language from the statement,” and “refer to it regularly.” By focusing on how children learn, it became a philosophy and pedagogy of teaching and learning. As Figure 2 shows, graduates felt the Laboratory School teachers clearly actualized the vision.

**Figure 2**

*Extent to which Dr. Eric Jackman Laboratory School teachers embody vision of MA-CSE (one being low and five being high)*

As a result of the vision being actualized in the Laboratory School and acting as the reference point for the teacher education program, it had an impact on graduates. One graduate summarized: “The direct connection between the MA-CSE program and the Laboratory School was so powerful.”
Given the close proximity to and the deep connection with the MA-CSE, Laboratory School classroom teachers did more than “host” student teachers. They actively participated in the academic courses. For example, Richard, the school’s principal, introduced how and why to teach Shakespeare in the elementary years, teachers discussed their approach to classroom management, while others presented on inquiry learning in the early years. These presentations by the Laboratory School teachers were highly appreciated.

When the teachers came and presented to our class were some of the most valuable moments that stuck with me. Seeing all of those philosophies actually embodied and practiced every day was inspiring and gave concrete evidence that this wasn’t just an impossible goal but an achievable one. (Graduate from MA-CSE program)

Since the vision of the MA-CSE is squarely on the child, graduates felt for the most part they truly understood children. As Figure 3 shows, they felt they knew “how to plan for and engage learners.”

Figure 3

*Understanding of child development and inquiry (one being low and five being a great deal)*

One graduate described both the logistical and academic reciprocity as:

Small cohort of fellow students; caring community of researchers, instructors, staff; emphasis on theory, research and practice; manageable course load expectations; interesting assignments; exposure to lots of different classrooms; inquiry-based learning; support during challenging placements; and being with fellow educators who were equally joyful and curious about teaching. The positive culture in the program and the connections beyond the actual MA-CSE program strengthened the bonds.

Notably, the vision continued to influence teachers’ pedagogies well after graduation, as the next chart reveals:
The interconnectivity that the space afforded allowed the vision to move beyond the abstract, which in turn had a long-term impact.

PRACTICE TEACHING

As noted earlier, the overall satisfaction with the MA-CSE was very high. Figure 5 indicates the positive view of the practice teaching placements.

One teacher explained why the MA-CSE model worked well:

I found the half day split [placement in the morning/academic course in the afternoon] in the first year very valuable. Compared to friends in other teaching programs, I found the
workload more manageable and the ability to immediately reflect on observations or to apply discussion very valuable. Another strength of the model was the internship (13 weeks). I did very much appreciate that we were in schools from the get-go in Year 1 and that it was a 2-year program that definitely helped me feel more prepared for teaching.

As Figure 6 shows, the model supported learning.

**Figure 6**

*Practice teaching model to support learning (one being low and five being high)*

Another respondent noted:

Practicums were key. They gave me vital experiences as well as connections for after graduation. Also the staff working within the program – such a wonderful group of supportive educators! Always being available to answer questions and help in any way was vital for me to gain the confidence I needed when I was unsure of how to proceed.

The strong cross-over between the Laboratory School and the teacher education program (e.g., practice teaching placements in the school, teachers co-teaching academic courses) allowed for a continuous interplay of theory and practice.

A common complaint from new teachers about teacher education programs is that they are too idealistic or removed from the real world of teaching (Kennedy, 2006). To some extent, MA-CSE graduates shared this sentiment. As Figure 7 shows, through observing and practicing alongside the Laboratory School teachers, respondents felt they had understood **best practice**.
Once they had their own classrooms, the realities of teaching came as a shock. As Figure 7 illustrates, there was a difference between understanding best practice and understanding the realities of teaching. A common theme in the open-ended responses was the shock of “the political realities and often dysfunctional cultures in schools.” Like all new teachers, they stated that they worked hard with many describing how their self-efficacy and self-esteem plummeted in the first few years of teaching, as described by a teacher below:

I had a very hard first year after my MA-CSE, where I felt what I had learned wasn't working in the context of my first teaching job and I just didn't know how to handle feeling like I wasn't being a shining of example of what I had learned. Not that you can be trained to avoid that, but I think it's important to acknowledge the internal struggle when you start teaching.

PLACE OF RESEARCH IN THE MA-CSE PROGRAM

Given the high profile of research in the program description, a series of questions regarding research was asked both about research during the MA-CSE and involvement in research after the program. The responses were grouped into three categories.

Doing Research as a Student Teacher

Most of the MA-CSE instructors are tenured professors who are actively engaged in research. The opportunities for student teachers to engage in research were plentiful, including informal participation on research teams, graduate assistantships, research internships, and scholarships. Quite surprisingly, the data revealed that less that 20% had accessed opportunities to participate in research during the program. A few respondents stated that they wished they had taken up the opportunities for research as a student teacher.

When asked about their involvement in research during their work as teachers, few have had opportunities. As teachers, only 15 of the 224 respondents had been involved in research since graduation. Given that 20 are pursuing or are enrolled in a doctoral program, scant few are doing research. See Figure 8.
A few commented that they wished there were more opportunities to be involved in research now that they are teaching.

I would value in taking part in research now while teaching. I currently am evaluating my program and would like to have more of a foundation regarding integrating research into my instructional program to inform my teaching practice.

This leads to key questions – to what extent should student teachers be doing individual research projects while in a teacher education program since few do formal research as teachers? Is this the best use of time? Perhaps a more suitable question is: How can they approach teaching as a research-informed practice?

Faculty Sharing Their Research

Another perspective on research, beyond student teachers doing research, is faculty drawing on their research. The Dr. R.G.N Laidlaw Research Centre professors included their research in their teacher education courses in a natural way. They constructed their courses by drawing heavily on the research they were conducting. Respondents referenced one faculty member’s research on the early years (kindergarten) that was central to her foundations course and another faculty member’s study of children with ADHD was used extensively in her course on special education. One graduate described the value of this research-based approach:

I valued the opportunity to learn from faculty members who are true experts in their subject areas – especially language/literacy, mathematics, and special education, and who also understood the school context and/or had experience working as teachers themselves. I also valued the opportunity to engage in research with these faculty members and the emphasis on research evidence. It is important that programs prepare teachers to critically evaluate research and programs, and I believe the MA-CSE program did this.
The research culture in the MA-CSE seemed to influence their teaching: “I am passionate about PD [professional development] and learning more about children and how they learn thanks to the MA-CSE program.” This became an approach to teaching.

*Laboratory School Teachers Studying Their Practice*

When asked what they valued about the MA-CSE program, one participant echoed the sentiment of many when she wrote, “being connected to current research and having the Laboratory School teachers share their [research-informed] practices with us.”

The Laboratory School teachers’ commitment to research-informed practice was recognized and valued. Laboratory School teachers describe themselves as using research-based practice and all teachers were conducting small-scale studies in their classes (e.g., one teacher studied stress levels of children in sixth grade; another teacher looked at children’s perceptions of art and themselves as artists; and the entire school looked at interventions to improve computational skills). One respondent explained her understanding of research-informed practice as: “The philosophy, integration of theory and practice, intellectual rigour, and modelling of professional inquiry by school teaching staff.”

Student teachers were able to observe and discuss research-informed practice with Laboratory School teachers during placements and given that classroom teacher teachers participated in the academic classes, there was a seamless integration of research into courses. This model reinforced the goal of fusing research and teaching.

The findings above considered three elements: shared space, practice teaching model, and research-informed courses. These were found to be highly influential in making the MA-CSE a distinctive teacher education program.

**DISCUSSION**

The MA-CSE program has a unique structure and a long history. The model cannot be duplicated easily but we believe there are lessons to be learned for other teacher educators.

**SHARED SPACE AND VISION**

The physical location of the program had an important “teaching” role because student teachers were immersed in a school. The shared space opened possibilities for collaboration, connection, and partnerships. Space was important both ideologically and pedagogically. Kosnik and Beck (2009) note a vision is more than a vision statement: “It is vast network of ideas, principles, and images touching on both theory and practice” (p. 111). With the vision focusing on children straddling both the school and teacher education program, it became a broader goal for education. One graduate stated: “I am always considering the ‘why’ behind everything I do.” A suggestion for teacher education programs is to consider their vision statement. Does it consider children? Does it cover both the education of children and student teachers? Is it written in accessible language? Vision statements should be considered a living document that guides all stakeholders in education. Developing a vision statement should not be a remote activity; rather, it must be a dynamic process. The goal should not be to develop a final product – a vision statement – but for it to be an ongoing process so that the teacher education is responsive to current initiatives in
education. Typically, each year new teacher educators join the program; therefore, each year the vision statement should be revisited. All involved in the program must know the overarching goals and know what they look like in practice (both in schools and teacher education).

As noted earlier, worldwide reform efforts in some cases are scripting courses in teacher education. However, individual teacher educators can still carve out some small spaces for discussion. As issues arise, perhaps they can set aside their formal lecture for discussion because, as noted earlier, this is where some of the most powerful learning opportunities occur. Yes, discussion takes time and is often “nerve-wracking” but learning to be a teacher is a complex process that cannot be learned from a textbook or just observation. Discussion, debate, voicing of concerns, raising questions, and stating discomfort are essential for growth. Conceptualizing space beyond the physical locale can foster a social and intellectual community.

A critical requirement for the interplay of theory and practice to occur is almost invisible – an intellectual community. Faculty and cooperating teachers must take the lead on building both an intellectual and social community. Community cannot be conceived as a frill or an add-on; rather, it must be perceived as an essential part of learning. For this to occur, the mindset of the researchers and teachers must be one of openness and inclusivity. A milieu that welcomes student teachers and their ideas can enrich the community while creating a space for dialogue and growth. Community can be another powerful teaching tool.

PRACTICE TEACHING MODEL

Overall, the practice teaching model worked well. The half-day splits (practice teaching in the morning and academic courses in the afternoon) and extended internship worked very well. Although this may not be feasible for many programs, we believe there are some changes that can be accomplished. For example, the MA-CSE cooperating teachers for the most part make explicit their approach to their student teachers, which is what Feinman-Nemser calls educative mentoring (2001). Student teachers were given a window into the teachers’ decision-making process because they co-planned with teachers (being in placement before school even began). The model provides time for the student teacher and cooperating teacher to move beyond just discussing logistical issues. In-depth discussion may help beginning teachers be more effective and understand the complex role of the teacher. Many of the graduates felt the MA-CSE helped them develop an approach to teaching that has endured. The continuity between the academic program and the practice teaching placements provided a powerful model for teaching.

As noted in the literature, practice teaching is both a central part of teacher education but also one of the most difficult to organize. Often, the organization of practice teaching is done by staff who are not necessarily central to the academic program, which creates a deep division between the two parts. It is not because the MA-CSE is a small program that they can create an integration between practice teaching and the academic program, but because those who organize practice teaching are deeply connected to the academic program. They teach in the program, are part of faculty meetings, offer suggestions, update faculty on current issues in schools – this can occur in any program, regardless of size. By dividing a large program into cohorts, where each cohort partners with specific schools for practice teaching, they can then build a relationship. And the staff who organize the practice teaching placements can work with the faculty who teach the academic program for that cohort.
The teachers in the Laboratory School are exemplary; however, we recognize how difficult it is for a program to recruit exemplary teachers. Use of videos of exemplary teachers and unpacking what they do could help student teachers observe and understand strong practice. Wherever possible, having classroom teachers involved in the program should be considered – as guest speakers, co-instructors of a course, Skype or Zoom calls into a class, videotaped presentations, and then discussions about their practice.

PLACE OF RESEARCH

The MA-CSE did not set up a dichotomy of “either research or practice”; rather there was a continual interplay between the two. The place of research in teacher education can look different and play itself out in a variety of ways. Research was central to the program but not in the often-conceived way that is requiring student teachers to do a research study. The stark distinction between teaching and research was overcome because of whom the professors were, the involvement of the Laboratory School teachers in both research and the MA-CSE program, and the opportunities for student teachers to be involved in research. One of the most powerful aspects of the program was student teachers witnessing and being involved in the Laboratory teachers’ research-informed practices (teacher inquiry projects). The concept of research-informed practice was woven into the program and through working with teachers who are actually studying their practice rather than student teachers doing an artificial research project. It became a way of being a teacher. The goal of a teacher education program should not be to try to make the student teachers into mini-researchers, because few actually do research as teachers (see Figure 8), but to help them see the value of research-informed practice and to understand that research can take many forms besides a formal research study. If we only think of “big R” research, the valuable work of teachers may not fall under that umbrella. In academic courses, we need to talk about “small r” research, the value of teachers studying their own practice, and encourage our student teachers to ask their cooperating teachers about their theories of learning, how their practice has evolved, goals they set for the year, and so on. This would help student teachers understand that learning to be a teacher is a life-long process and yes, teachers can be researchers too. One area that is currently under review for improvement is the integration of opportunities provided by the Dr. R.G.N Laidlaw Research Centre for student teachers while in the teacher education program.

CONCLUSION

In reviewing the data, one overall conclusion of the strength of the MA-CSE was the high level of coherence. The vision and space became pedagogical tools that helped achieve a level of coherence and interconnectivity. The MA-CSE was not a collection of courses or activities, rather it was what Darling-Hammond (2006) referred to as a tightly woven experience. To accomplish this level of coherence required incredible commitment and time, which are often in short supply. However, recognizing space and vision as both goals and pedagogical tools is an important step in moving forward in understanding effective teacher education. This is in direct contrast to the reform efforts noted earlier, which are looking for quick fixes or top-down mandates.

This research has provided a snapshot of the MA-CSE graduates and their views on certain aspects of the program. No teacher education program can produce fully formed teachers. Our hope is that we have provided our graduates with ways to think about teaching, to question the taken-for-granted, to continue to learn, and to always keep their focus on the individual child’s well-being.
and learning. We need to think outside the usual parameters of structure and content to develop Teacher Education 3.0 (Kretchmar & Zeichner, 2016).

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The loss of the stable state means that our society and all of its institutions are in continuous processes of transformation. We cannot expect new stable states that will endure for our own lifetimes.

(Schön, 1973, p. 30)

INTRODUCTION

As we paused to reflect on our program five years after its first implementation, we were reminded of Schön’s early work on learning systems—systems that bring about their own transformations in response to the unrelenting and unstable states they face on a persistent basis (Schön, 1971). Ontario Tech University’s Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program has been in a continuous state of evolution, tweaking, shaping, and (re)development since 2013 when the Ontario government formally announced the legislative changes to initial teacher education (ITE).

We begin this chapter with a brief overview of the process we engaged in to set the frame of this chapter. Next, we share a substantive change with respect to our university’s name and rebranding efforts. We then describe our faculty’s vision for the program, and how we have attempted to use the vision to guide the organization’s (i.e., the B.Ed. program’s) learning, as well as foster coherence and cohesion within courses, field experiences, and the program in general. As per the Call for Chapters request, we then provide a descriptive overview of the B.Ed. program including program options, enrolments, program content, and organization, as well as our insights and adjustments over the past five years. We focus more deeply on the field experiences (i.e., practicum) and their connection to the Foundations (of teaching and learning) courses, a series of courses that serve as the backbone for the program and explicitly connect to the field experience. Throughout each of the sections noted above, we provide a commentary of the successes, challenges, and how our B.Ed. program as an organization has attempted to become “adept at learning” (Schön, 1971, p. 30). This term used by Schön emphasizes the need for institutions to
build capacity for learning and dealing with changes to become systems capable of generating ongoing transformation.

PROCESS

We began writing this chapter by first revisiting the initial description of our B.Ed. program published in the Canadian Association of Teacher Educator’s Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs (Petrarca et al., 2017). Using the Call for Chapters for this volume as a guide to frame the chapter’s topics, we drew from several sources to share our developments and insights gleaned since introducing the enhanced program in 2015. These sources included:

- Our personal experiences as B.Ed. program faculty and researchers;
- Our participation in self-studies for our renewal of Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) accreditation and our university’s quality assurance internal review;
- B.Ed. program instructor and support staff feedback; and
- Teacher candidate feedback.

MEET ONTARIO TECH UNIVERSITY

A major change since 2015 is the recent rebranding efforts made by the university to strengthen its somewhat lack of definitive identity, image, and reputation. While the official university name remains University of Ontario Institute of Technology, the way in which we refer to the university is now Ontario Tech University and not its former signature acronym, UOIT, which was often mispronounced or mistaken for another larger higher education institution in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Since its inception in 2002, the university struggled with its 18-syllable name and unified identity (Ontario Tech University, 2020a). In September 2018, a new potential moniker was introduced to the university community and follow-up consultations with the community took place. A major rebrand initiative was launched, and on March 27, 2019, the transition from the former visual identity began. The rebrand was gradually phased in, leading up to September 2019.

The rebrand is technology-focused, which is consistent with the university’s initial mandate, and it is meant to be “simple, unique and identifiable [so that it] stands out in a crowded academic landscape” (Ontario Tech University, 2020a). An extensive Brand Central website was launched to support the transition for the university community. While the university’s overarching vision statement has not changed, the rebrand does focus on several priorities that appear to be in alignment with the vision, mission, and values statements that guide the university’s work. The newly stated priorities include: tech with a conscience; learning re-imagined; creating a sticky campus; and partnerships.

FACULTY VISION

The purpose of a vision in any organization is to guide what individuals within the organization do on a daily basis (Fullan & Steigelburger, 1991). Our Faculty of Education’s vision statement remains the same as it was in 2015:
Our faculty strives to educate thoughtful, well-informed and socially responsible educational leaders, making optimal uses of new and emerging digital technologies for learning. (Ontario Tech University, 2020b)

OUR VISION AS A TOOL TO GUIDE ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

Our faculty’s overarching values and goals that stem from the vision focus largely on learning and research to inform professional practice, leadership, innovation, digital literacies, and inclusive learning environments. We deliberately revisited these guiding statements over the past five years with all B.Ed. program full-time and part-time faculty during large group half- to full-day planning sessions approximately one month prior to the academic year. Drawing from the ITE program literature, we started these planning meetings with big picture discussions regarding the faculty’s overarching vision for our graduates to deepen our own shared understanding and vision of “good” teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Initial discussions typically began with broader perspectives regarding how we enacted our faculty’s vision as a collective and then in our individual courses. The overarching purpose for holding these planning meetings was to enhance cohesion and coherence throughout the B.Ed. program. As noted by Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007), historically, ITE programs have been criticized for “offering fragmented and incoherent courses, and lacking in a clear, shared conception of teaching among faculty” (p. 119). To facilitate deeper learning, ITE programs must have well-established values that clearly ground the program (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019).

By clarifying our guiding vision, values, and goals with our B.Ed. team, we also attempted to build capacity amongst the B.Ed. instructors so that building and sustaining a program that fosters teacher candidates’ deep learning eventually reaches a point where ‘it’s just how we do business’. With the newly rebranded university identity and priorities, future planning sessions with the B.Ed. instructors and staff will more than likely include discussions regarding how we enact the newly articulated priorities within our B.Ed. program. Given our individual faculty’s current vision, we believe that we do reflect tech with a conscience, learning re-imagined, creating a sticky campus, and partnerships; however, a deeper examination of how the priorities are deliberately articulated in our courses and program is warranted.

The conversations occurring at these early planning sessions eventually led to more pragmatic discussions regarding how we operationalized the guiding vision, values, and goals, and the challenges that prevented the enactment of our aspirations often emerged. During these discussions, we learned about course or program situations that may or may not have been in alignment with our vision, values, and goals and we engaged in conversations regarding how to either build on identified areas of alignment or assist in resolving challenging situations to enhance alignment. Such “learning-based interaction[s] between individual employees and the organization that employs them” (Wang & Ahmed, 2003, p. 10) help the B.Ed. program continuously improve.

These early conversations also established the foundation for individual instructors in the B.Ed. program to question their thinking and instructional practices with respect to the program’s overarching vision. By consistently revisiting why we do what we do with the B.Ed. program members, we hope that course instructors make instructional decisions that are congruent with the program’s purpose, goals, and mission. We also hope these initial big-picture discussions serve as a point of reference for instructors so that they could detect course components and practices
that are not in alignment with the program’s overarching goals, engage with the organization (i.e., the B.Ed. program), and readjust accordingly. The ultimate goal of such interactions is to foster a culture of learning within the organization, where the B.Ed. program, as an entity and its individual members, interact and engage (Wang & Ahmed, 2003).

Based on the informal feedback from instructors regarding our yearly planning sessions coupled with our own perspectives as participants in this process, we believe rich discussions regarding various interpretations of how we enact our guiding vision, goals, and values occurred amongst both full-time and part-time faculty. Examples of outcomes of our initial planning meetings included integration of assignments within multiple courses and sharing of instructional strategies, key readings, and assessments. While not perfect, and still challenging, the process is now in its fifth year, and as repeat sessional instructors return to the B.Ed. program, we ensure that the knowledge of the ITE program, culture, and organization is not limited to a few select individuals (Wang & Ahmed, 2003). We believe that the discussions and learning that occurs through our shared understandings support cohesion and coherence and help build capacity so we can sustain and continue to not only grow as a collective and as a program, but also become a learning organization. Senge (1990) describes learning organizations as, “organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (p. 3).

At the centre of organizational learning sits the collective of individuals’ learning (Wang & Ahmed, 2003), and it is critical for our individual B.Ed. program members to actually feel part of the collective. Following the initial large group planning session, we encouraged the B.Ed. program members to continue to consider and reflect upon the program’s ultimate aims throughout the upcoming semesters in their individual courses. Feedback continued to come forth throughout the academic year either through monthly B.Ed. program meetings, corridor conversations, or via individuals (both full- and part-time instructors) reaching out to discuss ideas or arising issues for the purpose of improving our B.Ed. program. It is critical for our many part-time instructors to feel part of our B.Ed. community, part of the improvement process, and part of our program. As Argyris and Schön (1996) described, the organization (in this case the B.Ed. program) can learn when “individuals within an organization experience a problematic situation and inquire into it on the organizational behalf” (p. 16).

OVERVIEW OF THE BACHELOR OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

This section shares Ontario Tech’s program offerings and enrolments, as well as successes, challenges, and changes specific to program offerings and enrolments that have occurred since the first CATE polygraph volume.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

The Faculty of Education at Ontario Tech University has not made any changes in offerings since the initial volume published in 2017. We still offer concurrent, connected, and consecutive programs of education with areas of study in the Primary/Junior and Intermediate/Senior divisions, leading to a Bachelor of Education degree.
**Concurrent and Connected Programs**

Our concurrent and connected programs serve as advanced/direct entry options to the consecutive program for secondary school graduates or for current Ontario Tech students in their first or second year of an undergraduate program. As we indicated in 2017, the rationale for creating these advanced/direct entry options was to enhance recruitment for the university’s undergraduate programs, including the consecutive B.Ed. program. Upon completing their undergraduate degree, students in the concurrent and connected programs who meet the admissions requirements of the B.Ed. program receive automatic acceptance to our program. Subsequently, since the concurrent education and connected programs serve as advanced entry programs to the consecutive B.Ed. program, any further description of the B.Ed. program in this chapter specifically refers to the consecutive education program. At the time of this publication, changes are underway to merge the connected and concurrent admission pathways under one name due to the potential confusion of the multiple pathway names.

**Consecutive Education Program**

Ontario Tech offers a 16-month consecutive B.Ed. program in the Primary/Junior (P/J) and Intermediate/Senior (I/S) divisions. The focus on technology in learning and teaching is a defining element of the Ontario Tech B.Ed. program. As noted in the Ontario Tech Academic Calendar (2015), “Teacher Candidates (TCs) use technology in their own learning experiences so that they will understand how to integrate technology into classroom practice” (p. 73). The program’s conceptual framework of technology, diversity, reflection, and praxis serves as a conduit between the faculty’s vision and program content, format, and implementation. The program offers a blend of on-campus and online curriculum offerings by infusing the use of digital technologies and multiple forms of literacy throughout the program with the hopes that our graduates will be leaders within educational contexts.

**DIVISIONAL OFFERINGS AND ENROLMENTS**

Our four-semester program divisional offerings have not changed since the implementation of the four-semester program in 2015. We continue to offer programs for P/J and I/S divisions. Teachable subjects for the I/S division still include Biology, Chemistry, English, General Science, Health and Physical Education, History, Mathematics, and Physics.

Table 1 displays the number of enrolments since 2015, which includes the phasing out of our former pre-2015 concurrent education program; this program was preserved for students who were enrolled in the program post-announcement in 2013 regarding the legislative changes for ITE programs beginning in 2015. These students remained until they graduated. As seen in Table 1, the final cohort of the former I/S concurrent education teacher candidates entered the two-semester B.Ed. program and graduated in 2018.

**SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES**

Both the yearly and divisional enrolments have fluctuated somewhat ranging from 120 to 204 between 2015 and 2019. The unpredictable nature of the enrolment fluctuations and the proportion of I/S and P/J teacher candidates has challenged our planning, resources, hiring, space allocations, and scheduling, especially during the 2019 academic year when we were at peak enrollment. In February 2019, our TEAS application acceptances spiked and remained relatively consistent at an
oversubscribed number. For example, the cohort of teacher candidates beginning in September 2019 totaled 225 in July 2019 even though the admissions offer models remained consistent from the previous year. Numbers eventually decreased to 204 in September 2019 due to regular attrition, but this number was still well above the usual intake (see Table 1). One hypothesis for the larger 2019 cohort is the improving job opportunities for beginning teachers in Ontario. In November 2018, many of our teacher candidates secured employment interviews during our yearly November Career Expo on campus, and a large number of those interviewed received conditional employment offers for occasional teaching or teaching French as a Second Language. The increase in conditional job offers well before graduation is a phenomenon we last experienced in the early 2000s. The increase in our teacher candidates’ job opportunities was consistent with the improving employment prospects across the province as suggested by the *Transition to Teaching Report* (OCT, 2018).

**CHANGES**

While the four-semester program offerings have not changed since its implementation, the 2017-2018 academic year marked the final year of the former I/S concurrent education program at Ontario Tech. As described in the previous CATE volume (Petrarca et al., 2017), and as seen by the low enrollment numbers in Table 1, the former concurrent program was no longer sustainable. For three years, the B.Ed. program needed to accommodate the small number of I/S concurrent education students by providing them with alternate programming that would have been available in the previous two-semester program. This added an additional layer of complexity and problem solving specific to budgets, staffing, and scheduling for the I/S concurrent education students who would take some courses with the four-semester students but required additional programming to ensure they met the graduation requirements of the former two-semester B.Ed. program.

**Table 1**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (as of September start-up*)</th>
<th>Number of P/J Teacher Candidates (Year 1 /Year 2)</th>
<th>Number of I/S Teacher Candidates (Year 1 /Year 2)</th>
<th>Number of former I/S Concurrent Teacher Candidates in Year 1 (grandparented to only complete 2 semesters)</th>
<th>Total Number of Year 1 Teacher Candidates (<strong>includes NEW concurrent/connected program</strong>)</th>
<th>Total Number of Year 2 Teacher Candidates</th>
<th>TOTALS (as of September start-up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>92 / N/A</td>
<td>35 / N/A</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>103 / 90</td>
<td>27 / 35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>81 / 95</td>
<td>50 / 32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>60 / 81</td>
<td>57 / 47</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>92 / 57</td>
<td>102 / 59</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>204(**9)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As noted in Table 1, we are beginning to see direct entry applicants through the concurrent and connected programs initiated in 2015 as a recruitment strategy by the university. Although the numbers remain low and have not yet had an impact on our application offers, we will need to be attentive and examine more closely if the number of concurrent and connected students (described earlier) begins to increase as this would certainly limit the number of B.Ed. seats from TEAS applicants.

PROGRAM CONTENT/CURRICULUM

We now briefly describe the 16-month structure of our B.Ed. program and how the curriculum and practica are organized within the four-semester structure. We highlight some of the successes and challenges related to the program content/curriculum, and focus on the curriculum and program changes we have enacted since the implementation of the four-semester program, and since the publication of the Ontario Tech chapter (Petrarca et al., 2017) in the CATE polygraph. Many of the changes we highlight centre on the third semester, which is the fully online semester in Ontario Tech’s B.Ed. program.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The Bachelor of Education degree programs for both P/J and I/S divisions follow the same organization; however, there are a few differences between the division program maps that have emerged over the past five years. Table 2 (below) outlines how our program is organized within a 16-month framework. As per the accreditation requirements, the program includes courses focusing on theory, methods, and foundations, and makes appropriate provision for the application of theory in practice. Depending on the academic and calendar years, total number of field experience (the Faculty’s term for practicum) days have ranged anywhere from 86 to 92 days.

Semesters 1, 2, and 4 are each comprised of 9 weeks of courses, followed by a large practicum block as identified in Table 2. Teacher candidates spend some observation days throughout the 9-week course time in the associate teacher’s classroom/school prior to the larger practicum block.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B.Ed. Program Semester and Practicum Structure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
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<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 3</td>
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<td>Semester 4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The practicum block occurs at the end of the 9-week course period. On completion of the practicum block, TCs return to campus for a mandatory one-day “Debrief” or “Culminating” Day to participate in guided reflective activities where they analyze their practicum experiences with colleagues, using various theoretical constructs from their coursework as guides. These days serve as a time to wrap up the program in a manner to help teacher candidates consolidate the semester and, in the final semester, the program.

Semester 3 (Spring/Summer) courses are offered in a fully online format consisting of synchronous (in Adobe Connect virtual classrooms), asynchronous, and webinar components. Table 2 displays the B.Ed. four-semester structure, including the field experience (i.e., practicum days) within the applicable semesters.

**CURRICULUM**

As indicated in the initial CATE volume (Petrarca et al., 2017), Ontario Tech took advantage of the opportunity to restructure and re-envision our ITE program. To organize the program curriculum we: (1) used the Faculty’s guiding vision, program learning outcomes, and the OCT core content requirements as stated in Schedule 1; (2) supported our changes using the literature on effective teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hammersen et al., 2005; Kosnik & Beck, 2009) as well as discipline specific content areas (Ball et al., 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Hill et al., 2008; Hill & Ball, 2009; Hill et al., 2004; Hughes & Morrison, 2014; Manion & Short, 2011) to organize the curriculum; and (3) we made a concerted effort to build cohesion and coherence (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Russell et al., 2001; Zeichner, 2010) within the program’s coursework and practicum, which will be elaborated upon in a later section of this chapter.

**SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES**

In writing this chapter, we realized our early conceptions and hopes for ITE—while well thought out, grounded in various teacher education literature, and guided by our institutional vision,
mission, values, and goal statements—reflected a sense of hope, fervor, and perhaps in retrospect, a little naivety and utopian ideals. As one example of such ideals, we grounded our conceptions of the “enhanced” or “modernized” program and curriculum in research literature specific to digital literacies and the infusion of technologies throughout coursework in meaningful ways. What we did not account for was the very small number of full-time faculty who actually taught/teach in the B.Ed. program. In an already very small faculty, the actual implementation of the B.Ed. program in the manner it was initially envisioned by the program developers (comprised of full-time faculty/researchers) required rigorous and labour-intensive hiring, and induction practices for part-time instructors, stretching an already small faculty well beyond their limitations. For example, the sometimes arduous groundwork to establish frames of reference for the individuals within the organization, as described earlier in the chapter, is time consuming and requires deliberate efforts; however, we believe it is fundamental to establishing context for B.Ed. program members. In doing so, individuals within the program are well-equipped to identify any incongruences in their B.Ed. experiences, and bring forth any such problematic situations to the “organization”, enhancing the collective of individuals’ learning (Wang & Ahmed, 2003), and promoting the overarching learning of the B.Ed. program.

Concrete learning processes and practices are also critical to developing a learning organization (Garvin et al., 2008), and include activities such as “intelligence gathering” (p. 4), analysis, problem identification, and problem solving. As part of the enhanced program, we have made deliberate attempts to foster such concrete learning processes and practices within the program. For example, following the completion of each semester, the B.Ed. program administrative team gathered/gathers formal feedback regarding teacher candidates’ perceptions of successes and challenges of the semester, including suggestions for improvement purposes. As described earlier, faculty and staff contributed/contribute ideas and feedback in an ongoing manner at monthly program meetings and individually throughout each semester as challenges, questions, issues, and ideas arose/arise. As noted by Ramage (2017), Schön maintained that effective learning systems respond to problematic situations in a manner that reduces the lag time in implementing ideas directed to the issues that contribute to the “loss of the stable state” (Schön, 1971, p. 30). In order for the B.Ed. program to detect and correct “errors” (Bolman, 2017), the collective learning of the individuals in the organization (i.e., the B.Ed. program) must be sought, considered, deliberated, and, as necessary, used to steer the learning and progress of the B.Ed. program. Much like other learning environments, however, all members of the B.Ed. community must feel comfortable in sharing their individual learning within a safe learning environment. Wang and Ahmed (2003) remind us that “organizational learning is not simply a collectivity of individual learning processes, but engages interaction between individuals in the organization, and interaction between organizations as an entity, and interaction between the organization and its contexts” (p. 15).

We also caution, however, that when analyzing the various sources of feedback, we must do so against the backdrop of teacher education literature. For example, initially, some teacher candidates were extremely vocal regarding our ‘demanding’ lesson planning expectations. They argued against the need to consider all of the elements within the lesson plan template (e.g., learning needs, resources, scaffolding, assessment, etc.) when their associate teachers’ planning methods did not reflect the depth of our requirements. A few teacher candidates even challenged the usage of a lesson plan as they argued they ‘performed’ better on their feet, and that planning took away from the actual teaching. When we reviewed this feedback, we considered the feedback
in conjunction with the research literature about developing teachers. We returned to Lortie’s (1975) apprenticeship of observation and to the problems of learning to teach (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007), which include the misconceptions of teaching, the problem of enactment, and the problem of complexity. Upon completion of the program, the majority of teacher candidates tend to appreciate the need for planning lessons with detail as novice teacher candidates. They realize in retrospect that as teacher candidates, they initially do not understand the complexity of teaching and learning and the need for a detailed lesson plan. This is a significant example of how we have to weigh teacher candidate feedback in relation to research about how they learn: had we not considered the teacher education literature, simply based on teacher candidate feedback, we might have reduced the lesson planning expectations and possibly hindered teacher candidate learning.

We also wondered how the condensed 16-month format would hinder or help teacher candidate learning. As seen in Table 2, Semester 3 follows immediately after the second semester, and typically begins in the first week of May. Would teacher candidates have enough time to achieve our program learning outcomes? Would the 16-month format be appreciated and/or preferred? Student feedback revealed that while some of the teacher candidates found the condensed 16-month format quite overwhelming at times, the majority appreciated the opportunity to complete the program in December and begin seeking employment in January upon certification by the OCT. We initiated this change in 2015 for fear of losing second career individuals who would need to take two two-semester leaves from employment.

Feedback from teacher candidates regarding the fully online semester is mixed. Some teacher candidates quite strongly favoured the online semester as it provided an opportunity to experience various synchronous and asynchronous learning platforms, and they appreciated experiencing firsthand the affordances and challenges related to fully online learning environments. Some teacher candidates felt isolated in the virtual environment, while others enjoyed not commuting long distances to campus. Many indicated feeling overwhelmed after multiple classes scheduled on one day; however, the majority of teacher candidates, even though they felt overwhelmed, did not want to attend classes every day of the Semester 3 week, as they valued full weekdays with no classes so they could work part-time jobs or tend to other family responsibilities.

**CHANGES**

As we progressed/progress through each semester and with each cohort, we continued/continue to monitor, made/make some adjustments, took/take the pulse again, and started/start again. At times it felt/feels like the “stable state” (Schön, 1971, p. 30) would/will never be attained by the B.Ed. program, but we have come to realize that for an organization to continually learn, it must also continually respond to the collective learning and adjust. Learning, an ongoing process, will thereby require the constant “lather, rinse, repeat” cycle of what at times seemed/seems like an endless loop of monitoring, listening, sharing, and adjusting.

Some of the minor and less labour-intensive changes centred on administrative omissions or errors resulting from the quick turn-around time required to design, plan, seek university-level approvals, and implement the enhanced B.Ed. program. Self-study processes for both internal quality assurance and for the OCT Accreditation reviews helped unearth additional areas that required improvement, such as the need to reword or re-map learning outcomes for individual courses.
Other changes that resulted from the ongoing and iterative learning processes and practices (Garvin et al., 2008) included creating streamlined policies and procedures regarding absences, lateness, communications, and assessment practices.

Other more substantial changes included the revamping of the program map to address curricular and instructional gaps brought to the attention of the administration by various instructors who, through their experiences working in the program, noted discrepancies. Reflecting Schön’s notions of learning systems requiring decentralized decision making and ad hoc leadership (Ramage, 2017, p. 1164), a small committee of B.Ed. program instructors emerged organically to more closely examine how to address the noted gaps. After collaborative and creative problem solving, the small team reworked the program map so that the P/J teacher candidates had additional hours via two discrete courses in the Arts and Health and Physical Education. To achieve this change, we needed to remove the Independent Inquiry/Internship course from the P/J program map in order to make room for both HPE and Arts courses. While we believe the Independent Inquiry/Internship course provides our teacher candidates with excellent opportunities to further develop their inquiry skills and to participate in experiential learning opportunities to support their learning, the committee realized that the P/J cohort, as generalists, required additional time devoted to HPE and the Arts. This resulted in additional shifting of courses within the program map, and although difficult decisions needed to be made, our guiding vision, values, and goals guided our decision making.

Another change specific to instructional practice emerged as a result of the noted teacher candidate resistance to letting go of their personal and deeply rooted conceptions of teaching and learning. While we have always noted this resistance in our instructional practices, by continuously gathering feedback from the TCs, we were able to quite clearly see the lasting effects of Lortie’s (1975) apprenticeship of observation. The depth of the effects of the apprenticeship was magnified in the feedback given by teacher candidates, such as the earlier lesson plan example. To address these entrenched beliefs about teaching and learning that beginning teachers typically bring to the B.Ed. program, we began to share research about beginning teachers and problems related to “learning to teach” (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007) as part of course readings very early in the program. This established a foundation for continued revisiting when comments related to “but I learned it this way” came up in discussions and provided additional opportunities to explore and challenge conceptions about teaching and learning.

We also began to be more transparent regarding instructional and program decisions. For example, by helping TCs explore the rationale for the need to submit an action plan (of learning) if they are absent for a class, they realized that submitting an action plan was not meant to be punitive but rather it served as a means for the teacher candidate to communicate how they achieved the learning outcomes for missed class(es). By increasing the transparency of instructional and program decisions based on research or previous program feedback, we not only modeled evidence-based decision making, but it also made explicit to the teacher candidates how we used feedback as a form of learning for the purpose of program improvement. Importantly, because all course instructors, whether full-time or part-time, were involved in the learning process, course instructors were able to reinforce the same messages throughout the courses.

Our fully online third semester presented challenges as well. Given the fully online nature of the semester, our initial attempts at modeling the semester after our fully online Bachelor of Arts program (operating since Fall 2013) proved challenging, as seen in the original iteration (and
rationale for changes) of the fully online semester in the Appendix (The Evolution of Semester 3’s Fully Online Semester) at the end of this chapter. Precipitously, teacher candidates provided excellent feedback during the second semester, even prior to the beginning of the online third semester. Initially, we made the unfortunate assumption that all TCs would have access to the Internet; however, several TCs approached the administration regarding their lack of access to high speed internet due to financial constraints. Other TCs indicated they required a quiet space as their homes were not conducive to online learning for a host of personal reasons. We immediately reserved several classrooms in the Faculty of Education building for the duration of the semester. We made the reserved rooms accessible to all students including those who required high speed Internet or a quiet space. Other feedback early in the second semester included the desire for an orientation to the online learning platform (i.e., Adobe Connect) as there was some anxiety regarding moving to a fully online learning environment. We subsequently created and offered multiple one-hour Adobe Connect sessions as well as online instructional videos to support the transition from the face-to-face campus learning to the online learning environment.

The Appendix provides an overview of the evolution of the fully online Semester 3 at Ontario Tech University. As seen in the blue italicized text, the semester has evolved in several areas since its inception in 2015. Key areas of change include: (1) format (i.e., synchronous or asynchronous weeks) of semester; (2) course offerings; (3) weekly schedule times/formats; and (4) class schedule formats (i.e., ratio of synchronous/asynchronous hours). We believe the third and fully online semester serves as an example of how the deliberate inclusion of concrete learning practices and processes (Garvin et al., 2008) helped foster the learning of the organization (i.e., the B.Ed. program). Continued and ongoing feedback from the teacher candidates and third semester instructors, coupled with research literature regarding online learning, continued to help shape our fully online semester and practices as we moved forward in what seemed like a continuous state of transformation.

FIELD EXPERIENCE

We now focus more specifically on the field experience, which refers to the practicum and any related observation days prior to and during the practicum block. Specifically, we describe how field experiences in our program are organized within the context of the overall program, the support and supervision provided, the assessment framework, and how field experience is connected to the Foundations series of courses. Similar to previous sections, we also describe successes and challenges and related changes since 2015.

ORGANIZATION

Ontario Tech’s Bachelor of Education Field Experience refers to practical experiences that include: (1) observation days and (2) practicum/teaching blocks. Our practical experiences total anywhere from 86 to 92 practicum days, depending on the academic and calendar year. As seen in the Appendix, Ontario Tech’s practica are organized within three “field experience” periods, each connected to one of three Foundations courses. The Foundations series of courses serve as a unique combination of foundations-based and methods-based courses (as per regulatory definitions) that serve as the backbone for other courses and field experiences in the B.Ed. program. The Foundations courses are offered in Semesters 1, 2, and 4 which correspond to the respective practica.
The first part of each Foundations class is led by a full-time instructor, allowing the TCs to experience the broad applicability of the topics across all divisions. The latter half of each Foundations class is organized into smaller division-specific and geographically based cohorts, led by part-time instructors who also serve as University Liaisons for the teacher candidates in their respective smaller cohorts during the practicum. The Foundations series of courses represents our attempt at enhancing coherence and cohesiveness between coursework and field experiences—another feature of exemplary programming documented in the literature (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Levine, 2006). In addition to the weekly class, the Foundations courses are also connected to our Foundation Fridays. On these days, teacher candidates either are on campus participating in professional development activities directly related to the teaching profession and/or program content or they spend time in their field placement schools as helpful guests and observers.

Observation days take place on select Foundation Fridays throughout the semesters and prior to each practicum/teaching block, at the end of the 9-week course blocks of semesters 1, 2, and 4. Observations are conducted within the practicum school and classroom (as seen in the Appendix). The number of observation days in each semester varies between two to seven days depending upon the semester. At the same time, teacher candidates are encouraged to continue formal observations throughout their non-teaching times during their practicum blocks. Our eight practicum partners include: (1) Durham District School Board; (2) Durham Catholic District School Board; (3) Toronto District School Board; (4) Toronto Catholic District School Board; (5) York Region District School Board; (6) York Catholic District School Board; (7) Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board; and (8) Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board.

Our school board contact, the Practicum Specialist, makes placement arrangements based on teacher candidates’ divisional/teachable subject requirements, with a designated school board contact. Teacher candidates do not seek out schools or associate teachers on their own for their placements.

Teacher candidates complete each of their Field Experiences placements in three distinct classrooms and schools. Although at times, depending on the school board’s processes for organizing practicum placements, teacher candidates may be placed within the same school for more than one practicum placement.

SUPERVISION

The Practicum Specialist oversees the Field Experience component of the program and works closely with the Foundations instructors who also serve as University Liaisons in the field. In order to be eligible for the Bachelor of Education degree, teacher candidates must achieve a pass in each field experience, which is a component of the corresponding Foundations course (i.e., Foundations I, II, or III). The associate teacher recommends a final grade of pass or fail, based on the Field Experience Practicum Report, to the Practicum Specialist. The Practicum Specialist recommends a final grade of pass or fail to the Foundations instructor who then submits a final grade (if the practicum is a pass) or a fail (if the practicum is not a pass). All assessment processes related to the Field Experience (including a copy of the Field Experience Practicum Report (FEPR) and
rubric) are included in the Field Experience Handbook that all TCs, ULs, and associate teachers receive.

FIELD EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENT

Associate teachers assess the teacher candidates’ progress via the FEPR, which is completed electronically using the Field Experience Portal. The associate teacher, teacher candidate, and the practicum department all have access to the portal. Associate teachers assess teacher candidates using 71 “look-fors” organized within the following seven areas of competency: Commitment, Communication, Knowledge, Professionalism, Classroom Management, Planning, and Implementation. Each look-for is assessed using a level 1 through 4 system where level 4 is exemplary, level 3 is good, level 2 is adequate, and level 1 is unsatisfactory, as well as a clearer explanation in the accompanying rubric. Each of the seven competency areas also has an area for additional comments. A Level 1 rating in any two areas of competency corresponds to a grade of “Fail”. The Practicum Specialist reads and approves every FEPR completed by the associate teacher for each teacher candidate, and the UL receives a copy of the report.

We strongly recommend that associate teachers provide ongoing feedback on a regular basis throughout the practicum block to ensure that a teacher candidate has some feedback prior to the final FEPR. The associate teacher completes an interim report midway through the practicum. This formative assessment consists of a paper copy of the Field Experience Practicum Report located in the Field Experience Handbook. This interim report is important because should a teacher candidate earn a Level 1 in any competency on the interim report, we have educative procedures in place to help the TCs further develop the competency. The procedures are outlined in the Field Experience Handbook and include the development and implementation of an Improvement Action Plan (IAP). The IAP is usually co-created with the associate teacher, teacher candidate, and the University Liaison (or the Practicum Specialist) depending on the circumstance.

To successfully complete the B.Ed. program, teacher candidates are required to: successfully complete all courses with a passing grade; complete the program with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7 (70%); and pass each of three field (practicum) experiences. If a teacher candidate does not pass the field experience, depending on the circumstances of the failed practicum, a “make-up” placement may or may not be granted.

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Since starting the four-semester program in 2015, the cohesion and coherence between coursework and the field experience has improved tremendously. From 2004 to 2015, we relied on retired administrators and teachers to supervise teacher candidates in the field and serve as Faculty Advisors. The Faculty Advisors would visit the teacher candidates in the field and they would also complete a formal FEPR. Although we attempted to communicate the expectations of the program and our underlying vision of teaching and learning, it was extremely challenging to create a shared vision. As a result, we found it extremely challenging to maintain consistency in expectations, assessments, and actions amongst the many FAs that were hired to visit schools and assess teacher candidates on their placements. Specifically, we noted that it was extremely challenging to create learning communities between the FAs and their teacher candidates when they did not spend much time together outside of the school visits. And in contradiction to the goals of our program, at times
teacher candidates and associate teachers would receive feedback from the respective FAs that was not in alignment with the B.Ed. program’s overarching vision, values, and goals.

With the four-semester program, the teacher candidates are supervised by their small class (approximately 20 students) Foundations instructors, which has made a positive difference with respect to establishing safe learning environments. Students stay with their same Foundations instructors across the three Foundations classes. This continuity of instructors in the Foundations courses as well as the benefit of small classes has provided TCs with consistency. Importantly, because of the smaller groups instructors can make connections with students and are able to provide individualized feedback. Because Foundations instructors are University Liaisons, they can make explicit connections to coursework in Foundations when the TCs are in the field. Feedback from instructors and students has noted that through this close contact TCs and instructors develop a relationship and feel mutually supported. While there are still inconsistencies when working with large groups, the cohesion in the smaller groups has improved drastically.

One drawback to such a program is that it is labor intensive. The creation of smaller sections/classes for Foundations must be done manually by the Practicum Specialist, the Practicum Assistant, and the B.Ed. Director in tandem. Logistically, consideration must be given to geographical location of the teacher candidates’ placements in order to avoid long distances across eight school boards for the ULs. This organization element can become challenging, as TCs may move over the summer and require changes to be made in groupings. These changes can cause classes to be unbalanced in number. Even with these considerations, the UL still needs to travel a great distance at times, depending on the circumstances of the TC and group makeup.

CHANGES

Our changes are an ongoing process and we continue to reflect and evolve the program as a result of our reflections. Foundations and practicum have been at the core of our program and the foci of much of our attention. One area that we have concentrated on is accountability. In the previous two-semester program, Faculty Advisors provided formal reports, which included the consistent organization and upkeep of a digital Field Experience Binder with required contents such as lesson plans, schedules, resources, and other pertinent school materials. With the enhanced program where ULs do not formally assess the practicum, we found a lack of attention to the digital Field Experience Binder, which was concerning. In some instances, TCs did not even complete the required full lesson plans because the ATs did not tend to look over the binder as much as the FAs and ULs. To enhance cohesion between Foundations and the practicum, the ULs now assess the digital Field Experience Binder as part of the Foundations course. With this change, we have noted an improvement in student accountability of their own growth: general organization, upkeep, and quality of lesson plans and materials. This in turn, we believe, will develop better teaching. We have also noted increased conversations between TCs and ULs about the contents of the FE binder, which reflect the topics from the Foundations courses such as differentiation of instruction, instructional strategies, assessment, and responding to students’ behaviours. We hope this reflects the enhanced cohesion between the coursework and the practicum.
MOVING FORWARD

In our effort to continuously evolve, we revisit Schön’s (1971) statement at the beginning of this chapter, specifically, the notion that our institutions must strive to become learning systems—systems that are adept at bringing out our own ongoing transformation (Schön, 1971). Schön’s (1971) early work on learning systems served as the basis for organizational learning, which has been expanded, studied, and (re)defined by many scholars in a wide range of contexts. Bolman (2017) summarized Schön’s ideas regarding organizational learning as “the detection and correction of error” (p. 29). As we have seen at Ontario Tech, a move from the two-semester to the four-semester program has not been a static event and these past five years have certainly been filled with discovering “errors” through the collective. In our context, we identify “errors” as areas within our B.Ed. program that were not in alignment with our vision, goals, and overall TC learning.

In order to equip the B.Ed. program to identify and correct such “errors”, a steadfast and deliberate commitment to creating and maintaining a safe culture of learning for all members of the program, including instructors, staff, and teacher candidates, is essential. By creating a safe culture of learning and community, as well as creating opportunities and processes to communicate and share, we hoped/hope that individuals within the B.Ed. program were/are empowered to serve as agents of change in order for the “organization”, which in this case is the B.Ed. program, to learn (Argyris & Schön, 1978).

Creating such a culture and community from “scratch” has come at a cost, however, to program directors’ research outputs. With the multiple demands made on faculty who typically serve as program directors within the higher education organization, it can be tempting to maintain the status quo in a B.Ed. program when research and teaching responsibilities compete for time, energy, and attention; however, complacency should not be an option. Moving forward, to mitigate the costs to a faculty member’s other responsibilities, establishing structures to formally research and publish about the program from systemic perspectives would be advantageous. We also believe that the archaic and sometimes constraining systems within higher education related to who “directs” a program, support staff, or number of course releases for carrying out the role must also be examined and perhaps challenged in order to alleviate the stresses related to the constant learning processes grounding the transformations in our programs.

Five years upon launching the enhanced B.Ed. program at Ontario Tech, we have now established a critical mass of sessional and full-time instructors and staff who can carry the program forward in a manner where the program continues to learn. We are finally beginning to build capacity to “learn to understand, guide, influence and manage these transformations” so that we can “make the capacity for undertaking them integral to ourselves and to our institutions” (Schön, 1973, p. 30).

REFERENCES


### APPENDIX

#### THE EVOLUTION OF SEMESTER 3 (FULLY ONLINE SEMESTER)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td><strong>Time between Semesters 2 and 3</strong></td>
<td>1-week break between practicum &amp; culminating day</td>
<td>1-week break between practicum &amp; culminating day</td>
<td>1-week break between practicum &amp; culminating day</td>
<td>1-week break between practicum &amp; culminating day</td>
<td>1-week break between practicum &amp; culminating day</td>
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<td><strong>Format of semester dates</strong></td>
<td>May 9 – July 8, 2016 (all weeks synchronous)</td>
<td>May 8 – July 7, 2017 (all weeks synchronous)</td>
<td>May 7 – July 6, 2018 <em>(final week is asynchronous)</em></td>
<td>May 6 – July 5, 2019 <em>(final week is asynchronous)</em></td>
<td>May 4 – July 3, 2020 <em>(final week is asynchronous)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Course offerings</strong></td>
<td>1) Equity and Diversity;</td>
<td>1) Equity and Diversity;</td>
<td>1) Equity and Diversity;</td>
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<td>Same as 2017, 2018, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Learning in Digital Contexts;</td>
<td>2) Learning in Digital Contexts;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3) Teaching for Inclusion: Special Needs and Individualized Education;</td>
<td>3) Teaching for Inclusion: Special Needs &amp; Individualized Education;</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5) Independent Inquiry/Internship</td>
<td>5) Independent Inquiry/Internship</td>
<td>5) Reflective Practice/Action Research²</td>
<td>5) Reflective Practice/Action Research</td>
<td>5) Reflective Practice/Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weekly schedule format</strong></td>
<td>3 courses offered on Tuesdays 2 courses offered on Thursdays <em>(classes every other day)</em></td>
<td>3 courses offered on Tuesdays 2 courses offered on Wednesdays *(2 consecutive days)³</td>
<td>3 courses offered on Tuesdays 2 courses offered on Wednesdays *(2 consecutive days)³</td>
<td>3 courses offered on Tuesdays 2 courses offered on Wednesdays *(2 consecutive days)³</td>
<td>3 courses offered on one day and 2 courses offered on other day *(Mon/Wed OR Tues/Thurs) *(classes every other day)³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(choice of 6 one-hour sessions per course beginning at 8am and ending at 9pm)</td>
<td>(choice of 6 1.5-hour sessions per course beginning at 8am and ending at 10pm)</td>
<td>(choice of 6 1.5-hour sessions per course beginning at 8am and ending at 10pm)</td>
<td>*(forced scheduling³ into one of 4 2-hour² sessions per course beginning at 9am and ending at 5pm)³</td>
<td>*(choice⁸ into one of 4 2-hour sessions per course beginning at 9am and ending at 5pm)³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class schedule format</td>
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<td>1.5-hour required synchronous time via Adobe Connect virtual platform (video conferencing) + 2.5 hours of asynchronous time per course</td>
<td>1.5-hour required synchronous time via Adobe Connect virtual platform (video conferencing) + 2.5 hours of asynchronous time per course</td>
<td>2-hour required synchronous time via Adobe Connect virtual platform (video conferencing) + 2 hours of asynchronous time per course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:
- *Italicized blue text* indicates an area of change from previous year

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE:
- 1 very poor attendance in synchronous classes during the final week of classes, which coincided with full-time summer employment for many TCs
- 2 teacher candidates found it challenging to find suitable internships during the May/June months; many felt that completing an internship at this time worked counter to the virtual nature of the semester; many of the internships required physical presence
- 3 teacher candidates wanted a larger block of consecutive days without classes
- 4 teacher candidates and instructors wanted more synchronous time
- 5 with only 4 options for the synchronous sessions, teacher candidates were not able to select their preferred class time; changes were possible in extenuating circumstances
- 6 teacher candidates and instructors wanted more synchronous time
- 7 teacher candidate feedback regarding the intensity and challenge of the two full consecutive days of classes prompted the faculty to schedule one day in between the two days of classes
- 8 teacher candidate feedback indicated they wanted to select their class times; options to select preferred class times were provided but only if they followed the instructions for registering in Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday classes
- 9 Evening classes numbers were extremely low and so we moved the schedule to somewhat reflect the start and end times of other semesters
CHAPETR 14

QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF EDUCATION: HOW WE DEVELOPED OUR INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM AND THE CHANGES WE HAVE MADE TO THE PROGRAM

Peter Chin

Queen’s University

This chapter explores the initial development and structure of the original 4-term program of the Queen’s University Faculty of Education. It provides a description of the features of the original program developed for May of 2015 and shares some of the parameters and critical thinking behind the decisions associated with the program. The second half of the chapter highlights the minor changes to the program that have occurred over the years (and why these changes had to be minor) and draws attention to the new multi-session programs that have been redeveloped to replace the old 8-month Aboriginal Teacher Education community-based program and the Technological Education summer internship program.

THE INITIAL PROGRAM

In the Fall of 2012, when the provincial government was contemplating longer B.Ed. programs in Ontario, I was in the role of Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies at the Queen’s Faculty of Education. We were quite involved in all government deliberations, and because we were having some preliminary ideas gestating within our faculty, we also knew that it was critical in that dialogue to insist that the longer programs were defined as “4-term” programs as opposed to being called “2-year” programs. By defining the programs in terms of the number of credits rather than by a certain calendar length, it allowed us (and all other Ontario programs) the opportunity to think in ways outside of the traditional “fall-winter” mode of academic years. In the Spring of 2013, the provincial government formally announced that all initial teacher education programs would be 4 terms in length.

ENABLING CONSTRAINTS

In January of 2013, the Dean of Education struck a Strategic Re-envisioning Committee (SREC) that had a broad representation of interested faculty members. This committee had the eventual goal of developing the new B.Ed./Dip.Ed. program for implementation in 2015. In addition to this end goal, SREC also wanted to look at some of the strategic elements of our program to ensure the viability of the Queen’s Faculty of Education programs. The strategic elements included attention
to the maintenance and improvement of the academic integrity of all Queen’s Faculty of Education programs, the improvement of the public profile of the Queen’s Faculty of Education and how we differentiated ourselves from other Ontario Faculty of Education programs, and the improvement of fiscal efficiency.

The attention to fiscal efficiency may have been an omen because when the Ministry of Education formally announced the new 4-term initial teacher education program in the Spring of 2013, two surprises were attached. First, it was announced that the enrolments for each program would be cut in half -- with the end result of having half as many teachers graduating each year. (This issue is addressed in detail in various chapters of the initial volume.) This had significant implications because if there were only half of the students, then there would be only half of the tuition. It was argued that this reduction was to address an oversupply of teachers, although many were cautioning that this would lead to a critical undersupply of teachers within a few years. The second surprise was that, in addition to halving the enrolment for each program, the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities also announced that the funding for each student would also be reduced. This would mean that in addition to losing half of the tuition in a typical academic year, the students that we had would be funded approximately 30% less by the provincial government than they had in the past.

The Queen’s University Faculty of Education has a large, well-established concurrent education program. At the time of the announcement about the 4-term program, we had concurrent education programs at Queen’s, a joint concurrent program with Trent University, and a joint concurrent program with the University of Waterloo. It quickly became evident that the reduced enrolment and the reduced funding meant that we needed to reduce the size of the concurrent program, which resulted in the closure of all concurrent programs outside of the Queen’s concurrent program. 2014 saw a reduction in enrolment in the Queen’s-Trent concurrent education program, and 2015 saw a suspension of the intake to the program. This brought an end to a joint program that began in 1975.

Another significant factor also became evident. Specifically, when the government announced the new program and the reduction of enrolment by half, everything was predicated on the assumption that all programs were basically consecutive education programs that could easily be cut in half. With the Queen’s concurrent program, this was not the case since all pre-final year students were enrolled in one course and one practicum each of their first three years while also enrolled in undergraduate studies. Perhaps a more significant assumption of the government that caught them by surprise is that they assumed that all existing concurrent education students would automatically be enrolled in 4-term programs once they were announced. It was only later that they realized that concurrent students started their programs 4 or more years earlier, and “contractually” had to be grandfathered in the program they started. As a result of all of this, we were faced with reduced enrolment, reduced funding, and the need to offer concurrent education students the same program they were promised for the next 4 years until all cohorts were complete, as well as offering a 4-term consecutive program at the same time. These challenges were a key concern that needed to be attended to within the design of our B.Ed./Dip.Ed. program.

As the SREC committee began its deliberations, two subcommittees were formed. As the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, I was the chair of the subcommittee that was responsible for program content, while the other subcommittee was responsible for deciding on the program
The two subcommittees began their work, with the expectation that the program structure subcommittee would finish its work long before the program content committee. In fact, the decision about the program structure had to come first. The timelines were tight because a fully developed program needed to be approved by the Faculty Board by December of 2013, and approved by the University Senate by April of 2014. This would allow us adequate time to start promoting the program and accepting applicants when the Ontario University Application Centre opened in September 2014 for our expected May 2015 consecutive program start. From the time of the official provincial government announcement to the presentation of a fully developed program to the Faculty Board, we had approximately 8 months.

**PROGRAM DESIGN**

The Queen’s B.Ed. program is comprised of two pathways: (1) the Consecutive Program and (2) the Concurrent Program. We needed a program pathway that allowed for continuation of the Concurrent students currently enrolled in the program to continue in the same program that they signed up for. This program pathway would need to run for the next 4 years. In fact, only those high school students accepted into Concurrent Education for September of 2015 would be the first Concurrent group required to complete all elements of the 4-term program. This group would arrive to join the last three terms of the Consecutive Program pathway in September of 2019.

In order to accommodate both programs, up to and including 2018-2019, we decided to offer our enhanced and modernized teacher education program in four straight terms so that the Fall/Winter programming would be the same for both Concurrent and Consecutive candidates. The Fall/Winter programming would be identical to the programming that had always been offered because Concurrent students had to receive the program to which they originally agreed.

Table 1 provides a high-level overview of the 4-term program overlaying the Concurrent and Consecutive Programs.

This arrangement was significant for several reasons. First, during Summer One (S1), Consecutive candidates would take the equivalent courses that the Concurrent candidates completed in Years 1, 2, and 3 of the Concurrent program. The Consecutive candidates would also have 15 days of practicum in May.

Second, in order to meet the Ministry of Education’s minimum of 80 practicum days, we would need to have 3 weeks of practicum placement in Summer One with the expectation that the fall would add 6 weeks, the winter would add 4 weeks, and the following Summer Two May placement would add 4 weeks for a total of 17 weeks or approximately 82 or 83 days depending on the location of statutory holidays in any given year. Moving forward in 2019, the third-year Concurrent Education practicum would also need to be utilized to meet the number of practicum days for Concurrent Education teacher candidates.

Third, Schedule 1 of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act* (1996), Ontario Regulation 283/13, and Amending O. Reg. 347/02 highlighted specific content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and instructional strategies, and contextual knowledge that must be included as mandatory core content in a teacher education program. When we compared the mandatory core content with what we
were already doing, we saw that we had the potential to add more to the Primary/Junior program in terms of literacy and numeracy and we could also add more courses in the arts.

Table 1

Overview of Four-Term Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concurrent Program pre-2019</th>
<th>Consecutive Program May 2015</th>
<th>Full Program for All 2019-2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 years Arts &amp; Sci</td>
<td>SUMMER 1 (S1)</td>
<td>Concurrent do their year 1, 2, and 3 courses and their year 1, 2, and 3 PRAC. (1.5 courses, 0.75 prac. – 8 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr. 1, 2, &amp; 3 – PROF 110, PROF210/211, PROF310/311 (0.5/yr = 1.5)</td>
<td>**MAY 2015 PROF 110, 210/211, 310/311 PROF 100/101</td>
<td>Consecutive does Summer 1(S1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.25 PRAC in yr. 1, 2, and 3 (0.75 total) – 8 weeks prac. courses (8 weeks total)</td>
<td>* some practicum (15 days)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FALL TERM</td>
<td>FALL TERM</td>
<td>FALL TERM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same CORE as now</td>
<td>Same CORE as now</td>
<td>To be determined to create a smooth F, W, and S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINTER TERM</td>
<td>WINTER TERM</td>
<td>WINTER TERM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same CORE as now</td>
<td>Same CORE as now</td>
<td>To be determined to create a smooth F, W, and S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMER 2 (S2)</td>
<td>SUMMER 2 (S2)</td>
<td>SUMMER 2 (S2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*some prac. (20 days)</td>
<td>*some prac. (20 days)</td>
<td>To be determined to create a smooth F, W, and S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance, more Language &amp; Math Indigenous Education, environmental education, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Intermediate/Senior program, we saw the possibilities of adding more on transitions, teaching grade 7 and 8, and more on understanding how we all teach English language learners. Also, we saw that we could add more to all teacher candidates in terms of technology in the classroom, research data use, environmental education, First Nations education, financial literacy, mental health, and so on. The critical issue here is that these additional program components to meet new Schedule 1 requirements needed to occur in the Summer 2 term since little variation to the Fall/Winter terms could occur because that pathway was the required commitment to Concurrent Education teacher candidates who were accepted to the program prior to September 2015. An added benefit of having these topics occur in separate courses in Summer 2 is that the summer term is ideal for classroom teachers to participate as instructors in our program and Faculty members are only required to teach in two of the three terms as part of their collective agreement.

Fourth, prior to the 4-term program, our Concurrent Education students took the same Fall/Winter courses as Consecutive Education students. The net result is that the three pre-final year Concurrent Education courses and the three practicum placements of 2 weeks in Year 1, 3 weeks
in Year 2, and 3 weeks in Year 3 were program requirements for Concurrent Education but were not counted within the required credits of the 8-month program. The development of the 4-term program and having Consecutive teacher candidates take the same courses that pre-final year Concurrent Education students took effectively elevated the pre-final year program requirements to being 4-term program requirements. In effect, the pre-final year Concurrent Program elements were now conceptualized as term 1 of the 4-term program.

Fifth, this program design of four straight terms -- Summer One, Fall, Winter, Summer Two -- allowed for all teacher candidates to finish their program almost nine months earlier than those enrolled in standard fall-winter programs. This provided us a clear point of differentiation from other Ontario Faculties of Education. Importantly, this program plan validated the previously required (but not counted) pre-final year Concurrent Education courses, and also resulted in our Concurrent Education teacher candidates graduating nine months before those in other traditional 4+2 concurrent programs. This feature would help Queen’s Concurrent Education to be recognized as a desirable program for direct entry from high school.

Finally, our pragmatic and fiscal efficiencies that led to the 4-term program also served the valuable approach of creating the new program to compliment the Concurrent Education pathway. By treating the pre-final year Concurrent Education courses as a collective term 1, it allowed us to create the Fall, Winter, Summer Two program as the logical continuation from pre-final year Concurrent Education. Unlike other programs that built standard fall-winter Consecutive programs and then tried to find ways to make the Concurrent Education pathway fit, our eventual process created the ideal Concurrent Education pathway and made the Consecutive Education pathway fit. Thus, it is no surprise that our 4-term program requires Consecutive Education teacher candidates to begin in May of each year so that they can “catch up” with the courses the Concurrent Education students have already taken. In this way, September signals a time when Concurrent and Consecutive teacher candidates come together, after having completed the same courses already.

PROGRAM CONTENT

The program content subcommittee could not fully engage in its work until the program structure was established since we knew that the design of the program would have a major impact on the nature of the courses and their location within the new 4-term program. We used the preliminary months of meetings to reflect on and articulate some of the key desired features that we wanted to have in our B.Ed./Dip.Ed. program.

Over the years, the Queen’s Faculty of Education has been recognized for its program tracks of Outdoor and Experiential Education (OEE), Artists in Community Education (ACE), and Indigenous Teacher Education (ITEP). (The ATEP program had a name change last year to the Indigenous Teacher Education Program.) In addition, over the years, we have offered a full-time Technological Education as well as a Technological Education summer internship program for people who were teaching on Letters of Authority within Technological Education courses in high school but did not have formal teaching credentials. These program tracks and the Technological Education program have taught us well about the importance of community since all of these programs often report strong identification with the group.
An important feature of our 8-month program was our program focus course (FOCI) and how we linked that to the 3-week alternative practicum. This was a very popular feature of our program and about 25% of our teacher candidates arranged their 3-week alternative practicums in international settings. A typical FOCI course included: Educators Abroad, Exceptional Children, At-Risk Youth, Leadership in Education, Assessment and Evaluation, and Environmental Education, for example. The alternative practicum occurs in the course PRAC 450/451.

The sub-committee had a desire to create the same feel of community that existed in our program tracks within all of our teacher candidates by creating “concentrations”, which would be a two-course combination of a more practical FOCI course coupled with a more theoretical EDST course. It was decided that a key feature of our new four-term B.Ed./Dip.Ed. program would be the availability of a choice of concentrations in areas of professional interest to teacher candidates. Linking the robust theoretical framework provided by an EDST course to a practice-oriented FOCI course with its associated alternate practicum would create professionally advantageous concentrations for our candidates. We believed that these concentrations would not only be of significant professional benefit to our candidates, but they would also make our program even more attractive to potential applicants.

Two other commitments that the sub-committee made were regarding certain curriculum courses. In the Intermediate/Senior program, we reaffirmed our desire to keep teaching methods subjects at 72 hours even as class sizes would become smaller due to the reduced enrolment. Other programs were creating generic I/S curriculum courses where teacher candidates from all teaching subjects were in the same course for 72 hours, and then they enrolled in their subject specific methods courses for 36 hours each. We felt that the 72 hours of subject specific teaching methods would also serve to differentiate us from other programs. In the Primary/Junior program, we reaffirmed our commitment to the Arts. Many other programs were creating short 18-hour courses on integrated Arts, but our sub-committee reaffirmed the importance of the Arts in elementary schools. As a result, we committed our program to have Drama, Music, Visual Arts, and Dance 18-hour courses for a total commitment of 72 hours for the Arts.

Later on in the process, the program content subcommittee needed to make decisions about the necessary add-ons to the program that would help us to meet all Schedule 1 requirements, and on how we wanted to deliver those add-ons. For example, environmental education is a requirement in Schedule 1 and some Faculties chose to embed such subject matter into existing courses, in contrast to our decision to have a short course dedicated to environmental education. These decisions needed to occur on all items, and often, the decision was to place them in distinct courses. One reason for that is due to the overlap of the 2-term and 4-term programs for four more years, we could not add elements to Fall/Winter because that program was already quite full.

Likewise, we could not add new elements to term 1 (pre-final year Concurrent and Summer 1 for Consecutive) because of the difficulties in infusing such material into pre-final year Concurrent courses moving forward. For example, if we added topic X to the PROF 110, PROF 210, and PROF 310 courses in Summer One, how could we make sure that a Concurrent student coming to final year also had such content since it was not present in their equivalent courses when they took them several years earlier. Likewise, if we wanted to add 18 hours to our Primary/Junior mathematics courses, the logical place to add them would be when the other 36 hours are taught,
but since we could not add course requirements to the grandfathered Concurrent Education students until Fall of 2019, we had to add it to a course in Summer Two.

THE FINAL PROGRAM

The convergence of the program design and the program content sub-committees resulted in the final product of a new 4-term program that was presented to Faculty Board for approval in the late Fall of 2013.

The first term of the program is similar to the pre-final year Concurrent Program, terms two and three are similar to our pre-existing 8-month program, and the fourth term (i.e., Summer Two) is made up of all extra program elements that explicitly address Schedule 1 requirements.

Our program components are organized into six categories of courses: (1) Curriculum (CURR) courses; (2) Professional Studies (PROF) courses; (3) Foundation (FOUN) courses; (4) Educational Studies (EDST) courses; (5) Focus (FOCI) courses; and (6) Practicum (PRAC) courses. Taken together, these address all the program requirements of the new 4-term teacher education program.

Curriculum (CURR) courses focus on what and how we teach, emphasizing lesson planning and assessment in relation to Ontario curriculum documents for specific grades and subjects. Our Primary/Junior teacher candidates take ten CURR courses (for a total of 21 credits): Language and Literacy, Elementary Mathematics, Literacy and Numeracy, Social Studies, Science and Technology, Health and Physical Education, Art, Dance, Drama, and Music. The Literacy and Numeracy course is in fact additional Language and Literary and more Elementary Mathematics but due to the parameters already discussed, these extra hours of those curriculum subjects had to be placed in a separate course in Summer Two. Teacher candidates in the Intermediate/Senior program select CURR courses related to two teaching subjects (for a total of 12 credits): Dramatic Arts, English, French as a Second Language, Geography, History, Mathematics, Music-Instrumental, Music-Vocal, Native Studies, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Visual Arts.

Professional Studies (PROF) courses explore overarching topics in educational practice that inform all curriculum areas. Teacher candidates complete nine PROF courses that fall into the three broad areas of development as a professional educator, knowledge of the teaching context, and special topics in education. This totals 21 common credits in PROF courses. There is also a PROF course (1.5 credits) that links the program to practicum where the instructor of the courses is also the person who visits teacher candidates in the schools. PROF 410 is the Primary/Junior course and PROF 411 is the Intermediate/Senior course. Thus, all teacher candidates receive 22.5 common credits in PROF courses. In addition, Intermediate/Senior teacher candidates also complete three additional PROF courses dealing with English Language Learners, teaching grades 7 and 8, and transitions within the school system. These are 6 additional credits, making the final Intermediate/Senior total of 28.5 credits in PROF courses.

Foundation (FOUN) courses are broad overview courses that focus on why and who we teach. All teacher candidates take these 3 credits in Psychological Foundations of Education, Foundations of Assessment, and Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Education.
The Educational Studies (EDST) and Focus (FOCI) courses are addressed together because they operate as a complementary pair that forms a concentration. This 6-credit concentration is also the focus of the 3-week alternative practicum that takes place in the winter term. The concentrations are a distinctive element of the Queen’s program (mirrored after the success of our program tracks) that allows teacher candidates the opportunity to conduct a deeper dive into a particular area of interest. The EDST course focuses more on the relevant theory and research in the area, and the FOCI course enables teacher candidates to explore practice-based applications of professional knowledge developed in the EDST course. Teacher candidates arrange an alternative practicum placement related to their concentration. This provides teacher candidates with opportunities to experience education outside of traditional K-12 classroom settings.

As seen in Table 2, Practicum (PRAC) courses account for 10.5 credits in our teacher education program. This practicum now accounts for 21 weeks of placements (of which 3 weeks are alternative placements where the days do not count towards OCT certification requirements). PRAC courses are sequenced in a way that coincides with increased responsibilities in teaching during each practicum block, resulting in a more gradual immersion into practice teaching. For Primary/Junior teacher candidates, PRAC 410 is a 3-week placement that occurs in May of Summer One, PRAC 420 is a 3-week placement in the fall that is immediately followed by PRAC 430, which is 4 weeks in duration. PRAC 440 occurs in winter term for 4 weeks and is followed by PRAC 450, which is the 3-week alternative practicum. PRAC 460 is the final 4-week practicum that occurs in May of Summer Two. PRAC 411/421/431/441/451/461 are the equivalent Intermediate/Senior practicum placements. PRAC 415/425/435/445/455/465 are the equivalent community-based Indigenous Teacher Education Program practicum placements, and PRAC 417/427/437/447/457/467 are the equivalent Technological Education multi-session program practicum placements.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRAC Course</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 410/411</td>
<td>Summer 1</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>1.5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 420/421</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>1.5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 430/431</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>2.0 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 440/441</td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>2.0 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 450/451</td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>2.0 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 460/461</td>
<td>Summer 2</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>2.0 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3

**Consecutive Pathway for Primary/Junior and Intermediate/Senior**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIMARY/JUNIOR</th>
<th>COMMON PROGRAM ELEMENTS</th>
<th>INTERMEDIATE/SENIOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUMMER 1</td>
<td>SUMMER 1</td>
<td>SUMMER 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COMMON</td>
<td>PROF 110-Self as Teacher</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL TERM</td>
<td>PROF 210-Self as Learner</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 310-Self as</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRAC 410/411 (3 weeks)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FALL/WINTER</td>
<td>FALL/WINTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 355-Language &amp; Literacy</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>CURR 1A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 383-Mathematics</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>CURR 1B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 387-Science &amp; Technology</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>CURR 2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 385-Social Studies</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>CURR 2B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 395-Health and Phys. Ed</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>PROF 411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 389/391/393-Art/Drama/ or Music</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 389/391/393-Art/Drama/ or Music</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 410</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SPECIFIC</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COMMON</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL TERM</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMER 2</td>
<td>SUMMER 2</td>
<td>SUMMER 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR-Dance</td>
<td>PRAC 460/461 (4 weeks)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 389/391/393-Art/Drama/ or Music</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>PROF 506-English Language Learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR-Literacy &amp; Numeracy</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>PROF 507-Pathways&amp;Transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 500-Teaching Life Skills</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 501-Building a Professional Career</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 502-Intro to Aboriginal Studies</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 503-Supporting Environmental Ed</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intermediate/Senior Consecutive teacher candidates complete 60 credits, while the Primary/Junior Consecutive teacher candidates complete 63 credits. Concurrent teacher candidates complete an additional 3 total credits from extra practicum placements pre-final year. Table 3 provides an overview of the Consecutive pathway and shows the commonalities and differences between Primary/Junior and Intermediate/Senior.

## CHANGES TO THE INITIAL PROGRAM

I have continued to be the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies at the Queen’s Faculty of Education (although we have now renamed the role as the Associate Dean of Teacher Education). In my role, I have been the chair of the Professional Studies Committee that has monitored the new 4-term program and looked at the exit survey data from each year. We have worked within a limited scope of adjustments to the program since the Concurrent Education students would not join the fall-winter-Summer 2 sequence until the 2019-2020 academic year. In 2018, we also started a new B.Ed. revision committee to look one last time at the delivery of the 2019-2020 academic year, which would be the first time all of our teacher candidates completed the same program. Our intention was not to start over again, but to have one last look at any obvious changes that could be made for that first year when everyone was together. Particular attention was paid to the demands on our building during the summer months as we now had a very large Summer 2 cohort in the building at the same time as the incoming Consecutive Summer 1 cohort. Within this context, it is important to understand that even though we started the 4-term program with Consecutive students in May of 2015, the 2019-2020 academic year was the first that had all of our Consecutives merged with our first cohort of Concurrent students that were required to complete the 4-term program. As such, at time of writing, this is only our second full academic year running the program as it was designed back in 2014.

### MINOR CHANGES

Our committee appreciated the fact we needed to keep the 4-term program close to its final form for 4 years until the first Concurrent cohort to take the longer program arrived in 2019-2020. This recognized that small changes could occur, but they had to be limited to Summer 1 and Summer 2. The fall and winter terms needed to remain static because those terms represented the terms that grandfathered Concurrent Education students needed to complete.
Our Professional Studies Committee received exit survey data each year and in the first two years, we also conducted focus groups. One of the first things we identified is that the timetabling of the summer was too spread out and there was too much idle time to warrant having the teacher candidates be in Kingston from June until the second week of August. We also moved two courses from Summer 2 into the first part of Summer 1. In order to make this work, we conceptualized Summer 1 as a June term and a July term. In the June term, in addition to PROF 110, we now added PROF 500 and PROF 504. The July term was now PROF 210 and PROF 310. This is significant because these two PROF courses were treated sequentially in the original plans. Class lengths also had to change from 2 hours to 2.5 hours so that the number of hours during the month added up. Because of the shift of PROF 500 and PROF 504, we also realized this added new challenges for the Concurrent students because somehow, we now needed to offer them these two courses separately since they were no longer in the Summer 2 term. Our eventual solution (which we had three years to figure out) was to offer PROF 504 to them in the Fall term and to adjust their Summer 2 June schedules so that they could take PROF 500 with the Summer 1 teacher candidates. This added credits to those two terms but lightened the second block of Summer 2.

In the second iteration of the new program, survey data and focus group interviews resulted in a second minor change to sequencing. We moved the one-week term break from a spot that broke up the June and July terms, and shifted it immediately to occur after the 4-week May practicum block. The main rationale for this was that the July 1 holiday weekend already helped to break up the time between June and July, and that most people are at the location they wish to be while on practicum. It made sense to make the break right after the practicum so they did not have to add another trip between Kingston and another location.

A final change occurred after the third year to add one more week of practicum into the fall term, thus increasing practicum from 6 weeks to 7 weeks. In order to accommodate this extra week, the fall program was shifted to start before Labour Day weekend. This change increased our total number of practicum weeks to 18 weeks, which results in approximately 86-87 days of practicum depending on where the statutory holidays happen to fall.

Some enhancements also occurred within the program courses. Mental health and the importance of equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigeneity have also permeated elements of the program. A three-part mental health series of workshops was created and added to PROF 110, 210, and 310 in both Concurrent and Consecutive programs, the KAIROS blanket exercise and cultural safety training were added to the Summer 1 Consecutive group and to the fall Concurrent group so that all teacher candidates had early exposure to Indigenous education rather than waiting until the Summer 2 Indigenous Education course. We submitted a new program request to the OCT and received approval to offer a concentration in French as a Second Language (FSL) in our P/J program. This helps to increase targeted enrolment in a high demand subject area. Beginning in the 2022 intake, this P/J FSL concentration will shift to a program track, which means that people will apply directly to the program through TEAS. As well, Concurrent P/J students who meet the requirements can also be added to the program track in their “final year” of the B.Ed. program.

An issue related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigeneity also bears mentioning here. Until recently, teacher candidates in Technological Education and in the community-based Indigenous Teacher Education programs received Dip.Ed. certification upon completion of the program. Even
though they completed the same program requirements as their colleagues, they could not be granted a B.Ed. unless they had a previous degree. From an equity perspective, why should these teacher candidates receive a different credential because of prerequisites, as opposed to differences in the actual programs? After a lengthy consultation and development process that was unanimously passed by the Professional Studies Committee, Faculty Board, and Senate in the Fall of 2018, we became the first Ontario Faculty of Education to grant B.Ed. degrees to all community-based ITEP graduates and to most Technological Education graduates.

ADDITION OF MULTI-SESSION PROGRAMS

Perhaps the greatest concern that came with the 4-term teacher education program was the threat that it placed on our community-based Indigenous Teacher Education Program and on our Technological Education program. These two programs, and the teacher candidates that are enrolled in them, are an important component of our Faculty’s social responsibility to equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigeneity. Indigenous teacher candidates often end up teaching in their communities and serve as role models for others as to what careers are possible. As well, community-based ITEP teacher candidates teaching in their communities add stability to northern and reserve schools because those teachers are from the region and intend to stay in the area. This helps to end the “revolving door” of new hires that arrive and then leave as soon as the desired job in the South arrives. We had a community-based, part-time program for the 8-month program, but it was too difficult to create a 4-term version until we had our main program running. Also, there were concerns about the length of the program, the number of days of practicum (that would require people to take unpaid days off of work), and the difficulties of coming to Kingston, Ontario.

Technological Education teachers offer programs in the broad-based technologies, which creates a pathway for students in schools that are not necessarily interested in the university pathway. These technological education pathways can lead to co-operative education placements, bridges to apprenticeship programs (such as the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program), school-based enterprises, and work-based enterprises. Importantly, the broad-based technologies are the anchor courses for the various Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM) pathways available in Ontario secondary schools to provide pathways to the mandate of reaching every student. The Technological Education program had similar challenges, as well as a few additional ones. The 8-month program had an economic impact on these teacher candidates but we realized that 4-terms would prove to be even more challenging. Technological Education teacher candidates are typically older since they have worked in the trades for a number of years (which is also a qualification requirement for enrolment in the program). A majority of these teacher candidates have mortgages and families to support. Even though we developed a Technological Education stream in our main program, we also realized that there may be reduced interest in people taking that program. Years ago, we had the summer internship program for Technological Education for those already teaching on letters of permission, but that program closed as the oversupply of teachers became greater. This same concern is that all other Ontario programs offering Technological Education programs chose to close and not create a 4-term program. (Since that time, a few have returned with modified programs.) We recognized the need to create an ITEP community-based program as well as a Technological Education multi-session program.

Once our main program was running, we focused our attention on the development of a multi-session, community-based Indigenous Teacher Education program. We realized that once we had
a viable structure for the ITEP program we could easily develop a Technological Education program.

There were key features of both programs that were necessary. First, we wanted a full-time program so that all teacher candidates could qualify for Ontario student loans and/or band funding for Indigenous teacher candidates. Second, we wanted students in the program to come to Kingston early because all of our previous focus groups and town halls with our community-based programs clearly told us that they did not feel like Queen’s students until they came to Kingston. Third, we wanted to take advantage of any opportunities we could to integrate the community-based teacher candidates with those in our main program (whether the Consecutives in Summer 1 or with all teacher candidates in fall, winter, or Summer 2). Fourth, we wanted the majority of the program to take place on concentrated weekends throughout the year where the teacher candidates met at a site and took the courses together. We would bring the instructors to them. We supplemented the face-to-face weekends with required asynchronous course elements, thus resulting in a blended program. Finally, we wanted a program where the first term of the multi-session program meets the Ontario College of Teachers’ requirements, which allows these teacher candidates to apply for the Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration. This TCoQR would allow these teacher candidates to be temporarily certified as teachers for 5 years, and would allow them to work as supply teachers, long term occasional teachers, or as contract teachers. In the case of the latter two scenarios, if a teacher candidate was being paid to work in the appropriate broad-based technology, then such days were equated to count as practicum days, thus allowing the teacher candidate to earn wages, meet requirements, and not have to take vacation days to participate in a formal, supervised practicum placement. Taken together, the goal of the community-based multi-session programs was to create the best teacher education program that had flexibility to allow them to earn incomes and stay in their communities without having to leave their homes to attend a 4-term program in Kingston.

FEATURES OF THE COMMUNITY-BASED INDIGENOUS TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM (ITEP)

As seen in Table 4, the community-based ITEP program is a full-time, 6-semester program that has the same program requirements as our Primary/Junior program with one exception. It begins at the beginning of May in the community with an orientation weekend, which is immediately followed by a 3-week practicum placement. This is followed by two additional weekends in June to finish off the PROF 110 course. July occurs in Kingston, where the teacher candidates join the Consecutive program teacher candidates in PROF 210. As well, these teacher candidates take Health and Physical Education, Dance, and Science while at the Faculty since we have the expertise and facilities for these courses. This is the common start to each cohort, and at the end of July all teacher candidates have met the requirements to apply for a TCoQR. For the coming year, we have three community-based sites: (1) the Manitoulin-North Shore program hosted by the Kenjegewin Teg Education Institute; (2) the Mushkegowuk Territory site in lower James Bay hosted by Omushkego Education; and (3) the Lambton-Kent site hosted by the Lambton-Kent District School board. All three sites start in their locations in May and June, and all three sites come together in Kingston for the July courses. The Manitoulin-North Shore site began in May of 2018, and the Mushkegowuk Territory was supposed to start in May 2020 but was delayed due to excessive flooding in the region and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Mushkegowuk Territory site and the Lambton-Kent site both began in May 2021.
Table 4

Indigenous Teacher Education Community-Based Program (ITCB)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At-a-Glance Chart</th>
<th>Queen’s University, Faculty of Education</th>
<th>Consecutive Program of Professional Education, Primary-Junior Indigenous Teacher Education Community-Based Program (ITCB)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Credit</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S 1 (May-August)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 410 (14 full days)</td>
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<td>CURR 383-(Method) Mathematics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 110-(Foundation) Self as Teacher</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>CURR 387-(Method) Science &amp; Technology</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 210-(Foundation) Self as Learner</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>CURR 391-(Method) Drama</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 310-(Foundation) Self as Professional</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>CURR 393-(Method) Music</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 500-(Foundation) Supporting Learning Skills</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>FOCI 201-(Foundation) Indigenous Teacher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROF 504-(Foundation) Educational Technology as a Teaching and Learning Tool</td>
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<td>FOUN 102-(Foundation) Historical &amp; Philosophical Foundations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S 2 (Sept-Dec)</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 420 (14 full days)</td>
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<td>PRAC 440 (19 full days)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CURR 355-(Method) Language &amp; Literacy</td>
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<td>CURR 383 (continued from S4)-(Method) Mathematics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>CURR 387 (continued from S4)-(Method) Science &amp; Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDST 201-(Foundation) Theory of Indigenous Education</td>
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<td>FOCI 201 (continued from S4)-(Foundation) Indigenous Teacher Education</td>
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<td>FOUN 100-(Foundation) Psychological Foundations</td>
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<td>PROF 180-(Foundation) School Law and Policy (blended)</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>S 2 Subtotal Credits</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>S 4 (Sept-Dec)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>S 4 Subtotal Credits</strong></td>
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<td><strong>S 5 (Jan-April)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>S 5 Subtotal Credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.5</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the common summer start, each program site cycles through a set of courses for the next five semesters. An important feature of this, due to the small class size of each cohort, is that we double up cohorts where they make sense. Specifically, the first cohort would take term 2 and term 3 in year one, followed by term 4, 5, and 6 in year two. The second cohort would start by taking the term 4 and 5 courses followed by term 2 and 3 courses and ending on term 6 courses. All program cohorts start with term 1 and end with term 6. The overlap courses with a second cohort occur in the term 2-3 and term 4-5 sequence and help to increase efficiency since these cohorts are quite small. Where possible, instructors are hired locally from the region.

The one difference in the ITEP community-based program is that there is increased attention to Indigenous and Northern teaching in two ways. First, each curriculum course embeds an Indigenous bundle of teaching or a Northern bundle of teaching for teacher candidates, who select one bundle that carries them throughout the whole program. Each curriculum course addresses
specific links to either Indigenous approaches (e.g., traditional ecological knowledge in science) or Northern approaches (e.g., understanding the history of settlement in the North).

The second way that Indigeneity and the North are threaded into the program is through the Anishinaabe Aadziwin (AA) passport. This passport is equivalent to the 90 hours required for alternative practicum in the main program. Instead of a formal 90-hour alternative practicum, it was decided that the Kenjegewin Teg Education Institute would work with its Elders to create opportunities for teacher candidates to connect with their culture and their land. The Elders created a list of activities that would be approved within the AA passport and assigned how many hours particular activities were worth. This could include sweat lodges, medicine walks, powwows, traditional ceremonies, Ojibwe language instruction, and so on. In this way, the passport contributed to the Indigenous and Northern characteristics of the community-based program. In the other two sites, similar passports are being developed, with the recognition that the Mushkegowuk Territory site would focus on Cree teachings, while the Chatham-Kent site would have separate passports for those from Ojibwe, Chippewa, or Lanape First Nations.

FEATURES OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION MULTI-SESSION PROGRAM (TEMS)

The Technological Education Multi-session program utilized a similar basic structure of the ITEP with a few significant differences. First, a similar structure is used, but the TEMS follows the Intermediate/Senior pathway. Second, unlike the ITEP program where the second summer was an open term and the program finished term 6 in the summer within the community site, the TEMS program goes six straight terms with term 6 finishing in the winter of year 2. Third, this pathway allowed us to fully utilize the technological education shops within our building and provided opportunities for the TEMS Technological Education teacher candidates to intermingle with the main program Technological Education teacher candidates during the summer months. As well, we were better able to integrate the TEMS teacher candidates into the existing summer offerings in our main program.

Within the TEMS program, the summer 1 and summer 2 terms are unique and do not include the other cohort in the program. These overlaps only occur in term 2 and 3, and term 5 and 6. Thus, the first cohort, which started in May 2020 in a centralized location in the Greater Toronto Area, will unfold with all 6 terms in order. After the first term, the teacher candidates qualify for the TCoQR. The second cohort, which will begin in May 2021, will take term 1 on its own, but then join term 5 and 6, followed by summer 2 on its own, and then double back and take term 2 and 3. Of course, they will take term 2 and 3 with the cohort that follows them, while they will take term 5 and 6 with the cohort that preceded them. In this way, we can double up classes to make them viable since these cohorts tend to be small in numbers. There is also some advantage in having the variety within each class where some are just beginning and others are approaching completion. There is one difference between the TEMS alternative practicum requirements and those for the main campus program. The TEMS alternative practicum shifts away from a formal practicum (much like the ITEP community-based program) to a self-guided improvement in an area of their broad-based technology. The teacher candidate keeps logs of 90 hours of professional development that helped them enhance their skills in a weaker area of their broad-based technology. These logs are handed in to the FOCI instructor for validation. Also, although not described earlier, a commonality of all technological education programs is that instead of an EDST in the
concentration, the technological education teacher candidates take an additional course on exceptionalities in the classroom.

Table 5

Multi-Session Technological Education Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At-a-Glance Chart</th>
<th>Queen’s University, Faculty of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consecutive Program of Professional Education, Intermediate-Senior Multi-Session Technological Education Program</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>S4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(May-August)</td>
<td>(May-August)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 417 (14 days)</td>
<td>CURR 361-Teaching Tech. Ed. Part 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURR 368-Curriculum Development in Tech. Ed. Part 1</td>
<td>PROF 310-Self as Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 110-Self as Teacher</td>
<td>PROF 500-(Foundation) Supporting Learning Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 502-Intro to Indigenous Studies for Teachers</td>
<td>PROF 504-(Foundation) Educational Technology as a Teaching and Learning Tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S1 Subtotal Credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>S4 Subtotal Credits</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>S5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sept-Dec)</td>
<td>(Sept-Dec)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 427 (14 days)</td>
<td>EDST 476-Exceptional Children and Adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAC 437 (20 days)</td>
<td>FOUN 102-Historical &amp; Philosophical Foundations (Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOUN 100-(Foundation) Psychological Foundations</td>
<td>PROF 180-School Law and Policy (Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 210-(Foundation) Self as Learner</td>
<td>PROF 501-Building A Professional Career as a Teacher (Blended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROF 411-(Foundation) Theory and Professional Practice</td>
<td>PROF 503-Integrating Environmental Ed. in the Classroom (Blended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S2 Subtotal Credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>S5 Subtotal Credits</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION

This chapter has summarized the development of our original 4-term program, the changes that we have made since it started, and the additions that we have made to our program delivery in terms of the community-based multi-session programs for Indigenous Teacher Education and Technological Education. As important, this chapter has tried to convey the enabling constraints
and the rationale behind decisions that were made over the years as we move forward with our B.Ed./Dip.Ed. programs at the Queen’s Faculty of Education.
CHAPTER 15

TEACHER EDUCATION AT REDEEMER UNIVERSITY:
CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS FOR A PUBLIC GOOD

Phil Teeuwen, Christina Belcher, and Terry Loerts

Redeemer University

INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves to introduce readers to the context of teaching in a teacher education program found in a liberal arts and sciences university and established within the Christian tradition in Ontario. In addition to its purpose, structure, theory, and application of learning, we consider how to adjust to change, serve society, and remain faithful to Redeemer’s mission as a publicly chartered, privately funded, professionally accredited Bachelor of Education program in Ontario, furthering education for the public good.

Educators may define ‘public good’ as a perspective that values education as a means to further enhance society. Every institution has a ‘heart-held’ faith and purpose that undergirds practice, although not all verbalize one specifically. A Christian educational institution has the freedom to be distinctive and open in this regard. This inherency of faith and passion that undergirds teaching is evident in education, and is seen in the moral, ethical, joyful, and passionate life of its teachers. The service of the public in ways that are good requires reflective and deliberate thinking that generates belief, self-knowledge, and self-governance in the service of others. For small faith-based institutions, time is given to developing the openness, critique, moral and ethical character, humility, and gratefulness for the gift of work in ways that sometimes are not possible in large institutions. In short, Christian Education has a distinct worldview that Christians and non-Christians can identify. The distinctiveness is that Christian faith-based institutions believe human goodness comes not from self, but from God, and God sees people in His image. This is an incarnational perspective, not merely a ‘religious’ one. Being a small institution provides the benefit of exploring ways that faith matters. Faith is viewed as a gift through which the public is served in significant ways. Faith gives vision and motivation to those of faith and serves those with or without it in ways that seek to further the good of society. In loving God, loving all people, and caring for the world, grace and service may be added to society in times of need.

What good is all this to the public? That which helps all of society to flourish, which helps all individuals and social institutions coexist with each other and creation in peace, is a public good.
Our society is quite diverse, and this diversity is deeper than the rich array of individuals in our midst. It is essential that there are healthy public institutions to support and enhance the good in this diversity. Diverse individuals are often supported and nurtured from within diverse institutions and communities. As such, it is important and just that diverse social needs find expression and support in diverse institutions and methods of delivery. In education, that means educational justice for all students in all schools and all schools in all communities. As a Christian institution, Redeemer seeks “to act justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly” with God – a biblical motive found in Micah 6:8. This helps define what we do and why we do it. The fact that our worldview reflects our Christian beliefs, that we have a responsibility to shape and care for the world and all those in it is for the public good. Our teacher candidates will not necessarily arrive at Redeemer or leave Redeemer with this same conviction. They will have had the opportunity to think about it, however, and in doing so they may be sensitive to the importance of their calling, the inherent dignity of their students, the wonders of creation, and the ongoing stewardship of all this and all of those in the schools they will serve.

In summary, our graduates are prepared for service in independent and public schools and are certified by the Ontario College of Teachers to do so. Both public and non-government schools serve the public good. Having certified teachers in both contexts helps the public at large know that teachers across the province are committed to similar ethical and professional goals and are similarly well-equipped to enact these goals. They have been taught, within our Christian framework, of educating for faithful, effective, reflective, and professional practice. We believe that this strengthens the professional dispositions that adhere to both the ethical and professional standards of the teaching profession and will richly enhance classrooms where our teacher candidates will serve.

OVERVIEW OF TEACHER EDUCATION AT REDEEMER

HISTORY

Redeemer University, established in 1980, is a Christian liberal arts and sciences university located in Ancaster, Ontario, which has been offering university-level education since 1982. Redeemer is privately funded, relying primarily on tuition and donations for the development and delivery of its three degrees: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Education. As an undergraduate degree-granting institution, Redeemer is publically chartered through specific Acts of the Ontario legislature, first in 1980, and then again in 1998 and 2003. Redeemer’s initial charter in 1980 enabled the granting of arts and science degrees, which were officially called Bachelor of Christian Studies. This nomenclature caused some confusion, leading many to believe that Redeemer was primarily a Bible college and not a liberal arts and sciences university. In 1998, as a result of Bill Pr17, Redeemer was given the authority to confer Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees. In 2003, Bill Pr14 amended the degree-granting powers of Redeemer to include the Bachelor of Education degree. The B.Ed. program received initial accreditation from the Ontario College of Teachers in 2003, and renewal of accreditation in 2007. Redeemer’s B.Ed. program was recently reaccredited in 2018 under the enhanced teacher education program regulations, and will be reviewed again in 2025.

Redeemer’s involvement in teacher education began in the mid-1980s as a way to meet the needs of Ontario students who wanted to be educated in a Christian university context. Up to that point,
the closest option for such students was the teacher education program at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This program was limited in its ability to offer a program grounded in the Ontario education context in a meaningful way. A combined program was developed that enabled Ontario students to complete their Calvin College education degree by taking specific courses at Redeemer. In September 1992, Redeemer added its own elementary education program to this combined program. Soon after this development, most Ontario education students at Redeemer opted to take the Redeemer program and the combined program with Calvin College came to an end. Redeemer has had its own teacher education program ever since.

The Bachelor of Education program at Redeemer University has been shaped by the cultural and religious community that founded it and by the liberal arts orientation that is characteristic of Redeemer. By liberal arts, we mean an education that is thorough, broad, and incorporates the opportunity to study in a number of areas that provide a more complete formation of thought and practice. Redeemer’s undergraduate core curriculum encourages students to engage in subject areas beyond their chosen majors and minors, resulting in significant exposure of all students to the humanities, social sciences, the arts, and sciences. This enables students to think broadly and deeply about the world and their place in it.

The establishment of Redeemer University was consistent with a tradition of interest in higher education that has characterized a part of the Protestant community sometimes identified as Reformed. This tradition is manifested in parental educational associations and schools interested in education that aligns with their religious beliefs at the elementary, secondary, and university levels. Unlike their provincial Catholic counterparts, these parents had no publicly funded educational options. Over the last seventy years, schools in this tradition have continued to grow and to include not just the early supporters, many of whom were post-war Dutch immigrants, but most Protestant Christian denominations represented in Ontario. Given this cultural/religious context, it is not at all surprising that proponents for independent schools would be interested in a teacher education program at Redeemer University. From its early days, the Department of Education was dedicated to the education of professional and highly qualified teachers for independent schools. As such, the goal was to encourage and contribute to the flourishing of society for the public good.

The liberal arts orientation of Redeemer is consistent with the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Learning (1994) concerning teacher education:

> ...we believe that it is reasonable to require some common undergraduate preparation prior to the teacher training program. The issue is different for elementary than for secondary programs. It seems more reasonable to require a variety of subject prerequisites for elementary school teachers who are expected to teach a broad range of topics. (Vol. III, The Educators, p. 23)

This recommendation is echoed in Liston, Whitcomb, and Borko’s (2009) call for a renewed focus on the liberal arts in teacher education:

Future teachers’ education should include (in part and at some point in time in their professional development) an examination of their own personal and professional values
as well as the larger educational and cultural values. The education we offer our candidates should engage them in the best that the liberal arts tradition has to offer: reflective self-discernment as well as critical cultural understanding. (p. 107)

The liberal arts orientation provides students with the opportunity for a broad understanding of history, culture, and ways of knowing. Students at Redeemer have the opportunity to ask deep philosophical questions of life, faith, aesthetics, identity, and belonging.

EXTENDED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program at Redeemer (see Table 1) was designed as an expanded program beyond provincial requirements prior to the commencement of the enhanced provincial requirements in 2015. The former program at Redeemer was a 45-credit program that occurred over three semesters. This program originally included 75 days of field experience - 35 more days than regulatory requirements. One reason for this initial expanded program length was the context in which the program was developed. In particular, the Ontario Report of the Royal Commission on Learning (1994) recommended:

A longer and more substantive program for teacher preparation, delivered both by faculties of education and schools. Why? Because teaching is difficult and complex, and teachers cannot be well prepared for the challenges of today’s schools in a one-year program. (Vol. III, The Educators, p. 11)

In addition to this very clear recommendation was Redeemer University’s liberal arts orientation, which was characterized by a commitment to critical reflection as well as a well-rounded education. This included not only curriculum design and methods, but also the historical, religious, philosophical, and social foundations of teaching. The developers of Redeemer’s original ITE program believed that solid teacher preparation and adequate experience could not be integrated well within a one-year program of study.

The current four-semester teacher education program is designed around a traditional fall/winter university calendar. The courses are divided into four categories: foundations, curriculum, electives, and practicum. Foundation courses provide candidates with the opportunity to reflect upon the educational, social, historical, and philosophical context of education in Ontario. Curriculum courses provide candidates with the opportunity to learn and use curriculum documents from the Ministry of Education. We have developed a number of electives that offer candidates a chance to explore diverse elements of teaching and learning. Finally, our practicum component includes 110 days of fieldwork.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As with any educational framework, our philosophical and conceptual framework needs to connect and orient its program within its special character and mission. This section considers how our educational philosophy and mission focus intersect with the delivery of our program across components of teaching, engagement, and reflection. The Department of Education at Redeemer orients its program around the following mission statement: Teacher education for faithful,
### Table 1

**Two-Year Teacher Education Program at Redeemer University**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester One</th>
<th>Semester Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Foundations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301 Development and Learning</td>
<td>323 Multicultural Classrooms in a Global Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>303 Social Foundations &amp; Introduction to Teaching</td>
<td>331 Digital Technology for Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>414 Curriculum Foundations</td>
<td>415 Classroom Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>332/333 Teaching the Arts</td>
<td>337/338 Teaching Social Studies, History &amp; Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Electives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>335 Elementary Reading Practices</td>
<td>421/423 Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251 Children’s Literature</td>
<td>440/442 Teaching Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>310 Religious Education in Catholic Schools</td>
<td>446/447 Teaching Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>329 French as a Second Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practicum</strong></td>
<td><strong>Practicum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 days</td>
<td>Six-week / 30-day placement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester Three</th>
<th>Semester Four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Foundations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>327 Indigenous Education</td>
<td>306 History &amp; Philosophy of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>432 Differentiated Instruction</td>
<td>407 Systems of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>340/341 Teaching Health, P.E., &amp; Dance</td>
<td>417 Special Education &amp; English Language Learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>422/424 Literacy</td>
<td>488 Professional Teaching Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>441/443 Teaching Math</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Electives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>222 Music Advanced</td>
<td>322 Multiliteracies in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>307 Religious Studies</td>
<td>325 Collaborative Workspaces &amp; Restorative Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>321 Visual Arts Advanced</td>
<td>404 Project Based Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>326 Environmental Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>334 Play-Based Learning: Teaching in the JK-SK Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>426 Reading Restoration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>437 Geography Advanced</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>438 History Advanced</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>449 Science Advanced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practicum</strong></td>
<td><strong>Practicum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six-week / 30-day placement</td>
<td>Six-week / 30-day placement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
effective, reflective, professional practice. Redeemer University seeks to equip educators who are faithful to their calling, effective in their work with learners, reflective on and in their practice, and who aspire to fulfill the ethical and professional standards of the teaching profession. This section elaborates on each point of this mission as it relates to our special character.

Faithful Practice
Given the faith orientation of Redeemer University, we consider faithfulness to include personal dispositions and inclinations of teachers, specifically in relation to our call to love, educate, and contribute to the flourishing of society as a public good. We seek to display love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control through our teaching and learning. Teacher education is transformational; our hope is to be continually transformed to reflect the above traits so that we and our candidates can act justly and love mercy in their future teaching contexts.

Faithfulness also impacts the way we approach knowledge and learning. Faith and knowledge intersect in practice. Faith is an aspect of spiritual awareness and identity, especially as this applies to the teaching relationship, as noted in Norsworthy and Belcher (2015). We find resonance with Barrett (2015) who states “that teachers’ enacted beliefs will depend on espoused beliefs related to both their work and personal lives, thus religious beliefs become an important set of beliefs to examine” (p. 5). Such examination is done via a commitment to reflection and professional practice. We seek to be comprehensive and holistic in this regard.

We also strive to engage in teaching and learning that is shaped by the virtue of hospitality. In this regard, Parker Palmer (1993) writes, “Hospitality means receiving each other, our struggles, our newborn ideas with openness and care” (pp. 73-74). Hospitality shapes the way we view others and ourselves. As Smith (2018) suggests, it opens us to others while at the same time revealing to us our own strangeness to others “and our need for their hospitality. We become both hosts and guests” (p. 56). A posture of hospitality requires both self-awareness and humility. Teachers need to know how who they are impacts the learning environment. Do they communicate openness to all? Do they foster a sense of curiosity through the way in which they address newly-formed ideas? How do they welcome students back to class once they have been away? In all these things, teachers put others first. Teaching is an other-oriented vocation; as such, it is, as Parsons (2006/2007) puts it, a noble task.

We seek to educate teachers who are committed to their duties as articulated in The Education Act, specifically section 264(1), which states:

It is the duty of a teacher and a temporary teacher:
(a) To teach diligently and faithfully the classes or subjects assigned to the teacher by the principal;
(b) To encourage the pupils in the pursuit of learning.

Such faithfulness requires knowledge of the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum, current theories of teaching and learning, as well as a commitment to the Ontario College of Teachers’ Professional Standards, which includes the Standards of Practice, Ethical Standards, and the Professional Learning Framework.
Effective Practice
The Department of Education at Redeemer takes seriously the professional and moral obligation of teachers to teach well for the sake of their students. We take a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) and believe that all students can learn. As such, we are committed to providing teacher candidates with a comprehensive education in which they are exposed to current and prevailing theories of learning and development and are challenged to mindfully employ such theories for the learning of each of their students in light of critical inquiry and cultural context.

Reflective Practice
At Redeemer, we are committed to reflective practice as a defining element of our teacher education program. We believe that teachers must embrace their role as reflective practitioners (Schön, 1983). We are committed to ongoing reflection as a means of integrating theory and practice, enhancing student learning, and pursuing ongoing professional learning. We also believe that reflective practice helps “students to confront their own deep-seated beliefs and assumptions about learning and students and to learn about the experiences of people different from themselves” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 305), which among other things enables candidates to serve ethically in diverse settings.

Darling-Hammond (2006) states:

Powerful teacher education programs have a clinical curriculum as well as a didactic curriculum. They teach candidates to turn analysis into action by applying what they are learning in curriculum plans, teaching applications, and other performance assessments that are organized on professional teaching standards. These attempts are especially educative when they are followed by systematic reflection on student learning in relation to teaching and receive detailed feedback, with opportunities to retry and improve. (p. 308)

The connection of reflective practice to teacher education is not new. In fact, according to Collin, Karsenti, and Komis (2013), the term “reflection” has been overused and poorly understood. To be sure, reflection must be taught in order to be effective. As such, we provide candidates with tools for and experiences in reflection that also view learning within the larger context of future educational and personal development. We are also conscious that we as faculty – ourselves educators – must reflect on our own actions and practice as much as or more than we expect of our candidates. We recognize, along with Russell (2012), that “how I teach is the message”, or as Palmer (1998) would suggest, that we teach ourselves to our students. As such, when candidates identify situations from practicum that they do not like, or see their associates organizing their classrooms or teaching in ways they disagree with, we often ask them why they think they have noticed these things and what this says about them as future teachers. The goal is that they understand themselves more fully, and others more graciously.

Professional Practice
The Department of Education is committed to the teaching profession. We ensure that candidates in our program understand the seriousness of the role they seek as well as the moral, legal, and professional obligations that come with the career. It is one of our goals that graduates embody the professional obligations of members of the Ontario College of Teachers, specifically the Ethical Standards and the Standards of Practice (Ontario College of Teachers, 2020). This practice
is reflected in our admission policy, as we interview teacher candidates prior to admission to find out their reasons for committing to the profession of teaching, their aspirations, and their teacher dispositions for entering the profession.

We also incorporate the Ethical Standards and the Standards of Practice (Ontario College of Teachers, 2020) within our courses so that candidates go beyond reading what they contain to practicing what they contain. In the *Professional Teaching Seminar and Reflective Practice* course, *EDU 488*, candidates write reflections using the standards as a framework. They select and analyze an artefact from their practicum experience such as a lesson plan, an assessment instrument, a video clip of classroom instruction, or any other artefact that is part of the practicum experience. This analysis includes defining the standard, reflecting on what it means for their teaching, and how they have developed or embraced that standard through the artefact that they selected. The reflection and connection truly embody an application of learning so that they understand the implications of this experience as they reflect on what it means for their current and future practice, thus developing their competencies as a professional.

*Practica*

Practica at Redeemer consist of 110 days of field experience, which exceeds the 80-day provincial requirement. Having full-time faculty also doing field supervision allows this to occur in a meaningful way across a variety of content areas. Our program provides deliberate connection for practicum to be discussed across our learning content within curriculum delivery. In connection to our mission, faculty believe that both being and becoming in an educational program is enhanced when candidates learn how to become and be teachers who can practice what they are learning in a meaningful way that extends beyond an economy of classroom knowledge.

Russell and Dillon (2015) explore teacher education programs in Canada to understand how such programs are designed to bridge theory and practice, particularly through practicum experiences. They identify the integration of theory and practice as an ongoing shortcoming and tension in teacher education:

> If there is a central and common issue within reform efforts targeting the design of programs, it is the issue of the integration of theory and practice within a program, often seen as the integration of campus-based course work and school-based practicum placements. (p. 151)

This observation makes clear that the integration of theory and practice is a top priority across Canada, and that it is difficult to achieve with complete satisfaction. It requires attention and intention.

The integration of theory and practice is an important aspect of the program design at Redeemer. Because of our relatively small class sizes and full-time faculty, there is an advantage for us to continue conversations around how theory shapes our practice. Our size allows us to teach students across subject areas and to make connections between theories and practices in an interdisciplinary manner over the two years of study. There are a number of ways in which our program is designed so that theory flows into practice and then back into theory in a cyclical manner. For example, a professor teaches teacher candidates from the first-year cohort in both the Arts and *Curriculum*
Foundations during the first semester. In both, lesson planning and assessment practices (for example) are taught and modelled so that candidates learn not only the theory but the application of those practices in actual teaching scenarios.

In our EDU 301/303 classes, the program combines two key foundational courses in the first semester. EDU 301: Development and Learning introduces candidates to important theories of learning and teaching during the first semester of the program. It does so in conjunction with EDU 303: Social Foundations & Introduction to Teaching, where candidates complete 20 days of practicum experience. Candidates learn about theories in class at Redeemer while serving students in local schools. In addition, full-time faculty visit students on practicum, and often tie their learning in this setting to grand conversations in class. This course is intentionally designed to encourage reflection and discussion or the links and tensions between what is learned in class and what is experienced in the field. Teacher candidates begin to take on partial teaching roles working with individual students, small groups, and occasionally whole class teaching. Successful completion of this placement is needed to continue in the education program.

The integration of theory and practice is also enhanced through the supervision of practicum by full-time education professors. Hirschorn, Sears, and Rich (2009) discuss the difficulty of integrating theory and practice in their study of program reform at the University of New Brunswick:

At the University of New Brunswick (UNB) there was a significant sense of disconnection noted by students and some faculty between coursework and the internship. Part of the reason for this was the lack of regular faculty involvement in internship supervision for reasons discussed above. (p. 84)

To mitigate this, full-time faculty at Redeemer regularly serve as faculty associates during practicum placements in all four semesters of the program. This enables faculty to see what is happening in the field in order to support candidates. It also enables candidates to connect theory with practicum experience.

The six-week practicum placements in semesters 2 and 3 are scheduled so that they occur immediately after methods courses that correspond with the division the placements are in. For example, candidates in the Primary/Junior division take courses in literacy and math for the primary grades in the first half of semester 2, and this is followed immediately with a placement in the primary grades in the second half of semester 2. Candidates in the Junior/Intermediate division take courses in their teaching subject area just prior to their intermediate placement in Semester 3. The same alignment occurs for junior and intermediate literacy, as well as primary, junior, and intermediate math.

Each of the six-week practicum placements in semesters 2, 3, and 4 is accompanied by a foundational course that we believe addresses a specific area of importance for candidates’ practice. The first 6-week placement is accompanied by EDU 415: Classroom Management. We know that student misbehavior during practicum is a major stressor for teacher candidates (Montgomery, 2016), and so we have chosen to address issues related to management and mental health during this first major practicum. The second six-week placement is accompanied by EDU
Differentiated Instruction. We have chosen differentiated instruction as a focus because of the importance of candidates learning to address all learners in the classroom. The third six-week placement is accompanied by EDU 488: Professional Teaching Seminar. The order of these particular courses helps our candidates reflectively gain confidence as they manage the class, try out specific theories for reaching all learners, and then find their place in the professional education landscape and make preparations to transition to practice. These courses are offered in a blended format with face-to-face sessions being held prior to and after the placements as well as reflections and other activities assigned during the practicum.

Each of the six-week practicum experiences in semesters 2, 3, and 4 are 30 days in length. The organization of these experiences is facilitated by the Placement Coordinator and supervised by the Practicum Supervisor. The Placement Coordinator finds partner schools through various board office requests that typically do not exceed a 45-minute radius from campus. This is helpful for full-time faculty to provide support and on-site visits as there is much travel involved. In semester 2, only the second-year cohort is on the six-week practicum but in semester 3, both the first and second cohorts are out on practicum. Redeemer hires other faculty associates to help with on-site visits to support our candidates when help is needed. It is our commitment to visit students at least three times during their six weeks. During the initial visit, typically done during the first week, faculty associates meet the principal, talk with the classroom teacher, and have a conversation with the teacher candidate to see how things have progressed and if there are any questions or concerns. Typically, a visit schedule is set up for the three classroom observations where candidates will be teaching the class. At these site visits, faculty associates will observe the teacher candidate, record notes, and have a debrief time afterwards to discuss strengths, areas of growth, unit and lesson planning, and any other concerns that arise. Official documentation of reports, time cards, and summative evaluations by both the classroom teacher and faculty associate become part of the candidates’ portfolio and record of successful completion of practicum experiences. As a liaison between Redeemer and the participating school, the faculty associate takes on the full support of the teacher candidate. If situations arise that need further consultation with candidates and/or classroom teachers, the Practicum Supervisor is also asked to provide additional support.

In our program, teacher candidates have options for alternate practicum experiences in semester 4. Candidates are required to meet OCT requirements of 80 practicum days in a publicly funded school. This requirement is met after the successful completion of semester 3. However, in order to meet the requirement of Redeemer’s education program, and to meet OCT certification as accredited, they need the additional 30-day placement in semester 4. For candidates wishing to teach in an independent faith-based school, for example, semester 4 provides the opportunity for a placement to be held in such a school. In semester 3, candidates fill out a form indicating their interest for possible alternative placements in semester 4 so that plans can be made for the Practicum Coordinator to contact schools for availability. Other possibilities that have taken place in semester 4 are overseas placements. For example, candidates have had placements in schools in New Zealand, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

Due to the relatively small size of our education program, Redeemer has been able to maintain a high level of support for our teacher candidates – both in the classroom and on placements. We seek to follow Darling-Hammond’s (2006) directive to provide an enhanced level of “coherence and integration” as well as “extensive, well-supervised clinical experience linked to course work.
using pedagogies that link theory and practice” (p. 307). Beyond that, these program design elements all contribute to what we believe is an effective interplay of theory and practice in our teacher education program that nurtures our candidates to becoming teacher educators with faithful, effective, reflective, and professional practice.

THREE EXAMPLES OF OUR PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH TO CURRICULUM

The development of the enhanced teacher education program caused the Department of Education to reflect upon our course offerings and our approach beyond expanding the time it took to complete the program and the number of practicum days. Throughout the development process, we were deliberate about asking questions regarding the way we had done things, and the way we could do things in light of regulatory changes. In this section, we provide details on the way in which the new program requirements encouraged us to consider new approaches in three important areas: technology, Indigenous education, and mental health.

Technology

Within our program, we focus on core subjects that integrate our special character with our particular calling as an independent educational provider. Discussing technology across a liberal arts perspective includes not just understanding the latest educational technology and how to use it, but also to consider the philosophy and research that undergirds its use, and where it is best used for learning to occur as seen not only by the teacher, but also by the student. Technology is a tool to an end, not an end in itself. Cross-disciplinary research in a liberal arts vein on the topic of technology by various current writers on the topic (Gay, 2018; Harris, 2017; Postman, 1993; Schuurman, 2013; Turkle, 2016; Wolf, 2018) are discussed due to their cultural and educational relevance, and perspectives regarding student health also inform candidates with reasons for how and when technology is used wisely to do no harm in a learning environment.

Indigenous Education

In our Indigenous education course, policy, history, humility, truth, compassion, and ownership for past and present discrimination are discussed. Redeemer’s faith orientation has served as a double-edged sword in the design and ongoing development of this course. On the one hand, the Reformed Christian tradition upon which Redeemer is based has made us very open to discussions regarding faith, spirituality, and knowledge. As such, discussions of Indigenous education and spirituality strike a deeply significant note for us. On the other hand, the role the Christian church has played in the colonization and subjugation of Indigenous nations, particularly through residential schools, weighs heavy on us. We realize that we cannot teach Indigenous education well without coming continually to terms with this terrible history and role of the Christian community in it. Accordingly, the words of Lakota Elder Dan in The Wolf at Twilight ring true:

Okay, let me try to lay this out straight for you. I’m not saying any of this is your fault or even that your grandparents did any of it. I’m saying it happened, and it happened on your people’s watch. You’re the one who benefited from it. It doesn’t matter that you’re way downstream from the actual events. You’re still drinking the water. I don’t care if you feel guilty. I just care that you take some responsibility. Responsibilities about what you do now, not about feeling bad about what happened in the past. You can’t erase the footprints that have already been made. What you’ve got to do is take a close look at those
footprints and make sure you’re more careful where you walk in the future. (Nerburn, 2009, pp. 116-117)

The concept of “drinking downstream” was utilized by the Doctrine of Discovery Task Force, which reported to the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America in 2016. This task force traced the history of the subjugation of Indigenous peoples in North America and the church’s role in this colonial process. Redeemer shares with its sister universities the commitment to respond to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015). Redeemer University is not a church, nor is it governed by a church. However, we at Redeemer do reflectively acknowledge the role the church and church organizations played in making truth and reconciliation necessary in the first place.

We have found it helpful to use a blessings and burdens approach in this regard. We find that candidates are quite capable of understanding the blessings of being Canadian - freedom, diversity, and relative wealth. They are also able to see that they have inherited many of these blessings simply by being born here. Once we have established that, we are then able to consider the concept of burdens. We might not have directly caused the burdens and injustice that surrounds us. However, just as we accept the blessings we did not earn, we must also accept the burdens we did not directly cause. From a justice perspective, there is no other choice. To know of burdens and then to do nothing is to contribute to them.

**Mental Health**

The requirement to enhance the ITE program at Redeemer enabled us to reconsider important aspects of our program that required more time and attention. Student mental health was high on our list of topics to reconsider in the new program. This topic had not been ignored in the former program; however, the new requirements helped us consider a more integrated approach to student mental health.

Our attention to hospitality and belonging extends to how we seek to connect our candidates in a community of learners while at Redeemer. One primary way we do so is through our Future Teachers Association. Redeemer provides a voluntary Future Teacher Association student program for peer support, which is run by senior education students with the support of an education faculty member. This program exists to encourage community building across all four semesters while providing connections for volunteer service in our local neighbourhood, and to plan professional learning opportunities and mentoring for teacher candidates across all four semesters.

Our approach to student mental health has become integrated with the introduction of the enhanced program. It has become more of a framework rather than a topic in our program. Our aspiration to shape our practices with hospitality in mind is certainly part of this. Our goal is to receive each other with openness, respect, and love. This goal has been complimented by the Ontario Ministry of Education’s curricular references to *Stepping Stones: A Resource on Youth Development* (Ontario Ministry of Children, Communities, and Social Services, 2012). *Stepping Stones* provides a helpful and holistic model for understanding youth development. It clearly illustrates how the self/spirit is developed through the interconnections of the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social. As such, all students are unique and worthy of respect and dignity.
However, our implementation does not end there, but is connected to Palmer’s (1998) work on developing a community of truth. Rather than seeing learners as competitors and self-interested individuals, Palmer envisions a web of interactive relationships, co-learners, and fellow knowers, bringing all of who they are in the learning and honoring of the subject. Palmer (1998) describes a community of truth in this way:

> As we try to understand the subject in the community of truth, we enter into complex patterns of communication - sharing observations and interpretations, correcting and complementing each other, torn by conflict in this moment, and joined by consensus in the next. (p. 103)

We understand the community of truth as a community of fully human beings - in all their emotional, physical, social, cognitive, self/spiritual complexity - coming together in the context of a supportive learning community. In our program, we seek to embed student mental health within an understanding of the complexity of being human, and our mutual need for each other and the community.

Student mental health is addressed within the program specifically as well. As consideration of a student being ‘fully human’ beyond being a vocational vessel for a knowledge economy emerges and the need for empathy widens, professors ensure Care Theory (Schat, 2018; Noddings, 2013) and Restorative Practice (Vaandering, 2013) are engaged. Workshops with educational/psychological experts are regularly included in our professional seminars. We have also changed our approach in EDU 415: Classroom Management. While we still look at professional teaching practices that aid in the formation of a positive learning environment, we do so using Supporting Minds: An Educator’s Guide to Supporting Student Mental Health and Wellbeing (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013) rather than a typical classroom management text.

We realize that as we focus on student mental health for the sake of future students and their families, we have our own candidates’ mental health to consider as well. Teacher education is stressful and difficult. In all we do, we seek to connect with our candidates in ways that enable them to reach out for help and advice when needed. Given our small community, we seek to know our candidates well enough to know when there has been a change that indicates a struggle. Teacher candidates at Redeemer are provided with access to counseling services where they can be assisted, and also have access to professors for academic assistance. As a faith-based institution, we also take seriously the spiritual needs of our students as an essential element of their wellbeing. The program deliberately has a cap for courses to allow this to occur so that the needs of candidates can be addressed holistically to the best of our ability. We strive to support positive mental health, as described by the Public Health Agency of Canada, that increases

> . . .the capacity of each and all of us to feel, think, act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity. (Government of Canada, 2020)
DIVERSE INSTITUTIONS FOR A DIVERSE SOCIETY IN ONTARIO

In this chapter, we have explored the history and development of the teacher education program at Redeemer University since its first days in the 1990s to its current two-year program. We are confident that the program we offer is of high quality. We seek to serve our candidates well. In doing so, we seek to support the schools in which they serve and the students who learn in those schools. Our mission - teacher education for faithful, effective, reflective, professional practice - is rooted in our Reformed Christian heritage and the Ontario College of Teachers’ ethical and professional standards. At Redeemer, we ask big questions, questions that get to the heart of what it means to be human in this world. These are questions teachers should be in the habit of asking and seeking to answer. With the Government of Ontario, we recognize that the students we teach are complex social, cognitive, emotional, and physical beings. Each student is a unique self. During youth self-development, “rites of passage, spiritual tasks, and cultural ceremonies can be important activities in both marking and supporting developmental growth” (Ontario Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services, 2012, p. 17). The example given to illustrate such growth comes from the Anishinaabe culture. We suggest that all religiously oriented people require that attention be paid to the spiritual and cultural practices and milestones that help make sense of their place in the world. Such orientation is not odd or optional, but rather an essential part of who they are.

Canada is composed of a diversity that is worth celebrating. In our program we highlight this diversity in a number of ways. Two courses specifically address this diversity: Multicultural Education in a Global Context and Indigenous Education. As we teach and develop these courses with our candidates, we are continually struck by the way in which diversity is supported and expressed through deeply held spiritual ideas. With our candidates, we explore the ways in which Canadians have sought to separate religion from culture in the past - seeking cultural and religious homogeneity through acts of parliament and educational practices, such as residential schools. We lament this and work to move forward in the full knowledge of this truth. As we do so, we wonder what might it look like to celebrate the potential of diverse institutions as much as we celebrate diverse individuals. We think religious individuals can be trusted to serve the public good appropriately. We also think faith-based institutions, including publicly chartered, provincially accredited, not-for-profit institutions like Redeemer might be well-positioned to engage in conversations in how this can be so.

REFERENCES


CHAPTER 16

“PROGRESSIVE, PASSIONATE, AND WELL-VERSED IN THE COMPLEXITIES”: THE TRENT UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Nicole Bell, Denise Handlarski, Claire Mooney, Blair Niblett, Karleen Pendleton Jiménez, and Kelly Young

INTRODUCTION

The School of Education at Trent University rests beside the Otonabee River, surrounded by green lawns, trees, and wildlife, and “located on the treaty and traditional territory of the Mississauga (Michi Saagiig) Anishnaabeg” (Trent University Michi Saagig Protocol Guide Book, 2019, p. 4). The land plays an important role in shaping the learning within our program, where Indigenous knowledge and environmental activism are core themes across the Bachelor of Education. Founded in 2003, the School of Education has designed a professional, scholarly community upon this land, with an emphasis on multidisciplinary approaches to literacy, leadership, and social justice curricula. Given the mandate to expand into a two-year program in 2014, we took the opportunity to enrich existing courses, to develop courses that meet contemporary local and global challenges (as well as to imagine those of the future), and to offer students more options for their path of study.

CORE THEMES OF TRENT’S SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Across all our program offerings, including our two entry to practice Bachelor of Education programs, we seek to enact the following three themes:

EDUCATION AS A RELATIONAL PROCESS FOR DEMOCRATIC, SOCIAL, AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

We view the process of education as a relational endeavour that is at its best when teachers and learners engage mutually to understand one another, their shared environments, and the concepts under study (Palmer, 2007). We understand that the relationship between teacher and learner is imbued with power dynamics, and enmeshed within broader communities surrounding the educational milieu, and that the learning communities we design and implement exist in dynamic interaction with those broader communities. Our learning communities are fundamentally influenced by their broader communities, and have the capacity for reciprocal influence (Freire, 1970; hooks, 2003). This is especially relevant to our commitments to democratic, social, and

1 These are deeply complex principles of teaching and learning philosophy that we describe here only in the broadest terms in order to contextualize the descriptions of our teacher education programs.
ecological justice. We understand education as a normative, political process that encompasses each participant’s whole identity including intersections of historical and contemporary privilege and/or oppression (i.e., Indigeneity or colonial status, race, gender, sexuality and gender identity, dis/ability, socioeconomic status, etc.). We further recognize that our social worlds are integrated within and dependent upon the earth’s natural systems, and that we are educating in a time of ecological crisis (The Earth Charter Initiative, n.d.). As a School of Education, we acknowledge an ethical imperative to proactively address these socio-ecological crises across all of our programming.

CARING AS THE PRIMARY DRIVER OF HIGH-QUALITY PEDAGOGY

We conceptualize excellence in education as an enactment of caring that enables teaching and learning to unfold effectively. Educators require skills and knowledge of key content that they teach, and also pedagogical skills and knowledge by which to deliver that content through teaching and learning. Our understanding of pedagogy is primarily rooted in a conception of caring for students; a kind of care that includes but transcends sanitized notions of care that are often integrated in teachers’ professional regulatory frameworks (e.g., Ontario College of Teachers, n.d.). This broad understanding of caring for students is not neutral, but politicized in the context of our social and ecological justice commitments, and can be characterized by love and genuine compassion for students as whole persons (with physical, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual aspects) (Bell, 2014; Darder, 2009). Caring is a significant catalyst for pedagogies of social and ecological justice, as it creates a foundation of security on which teachers and students can risk social vulnerability as they engage in the often-difficult learning related to social and ecological justice (Niblett, 2017).

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION METHODOLOGY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Program delivery in the School of Education is underpinned by a commitment to experiential education in a variety of formats (including but not limited to practicum placements, field experiences, case studies, research, etc.). In implementing experiential learning, we are committed to ongoing reflective practice whereby students engage in rich contemplation of the significance of their experiences both inside and outside of the university classroom (Dewey, 1918, 1938). This typically includes pre-briefing that offers preparation for rich experiences and debriefing that allows for intentional reflection from which students draw connections between experiences, their own personal learning goals, and curriculum outcomes (Joplin, 1981). We understand that our capacity to deliver effective experiential education is dependent on a strong network of community partners who share our values. We acknowledge the need to maintain strong community partnerships through ongoing communication and reciprocity of value within our partnerships.

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2 The text of the care element of the Ontario College of Teachers’ Ethical Standards document is not inherently problematic, but we suggest that when taken in the context of broader discourses of professional distance and boundaries, a sanitization of caring results and many teachers become unwilling to engage students as whole persons. For instance, physically (through appropriate, professional pedagogical touch), emotionally (through acknowledgment and validation of a full range of emotions), and spiritually (through acknowledgment and validation of aspects of the human experience that transcend empirical reality).
MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The School of Education is committed to sound preservice and in-service teacher education, in close partnership with educators in the wider community and the Arts and Science faculty of Trent University. Coursework offered in the program incorporates theory and research that encourage teacher candidates to think creatively and critically about their own professional practice with attention to meeting individual learners’ needs, valuing multiple modes of learning and diversity, and enacting practice that is committed to social and ecological justice.

For the Trent University School of Education, effective teacher education is a partnership activity that involves an entire community of learners committed to pre- and in-service teacher education. The activities of the community are grounded in current theory and research. The community continually renews itself and its practices through critical reflection and creative, community-based responses (Annual Report 2019-2020).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In response to Trent University’s Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) 2017-2020, we updated our Conceptual Framework as it provides a description of the principles and practices valued by the School of Education. These principles and practices are informed by research, theory, and the Ontario College of Teachers’ Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession and Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession.

The School of Education and Professional Learning fosters ongoing partnerships with the wider community of learners. Our program’s comprehensive conceptual framework includes 10 principles informed by current educational theories that guide our practices: (1) teaching and learning are interactive processes that involve meaningful engagement of all participants; (2) education is a collaborative endeavour involving partnerships within and beyond the learning community; (3) communities of learners in educational settings support identity formation, a sense of belonging, and engagement in lifelong learning; (4) teaching and learning that promote inclusivity are based on a commitment to equity, diversity, and environmental sustainability; (5) respect and appreciation for Indigenous Knowledges, perspectives, and pedagogies is central to teaching and learning; (6) effective teaching practices are based on sound educational theory and research; (7) for the purposes of deep learning and continued growth, educators engage in critically reflective practice; (8) ongoing meaningful feedback drives high quality teaching and learning experiences; (9) creative thinking and in-depth subject knowledge underpin learning; and (10) an effective education leads to critical engagement, agency, and active citizenship (Annual Report 2019-2020).

Drawing upon these 10 principles, our program is deeply guided by a philosophy of sustainability and eco-justice pedagogies, social justice, infusion of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge, recognition of learner diversity, and a commitment to professional practice. Our philosophy is in line with Trent University’s Vision and Mission statements and Strategic Mandate Agreement as indicated in the External Reviewers’ Cyclical Review Report: “Many of these themes reflect the University’s Vision and Mission statements, and Strategic Mandate Agreement. Such elements of the Vision as one of striving to make ‘valued and socially responsible contributions to our local communities,’ supporting ‘a diversity of faculty staff and students who share a commitment to the
learning experience and are responsive to its challenges,’ of fostering ‘an environment where Indigenous knowledge are [sic] respected and recognized as a valid means by which to understand the world’ are clearly reflected in the philosophy of the program, and such documents as its course outlines” (External Cyclical Review Report, 2017).

CONCURRENT INDIGENOUS BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

The Indigenous Bachelor of Education Program was introduced in 2016. This concurrent five-year program is customized for students entering from high school or college who self-identify as having Indigenous ancestry. Students with college-level secondary credits can enrol into the Foundations of Indigenous Learning Program at Trent and transfer into the Indigenous Bachelor of Education Program after their first year. Within the Indigenous B.Ed. program, students can complete a three-year general undergraduate degree program that emphasizes Indigenous education and two years of a Professional Learning program infused with Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing, which then leads to certification through the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). Details of this program can be found within the chapter outlining Indigenous Bachelor of Education programs in Ontario (see Chapter 23).

THE CONSECUTIVE BACHELOR OF EDUCATION PROGRAM UPDATE OVERVIEW

The Consecutive Bachelor of Education program combines attention to individual learners in small class settings with a community-based approach. The School of Education works in close collaboration with Trent University's Faculty of Arts and Science and with educators in the wider community. Through their university credits in foundational and curriculum courses, students are exposed to recent advances in theory and research. During their classroom placements, they are encouraged to use this expertise to think critically about their own professional practice and to develop a professional identity through attention to individual needs, multiple modes of learning, human diversity, and critical thinking in content areas.

Programs of study are offered in a full-time format to prepare students interested in teaching at the Primary/Junior level (K-Grade 6) and at the Intermediate/Senior level (Grades 7-12). The program is two years in length, running from September until mid-April each year. An extensive overview of the program can be found in Crowley et al. (2017). Our program consists of:

- Two teaching divisions: the Primary/Junior level (K-Grade 6) and the Intermediate/Senior level (Grades 7-12);
- A full-time and in-class program at 2 years (four terms) in length;
- A program schedule from first week of September through to the middle of April, reflecting the school term calendar, and with a summer break between Year 1 and Year 2;
- An ability to focus on an area of interest through elective courses; and
- Approximately 115 days of teaching experience for practicum and an alternate settings placement.
TEACHING DIVISIONS

Primary/Junior
This option is designed for candidates who intend to begin their teaching careers in elementary schools. Candidates are prepared to teach all subjects in the Primary division (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3) and the Junior division (Grades 4 to 6).

Intermediate/Senior
This option prepares candidates to teach in the Intermediate division (Grades 7 to 10) and the Senior division (Grades 11 to 12). Applicants are required to choose two teaching subjects:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Computer Studies**
- Dramatic Arts*
- English
- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies*
- French (Second Language)
- Geography
- Health and Physical Education
- History
- Mathematics*
- Physics*
- Visual Arts*
- Anishnaabemowin (Ojibwe)

* These courses are offered every two years to accommodate learners in teaching areas that typically recruit smaller cohorts.
** This course is not currently being offered.

ELECTIVE COURSES
In initial planning meetings for the two-year Bachelor of Education program, we brainstormed numerous new courses; however, faced with the simultaneous provincial cuts to B. Ed. funding, we realized that few could actually be added. We carefully reflected on what possibilities might be most valued by students. With the one-year program, all courses were compulsory; students had no choice over their plan of study. Such rigidity had always troubled students and faculty alike, where theories of student-centred learning and critical pedagogy were espoused within our classrooms. While we could not afford to expand broadly, we believed it was important to ensure that our students could choose at least one elective.

In Year Two, students are provided a list of five courses from which they rank their desired selections. The electives run once a week throughout both terms of Year Two. This two-hour portion of their week is where students possess the greatest ownership over their learning, and where faculty have been afforded the greatest opportunity to embrace areas of interest, creativity, and innovation in course design. Courses are not taught every year, but instead are offered in
rotation. To date, they include: Literacy and Math in the Early Years; Experiential and Adventure Education; Indigenous Education; the Role of STEAM Education; Teaching Through Drama; Teacher Stories - Narrative and Practice; International Education and International Teaching; Modelling Digital Citizenship through Technology and Social Media Use in the Classroom; Classrooms Broadly Defined: Community and Adult Education; and Issues in Planning, Assessment and Evaluation.

PRACTICUM/SCHOOL PLACEMENTS

School placements offer teacher candidates the opportunity to synthesize learning from their coursework and apply it in ways that reflect their own talents and beliefs about teaching and learning. Classroom associate teachers work closely with faculty to help teacher candidates build comfort in expected teaching competencies as well as to develop mechanisms for reflecting on their own practices and constructing their own understandings and theories. Placement details are as follows:

- 90 days of classroom placement in four different classrooms
- 15 days of placement in a school or 75 hours in a non-school setting
- 10 days (equivalent) of one-on-one tutoring in the Supporting Literacy and Learners with Special Needs program.

Placements are arranged through the Practicum Coordinator and can be completed with any of our partner school boards - Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Trillium Lakelands District School Board, Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board, and designated schools within the Durham District and Durham Catholic School Boards. In addition, we have the following partnerships with local First Nation communities: Alderville First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, Métis Nation of Ontario, and Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation.

There are opportunities for teacher candidates to engage in Early Education Practicum placements paired with an ECE candidate as part of our local Fleming College partnership.

COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Examples of our ongoing collaborative community partnerships include the Youth Leadership in Sustainability Program (YLS) at Trent’s School of Education. YLS is an innovative educational program that prepares Peterborough region grade 11 and 12 students for leadership roles in pursuing sustainability at the local and global levels. As part of their 26 field trips, this year’s 25 students surveyed an old growth forest, learned how to harvest and prepare wild rice at Alderville First Nation, prepared a “100km dinner”, took an active role in the federal election, created and delivered climate education to elementary schools, and soaked in the ReFrame Film Festival. A couple of highlights include the class’s successful petitioning of the Peterborough City Council to declare a climate emergency and a one-hour video call with David Suzuki.

The Roger Neilson Research School in Peterborough is the site of Canada’s first public elementary research school – the outcome of a new partnership between Trent University’s School of Education and the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPRDSB). This research school
brings educators and researchers together to learn more about how children and youth learn, and to explore best practices for teaching and learning. Teacher education is a key feature of the research school. Through this partnership, Roger Neilson will commit to taking teacher candidates from the Trent School of Education B.Ed. program for teaching placements on a regular basis (Annual Report, 2019-2020).

INDIGENOUS INFUSION INITIATIVES

The School of Education has implemented a number of Indigenous infusion initiatives to advance Indigenous education from K-12. To build faculty capacity to infuse Indigenous content and pedagogy into their courses, the school offered two faculty retreats, a faculty READS program, and workshops addressing course specific planning. Teacher candidate capacity is fostered by a number of initiatives such as a core text, film nights, guest speakers, and experiential workshops. The program identified a core text for both the P/J and I/S divisions for faculty to use in their courses to model how Indigenous ways of knowing and doing education can be infused across the curriculum. *Keepers of the Earth* is used in the P/J program and *Dreaming in Indian* is used in the I/S program. Film nights are hosted and followed by discussions to create awareness of the Indigenous experience in Canada and applications to education. An Indigenous guest speaker addresses the first-year students on their ‘first day of school’ to situate the importance of Indigenous education. All teacher candidates also participate in the Blanket Exercise and Project of Heart experiential learning workshops to further develop their foundation of cultural awareness and understanding.

TECHNOLOGY INFUSION INITIATIVES

As technology was a focus of the revised 2-year program, we introduced a Technology Certificate Program (see below under “Niche Certificate Programs”). In 2019, we expanded this program to include 8 mandatory hours of workshops on the following topics:

- *Digital Citizenship and Well-being in the Classroom* with a review of the use of social media and device use in the classroom and its impact on well-being, along with strategies for creating better digital citizens;
- *Learning Google Apps for Education* with an exploration of Google Docs, using Google Forms for assessment, Google Slides and Google Keep, and how teachers are using all of these tools within Google Classroom;
- *Assistive Technology in the Classroom* with an emphasis on the ways in which technology can aid with learning difficulties and help students to reach their potential because it allows them to capitalize on their strengths and bypass areas of difficulty;
- *Learning Tech Devices - iPads, Chromebooks, Tools for the Classroom* that helps educators integrate technology into their classroom practice. The applications have an emphasis on creation, communication, and student documentation.³

After teacher candidates attended the workshops, we surveyed 162 students. We received 86 responses and 30 provided additional feedback. One teacher candidate wrote:

³ Thanks to Mitch Champagne, Tim Foster, and Rich McPherson in the School of Education for their technological expertise for the workshops.
They [the workshops] were extremely helpful! I just so happened to end up in a class for my practicum that takes full advantage of all available technology: smartboard, Chromebooks for all the students, Google Classroom, etc. Having a quick rundown of all this technology has helped me be a more confident user of these technologies, and assist my learners with their use.

Another teacher candidate commented, “The technology seminars have been awesome in supporting me in this practicum.” Another workshop participant added, “I really enjoyed the Google apps tech shop… I think it is very practical for teaching and it seems to be a very helpful app that will save teachers time with planning, marking, and documenting progress of each student.” The feedback reinforces our implementation of current tech curricula that helps to prepare students for practicum placements.

In 2020, in response to our online teaching and learning environment, as teacher candidates prepared for placements in virtual and in-person settings, the School of Education provided two 90-minute workshops for faculty advisors and teacher candidates around the foundations of Google Classroom. In these sessions, instructor Mitch Champagne walked participants through the setup of Google Classroom, how to create assignments, grading, understand privacy settings, and more.

In response to the 2019 feedback and 2020 virtual online teaching and learning environment placements, we plan to continue with a mandatory technology certificate series of workshops during orientation week (September), foundations week (November), and professional development week (March) in the coming few years that incorporate Google Classroom, social media and mental health, technological changes, accessibility, and digital literacies and security. Finally, in January of 2021, we established a Makerspace Lab for faculty and students to engage with technology that they will encounter within the school system to support and enlarge student experience across the curriculum.

NICHE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

The School of Education offers four niche certificate programs for teacher candidates throughout their 2-year program in: (1) Eco-mentorship; (2) Educational Technology; (3) Learning on the Land & Indigenous People; and (4) The Learning Garden Program.

The Eco-Mentorship Certificate Program is an innovative opportunity offered to teacher candidates. As collaboration between the School of Education and Camp Kawartha, it draws on expertise from the local environmental education community. Becoming an Eco-Mentor tells principals that you are committed to bringing environmental education to your students and using it to build social capital in the school community.

The Educational Technology Certificate Program prepares educators to help their students become powerful digital-age thinkers, makers, and problem solvers. Participants in the certificate program acquire foundational knowledge and skills that will transform their thinking about how, why, and when to integrate a range of digital technologies to support student learning. The learning goals for levels one and two involve (1) understanding and developing a baseline knowledge of technologies currently in use in the classroom; (2) possessing a stronger confidence in their ability
to address the practical challenges in learning situations involving technology via hands-on learning; (3) becoming aware of assistive technologies; (4) being able to appropriately choose technologies for educational purposes with situational awareness in mind; (5) possessing a greater understanding of specialized technologies currently in use in classrooms; and (6) continuing to appropriately choose and deploy technologies for educational purposes with unique situational awareness in mind. Topics in level one are: (1) the Internet in Education; (2) Communications Technology; (3) Assistive Technology in the Classroom; (4) Learning Google Apps for Education; and (5) Learning Tech Devices -- iPads -- Tools for the Classroom. Topics in level two are: (1) Instructional Design; (2) Virtual Teaching; (3) Cyber Security in the Classroom; and (4) Managing Educational Technology Change. Both levels 1 and 2 require a Capstone Project Certification ePortfolio that enables teacher candidates to gather, analyze, and demonstrate their skills, assets, values, and beliefs regarding technology integration.

The Learning on the Land & Indigenous People and the Learning Garden Certificate Programs are described below as part of the Alternative Settings Placements.

ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS PLACEMENTS

As part of the 2-year Consecutive Bachelor of Education program, teacher candidates are required to complete 75 hours as part of the Alternative Settings Placement. The placements will adapt teacher candidate experiences and learnings from the program and apply them to situations and scenarios that may not be familiar. For some candidates, these settings may include opportunities such as being a counselor at a summer camp, one-to-one after school tutoring, facilitation of athletic and sports-based programs (i.e., skating lessons, swimming lessons, etc.), research assistant, outdoor learning support, and many more. See Crawley et al. (2017) for a description of the Learning from the Land & Indigenous People together with the Learning Garden alternative settings placements (pp. 198-200). Since 2017, faculty are also offering the following:

*Teaching of The Fire and Learning from Our Elders*

The Teachings of the Fire and Learning from Our Elders alternative settings placement is designed to build an understanding of Indigenous Knowledge systems and Indigenous ways of knowing through experiential learning. Teacher candidates in the Consecutive Bachelor of Education program work closely with Elders, Traditional Knowledge Holders, and the First Peoples House of Learning to receive the necessary training to be fire keepers. Selected teacher candidates then host weekly social fires in the School of Education tipi located in the Otonabee College Quad and the First Peoples House of Learning tipi located in the Traditional Area near the Enwayaang Building. In the process of hosting social fires, teacher candidates develop leadership skills through modeling proper use of the Traditional Area and mentoring volunteer fire keepers. This experiential learning placement is grounded in Indigenous pedagogies of reflective action and writing. Teacher candidates connect their learning of Indigenous Knowledge and practices to their role as educators.

The purpose of this alternative settings placement is to demonstrate that Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous ways of knowing are relevant pedagogies in the 21st century and help teacher candidates feel better equipped to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing into their classrooms and practice.
Camp fYrefly
Camp fYrefly is Canada’s only national leadership retreat for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, two-spirited, intersexed, queer, questioning, and allied youth. The camp helps youth develop the leadership skills and personal resiliency needed to become agents for positive change in their schools, families, and communities. Camp fYrefly operates in July, hosted by the School of Education at Trent University in partnership with the University of Alberta, where the camp was founded in 2004. Teacher candidates will participate in program planning and implementation, as well as small group leadership with LGBTQ youth campers.

International Alternative Placement Options
The School of Education offers Alternative Settings Placements that provide an authentic international teaching experience in direct partnership with overseas schools. These placements are directly supervised by a Trent faculty member, and the instructional opportunities are designed to build on learning that has taken place within the B.Ed. program. Recent locations have included China and Cambodia (locations vary year-to-year).

Sex Education: Getting Serious About Sex-Ed
This alternative placement provides teacher candidates grounding in the information and approaches required to teach sex education. With a framework of self-learning, teacher candidates attend in-class activities and engage in independent study that includes readings, films, and the culminating task of creating a unit plan, including lesson plans, specific to one grade level and its Ontario curriculum expectations.

Kawartha Food Share
Alternative Settings Placements are available at the Kawartha Food Share (www.kawarthafoodshare.com). The Kawartha Food Share is located at 665 Neal Drive, Peterborough. The Kawartha Food Share supplies food items to local food banks and meal programs in the City and County of Peterborough. Over 7,500 people access the food bank each month, including 51 local schools for their breakfast and nutrition programs. These programs feed 17,000 children each day. This Alternative Settings Placement will provide teacher candidates with a hands-on opportunity to help with every aspect of the organization, including food acquisition, food drive events, and front-line warehouse activities.

Game-based Learning
This placement offers teacher candidates the opportunity to analyze the use of gaming in education, to create gaming curriculum, and to develop a personal approach to the use of gaming as an educational tool by working independently and/or collaboratively.

LITERACY TUTORING
Literacy tutoring is one of the most cherished requirements of our program for teacher candidates, associate teachers, and students in regional schools. In the first year of the program, all teacher candidates must complete the course Supporting Literacy and Learners with Special Needs and its accompanying literacy tutoring placement. The course provides general knowledge of diverse learning abilities, differentiation, and cross-disciplinary literacy strategies. Since moving into the two-year program, we have reduced the placement from 10 weeks to 7 weeks, but teacher candidates continue to meet twice a week with two students at a regional school, one-on-one, for
roughly 50 minutes each. While this reduction in weeks is a minor alteration in the program, it speaks to the careful review we took of all of our courses, noting where we felt students had been asked to carry higher workloads than necessary for a .5 credit.

It is the first placement for our teacher candidates that provides them with the opportunity to become familiar with public school contexts, professionalism, associate teacher expectations, and classroom navigation, as well as the chance to think deeply about the strengths and challenges in each student’s learning and to plan lessons accordingly. Teacher candidates offer their students tips for improving reading and writing skills, as well as a focus on their individual interests. The program is guided by student interest in the attempt to find reading and writing activities that students might embrace beyond the scope of the tutoring sessions. For example, by allowing students to engage in topics of their choice, such as gaming, cooking, farming, hunting, popular culture, sports, etc., we hope to inspire long-term student relationships with literacy.

The tutoring program is one of our most successful outreach programs to our school partners, who are able to offer selected students one-on-one support to enhance their understanding. It is perhaps of most value to the students in the community, who have the chance, sometimes the only chance, to receive one-on-one instruction and attention during their school day. Teacher candidates and their students often report strong rapport and meaningful bonding through their time working together. We plan to check in with associate teachers in the upcoming year through a survey to ask about the strengths, weaknesses, and future possibilities for the program.

TEACHER EDUCATION STREAM

The cut in the number of funded places, as a consequence of the amendment to Reg. 347/02, resulted in the ending of the long-established Trent-Queen’s concurrent education program in 2015. Recognizing the valuable impact upon institutional ethos made by undergraduate students in education, a new undergraduate Teacher Education Stream (TES) program was introduced in 2017. This new program allows undergraduate students to study electives from the School of Education and includes education courses and associated placements in each of the four undergraduate years.

Courses in the first two years focus upon foundational issues in education. They explore the relationship between good teaching and effective learning, with a focus on teaching as a reflective practice and on social and environmental justice. They also consider leadership, teacher identity, and representations of education in public spheres and the media. In the third and fourth undergraduate years, the focus changes to cross-curricular learning. Recognising that the majority of the students within the TES program aim to study for a B.Ed., this shift in focus ensures that we can start to address some of the subject content that is relevant and integrated across all areas of the school curriculum. Throughout these years, students take courses in learning and literacy, mathematics education, and STEAM; the emphasis is on critical thinking and inquiry within a multidisciplinary approach.

The TES program replaces some of the elective courses that students might otherwise study. It is identified on their transcript and, if they maintain an appropriate grade average, they have guaranteed admission to our consecutive B.Ed. program. Those students who do not achieve guaranteed admission are still able and encouraged to apply; having studied issues in education,
completed placements, and written and reflected critically upon all aspects of their learning, they are strong applicants for teacher education programs. In addition to students registered within the TES program, these undergraduate education courses are also open to students within the undergraduate years of our concurrent Indigenous B.Ed. program.

**CHALLENGES AND CHANGES — OUR NEXT STEPS**

We have been exploring potential pathways to address and overcome the loss of the part-time B.Ed. program, an offering that helped us attract a greater diversity of candidates.

To respond to increased rates of mental health concerns amongst our students and students across teacher education programs, we have created a well-being program. This program offers workshops related to mental, emotional, and physical wellness. We also created a new student lounge area where yoga classes and other wellness programs can take place, as well as offering students a place that is theirs to relax with their colleagues, work quietly, and rest.

We continue to design for future challenges and needs, as well as wanting to bolster our strengths. To that end, we have engaged in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis as a faculty to revise and envision our program update.\(^4\) The SWOT analysis involves a review of the strengths and areas for improvement in the program. This is ongoing. The process, like the intended outcomes, is designed to ensure that all members of the School of Education have a voice. We believe strongly in the ethic that in our department, just like in the schools we aim to help foster, no one should get left behind. Faculty, staff, and students are being asked for input. We began with appreciative inquiry and analysis of our strengths so that we may build on those strengths and enhance our programs with a view to fulfilling our mission. We aim to model that growth is always possible and, when done in service of the values of the individual or institution, growth can inspire growth in others. We hope to enable our faculty, staff, and students in their flourishing and, in turn, build communities that flourish. Even as we seek to make changes, we want to retain the core of who we are. We are delighted, therefore, that in our preliminary review of the recent SWOT analysis, it was noted that one of our strengths is that we are “progressive, passionate, and well-versed in the complexities.”

**REFERENCES**


Darder, A. (2009). Teaching as an act of love: Reflections on Paulo Freire and his

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\(^4\) Thanks to Paul Elliott for suggesting this re-envisioning process in our department.


TEACHER EDUCATION AT TYNDALE:
FAITH-BASED, PRIVATELY FUNDED, PUBLICLY ACCOUNTABLE

Heather J. S. Birch and Carla D. Nelson

Tyndale University

Tyndale University, a private Christian institute of higher education, offers a post-baccalaureate teacher education program that leads to teacher accreditation in Ontario. This program, explicitly rooted in the Christian faith tradition, does not receive any provincial funding but is accountable to the public through the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Ontario College of Teachers. The program operates with the approval of the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) and is accredited through the OCT. All qualified applicants, regardless of background, graduate as teachers certified to teach in Ontario. As of November 2019, 11 graduating cohorts (633 graduates) have earned the Tyndale B.Ed. degree.

Our purpose in this chapter is to describe the intentionality with which this unique teacher education program was designed. First, we offer a brief history of Tyndale and a description of the impetus to add a B.Ed. degree program to its list of offerings. Then, we present an explanation of the program’s format and structure, emphasizing a series of program distinctives including: the holistic approach that acknowledges the spiritual aspect of teacher formation; the 16-month consecutive semester format; program coherence and through-lines; the intentionally structured and supported practicum experiences; and the well-defined conceptual framework that informs program practices. Finally, we identify the various research-based theoretical frameworks that informed and continue to inform the intent of the program.

Throughout the chapter, the above listed distinctives will be described, alongside quotations from Tyndale B.Ed. graduates who are referred to by pseudonyms, and whose words illustrate their lived experience of the program. The included quotations represent data from an ongoing research inquiry titled, “Storying Tyndale’s B.Ed. Program.” This qualitative inquiry represents three main data sources, including two assignments that teacher candidates complete in light of their developing worldview and their developing teacher identity, as well as the transcripts from audio recordings of Final Conversations, i.e., an official opportunity for each teacher candidate to meet with two or three Faculty members, and to bring full circle the relationship that was begun when the teacher candidate first arrived on campus to be interviewed as an applicant.
EDUCATIONAL LEGACY AT TYNDALE

Tyndale University is an institution of higher education that stands in the Protestant Evangelical tradition. Tyndale is located on a 56-acre campus on Bayview Avenue—the former home of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto. It is not surprising, then, that it is sometimes mistaken for a Catholic institution; while the Sisters and Tyndale represent different Christian traditions, they commonly embody the mission of advancing Christian education and community service. The chapel on campus continues to be used as a sacred space to which all members of the Tyndale community have access for prayer and reflection. Tyndale offers undergraduate degrees in the humanities, social sciences, and business, as well as graduate degrees, including the Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, and Doctor of Ministry. The institution boasts a history as a place of scholarship and professional religious training for over 125 years, having undergone a number of name changes until most recently being officially named Tyndale University. Tyndale has shown steady growth since 2010, and total enrollment is currently approaching 1,600 students.

Almost from its inception, Tyndale has been involved in the preparation of teachers. In the early years, this preparation was primarily for education in the church context and the degrees granted were religious degrees, including the Bachelor of Religious Education and Master of Divinity in Educational Ministries. More recently, interdisciplinary programs of Psychology, Sociology, and Religious Studies were developed (including a Bachelor of Arts in Human Services that is conjointly offered with a Diploma in Early Childhood Education from Seneca College in Toronto). As a result of offering these programs, a significant number of Tyndale alumni, over the last 100+ years, have worked and continue to work in private, religious, and public educational spaces in the Province of Ontario and beyond.

Tyndale is deeply committed to the central Canadian values of a critical liberal democracy: values of diversity, equity, and social justice for all people. As such, after receiving degree-granting status in 2005, Tyndale was well-positioned to initiate plans for a program that could empower its graduates to seek provincial certification within an educational landscape that also embodied these values. Tyndale’s vision is to prepare graduates for teaching excellence regardless of the context—be that public, private, or faith-based schools in Ontario, Canada, or abroad.

No matter the type of school, Tyndale B.Ed. graduates must be equipped to address the needs of all their students, including the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. For Tyndale, this is in response to the mandate of God that we love our neighbour as God loves us. There is a recognition at Tyndale of the importance of preparing our graduates to understand the particular needs of minority and marginalized populations, students at risk, and those with special learning needs, not just as a matter of best practice, human rights, or educational mandate, but also as springing from our deeply held belief in the value and uniqueness of each person with a destiny and with the right to live their life to the fullest. We strive to embed within our program opportunities for understanding the need to cultivate a nurturing learning environment that values and respects the whole human person, and that enables children to mature intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. We believe this allows our graduates to be fully prepared to teach in the schools of Ontario, through appreciating and embracing their role in the formation of children who will become both informed citizens and responsible participants in a civil society.
As previously stated, Tyndale is privately funded. Without government financial support and without any guaranteed financial commitment from a specific Christian denomination or group of churches, Tyndale meets its obligations through the acquisition of funds from four sources: tuition and fees; ancillary funds from the operation; Annual Fund; and Capital Campaigns. Thus, the number of new B.Ed. enrollments each year is not tied specifically to provincial funding. New enrollments are limited, however, because the program operates by virtue of the consent of the Minister of Colleges and Universities of Ontario, whose office, in conjunction with the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB), grants permission for Tyndale to offer the program.

While Tyndale is a private institution, virtually every person who teaches in the program has experience as an Ontario public school educator. Thus, Tyndale faculty are fully committed to the value of publicly funded K-12 education and to the mission of preparing our teacher candidates to enter that system. At the same time, we enjoy the freedom to explore how our faith impacts who we are as educators, and the freedom to help our teacher candidates discover how their own beliefs will impact them as public educators. Resources on the Ontario Ministry of Education website, including *Stepping Stones: A resource on youth development* (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, 2012) and the Health and Physical Education curriculum document (Ministry of Education, 2019b), acknowledge the reality of the potential for spiritual experience and spiritual understanding to impact learners. The documents feature an image of the *Stepping Stones* framework, which depicts the multidimensional nature of development as inclusive of cognitive, social, emotional, and physical dimensions of development, and which are ultimately rooted in an “enduring (yet changing)” self that impacts growth and understanding (p. 2). That self includes the spirit (See Figure 1). The description of the framework mentions Indigenous communities as examples of those who have traditionally viewed development in this holistic way, conceiving the whole self as including the spirit, and acknowledging a deep interconnectedness between the cognitive, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual aspects of learning and growth. Tyndale also acknowledges this holistic approach and takes seriously the integral connection between the spiritual and the self. Teacher candidates are given specific opportunities to reflect on their spiritual development during in class activities as well as culminating activity assignments. The value of such opportunities is demonstrated in the following excerpts from Final Conversations:

I have come to the realization that my faith journey has also had an influence on others around me. One example of a time where my faith journey influenced my daughter is when she said, “let’s say a prayer before you submit your Tyndale application online.” This was the first time my youngest daughter had ever suggested us praying together for something that was important to me. I realized in that moment that this journey to become a Catholic educator was not only my journey. The journey of faith brings people together. (Penny, Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2019)

I now see that faith can be incorporated into teaching in simple ways; it doesn’t have to be grandiose or blatant, but rather, we can interweave the values that all faiths teach into our lessons—caring, love, kindness, compassion, humility, positivity and other constructive virtues can all be reinforced by the examples we choose to highlight or the words we decide to use when teaching. (Warun, Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2019)
**PROGRAM FORMAT AND STRUCTURE**

**SCHEDULE**

While the program has historically had as many as 66 teacher candidates in a cohort, since the implementation of the enhanced teacher preparation program in 2015, ministerial consent to offer the program has been conditional upon annual new enrolment to a maximum of 53. Since then, 53 candidates are admitted and begin the program each year, which is scheduled as four consecutive semesters. From start to end, the program length is 16 months, with teacher candidates beginning in August, and if the program is followed as planned, completing the program the following November.

The four consecutive academic semesters, beginning in August, have been intentionally structured to facilitate certain benefits for teacher candidates, besides expeditious completion given the enhanced program’s four semester mandate. First, the consecutive approach fosters the development of a professional community and an immersive approach to the teaching profession. Second, our teacher candidates, having taken two courses during the month of August that focus on creating safe and inclusive educational spaces as well as differentiated instruction, enter their first placement during the first week of school in September with some experience of teacher education. Thus, they have the twin benefits of being present during the first week of school in a classroom to view the culture-building, routine-establishing practices of the teacher, and they arrive at that experience with some preparation and with a sense of being part of an established (even for a short two months) teacher educator community. This may manifest as increased ease of use of professional vocabulary, heightened attentiveness to the development of community within the placement classroom, and an informed willingness to participate and learn within the
placement. These are the benefits at the outset. A third benefit, during the last four months of the program, is that teacher candidates will have completed nearly all their coursework and thus have the opportunity to focus on their final practicum placement to invoke all of the learning garnered throughout the program and concentrate on consolidation of that learning. It is here, in the area of program and structure, that we see the greatest benefit of the enhanced program for the preparation of Tyndale’s teacher candidates. The four-semester structure allows us to offer a concentration of courses in the summer months and access over 100 in-school days interspersed with additional courses when school is in session.

COURSES

The following table lists the courses that each teacher candidate takes throughout the four semesters, and also depicts the intentional organization of the courses into three categories: concept courses, emphasizing theoretical approaches and foundational knowledge of educational ways of knowing and acting; content courses, focused on pedagogical approaches appropriate to each curricular area and developing familiarity with the Ontario curriculum; and context courses, addressing knowledge of contemporary educational environments and the implications for practice.

The shift from Tyndale’s three-semester (12-month) program to the enhanced four-semester (16-month) program in 2015 allowed us to redesign several courses. However, Tyndale’s program was already requiring nearly 60 credit hours of coursework and practicum days prior to the launch of the enhanced program.

PROGRAM COHERENCE AND THROUGH-LINES

Program coherence is achieved through various means, most notably through a commitment to the program’s conceptual framework, as will be described in the following section. Other ways of ensuring program coherence are considerations of topics and skills and how these are covered. For example, assessment is covered through a spiral curriculum approach and is addressed in multiple courses throughout the program, allowing for an investigation of the topic through the lens of various course foci. Thus, assessment in math and assessment in the arts can be explored specifically. Teaching and learning of specific skills are also planned to occur within designated courses, i.e., in Social Studies, teacher candidates will learn to create a Unit Plan.

There are two aspects that are specifically conceived of as program through-line threads, each running across a series of courses. These aspects include FSL (French as a Second Language) and Indigenous perspectives. Teacher candidates enrolled in the P/J FSL program complete several in-class activities and assignments in French to provide opportunities for engaging in language-specific conversations and vocabulary development.

The Indigenous through-line is supported by Tyndale’s program Elder. This role is envisioned as providing spiritual and cultural leadership, as well as practical guidance, enacted through relationships. The program Elder brings his perspective based on his knowledge of traditional ways, teachings, and ceremonies. This perspective informs the program faculty and staff to increase understanding and provide input into decision making. The teacher candidates learn culturally appropriate approaches to curriculum through interactions with the program Elder in the
context of informal conversations, presentations, and meetings over lunch. With the role of Elder, he is able to, as described by Gladys Kidd, “show you what you can do in a good way” (as cited in Stiegelbauer, 1996, p. 57). The program Elder uses his life experience to provide guidance to teacher candidates as they learn about how to best support Indigenous learners within their classroom, and to incorporate Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing among all learners. Instead of teaching a single course, the program Elder contributes to several courses, providing an Indigenous perspective in each particular context. For example, the program Elder teaches about an Indigenous theory of development within *The Developing Learner* course, about an Indigenous understanding of patterns and symmetry in Mathematics, and about storytelling in Language.

**PRACTICUM**

Teacher candidates in Tyndale’s program are involved in a variety of in-school experiences in each of the three practicum components. In total, teacher candidates complete between 107 and 110 days of practical experience. Each practicum component has two phases, Phase 1 being Observation and Participation, and Phase 2 being Practice Teaching. Observation and Participation consists of at least one full week plus one or two days weekly in the placement, while Practice Teaching constitutes a 3- to 6-week block of daily commitment to the placement classroom.

The Observation and Participation phase coincides with the coursework the teacher candidates are engaged in throughout the given semester and is intentionally structured as an opportunity for teacher candidates to observe and participate, but not to take over the instructional responsibilities in the classroom. The phase enables active participation and time for reflection on the connections between theory and practice. It provides the host teacher with opportunities to model effective practice and for each teacher candidate to become familiar with the students and classroom routines. This arrangement continues into the Practice Teaching Phase with a gradual release of responsibility. This weaving of placement and coursework throughout the Observation and Participation phase allows for the application of theory and pedagogy. For example, certain assignments for courses involve collecting assessment data from a student in their placement class and creating responsive plans for instruction that are appropriate to that student’s needs. Thus, the teacher candidate receives descriptive feedback from their host teacher, as well as from an instructor who is focused on pedagogy in a certain curricular area.

Intentionally, one dedicated Faculty Advisor is assigned to supervise a teacher candidate for all three of their practicum placements for the duration of the program. Each Faculty Advisor takes on the crucial role of mentoring their teacher candidates by providing support through visits to their placement schools to observe, assess progress, and communicate with the host teacher. Faculty Advisors are considered partners who help teacher candidates navigate the increasing demands of each practicum placement, apply coursework learning to in-class practice, and embrace the learning opportunities in each practicum experience, no matter the challenges. During the first week on campus, the new cohort is introduced to the Faculty Advisor team and hears about their individual achievements in education such as their experiences as administrators, instructional coaches, and classroom teachers; areas of research interest; as well as their awards and recognitions earned. Then each Faculty Advisor meets with their teacher candidate group of between 5 and 10 teacher candidates, where they share “First Impressions,” an activity that is part of the course *Creating Safe, Engaging and Inclusive Learning Environments*. Each teacher candidate, as well as each Faculty Advisor, participates in “First Impressions,” bringing an artifact
to represent themselves and using that artifact to introduce themselves to the group. This activity has several purposes: to prepare teacher candidates to introduce themselves to the learners in their practicum placement classroom; to encourage teacher candidates to reflect on their identity at the outset of their teacher preparation program journey; and to establish the smaller learning community with a common Faculty Advisor within the larger community.

Table 1
Program Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRANDS</th>
<th>COURSES (Credit hours)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONCEPT (Theory and Foundation)</td>
<td>• Democratic Values, Christian Perspectives and Education (3), OR</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Religious Education: Democratic Values, Catholic Perspectives and Education (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The Developing Learner (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflective Practice (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONTENT (Methodology)</td>
<td>Primary/Junior and P/J FSL:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Language and Literacy Pt 1 (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Language and Literacy Pt 2 (3)</td>
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<td>• Mathematics Pt 1 (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Mathematics Pt 2 (3)</td>
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<td>• Science and Technology (3)</td>
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<td>• Health &amp; Phys Ed (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Social Studies (3)</td>
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<td>• Arts (3)</td>
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<td>Junior/Intermediate:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Language and Literacy – Pt 1 (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Language and Literacy – Pt 2 (3)</td>
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<td>• Science and Technology (3)</td>
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<td>• Health &amp; Phys Ed (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Soc St J and History/Geography I (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Arts (3)</td>
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<td>Early Years (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>French as a Second Language (6)</td>
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<td>One Intermediate Teachable from (3):</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• French as a Second Lang I</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Science-General I</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• English I</td>
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<td>• Music I</td>
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<td>• Mathematics I</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• History I</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Geography I</td>
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<td>CONTEXT (Foundation and Applied Theory)</td>
<td>• Creating Safe, Engaging and Inclusive Learning Environments (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Differentiated Instruction for Diverse Learners – Part 1 (3)</td>
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<td>• Differentiated Instruction for Diverse Learners – Part 2 (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Education Act and Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Educational Technology (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONAL SEMINAR and PRACTICA</td>
<td>• Professional Seminar (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Practicum 1 = 2 (2) Literacy and Numeracy, ~30-31 days</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Practicum 2 = 2 (2) Full Associate Teacher’s Assignment, ~41 days</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Practicum 3 = 2 (2) Full AT’s Assignment including Focus, ~36-39 days</td>
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THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, the conceptual framework that embodies the vision of Tyndale’s B.Ed. program is described, which includes a model of differentiated instruction, institutional mission statement, program mission statement, and program outcomes.

HUME’S MODEL OF DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

The conceptual framework is based on the work of Karen Hume (2008), which is not specifically religious, nor was it developed in connection with anyone from Tyndale. But the framework was found to be particularly resonant with Tyndale’s vision for teacher education. Hume’s educational career was based in Ontario and reached an international audience. Her framework for understanding differentiated instruction was described in the book *Start where they are: Differentiating for success with the young adolescent*. Hume did not originally envision that this framework would be used to inform and guide a program of teacher education, but she subsequently visited Tyndale, and acknowledged and approved of the framework’s use in such a context. Hume has been a guest on the Tyndale campus on several occasions for the purpose of interacting with the teacher candidates. Upon her retirement in 2015, she donated her professional library to Tyndale.

Hume’s adapted model, depicted in Figure 2 below, encompasses the teaching and learning process, is accessible for beginning teachers, and allows for the examination of the influence beliefs have on teachers’ educational decisions. According to the framework *Teacher Beliefs and Knowledge*, one of the dimensions that impacts every learning environment is depicted at the bottom of the framework as the foundation of our effectiveness – our knowledge of the essential understandings and our beliefs about teaching, learning, and students – beliefs that emerge from the worldview we each hold. This foundation can include religious beliefs, or in other words, beliefs about God and humanity’s relationship to God. We have found that reflecting on one’s worldview and how that impacts every learning space a teacher creates is accessible to all teacher candidates from various faith backgrounds, and those with no particular faith affiliation. Not only is this kind of reflection accessible, but it is crucial for fully understanding one’s own teacher identity and the impact that identity has on learners in the classroom. Hume’s model therefore aligns with our institution’s grounding in foundational beliefs.

The rest of Hume’s model is also resonant. The model identifies eight aspects of the teaching/learning process, graphically represented in domain ovals. The domain ovals in the outer diamond represent the conditions of effectiveness that are preconditions for good instruction. The *Essential Understandings* on the left side specify the content of what is being taught and the *Learning Community* on the right side gives the context for the learning to take place. Both are important considerations for all teachers. Differentiation is not about what is taught but about how it is taught; differentiation is dependent on the teacher’s commitment to meeting the unique learning needs of each student. The *Appropriate Challenge* at the top is about the art of teaching: how to plan instruction to the right degree of challenge and support for each individual. The three ovals in the inner diamond offer the specifics about how we do differentiation with *Knowledge of Students*, *Powerful Instructional Strategies*, and *Evidence Base*. This last term emphasizes the wide variety of evidence that a teacher who has become proficient with differentiating instruction takes into account, including self-evaluation, teacher reflections, and an ever-increasing
knowledge of individual students, along with the full range of formal and informal assessments. As our understanding of education has evolved in the context of new emphases and new aspects to regulations, we have adapted the top oval, with permission of the author, to indicate that all components of the framework are in relation to and will lead to “Student Achievement and Well-Being.”

**Figure 2**

*Eight ovals in Hume’s adapted model representing the essential elements of educational environments. (Used with permission of the author.)*

The conceptual framework is salient within the program in a number of ways. Hume’s (2008) model is included on every course outline, along with the instructor’s indication as to which of the domain ovals that particular course will focus on. Hume’s model serves as the organizing framework on the evaluation surveys of courses and instructors, as well as on the summative
assessments of the practicum components. Hume’s model also serves as the organizing framework for Parts 1 and 2 of the courses entitled *Differentiated Instruction for Diverse Learners*. And the five domains of the mission statement serve as the organizing framework for each cohort’s collective commitment.

We understand that Hume’s adapted model is a starting point that empowers us to service the public good by intentionally planning for our graduates to be well-equipped to teach in Ontario schools, through knowing who they are and knowing how to best serve their diverse learners, as they uphold the *Standards of Practice* and *Ethical Standards* to which all OCT certified teachers are held accountable.

MISSION STATEMENTS

*Institutional Mission*

Tyndale’s vision of teacher education also aligns with Tyndale’s broader mission: “dedicated to the pursuit of truth, to excellence in teaching, learning and research, for the enriching of mind, heart and character, to serve the church and the world for the glory of God.” At Tyndale, one of our ‘teacher beliefs’ is embodied in this mission statement, that is, that whatever we do, we do “for the glory of God.” This is based on our strong belief in two central Biblical commands, both of which are “for the glory of God”. These two commands flow out of the *Teacher Beliefs and Knowledge* oval of Hume’s model, as seen in Figure 3 below.

*Program Mission*

The first command is to “love God with our whole selves.” This implies that we maintain a high degree of professionalism and excellence for in everything we do, we desire, as acts of devotion, to do and be our best. This involves, among other aspects of teacher preparation, applying current educational theory, encouraging critical thinking and inquiry, and reflecting on practice. The second command is to “love our neighbour as ourselves.” This implies that our teacher preparation program includes a focus on collegiality and community, equity and social justice, and service and stewardship including that of the environment.

Faculty and staff at Tyndale believe that it is for the glory of God that we execute our mission of educating and equipping graduates to teach with the utmost commitment to professionalism, excellence, collegiality, equity, and service. When teacher candidates are immersed in the Tyndale community for 16 months, they have opportunities to articulate what these domains mean to them, to practice them in community with one another, to reflect personally on their growth in each domain, and to receive peer and faculty feedback about their growth in each domain. One way that teacher candidates are encouraged to grow in these areas is through the faculty and staff choosing to embody these characteristics themselves and making decisions based on the value of each of these domains.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER BELIEFS

As stated, Hume (2008) includes teacher beliefs in her model; other researchers in teacher education do as well. Fullan (1993) implored education faculties to acknowledge and attend to the development of teacher candidate beliefs and understandings. Research in the area of teacher
beliefs is likely not referring to a narrow definition of religious beliefs. More likely, the attention to teacher beliefs is referring to the stance that Palmer (1998) articulates:

Whatever our students may be, whatever subject we teach, ultimately, we teach who we are. When I hear teachers ask whether they can take their spirituality into the classroom with them, I wonder what the option is: As long as we take ourselves into the classroom, we take our spirituality with us! Our only choice is whether we will reflect on the questions we are living – and how we are living them – in a way that might make our work more fruitful. (p. 10)

Tyndale’s program of teacher preparation attempts to offer teacher candidates a space in which to consider how they are living and how they will live the beliefs that they hold. For example, they are invited to do readings, in-class assignments, and reflections on Palmer’s (2007) The Courage to Teach. Many teacher candidates expressed their appreciation for the space to consider beliefs:

For me it has been a great experience coming to Tyndale because it has been more than just the teacher education. The religious component is there, and it is crucial. It has been interesting to see what other teacher candidates bring to their placements. A faith background impacts how you approach your students and the classroom. It has benefitted me being here. (Edward, Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2016)

Throughout the program too I realized that faith is not just religion and beliefs. It is also the values you have and what motivates you to act regarding social justice and equity. (Simone, Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2016)

I am a different person than I was two years ago. The way that I work, the habits that I have. I used to panic about my plans… But then, I got to the point of asking who the plan is for – it is for them. I have grown so much. If I am in the middle of a lesson that is going sideways, which it does, give myself permission to stop, pause, and change direction because that is for the students. Teaching-wise, I am completely different. My core, my beliefs are still the same. The way I enact those beliefs – completely different. (Analisa, Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2017)

The beliefs held by a teacher are reflected in the way that a teacher interacts with students and structures various learning environments (Edmunds et al., 2015). For example, what does a teacher believe about human nature? Are children, by nature, basically good (beneficent, charitable, cooperative), bad (egocentric, self-seeking), or neutral (dependent upon experience to form character)? What does one believe about knowledge and how we come to know? Is knowledge justified true belief, the sum total of all the beliefs in a society, or is knowledge something that is constructed through experience? Understanding their own personal philosophy will help a teacher move from executing the many practical details of teaching to a reflective examination of the reason for their decisions, as well as the reasons their colleagues and superiors may provide for the decisions they make. The importance of understanding the reasons for teaching is emphasized by Bartolomé (2004) who suggests that teacher candidates must be taught and encouraged to critically reflect upon their own beliefs. More recently, Routledge’s Educational Psychology Handbook series has published the International Handbook of Research on Teachers’ Beliefs.
(Fives & Gill, 2015), an edited volume that explores the foundations of, methodologies used in, and application to teaching practices as a result of research in this area.

**Figure 3**

*Hume’s adapted model, mission statements, and learning outcomes*
Tyndale’s program of teacher preparation offers teacher candidates a space in which they can consider how they are living and how they will live the beliefs that they hold. As stated earlier, we are cognizant of the fact that research in this area is likely not referring to a narrow definition of religious beliefs. However, we are energized and enthusiastic about the fact that, indeed, it can apply to religious beliefs, giving us the chance to freely allow teacher candidates to discuss these beliefs as part of their identity and in particular, as part of their developing teacher identity. As Fatima reflected on one of her practicum experiences, which occurred while she was fasting during Ramadan, a time observed by Muslims as a means of focusing on reflection and prayer, as well as strengthening relationships with God and with family, she commented:

Actually, conquering my second practicum was a big deal for me, so it’s a very proud time for me. I was fasting. It was a difficult practicum. I was incredibly tired. We had students who had behavioural situations that were not comfortable. And it was a test of patience at that time and especially for my faith… because especially during that time you’re not supposed to be unkind to others. Not that you’re not supposed to be unkind in general but during that time… it was a test for me… And breathing exercises came in big at that time, not just for students but for myself. And that was one of the proudest moments for me, I would say. (Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2019)

And Serena reflected, “There have been so many challenges. It starts with peeling away the biases I hold. Why do I have the values and beliefs that I do?” (Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2017). The intent in Tyndale’s program is to create a space where beliefs, religious or not, are expected and celebrated aspects of conversations, such that a holistic approach to learning is experienced. We acknowledge that everyone has a worldview that encompasses various beliefs.

**THE FIVE DOMAINS OF THE MISSION STATEMENT**

Emerging from the conceptual framework’s two central Biblical commands and the institution’s mission statement are the five domains that represent the program outcomes. Each domain will be described here in order to show how Tyndale envisions the importance of each.

During the first week of the program, each Tyndale cohort is asked to collaboratively generate descriptions of each domain, so they have their own roadmap for how to enact those domains for the next 16 months as they live in community with one another. The assumption is that if our graduates are to exhibit the five domains once they graduate and are working in schools, they need opportunities to practice doing so during their preparation program. The five domains are professionalism, excellence, equity, collegiality, and service.

**Professionalism**

Professionalism is envisioned as the adoption and embodiment of the Ontario College of Teacher's *Standards of Practice* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, as well as the integration of current educational theory and research in teaching practice. Tyndale faculty commit to continual growth and modelling in these areas, and to integrating teaching about professionalism into each course in the specific ways that professionalism impacts the particular understanding and practices related to that course topic. Teacher candidates are required to gather artifacts throughout the program to include in an e-portfolio that demonstrates evidence of their commitment to the standards of practice.
**Excellence**

With regard to excellence, Tyndale imagines its teacher candidates striving for a high degree of competence in various aspects of teacher preparation, including critical thinking, inquiry, assessment and evaluation, the use of information technology, and the habit of improving one’s practice based on personal and professional reflection. Faculty members, instructors, and faculty advisors embrace a developmental progression towards achievement and take seriously assessment as, for, and of learning as they support teacher candidates in their progression towards the demonstration of excellence. An example is the read-aloud lesson plan assignment in Language and Literacy Part 1. All teacher candidates receive quality descriptive feedback on their read-aloud lesson plan. If the lesson plan is not assessed as exceeding expectations, teacher candidates are encouraged to revise their work based on the descriptive feedback they have received, as they strive to achieve a high standard. As the language professor has been heard to say, “We want everyone graduating from Tyndale to be able to write excellent lesson plans in language and literacy.”

The development of and continuous improvements to various aspects of the program are collaborative efforts between team members and teacher candidates towards excellence. The ethos of the program is to welcome input and ideas from all stakeholders and to make improvements based on this input.

**Equity**

By equity, Tyndale refers to the responsibility of teachers to be alert to and address issues of equity and social justice in our society as outlined in the Ministry of Education’s document, *Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools* (Ministry of Education, 2014). We acknowledge that becoming alert to and addressing issues of equity and social justice is a process. We speak of it as a movement along the equity continuum and as an area of growth that requires both concentrated study and an examination of personal experience. Tyndale faculty engage along this continuum through professional development at team meetings, during continuous discussions, and by viewing ourselves as engaged in this journey along with the teacher candidates. Across several courses, teacher candidates examine both provincial laws and various school board policies that support various marginalized communities; they are introduced to the concept of cultural proficiency in the classroom context; they learn about Indigenous perspectives, cultures, histories, and ways of knowing; and they develop familiarity with assistive technologies. It is our goal that teacher candidates will have continuous opportunities to confront the challenges of identifying and defeating bias, barriers, and power dynamics that hinder learning.

**Collegiality**

Collegiality refers to the valuing of each individual as a contributor to community, to the critical importance of the community to all individuals, and to the intentional offering of collegial support in educational communities as modelled at Tyndale. All department members work diligently and intentionally to offer a welcoming and hospitable atmosphere for the teacher candidates—coffee is readily available and doors to offices are open. In courses, teacher candidates are invited to co-create success criteria, to engage in learning activities and complete assignments in pairs and small groups, and to participate in community circles. Other opportunities for developing collegial relationships include two ‘Thank You’ rocks that travel among the cohort as a means for them to express appreciation to one another, as well as the practice of attending chapel services together.
The Representative Council, consisting of three to six elected teacher candidates, oversees community-building activities such as potluck lunches, First Aid and TRIBES training, and visits from therapy dogs. The collaboration that Tyndale’s program enjoys with the Teacher Education Advisory Committee (TEAC) also demonstrates the core value of collegiality. Recently, we sought to amend our bylaws regarding TEAC in order to increase the designated maximum number of members, since we had so many interested parties who wanted to join that committee and be part of the collaborative support to the program.

Service
By service, we mean the willingness and intention to serve the unique learning needs of students, and the demonstration of stewardship in all areas of life, including interaction with people, culture, and communities; use of resources; and care for the environment and our world. The emphasis Tyndale’s program places on differentiated instruction speaks to our commitment to serve the unique learning needs of students. The course Science and Technology allows teacher candidates to investigate topics that demonstrate how sustainability, stewardship, and the environment are interwoven within a curriculum unit relevant to their division (i.e., soils in Primary/Junior and climate change in Junior/Intermediate) and includes learning about Indigenous perspectives of global sustainability as a worldview. Teacher candidates are encouraged to consider the stewardship of their talents, unique abilities, resources, and skills in the service of their students and colleagues, and to consider the classroom environment as an ecological and ethical space to be stewarded with careful attention to administrative, parental, and interpersonal influences. As a program, we are mindful of paper and printing usage; resources, for the most part, are posted online. We encourage sustainability through gifting each teacher candidate a Tyndale travel mug on their first day on campus.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH-BASED EMPHASES
As a result of Tyndale’s inherent focus on teacher beliefs as a key essential element of any educational environment, there are five accompanying emphases that shape Tyndale’s program, including: Reflective Practice, Developing Teacher Identity, Cohort Community, Curriculum of Lives, and Integration of Theory and Practice. A description of each of these emphases is offered here.

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE
Acknowledging that teacher beliefs are an essential component of any educational environment necessitates an emphasis on providing time and opportunities for reflection, and for explicitly teaching teacher candidates the importance of reflective practice. As articulated by Edmunds, Nickel, and Badley (2015), the attitude of being “the best teacher each of us can be” (p. 5) comes with a corollary: “as you think about yourself as teacher, you will be” (Sockett, 2008, p. 7). Adopting the attitude is the first step but

… [w]hat has to be adopted next, and this is the sticky part, is coming to grips with your own honest perceptions of who you are as a teacher, having the courage to accept that what is known about good teaching is forever changing, and summoning the determination to reshape your teaching until it matches your inspirations. You have to be willing to identify and scrutinize your assumptions and perceptions about teaching and, after having done so,
go back to teaching with renewed and revised assumptions and perspectives. And then you have to be willing to do it all over again. This cyclical process is called reflective practice. (p. 7)

Reflection-in- and reflection-on-practice is rooted in the work of Schön (1983, 1987). Many researchers since Schön have identified that reflection is a critical element in teacher education and a critical quality of effective teachers (Clandinin, 1986; Fullan & Connelly, 1987; Marzano, 2007). Tyndale’s lesson plan template includes the step of reflection as a way of tangibly practicing this habit of mind. The cohort community periodically takes time to reflect on how the community and how we, as individuals within it, are fulfilling our collective commitments. This is accomplished through activities such as community circles, online polls, peer sharing, and self-assessment forms. As well, the program requires all teacher candidates to take the course Reflective Practice, which allows teacher candidates to engage in reflective work through a case study approach. Based on Brookfield’s (2017) four interrelated lenses through which teachers can look at their practice (i.e., the autobiographical, learner, peer/colleague, and research lenses), the instructors of Reflective Practice propose six lenses through which educational events can be reflected upon: the lenses of the philosophical, political, pedagogical, professional, parental, and personal.

Narrative inquiry as a process of reflection is referenced in a publication by the Ontario College of Teachers, Living the Standards (2007). Grounded in the work of Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Connelly and Clandinin (1998), it refers to the making of meaning through personal experience by way of a process of reflection in which storytelling is a key element. Tyndale’s program attempts to understand the months of teacher preparation as being an intentional part of the larger story of the teacher candidates’ lives. This is one reason why the application process to the program requests applicants to include two statements, each approximately 500 words in length, as to how their experiences prior to applying for the program have fostered their development towards living the College’s Standards of Practice. In narrative inquiry terms, Tyndale’s program of teacher preparation intends to be an experience that facilitates the composing of their teaching lives.

DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER IDENTITY

The idea that teachers are “in the making” is key to the Tyndale experience, and has been noted by many researchers (Britzman, 2007; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Huber et al., 2014; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2007; Vinz, 1997). Teacher education programs are encouraged to provide a space for teacher candidates to consider this new professional identity that they are developing, whether it is termed as “composing an identity” (Vinz, 1997) or “stories to live by” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Huber et al., 2014) or “uneven development” (Britzman, 2007) or “professional identity” (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2007).

Identity development is an unfolding process that has begun prior to the official start of the teacher preparation program and is not finished by the time the teacher preparation program ends. This “incompleteness” (Greene, 2001) bumps up against the expectation that graduates of teacher education programs have “finished” their preparation. While we at Tyndale intend that our teacher candidates have confidence in their preparation, we also intend that they leave the program with a sense that their development is just beginning as they launch the adventure of their professional lives. We hope that our teacher candidates embody a vision of and a commitment towards
becoming the very best teachers they can be based on what they have experienced while in the
program, while at the same time continuing to refine that vision in whatever professional context
they may enter.

Defensible teacher education programs facilitate an educational process that understands the
personal and educational need to develop ends, revise them, work on them further, and sometimes
simply change educational and life paths. Beginning teachers need to be a part of that educational
process. We cannot hope to call our endeavour a profession unless we guide candidates through a
process that honours the conversation of valued ends and recognizes the multiple ways in which
teaching implicates the teacher’s self (Liston et al., 2009). Teacher education researchers who
consider teacher identity development narratively speak about the development in terms of
negotiating the interaction of their personal and professional knowledge landscapes. As they
mediate these understandings, they must “continually rediscover who they are and what they stand
for through their dialogues and collaboration with peers, through ongoing and consistent study,
and through deep reflection about their craft” (Nieto, 2003, p. 125).

As an example of how Tyndale teacher candidates are encouraged to consider their own developing
teacher identity, they are asked to chart this development as one of the assignments in the course
Reflective Practice. Another example as to how the exploration of teacher identity is facilitated is
through instructors sharing their own development of becoming a teacher. In addition, there is a
session of the course Professional Seminar scheduled after the conclusion of each practicum
placement in order to give teacher candidates the opportunity to discuss, as a community, their
developing understanding of who they are as educators.

COHORT COMMUNITY

As prompted by Tyndale’s conceptual framework, the program design includes the intentional
development of cohort community—within the full class, within the Primary/Junior and
Junior/Intermediate division groupings (20 to 40), and within even smaller areas of focus, such as
FSL and Intermediate teachables. Spending the month of August together, as the program begins,
provides the opportunity for the entire cohort to be together and begin to forge relationships. And,
under the facilitation of the instructor of the course Creating Safe, Engaging and Inclusive
Learning Environments, the Collective Commitments are established through a collaborative
exercise.

The potential benefits of cohort groups have been established as diminished effects of isolation,
higher retention rates, and better understanding of the diversity of classmates, which in turn build
a sense of community and an experience of collegiality (Koeppen et al., 2001). Small programs
have inherent benefits and limitations. Faculty members in small programs often need to teach
beyond their area of primary expertise and therefore have limited time for research. While we at
Tyndale have experienced some tension in this regard, we have still managed to include many
part-time instructors whose areas of expertise are consistent with the course content and at the
same time, support full-time instructors in productive research agendas.
CURRICULUM OF LIVES

An understanding of the “curriculum of lives” has influenced Tyndale’s program. Several researchers connected with the Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development at the University of Alberta (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992; Hefflin, 2001; Huber & Clandinin, 2005) suggest that curriculum “might be viewed as an account of teachers’ and children’s lives together in schools and classrooms” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, p. 392). Tyndale’s program of teacher preparation attempts to enact this broad understanding of curriculum as the experience of the teacher candidates while they are in the program as well as the vision of the teaching/learning process they will facilitate as certified teachers alongside students. We remind ourselves that what we do in the program should model an exemplary classroom.

What happens in schools is an identity-shaping process; lives are written and rewritten, storied and re-storied. The identities, the stories to live by of children, teachers, administrators, and families are all being expressed, and, in those expressions, become open to being re-storied, to being silenced, to being erased, to being shifted in educative and mis-educative ways (Clandinin, 2006, pp. 15–16). In this view of curriculum, the teacher is an integral part of the curricular process “in which teacher, learners, subject matter and milieu are in dynamic interaction” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, p. 392). The instructors in Tyndale’s program enact this understanding of curriculum both in their own engagement with teacher candidates and in the vision of the teaching/learning process they offer. They demonstrate attention to the curriculum of lives through open office doors, intentional communication, modelling respect, honouring differences, enjoying the beauty of our campus, hallway laughter, ‘Thank-you’ cards, read-alouds, picnic quilts, and coffee pots. One teacher candidate describes,

I had such a great time here. People say – 16 months?! That sounds nerve-racking. I say, ‘It was amazing.’ You have to come here. We have these small groups and we are able to make a connection with every single one of our professors. I was lucky if one of my professors in undergrad knew my name. It really makes a difference. You want to come. You want to do your best because you have relationships. (Eleanor, Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2017)

And Mahati confirms, “Tyndale has been so important in my life. One of the biggest milestones – so many good friends, great professors one-on-one, became friends with them; [it is] not a program [but] a family.” (Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2016).

INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

Tyndale’s B.Ed. program, as influenced by the conceptual framework, has been impacted by Connelly and Clandinin’s (1999) research in the sense of understanding teachers as knowers: “knowers of themselves, of their situations, of children, of subject matter, of teaching, of learning” (p. 1). They base their work on the importance of linking knowledge, context, and identity in the ongoing composition of teaching lives. This is their way of speaking of the linking between theory and practice. As Fullan and Connelly (1987) observed,

Teacher education scenarios that are merely practical are routine, dull, and mind-stifling. Programs that are merely theoretical are abstract, irrelevant, and meaningless. Lively
interactions of theory and practice are needed... Theory and practice must become interconnected in the minds of teachers. The mental test of whether theory and practice interact, with neither assuming priority, is not in the logical structure of teacher education programming, but in personal experience as reported by teachers. The question for teacher educators is whether what they do in the name of teacher education contributes to a unity of theory and practice in the minds and practices of student teachers and teachers. (pp. 46-47)

There are certainly some graduates of Tyndale’s program that express the view that the theoretical components of their education as less relevant than their practicum experiences, as affirmed by Goodnough, Falkenberg, Macdonald, and Murphy (2017). Research in support of this perspective is long-standing (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981) and pervasive (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Wideen et al., 1998). However, there are also some graduates who, in the Final Conversations, challenge the dominant story of having learned nothing in the program except learning through doing in the context of practice teaching blocks. For example, Fidelia described,

You do learn a lot in practicum certainly, but it is what you are taking from the theory and putting it into practice. I don’t think you can have one without the other. You would be missing a crucial part of it. I would be missing key tools and would be going to practicum completely blind. You need both supporting each other. We can’t do theory without practice because you have to see it in action. It is the only way to really know what you are getting yourself into. (Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2016)

And Jenica confirmed:

The biggest thing was realizing, when I was in my practicum, I realized that all the theory, everything we have learned here [at Tyndale] applies to a tiny little 40-minute teaching block! It was very rewarding to think of that. It is all relevant to that one block – your planning, your knowledge of students, your assessment – everything. (Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2015)

Teacher candidates have been shown to need help integrating the “seemingly disconnected experiences of the university and the school” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, p. 456). Tyndale’s program offers this help in at least two ways. First, we take seriously the preparation and role of faculty advisors on the program team. As described earlier, they regularly meet with instructors in order to understand the content being presented. Some core faculty members have faculty advising responsibilities. Communication protocols are three-way, involving instructor, faculty advisor, and teacher candidates. Faculty advisors often join in classes, are present at team meetings, and engage in reflective practice through open dialogue. And, second, we replicate several practices at Tyndale that are encountered in schools. For example, the Evaluation of Course and Instructor is similar to the Teacher Candidate Practicum Evaluations. Both are based on NTIP (Ministry of Education, 2019a) assessments. Assessment and evaluation in each course are aligned with the 4-Level grading scheme so that teacher candidates can experience the same grading system that the Ministry of Education has implemented in K-12 schools. Practicum components in schools are scheduled to be interspersed with coursework components. Several of the courses (Professional Seminar, Educational Technology, and Reflective Practice) are structured to extend over more
than one semester. This provides extended time for conversation, reflection, and input from various educational stakeholder voices, including that of our program Elder as he offers an Indigenous perspective on the topics of several courses.

Tyndale’s attempt to replicate structures and procedures that teachers encounter in school is meant to avoid what Tom (1997) refers to as “stockpiling”, or the tendency of programs to introduce “professional knowledge prior to – and often separated from – teaching practice” (p. 139). Our intent is to have instructors model the practices they desire the teacher candidates to embody. Teacher candidates are more likely to adopt the pedagogical strategies they have experienced (Ertmer, 2003). Comments from the Final Conversations demonstrate that this has indeed been the experience of many Tyndale teacher candidates. One example is this explanation by Lexie, where she refers to an activity she led in her third practicum, during which the students contributed ideas for what they wanted their classroom culture to look like, and where they were invited to sign a collective commitment. She said:

So we started with asking them what they wanted or what was important to them from their teacher - their learning environment. It modelled a lot of what I learned in Tyndale. I think that’s why I was so comfortable doing it. It was practiced for us, right? (Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2019)

Kenneth explained his inspiration to model his future classroom after the Tyndale model, saying:

The most important thing I learned at Tyndale was building a classroom where everyone should feel safe in. That’s one thing. Even when I was coming here, I felt safe talking to everyone. Everyone’s door was open. And I thought, this school does that very well and I think that I should do that as well. Being a teacher, I should be open to listening to all of my students and hearing what they have to say… If something’s happening outside of school, they can feel comfortable talking to me. I felt comfortable talking to everyone here. That was one thing that I learned here that I want to do especially, as a teacher. (Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2019)

CONCLUSION

Tyndale’s privately funded program serves the public good through preparing teacher candidates who have engaged in reflection and embarked on a 16-month journey of intentional identity development. The continuity of the 16-month journey, the holistic approach that acknowledges and values the spiritual dimension of learning, experiences with the program Elder, as well as a supported and intentionally designed practicum, emerge from the conceptual framework. The Tyndale B.Ed. program tends to be characterized as a tight-knit community. Reflecting on their 16 months, teacher candidates refer to the strong sense of community, personalized attention, and supportive atmosphere they discovered at Tyndale. Some teacher candidates will attribute these aspects of their experience purely to the small size of the program; their lived reality of the holistic, reflective, and intentional nature of the program is believed to be a direct result of the program’s size. Admittedly, it is more reasonable to imagine enacting an approach such as this with a small cohort. Small programs have been shown to have an increased sense of collegiality, unity of purpose, and critical deliberation (Goodlad, 1990, pp. 235-236). But we believe that small size alone is not a sufficient condition to result in the unique Tyndale experience. Some teacher
candidates do speak to the faith-based aspect of the Tyndale program and its ripple effect throughout all aspects of the program, which made their experience different than they may have expected. For example, as Joshua explained,

> Because we demonstrate the love that God has for humanity to the rest of humanity, like we model that, then it’s hard to get it wrong, in a sense. But that’s what I see that the leadership has modelled for the cohort. It models the fact that care and... a love for them and their learning and their journey. And that radiates through them. So, despite the fact that we have so many different faith groups, so many different beliefs, it seems like we’re all still united as one, because of that commonality of care and love. (Tyndale B.Ed. Graduate, 2019)

The space that Tyndale desires to create is one in which foundational, theological, and philosophical beliefs are examined in the context of scholarship, conversation, and reflection. The purpose is to instill in each teacher candidate a reflective stance on beliefs and teaching practice that leads to integrity and to wholeness (Palmer, 2007). Our vision is for each teacher candidate to engage in thoughtful and humble consideration of their own professional voice and practice as a person who holds a belief system of some kind, religious or not. The Ontario College of Teachers offers a “vision of professional practice” through the articulation of four Ethical Standards – Care, Respect, Integrity and Trust. Tyndale’s program endorses these Ethical Standards as more than qualities to be identified, demonstrated, promoted, and admired. The Ethical Standards emerge as authentic professional practice when they come from a rooted place, one that is developed through an intentional reflective process of examination of beliefs and their implications.

**REFERENCES**


Despite the expanding body of scholarship on equity and higher education, analysis of racism, racialization, and Indigeneity in the academy are most notable for their absence.

(Henry et al., 2017, p. 7)

Teachers are obligated to honour the civic particularity of this multicultural, linguistically plural, occupied place where they encounter the entire world in one classroom. Particularity is thus political and cultural and personal. Subjectively situated, teachers are attuned socially to those children and colleagues in their midst but also to those who dwell distant from the immediacy of their everyday lives.

(Phelan et al., 2020, p. 8)

Our wider teacher education community is living the civic particularities of a global pandemic on the unceded and unsurrendered traditional territories of the Anishinaabe Algonquin First Nations people. On March 12th, 2020, the Ontario government announced the closing of its public schooling system, which also included in-person classes at the University of Ottawa (Stone, Gray, & Alphonso, 2020). At that time, no one knew that the closure of schools for in-class teaching and learning would continue for the rest of that academic year. Like other teacher education programs, our community had to adapt and rethink how we might plan, implement, and live a teacher education curriculum together as a community. As teacher educators and teacher candidates, we have been called upon to “rethink,” “reconceptualize,” and “adapt” our curriculum-as-planned and “pivot” the curriculum-as-implemented in response to different national, provincial, and local educational policies seeking to support the mental health, well-being, and academic achievement of the students we seek to serve.

For educational researchers, teacher educators, and frontline educators in schools, the pandemic amplified existing inequities in the K-12 public schooling and higher education systems (Whitley,
Beauchamp, & Brown, 2021). Several had to contend with the loss of family members, friends, and a lack of access to in-school resources and support for children and youth. Teachers and teacher candidates now working from home, in several cases as parents, had to reimagine their workdays, their curricular designs, and pedagogical strategies in relation to teaching virtually via different platforms such as, but not limited to, Google Meet and Classroom, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, YouTube channels, Flipgrid, and/or other applications or platforms. Once the province reopened, teachers and teacher candidates then had to contend with social distancing strategies, localized outbreaks, limited extracurricular activities, ensuring access to different technologies, the Internet, and the mental health and well-being of the students in their care.

And yet, how are teacher education programs and their respective teacher educators seeking to create, support, and sustain their curriculum-as-planned, -implemented, and -lived with teacher candidates in response to, and beyond, the current pandemic? The Royal Society of Canada (2021) commissioned a policy brief, whose panel of researchers confirmed:

> The pandemic has been challenging for children and youth. It has also been challenging for teachers, support staff, and principals who have been faced with having to quickly adapt their learning environments, being vigilant around ever-changing public health directives, and worrying about their own health and safety—all while trying to keep children and youth engaged and motivated. This is no small feat and one that must be recognized and valued. (p. 7)

One of 10 recommendations moving forward is for politicians and the public to acknowledge that teaching is “essential work” (p. 8). In turn, the panel pointed out the dire lack of “support for educators during the pandemic” and urged the Council of Ministers of Education to “reconsider the professional status of education and work to improve the conditions under which educators and children and youth spend their days” (p. 8). Like other teacher education programs here in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada, we have had to reconsider the different curricular and pedagogical implications that the pandemic has created for vulnerable families, children, and youth.

Since the publication of the first volume of *Initial Teacher Education in Ontario* (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017b), we have been called upon to address the macro and micro contexts of the COVID-19 pandemic and, particularly, the ongoing systemic barriers for the different Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour (IBPOC) students we seek to serve. Consequently, we have had to rethink and reconceptualize our program in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic; Asian-, Indigenous-, Black-, and other forms of antiracisms; truth and reconciliation education; and equity, diversity, and inclusion (Henry et al., 2017). In the first edited collection, like other institutions, we primarily provided an overview of our conceptual framework, structure, and content of the program in response to provincial calls to extend teacher education programs. Although we had some initiatives, programming, and professional learning days in place, we recognized that we needed to be more proactive in creating, supporting, and sustaining a teacher education curriculum that seeks to address individual, systemic, and societal forms of discrimination such as racism(s) (James, 2010, 2021). As Petrarca and Kitchen (2017c) stressed in the first volume, among the elements of core content requirements (i.e., foundations) within Ontario teacher education programs, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) includes “mental health, addictions and well-
being” and “First Nation, Métis and Inuit perspectives, cultures, histories and ways of knowing” (p. 10). Since then, the OCT announced an amendment to the Ontario College of Teachers Act and created an anti-Black racism Additional Qualifications (AQ) course for educators (OCT, 2020). While this is an important and crucial step forward, we cannot assume that trickle-down antiracist professional dispositions will occur from the OCT regulation changes on their own. Building working relationships between teacher education, schools, education governance, and communities can offer avenues forward that reflect the lived and changing experiences of students and educators.

In the first volume, various Ontario teacher education programs reported that they offered courses that addressed mental health; equity; diversity; First Nations, Inuit, and Métis histories, contemporary issues, and perspectives; and social justice. However, at that time, few programs listed any of this content as part of their foundations of education courses and/or descriptions. For several universities included in the review, any content that did move beyond traditional conceptions of foundations education—philosophy, history, democracy, schooling, society, etc.—were taken up as extracurricular professional learning programming and/or integrated into the course descriptions and content of other courses. Our program is no exception. In analyzing Ontario teacher education’s transition from a two-semester to a four-semester structure, Petrarca and Kitchen (2017a) thus explained that foundations have “for the most part disappeared as distinct stand-alone elements of consecutive education,” with sociology, for example, “largely absorbed into inclusive education” (p. 27). Such curricular reforms are a response to the ongoing reconceptualization of foundations education. In turn, there are opportunities for teacher education programs to be more intentional with redesigning foundations curriculum that promises to unsettle and disrupt individual and systemic racisms, settler colonialism, barriers, and ongoing inequities.

Despite the expanded four-semester structure, programmatic limitations remain. According to Petrarca and Kitchen (2017c), the OCT-required minimum percentage of a program that must focus on foundations decreased from 20% to 10%. In 2017, it was unclear whether or not foundations courses addressed anti-oppressive or anti-discrimination curricular design and/or pedagogical promising practices. Indeed, administrators may point to courses in their programs that they feel do this critical work. There are individual professors and professional associations who research, lead, and teach toward these wider societal social justice issues (Henry et al., 2017). In the past, making the necessary equity, diversity, and inclusion programmatic changes to one’s teacher education curriculum remained a difficult democratic challenge in relation to predominantly White settler colonial, historical, cultural, and social contexts of higher education and K-12 public schooling systems (see Hampton, 2020; Ng-A-Fook, Ingham, & Burrows, 2018; Sharma, 2020). Therefore, the recent policy accreditation requirements that the OCT has put forward will perhaps provoke teacher education programs to rethink and reconceptualize their programs, like ours, in relation to the macro and micro educational opportunities and challenges we now face locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally (Clarke & Phelan, 2017; Phelan et al., 2020). And there seems, at least in our teacher education community, more readiness to enact such calls for social change and racial justice.

According to the first volume, most of the programs offered “dedicated courses (often more than one, including electives) on equity, diversity, inclusion and/or social justice” (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017a, p. 26). Moreover, the term ‘equity’ could be found 104 times throughout the polygraph;
‘diversity’ 115 times; and ‘inclusion’ 28 times (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017b). “Despite the expanding body of scholarship on equity and higher education,” as Henry et al. (2017) remind us, “analyses of racism, racializations, and Indigeneity in the academy are most notable for their absence” (p. 7). How antiracist education, equity, diversity, and inclusion are purposefully addressed in one’s conceptual framework (including our own) in relation to scope and sequencing is for the most part also absent. In the wake of George Floyd’s murder, the unlawful detainment of Jamal Boyce for skateboarding across the University of Ottawa campus, debating the use of the N-word, anti-Black racism(s) within the Peel District School Board (PDSB) and others, the Black Lives Matter and Land Back Movements, anti-Islamophobia, anti-Asian racisms, homophobia, transphobia, ongoing settler colonial violence, and truth and reconciliation education, our teacher education program has sought and is seeking to address such societal calls for systemic change in relation to the conceptual framework of our program, course content, and promising pedagogies such as, but not limited to, trauma-informed, culturally responsive, relational, relevant, and sustaining pedagogies (see Currie, Ng-A-Fook, & Drake, 2021; James, 2021; Ladson-Billings, 2021). We continue to rethink how our teacher education program can prepare teachers who are committed to reimagining their past, present, and future relations with the different communities they seek to serve within the K-12 Ontario public and private schooling systems. In what follows then, we think through how such reconceptualization of our curriculum, as a critical self-study, can be planned, implemented, and lived through the Year 1 Becoming a Professional Educator and Year 2 Teacher-as-Researcher and the conceptual framework, scope, and sequencing of our teacher education program.

ENACTING TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM AS: -PLANNED, -IMPLEMENTED, AND -LIVED

For curriculum planners who understand the nuances of the indwelling of teachers in the Zone of Between, the challenge seems clear. If, as many of us believe, the quality of curriculum-as-lived experiences is the heart and core as to why we exist as teachers, principals, superintendents, curriculum developers, curriculum consultants, and teacher educators, curriculum planning should have as its central interest a way of contributing to the aliveness of school life as lived by teachers and students.


Since reconceptualizing our teacher education program in 2015, our community has sought to understand the nuances of the indwelling of teacher candidates in the zones between theory and practice: praxis. Such zones of in between also include, for Aoki (1986/1991/2004) and our program, the messy enacted translations among the curriculum-as-planned, -implemented, and -lived with students in the classroom. To navigate the complexity of our professional dispositions and relations with students, teacher candidates must not only become competent in their “expertness” in learning the professional language and creative “tasks of curriculum development,” but a “deeply conscious sensitivity to what it means to have a developer’s touch, a developer’s tact, a developer's attunement that acknowledges in some deep sense the uniqueness of every teaching situation” (p. 165). In turn, “such a sensitivity,” as Aoki stresses, “calls for
humility without which they will not be able to minister to the calling of teachers who are themselves dedicated to searching out a deep sense of what it means to educate and to be educated” (p. 165). Therefore, our conceptual framework attempts to orient teacher candidates toward different critical competencies “in thoughtful action, that is, action full of thought” while experiencing the scope and sequencing of our program (Aoki, 1984/2004, p. 134). For Aoki, “a critical competence is,” in part, “the way we choose to act to oppose inhumanity” (p. 133). Moreover, developing such situated and evolving critical competencies calls on a certain orientation toward an “adaptive expertise” (Timperley, 2012). Such adaptive orientations invite teacher candidates to draw on educational research and an inquiry stance to examine assumptions critically in relation to their curriculum theorizing, integrating theoretical and practical knowledge, teaching and learning, forming one’s philosophy, professional identity, in terms of limitations and strengths through reflexive practice, and actively seeking professional opportunities for disrupting, unsettling, unlearning, learning to become an educator, or teacher-as-researcher, as a praxis of self-study (Kitchen & Russell, 2012; Shah, 2019; Tupper & Mitchell, 2021; Tupper 2020).

Figure 1

Becoming a Professional Educator

**Year 1: Professional Inquiry**

We have attempted to create, support, and sustain such adaptive expertise and critical competencies with an orientation toward creating diverse communities of inquiry wherein candidates cultivate an inquiry habit of mind and (re)consider different forms of evidence, theories, and philosophies to then make decisions through a collaborative, reflexive, and purposeful practice. In Year 1, teacher candidates are expected to do an in-school community service learning and practicum placement and to focus on the concept of “Teacher as Professional.” During their coursework candidates are expected to draw on their CSL and practicum experiences to develop the necessary professional language and competencies as Ontario Teachers. Teacher candidates should have opportunities within your course to take up concepts such as, but not limited to: professional collaborative inquiry, critical reflective praxis, case studies, curriculum-as-planned, — implemented, — lived, differentiated instruction, assessment, inclusion, diversity and equity, community service learning, co-teaching and professional learning. In year 1 candidates should become familiar with Timperley’s (2012) “adaptive expert” theoretical model (as well as others), which in turn suggests that teachers learn best when they are actively involved in thinking about, engaging with and listening to the students in their classrooms.
and practicum placement and to focus on the concept of what it means to be a teacher through their different “professional inquiries” (see Figure 1). To do so, during their coursework candidates are expected to draw on their practicum experiences to develop the necessary professional language and critical competencies as future teachers here in Ontario and elsewhere. In turn, teacher candidates are afforded different curricular and pedagogical opportunities within their courses to take up concepts such as, but not limited to, professional collaborative inquiry, a critical reflexive praxis, case studies, curriculum policy documents, educational research, curriculum-as-planned, -implemented, -lived, differentiated instruction, assessment, equity, diversity, inclusion, co-teaching, and professional learning. Candidates are introduced to Timperley’s (2012) “adaptive expert” theoretical model (as well as others), which suggests that teachers learn “promising practices” when they are actively involved in thinking about, engaging with, listening to, and attuning themselves toward welcoming and hosting the students in their classrooms (Kosnik, Beck, & Cleovoulou, 2008). Moreover, teacher candidates are encouraged to recursively question and inquire in relation to who they would like to be as a professional Ontario educator at this place, and at this time, in terms of the pressing macro and micro contexts of the K-12 educational system and wider societal issues that promise to impact what transpires in their classrooms.

**Figure 2**

*Teacher-as-Researcher*
Our teacher education curriculum in Year 2 is extended to the concept of “Teacher-as-Researcher” as part of their orientation with the inquiry cycle (see Figure 2). Here a candidate can, as one example, delve into the first three aspects of Timperley’s (2012) model of the adaptive expert:

- Building a conceptual framework from theoretical and practical knowledge;
- Engaging common sense theories to uncover assumptions; and
- Increasing metacognition to drive self-learning and reflection.

In Year 2, our program continues to scaffold and support this iterative and recursive teaching, research, and learning feedback loop by extending into the fourth and fifth phases of the adaptive expert model:

- Practicing self-awareness to determine limitations and strengths; and
- Seeking opportunities for learning and professional growth in relation to different pressing individual, systemic, and societal issues such as but not limited to different antiracism(s), gender and sexuality, accessibility, mental health, well-being, exceptionalities, digital presence, climate change, school to prison pipeline, and settler colonialism.

We scaffold teacher candidate learning by asking them to reflect on their individual teaching practice, strategies of adaptive teaching through self-understanding, social action research with colleagues, and demonstrating the ability to work in professional learning communities by contributing to the furthering of classroom practice, philosophical stance, and their evolving situated praxis. At the end of their coursework, each Year 2 candidate should have experienced the cycle of the adaptive expert model in relation to becoming a professional educator whose praxis is informed by research. Building from contextualized knowledge of the classroom, one’s reflective praxis, and collaborative professional inquiry through action research, teacher candidates are afforded opportunities to share what they learned via their professional digital hub.

An “adaptive expertise” in relation to an inquiry cycle relies on developing the professional identity of the teacher candidate, shifting from self as a student learning how to teach, toward a “professional identity focused on promoting valued outcomes [lived experiences] for all learners” (Timperley, 2012, p. 10). This is coupled with one’s agency being grounded in complex and reciprocal relationships with all students, and learning “how to identify and use the cultural and linguistic resources learners bring” (Timperley, 2012, p. 10). Candidates often enter teacher education with prior (mis)conceptions of what it means to teach, to be a teacher, and to become a professional “expert” (see Britzman, 2012; Phelan & Dion Rüsselbæk, 2018). Such strongly held preconceptions of teaching and learning might be effective with some diverse groups of students we find in our schools today, but many (perhaps most) are not. In PED 3150, time is taken to make explicit teacher candidates’ preconceptions of what it means to teach, to be a teacher, and to become a professional “expert” (see Currie, Ng-A-Fook, & Drake, 2021; James, 2021; Ladson-Billings, 2021). Without this challenging (unlearning) work, the words “equity,” “diversity,” and “inclusion” lose meaning.
and ostensible intent, potentially reproducing exclusionary worldviews and blind privilege (Ahmed, 2011). A critical orientation toward the cycle of inquiry and reflexivity therefore can perhaps guide teacher candidates toward embodying (enacting) more equitable, relevant, responsive, sustaining, and inclusive teaching orientations and relations as an integral philosophical disposition of their professional identity.

CREATING, SUSTAINING, AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES OF INQUIRY

At the University of Ottawa, we see teacher education as creating, sustaining, and supporting an educational ecosystem called “Communities of Inquiry.” We use the words “ecosystem” and “communities” to represent the multiple communities and relations that teacher candidates and faculty members are part of and refer to during the preparation of new teachers (James, 2017). These include, but are not limited to:

- B.Ed. classrooms
- Cohort communities
- Practicum classrooms
- School communities
- Global communities
- Research communities
- Service learning communities
- Virtual communities

Our focus on communities is grounded in work that suggests that social practice is the primary, generative source of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Opportunities to dialogue and engage with meaningful and sustained collaborative work are well recognized as ways of encouraging teachers to take up an inquiry stance in relation to their classroom practice as well as supporting the experimentation and enactment of new curricular and pedagogical research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Donnell & Harper, 2005; Fullan, 2001). Teachers, both beginning and experienced, derive support, motivation, and direction from collaborative work and discussion as they grapple with new thinking, practices, and understandings that emerge through research, policy, classroom practice, or readings.

When applying to the teacher education program, prospective teacher candidates are asked to indicate their preference to participate in one of five themed cohorts. Cohort leads, or educational researchers, support the following cohorts: (1) Comprehensive School Health, which has been co-led by Drs. Rebecca Lloyd and Jessica Whitley (see Lloyd, 2017; Lloyd, 2018; Lloyd, 2020; Smith & Lloyd, 2021; Whitley et al., 2018; Whitley et al., 2019; Whitley, 2020); (2) Second Language Education, which is co-led by Drs. Stephanie Arnott and Marie-Emilie Masson (see Arnott & Mady, 2013; Milley & Arnott, 2016; Arnott et al., 2019; Masson et al., 2021; Masson, 2018); (3) Imagination, Creativity and Innovation, which has been co-led by Drs. John Richardson, Hugh Kellam, and Michael Wilson (see Kellam, 2020a, 2020b, 2021; Richardson, 2016, 2017); (4) Urban Education Community, which is co-led by Linda Radford and Shari Orders (see Aiken & Radford, 2012; Strong-Wilson et al., 2014; Radford, 2017; Aiken & Radford, 2018; Ng-A-Fook et al., 2020); and (5) Global Perspectives in Education, which is led by Drs. Saba Alvi and Diane Watt (see Alvi, 2013; Alvi, 2015; Alvi, 2020; Watt, 2013; Watt, 2016a; Watt, 2016b). Once
candidates are placed into a cohort within a specific division, they remain in that cohort for the duration of the entire program. P/J candidates complete all their coursework together within a given cohort except for their elective course at the end of Year 2. In the J/I and I/S divisions, teacher candidates complete their eight foundation courses as a cohort, but study with other cohort candidates in their teachable subject areas. Cohorts are another community of inquiry that provide candidates with a perspective or lens to explore diverse, equitable, and inclusive praxis.

**FSL & SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING**

All the research-supported design elements apply to each division of our teacher education program. The P/J FSL curriculum-as-planned and -implemented was also directly informed by second language education research in significant ways. First, the activities and workshops organized by the Second Language Education cohort in the P/J FSL program are purposefully designed to engage future teachers in reflecting on themselves as language teachers, regardless of the grade or discipline in which they teach. In line with recent research and OCT Standards of Practice related to *Supporting English Language Learners*, such culturally and linguistically responsive teaching is central to our teacher education program through diverse second language education workshops and courses (i.e., PED 3129) offered to all future teachers.

Second, we incorporate a holistic perspective on developing future FSL teacher critical competencies across four key pillars for success: (1) language proficiency, (2) intercultural competence, (3) pedagogical knowledge, and (4) professional collaboration. These pillars reflect relevant research detailing the specific knowledge, skills, and experiences required of FSL teachers to teach French effectively (Salvatori & MacFarlane, 2009), and the collaborative professionalism that contributes to such professional learning in teacher education programs (Hargreaves & O’Connor, 2018). Not only do many candidates take an additional language course focused on supporting their French language development (i.e., PED 1599), but we remain the only Faculty of Education in Ontario that offers the *DELF Correcteur Training* as part of their FSL teacher education program (i.e., training that positively impacts the planning, pedagogy, and assessment/evaluation practices of in-service FSL teachers – see Rehner, 2017, 2018). These two initiatives respond directly to calls for sustained support and development of future FSL teachers’ French proficiency and motivation to continue in the profession (ACPI, 2018; OPSBA, 2018).

Through living the cycles of critical inquiry, cohort members are invited to study, reconsider, rethink, and critically examine in-depth issues arising from practice beyond the scope of their on-campus courses in relation to existing research (Donnell & Harper, 2005; Jennings & Smith, 2002). Thus, participating in cohort micro-programming and community-wide initiatives, assisting in the development and organization of workshops, and engaging in school-based cycles of inquiry encourages a more nuanced understanding of teaching practices, supports the exploration of relationships between information and experiences, and enhances peer support. The focus on communities of inquiry is not new in our thinking about teacher education at the University of Ottawa, but rather it helps to articulate and highlight some of the work that is already happening within our Faculty of Education. While we recognize that all B.Ed. classes can be seen as relational sustaining communities, and as teacher candidates transition into school and classroom communities, there are additional initiatives that extend this notion of communities of inquiry. For instance, some professors have made connections with school classrooms and take teacher candidates in their courses to those classrooms to observe, assist, and then through discussion,
connect the school classroom experience to the more theoretical discussions they have in their own courses. Other professors create opportunities for teacher candidates to participate with different community-service projects, which connect to the theory and research they are studying together. Hence, the notion of community not only includes the courses and classrooms within the teacher education program but also extends to communities beyond the program, all of which helps to provide forums for orienting their curriculum inquiries in relation to the curriculum-as-planned, -implemented, and -lived with their students.

ORIENTING TOWARD A CRITICAL INQUIRY STANCE

What seems to be needed in curriculum inquiry, therefore, is general recognition of the epistemological limit-situation in which current curriculum research is encased, that is, a critical awareness that conventional research has not only a limiting effect but also to some degree a distorting effect on new possibilities in curriculum research.


As educators, we feel obligated to create opportunities and learning situations for students to question why some people suffer, lack opportunities, and lose hope despite their hard work and resilience, while others have anything they want and more in a relatively easy way. We also feel the urgency to engage students and teachers in this type of inquiry for conscientization, and to strengthen alliances for working toward a more just and democratic society.

(Sleeter, Torres, & Laughlin, 2004, p. 83)

We use the term ‘critical inquiry’ to create an orientation where a ‘teacher’ and ‘student’ enact curriculum research together. Teacher education is not merely about educating and orienting teachers toward becoming professional curriculum technicians, implementing prescribed scripts, honing disciplinary (disciplined) “best practices,” and/or delivering standardized governmental policies (Aoki, 1983/2004; Clarke & Phelan, 2017; Wrench & Paige, 2020). Rather, teacher education and its respective curriculum seeks to sustain and support beginning teachers as they bump up against relevant literature, current societal dilemmas, curricula, educational policies, and the actions and thinking of teachers while inquiring and reflecting critically and creatively on their views and practices in relation to the larger educational ecosystem and its respective nested school communities. Thus, as well as creating inquiry opportunities for beginning teachers to (re)educate themselves and self-study, we also present opportunities and experiences for them to establish a critical orientation toward a (their) stance of inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009).

The University of Ottawa teacher education program is an opportunity for beginning teachers to experiment with, unlearn, and learn from the dynamic and iterative cycle of critical inquiry orientation situated within different local, provincial, national, and international Indigenous and non-Indigenous superdiverse and plurilingual communities (Krasny & Sachar, 2017; Ndhlovu, 2016; Piccardo, 2017). It is within these communities that our teacher candidates can experiment
with their praxis, engage in discussion about such planned and lived experimentations with associated teachers and educational researchers, and are provided with opportunities to conduct further research in relation to their professional knowledge and practice in superdiverse and plurilingual community-referenced settings.

Carl James (2017) calls on us to consider a community-referenced approach to education (CRAE). “Communities shape, and are shaped by, group affiliation based on shared norms, values, interests, and practices —all of which are interrelated to social, political, religious, and economic circumstances” (p. 39). Moreover, “community is neither homogeneous nor stable, but is,” as he reminds us, “necessarily complex, contextual, changing, multilayered, relational, and sometimes temporary, differentially serving its members who exercise their agency based on their beliefs, ethics, and mores” (p. 39). In turn, James reminds educators “to take every opportunity to co-create curriculum with students helping them to develop their critical analytical skills, learn language to articulate their understandings of their lives, make sense of their community and social circumstances, and acquire understandings of the structures that support their circumstances” (p. 40). Therefore, our teacher education curriculum seeks to afford teacher candidates opportunities during their coursework and practicum placements to plan for, live, research, and respond to the complexities of the systems and structures in which Ontario teachers work and the diverse communities and individual students they seek to serve. It calls on teachers and students to co-create, co-sustain, and co-support a critical inquiry orientation, or a stance, toward becoming teacher-as-researchers.

An inquiry stance, an inquiry habit of mind, or what Aoki (1978/1980/2004) calls a “critical inquiry orientation,” therefore informs our program design through the integration of coursework and their community-referenced experiences (pp. 98-99). Such situated and referenced critical inquiry orientations call on teacher candidates to hone their “understanding of fundamental interest, values, assumptions, and implications for human” and more-than-human social action and relations (p. 99). Our teacher candidates in Year 1 spend every Wednesday in their assigned school community from early November to December and then again in January to early March so that we can bridge the assumed “theory/practice” gaps. The inquiry cycle is embedded in all courses and requires teacher candidates to question, investigate, research, analyze, collaborate, and share on a regular basis. For example:

- PED 3151 has teacher candidates in Year 2 conducting action research or a professional inquiry on their own praxis. These projects are shared in the second semester in a poster sharing session.
- PED 4142 invites teacher candidates to draw on research related to special education and inclusive practices to collaboratively problem-solve specific case studies.

Our program also provides a wide range of professional learning opportunities with input from our teacher candidates and our community partners. These include the Teachers Teaching Teachers conference, the Professional Learning Community workshop series for PED 3150 and 3151, and Building Futures, a Ministry of Education initiative, as well as access to several Educational Research Unit research activities. Topics range from equity, diversity, inclusion, human rights,
truth and reconciliation education, intersectionality, ethical standards, technology, career planning, mental health, well-being, and so much more.

DIGITAL PROFESSIONAL HUB STRATEGY

Dr. Michelle Schira Hagerman created our Digital Hub strategy, which in turn supports teacher candidates' engagement with technology in relation to their online professional identity and orientation to an equitable praxis (see Spiro et al., 2015; Castek et al., 2017; Hagerman & Coleman, 2017; Hagerman, 2017; Turner et al., 2017; Hartman et al., 2018). A variety of initiatives constitute the Hub: an online learning MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) as a primer for effective online learning; integrated software and technology support; expanded sections of technology courses; webinars and online training; virtual workshops and online tutoring to support mandatory tests; and a STEAM club developed in collaboration with the Faculty of Engineering in which candidates can experiment with coding and Maker technologies. By the end of Year 2, all candidates are required to create their own Digital Hub, synthesizing their different conceptualizations of “teacher-as-researcher” toward becoming Ontario professional educators. These curated collections of coursework artifacts and representations of their teaching practice encourage candidates to engage with not only existing digital communities and professional networks, but also support and communicate their critical praxis in relation to their conceptions of who they were, are, and would like to be in service as educators during their future careers.

PRACTICUM PHILOSOPHY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PLACEMENTS

We consider that the dynamic notion of culture and the situated nature of understanding and learning require teachers to be inquirers of their classrooms and teaching.

(Sleeter, Torres, & Laughlin, 2004, p. 83)

The practicum is based on a critical inquiry orientation, stance, and cycle put forth in our conceptual framework. It affords teacher candidates curricular and pedagogical opportunities to examine their preconceptions about teaching and learning and entertain uncertainty through observing, participating, and engaging in the ongoing day-to-day realities of a classroom. It provides teacher candidates with periods of observation, co-planning, and collaborative classroom interaction through which they can consider their cultural and professional dispositions, as self-study, in relation to responding and sustaining their students’ emotional and academic needs. It creates opportunities for teacher candidates to become adaptive experts who start with student engagement and individual needs at the core of their professional learning. Teacher candidates can then reflect, in evidence-informed ways, on what has worked and what has not worked in relation to the diversity of students they seek to serve.

This “inquiry habit of mind” requires educators to unpack their assumptions of schooling, learning, and teaching as part of a cycle of inquiry to better address the diverse needs of the learners in their classrooms. Adaptive experts can, as Timperley (2010) makes clear,

…flexibly retrieve, organize and apply knowledge to new problems and are not restricted to executing established routines of practice. Adaptive experts know
what to do when known routines do not work, and when they need to expand the depth and breadth of current expertise by integrating knowledge from various domains to solve new problems that cannot be solved by what they did previously. (p. 6)

This framework recognizes that the inquiry cycle is continuous and is enhanced with one’s lived experiences with curriculum-as-planned, -implemented, and -lived in the classroom with students. The components of practicum are framed like the gradual release used in balanced literacy programs, where a teacher candidate becomes more independent and competent over the course of the practicum. Regular communication by email and our teacher education monthly newsletter help to ensure that associate teachers and principals are informed about our program’s conceptual framework, scope, and sequencing in relation to the different priorities of their school communities.

MINOR AND MAJOR CHANGES TO OUR TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Doing curriculum implementation is achieving a deep understanding of Curriculum X and transforming it based on the appropriateness to the situation.

(Aoki, 1984/2004, p. 118)

In addition to practicum, teacher candidates in all divisions continue to complete sixteen 3-credit courses across two years (4 semesters). These courses include, depending on division, 7-9 foundations courses, 4-6 teaching subject methods courses, 2 professional inquiry courses (referred to previously, PED 3150 and 3151), and 1-2 electives (see Ng-A-Fook et al., 2017). Teacher candidates in our P/J FSL program take 2 additional teaching subject methods courses related to teaching FSL at the Primary and Junior divisions; as well, many take a year-long course to supplement their French language competency. Among the foundations courses, all teacher candidates develop their critical competencies in relation to curriculum planning, implementation, and assessment (PED 3141, 4141); learning theories and inclusive practices (PED 3142, 4142); First Nations, Inuit, and Métis education (PED 3138); and broader societal issues related to schooling (PED 3102). Those in the Primary/Junior and Junior/Intermediate divisions also develop their math and science thinking competency in PED 3152; those in Junior/Intermediate examine human development and transitions within the school context at the J/I levels in PED 3153 and PED 3154, whereas those in the Intermediate/Senior division examine human development and transitions at the I/S levels in PED 3153 and PED 3155.

Teacher candidates in the P/J division complete 6 teaching methods courses. Methods courses in Year 1 focus on teaching in the Primary division, while in Year 2 they focus on teaching in the Junior division, or vice versa. However, rather than each course being devoted to a specific subject, each focuses on integrating across a pair of subjects. This integrated approach has several advantages. By combining pairs of subjects in each methods course, teacher candidates are exposed to teaching all six of the subject areas at the start of the program with sufficient time to be prepared for their first practicum experience. As well, integrating subjects in each methods course helps prepare teacher candidates to use an interdisciplinary approach, such as found in many
elementary classroom settings. It eliminates redundancy across Primary and Junior level courses, allows them to examine an interdisciplinary approach within more traditional subject pairings (e.g., mathematics and science; arts and language arts), while also challenging them to break stereotypical thinking and identify links across less traditional pairings (e.g., art and mathematics), which is crucial for acquiring flexible knowledge that can be effectively transferred and applied. Teacher candidates in the J/I division complete three such integrated teaching methods courses at the Junior division, as well as one specific to their chosen teaching subject at the Intermediate division. Teacher candidates in the I/S division complete teaching methods courses specific to both of their chosen teaching subjects at both the Intermediate and Senior divisions. In Year 2 of our program, teacher candidates select one (those in the P/J and J/I divisions) or two (those in the I/S division) elective courses. In an effort to maintain a relevant array of options in relation to current issues, needs, and interests of teacher candidates in Ontario, we are introducing 4 new elective courses in 2021/2022: Exploring Gender & Sexual Diversity through a Critical Lens, Pratiquons ensemble!: Empowering FSL teachers’ personal and professional practice with French language(s) and culture(s), Connecting Math to Your World, and Introduction to Educational Leadership.

We are mindful, however, that adding new content such as courses represents a minor change. In response to the real and felt need to address antiracisms, homophobia, transphobia, islamophobia, and other individual and systemic inequities, we have been called on to do more. While, for example, shifting the content and voices we include in our courses might begin to unsettle a settler colonial inertia, such curricular and pedagogical changes do not necessarily disrupt the very colonial logics inscribed on our institutional landscapes and teacher education curriculum (Donald, 2012). As part of our ongoing self-study and enactment of the scope and sequencing of our teacher education program, we continue to inquire ourselves, critically, and in turn challenge the kinds of orientations and relationships that our program is creating, maintaining, excluding, and/or making (im)possible.

**ENACTING PRAXIS AS A CRITICAL INQUIRY ORIENTATION IN RELATION TO TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION EDUCATION, ANTIRACISM(S), EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION**

Critics reject a liberal model of reconciliation that enables the Canadian settler state to make modest adjustments to “recognize” and “accommodate” Indigenous peoples in existing political, legal, and institutional structures and systems in ways that ultimately perpetuate colonialism.

(Craft & Regan, 2020, p. xiii)

Both cultural analysis and critical race theory foster a discussion about the intersection of race, gender, and class as they are lived, performed, experienced, and resisted in stratified societies where the culture is shaped, reshaped, and maintained through mechanisms such as racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and stereotyping.

(James, 2021, p. xx)
Over the past six years, truth and reconciliation education, antiracist education, equity, diversity, and inclusion have been addressed to some extent across the scope and sequencing of our teacher education curriculum. Beyond our conceptual framework, emphasis has been placed on teaching as a praxis with critical competencies and an orientation toward culturally relational, responsive, relevant, sustaining, and trauma-informed pedagogies (Currie, Ng-A-Fook, & Drake, 2021; Donald, et al., 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2021; Milner, 2017; Paris, 2012). Although considerable efforts have been made to increase the diversity of our teacher candidate population, we still find ourselves not reflecting the diversity of today’s classrooms in our instructional staff and/or across the curriculum. In response, we have added anti-oppression training and relevant literature to our professional inquiry courses and compulsory professional learning in the areas of trauma-informed practice; anti-Black, -Indigenous, Asian-racisms; inclusive practices; and bias-free progressive discipline. Ladson-Billings (2021) offers the following cautionary note:

Unfortunately, the popularity of culturally relevant, responsive and sustaining pedagogies has led to the creation of workshops, institutes, and certifications designed to “make” teachers culturally relevant (responsive or sustaining) pedagogs. Typically, these bromides are rarely grounded in careful theory and offer desperate teachers, schools, and districts a set of prescriptive approaches that are antithetical to everything the theory represents. (p. 352)

Ladson-Billings points out that “while teacher educators regularly assign readings on culturally relevant, responsive, and sustaining pedagogies, they rarely demonstrate such work in their own teaching and teacher education students and novice teachers report struggling with implementation of the theory in their own practice” (p. 354). The school stoppages in the United States and here in Canada have, as Ladson-Billings reminds us, “forced us to acknowledge we were not serving all students well before COVID-19 school closures,” including our teacher candidates (p. 355). In response to ongoing macro and micro contexts of systemic racist and structural barriers inside and outside our teacher education program and its respective curriculum, during the 2019/2020 academic year, teacher candidates created the “Teacher Candidates of Colour Collective” to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the program and Faculty.

The TCC collective now contributes to a variety of Faculty committees and provides professional learning for fellow Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour (IBPOC) teacher candidates. Its work is based on an anti-oppressive framework and a consensus-based decision-making process. They continue to address: (1) decolonizing the body, mind, and spirit, which focuses on learning and unlearning our own assumptions and biases; (2) decentralizing hierarchies and power dynamics to empower marginalized communities and individuals; and finally, (3) removing and reducing systemic and structural barriers that exist. Our teacher education program has worked to centre and address such ongoing structural and systemic racism(s) at program council meetings in terms of reconceptualizing its curriculum and institutional culture. In terms of our 2020/2021 academic year, our wider Faculty of Education community was called upon to rethink their work, teaching, and relations with each other in terms of contributing “to action for racial justice and to address anti-Black racisms and other racisms in our Faculty, University and society” (University of Ottawa, 2020). Although our teacher education program continues to work together against various forms of individual, systemic, and societal racism, there is still much more work to be done. Such ongoing racial justice work is informed by the following principles:
• **Active**: A focus on action, not more studying the problem;

• **Engaged**: A commitment to engage stakeholders, including students and staff, and community partners in crafting our long-term action plan; and

• **Sensitive**: A commitment to be aware of the additional work and emotional cost that may inadvertently be borne by IBPOC members of our community and to conduct the process responsibly and with sensitivity. (University of Ottawa, 2020)

These principles promise to inform the current and future curricular and pedagogical critical inquiries and orientations we seek to enact with teacher candidates as part of the inquiry cycle and in terms of the kinds of teacher-as-researcher questions they might ask in relation to the curriculum-as-planned, -implemented, and -lived with students in the classroom.

Our collective action for the 2021/2022 academic year attempts to build on what we have unlearned and learned in relation to racial justice and anti-black racism(s) and is now refocusing on critical inquiries and situated orientations toward Indigenous Rights in Education. The following principles guide our thinking and actions:

• **Ethical engagement**: A commitment to ethically engage with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis community members, students and staff, and community partners in crafting our long-term action plan;

• **Reciprocity**: A commitment to strive for reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities and individuals with whom we collaborate; and

• **Respect**: A commitment to be aware of the additional work that may inadvertently be borne by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis members within or outside of the Faculty of Education and to conduct the process with respect, reciprocity, and sensitivity. (University of Ottawa, 2021)

In response to the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 **Calls to Action** (2015), we have made several changes to our teacher education curriculum. For example, we created a foundations course titled PED 3138 *First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Histories, Perspectives, and Contemporary Issues*. All teacher candidates are now introduced to the historical contexts of settler colonial violence, its intergenerational impacts, Indigenous resistance, empowerment, revitalization, renewal, sovereignty, treaty education, ongoing systemic inequities, challenges, and different ethical ways they can contribute toward reimagining and enacting our past, present, and future relations (Donald, 2011, 2012, 2021). In turn, we continue to create, support, and sustain mutually reciprocal relations with the Kitigan Zibi Algonquin Nation, its educational sector, Elders, knowledge keepers, educational and political leaders, and the Kikinamadinan School, its administration, teachers, and students. We also established the Teacher Education First Nations, Métis, Inuit Advisory Committee, which in turn is composed of different members from the wider
Ottawa-Gatineau region. Moreover, we hired two tenure track First Nations professors (Keri-Lynn Cheechoo, 2020a, 2020b; McGuire-Adams, 2017, 2020a, 2020b). However, these remain small and long overdue glacial incremental steps toward redressing the historical harms perpetuated by settler colonial teacher education and K-12 institutions and their respective programs. Our Advisory Committee met once a month for an evening potluck to discuss how we might address truth and reconciliation education more broadly inside and outside of our Faculty of Education community and specifically across the teacher education program and its respective curriculum. Such gatherings led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Ottawa and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. In turn, the Faculty of Education is now the Ontario host for Project of Heart. Our teacher education program and its different cohorts continue to collaborate on several different truth and reconciliation education programming with different First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners including several experiences with the land and its kin due to the generosity of several Kitigan Zibi Algonquin Elders and knowledge keepers. There is much more urgent relational work needed in terms of listening to, supporting, collaborating, and co-creating with our colleagues, the different local First Nations, Inuit, and Métis individuals and communities who are living here in the Kitchissippi valley.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars have critiqued current conceptualisations of truth and reconciliation education and its respective research. Truth and reconciliation education must, as Hare (2020) makes clear, challenge conceptions of a professional settler consciousness and move teacher candidates toward action and accountability. Otherwise, it remains a “trendy topic as it has been cast in social media and scholarly writing” (p. 23). Likewise, Madden (2019) reminds us that the TRC Calls to Action cannot be reduced to pedagogical approaches or “best” teaching practices. Instead, she advocates for a “de/colonizing theory of reconciliation” (p. 285), which includes a “consistent examination of colonial logics and productions” (p. 287). Indeed, recent research by teacher educators points toward a commitment to challenging the settler historical consciousness reproduced in teacher education programmes (Aitken & Radford, 2018; Brant, Ng-A-Fook, & Llewellyn, 2019; Tupper, 2020). Such research addresses the various ways that a settler colonial worldview has contributed and contributes toward teacher candidates’ resistance to unlearning national myths, settler denialism, and how they continue to benefit from settler colonial policies in relation to their future professional responsibilities as Ontario public servants (Howell & Ng-A-Fook, Ingham, & Burrows, 2018; Howell, Brant-Birioukov, & Ng-A-Fook, 2021). How the TRC Calls to Action for curricular and pedagogical transformation are being addressed, or not, within Faculties of Education is therefore a significant ongoing critical inquiry for us to self-study, deconstruct, reconstruct, and enact together.

RESPONDING TO CURRENT AND FUTURE EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

To help explore this view of competence, let us uncover the root etymology of “competence.” The disclosure of the Latin root reveals a fresh view. The Latin root is “com-petere,” “com” meaning “together,” and “petere” meaning “to seek.” In a root sense, then, to be competent means to be able to seek together or to be able to venture forth together. This root meaning of “competence” as “communal
“venturing” holds promise for a fresh view of what it means to be a competent teacher.

(Aoki, 1984/2005, p. 130)

The past six years have required Faculties of Education to respond to several Ontario government initiatives. For example, during the last provincial election, the present government campaigned on reforming teacher education in relation to mathematics education, academic achievement, and international standardized tests scores. They promised a return “back to the basics.” To do so, the government is now implementing a standardized math proficiency test. All Ontario teachers must now pass it to become accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers. Certainly, all school and public health-based decisions directly affect our teacher candidates, but the introduction of the Mathematics Proficiency Test and the OCT Temporary Certificate has created additional confusion for teacher candidates and within the field. The timing of, and the expectation to respond quickly to, these announcements provided little time to adapt and to collaborate with our local school board partners. Under “normal” circumstances, the announcement of this new requirement for certification to teach in Ontario undoubtedly increased the level of stress and the workload of teacher candidates and faculties of education; these consequences of the test have most likely been compounded by the additional stress experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of our ongoing self-study, we continue to look for ways to disrupt, unlearn, learn, address, consolidate, link, and communicate the different components of the program, in relation to our conceptual framework, orientations toward an “adaptive expert,” a critical inquiry stance, the OCT criteria, Ministry directives, and current educational research (Kitchen, 2016; Myers & Hughes, 2021). Such self-study continues to focus on a “communal venturing” within communities of inquiry, and what might hold “promise for a fresh view of what it means to be a competent teacher” (Aoki, 1984/2005, p. 130). In turn, our conceptual framework will continue to scaffold and orient teacher candidates toward different critical competencies “in thoughtful action, that is, action full of thought” while experiencing the scope and sequencing of our program (Aoki, 1984/2004, p. 134). Looking toward the future, such adaptive orientations promise to invite teacher candidates to draw on educational research and an inquiry stance to examine their assumptions and contributions toward our Faculty of Education’s Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and Antiracism Action Plan (University of Ottawa, 2021b), the OCT’s Professional Advisory on Anti-Black Racism (2021), and our ongoing commitments to and beyond the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action. We are, as Phelan et al. (2020) remind us, “obligated to honour the civic particularity of this multicultural, linguistically plural, occupied place where they encounter the entire world in one classroom” (p. 8). In turn, understanding the nuances and complexities of such particularities remain critical inquiries for us as we unlearn and learn to become “professional educators” committed to the lifelong concept of “teacher-as-researcher” while venturing forth together with the curriculum-as-planned, -implemented, and -lived.

REFERENCES


INTRODUCTION

Quality clinical experiences are considered to be vital to the development of new teachers. Teaching practice and time in schools and classrooms provide opportunities for preservice teachers to enhance their pedagogical skills and confidence, as well as develop dispositions and habits of mind, that are consistent with standards of practice for the teaching profession. In response to the two-year Bachelor of Education in Ontario, which mandated a greater emphasis on clinical experiences, the Faculty has not just increased the number of practice teaching days but also sought to provide teacher candidates with what might be considered to be value-adding and uncommon field experiences. Three important elements of this include providing experiences to (1) work with vulnerable student populations; (2) learn through community engagement; and (3) learn in international contexts.

This chapter analyzes three field experience programs that address the three elements identified above. We start by describing the general teaching practice model in our consecutive and concurrent programs, before analyzing the Leadership Experience for Academic Direction (L.E.A.D.) program, Reciprocal Learning Program (RLP), and Global Community Engagement Program (GCEP). We end with a few concluding thoughts about the lessons learned and implications for the future of field experiences in the Faculty of Education.

OVERVIEW OF FIELD EXPERIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

In an effort to improve teacher education in Ontario, Faculties of Education have moved to a two-year program (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2013). Still at the core of the programs is the relationship between theory and practice and the partnerships developed with school boards across the province. Thus, the Ontario College of Teachers and the faculties of education have agreed that the field experience component would be no less than 80 days over four semesters. This increase
in teacher candidate experiential education was established to better integrate theory and practice that for some has been considered to be a problematic and often contentious issue.

There is no doubt that experiential learning and education are critical to the teaching profession as they are to most professions such as medicine, nursing, social work, law, engineering, and journalism. In fact, experiential learning in teacher education has been a staple for faculties for over 40 years where its use has been focused on the experience of preservice teachers developing their practice in the classroom with an experienced teacher mentor known in Ontario as an associate teacher. Doing more of the same or increasing the number of practicum days does not necessarily improve the teaching experience. To enhance the programs, we need to meet the needs of our changing global society and better prepare our teacher candidates for the socio-political-economic elements of the learning environment (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012).

At the University of Windsor, we collectively chose to approach this through alternative pedagogies that weave experiential learning with service-learning, purposively targeting the socio-political-economic elements that create significant gaps in learning from kindergarten to post-secondary education.

PRESERVICE PROGRAM STRUCTURE

At the University of Windsor, field experience is a mandatory component of the Bachelor of Education program, which provides initial teacher preparation of prospective teachers. Three preservice education programs are offered: Consecutive Bachelor of Education and Concurrent Bachelor of Education for P/J, J/I, and I/S divisions, as well as Technological Studies Bachelor of Education or Diploma in Technological Education for the I/S division. Our Concurrent programs are varied and done in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Science at the University of Windsor, and St. Clair College to offer a Diploma in Early Childhood Education (See Beckford et al., 2017). The faculty also offers an International Baccalaureate certification program, which students take concurrently with their teacher education program.

FIELD EXPERIENCE

The Ontario College of Teachers, the teacher accreditation statutory body in Ontario, mandates a minimum of 80 days of teaching practice for accredited preservice teacher education programs in the Province. Teaching practice experiences at the University of Windsor are delivered through the mandatory Teaching Practice course for all teacher candidates. The course has two components: the in-school component comprising 94 days of field experience over the two years of the program and an in-Faculty component where every student is part of an Advisory Group (AG) that is assigned a Faculty Advisor (FA). The AG is a community of learners with flexible grouping but grouped typically by division. It meets regularly throughout the program as a seminar class to prepare for and reflect on field placements specifically, and share ideas and experiences about teaching and learning praxis more generally.

Field experience at the University of Windsor is characterized by a cycle of in-class coursework programming and teaching practice experiences. Teacher candidates do alternating blocks of classes and teaching practice throughout the two-year program. The same applies for Concurrent
students during their dedicated education years, which are the years of their five-year program when they take only education courses and programming. Prior to embarking on teaching practice, teacher candidates are prepared through their methodology and foundations course, their Advisory Groups, and a special workshop called Orientation to Teaching Practice. In the next sections we describe the structure of the field experience component of the Bachelor of Education program.

ORGANIZATION OF CONSECUTIVE AND CONCURRENT PRACTICE TEACHING

It should be noted that in Year 1 of the Consecutive program, Concurrent students are in the third year of their undergraduate degree program. In this year, they start taking Faculty of Education programming with this entire year dedicated to their teacher education program. In the fifth year of their program, they return to the Faculty of Education to complete their Bachelor of Education degree. Teacher candidates in their first year complete a total of 47 days of teaching practice in two teaching practice blocks, one in each term. In Term One, the first block is a twenty-four-day placement, which follows nine weeks of classes. In Term Two, teacher candidates complete nine weeks of classes at the university, before ending the year with a twenty-three-day placement that commences after the traditional March Break for schools. The structure of the Year One practicum is repeated in Year Two of the program for second-year Consecutive students, and fifth-year Concurrent students. They complete 47 days of teaching practice -- 24 days in Term One and 23 in Term Two.

A key feature of the teaching practice structure is the incremental increase in the teaching expectations from placement to placement, both in terms of amount of teaching TCs should do and the level of competence required of them. This is outlined in the Practicum Dates and Teaching Expectations document that each associate teacher receives. The document spells out the teaching percentages and expectations for each placement. It also emphasizes that teaching expectations can be met in a number of ways, including teaching small groups and team teaching.

It should be pointed out that within this general structure there are some variations. For example, students in the L.E.A.D. program also spend Fridays during the teaching weeks in their teaching practice schools. In addition, whereas teacher candidates generally practice in at least two different schools, L.E.A.D. participants do all their teaching practice in one school. The Faculty also offers a program that provides teaching certification to teachers of technological studies in secondary schools. The field experience model for this program provides for 80 days of teaching practice between September and April, and teacher candidates and their associate teachers have autonomous flexibility to come up with a schedule based on mutual convenience. Teacher candidates are responsible for maintaining a detailed log of their hours (1 full day = 5 hours = 4 full periods), which must be validated by the associate teacher and submitted each month to the Advisor and Field Experience Office at the Faculty of Education. Credit is only given for time taught in their broad-based teachable subject area.

THE NATURE OF TEACHER FIELD EXPERIENCES AT UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

The University of Windsor offers a variety of field experience opportunities for teacher candidates (TCs). The conventional in-school teaching practice, which is the gold standard for clinical teaching experience for preservice teachers across the world, is also a feature of the Windsor teacher education program. In this context, each TC is placed with a mentor teacher called an
associate teacher (AT) in Ontario. The AT plays a huge role in the professional development of the TC. In addition to being a mentor and guide, the AT is also an assessor and evaluator of the TC. It may be argued that these two roles may produce some dilemmas for both the AT and TC.

The Windsor programme also offers non-traditional field experiences and alternative placements. These are designed to provide exceptional experiences for TCs that extend their range of experiences and enrich their professional and personal development. Included among these are a number of international opportunities that are optional for teacher candidates. Also included are opportunities for experiential learning through community service engagement. Two years ago, the Faculty made it mandatory for all teacher candidates to take a service-learning option in an effort to initiate a more holistic development of our young teachers. These courses provide opportunities for teacher candidates to learn in different contexts and view teaching through different lenses.

This paper analyzes three of these different field experiences open to Consecutive and Concurrent teacher candidates in our Faculty of Education. These are:

1. Leadership Experience for Academic Direction (L.E.A.D.)
2. Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program (RLP)
3. Global Community Engagement Program (GCEP)

In the context of the three elements of uncommon field experiences that were identified earlier, L.E.A.D. is related to working with vulnerable student populations; RLP is related to learning in international and intercultural contexts; and GCEP is related to both of these in addition to learning through community engagement. The GCEP and RLP experiences are not counted as OCT-required teaching practice but L.E.A.D. is. OCT-recognized teaching practice must be supervised by an OCT member teacher in a school in Ontario.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE FOR ACADEMIC DIRECTION (L.E.A.D.)

The L.E.A.D. program is the brainchild of Dr. Geri Salinitri. The program was designed to better prepare teacher candidates to meet the needs of vulnerable learners typically considered to be ‘at-risk’ or, to use the more contemporary term, ‘in-risk’. The goal was to develop teacher leaders who were advocates and champions for ‘in-risk’ high school youth. The program has since expanded to include elementary school students. L.E.A.D. has grown to be an exceptionally popular experiential program for teacher candidates and is highly sought after and thought of.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Experiential learning itself is defined as an individual’s experience that “occurs when changes in judgments, feelings, knowledge or skills result for a particular person from living through an event or events” (Chickering, 1976, p. 63). According to Stehno (1986), experiential learning involves action, reflection, abstraction, and application. Adding to these definitions, experiential education is a transactive process between an educator and student (Itin, 1999). It was Dewey (1916) that introduced the place of experience in education. At the core was the education of the learner for participation in a democratic society (Kraft, 1996; Itin, 1999). Thus, the teacher and the learner are engaged in purposive experience (Dewey, 1986).
According to Itin (1999), experiential education is:

A holistic philosophy, where carefully chosen experiences supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results, through actively posing question, investigating, experimenting … solving problems, assuming responsibility … constructing meaning and integrating previously developed knowledge. (p. 93)

Within this, the learner is challenged to take risks and explore issues of beliefs, relationships, diversity, inclusion, and society. This impels teacher educators to facilitate learning by actively engaging the learner in co-creating the process and by linking the theory or knowledge to the experience. According to Shor and Freire (1987), this is “empowerment-based” education (Shor, 1992, p. 15). This would suggest that teacher educators should provide ample opportunities for teacher candidates to reflect on how their experiences relate to theory, to power, and to the inequalities in society, as well as to question and critically analyze education locally and globally. The seminal work on experiential and social learning of theorists like Dewey, Kolb, Bandura, and Shor and Friere is still relevant today as we grapple with the direction of education in this changing, complex society.

One such program at the University of Windsor that builds on the foundation of these theorists is L.E.A.D. – Leadership Experience for Academic Directions. As the name suggests, the goal of the program is to encourage teacher candidates to develop leadership skills that will prepare all students -- especially those who are deemed in risk of not graduating due to factors related to socio-economic status, challenges with academic achievement, social integration, and mental health -- to become healthy and productive citizens of their community. Specifically, the objectives of the L.E.A.D. service-learning course are to facilitate teacher candidates to:

- Gain an understanding of youth who are identified as “in-risk”;
- Immerse in a unique field experience where the teacher candidate is mentored by both the Student Success teacher and the Associates from their teachable areas;
- Examine alternative forms of education;
- Understand theories of social learning, resilience, teaching personal and social responsibility, restorative practices, and motivation;
- Link with community agencies and experts to provide a student success model for learning communities;
- Address current teen issues to learn to teach from a personal and social perspective; and
- Conduct a needs assessment with the student success team to develop a program within the school community and assess its impact.

Teacher candidates in the L.E.A.D. program take the service learning course, which addresses the theory of service-learning: “a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. Reflection and reciprocity are key concepts of service-learning” (Jacoby, 1996, p. 5). Moreover, reflective service-learning classes
predict increased “complexity in analysis of both causes and solutions to social problems” (Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. 75). Highlights of the program include:

- **Understanding poverty education**: The United Way presents a poverty simulation for our teacher candidates who experience the life of those in poverty through role play. It is a revealing look at poverty that one in four children face in our local community.

- **Understanding diversity**: Teacher candidates are presented with issues of cultural diversity, sexual identity, poverty, race, ethnic and gender discrimination as well as language barriers faced by so many in-risk youth.

- **Mentoring in-risk youth**: Teacher candidates work with small groups and individuals through credit rescue, credit recovery, and General Learning Strategies curriculum.

- **Working with Student Success Teachers**: Our teacher candidates spend half of their practicum time with Student Success initiatives reaching in-risk youth through alternative pedagogical strategies.

- **Understanding Pathways to Success**: Applying the theories of a growth mind set (Dweck, 2017a, 2017b; Ministry of Education, 2013), all students have strengths and capacity to become viable citizens in society. They just need help in determining their pathway to success. Good mentoring and understanding of pathways help teacher candidates to understand the diverse needs and possibilities that students possess.

- **Participating in Service Learning Projects within the School Communities**: Teacher candidates are required to complete a needs-assessment with the school administration and student success team. Following the needs-assessment, they propose a semester/yearlong initiative that they will lead to address the determined gap or improvement plan. The teacher candidates implement the initiative and assess its impact on the participants and the school community. They conclude with a research paper and presentation on their findings.

Teacher candidates complete all their field experience along with additional field time during the two years in the same urban school. This provides time for the teacher candidates, the students, and the school community to develop a trusting relationship. In-risk youth are best benefitted by an adult mentor (Holloway & Salinitri, 2010) and this is the key role of the teacher candidate in the L.E.A.D. service-learning. Holloway and Salinitri (2010) found that by “encouraging this kind of political growth, and rooted in the local experience, teacher candidates come to their own realizations” (p. 44-45). As one noted, “I would ask [in-risk students] questions about life, but some of the things they said were very shocking. It made you sort of understand why they do the things they do a little bit better” (p. 399). The experiential learning through L.E.A.D. has teacher candidates realizing that in serving in-risk youth, they are also serving the broader social structure.

**FEATURED ACTIVITIES**

Along with service-learning projects conducted at the schools during the field experience, L.E.A.D. teacher candidates are responsible for hosting two out of three possible full-scale events.

1. **LEADership Camp Experience**

L.E.A.D. teacher candidates were asked to volunteer for a 3-day camp experience with in-risk students from schools in Southwestern Ontario. The ratio of teacher candidate to student was 1 to
10. The teacher candidates mentored the students through risk taking activities at a camp ground. They reflected with the students on the challenges and rewards that accompanied them through the process. For many of the students living in urban centres, a camp experience was completely novel, exciting, and frightening, which proved true for many of the teacher candidates as well.

According to Furlong (2012), who has participated in the program and conducted research about it, the camp had a very significant impact on the participants. She emphasized its role in deepening trust and building relationships with in-risk students.

2. Challenge Cup
At the end of the year, teacher candidates are responsible for running the annual Challenge Cup. This activity is a team building, spirit raising challenge for teams of in-risk students from all of the local secondary schools. The teams are asked to wear spirit attire to represent their schools. The teams are put through various team sport challenges throughout the day. The team with the best spirit and best approach to the challenges wins the cup that was donated by the Windsor Police Services.

3. Power of Potential
Many in-risk youth have not been guided well in goal setting and aspirations for their future in society. Power of Potential is like a job fair geared specifically for students in risk. This is a full day event for over 300 local students that is sponsored by the L.E.A.D. program and local affiliates and agencies. Teacher candidates invite participants such as local businesses, post-secondary institutions, social agencies, police, and firefighters to present workshops, host information booths, and interact with the youth of our community schools.

PARTICIPANTS’ REFLECTIONS
Teacher candidates like Julie Last, who was involved in the L.E.A.D. program, feel it is a challenging and enriching experience—one that offers opportunities for everyone involved to learn and grow. Last reflects:

Through L.E.A.D., I was given the opportunity to work with, and learn from, the best teachers in the city. And the in-risk students I worked with taught me how challenging it is to find success and how rewarding it is when you have achieved it.

One of the instructors of the program conducted a study on the perceptions of SSTs regarding the L.E.A.D. program and noted:

My L.E.A.D. teacher candidates were extremely helpful and fabulous when it came to helping the students learn. Not only did they do a phenomenal job teaching one-on-one, they were exceptional in motivating the students during our events. They build a solid rapport with the kids and they were well respected by staff and students alike. The L.E.A.D. program has helped our Student Success room and be leaders in our activities. (Pizzo, 2015, p. 39)

From another Student Success teacher, Pizzo (2015) discovered:
Most of my L.E.A.D. teacher candidates come in with previous experience in working with a diverse population, but most importantly they all come in with a growth mindset that allows them to learn and grow everyday into positive role models for these in-risk students as they work alongside them throughout the course of the year. (p. 41)

The impact of L.E.A.D. on some teacher candidates has led them to pursue graduate research. For example, Nahaiciuc (2017) studied L.E.A.D. at one compensatory school that hosted 12 L.E.A.D. teacher candidates. Through a focus group, one teacher candidate noted:

I feel like I'm ready for an academic school or a locally developed school and even if I am teaching an Applied class I still have really, really intelligent kids in that classroom and I still have to challenge myself intellectually by creating interesting and engaging lessons, but at the same time I've built those strategies that can help students that are not as academically strong. In the focus group, another Pre-Service L.E.A.D. Teacher strengthens that opinion by saying: Before L.E.A.D. I didn't even know what an SST was and I feel like student teachers who don't have any student success aspect to their improvement as a teacher might develop the mindset of "that's not my job" and "I'm just a teacher" - I feel like I didn't realize how much extra goes into helping your students whereas now I feel like I know a lot of extra things that teachers can do to help students who don't want to work and it's a part of the job that I didn't realize before. (p. 46)

In the same research, another L.E.A.D. candidate added:

It's good to even just know at what point you should be taking advantage of those student success resources and have your students come down in order to hear it from somebody else so they can get back on track; L.E.A.D. helped me to learn how to utilize programs like this. (p. 46)

The principal of the school hosting the L.E.A.D. candidates commented on the change in teaching strategies experienced by the L.E.A.D. preservice teachers in his individual interview:

I'm envious of these L.E.A.D. teachers because I think they've really been dropped into an ideal situation where there are parameters in terms of what we would like them to do, but they have the autonomy to make it their own and I'm envious also because I can see the potential for learning and for really becoming great life-long learners; it's humbling to see that they know things that I didn't know until I was twice their age. (p. 47)

The feedback from participants reflects the impact of the program on the development of teacher candidates. It represents a unique approach to meet the needs of in-risk students by preparing teachers in terms of their views about teaching, their knowledge of in-risk students, and developing strategies and approaches to mitigating risks and giving students a chance at success. L.E.A.D. continues to grow as a service-learning/field experience opportunity for teachers in understanding pathways to success for all students.
TEACHER EDUCATION RECIPROCAL LEARNING PROGRAM (RLP)

The insightful sentiments of a teacher candidate who participated in the Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program (RLP) seem appropriate to start this section. Reflecting on the importance of the program, the TC noted the relevance of the program in building bridges between East and West and the resultant reciprocal learning that occurs. The RLP, initially supported by the University of Windsor Strategic Priority Fund and Southwest University in-kind contributions when it was first developed in 2010, has become a foundational program in Xu and Connelly’s (2013-2020) Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Grant Project. Since 2014, RLP participants have also been mentored to apply for the MITACs Globalink International Research Award. RLP is a collaborative initiative developed between the University of Windsor (UW) in Windsor, Ontario and Southwest University (SWU) in Chongqing, China. The Canada-China Reciprocal Learning Partnership extends to two universities and school boards in Ontario, Canada and four universities and related schools in China with the University of Windsor as the lead organization (Xu & Connelly, 2017). The philosophical predicate for the Partnership Project “… is the idea of a global community in which ideas, things and people move between countries and cultures” (Xu & Connelly, 2013a, p. 6). It advances intercultural dialogue to enhance global understanding and facilitate comparative international education through what chief architects of the RLP, Xu and Connelly (2013a), call ‘reciprocal learning across cultures’ (p. 6) and postulate that the RLP promotes the understanding of educational practice in narrative cultural contexts.

The RLP has helped the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor respond to education and research perspectives that advocate for diversifying and internationalizing preservice teacher education programs in the context of the realities of learning in an increasingly globalized world. According to Apple (2011), teacher education needs to be better anchored in a global orientation. This view is supported by Zhao (2010), who argues that teachers today should be competent global citizens (as cited in Xu, Chen, & Huang, 2015). In addition, Howe and Xu (2013) call for teacher education to facilitate more trans-cultural thinking. Generally speaking, teacher education lacks global contextuality and is grounded in the local, which, according to The Longview Foundation for Education in World Affairs and International Understanding (2008), is inadequate given the realities of globalization. In the context of the UW-SWU Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program, diversity with global competences has become an integral part of teacher education pedagogies in Canada and is becoming a growing element especially of urban educational settings in China (Xu, Chen, & Huang, 2015).

Despite this, there is still considerable debate about how best to enhance the development of diversity philosophy and practice among teacher candidates (Xu, Chen, & Huang, 2015). The most conventional strategies focus on coursework, which involves students taking courses specifically designed to raise cultural awareness and sensitivity as imperatives for teaching today. More recently, field experiences that place teacher candidates in neighbourhoods and schools characterized by cultural diversity have been incorporated into diversity strategies in teacher education. The urban education programs in places such as York University and the University of Windsor are examples of such experiences. The most recent strategies in this regard involve immersing students in culturally diverse communities different from their own and those where they live and work for varying short-term periods of time. The RLP is one such program. Xu et al. (2015) postulate that:
We argue that both the global and multicultural perspectives are cultivated in reciprocal learning that infuses the lived experiences of both Canadian and Chinese preservice students for mutual respect, understanding, and appreciation between cultures. This cultivation will in turn help them become culturally responsive and globally minded teachers when working with diversity in schools. (p. 143)

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The phrase “reciprocal learning” has been used in a wide range in terms of education, language learning, health care, computer science, business, and so forth (Cherkowski & Schnellert, 2018; Dunworth, 2010; Fowler et al., 2012; Leone, 2012; Scarino, 2014; Tyran & Garcia, 2015). For teacher education, as in other professions, there is a pervasive perspective of oversight in education psychology as a one-way teaching and learning system (Carrington, 2004). These studies emphasize the significant impact of reciprocal learning, especially in teachers’ development and language teaching and learning (Dunworth, 2010; Mitton-Kükner & Akyüz, 2012; Scarino, 2014). The reciprocal learning could promote collaborations among different institutions and mutual understanding among different stakeholders. Only one-way input and output would never be successful in a sustainable learning environment.

The concept of reciprocal learning in the context of Canadian and Chinese education was developed from the studies of immigrants’ cross-cultural schooling experience in Canada, in which we find the sense of a two-way bridge of educational reciprocity is mostly lost in immigrant education (Xu, 2017; Xu, in press). The Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program is designed to address this matter by highlighting reciprocal learning across cultures and societies. Built on the narrative knowledge base in curriculum and teacher education by Connelly and Clandinin (1988, 1990, 1992, 1995), this work has also been inspired by Hayhoe’s idea of dialogue across cultures (Hayhoe & Pan, 2001), especially the emphasis on identifying core Confucian values useful for the West society, Hall and Ames’s (1999) “we-consciousness” between the East and the West, Tu’s (2002) neo-Confucianism, and Cummins’ (1984, 1996, 2000) work on diversity and bilingual/multicultural education (Xu, 2006; Xu et al., 2015; Xu, 2017). The goal is to foster, study, and understand the concept of reciprocal learning in culture and education between Canada and China and to broaden the horizons of future teachers by developing their global competences for changing world landscapes.

Hence, the term “symbolises equality in educational relations between the two societies” (Connelly & Xu, in press, p. 2) with a vision of harmonizing Eastern and Western knowledge and learning in mutual respect and appreciation (Xu, 2011b; Xu, 2017; Xu, in press).

DESCRIPTION OF THE RLP

The RLP is the brain child of Professor Shijing Xu. The goal of the program is to “provide an exceptional cross-cultural experience with international engagement, [and] to broaden teacher candidates’ horizons for a society of increasing diversity in today’s globalized world” (Xu, 2011, p. 1). The program has two components each year.
1. Each Fall, SWU teacher candidates visit the University of Windsor and spend three months in the Faculty of Education where they engage in a variety of academic, professional, and cultural activities. They take preservice classes, conduct observational visits to local schools in the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB), and participate in cultural events. They also observe the academic and operational characteristics and strategies in the local school settings during practicum (Xu, Chen, & Huang, 2015).

2. Each Spring, UW teacher candidates visit SWU in China for about three months. There they participate in a series of lectures and workshops, visit Chinese schools, and engage in cultural activities (Xu, Chen, & Huang, 2015).

The selection of students for the program takes place through an application process open to registered teacher candidates in both universities. SWU typically has groups of 16-20, mainly third- and fourth-year students visit Windsor each year. The number of UW students has fluctuated from year to year especially when the successful applicants would have to go through a rigorous application for the Mitacs Globalink Research Award in the first semester. An initial group is selected from a list of TERLP applicants who express an interest at the beginning of each Fall semester, who then would have to be committed to the application for the Mitacs award and supported by UW home supervisors and co-supervisors and SWU host supervisors and co-supervisors who are Shijing Xu’s SSHRC Partnership Grant Project Team Leaders or members. Both sets of students are accompanied by Faculty Advisors. The SWU groups are supported by SWU with UW in-kind contributions. The University of Windsor groups are supported by the Mitacs international research awards for those who succeed in the applications and also by UW and SWU in-kind contributions and the SSHRC Partnership Grant.

REFLECTIONS FROM UW TEACHER CANDIDATES

The RLP has grown and strengthened to become one of the most popular programs in the Faculty of Education. It is also a major draw from a recruitment standpoint with students choosing Windsor because of the opportunities it provides for international engagement and cultural exchange. Feedback from participants from the University of Windsor has been extremely positive. Teacher candidates (TCs) overwhelmingly consider the program to be the highlight of their Bachelor of Education program. In this section we share some of their reflections on the RLP.

For some students, their experiences allowed them to learn about themselves and the kind of teacher they want to be. For example, one TC offered the following perspective:

I reflected a lot and in fact, I reflected every day. The main thing is that this visit has given me more reason to practice empathy in my teaching. I learned how hard it is to teach a language to students who were not good with that language. Effectively, it has taught me how to be a clear speaker.

Another wrote:

I learned more about the importance of preparing lessons as a teacher. Student teacher interns and my associate teacher in TJB middle school provided me with a lot of support
in helping me create lessons and reflecting with me on my lessons. In fact, before the reciprocal learning program, I was always very nervous to have outside teachers view my lessons, but now I realize how much this can help me improve as a teacher.

Some TCs grew in terms of their cultural awareness and knowledge. As one participant said:

I learned a lot about Chinese culture during the reciprocal learning program. I am especially interested in the love many Chinese people have for their country, and their emphasis on collective work as opposed to the focus on individuality in North America.

On the same note, another TC said:

…I also learned more about Chinese culture and Chinese history that I can bring to teaching in Canada.

Another TC offered this:

I learned a lot about the history of China and Chongqing but more importantly, I learned how passionate Chinese people are about their culture.

For some participants, the RLP and teaching in China helped them to improve their teaching. The following two reflection excerpts underscore this point:

I learned a lot about the importance of preparation as a teacher. I also learned more about Chinese culture and Chinese history that I can bring to teaching in Canada. Perhaps most importantly, I developed my confidence as a teacher because of the terrific feedback I received from my associate teachers.

Another participant had this to say:

I learned how to take control of the classroom. When I was in Canada, I struggled to find a way to keep control of my class and be able to run a classroom of my own. Having my own classroom in China gave me the chance to be in charge of my class. It gave me the confidence I was lacking and made me the teacher I am.

From this small sample of reflections, it seems obvious that the RLP has enhanced the personal and professional qualities in the participants. This was quite eloquently captured in the next excerpt from a participant’s reflection:

I will think of my China experience each and every time I teach. I know that I had more areas to develop than to celebrate, but it was an amazing learning experience in terms of activities and discipline. Seeing the [work]ing [ethic]s and determination of teachers in China made me want to work harder.
GLOBAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM (GCEP)

THE COURSE

The GCEP is the experiential component of the service-learning course *Vulnerability, Marginalization and Education* developed by Dr. Clinton Beckford. This course brings together five main themes or learning strands: community service-learning, global education, international and comparative education, intercultural experience, and experiential education. The main focus of the course is an exploration of the complex relationship between students’ out-of-school lives and their school experiences and the implications for teaching and learning. Teacher candidates focus on strategies for integrating service-learning in their teaching. The centerpiece of the course is the Global Community Engagement Project, through which teacher candidates authentically explore vulnerability and marginalization in education in a global context. The course provides opportunities for teacher candidates to plan and implement local and international service-learning projects. Specific objectives of the course include:

- To develop a greater understanding of the relationship between children’s out-of-school lives and their school experiences;
- To underscore the impact of marginalization and vulnerabilities like poverty, gender, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, and culture on children’s educational experiences; and
- To emphasize that as educators, we teach students, not subjects.

In terms of conceptual and theoretical foundations, the course discusses topics including:

- Definition of service-learning;
- Key principles of service-learning;
- Theoretical foundations of service-learning;
- Benefits of community service-learning;
- Community service-learning and student engagement;
- Tips for designing service-learning activities/projects for school children;
- Relationship between children’s out-of-school lives and their school experiences; and
- Vulnerability and education (poverty, hunger, homelessness, gender, etc.).

In terms of applications, teacher candidates design and develop local community service projects and activities, plan and implement social justice conferences, and also prepare resources and activities for international service-learning projects in Jamaica and Tanzania.

THE PROJECT

The Global Community Engagement Program provides teacher candidates with authentic educational experiences designed to further a number of learning outcomes tied to the Faculty of Education’s mission and vision, as well as the University of Windsor’s strategic priorities including exceptional experiences for students, community outreach, and internationalization. It provides hands-on experiences for teacher candidates to grapple with, and make meaning of, the political, moral, and cultural imperatives of teaching. An important element of the GCEP is the
opportunities provided for teacher candidates and graduate students to engage in community
development and educational research (Beckford et al., 2017).

Beckford et al. (2017) identified the role of GCEP in moving teacher candidate participants to
think about the diverse and complex relationships between students’ out-of-school lives and how
they experience education, schools, and schooling. Furthermore, through the GCEP, teacher
candidates interrogate how vulnerability and marginalization might impact students’ learning
experiences and the implications for teaching and learning (Beckford et al., 2017). In addition,
the program puts teacher candidates at the sites of vulnerability and marginalization and facilitates
active engagement with marginalized/disadvantaged and vulnerable students and school
communities.

The specific objectives of the GCEP are related to:

- Active engagement with local and international communities;
- Understanding service-learning as a pedagogical strategy;
- Developing and enhancing teacher candidates’ awareness of social justice in education,
especially in multicultural contexts;
- Enhancing teacher candidates’ appreciation of the causes and impacts of vulnerability
  and marginalization in the lives of students and children; and
- Providing inter-cultural experiences for participating teacher candidates.

Participants also have opportunities to engage in activities that they typically do not have in a
teacher education program, such as project planning and implementation. For example, they
collaborate with classmates to plan and implement service-learning projects both locally and
internationally before reflecting on these activities and the impacts on their personal and
professional selves. Teacher candidates also work with community organizations like United Way
to conduct poverty workshops, such as Poverty Simulation, and also plan the Professional Learning
series event Vulnerability and Marginalization in Education Social Justice Conference.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The GCEP is a community service-learning initiative and thus combines and integrates curriculum
goals with experiential learning through community engagement. Reciprocity and critical
reflection are considered to be foundational to good service-learning praxis (Beckford et al., 2017;
Abedini, Gruppen, Kolars, & Kumagai, 2012; Crump, DeCamp, Barry, & Sugarman, 2013; Butin,
2003). Meaningful reciprocity practiced authentically ensures that service-learning is ethical and
pedagogically rigorous, while critical reflection is fundamental to transformative learning
(Mezirow, 1990) and making meaning of one’s learning experiences. The practice of service-
learning has increased in post-secondary education in the last two decades as universities seek to
reach out to communities and the scholarship of engagement (Boyer, 1990) resonates with more
university faculty across different disciplines but particularly in medicine first, and the social
sciences and humanities more recently. Growing student interest in these activities is another
important driver of the process (Beckford et al., 2017).
In the context of teacher education, Beckford and Lekule (2018) suggest that service-learning could be beneficial to the development of beginning teachers, particularly as it helps to enhance their understanding of how students’ out-of-school experiences might influence how they experience schooling. Beckford et al. (2017) postulate that well designed service-learning can enhance beginning teachers’ awareness of their students and their communities and neighbourhoods, which might have implications for student learning, and by extension teachers’ teaching. The social justice benefits of service-learning have also been touted by various scholars. See for example Dharamsi et al. (2010) and Bender and Rene Jordaan (2007).

Research also makes the link between experiential learning and deep enduring learning that may be considered as transformational. For example, Kolb and Kolb (2005) purport that experiential education is critical to transformational learning. First-hand experiences, and learning through doing, often result in deep understanding and long-lasting learning. The central role of experience in learning has also been postulated by John Dewey (1963), while Kolb (1984) articulated a theory of experiential learning that also postulated the inextricable relationship between experience and learning. According to Crowder (2014):

> Experiential learning empowers students to actualize their knowledge, gain practical experience, and further apply knowledge in the field. This type of learning enhances global citizenship, civic engagement, and can provide valuable insight for future academic and professional decisions made by the student. (p. 4)

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING (ICSL)

The GCEP provides opportunities for both domestic and international service-learning experiences. International community service-learning (ICSL) has become a much sought-after experience for university and college students interested in travel, global education, and volunteerism. Professional programs have led the way with ICSL as an entrenched element of many medical school programs (Abedini, Gruppen, Kolars, & Kumagai, 2012; Crump, DeCamp, Barry, & Sugarman, 2013; Curtin, Martins, Schwartz-Barcott, DiMaria, & Oganda, 2013; Dharamsi, Richards, Louie, Murray, Berland, Whitfield, & Scott, 2010; Kohlbry & Daugherty, 2013; Shultz, 2011).

International community service-learning has also become a more integral part of preservice teacher education globally and in some cases, it has become a requirement (Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006). ICSL programs are typically short term, lasting from three to eight weeks. In the research literature, the focus tends to be on the goal of enhancing teachers’ intercultural awareness and competency, which is seen as a critical quality of teachers in the ever increasing cultural and racial plurality of classrooms certainly in North America as it dominates the literature on the subject. The current research literature also indicates that ICSL is gaining traction in other parts of the world as well (Hamza, 2010; Kizilaslan, 2010; Bender & Rene Jordaan, 2007; Kambutu & Nganga, 2007; Walters, Garii, & Walters, 2009). The emphasis on intercultural development is understandable given the need to prepare more globally aware citizens (Kambutu & Nganga, 2008; Kizilaslan, 2010). Students have diverse characteristics, abilities, and interests and this should be reflected in teaching (Mahan & Stachowiski, 2002). The ability of teachers to integrate global cultural perspectives into their teaching can also be enhanced by ICSL experiences (Kizilaslan, 2010).
ICSL is praised for promoting intercultural awareness through the immersion of aspiring teachers in unfamiliar international sociocultural environments, raising cultural awareness and understanding, and reducing ethnocentrism (Kambutu & Nganga, 2008), as well as instilling social skills that are fundamental to operating in globalized environments (Kizilaslan, 2010). It also facilitates active engagement of participants in unfamiliar sociocultural, economic, and political environments (Garcia & Longo, 2013; McClintic, 2015; Prout, Lin, Natattabi, & Green, 2014; Rubin & Mathews, 2013; Chambers, 2009). According to Beckford and Lekule (2018), the short-term immersion of students in unfamiliar socioeconomic cultural contexts can advance intercultural learning and global education. It often puts students out of their comfort zones as they grapple with experiences that create discomfort, disequilibria, and philosophical dissonance. These disorienting dilemmas (Kiely, 2005, 2004) can lead to perspective transformation (Mezirow, 2000). Research about international learning offers insights into the benefits than can accrue from international service-learning (Kiely, 2011).

In the context of teacher education, international service-learning prepares beginning teachers to be more open-minded. In a study of US student teachers who had participated in an international service-learning initiative, it was shown that 90 percent improved open-mindedness (Hadis, 2005). Effective ICSL and meaningful reflection may generate life-changing benefits (Hartman & Kiely, 2014; Miller, Dunlap, & Gonzalez, 2007), not least of which is raising the competence of teachers to work in economically, racially and socioculturally diverse schools (Crowder, 2014). When prospective teachers step outside their comfort zone and reflect on their community service-learning experiences (Beckford & Lekule, 2018), they become more flexible and reflective (Pence & Macgillivray, 2008) and are better prepared to function effectively in intercultural environments (Hamza, 2010). Hamza posits that service-learning may help teacher candidates realize the extent to which they have the power to make a difference and affect social change. Enhanced cultural awareness fostered through international service-learning experiences increases the capacity of student teachers to revisit and challenge previously held views and apprehension of other cultures (Kambutu & Nganga, 2008). According to King (2004), service-learning can be a site for critical pedagogy, an important part of a progressive agenda in some teacher education programs. The potential of service-learning is also purported by other researchers including Miller and Gonzalez (2009), Nelson, Antaya-Moore, Badley, and Colman (2010), and Urraca, Ledoux, and Harris (2009).

**STRUCTURE OF THE GCEP**

Through the Global Community Engagement project, teacher candidates at the University of Windsor’s Faculty of Education have opportunities to participate in international service-learning experiences in the Caribbean Island of Jamaica and the East African Republic of Tanzania. The aim is ideally to provide teacher candidates with two international service-learning experiences in their two-year Bachelor of Education program. In their first year, students are invited to participate in the Jamaica project. In their second year, the Tanzania component is available to them. As we discussed earlier in this chapter, the GCEP is the experiential learning component of the Vulnerability, Marginalization and Education service-learning option but is opened to all Bachelor of Education candidates. The project is a mandatory part of the course for registered students, but the international travel opportunity is optional. While there are no special selection criteria, participants must be in good academic standing and be performing well in teaching practice. Students who are considered to be at risk of failing are not considered. In addition, as an alternative
placement, the program is structured so that teacher candidates meet the Ontario College of Teachers’ requirements for teaching practice in terms of classroom time.

Information about the course and the project is communicated to teacher candidates through information sessions, class discussions, promotional flyers, and other print material. Peer influence of interested teacher candidates is also an important promotional tool. The philosophical and pedagogical foundations of the course and relationship to the project are clearly laid out. Information sessions make clear that the international projects are work and study and not vacation. Prospective participants are prepared for the fact that the international experiences are in many respects more challenging than conventional teaching practice.

The international experiences are short-term initiatives lasting between two and a half to three weeks. In 2019 for example, the trips to Tanzania and Jamaica were both exactly three weeks. Feedback from participating teacher candidates shows that these kinds of short-term experiences are the most effective, although many participants suggest that 3-5 weeks would be ideal. There is also other research that advocates for the effectiveness of short-term experiences (see for example Brooking, 2010; Crowder, 2014). Students participate in a variety of activities including teaching in local Jamaican and Tanzanian schools, textbook projects for primary and secondary schools, leadership and empowerment training programs for girls, and environmental sustainability education activities. In Tanzania, participants are also involved in community projects that serve the needs of marginalized and vulnerable populations such as orphaned and vulnerable children, sick children, and adults and children who live with albinism.

Project countries and sites are deliberately selected to maximize the learning goals of the course and project. We want students to be safe while serving a vulnerable population in unfamiliar cultural contexts. Modeled on the ideas of disorientation, discomfort, and perspective transformation (Keily, 2005; Mezirow, 2000; Mezirow, 1990), the sites and activities are intended to force students outside of their comfort zone. Like the Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program in China, the international service-learning trips to Jamaica and Tanzania are planned and implemented by Faculty members who also supervise teacher candidates for the duration of the trips. This is considered to be important to ensure the academic integrity and rigour of these experiences and to enhance student safety. We suggest too that this is important in creating a climate for service-learning success (Jeandron & Robinson, 2010). Assessment of the overseas field experiences is informal, but students are required to complete a detailed reflection form that documents their activities and the impact or impacts on their personal and professional selves.

Feedback from participants underscores the value of these experiences to the personal and professional development of these beginning teachers. Most participants agree that the international project was the highlight of their teacher education experience. A recurrent theme in participants’ feedback and reflections is that the experience was ‘life-changing’.

PARTICIPANTS’ REFLECTIONS

Student reflections can provide insights into the element of transformative leaning through international service learning (Hullender, Hinck, Wood-Nartker, Burton, & Bowlby, 2015). Reflection on their experiences is an integral part of the GCEP. The reflections of teacher candidates who have participated in the program have been overwhelmingly positive. They
indicate personal and professional growth with an enhancement in intercultural awareness. Here we share a few perspectives on the Jamaican and Tanzanian experiences.

My experience in Jamaica has taught me so much about education. Our trip allowed me to experience a new country while engaging with some of the most unforgettable kids. The trip really taught me about the issues that a lot of youth in schools face, both in Jamaica and elsewhere in the world. I was able to see first-hand how poverty can affect student learning, and how children cope and adapt to these circumstances. Even in these schools that lacked extensive resources, I was able to see a desire to learn and be engaged on the students’ faces. The kids I met in Jamaica have taught me so much about myself, both as a person and a future educator.

Another participant said:

I think understanding privilege is vital. If we understand and are aware of our privilege, whatever it may be, we can be more sensitive about our behaviours, biases, and comments in our daily lives. Thus creating a more inclusive atmosphere.

Still another student made this assessment:

Volunteering in Jamaica was definitely one of the best decisions I have ever made. I will forever carry the relationships I made with the Jamaican students with me in my personal and professional life. This experience was very educational and I will always cherish it.

The next reflection also highlights the profound impact of the international service-learning experience in Jamaica:

My experience in Jamaica was so much more than could ever be described in words! I feel so fortunate to have learned about Jamaican culture in its true form, and to meet and work with the amazing students, educators, and organizations. Although we can talk about the programs and impact we had on the students, it is their impact on us that will stay with me forever.

The feedback about the Tanzania ISL trip was just as positive. The following reflections underscore this point. One participant had this effusive response:

My experience in Tanzania was rewarding and unforgettable to say the least. It was heartwarming to see the respect, passion, and drive for knowledge that the students exhibited on a daily basis. The most life-changing part of this experience for me was through the woman’s leadership program. … I would encourage anyone who is considering embarking on a journey like this to go for it!

The experience impacted participants personally and professionally, as the following statement indicates:
The people of Tanzania taught me so much about not only teaching, but also about life in general. This is the second trip I have gone on with Dr. B, and both of them have really shaped who I am as a person and educator. It is amazing how much you can learn from other people and other cultures when you are open to it! I am super thankful to have gotten to spend time with some incredible people in an amazing place. I feel that service learning projects like these and what we learn from them are invaluable.

Participants felt that the international service-learning program was invaluable for preservice teacher candidates. This is captured in the following reflection:

Teach Tanzania was such a rewarding experience. … This trip was very rewarding in many ways. I encourage everyone to go on the Tanzania Trip! You will come home with so much more than you left with.

CONCLUSION

Providing quality and exceptional field experience opportunities for teacher candidates is a long-term mission of the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. This includes conventional teaching practice placements as well more uncommon experiences locally and internationally. Providing meaningful international opportunities is particularly desired as we strive to enhance intercultural knowledge and understanding and improve the capacity of our graduates to teach within a global education pedagogical framework. The field experiences discussed in this chapter facilitate development of more inclusive philosophies and practices among teacher candidates, including working effectively with vulnerable students.

They add richness and diversity of experiences to our program and provide opportunities and experiences that are uncommon in that they are not typical of preservice teacher education programs in Ontario. Not only are teacher candidates gaining international teaching experience and reaping the numerous intellectual, practical, and sociocultural benefits of such programs, but they hone their ability to work with the most vulnerable children and youth. In addition, teacher candidates in these three programs have authentic experiences in project planning and implementation and conference planning and facilitation. One of the University’s central goals or pillars is to provide an ‘exceptional experience’ for students. These unique teacher education opportunities enhance the student experience and make the University of Windsor’s teacher education program different and better. Participants in these programs speak of them as the highlight of their university life and their Bachelor of Education program. There might thus be lessons for other teacher education programs beyond the University of Windsor.

There are challenges delivering some of these experiences and making them available to more teacher candidates. The main issue is that of a lack of resources. For example, international experiences are expensive to organize and execute. Participants in the RLP have access to significant funding through a MITACs grant. However, participants in the GCEP typically have to self-fund their trips to Jamaica and Tanzania. In the last two years, the Faculty has provided some funding to offset students’ costs and this year some students benefitted from some funding from a University of Windsor international experiential learning initiative. There is thus a challenge to find sustainable funding options so that more students can avail themselves of these international opportunities. This is the subject of ongoing discussions in the Faculty of Education.
There is also a need to ‘institutionalize’ these opportunities. Perhaps with the exception of L.E.A.D., they currently operate because of the interest of faculty champions. There is doubt, however, about their unsustainability if these champions were no longer able or available to lead them.

Reflections and feedback from teacher candidates speak to the value of GCEP, L.E.A.D., and RLP in the personal and professional development of beginning teachers in our program. The goal is to expand and improve their experiential learning design and broaden and deepen their reach in terms of the number of students who benefit from their richness and value-adding experiences.

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CHAPTER 20

ASSESSING TEACHER CANDIDATES FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE
AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Kathy Hibbert, Mary Ott, and Jessica Swift

Western University

INTRODUCTION

Historically, research in teacher education has been preoccupied with tensions concerning the degree to which education programs are either too practical or too theoretical (Crawley, 2018; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Kitchen & Petrarca, 2013). However, a review of our teacher education program at Western University drew our attention to a more pressing ‘theory-practice gap’ that has been looming undisturbed for too long: How do we assess our teacher candidates? While there is a large body of literature that attends to the different purposes of formative and summative assessment for improving and evaluating achievement, it is assessment as it relates to fostering the qualities, characteristics, and competencies of developing professionals that is of primary concern. The unproblematic adoption of traditional institutional assessment practices has been counterproductive to our shared goals of nurturing the intellect of our teacher candidates while fostering critical self-regulation and self-assessment capabilities. To state the obvious, the “ability to accurately assess one’s own strengths and deficiencies is a hallmark of professionalism” (Regher, Hodges, Tiberius, & Lofchy, 1996, pp. 51-52).

One of the key functions of a teacher education program must be to help teacher candidates make the critical transition from ‘students’ (focused on what grade they have received in a course) to teachers (focused on what they are learning and how it will inform their future professional practice with learners). Systemically, assessment practices ought to reflect and prepare candidates for the system they are moving into rather than the one that they are exiting. Once in professional practice, assessment strategies are designed to provide “teachers with meaningful appraisals that encourage professional learning and growth” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012, n.p.).

This matters because teaching is an increasingly complex and demanding profession: increased societal demands are coupled with correspondingly heightened mechanisms of scrutiny; the growing diversity in classrooms requires high quality professionals able to enact sophisticated formative assessment practices that will guide program planning to address the diversity. Formative assessment is the exercise of professional judgement (Black, 2015).
Yet despite these apparent professional characteristics, ‘effectiveness’ in teaching is increasingly defined “solely through the capacity to improve student performance” and through an accumulation of numerical data that “have produced a teaching profession(al) thoroughly cast in the image of data” (Lewis & Holloway, 2019, p. 49). It is little wonder, then, that professional educators feel as though their “professional judgement – expertise and scholarship” have been hijacked in favour of compliance with baseline regulatory competencies and outcomes (Peseta, 2014, as cited in Roxå & Mårtensson, 2017, p. 96).

In this chapter, we report on what has been rediscovered (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2017) as we reviewed the extended program – teasing out the values we defined in our program—:

Transforming learning. Transformed learners.

BACKGROUND: WESTERN’S EXTENDED INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

In 2015, Western introduced an extended initial teacher education (ITE), mandated by the Government of Ontario, doubling the program length from two semesters to four. In addition to halving the number of students admitted to ITE programs, the implementation of the extended program was hobbled by a nearly 30% reduction in operating funds than what had been provided to run the previous iteration of a one-year program. The initial iteration of the extended ITE program at Western is contained in “Western Faculty of Education Two-Year B.Ed. Program: Focus on International Education Cohort Specialization” by Al-Haque, Larsen, Searle, and Tarc (2017) in the first volume of Initial Teacher Education in Ontario.

Efforts to create optimal conditions in ITE were further handicapped as members of the faculty were inextricably tied up in competing efforts to grow the graduate programs in Ontario. This meant that while universities were incentivized to develop new graduate level programs, hiring of additional faculty was only supported when sufficient and perceptibly sustainable enrolment was reached. As existing full-time, tenure-track, and tenured faculty were preoccupied with teaching and development of the graduate level programs, the ITE program grew increasingly dependent upon the use of contingent, part-time instructors referred to as “limited duties” (LD).

There are benefits and drawbacks of a significant dependency on LD instructors. While LD instructors often bring more substantive time in professional practice to their teaching, sometimes they have been overtly schooled in the practices of or have preferences that align with a single Board of Education. They are hired on a ‘per term’ basis, making long term planning, collaborative planning, and goals for consistency and continuity more challenging. “Reliance on part-time” instructors can erode both the quality of the overall program and the “performance of full-time, tenure-track faculty members” (Schmidt, 2008, p. 1) However, they are often motivated to engage in change initiatives, and some may feel they have more time to participate without additional research and service obligations typical of full-time faculty.

The two-year professional teacher education program is a highly competitive program that attracts high achieving students with 4-year undergraduate degrees. Western has had a long history of attracting students with both high undergraduate grades and an impressive experiential profile. The imperative for grades in undergraduate programs is multifaceted; grades signal the degree to which students have mastered a particular and often disciplinary body of knowledge and skills. Grades are often useful in locating students within a range of eligibility for scholarships and awards,
graduate programs or residencies, and, in some cases, are important to employers. However, grades earned in the ‘second entry’ undergraduate teacher education years are far less ‘useful’: they are not calculated for entry into graduate education programs; they are not required during hiring; they are not calculated to determine pay. The function of assessment in ITE is therefore something we wanted to consider more closely.

The employment landscape has been changing, with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) noting that London, Ontario has recently been tied for second place in terms of success in getting employed, with 95% of our teacher candidates finding employment (OCT, 2018). This may perhaps have contributed to changes in ‘who’ our students are. Over the past few years, we have seen increasing numbers of students who are returning to do an ITE program (for example, nearly one third are over 30 years of age).

Despite consistent calls for improved cohesion in ITE (Darling-Hammond, 2006), the retraction of university funding led to further difficult decisions that eroded continuity and cohesion across the program as we engage with our educational partners with whom we collaborate to fulfill the practical experiences required. The previous ITE model of proactive, individualized supports (in place for board partners and students), which had been designed to ensure oversight and collective participation in the field experiences (the practicum), was now significantly reduced to a reactive ‘on-call’ model. Teacher candidates would be observed by practicum consultants in a single practicum unless they were called to do so more often. Despite doubling the practicum placements (we manage approximately 1,500 per year, working with approximately 44 boards across the province), provisions for the Practicum Manager were reduced to 0.5 of a position. Similarly, a proactive team of practicum advisors – people who meet in advance of, during, and after practicum – was disbanded and replaced with a much smaller set of practicum consultants who served in an ‘on-call’ capacity with one viewed practicum prior to completion.

METHOD

Our ITE program was fully accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) soon after expanding to the two-year program. Similarly, our university had just completed its strategic planning cycle. However, we realized that in order to support our teacher candidates’ abilities to become professionals who were constantly seeking to understand how what they were learning was informing their future practice, we had to make changes. Those changes included engaging in consultation with our community: students, board partners, and our instructors. The ‘backward mapping’ (Crawley, 2018; Elmore, 1980; Fiorino, 1997) processes undertaken for this review needed to account for the multifactorial complexities described in both the profession and in the process of making change in institutions. Our goal in this review was to view the program as situated within the current literature on teacher education (Crawley, 2018), but importantly, set against the backdrop of sociopolitical, economic, and practical realities. Following Elmore’s (1980) work on incremental change in policy making, Fiorino (1997) argues:

The advantages of such a strategy are that it brings affected stakeholders into the process of designing and implementing reforms; proceeds incrementally to build a consensus for change; and leads to proposals that allow greater discretion and flexibility at the ground level, which is the direction that nearly all critics of existing regulation argue should be taken. (p. 249)
To do this, we created a Teacher Education Design team, who participated collaboratively in the process of reviewing, re-thinking, and critically assessing the existing design in light of new learning (see Figure 1, Backward Mapping). Design team membership was comprised of faculty, limited duties instructors, and teacher education program staff. The process allowed us to consider what we may need to change, not only in terms of teaching and learning, but in structural stakeholders such as room availabilities, scheduling, and accountability mechanisms.

**Figure 1**

*Backward Mapping*

FINDINGS

Over the course of three months, program staff completed an initial map of the ITE program and course objectives against OCT competencies, feedback from course surveys, voluntary exit interviews with new graduates, and advisory meetings with school board administrators to identify programmatic alignments, gaps, and overlaps. These results were brought to our design meetings for discussion and deliberation.

In Table 1, we provide an overview of some of the more significant pieces that arose in the process. There were multiple issues that the mapping exercise brought forward, so initially we returned to the bigger questions about our purpose, our values, and where there may be challenges achieving our purpose in alignment with our values. As we worked with our mapping, we deliberately sought to understand how the various pieces acted in relation to one another. We looked for points of connection, distortions, and what might be invisible. We considered those pieces that resulted from
organizational or institutional needs or arrangements, and those that resulted from administrative actions.

Table 1

Mapping the Teacher Education Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points of connection that matter (may be invisible)</th>
<th>Ruptures</th>
<th>Strategies for Reassembling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mapping Professional Competencies</strong></td>
<td>OCT; Learning Outcomes; 21st C outcomes; Overlapping serving institutional/regulatory purposes; Public desires missing; Indigenous missing</td>
<td>Lack of connection to big picture; society; overall goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mapping Curriculum</strong></td>
<td>Planning; Course syllabi; Class size, space, resources, readings</td>
<td>'Curriculum’ is enacted; Learning environment matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mapping Assessment Practices</strong></td>
<td>Number and timing; Differentiation; Repetition (e.g., reflection)</td>
<td>What are we assessing for? What are the TC’s learning (explicitly and implicitly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mapping the Literature</strong></td>
<td>Fragmentation in Initial Teacher Education Evidence based, profession oriented; Beyond competencies, experiential; Self-assessment, negotiating the personal, political, professional Call for cohesion</td>
<td>Disconnect between the continuous and pronounced call for cohesion; Viewing competency on a continuum; Developing teacher agency amid policies seeking to reduce effectiveness to performance assessments (+ International) amid political tensions (Mathematics, ‘Fear of falling behind’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We also worked to learn whether there were constellations that emerged from the cells in the table that would allow us to think about implications for the program as a whole. Elmore (1979/80) advises focusing on “the one or two critical points in a complex organization that have the closest proximity to the problem and describing what needs to happen at those points to solve the problem” (p. 607). This advice helpfully brought us to a realization that, despite our aim to help our teacher candidates become prepared for professional practice, the institutional structure of our courses (and their graded assignments) looked an awful lot like their undergraduate programs. When we looked at the points of connection and rupture, we saw how the discontinuities between the profession as presented through the ITE curriculum and as enacted in practice were also related to our teacher candidates’ positioning more as students going through assessment hoops than as professionals engaging in self-assessment to direct their learning.

As we contextualized the mapping, we sought to better align the professional assessment practices our teacher candidates engage with in our program with expectations that they will encounter in their future practice. Following the initial teacher education that teacher candidates receive through our Bachelor of Education, the Ontario Ministry of Education provides a New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) as the “second job-embedded step along a continuum of professional learning” (2019, n.p.). Evaluation of their success in the NTIP program is governed by the Ontario Ministry of Education’s Teacher Performance Appraisal System (TPA) designed to provide “meaningful appraisals that encourage professional learning and growth” (2010, p. 5). Upon successful completion of the NTIP program, Annual Learning Plans (ALP) are required (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). The ALPs are designed to “provide a meaningful vehicle to support experienced
teachers’ professional learning and growth … [They are] … teacher-authored and directed, and … developed in a consultative and collaborative manner with the principal” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 26).

Considering the TPA system allowed us to see the grading system currently in place in our Bachelor of Education program in fresh ways. Since the program is already highly competitive, our admissions ‘cut score’ is quite high. In other words, students have successfully demonstrated their capability in their disciplinary undergraduate programs. However, assessment as expressed through the dominant grades discourse “constructs learners as passive subjects … students are seen to have no role other than to subject themselves to the assessment acts of others” (Boud, 2007, p. 17). A system focused on achieving grades in each course perpetuated a way of thinking that was about what a teacher candidate ‘got’ in any given course, rather than what a particular course offered them that would contribute to a teacher candidate’s decision-making process when thinking about their future practice with students. The results of our mapping review and deliberation with the Teacher Education Design team were to insert two design effects at the critical point of assessment in our program, and to set in motion incremental response agencies to these effects. The first is a programmatic shift to ‘going gradeless’ through a pass/fail system. The second is a redesign of a course on assessment to model and focus on self-assessment for professional learning. We describe the rationale and review mechanisms for these changes next.

PRACTICUM AND ALTERNATIVE FIELD EXPERIENCES (AFE)

Recognizing the key role that experiential learning plays in the learning process, Western teacher candidates spend an equal amount of time in experiential learning settings (100 days of classroom practicum and 35 days of alternative field experiences) as they do through the equally important component of learning through participating in academic courses. Both provide opportunities for acquiring knowledge, developing skills, and advancing learning and professional goals.

As with Western’s one-year ITE model, our two-year model requires more than the OCT’s minimum number of days (now 80) in practicum. Planning for additional days builds in flexibility for when students become ill or where labour disputes or inclement weather result in a loss of practicum days. At the writing of this chapter, teacher candidates have lost practicum days due to revolving strikes occurring as labour negotiations with the Province of Ontario have stalled, and they have lost ‘onsite’ classroom practicum experiences during the unprecedented closure of schools due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, yet only a small handful of teacher candidates will not meet the minimum number of required days needed to successfully complete their program.

Teacher candidates complete two full-time AFEs (a total of 7 weeks) before graduation. They are encouraged to engage in community (local or international) settings: service learning, non-traditional classroom teaching, working with educational leaders, and so on, which offer perspectives that can add a unique, enriching, or even life-changing experience to their overall learning. Alternative Field Experiences are intended to provide opportunities for teacher candidates to broaden their experience and knowledge and support future teaching. Learning goals, identified by teacher candidates in the AFE Proposal, are reviewed and approved by specialty coordinators and the teacher education office.
The practicum and the AFE have always been assessed through a pass/fail approach so the change
in the rest of the program presents an opportunity for further alignment. We will turn our attention
to the need to further refine what and how we are assessing in our next cycle, as meaningful
insights are shared through Master Teacher Mentor (MTM) groups linking the perspectives of
associate teachers, course faculty/instructors, teacher candidates, and members of the teacher
education office.

DISCUSSION

The pass/fail approach will enable both instructors and teacher candidates to focus their efforts on
developing the professional competencies needed for a more seamless transition into practice. New
teachers focus on developing the knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies needed to become
capable professionals: the “formation of a capable person who can engage in professional work
and contribute to society as an informed citizen … measurement, objectivity, standards and
integrity are integral … but secondary to the act of becoming informed” (Boud, 2007, p. 20).

ASSESSMENT IN PRACTICE

All assessment will align with the Ontario College of Teachers’ (OCT) standards (and their
associated competencies) at defined stages over the two-year program.

The principal function of assessment of candidates in the teacher education program is to model
the process of assessing for learning, of learning, and as learning, as well as assessment as
scholarship. This function is critical to developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities that teacher
candidates must learn deeply and apply in their professional practice in order to meet the standards
of the profession.

Within each course, appropriate pedagogical approaches will be designed by the course instructors.
A clear ‘single point’ rubric will define what is required to pass. Developing professionalism
across all aspects of the curriculum will constitute a significant assessment outcome across the
program. Assessment across the Program curriculum will include the following aspects.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Formative assessment is a process of gathering information that accurately documents how well a
teacher candidate is meeting the standards for the profession. Its primary purpose is to improve the
learning of the teacher candidate. Information may be gathered through a variety of means
including observations, discussions, learning conversations, demonstrations, group work, inquiry
projects, professional practice records, performances, peer and self-assessment, self-reflection,
theses, essays, and so on. A collaborative relationship between instructors, peers, and mentors will
provide timely and meaningful feedback to enable teacher candidates to identify strengths and
weaknesses, and plan together how to improve their learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Black &
Wiliam, 2004a; Black & Wiliam, 2004b). The process provides meaningful information to
instructors about how they need to adjust their teaching to strengthen new learning as it is taking
place and as teacher candidates are developing skills. It also models the differentiated learning
practices that will be needed to meet the individual needs of students in their future professional
practice (Kraft, Balzar, & Hogan, 2018).
SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Summative assessments in each course must be successfully completed as delineated in the clear criterion of a single point rubric. Like the leveled assessment system in Ontario schools, success is determined by the most consistent level of success in the course. Individual course components that are identified as weaknesses may require a resubmission if further development is needed, or where necessary, candidates will be asked to redo the assignment(s). Even where a candidate has passed a course, areas that can be strengthened will be moved into what Lowenberg Ball, Ben-Peretz, and Cohen (2014) describe as a Professional Practice Record (PPR). Such documentation will form a part of the individual teacher candidate’s personal growth plan to be developed, monitored, and documented through the duration of the two-year program in small groups of 12 led by paid Master Teacher Mentors (MTM), and overseen by the instructor of the Research and Assessment course. The goal is to develop a “more precise relationship between teaching and learning” in a longer term and sustainable fashion (Yeigh & Lynch, 2017, p. 124; Kennedy, 2016).

ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING

Teacher candidates engage in assessment as learning to help them develop the professional competencies to be independent, agentic, autonomous learners able to set individual goals, monitor their own progress, determine next steps, and reflect upon their own learning and teaching. These professional skills map directly onto the process regulated by the Ministry to assess teachers in their professional practice through the supportive mentoring environment of new teacher induction and the intended consultative approach to developing annual learning plans. They also map onto Western’s agenda to improve student experience by aligning with the literature on the concept of thriving (Schreiner, 2010).

ASSESSMENT AS SCHOLARSHIP

Assessment activities become scholarship when they become public (Schön, 1984; Shulman, 1999). Teacher candidates need to understand how to critically review and evaluate each other within a professional learning community in which they can then begin to use, build upon, and develop creative acts of collaborative inquiry. The purpose serves the ongoing growth of the professional in a culture where a continuum of experiences and dialogue leads to improved professionalism and practice. In order to do this, we redesigned an existing, large-group course on research and assessment into a small-group, professional learning community format led by MTMs. MTMs provide relational modeling and coaching for teacher candidates to document their learning through coursework and practicum experiences within OCT domains of practice and competencies in their PPRs, inquire together on ways to improve their practice, incorporate feedback from instructors and associate teachers, consider research and resources, and identify next steps for professional learning in their placements and coursework through the development of ALPs. Because of the opportunity for programmatic feedback that the MTM groups also afford, the Research and Assessment course becomes a platform not only for self-assessment, but program assessment.
ENSURING RIGOUR AND QUALITY ACROSS ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

In our review of the literature surrounding programs that moved to pass/fail, we learned that while most students liked the changes for the reasons we have articulated, there were some new areas of concern that arose, namely, receiving quality feedback, support for a new process, and professional development of instructors engaging with new ways of assessment.

Our mapping pointed to three significant areas that we needed to attend to in order to maintain quality in our programming: Planning, implementation and review.

Figure 1

Ensuring Rigour Across the Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative planning across the program;</td>
<td>• Documentation through the electronic &quot;Professional Practice Record;&quot;</td>
<td>• Implementation of a web-based syllabus to generate data and inform planning;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional Development for Instructors;</td>
<td>• Consistent, ongoing mentoring for two years with &quot;Master Teacher Mentors&quot; in small groups of 12;</td>
<td>• Embedded program research with MTMs, students and program design team;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consistent and detailed syllabus format;</td>
<td>• Ongoing monitoring by MTMs;</td>
<td>• Annual, individual review of PPR by external partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Full-time faculty coordination of content, speciality and multi-section courses.</td>
<td>• Professional series offered in response to needs.</td>
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MAPPING CHANGE

PLANNING

A process of collaborative planning brings new and experienced instructors together with staff and faculty in the teacher education program. This allows us to identify and articulate how we might distribute the multiple competencies, outcomes, and skills, and where we will introduce, reinforce, and apply that knowledge. It also allows us to find opportunities for interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary application of knowledge and skills through inquiry projects, problem-based learning, case studies, and so on.

Like other universities in Ontario (Field, Jones, Stephenson, & Khoyetsyan, 2014), Western’s teacher education program has seen a significant increase in the number of limited duties
instructors hired to meet our demands to the extent that they form a significant majority of our staff complement in this program. Full-time faculty coordinate all the subject and specialty areas, but opportunities for other forms of support and professional development were limited. Our research pointed to the need for building a more cohesive professional culture among a fluid and changing group of people. Through a series of student and instructor surveys, focus groups, and a review of the end-of-course student and course questionnaires, we collaboratively generated a series of professional development sessions that will be provided over the course of each year to our instructors. Examples include collaborative course planning, developing a course syllabus, and sessions on university policies (e.g., equity, anti-racism, using inclusive language, and so on).

IMPLEMENTATION

We elected to use the existing course Research and Assessment (5013) as the basis of the introduction, development, and monitoring of a newly introduced, digital PPR. The course calendar description remains the same:

Teacher candidates learn how to gather information about their own students to serve in planning and assessment. They learn to use the iterative process of inquiry and data-based decision making to facilitate student learning and to use research in reflecting on their own practice. (.25 credit)

Rather than stand alone in a single term, we opted to spread the 18-hour course over the full two-year program and supplement the needs that we learned about in the course with the professional series offerings as part of the program’s Transition to Professional Practice (T2P). Course credit hours remain the same, and the professional series can be better tailored to complement specific needs in a more nimble, responsive fashion.

The course is overseen by a faculty instructor but supported by paid MTMs. MTMs will serve as liaisons between the course instructors and the students to ensure responsive and flexible teaching to ensure that the teacher candidates’ needs are met. Working with the course instructors, they will ensure they understand if any aspect of the course work does not meet expectations. Teacher candidates may be required to revise and resubmit course work or engage in supplementary experiences to demonstrate that they have met the professional standards.

The MTMs will set up the electronic PPR before the course begins. The PPR includes:

- the OCT Professional and Ethical Standards and competencies;
- a shared space for teacher candidates to document their learning in all their courses;
- mirror the profession’s Annual Learning Plan process to:
  - identify areas for improvement;
  - establish goals for individual growth with timelines;
  - collect artefacts that demonstrate progress (lesson plans, videotaped teaching, assignments, reflections, and so on)
- be accessible by course instructors, the teacher education office, the 5013 instructor and relevant MTMs.
This collaborative approach ensures that the program can more nimbly plan for the additional required professional T2P series to satisfy OCT requirements.

REVIEW

There are three levels of review that we have initiated as a result of our research. The first is at the level of planning. We have gathered the data required to build a highly interactive, digital syllabus that will allow us to gather information in real time as we are planning, which will help our instructors work more collaboratively across time and distance. It was designed with input from students, so it meets their desire for consistency, better scheduling of assignments, and live links to information that they need.

The second level of review involves the Professional Practice Record. While the instructors, mentors, and teacher education office will be monitoring the PPRs, we have included an annual external review component that brings our board leaders (principals, learning supervisors, superintendents) together to review the annual learning plans with teacher candidates. Their feedback will be critical to our students but will also offer an opportunity for us to learn together through the process of interacting around our shared goals. Opportunities to bring together learning from the university context, the practicum, and the AFE where the focus is on growth rather than grades is a promising site for reassembling what matters.

Finally, this has provided us with a systematic process of ongoing programmatic research in the teacher education program so that we can continue to learn about ways to improve and check how our initiatives are meeting the needs of the students.

CONCLUSION

We have learned a great deal from the period between our initial offering of the two-year program and where we are at now. Part of what we have come to understand better as we have had to reorganize to create a larger program with a smaller budget is what was lost, and how to prioritize what is critical to teacher candidates’ preparation. As we consider the context within which our new teachers are taking up practice, we felt that we had to attend to developing their ‘teacher agency’. Following Priestley et al. (2013), we view teacher agency as an “emergent phenomenon, something that happens through an always unique interplay of individual capacity and the social material conditions, by means of which people act” (p. 3). In this model, agency is understood as a compilation of our own embodied histories, situated within cultural, structural, and material spaces that have implications over both the short term and the long term. As our teacher candidates enter practice, we want them to be able to identify links between the development of capable agentive professionals, and what it means to be in a capable workplace (Cairns & Stephenson, 2009). Being able to name and identify what those features are will help us work more productively to create the conditions that will allow our teacher candidates to not simply ‘survive’ in their new profession but thrive.
REFERENCES


DEVELOPING INTEGRATED CURRICULUM KNOWLEDGE AND AN IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF DIVERSE LEARNERS IN COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS: INITIATIVES AND CHALLENGES AT WLU

Julie Mueller, Colleen Willard-Holt, and Bruce Alexander

Wilfrid Laurier University

OVERVIEW

In collaboration with community partners, the Wilfrid Laurier Faculty of Education prepares educational leaders who inspire lives through learning. As one aspect of a growing graduate and undergraduate complement, we offer a two-year, consecutive teacher education program from which graduates will earn a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree. The program qualifies teacher education candidates (TECs) in the Primary/Junior divisions (grades kindergarten to 6) and Junior/Intermediate divisions (grades 4 to 10). Junior/Intermediate TECs are admitted in one of the following subject specialties: English, French as a Second Language, Geography, Health and Physical Education, History, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Mathematics, and General Science. We currently enroll approximately 125 TECs each year, half in the Primary/Junior division and half in the Junior/Intermediate division across the two years of the program.

Laurier’s B.Ed. program is based on a Professional Development School (PDS) model that was unique in Canada at its inception. This model involves meaningful and ongoing partnerships between the university’s teacher education program and the schools in which their student teachers are placed for practicum experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2005; 2016). The model was originally chosen because of its success in concurrent school improvement and teacher education in communities in the United States (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). The emphasis on integrating theory and practice in an authentic context supports the conceptual framework of the program, which stresses the importance of teacher inquiry and ongoing experience within the K-12 education community.

In Laurier’s version of the PDS model, we have partnered with five area school boards to provide extensive, in-depth, and sustained field experiences for TECs. There are three types of schools in the elementary panel that partner with the Faculty: JK-6, JK-8, and 7-8. Schools apply to become PDS partners and interact with the Faculty of Education on a number of levels, including providing
input on program direction, conducting research and inquiry projects, and delivering comprehensive experiences for TECs across all aspects of the role of a teacher. The Laurier PDS model has been affirmed by our partnering boards, who applaud the design of the program and the resulting quality of our graduates. Aside from some exceptional circumstances, the PDS model requires that TECs are situated in the same school for the entire first year. In the second year of the program, each TEC changes to a second school, intentionally varied by demographics, unique programs, or other features, to provide a broader perspective on the continuum of schools in the province.

Consistent placement in one school for an entire year of the program affords TECs the opportunity to establish close, personal, interactive professional relationships with school personnel and communities. Initially, the TECs spend much time observing different teaching techniques, classroom management strategies, and school procedures. They begin working with individual students, then small groups, before taking responsibility for the entire class. Importantly, they regularly link the theory from their university classes to what they experience in the schools.

Research supports PDS models in which there are effective relationships between the university faculty and staff, and the associate teachers and other staff at partner schools (Buzza, Kotsopoulos, Mueller, & Johnston, 2010; Harris & Van Tassell, 2005). In our own study of the model, the rich and sustained school-based experiences and collaborative relationships TECs develop are rated as highly important to their perceived readiness for taking on the role of a professional teacher (Buzza et al., 2010; Buzza, FitzGerald, Kotsopoulos, Montero, Mueller, Sider, & Willard-Holt, 2017). Although the school experience component of student teachers’ preparation has been found to be important in more traditional (non-PDS model) programs as well (e.g., Guyton & McIntyre, 1990), it is a central feature to the Laurier program and, for this reason, is seen as foundational to our success.

Because the PDS model requires that TECs spend time in schools during every week of the program and schools are closed for much of the spring/summer term, we addressed this requirement in designing a two-year program (fall/winter, fall/winter), rather than compressing it into 16 months. Year One TECs are on campus for courses on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays from the week before Labour Day through the first week of April, with the exception of two block practicum placements; while Year Two TECs finish their coursework at the beginning of February and then engage in their ten-week Laurier Professional Placement until the end of April. This final placement is based on a mentorship model that situates TECs in the context of full-time teaching.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

The development of a two-year program of consecutive, preservice teacher education provided an opportunity for both ‘more of what was working’ and for novel content and approaches. We retained the immersion of TECs in the field immediately and consistently, and embraced the opportunity for addressing identified gaps. The extended program was designed to address what the Association of Canadian Deans of Education and our faculty saw as imperative in developing Canadian teachers: equipping teachers to “prepare all students for their roles in this diverse world” (ACDE, 2017).
New curriculum design organized courses by theme in sequential semesters to intentionally build foundational knowledge related to teaching and learning in Year One, and to more complex understandings and applications in Year Two (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*Curriculum Development Across Semesters*

The first semester includes courses addressing the foundations in teaching, including *School and Society, Professional Learning Seminar, Curriculum Foundations, Principles and Applications of Learning and Development, Special Education Part I*, and initial courses in literacy and numeracy. The second semester addresses most of the discipline-specific knowledge and pedagogies, including the Arts, Social Studies, Science and Technology, and Health and Physical Education, and also includes *Integrated Curriculum Part I*. Following a summer break, Year Two coursework is directed at reaching every learner and making deeper connections among the foundational curriculum concepts, discipline-specific pedagogy, and individual needs of learners that were introduced and expanded on in the first three terms of the program. The majority of courses offered at this stage of the program comprise a series focusing on diversity and inclusion, specifically *Equity and Diversity; Mental Health Issues in the Classroom; Special Education Part II; English Language Learners; and First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Topics in Educational Contexts*. A final course on integrated curriculum, a specific course on assessment, and another *Professional Learning Seminar* address the connections between the foundations and content in order to reach every learner. In addition, Junior/Intermediate teachable methods courses and electives are combined for TECs across the two years and are scheduled to fit timetables and staffing.

These carefully sequenced learning experiences are aimed at developing TECs’ pedagogical content knowledge and a deep understanding and appreciation for learners’ differentiated strengths.
integration was built into the design in a variety of ways:

- A theme of integrated curriculum over a three-course sequence wherein the Junior/Intermediate teachable courses were embedded;
- A six-course series on diversity and equity, including a specific course to support the Faculty’s commitment to Indigenous education;
- A requirement that each course explicate the ways in which technology was integrated; and
- An incremental approach to teaching responsibility and evaluation in the field.

A description of the original two-year program design may be found in Buzza et al. (2017).

**CHANGES SINCE 2015 PROGRAM DESIGN**

**UNDERSTANDING OF DIVERSE LEARNERS: INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AND DECOLONIZATION**

The Faculty of Education at Laurier, in keeping with the ACDE Accord on Indigenous Education (2010), is committed to fulfilling our responsibility in addressing the Calls to Action for teacher education by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015). In the change to the four-semester program, as part of the *Equity and Diversity* series, we created a mandatory course titled *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Topics in Education*. We also began to re-evaluate our decolonizing (Battiste, 2008) efforts to date, and committed to creating a five-year strategic planning process to better inform our program philosophy, course delivery, extracurricular learning opportunities, and faculty development in this area.

We held the first Indigenous strategic planning session in spring of 2017, the result of which was a clearly defined vision of the program we want to create within the next five years. We summarized our vision as one that included Indigenous Faculty and Elders; a commitment to decolonization by Indigenizing; a strong presence of community voices and resources; programming replete with authentic/holistic embedded pedagogy; active challenging of racism and privilege; and Indigenous embodiment in courses/curriculum. Our vision also included increasing diversity among our teacher education candidates, a clear sense that we are all on a professional learning journey, student engagement in a fun and safe environment, and a long-term investment to supporting our learning outcomes. The second session was held in the Spring of 2018, and the third session in the winter of 2019. Attendees at the sessions included full-time and part-time faculty, staff, School Board Indigenous Education Leads/Consultants, Indigenous students (Undergraduate, B.Ed., M.Ed.), staff from the Indigenous Student Centre, and Indigenous faculty from other academic units. These sessions have given us the necessary information, ideas, and guidance to now develop specific plans to enact our vision:
The Faculty of Education at Wilfrid Laurier University understands the critical need to rethink the delivery and content of preservice teacher education that is more inclusive of Indigenous Peoples of Canada. We aim to raise awareness among preservice teachers about Indigenous Peoples of Canada as a way to replace intolerance (e.g., racism, stereotypes) with acceptance toward First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples of Canada. Furthermore, we aim to promote greater awareness and knowledge among preservice teachers about Indigenous cultures and concerns as a way to critically evaluate how schools can better incorporate culturally sensitive curricula and teaching methods, while building stronger relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, families, and communities.

To ensure that these intentions are realized, each instructor must commit on their syllabus to incorporate Indigenous content or ways of knowing into their course in way that is meaningful to course content.

**INTEGRATION OF CURRICULUM KNOWLEDGE**

One major change in the original two-year program was the removal of traditional “teachable” methods courses in the Junior/Intermediate division. The goal was to integrate this content and differentiate expectations within curriculum courses for the TECs within their corresponding “teachable” content areas, e.g., History or English. Instructors were to develop general pedagogy, planning, and assessment across all curriculum areas and then individualize learning and practice according to each TEC’s field of expertise, and to model differentiation within that content-specific course for the TECs.

However, there were challenges connected with this strategy. There was debate and discussion related to the importance of specialized content knowledge, and reluctance from accreditation reviewers to approve fully-integrated specialty courses. Another of the major challenges was the demand for in-depth knowledge in multiple teachable subjects on the part of the instructors for the integrated curriculum courses. Beyond the philosophical decisions related to offering or not offering specialized teaching methods courses for “teachables”, there were logistical considerations in terms of course credits and timing.

The two-year program means that the numbers in each area of specialization need to be combined across the two years in order to make the teachable courses financially viable. Half of the specialty courses are offered each year, meaning that some Junior/Intermediate TECs will take the additional credits in year one of the program, while others take that course during their second year.

In order to make room for reinstating the teachable courses for the Junior/Intermediate TECs, and also because a 0.5 credit course (following a 0.25 credit course) in *Integrated Curriculum* seemed excessive when it was actually implemented, we reduced the credit weighting of *Integrated Curriculum II* to 0.25 credits. It was also logistically difficult to schedule a 0.5 credit course during the fourth term when the TECs are only on campus for five weeks; the course had to meet for six hours each week. Reducing the weighting on the integrated course for both cohorts not only provided space for the teachable methods courses for Junior/Intermediate TECs, it also allowed us to make the kindergarten methods course mandatory for the Primary/Junior TECs. This was beneficial given the distinctive teaching strategies used at that level.
Despite the fact that assessment is addressed within the series of integrated curriculum courses, TECs continued to request additional coursework in that area. A separate 0.25 course on assessment was developed as part of the extended program but was offered in the final semester. TECs requested that the assessment course come earlier in the program. As a result, we have moved the assessment course from the fourth term to the third term. As assessment is key to one of eight program learning outcomes, the faculty have also worked to integrate assessment concepts within multiple courses across the program, explicitly labeling it when it is discussed. Due to its complexity and importance, TECs and associate teachers continue to request even more instruction on the topic.

INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

The connection between theory and practice is a focus of our PDS model that continues to be important in the extended program. Although the program far exceeds the required number of days of practical experience, we continued the practice of two days per week of work in the schools while taking the university courses across both years of the extended program. Courses include three to six hours of course credit (for 0.25 and 0.5 credit weighting respectively) that are conducted in the schools or inquiry work outside of the classroom. The close connection and synchronous approach to coursework and field experience allows TECs to conduct targeted observations, try out pedagogies informed by theory, and collect data for analysis and synthesis in coursework. Some examples include conducting running records as part of a literacy course, creating a behaviour management journal for discussion in a learning and development course, or enacting a lesson plan developed in a curriculum methods course with the opportunity to review it with peers and instructors.

The demands of comprehensive “immersion” in the schools present challenges in terms of time management. As a result, we made one of the two weekly field days during the week before a block practicum a flexible learning experience day to assist in the transition from coursework to full-time field experience, e.g., finishing summative assignment or preparing lessons for the practicum block. In the subsequent year, the field days were consistently reduced to one day per week.

The Laurier Professional Placement (LPP) was developed as an opportunity built from increasing teaching responsibility across practica to a mentorship in full-time teaching across ten weeks. In the one-year program, our final practicum was six weeks in length, with four weeks teaching at 100%. At the onset of the two-year program, we required four consecutive weeks in a single classroom with the intent that TECs were teaching full time. The interpretation of this placement by field supervisors, associate teachers, and TECs sometimes led to less than four weeks of full teaching. This seemed like a step back from the requirement in the one-year program, so explicit changes were made to the LPP to mirror what had been done previously. Six weeks are now required in one classroom with four weeks of full-time teaching as an expectation. The overall placement provides opportunities for TECs to experience opportunities that they may have missed across the program and to transition from a teacher education candidate to a teaching professional. Additional information about the development and changes of the field experience component of the program are included in the next section.
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: FIELD DAYS AND PRACTICUM PLACEMENTS

In the extended program we added three practicum placements, providing TECs with a total of 181 days in schools. To recognize the significant time commitment, a total of 1.5 credits were allocated to practicum placements, whereas in the one-year program, no credits had been granted for them. TECs originally spent Tuesdays and Wednesdays of each week throughout the year in host schools, in addition to scheduled block practicum placements. The two field days per week accounted for 79 days in addition to the 102 days in teaching blocks, which well exceeds the mandatory 80 days required by Regulation 283/13. We also added a mandatory 15-day alternative placement. Finally, we added a professional learning seminar in Year Two to reflect the value placed on integration of theory and practice within the PDS model we have adopted. In response to student feedback regarding workload and in order to provide more flexibility, field days were reduced to one mandatory day (Tuesday) and one discretionary day (Wednesday) to be used as appropriate in the schools, for group and individual study, or for personal tasks.

TECs begin their participation in their PDS sites during the last week in August when teachers are preparing their classrooms. TECs are also in the PDS sites on the first two days of school in an elementary school setting, which is critical to the TECs’ understanding of how to establish rapport and set up the classroom as a learning community. During their field days, they have the opportunity to work with their associate teachers and in specialized areas of instruction and support available within the school: programs for English Language Learners, special education, behavioural support, the Arts, Health and Physical Education, and so forth. They may also work with the principal on selected school-wide projects, such as food bank drives, healthy living campaigns, musical productions, or character education programs.

In the previous one-year program, the first block practicum was a nine-day block in October. In the two-year program, this placement was changed to an extended field days block in order to allow a more gradual introduction to teaching practice and to help TECs learn how teachers establish and maintain a supportive, enabling learning environment where all students feel safe and are supported to achieve success. During this block, TECs are required to complete deliberate, intentional observations according to specific topics, and debrief their observations daily with the associate teacher for the purpose of developing an awareness and understanding of the many complex activities a teacher must consciously plan for and implement. TECs are not expected to engage in teaching during this block. In an effort to encourage formative feedback and ease the pressure of formal evaluation, the extended field days block is a pass/fail evaluation. They are evaluated primarily on professionalism, initiative, and collegiality, and meet on the last day of the placement as part of their Professional Learning Seminar. TECs have the opportunity to share, reflect, and make connections to assist them in preparing for their first practicum placement to follow in November.

There are two three-week practicum placements in Year One (one in November-December, and one in February). In each of these practicum placements, TECs observe, reflect, and assist the associate teacher in a variety of ways. During Practicum 1, under the supervision of the associate teacher, TECs should assume responsibility for teaching 25% of the associate teacher’s instruction, while in Practicum 2 they begin by teaching 25% and, from the midpoint to the end of the practicum, gradually work up to assuming 50% of teaching responsibility.
In Year Two, there are two practicum placements in the fall term (a two-week block in October and a three-week block in November-December). In these practicum placements, TECs take increasing responsibility for lesson planning, instruction, and assessment. During Practicum 3, under the supervision of the associate teacher, TECs begin the practicum by assuming responsibility for teaching 50% of the associate teacher’s instructional time and gradually work up to 75%, while in Practicum 4 they begin at 75% of the instructional time and work up to 100%.

Year Two TECs finish their course work in early February in order to complete a ten-week LPP at their PDS site. The LPP supports TECs in transitioning from student teacher to practicing professional, as they work hand-in-hand with a mentor teacher assigned to them at their PDS site for the year. During the LPP, under the supervision of an associate teacher, TECs must spend six weeks in the same classroom and assume responsibility for teaching 100% of the associate teacher’s instructional time during four consecutive weeks. The additional four of the ten weeks of the practicum placement are dedicated to broadening TECs’ teaching experiences as mutually agreed upon by the TEC and the PDS site and facilitated by the principal and/or the mentor teacher. Activities may include more complex or integrated aspects of teaching, such as intensive preparation of students for EQAO testing (either by the TEC or the associate teacher while the TEC instructs another group of students) or collecting data for a school-based team and assisting in implementing the recommendations. Participation in additional programs outside of the “regular” classroom experience might include shadowing English Language Learner or Special Education Resource Teachers. Extended time in a single classroom also provides opportunities for individual or differentiated instruction such as tutoring in areas of remediation or enrichment. This final practicum placement allows candidates to complete anything they may not have had a chance to address—observing or teaching in subjects or grade levels not heretofore experienced; working on school-wide projects; or leading extracurricular activities with teachers. Part of the transition to an independent professional may include “mock occasional teaching.” Mock occasional teaching provides an opportunity for candidates to experience what it will be like to do occasional teaching upon completion of their B.Ed. It involves assuming teaching duties for a class with no preparation beforehand, moving into a classroom with no knowledge of the class composition or lessons other than what would have been left for an occasional teacher. A certified teacher is present but does not participate in the delivery of the lessons or management of the class. The LPP also offers opportunities for TECs to contribute to divisional or curriculum teams at their schools, which offers further preparation for post-graduation professional practice.

While engaged in the LPP, TECs meet in small seminar groups on a regular basis with their field supervisors to reflect on their practice and construct professional knowledge as a community of learners. The extensive opportunities for varied classroom and school experiences that the LPP provides can deepen TECs’ knowledge of current Ontario curriculum and related policy documents, and knowledge of pedagogical and instructional strategies. It also allows TECs to have rich experiences in which they can operationalize required knowledge of the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession and Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession (Ontario College of Teachers [OCT], 2016). A recent review of research identified involvement in reflective activities and involvement in learning communities as important for teacher candidates’ identity development (Izadinia, 2013). These kinds of experiences are central to the conceptual framework and structure of our program and to the design of the LPP in particular.
SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION OF PRACTICUM PLACEMENTS

All practicum placements, including the LPP, are supervised by both associate teachers and field supervisors who are part-time faculty members. A majority of the field supervisors employed by the Faculty of Education were formerly school principals or consultants with the local boards, and as such are experienced in teacher evaluation.

With the exception of the LPP, the practicum evaluation form revolves around five themes, which cut across courses, practica, and the two years of the program:

- Learner-centred;
- Knowledge-centred;
- Pedagogy-centred;
- Community-centred; and
- Professionally-centred.

The first four themes are adapted from Darling-Hammond, Bransford, LePage, Hammerness and Duffy (2005). These themes provide TECs with a concrete way to connect the conceptual principles being learned in their courses to classroom practice. The fifth theme, professionally-centred, has been added to emphasize the types of attitudes and behaviours expected of teaching professionals. These five themes align with, but are not identical to, the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession and the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession (OCT, 2016). Together, the five themes provide a cognitive map for TECs to make connections across foundational and curricular course content, principles of teaching practice, and observed and enacted teaching events. The specific behaviours under each theme are gradually added as the TEC progresses through the practicum placement; for example, differentiation is considered to be a more advanced pedagogical strategy, and thus is not evaluated during the Year One practicum placement. The evaluation form for Practicum 4 is found in Appendix A. Note that this form is common to the first four practicum placements but some competencies are “greyed out” in the earlier practica and not evaluated due to TEC readiness.

The evaluation form for the LPP is modeled on the competencies of the New Teachers Induction Program in order to assist TECs in their transition to professional educators. While the themes are certainly still present, not all are explicitly mentioned. The LPP evaluation form is found in Appendix B.

ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT

The Alternative Placement (AP) is a mandatory three-week placement that normally occurs in April of Year One of the Bachelor of Education program, immediately after Practicum 2. Alternative Placements provide experiences that have a teaching/learning component but are outside of the regular classroom context of Ontario public schools. TECs may also elect to complete their Alternative Placement in a secondary school setting. Alternative Placements may be completed in or outside of Ontario, including international settings. Because the Alternative Placement occurs after the rest of the Year One commitments are completed, TECs may take advantage of any opportunities that may be offered to continue their placements over the summer. Contrary to our policy regarding the practicum placements, TECs find their own placements for
the AP. The field experience office may assist TECs in finding a secondary school placement as requirements will vary from board to board across the province.

During the AP, TECs work in a voluntary capacity in various contexts where learning takes place (e.g., Section 23 programs, KidsAbility\(^1\), museums, outdoor education centres). Community settings often address the needs of adults and children with an instructional component. The host agencies and organizations have opportunities to guide the learning of TECs, while TECs provide valuable volunteer assistance.

TECs may also take advantage of international opportunities for their AP. Opportunities currently exist in China, Egypt, Finland, Haiti, and Nepal; other sites (including Kenya, Ethiopia, and Ghana) are under exploration. International placements provide TECs with opportunities to develop culturally responsive pedagogical practices (DeVillar & Jiang, 2012). The Egypt, Haiti, and Nepal opportunities are offered in conjunction with the Laurier Educator and Leadership Institute (ELI), which aims to build teaching and leadership capacity in communities globally. The first ELI was launched in northern Haiti in August 2016 and continues to support educators in science, mathematics, critical literacy, early learning, special education, and school leadership. The initial objective of ELI Haiti was to impact the learning outcomes of 100,000 students by directly instructing 1,000 teachers and 100 principals in Haiti by 2020. As well, TECs support specialized camps that include robotics and entrepreneurship for girls. Finally, the TECs are involved in a conversational English program that partners Laurier students with Haitian high school and university students. The professional development courses occur each morning followed by an afternoon teaching practicum in the camps. This unique aspect of ELI provides an opportunity for educators to practice the learning that they are experiencing from the courses, mirroring the integration of theory and practice within the PDS model. The launch of ELI Nepal and ELI Egypt have been in response to localized needs to take what has been learned through the ELI Haiti experience and leverage this for work in other contexts. As part of the ELI, leading educators from Ontario, including Laurier TECs and faculty, travel to Haiti, Nepal, or Egypt to provide courses and engage educators in those contexts in professional learning. ELI is a project of the Faculty of Education in partnership with individuals from school boards in Canada and organizations such as Desire2Learn.

Given that TECs are not expected to teach during the AP (though they are permitted to do so), pedagogical practice is not included in the evaluation completed by the supervisor at the site. Thus, the evaluation of the AP focuses mainly on attributes of professionalism:

- Demonstrates consistent and punctual attendance;
- Demonstrates initiative, enthusiasm, and effort;
- Models clear oral and writing communication;
- Recognizes the limits of his/her knowledge and skills as an opportunity for growth;

\(^1\) Kidsability™ is the recognized leader in Waterloo Region and Guelph-Wellington (Ontario) for empowering children and youth with a wide range of complex special needs to realize their full potential (see [http://www.kidsability.ca/aboutus](http://www.kidsability.ca/aboutus)).
• Accepts responsibility for own behavior;
• Upholds the principles of the ethical standards of care, integrity, trust, and respect;
• Engages in ongoing discussion to increase knowledge/skills;
• Maintains confidentiality and respects privacy of students/clients and staff; and
• Contributes positively to organizational climate.

TECs were also required to prepare a short presentation on their AP experience for the incoming Year One TECs during orientation week of the subsequent year. The first few years of the revised two-year program took the form of a gallery walk, which was helpful to the Year One TECs as they began to contemplate their own AP plans.

MENTORSHIP, FIELD SUPPORT, AND SUPERVISION

Each TEC is assigned a field supervisor who visits them at their PDS sites. The field supervisor is a Faculty instructor who provides front-line contact with PDS staff (i.e., principals and teachers) and TECs at the schools to which he or she is assigned. This role includes mentoring, support, communication, problem solving, assessment of teaching practice, and providing feedback and instruction related to specific lessons or teaching activities of the TECs. Before and after each block placement, field supervisors meet with the TECs from their assigned PDS sites (normally five to six sites) as a group. The purpose of these meetings is to describe the expectations of that practicum for the TEC, and to debrief the experience afterward.

Field supervisors also visit each PDS site before the first block placement to meet associate teachers and establish communication protocols for the year. Understanding and rapport is thus developed, which provides a foundation for effective support of both the TECs and the associate teachers going forward. Field supervisors visit and observe TECs at least once during each three-week placement and at least twice during the LPP. Field supervisors provide a one-page formative assessment when they observe a TEC teach in a classroom. They also describe the TEC’s areas of strength, areas of growth, and next steps. If a field supervisor notes significant areas of concern, they will schedule further visits and interventions. Additional visits are made to the PDS sites to meet with associate teachers and TECs as needed for support when difficulties arise. Thus, the role of field supervisor is key, both in the development of TECs’ professional teaching skills and the effective coordination of school support and mentorship.

When a TEC is experiencing difficulties in a PDS, associate teachers and/or principals are asked to immediately contact the field supervisor, who then schedules a meeting with the TEC, one-on-one first and later with PDS personnel. The same procedure is followed when a TEC perceives a problem within the PDS setting, except that the TEC initiates the contact. In particularly serious or complex cases, the field supervisor brings the field experience officer (and possibly the associate dean and/or dean) into the loop as well. Another person from the faculty may be asked to observe the TEC in the classroom to provide a second opinion on their performance. When a TEC’s performance has been deemed unsatisfactory, an action plan is developed by the field experience officer, field supervisor, and associate dean or dean and discussed with the TEC and then with the associate teacher and principal.
During Year Two of the program, TECs also are assigned a mentor at their PDS site. The mentor, who is typically an associate teacher at the site, plans and coordinates the practicum and school-level participation experiences of the TEC, in preparation for and during the LPP. In certain cases, the principal may serve as a mentor, but in all cases he or she provides consultation to the mentor in assigning classroom teaching placements and other experiences during the ten-week LPP, as well as collaborating on the composition of the summative evaluation of this practicum placement.

DISPOSITIONS REVIEW PROCESS

Dispositions are those values and beliefs, as manifested in behaviours, that all professional educators in Canada must hold in order to be successful in increasingly diverse schools. Dispositions were recognized as having an important role in teacher education by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in the United States in 2000, suggesting that beyond knowledge, skills, and attitudes were dispositions that related to responsibility, values, and commitments. Villegas (2007), in examining the importance of a disposition for social justice in teacher education, defined dispositions as a “pattern of behavior that is predictive of future actions” (p.373). The specific dispositions that we assess in the program are described in the Professional Dispositions form in Appendix C. The Professional Dispositions review process is designed to provide TECs with feedback and to take timely steps with them as needed regarding ethical and professional behaviour, both in academic and field settings. The Professional Dispositions on which students are evaluated are closely aligned with the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession.

In the absence of evidence to the contrary, all dispositions are assumed to be at the acceptable level. When behaviours indicating an unacceptable disposition are identified by a faculty member, field supervisor, or the principal of the TEC’s assigned school, a Professional Dispositions Form is completed and submitted to the Office of the Dean. This may occur at any time during the year. When a Professional Dispositions form is submitted to the Office of the Dean, the dean, associate dean, or the field experience officer meet with the faculty member or field supervisor involved to determine together whether or not a meeting should be held with the student at that time.

Twice each year, in November and again in January, the dean, associate dean, all faculty members teaching in the B.Ed. program, field supervisors, and field experience officer meet to review the conduct and behaviour of each TEC in the program, in both academic and professional settings, with respect to professional dispositions. Principals are requested to complete their form for the TECs in their school in January, and this feedback is also considered. At this time, all Professional Dispositions Forms that have been submitted that year or since the previous dispositions meeting are considered for possible further action. It may or may not be necessary to meet with TECs who have been identified through a Professional Dispositions Form, depending on whether or not the behaviour or situation has been resolved. If any further action is to be taken on the basis of a Professional Dispositions Form, the TEC is asked to attend a conference with the faculty member(s) involved and either the dean or associate dean. At this conference, the TEC is informed of the problem, given a copy of the completed Professional Dispositions Form, and invited to respond. The TEC and faculty members, field supervisors, and the field experience officer work together to design an action plan to remediate the targeted disposition problem. In rare cases, serious concerns regarding dispositions may result in the inability to progress through the program and/or investigation of allegations of misconduct under the WLU Student Code of Conduct and
Discipline, and/or the TEC not being recommended for certification with the Ontario College of Teachers. If a TEC is dissatisfied with a decision, he or she may follow the appeals process.

INSIGHTS, CHALLENGES, AND NEXT STEPS

INSIGHTS

Despite the fact that the original program had been in existence less than 10 years when the move to a two-year program was mandated, the Faculty of Education accepted the challenge and redesigned the Bachelor of Education program to build on our original Professional Development School model; please refer to Buzza et al. (2017) for more details on this process. The intent of the two-year program design was to maintain the immersive approach of the model—linking theory to practice by continuing to provide synchronous field experience and academic courses and working in close partnership with our partnering schools. The two-year program built on the existing partnerships with new opportunities for mentoring and contributions. The opportunities afforded by our relatively small Faculty of Education include close and frequent connections with several geographically close school boards. We were able to capitalize on these partnerships as we implemented the revised four-term program.

The planning and implementation of the first five years of the two-year program highlighted the need for reflection, assessment, and evaluation beyond the accreditation and review processes already in place. A key insight from writing this chapter was the importance of gathering evidence and taking time for analysis and synthesis of how that evidence informs practice.

An extensive curriculum mapping process was instrumental in designing additional new courses and redesigning existing courses to support the program goals and overall philosophy. Many of the changes were done with the intent of addressing identified gaps (e.g., more assessment and evaluation content) and enhancing pre-existing strengths (e.g., build on the Indigenous focus with additional courses in equity and diversity). The additional content allowed for an expanded curriculum, but did not completely address the timing concern that TECs always note. That is, they want to “know it all” before they are responsible for teaching in the classroom. Some changes were made to address this desire; for example, moving the assessment course to the third term from the fourth term. The incremental approach of the coursework (see Figure 1)—moving TECs from foundations to making connections—does address the scaffolding of knowledge in parallel with the increasing teaching responsibilities in each practicum. Curriculum mapping continues in order to facilitate continuous improvement as we integrate new data and reflect on outcomes while responding to external and internal challenges as they arise.

CHALLENGES

Challenges with the change to a four-term program have stemmed from both internal and external sources. Government policies, budget cuts, admission uncertainties, and faculty workload all played a role as barriers to overcome.

The Ontario government changed policies in a number of areas that required quick responses from Faculties of Education. For example, the Health and Physical Education Curriculum was changed suddenly, particularly those sections relating to knowledge and understanding of LGBTQ2S
persons. The curriculum was rolled back to an earlier (and, some might argue, obsolete) version. TECs were understandably confused and concerned that the needs of a notable segment of the population were being overlooked. In a similar fashion, requirements were enacted for mathematics testing for all new teachers. This had implications for curriculum courses in mathematics and put pressure on TECs who were concerned about not being certified even if they successfully completed their Bachelor of Education program and demonstrated their mastery of mathematics in other ways. Changes in K-12 class sizes also impacted employment prospects for graduates.

There have been continued postsecondary budget cuts, from reduced funding rates for education students in 2015—from which our Faculty has never completely recovered—to tuition caps and tuition rate reductions beginning in 2019. Labour disruptions took place within Boards of Education during 2019-20, impacting field days and practicum placements.

Another category of concerns related to external forces, not necessarily government-related, but again, over which we had little control. The major concern in this category was volatility in confirmation rates in the B.Ed., making it difficult to plan budgets and staffing. For our program, confirmation rates jumped in one year from 29% to 59%. This created difficulties in delivering our curriculum in the way we prefer, which normally involves a great deal of active learning; smaller and more frequent assessments with prompt feedback; and maximum individualization for student needs. This approach is simply not feasible with class sizes hovering around 50.

A two-year program also means that there is twice the curriculum to deliver, which in a smaller Faculty implies the challenges in hiring more part-time instructors who are not necessarily intimately knowledgeable about the program model and who may not be as deeply immersed in pedagogical theory. In addition, this makes it more difficult to integrate content and themes across courses. The coordination of additional courses and faculty becomes more demanding. The integration across courses that was built into the design of the program was more difficult to enact than anticipated, with some course instructors having to teach outside their specific field of expertise. Faculty workload was greatly increased as they developed new courses and taught four unique courses rather than multiple sections of the same course.

The addition of a second year of TECs also added complexity. Placements are more complicated in that some schools indicated preference for only Year One or only Year Two TECs; TECs changed schools in Year Two of the program; and the number of our PDS sites expanded greatly. Maintaining close relationships with a larger number of schools strains the very “hands-on” approach to field supervision and wider contact with the faculty that had been part of our program. The Year Two cohort did, however, bring with it the opportunity for mentorship and support across the two years and within our partnering schools.

NEXT STEPS

A key aspect of our Bachelor of Education program is the Professional Development Model we have developed. Maintaining close relationships with our partnering school boards is critical to the concurrent professional learning of our TECs, our faculty, elementary students, and school staff. Staying current with developments in schools in parallel to advancements in post-secondary approaches and competencies will be important to continuous improvement and preparation of
future teachers. As we move forward with a two-year program, we will need to continue to connect with associate teachers, field supervisors, principals, faculty, TECs, and students. The needs and wants of each of these roles will be reviewed and addressed in a variety of ways. Annual surveys are conducted with TECs and our field experience office continues to communicate actively with principals and associate teachers. A series of professional learning events has begun wherein TECs invite their associate teachers to join them for coding workshops, flexible learning seminars, and other current issues at the faculty, which they then take back to their field experience.

The challenges that came with the division of funded seats into two years also brought possible benefits related to mentorship. Our Year Two TECs have organically supported incoming Year One TECs. A more formal mentorship program is an area that can be further developed moving forward across TECs and within Professional Development Schools. We also see space for a redesign of Year Two courses with additional TEC input based on their Year One experiences. It is important to recognize the difference between incoming TECs and those who have a year of teaching experience and course content.

Another important next step is the continued reflection on the integration of content and pedagogy in relation to Junior/Intermediate teachable subjects while exploring creative and productive ways to ensure these areas of specialty are addressed in concert with pedagogical development. Class size and instructor expertise have been considered as variables that impact the sustainability of teachable cohorts. Creative solutions have included online courses, team teaching, and collaborative course offerings across institutions. We continue to consider how best to support areas of specialization, providing opportunities for TECs with common interests and content expertise to connect and develop.

A final implication from the writing of this chapter is recognition of the need to ensure that data are gathered for the evaluation of all aspects of the program, from admissions to coursework to field experience outcomes. Data analysis is only as good as the data collection. A breadth and depth of evidence will inform future decisions that connect to our model, pillars, and goals that ensure equity and diversity; integration of technology and digital fluency; and decolonization of our curriculum. The continued collection of approaches to program development through publications such as this polygraph will assist in the ultimate success of teacher candidates across the province.

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CHAPTER 22

INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION AT YORK UNIVERSITY: A FOCUS ON DIVERSITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

Sarah Elizabeth Barrett, Diane Vetter, and Lindsay LaMorre

York University

INTRODUCTION

York University is a comprehensive university focused on providing quality education to a diverse population and its Faculty of Education reflects this. As one of the largest Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs in the province, the Faculty aims to serve a broad spectrum of students and communities, through all school subjects and divisions, with various specialties, pathways, and concentrations.

The Greater Toronto Area remains the number one destination for most immigrants to Canada (Ballingall, 2017). This has been the case for decades, resulting in one of the most linguistically, ethnically, and racially diverse populations in the world. York University’s Faculty of Education recognizes the diverse knowledge, gifts, and experiences that students bring to our program and is committed to contributing to the development of educators who are ready, able, and enthusiastic to serve this unique region. Equally, the Faculty aims to help our students recognize and engage effectively with stakeholders identifying with all categories of diversity, including ability, gender, and sexual orientation. The Faculty’s work is guided by three goals:

- community-centric pedagogy (James, 2012);
- recognition of and preparation to engage with a diverse student population; and
- diversifying the teaching profession.

These goals have informed York’s program for many years and did not change with the extension of the program from two to four terms. The provincial regulatory requirement to develop a four-term program offered an opportunity to revise our approach to fulfilling those goals. We will be describing our approach to doing so by describing aspects of the program specifically designed to fulfill them and then concluding with a detailed description of one unique aspect of our program that illustrates how all three goals hang together. Throughout, we discuss some changes the four-term program has undergone over the last few years.
To describe the program briefly, York has both concurrent pathways (where students earn an undergraduate degree (BX) along with a B.Ed. at the same time) and consecutive pathways (where students enter the program with their BX already completed) into the B.Ed. program. Concurrent students work on their BX for 3 years, take a stop-out year in Year 4 to do Year 1 of their B.Ed., complete their BX in Year 5 and return to complete their B.Ed. in Year 6, graduating with both degrees at the end. For more details on the program, please see Vetter et al. (2017).

The four-term program consists of four types of courses: foundations, methods, electives, and practica. Foundations courses revolve around topics such as history, philosophy, sociology, psychology, diversity, and teaching students with exceptionalities. These are required courses for all students and include topics related to residential schooling, the role and purpose of schooling, the significance of race, gender, sexual orientation, and social class, and teaching students with various language, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Methods courses focus on specific elementary school subjects such as literacy, math, and social studies, as well as teachables for Junior/Intermediate and Intermediate/Senior programs. Practica includes community and school practica (to be described in detail presently). Electives allow students to enhance their knowledge and expertise in specific topics or subjects (such as environmental education and international contexts) and/or explore their interests. Primary/Junior students must take an elective in both math and literacy, with a variety of choices for each. Junior/Intermediate students must take an elective in either math or literacy. Beyond this, students benefit from doing practicum days concurrently with courses for a minimum of three out four terms. In this way, classroom experiences inform teacher candidates’ study of theory and vice versa, creating opportunities for York students to begin to develop a habit of reflective praxis (Freire, 1970/2000; Schön, 1983).

Over the last few years, the authors of this chapter have been heavily involved in tweaking the program to meet student needs while paying close attention to the three goals. We provide details below.

**GOAL #1: COMMUNITY-CENTRIC PEDAGOGY**

Community-centric pedagogy recognizes the ways in which schools are situated in community through the students’ daily experiences, the school’s history in the community, and parent and community members’ stake in their children’s success (James, 2012; Leistyna, 2002). This approach is based on the understanding that the parents and community are partners in students’ education. As such, making community connections is part of a teacher’s daily work with students.

For the community-based practicum component of the program, teacher candidates are supported and mentored by a community partner organization. Community partner organizations include hospitals, community centres, libraries, after-school programs, outdoor education centres, parenting centres, etc. Our community practicum program acknowledges that education and learning occurs in multiple contexts (Solomon, Manoukian, & Clarke, 2005); it thus places emphasis on the importance of leadership in community engagement, with students, families and communities as the foundation of teaching and education (McDonald et al., 2011). In the four-term program, the community practicum is structurally similar to what it was for the two-term program. However, in the previous program, only concurrent students participated. In the current program, all students do. This reflects the Faculty’s belief that recognition and engagement with community is essential to teaching. During their first two terms in the program, teacher candidates
are required to participate with a community organization or education-related institution in a community practicum experience (once a week), which is designed to broaden the importance of education and pedagogy beyond the traditional locus of the school and into other contexts.

The Faculty has developed reciprocal relationships with almost 200 community organizations that teach, support, provide services, and build connections between communities and their schools. The community practicum program frames the student experience of these community organizations by facilitating the inquiry process (question, reflect, connect, act) in increasingly diverse contexts and by developing a holistic approach through considering differing perspectives (social justice, equity, diversity, anti-oppression), and constructing knowledge and values of learning within formal and informal contexts (Boyle-Baise, 2002). Teacher candidates engage in a wide variety of experiences for their community practicum, depending upon the nature of the organization where they are doing their community placement. Candidates may choose from a range of offerings with our partner organizations but do not arrange placements independently. Instead, they have an opportunity to peruse all the experiences available (on their designated placement day) via an online placement system. Students then submit their placement preferences to the system and the Practicum Office matches them with one of their preferences based on a weighted algorithm that considers both their requests and the number of allocated spots available from each community partner.

There is a direct relationship and monthly communication between each community partner and the Associate Director of Experiential Education. There is ongoing support from the practicum course director, as they facilitate a guided inquiry through the experiential education component via the coursework associated with the community practicum. This blended course approach provides an opportunity to bridge theory with practical community experience by framing and facilitating processes of inquiry (reflection, connection, questioning), as well as allowing teacher candidates to explore and debate learning as it occurs not only in schools and universities, but in communities as well. Teacher candidates examine their own bias as they explore the diversity and complexities within communities through a variety of activities and facilitated critical reflection opportunities. As identified within the 2018-2019 Course Syllabus, teacher candidates in the program:

- have opportunities to develop community-based investigations where they will analyze the complexities of the communities that they themselves come from and the factors in a diverse and changing society that impact learning and school experience;
- have opportunities to articulate and examine their own assumptions as learners and consider other perspectives in teaching and learning;
- develop strategies for asking important questions about and reflecting upon their own learning and the learning of others; and
- gain an understanding of community/school relations from a variety of perspectives.

The community practicum provides teacher candidates with an experience to build relationships, engage, and learn from and with communities in which they may not traditionally belong; to connect with and acknowledge the many resources and supports that exist within communities; and to better understand and disrupt their own assumptions and biases as they relate to community engagement. Understanding and authentically engaging with an unfamiliar community helps
teacher candidates to better understand the structures that exist and the learning and advocacy opportunities available, while fostering opportunities to adapt and facilitate culturally relevant and responsive curriculum and pedagogical approaches to teach and support in increasingly diverse contexts. Thus, this experience provides the foundation for goal #2.

GOAL #2: RECOGNITION OF AND PREPARATION TO ENGAGE WITH DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS

The practicum experience in the Faculty of Education at York University is founded on two key understandings:

- Schooling is a function of community that requires dynamic community-school relationships and mutual understandings of shared values (James, 2012).
- Strong professional relationships with community and school partners, and the stakeholders in education that sustain those partnerships, are vital to the education of teacher candidates (Boyle-Baise, 2002).

The Faculty determined that the practicum needed to provide time and space for teacher candidates to observe not only classroom interactions but the ways in which teachers account for the communities within which they teach. To do this, we needed to relieve the pressure to perform that is inherent in traditional approaches to teaching practica. For example, traditional roles of teacher candidates in preservice education may have seen them spending time observing mentor teachers, then reaching for quantitative achievement objectives based upon time spent delivering lessons. In the traditional model, teacher candidates respond to the demands of the curriculum and the mentor teacher. Readiness to perform the functions of teaching might be based on a pre-determined percentages of a teaching day at a specific time of the year (e.g., teaching 50% of the day in the fall term, 75% of the day in the early winter term, and 100% of the teaching day prior to program completion). Table 1 outlines the organization of the practicum experiences across academic years.

Table 1

Class/Practicum Schedule

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<td>Six-week block</td>
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In the second year of the Bachelor of Education program, teacher candidates have two different placement opportunities. The two different experiences align with their teaching division and/or teachable specializations (in the Intermediate/Senior divisions). Ideally, teacher candidates are provided two different types of Professional Learning Experience (PLE), in two different school communities. In the fall term of the second year, students attend a school placement two days a week followed by a two-week block. In the winter term, students attend for a six-week block. In preparation for the block, teacher candidates gradually accept responsibility for independent planning and teaching throughout the fall term. While there is no requirement for a teacher candidate to teach 100% of the day, every day, during the 2-week or 6-week Professional Learning Experience, it is understood that they will need significant teaching time to facilitate the development and demonstration of their skills.

While the percentage of the teaching day may not have been the sole measure of success in traditional models, the pressure to fill a day with activity presents the danger of a focus on time, rather than a focus on student engagement in rich learning experiences. In such a case, the question becomes: does the ability of a teacher candidate to deliver teacher-centered instruction from a textbook for 75% or 100% of the day equate to exemplary pedagogy? From the perspective of the Faculty of Education at York, it does not. Therefore, the Faculty determined that the first objective of the teacher candidate must be to plan, initiate, sustain, culminate, assess, and reflect upon engaging lessons that are responsive and relevant to the needs of students in the host classroom and reflective of the community within which the school resides.

At the point when teacher candidates are able to effectively undertake the process of planning through reflecting upon responsive, relevant, and engaging student learning, it is understood that they are ready to apply and sustain their strong pedagogical thinking over a greater percentage of the teaching day. To enhance teacher candidates’ abilities to make connections between community and classroom, they also participate in a community practicum.

This is accomplished through strong relationships.

TEACHER CANDIDATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN EDUCATION

Actively engaging in the work of the school and classroom to understand the role of all stakeholders in creating and sustaining an engaging, inclusive, safe, and equitable learning environment is a learning outcome of the program. The ways in which they do so include:

- developing effective communication strategies with families, teachers, staff, and community;
- researching current practices;
- supporting capacity building in curriculum and community through initiatives such as literacy events, after-school activities, action teams, or other community initiatives;
- working with schools and student leaders to encourage student voice;
- collaborating with school and community to support student wellness; and
- supporting students, community, and beyond through inquiries into priorities, strengths, areas of growth, ongoing initiatives, etc. (York University Faculty of Education, n.d.-c).
An additional learning outcome requires teacher candidates (TC) to develop professional relationships with students, teachers, other TCs, school staff, parents, and other stakeholders in education. In working to meet these learning outcomes, TCs develop their professional demeanour and gain insights into the importance of strong professional relationships that support student learning (York University Faculty of Education, n.d.-c).

FACULTY RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN EDUCATION

With learning outcomes for York teacher candidates to develop strong professional relationships with stakeholders in education, it is incumbent upon the Faculty to do likewise. Therefore, it continues to do practicum with six school boards only, emphasizing building and maintaining relationships with partner schools. Thus, the practicum support system engages practicum facilitators who are active and visible in schools to provide support to both mentor teachers and teacher candidates. A practicum facilitator’s roles and responsibilities are to connect, build, and strengthen relationships with their cohort schools—in particular, the site coordinator (at the school level)—and facilitate strong connections and relationships with their students:

A York Practicum Facilitator supports teacher candidates and their mentor teachers in local schools. They collaborate with mentor teachers (MT – an individual teacher who will work one-on-one with the teacher candidate throughout the placement), site coordinators (SC – school staff member who is appointed to support the placements of all assigned candidates at the school), and administrators to facilitate the success of teacher candidates (TC) in the practicum placement by:

• developing and enhancing positive relationships and open lines of communication between the Faculty of Education and local school communities;
• developing and enhancing York Faculty of Education cohorts in schools to support strong professional mentoring relationships between teacher candidates and their mentor teachers;
• supporting school-based professional learning communities that include teacher candidate and mentor teacher collaboration;
• hosting regular practicum meetings for teacher candidates as a collaborative project between School and Faculty, allowing teacher candidates and interested school staff to engage in professional learning conversations;
• introducing or expanding upon understandings about the Faculty of Education’s Bachelor of Education to clarify the learning outcomes and exit requirements for teacher candidates relating to practicum activities such as active engagement, co-teaching, independent teaching, and participation in the school community;
• supporting TCs, MTs, and SCs to address issues or concerns, facilitate early resolution, and, if required, develop a detailed action plan;
• sharing the learning that is happening in the Faculty with site coordinators and mentor teachers; and
• updating the School on Faculty research, opportunities, events, and projects that might support School objectives (York University Faculty of Education, n.d.-c).
The goal is for practicum facilitators to create a trusting and welcoming environment whereby students feel part of a community of learners within a safe and inclusive space to discuss challenges, successes, and areas for growth as they relate to their practicum experience.

Practicum facilitators facilitate monthly meetings based on themes (e.g., practicum preparation, assessment, program planning, instructional strategies, professional growth, etc.). Monthly themes help guide practicum discussions and facilitate student conversations. They also provide an opportunity for teacher candidates to discover areas for growth, while addressing questions and providing additional support and guidance from both the facilitator and their peers.

There is an emphasis on building a sense of community within the cohort of students to enhance connections that may help facilitate discussions bridging theory to practice. These monthly discussions can be facilitated online (in small groups) or in person within the local school community. Through this process, practicum facilitators have a very good understanding of student needs and are best equipped to support and ‘scaffold’ student learning within the practicum experience. They are also best equipped to guide students on how to access the necessary resources available (e.g., student services, student accessibility services) to facilitate their practicum success. Practicum facilitators provide consistent check-ins with the mentor teacher throughout the practicum experience as well.

The role of the mentor teacher is summarized in Table 1. In addition to their mentor teacher, teacher candidates are supported at the school level by the leadership and guidance of the site coordinator. The site coordinator is the liaison between the school and the Faculty, facilitating dialogue regarding the practicum program with administration, mentor teachers, and other school-based educators to ensure clear understandings of the roles of teacher candidates, mentor teachers, school, community, and the Faculty in preparing teacher candidates for their roles as teaching professionals. This is a leadership role within the school community to help facilitate the learning of our students at the practicum school. The site coordinator supports the implementation of a vibrant practicum program by:

- demonstrating the importance of strong professional relationships between teacher candidates, school, and community to facilitate an understanding of the role of all stakeholders in creating and sustaining an engaging, inclusive, safe, and equitable learning environment;
- ensuring that teacher candidates are oriented to the profession, school procedures and routines, and the learning culture of the school;
- demonstrating collaborative leadership in arranging placements within the school and supporting mentor teachers and teacher candidates as required throughout the year;
- supporting effective communication between teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and other members of the school community;
- collaborating with the York practicum facilitator in supporting teacher candidates and mentor teachers to address issues or concerns, facilitate early resolution, and, if required, the development of a detailed action plan; and
- organizing school-wide learning opportunities for TCs beyond the classroom including participation in shared learning experiences, professional development, extra-curricular events, and other school activities. (York University Faculty of Education, n.d.-c)
In organizing field experiences, the goal is to bring together site coordinators from different school communities to share, connect, mobilize, and celebrate best practices and exemplary outcomes at the local school level in support of our teacher candidates.

In a video produced for our teacher candidates and partners in education, Faculty of Education at York University shared:

The Bachelor of Education program builds on the Faculty’s belief that where there is education, there is also powerful transformation. We strive to provide passionate, creative people with an inspiring environment in which they can cultivate their interests, gain the tools they need to motivate students and engage communities, actively contribute to the evolution of education, and become powerful catalysts for change. (York University Faculty of Education, n.d.-b)

Such transformation begins with the development and establishment of strong professional relationships (Barrett, 2013; Barrett, Ford, & James, 2010). However, it does not end with teacher candidates, practicum facilitators, site coordinators, or schools. The Faculty strives to build the same strong relationships with community partners, policy makers, and the global education community to ensure that, like the teacher candidates who enroll at York University, the Faculty is always learning and growing in search of innovative and effective ways to facilitate learning.

Although the practicum schedule (see Appendix A) has been adjusted several times based on teacher candidate and mentor teacher feedback, the philosophy underpinning the practicum has not changed—community-centric, holistically assessed, relationship-enhancing pedagogy grounded in differentiated experiences in schools and communities. In other words, the practicum emphasizes developing relationships with all stakeholders in the extended school community, developing pedagogy rooted in students’ experiences, and is assessed based on the same principles. In addition to being assessed on demonstrating professional and ethical standards; school structure; current practice and theory; curriculum and policy; teaching strategies; and resources, they must also demonstrate in their lesson planning that they take account of stakeholders within and beyond the school and community environments within which the school exists, including the values, priorities, and concerns of that community.

**GOAL #3: DIVERSIFYING THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

In keeping with its commitment to diversity, the Faculty has an Access Initiative:

Access invites students from the following underrepresented groups to apply as part of this initiative “designed to recruit, admit and support individuals who will make excellent teachers and reflect the diversity of our society. Our admissions policies are designed to assess the potential of all candidates, in particular those who have faced systemic barriers in educational settings and in their lives:

- **Aboriginal** (First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Status, Non-Status, Aboriginal Ancestry);
- **Persons with Disabilities**;
- **Racialized Persons** (A racialized group is a group of people who may experience social inequities on the basis of their perceived common racial background, colour and/or
ethnicity, faith and who may be subjected to differential treatment in society and its institutions. Examples may include: people of African descent, people of Asian descent);

- **Other Minoritized Persons** (…. For example: people living in poverty; sexual orientation; English Language Learners; refugees or those impacted by the refugee experience).”
  
(http://edu.yorku.ca/academic-programs/bachelor-of-education/academic-support/how-to-apply)

This initiative has been largely successful in maintaining a high percentage of students from the above groups (Holden & Kitchen, 2017), although there are challenges that will be noted presently.

Another strategy the Faculty uses to diversify the teacher candidates is to provide various pathways to enter the program: Direct Entry (admission directly from high school), upper year concurrent (third-year York University students), and consecutive (students who have already earned a Bachelor’s degree). Generally, half of our students are preparing to teach in the Primary/Junior division, with the rest in the Junior/Intermediate and Intermediate/Senior divisions. Up to 20% of our students are part of six cohorts with specific concentrations:

1. Glendon French (Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Senior) – to be discussed presently
2. Technological Education (Intermediate/Senior) – see separate chapter in this volume
3. Catholic Teacher Education (Primary, Junior, Intermediate) – in partnership with Toronto Catholic District School Board
4. Jewish Teacher Education (Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Senior)
5. Ryerson Early Childhood Education (through a connection with Ryerson University) – calendar modified significantly since 2015 (Primary/Junior)

All students are eligible to complete an international specialization that requires specific electives and an international education experience. The Ryerson and Waaban cohorts follow a summer-fall-winter-summer schedule while the rest of the program follows a fall-winter-fall-winter schedule.

Ryerson ECE students follow the Direct Entry pathway. Waaban students follow the consecutive pathway and can do so directly out of high school (as allowed by Ontario College of Teachers regulations pertaining to Indigenous teacher candidates). They receive a B.Ed. as all teacher candidates in the program do. Similarly, Technological Education students follow a consecutive pathway, entering the program with a combination of work experience and postsecondary certifications. Granting B.Ed. degrees to Technological Education and Waaban students in spite of the fact that they are not necessarily entering the program with a Bachelor opens up career paths with education that would not otherwise be available to them. This is in line with our goal to diversify all roles within the profession. The variety of pathways into the program and the existence of special cohorts allows a diverse population of teacher candidates to find their way into our programs with approximately 40% of our students identifying with our targeted populations (Holden & Kitchen, 2017).
Finally, the Faculty utilizes a complimentary staffing model to provide a wide range of role models for the teacher candidates once they arrive. These include tenure-stream professors, currently involved in research in education, and full-time secondees (exemplary teachers borrowed from the six partner school boards for three-year terms). The latter ensures that the Faculty not only remains connected to current classroom practices but also that the B.Ed. program maintains a close connection to the experience of being a classroom teacher, especially within the six school boards with whom our teacher candidates do their practice teaching.

With respect to diversifying the profession through admissions processes and pathways, the greatest challenge is that students who may have struggled to take one year off work to do this program in the past are now faced with two years of study. This renders the program inaccessible to many. For others, it means working part-time while attending in order to make ends meet. This especially affects students who enter the program consecutively as a second career. Another challenge has been maintaining space for consecutive students in an environment where there are more than enough applicants to the Direct Entry and upper-year concurrent streams to fill the entire program. We focus on maintaining the consecutive program because these applicants tend to be more diverse in every measure, thus contributing to the goal of developing a more diverse teaching profession. Indeed, a 2017 report indicates that the proportion of underrepresented groups in Ontario teacher education programs decreased significantly after the four-term program was introduced (Holden & Kitchen, 2017).

We have attempted to address the hardship introduced by a four-term program through the introduction of a summer-fall-winter-summer delivery for some cohorts. Since, for such a large program, switching the entire population to summer-fall-winter-summer is not practical, we have also been tweaking the timetable to allow most classes to end earlier in the afternoon, thereby facilitating part-time employment. We have modified the calendar to allow more flexibility in scheduling.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: GLENDON FRENCH COHORT

York offers the B.Ed. at Glendon (York University’s French Campus) to a cohort preparing to teach in French Immersion, Core, and Extended French classrooms. The cohort cuts across all teaching divisions from kindergarten to grade 12: Junior/Intermediate and Intermediate/Senior teacher candidates graduate with a French as a Second Language Teachable and Primary/Junior teacher candidates graduate with a qualification in French as a Second Language.

The prerequisites to enter the program are such that students essentially must either be pursuing a BA in French Studies at the Glendon campus or have attended an institution with whom our Faculty has developed a pathway agreement that ensures that the prerequisite requirements are met. Those prerequisites include demonstrating French language proficiency (a minimum intermediate level on a French language proficiency test) and completion of specific courses in language, linguistics, and culture. French culture credits can be satisfied through successfully completing Glendon courses such as Culture and Literature in Society or French-language Indigenous Literature and Culture in Canada or a twelve-month French immersion experience during their postsecondary study.
Students in this cohort participate in a practicum that includes French and bilingual community partners and French as a Second Language programs in Anglophone schools.

Most B.Ed. courses in this subject-concentration are taught at the Glendon campus, the majority of which are taught in French. In addition to the usual B.Ed. required courses, all students in the Glendon cohort must take two courses: Teaching and Learning French in an Immersion Context and Teaching and Learning French in a Core French Context. In Teaching and Learning French in an Immersion Context, students critically examine both theory and practice in French immersion education. The course highlights teaching language through content:

[T]his course is intended to facilitate students’ understanding of French immersion learning and teaching. Implications for French immersion practice in all teaching levels is emphasized. Course topics include: classroom-based French language acquisition [and] characteristics of French immersion students and contexts … [and] their achievement in academic subjects such as mathematics and sciences… Theoretical explanations are examined for immersion students’ learning and challenges documented in empirical, classroom-based research conducted in various contexts across Canada over several decades… Course readings and activities draw students into debates that have shaped the evolution of immersion education for more than forty years… Faculty of Education students probe the needs of specific student populations within these programs; they consider a range of programmatic and instructional options for integrating French language and content teaching; they focus on instructional practices which create optimal classroom conditions to develop immersion students’ French proficiency in different types of immersion programs. (York University Faculty of Education, n.d.-a)

Such a detailed and in-depth examination of French immersion education provides the teacher candidates in the B.Ed. program at Glendon with a unique understanding of their chosen area of specialization. In addition, students must take Teaching & Learning French in a Core French Context, where the focus switches to non-immersion teaching:

Course topics include: … models of FSL delivery (core French, intensive core French, compact core French); the impact of time and intensity in the delivery of FSL programs on student learning … learning resources supporting the learning of FSL in core French settings including digitally mediated resources; literacy, and culture development in the core French classroom; the inclusion of students with special learning needs in the FSL classroom … the merits of non-native and native speaker teachers of FSL … and organizations and supports that contribute to the teaching and learning of FSL and FSL teacher preparation in Ontario and Canada. (York University Faculty of Education, n.d.-a)

Throughout both courses, issues related to linguistic and cultural diversity within FSL contexts are addressed with respect to both Francophone cultures and students in FSL, immersion, and extended French classrooms. Note that Junior/Intermediate and Intermediate/Senior students must still take the FSL teachable courses characteristic of any teacher education program in addition to the above noted required electives. Thus, although students in the Glendon cohort receive the same FSL qualification as any other student who takes the French teachable as an Intermediate or Intermediate/Senior teachable in any Ontario Faculty of Education, the enriched experience of
attending class on a French campus, doing most courses in French along with the two specialized electives, and the community and school practicum experiences ensure that the students are uniquely prepared to teach in core French, French immersion, and extended French environments upon graduation.

In switching from a two- to four-term program, the Glendon French cohort now has more time to become acclimatized to teaching in French. As a program that accepts students directly from high school for future enrolment, the students are required to take an introduction to education course (as all Direct Entry B.Ed. students at York are). In recognition of the linguistic demands of the course, the course is taken in Year 2 of their BA rather than Year 1. This is a change from the original plan when the four-term program was first designed. Also, students finish their BA before taking B.Ed. courses, again to support students’ development as French-language speakers.

The Glendon French cohort engages with community-centric pedagogy through the practicum, just as the rest of the program does. In this case, the Faculty works with one school board to develop and maintain relationships with partner immersion schools. It facilitates teacher candidates’ ability to recognize and engage a diverse student population through course emphasis on cultural and linguistic diversity within FSL contexts. Finally, by recognizing the global Francophone community for the purpose of admission and French language level assessment, the cohort supports the Faculty’s emphasis on diversifying the profession.

CONCLUSION

The work of educating tomorrow’s teachers requires ongoing analysis and development to keep pace with a fast-changing education landscape. The Faculty of Education at York University retains our determination to strive to provide passionate people with an inspiring environment in which they can cultivate their interests, gain the tools they need to motivate students and engage communities, actively contribute to the evolution of education, and become powerful catalysts for change. The Bachelor of Education program at York University continues to focus on the goals of community-centric pedagogy, recognition of and preparation to engage with diverse student populations, and diversifying the teaching profession using approaches appropriate to the University’s local and extended school communities.

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APPENDIX A

SUPPORT AND ASSESSMENT IN THE FIELD

MENTOR TEACHERS

Partner Boards of Education generally recruit mentor teachers through a central process to help develop the next generation of teachers in Ontario. York University’s Faculty of Education seeks mentors who are creative and inspire teachers with a commitment to the values of community, equity, diversity, and social justice in the classroom. We look for teachers who initiate engaging and dynamic practice and are eager to share in the exploration of new ideas and emerging practices in education. We highly value mentors who believe in the importance of supportive mentoring and strong professional relationships.

The role of the mentor teacher is to invite teacher candidates into a learning environment that facilitates shared experiences of teaching and learning. They provide authentic opportunities to integrate theory and practice in the classroom, while offering candidates a window into the analysis of student needs and the planning required to facilitate student learning. Working closely with a teacher candidate requires an open and trusting professional relationship that respects multiple perspectives, invites questioning, solidifies understandings, and encourages ongoing reflection on daily successes and challenges. Mentor teachers support this process by:

- modelling a collaborative and inclusive learning environment and a commitment to innovative, inclusive, and equitable teaching practices;
- creating a positive learning climate conducive to risk taking;
- co-planning and co-teaching with a gradual release of responsibility differentiated to meet the learning needs of the teacher candidate;
- making clear the daily learning objectives, rationale for planning and assessment, reflection on student learning, and educational research used to inform practice;
- collaborating with a York practicum facilitator to support teacher candidates, address issues or concerns, facilitate early resolution, and, if required, develop a detailed action plan;
- providing timely, constructive feedback to encourage ongoing learning;
- supporting achievement of the learning objectives required to develop the Year One portfolio of documented evidence and to meet the Year Two Practicum Evaluation Protocol Exit Requirements; and,
- working collaboratively with the teacher candidate to ensure engagement for 100% of the day in the work of teaching and learning, which may include actively observing teaching practices, working with small groups or individual students, taking on daily transitions and routines, co-planning and co-teaching lessons, and independent planning and teaching beginning with the culminating practicum experience (at the end of Year One).

To ensure ongoing communication and consistent understandings for teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and site coordinators, the Faculty of Education has developed a Mentoring and Teaching Resource Room (York University Faculty of Education, n.d.-c) to provide updated program
information, mentoring support and tips, upcoming professional development events, and links to Faculty and Ontario Ministry of Education documentation.

ASSESSMENT

Year One teacher candidates are required to document their achievement of the learning objectives through a portfolio that they present to their mentor teacher for feedback. The mentor teacher’s brief written feedback is shared with the Faculty:

Additional evaluation of the candidate’s Orientation to the Profession in Community and understanding of Learners will be embedded in coursework that is closely linked to the practicum experience. In the first year of the Bachelor of Education program, teacher candidates have the opportunity to engage with learning in multiple ways, which leads the learner to inquire, deconstruct, analyse, implement, reflect upon, revise, and wrestle with new understandings in meaningful ways. Active engagement and co-planning/co-teaching allow the TC to make sense of the foundational theories of learning in a collaborative mentoring environment. Today’s teacher candidates are the teachers of tomorrow. They will be responsible for self-assessing their professional practice and their learning needs for professional growth and development. It is important that teacher candidates begin this process of self-assessment from the first day of practicum. (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017)

The Ontario Ministry of Education’s policy document, Growing Success, outlines its philosophy of how evaluation should be handled in schools, describing a growth model of assessment and evaluation that prioritizes process over product. This model is based on seven fundamental principles, and “to ensure that assessment, evaluation, and reporting are valid and reliable, and that they lead to the improvement of learning for all students, teachers use practices and procedures that:

- are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;
- support all students, including those with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;
- are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
- are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
- develop students’ self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning.” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 6)
York’s Faculty of Education adopts a similar philosophy with regards to the practicum experience. Mentor teachers and teacher candidates are provided with the learning outcomes. Through ongoing conferencing with their mentor teacher, preservice students build a Portfolio of Documented Evidence to demonstrate their learning process in a manner that meets the “interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences” of the teacher candidate (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 6). Mentor teachers, in turn, provide “ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 6). Through this, teacher candidates are encouraged to develop “self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 6). This process instills confidence in the learner and provides an experience similar to what teacher candidates should provide for their future students and what they will be expected to employ in their own professional growth into the future. The first-year school practicum culminates with a two-week block, designed to allow students to assess their level of preparedness for the independent planning and teaching required in Year Two.

In Year Two, students attend practicum two days per week, followed by a two-week block. In the winter term, they have a 6-week block. The exit requirements are categorized into five areas of evaluation:

- Creating the environment for learning engagements,
- Classroom discourse,
- Individual learning engagements,
- Learning engagements within units, and
- Professionalism.

Based on feedback from the mentor teacher and review of the Portfolio documentation, the practicum facilitator posts a passing or failing grade.
CHAPTER 23

INDIGENOUS INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN ONTARIO

Leisa Desmoulins and Nicole Bell

Lakehead University and Trent University

The term ‘Indigenous education" has multiple meanings, from traditional learning with Elders and knowledge keepers as teachers within communities to classrooms for Indigenous students in publicly funded schools, with many variants in between (Hampton, 1995). Hampton (1995) asserts that Indigenous education *sui generis* (as a thing unto itself) meets the cultural structure and community standard of true Indigenous education (p. 10). For the purposes of this chapter, the authors explore education in Indigenous initial teacher education (IITE) programs for Indigenous learners in faculties of education that are certified by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). We review IITE programs to explore the variety, similarities, and ongoing challenges for faculties of education across Ontario. We explore opportunities to move toward true Indigenous education that reflects learning in local Indigenous cultures and communities.

In this chapter, we consider the sociocultural and historical contexts of IITE programs from the dual lenses of policy and practice. In the section Conceptualizing Indigenous Education, we review policy on Indigenous education, beginning with the watershed document *Indian Control of Indian Education* (National Indian Brotherhood [NIB], 1972). This document describes Indigenous education for Indigenous learners in on-reserve schools as well as all learners within public schooling and made recommendations for improving Indigenous education to meet the needs of students. We then narrow our historical focus to Ontario. We review the Ontario (1976) *Task Force on the Educational Needs of Native Peoples Report* that gathered recommendations from communities to enhance Indigenous education in public schools in Ontario. Next, we review two current documents that serve to inform policy in IITE programs. The first, the Truth and Reconciliation *Report on Indigenous Residential Schools in Canada* (2015), provides Calls to Action for education broadly. The second, the *Accord on Indigenous Education*, is a policy document specific to faculties of education across Canada. The governing body for faculties of

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1 In this chapter we use “Indigenous education” to refer to education for first peoples within Canada—First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. When citing others or describing initiatives, we use their terminology (for example, Lakehead University’s Aboriginal Education Department, or the Ontario Ministry of Education’s First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) framework).
education across Canada, the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE), commissioned four scholars to create this document. Archibald, Lundy, Reynolds, and Williams’ (2010) Accord calls for “increased national dialogue and cooperative action for improving Indigenous education” (p. 2) within initial teacher education (ITE) and IITE programs. In the section Policy into Practice, we review Indigenous education practices in provincial school classrooms at the elementary and secondary and post-secondary levels within Ontario. We begin with a historical review of resource and curriculum documents from the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) to guide elementary and secondary teachers’ practices on Indigenous education up to its most recent First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (FNMI Framework) (OME, 2007). To examine how OME policies align with practices, we review three progress reports published by the OME that reveal their successes and challenges toward meeting the goals of its FNMI framework (OME, 2009; 2013; 2018). Then we turn to post-secondary learning at IITE programs in post-secondary institutions (PSIs) in Ontario. To explore Indigenous education within PSIs, we review programs for Indigenous students at six faculties of education in Ontario. Currently, Brock, Lakehead, Nipissing, Ottawa, Queen’s, and Trent Universities offer IITE programs, as shown in Tables 1 and 2. In Case Studies of IITE, we feature the IITE programs at Lakehead and Trent Universities. These case studies highlight two approaches to IITE in faculties of education. These IITE programs share several features, which we present. In the final section, Challenges and Opportunities for IITE in Ontario, we discuss how the IITE practices within faculties of education in universities in Ontario meet the TRC’s (2015) Calls to Action and Archibald et al.’s (2010) vision, principles, and goals for Indigenous education within the ACDE Accord on Indigenous Education. We review the progress made over the past decade and the gaps that remain for cooperative actions for improving Indigenous education within IITE programs for Indigenous students, their families, and communities across Ontario.

CONCEPTUALIZING INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Across the country, Indigenous education gained widespread recognition with the release of the National Indian Brotherhood’s (1972) policy, Indian Control of Indian Education (ICIE), a seminal guide to Indigenous education for Indigenous students on reserve and in public schools. The ICIE policy was a direct response to the federal government’s (1969) White Paper, which recommended assimilation of Status Indians and dissolution of on-reserve schools. In response, the NIB proposed an alternative policy of Indian Control of Indian Education (ICIE). The NIB’s policy offered a comprehensive approach with a guiding philosophy of Indigenous education for all students. Its policy remains relevant for Indigenous education practices in schools today.

The Government of Ontario (1976) established the Task Force on the Educational Needs of Native Peoples comprised of Chiefs of Political Territorial Organizations (PTOs), Métis, and non-status representatives in Ontario, as well as representatives from provincial ministries and federal departments. The task force members’ purpose was to write a report with recommendations on the educational needs of Indigenous learners in Ontario. Indigenous leaders answered this request with 1,677 recommendations, which the Task Force clustered into three categories:

- Reinforce culture and identity (as they define themselves);
- Have the option of “living a native life-style or of competing on equal terms in the general job market, or both”; (p. 3)
• Get educated in ways that are “…of use to native society in general, not just to formally enrolled students; this by means of adult education programmes and so forth” (p. 3).

Future policy documents have clarified Indigenous education across Canada, both on-reserve and within public schooling (e.g., Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), 1996; Assembly of First Nations [AFN], 2010; Truth and Reconciliation Report, 2015). As one example, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (2015) Report on Indian Residential Schools brings to light the truth of the long history of Residential Schools through interviews with Residential School survivors and family members representing the 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students who were forced to attend 130 schools across the country. In a supplementary report, Calls to Action, the TRC recommends actions for non-Indigenous peoples to take to reconcile with Indigenous peoples.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION: CALLS TO ACTION

The TRC’s (2015) Calls to Action seek reconciliation from government, the private sector, and the broader public sector. The TRC provides two calls that are particularly relevant for post-secondary institutions, particularly for programs within faculties of education. These two calls, 16 and 62(b), call upon universities to create degree and diploma programs in Indigenous languages, and to fund education for teachers to learn how to integrate Indigenous knowledges and teaching methods into their classrooms, respectively.

These two calls to action echo several goals of the ACDE Accord on Indigenous Education (Archibald et al., 2010). For the Accord, the ACDE sought signatories. Deans of faculties that signed the Accord agreed to aspire to its vision, principles, and goals in their education programs and research initiatives (p. 1). In the next section, we review the Accord, which was the culmination of a consultation process led by Indigenous scholars Archibald and Williams and developed in collaboration with their decanal colleagues, Lundy and Reynolds.

ACDE ACCORD ON INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

The ACDE unanimously accepted the Accord on Indigenous Education, which set a mandate to support and encourage “increased national dialogue and cooperative action for improving Indigenous education” (Archibald et al., 2010, p. 2) based on an ambitious vision “that Indigenous identities, cultures, languages, values, ways of knowing, and knowledge systems will flourish in all Canadian learning settings” (p. 9). The Accord offers guidance for teacher educators within faculties of education, particularly IIIE programs. On June 1, 2010, the Deans that signed the Accord on behalf of faculties of education across Canada committed their members to four goals, to:

• Support a socially just society for Indigenous peoples;
• Reflect a respectful, collaborative, and consultative process with Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge holders;
• Promote multiple partnerships among educational and Indigenous communities; and,
• Value the diversity of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing and learning. (Archibald et al., 2010, p. 5)
They also committed to nine goals for transformative educational change:

- Respectful and welcoming learning environments,
- Respectful and inclusive curricula,
- Culturally responsive pedagogies,
- Mechanisms for valuing and promoting Indigeneity in education,
- Culturally responsive assessment,
- Affirming and revitalizing Indigenous languages,
- Indigenous education leadership,
- Non-Indigenous learners and Indigeneity, and
- Culturally respectful Indigenous research.

(Archibald et al., 2010, pp. 5-7)

The ACDE signatories accepted the authors’ challenge “to guide program review and transformation, [and work] collaboratively to prioritize the educational purposes and values of Indigenous communities and people” (Archibald et al., 2010, p. 4). Faculties of education used the Accord to review and revise programs. Five years after the ACDE and its faculties of education adopted the Accord, the Canadian Critical Pedagogy Association and the Canadian Association for the Study of Indigenous Education (with the ACDE and the Canadian Society for the Study of Education) hosted a panel discussion at the University of Ottawa in May 2015. Panelists discussed implementation of the Accord within their faculties. Panelists reported progress in various aspects, including the addition of more Indigenous-centered curricula; creation of Indigenous-focused programs; development of courses sensitive to Indigenous peoples’ experiences; building of community partnerships by Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty members; hiring of more Indigenous faculty members; and expansion of language programs (ACDE, 2015). However, panelists agreed unanimously that challenges remain to implement the ACDE Accord fully.

The ACDE Accord on Indigenous Education has become an aspirational document for faculties of education. It serves as a model for the wider university community, the teaching profession, and elementary and secondary education (Maclean’s, 2010, n.p.). Faculties’ greatest challenges lie in aligning the vision, principles, and goals of the Accord with practices within their ITE and IITE programs.

POLICY INTO PRACTICE

First Nations organizations have a long history of advocacy in Canada to assert Indigenous sovereignty over Indigenous education. The NIB (1972) began the call for Indian Control of Indian Education. Forty years later, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN, 2010) restated the NIB’s (precursor to the AFN) call with the paper First Nations Control of First Nations Education. Reissuing this document, the AFN asserted that despite the federal government’s affirmation of ICIE, the full spirit and intent of the original ICIE policy “has never been supported in a meaningful manner” (p. 3). The AFN policy framework served to reassert “First Nations inherent Aboriginal and Treaty rights to education” (p. 3) and provided recommendations for First Nations jurisdiction over education for all ages and stages for lifelong learning.
Indigenous communities and allies continue to work toward the repatriation of ICIE within federal schools (ACDE, 2015; AFN, 2010; NIB, 1972; Task Force, 1976). Further, these authors have shown consistently that Indigenous education is for all students and has a place within public schooling at all levels. To illustrate with one example, many teacher candidates in ITE and IITE programs will complete their program of study and seek teaching positions in provincially and federally funded elementary and secondary schools. These novice teachers will be expected to meet the needs of all students and to bring the principles of the ACDE Accord on Indigenous Education into their classrooms. To take the pulse of current practices within Indigenous education, in the sections that follow we review the OME’s Indigenous Education initiatives and we feature six IITE programs within faculties of education across Ontario. We begin with the OME’s resources for elementary and secondary teachers in provincial schools in Ontario.

HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS EDUCATION WITHIN THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

In 1995, the Ontario Ministry of Education released a document called People of Native Ancestry (PONA), a set of resource guides for teachers in Primary/Junior, Intermediate, and Senior divisions to supplement existing curricula. These guides had a dual purpose. They offered teachers resources for all students—Indigenous and non-Indigenous—to “build in the Native perspective [sic] to the existing course of study” (p. 6). One of these guides introduced curriculum for a new course, Native Studies, for students in the Senior division (p. 10).

In 2007, the OME began several initiatives. First, it refreshed its PONA resource guides with the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework. Second, it developed teacher resources for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) education. Third, it formed the Aboriginal Education Office (AEO) to support implementation of its framework. The newly formed AEO worked with three school board districts (Keewatin-Patricia, Kenora Catholic, and Toronto) and First Nations and Métis representatives. This ad hoc group developed provincial policy for voluntary self-identification of Indigenous students in schools. This policy asks Indigenous students to self-identify as members of an Indigenous group (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) in order to track their academic progress compared to their non-Indigenous peers. Ultimately, the FNMI framework aimed to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students.

Through its FNMI framework, the OME endeavoured to meet two challenges by 2016: “to significantly improve achievement among FNMI students, and to close the significant student achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students” (Auditor General, 2012, p. 131). To meet these challenges, the OME (2007) selected four measures of Indigenous students’ academic achievement: “literacy and numeracy, retention of students in school, graduation rates, and advancement to post-secondary studies” (p. 6). The OME gathered data from self-identified Indigenous students over seven years (2009-2016) and reported its progress, aggregated at the provincial level, via three Progress Reports (2009, 2013, and 2018).

These reports compare FNMI students to their non-FNMI peers in elementary and secondary schools across Ontario. Notably, during the period from 2009 to 2016 the number of self-identified FNMI students in Ontario school boards grew by nearly 32,000 students. The OME’s reports (2013, 2018) on student achievement and gap closing measures revealed some modest gains. By
2016, Métis students had closed the credit accumulation gap by 5% compared to the 2012-13 academic year (Progress Report, 2018, p. 74). However, on measures of literacy, numeracy, and credit accumulation for First Nations and Inuit students, as well as graduation rates for all FNMI students, school boards failed to meet their stated objectives to “boost Aboriginal student achievement” and “close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009) based on the measures it set for this policy initiative. These gaps continue to disadvantage Indigenous students entering post-secondary studies at colleges and universities.

INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

There are two types of Indigenous education initiatives within faculties of education in Ontario. The first type is mainstream ITE programs, which seek to “infuse, incorporate, or imbed Indigenous content, perspectives, worldviews, and pedagogies within the respective programs” (Deer et al., 2015, p. 26). Typically, these programs include mandatory course(s) on Indigenous education, often referred to as Indigenous Required Courses (IRC) (e.g., Lakehead University), or elective courses in ITE programs for teacher candidates (e.g., University of Toronto).

The second type are IITE programs, which are the focus of this chapter—i.e., initial teacher education programs for Indigenous students. Currently, six faculties of education in Ontario offer IITE programs: Brock, Nipissing, Ottawa, Queen’s, Lakehead, and Trent. Tables 1 and 2 show certificate programs and degree programs, respectively. Diploma programs differ from degree programs because they are shorter in length and the OCT applies restrictions for teaching.

These six faculties of education across Ontario offer IITE programs with a range of options for Indigenous students seeking teacher certification. Some offer Indigenous language instructor programs (e.g., Algonquian languages at Lakehead; Anishnaabe, Lenape, Cree, Mohawk, and Cayuga at Nipissing). Others offer an Indigenous language as a teachable subject (e.g., Algonquian languages at Lakehead, and Anishinaabemowin at Trent). Some offer community-based IITE programming in First Nations communities (e.g., Brock’s program with Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Institute) or at community sites (e.g., Queen’s program with Kenjgewin Teg on Manitoulin Island). Most community-based IITE programs are offered as blended programs, taught within a community and at the university. To illuminate, Nipissing students also take online courses and at Lakehead students relocate to take courses on-campus for their final two professional years. IITE programs offer flexibility for part-time (e.g., Nipissing, Ottawa) or full-time (e.g., Trent) studies. Faculty of education websites for each of the six universities provide further information about admission requirements and program options for their IITE programs.

2 These two tables update data originally reported by Naokwegijig-Corbiere (2007), and updated by Deer et al., (2015). Unfortunately, information from Brock University’s IITE program was unavailable at the time of publication. See footnote to Table 2 for information on Brock’s IITE program.
# Table 1

## Certificate and Diploma Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University &amp; Program</th>
<th>Admission Requirements</th>
<th>Delivery Modes/ Placements</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Additional Information/Supports</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Lakehead University in Thunder Bay is on the territory of the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850, and the traditional lands of the Anishnaabek. Indigenous Language Instructors Program (ILIP). | Fluency test in an Algonquian language (Ojibwe, Cree, Oji-Cree) | • Part-time, with full-time courses offered face-to-face over 3 summers.  
• Student teaching practicums completed (80 days over the course of the three-year program). | 3 years | • Thunder Bay campus  
• K-12  
• Summer childminding available through Odaminowin Day Camp; on-site Elder; other academic, spiritual, and social supports such as ceremonies and pot lucks. |
| Nipissing University in North Bay is on the territory of the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850 and the traditional lands of the Anishnaabek. Indigenous Teacher Education Program (ITEP). | Completed certificate from accredited PSI | • Blended two-year program with two six-week, on-campus sessions each summer; online courses in fall and winter semesters.  
• 19 weeks of in-school internships supervised by a certified teacher in a classroom setting.  
• 60 hours of alternative placement. | 2 years | • P/J Division  
• Nipissing offers these supports: summer day camps for children; Office of Indigenous Initiatives offers academic, personal and cultural supports; mentorship initiatives; an Indigenous Youth Education Gathering; Indigenous Week; annual welcome powwow; speaker series; student lounge; sacred space; and Elder-in-Residence program. |
| Nipissing University Teacher of Indigenous Languages as a Second Language | Minimum - Grade 12 Ontario OR equivalent OR 20 years or older and out of school for 2 years or more | • Blended two-year program with two six-week, on-campus sessions each summer; online courses in fall and winter semesters.  
• 19 weeks of in-school internships supervised by a certified teacher in a classroom setting. | 2 years | • P/I/S Divisions (K-12)  
• See supports above. |
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<th>University &amp; Program</th>
<th>Admission Requirements</th>
<th>Delivery Modes/Placements</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Additional Information/Supports</th>
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| Nipissing University Indigenous Classroom Assistant Program | Completion of Ontario grade 12 or equivalent, or 21 years or older and out of school for 2 years or more | • 60 hours of alternative placement.  
• 2 consecutive summer sessions on-campus.  
• Two school placements with a qualified classroom teacher in a classroom setting. | 2 years | • All divisions  
• Graduates may continue into the Indigenous Teacher Education Program*  
• See above for supports. |
| University of Ottawa Indigenous Teacher Education Program | Minimum high school diploma or equivalent with Grade 12 English & Grade 11 math | • Part-time, community-based program is experientially based. | 3 years | • P/J division  
• The ITEP certificate can be upgraded to a B.Ed. upon completion of an undergraduate degree within ten years. |

* Upon completion of the first summer, teacher candidates are eligible to apply for a Transitional Certificate through the Ontario College of Teachers.  
* Nipissing teacher programs have this option, but teacher candidates are eligible upon successful completion of Year 1 of the program(s)
Table 2

Degree Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University &amp; Program</th>
<th>Admission Requirements</th>
<th>Delivery Mode/ Placements</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Additional Information/Supports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lakehead University in Thunder Bay is on the territory of the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850, and the traditional lands of the Anishnaabek. BA/B.Ed. & HBEd | Ontario high school diploma with Grade 12 U English, and 5 Additional Grade 12 U or M Credits; Proof of ancestry may be required | • Full- or part-time  
• Community-based - HBEd blended (professional years completed on campus)  
• On campus - HBEd or BA/BEd | 5 years | • Thunder Bay campus only BA/B.Ed. with a major in Indigenous Learning (I/S); or HBEd (P/J)  
• Concurrent degree offered in both  
• Ojibwe language teachable |
| Nipissing University in North Bay is on the territory of the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850 and the traditional lands of the Anishnaabek. Indigenous Teacher Education Program (ITEP) | Completed certification from an accredited university or college; Proof of Aboriginal ancestry | • Blended two-year program with two six-week, on-campus sessions each summer; online courses in fall and winter semesters.  
• 19 weeks of in-school internships supervised by a certified teacher in a classroom setting.  
• 60 hours of alternative placement | 2 years | • P/J division  
• All students enrolled in Indigenous education programs at Nipissing University have access to a wide range of supports including: summer day camps for children; and an Office of Indigenous Initiatives that offers academic, personal and cultural supports; mentorship initiatives, an Indigenous Youth Education Gathering; Indigenous Week; annual welcome powwow; speaker series; student lounge; sacred space; and |

3 In fall 2019, Brock University offered an alternative concurrent program in Nishnawbe Aski communities in northwestern Ontario with a cohort of 21 students. This program combined 15 undergraduate credits with teacher certification credits adapted from those in the mainstream program. The second cohort is scheduled to begin in Fall 2022. Brock’s revamped program, the Indigenous Bachelor of Education, has been updated and approved by the Ontario College of Teachers. It is a partnership between Brock University and Oshki-Pinache-O-Win through the Wenjack Education Institute in Thunder Bay. It offers a blended approach to coursework—online, in Thunder Bay, or other sites (personal communication, J. Kitchen, June 2022).
<table>
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<tr>
<th>University &amp; Program</th>
<th>Admission Requirements</th>
<th>Delivery Mode/ Placements</th>
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<th>Additional Information/Supports</th>
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</table>
| Nipissing Teacher of Indigenous Languages as a Second Language | Minimum - Grade 12 Ontario OR equivalent OR 20 years or older and out of school for 2 years or more | • Blended two-year program with two six-week, on-campus sessions each summer; online courses in fall and winter semesters.  
• 19 weeks of in-school internships supervised by a certified teacher in a classroom setting.  
• 60 hours of alternative placement. | 2 years | • P/J/I/S Divisions (K-12)  
• See supports above. |
| Queen’s University in Kingston is located on traditional Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee territory.  
Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEDP) | The Manitoulin North-Shore and Omushkegowuk Education community-based degree programs for students with an undergraduate degree (for non-Indigenous students) or grade 12 equivalent (for Indigenous students). Queen’s also offers an on-campus degree program | On-Campus Program  
• full-time  
• 21 weeks of placement, including 4 weeks in a First Nation School  
• 3-week alternative practicum  
Community-Based Program  
• part-time  
• 18 weeks of practicum in First Nation and public schools | On-Campus Program: 6 successive terms  
Community -Based Program: 5 terms in community, 1 summer term on-campus | • On-campus: P/J & I/S divisions  
• Community-based: P/J division  
• Support services and events available to on-campus ATEP teacher candidates: Elder-in-residence, Aboriginal education resource market, and Aboriginal speaker series.  
• Community-based services and resources: Aboriginal student counselling service, Aboriginal Student Centre, access to Elders on-campus and in community. Kenjgewin Teg and Omushkegowuk staff available for administrative and community support. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University &amp; Program</th>
<th>Admission Requirements</th>
<th>Delivery Mode/ Placements</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Additional Information/Supports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Trent University in Peterborough is on the treaty and traditional territory of the Michi Saagig Anishinaabeg Indigenous Bachelor of Education Degree | Self-identify as having Indigenous ancestry (no documentation required)                  | • Full-time, concurrent five-year program with three years of undergraduate studies and two years of professional learning  
• 3-day classroom observations in years 1-3 (undergraduate years)  
• 8 days of literacy placements in year 4  
• 93 days of classroom placement in years 4 & 5 with placements in First Nations school in year 5  
• 75-hour alternative settings placement | 5 years | • P/J and I/S divisions  
• Teachable Subjects: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies; Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe); English; French – Second Language; Biology; Chemistry; Dramatic Arts; Geography; Health and Physical Education; History; Mathematics; Physics; Visual Arts; Indigenous Environmental Sciences.  
• Indigenous Infusion Initiatives include: KAIROS Blanket Activity, Project of Heart, Awareness Days (Orange Shirt, Sisters in Spirit, Indigenous Veterans, Treaty Week, Inuit Day, Louis Riel Day), movie nights, Tipi drop-ins with a social fire, use of core texts in the program (Dreaming in Indian for I/S candidates, Keepers of the Earth for P/J candidates).  
• Students not meeting academic requirements can be admitted to the Foundations of Indigenous Learning Diploma Program for transfer into the Indigenous B.Ed. after year one. |
CASE STUDIES OF IITE

In this section, we provide case studies of two IITE programs. The first is at Lakehead University, the oldest IITE programs in the province. The second is at Trent University, the newest IITE program in the province at the time of writing. We focus on four features: (1) approaches to learning, (2) program formats, (3) features of the program, and (4) placements and practica for these programs to provide a sense of the variation across IITE programs in Ontario.

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

Lakehead University respectfully acknowledges its Thunder Bay campus is located on the traditional lands of Fort William First Nation, Signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850.

Approach to Learning

Lakehead describes Indigenous education as “the study and practice of teaching, which focuses on Aboriginal languages, values, and traditions” (Lakehead University, 2019a). The IITE program uses teaching approaches that engage learners holistically through all aspects of their being—mind, emotions, body, and spirit (Lakehead, 2019). The IITE program employs “a multidisciplinary approach to provide [students] with the knowledge and skills to teach both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students; our programs address the academic, cultural, and traditional needs of Native students, educators, and communities” (Lakehead University, 2019a). This approach is grounded within academic, cultural, and traditional realms for learning to be effective and meaningful for Indigenous learners and their communities. The Faculty of Education at Lakehead University (Thunder Bay campus) has offered its IITE program for Indigenous learners since 1974. The next sections review the on-campus and community-based formats of the IITE program.

Program Format: On-Campus

In 1974, Lakehead’s Faculty of Education received accreditation to begin the Native Teacher Education Program (NTEP). The NTEP was the first IITE program of its kind in Ontario. “NTEP was introduced to address the need for teachers—Native or non-Native—with an intimate knowledge of and appreciation for Native culture, history, language—and who are sensitive to the cultural milieu of their students” (Baxter, 1982, p. 24). The Faculty offered elective courses in Algonquin languages for on-campus students. These language courses served as electives and counted toward an additional teaching certificate for Indigenous language, if a student elected to pursue additional certification. Until 1984, the NTEP was offered as a diploma program. The Faculty of Education at Lakehead worked with the OCT to amend the program requirements for a degree program in order to offer a full teacher certification without restrictions.

Program Format: Community-Based

In 1976, Lakehead established its Community-Based Native Teacher Education Program (Diploma) in collaboration with First Nations’ Education Authorities in northwestern Ontario (Grassy Narrows, Sandy Lake First Nation, White Dog First Nation, Rainy Lake Ojibway

\[\text{4 At the time this chapter was written, Lakehead University offered IITE or TILD programs at the Thunder Bay campus only (i.e., not at the Orillia campus).}\]
Education Authority, and Sioux Lookout). The Community-Based NTEP served two purposes: first, “to increase the number of qualified Native teachers in Northwestern Ontario, through an alternative program which will prepare teachers to meet the special social and cultural needs of Native communities, taking into account such factors as heritage and language” (Baxter, 1982, p. 24); and second, to prepare teachers that could offer students “the skills necessary to sustain their culture and language while at the same time teach school pupils the skills necessary to pursue further education if they so desire” (Native Teacher Education Program, 1994-95, p. 136). The program targeted mature Indigenous students who were working as teacher’s aides and classroom assistants in federal schools. Teacher educators from Lakehead’s Faculty of Education travelled to the students’ home communities to teach courses. This model allowed students to remain in their communities while earning a teaching designation on a part-time basis, making it doable for students with family commitments and allowing them to continue working. Successful completion of the program qualified students for an Ontario teaching certificate.

Program Format: Blended

In 1984, the two-year NTEP diploma program became a four-year concurrent degree program offering a combined Bachelor of Arts (General Program) and a Bachelor of Education (Native Education), referred to as a BA/B.Ed. (Native Education) program. The BA/B.Ed. is offered through community-based and on-campus modes of delivery. Successful completion of the program qualifies students for an Ontario teaching certificate with Intermediate/Senior qualifications (i.e., for teaching grades 7 through 12 in Ontario).

More recently, the department developed an HBEd (Indigenous teacher education) degree program. The HBEd is offered through community-based and on-campus modes of delivery. Both community-based and on-campus program options use a blended model. All IITE students (HBEd and BA/B.Ed.) take the first three years of coursework in their First Nations community or at the Thunder Bay campus, respectively. For the final two years, students in the HBEd and BA/B.Ed. program study on-campus with their ITE peers in the Faculty of Education.

These two years are called professional years, with dedicated education courses as well as placements in schools for IITE students. Successful completion of the program qualifies HBEd students for an Ontario teaching certificate with Primary/Junior qualifications (i.e., for teaching Junior Kindergarten through Grade 6 in Ontario) and BA/B.Ed. students for an Ontario teaching certificate with Intermediate/Senior qualifications.

Features of IITE Programs

The Faculty of Education’s IITE programs at Lakehead have several distinctive features. The first is the eligibility to gain an additional certification as a Teacher of Indigenous Languages. Eligible students arrive as fluent language speakers in an Algonquin language (Ojibwe, Cree, or Oji-Cree) and take the Indigenous Language Teacher’s Diploma Program (ILTD, formerly called Native Language Instructors Program or NLIP) over four summers. Successful program completion qualifies students for additional certification with the OCT (Teacher of Indigenous Languages) to teach an Algonquin language in primary or secondary schools. The second feature is the Honours Project course (EDUC 4001), a fourth-year, full-credit capstone course in which students apply their knowledge of Indigenous education within the contexts of their division (i.e., Primary/Junior or Intermediate/Senior) to develop a project. In this course students are encouraged to seek
guidance from Elders and knowledge keepers to design and develop linguistically and culturally relevant resources for schools in their communities. This course aids students’ applications of Indigenous education for their future classrooms.

**Placements and Practica**

Representatives from the Undergraduate Department of the Faculty of Education oversee student placements for ITE and IITE teacher candidates. Preservice teacher candidates may elect to complete their placements in publicly or federally funded schools (i.e., on a reserve) with a qualified associate teacher (i.e., OCT-certified and registered and currently teaching in an elementary or secondary school). Most often these schools are located in northwestern Ontario (NWO). Lakehead has formed relationships with several First Nations community schools within NWO. Many schools have eligible teachers who serve as associate teachers in the P/J division. BA/B.Ed. students in I/S division face challenges getting placements in federally funded schools. There are fewer secondary placements because there are far fewer federally funded First Nations schools in NWO that receive funding for students in grades 9-12. The Aboriginal Education Department (AED), in collaboration with the Undergraduate Department of Education, seeks to accommodate student requests for placements that meet the First Nation communities’ and OCT’s requirements.

Students in the HBEd and BA/B.Ed. programs have different placement requirements. HBEd students complete a supervised practical experience within an alternative and informal instruction setting (e.g., Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre, Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon). This initial placement is a field experience course (EDUC 4395). It consists of “nine (9) hours of instructional planning with their field experience team, eighteen (18) hours of face-to-face learning experience time with children and youth, followed by an additional nine (9) hours of field experience de-briefing and further refinement of planning” (Lakehead University, 2019b). HBEd students also complete two formal placements in the Primary/Junior division within public, separate, urban Indigenous, or on-reserve schools. In the past, students have completed placements in remote or First Nations communities such as Pikangikum, Aroland, and Moosonee. This placement model differs for BA/B.Ed. students. They complete two formal placements -- one in the Intermediate division and one in the Senior division. These placements occur in formal K-12 schools that are provincially or federally funded.

**TRENT UNIVERSITY**

Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario respectfully acknowledges that it is on the treaty and traditional territory of the Michi Saagig Anishinaabeg. Trent University’s Concurrent Indigenous Bachelor of Education Program (IBEP) began in September 2016 for teacher candidates who self-identify as having Indigenous ancestry. The program offers Primary/Junior (kindergarten to grade 6) and Intermediate/Senior (grades 7 to 12) divisions leading to a Bachelor of Education Degree and licensing by the Ontario College of Teachers, similar to the Consecutive Bachelor of Education Program at Trent.

**Approach to Learning**

The IBEP combines attention to individual learners in small class settings with a community-based approach. The program is guided by a philosophy of ecological and social justice, recognition of
learner diversity, and a commitment to professional performance. Through foundations and curriculum courses, teacher candidates are given the opportunity to engage critically with recent advances in theory, research, and practice. Placement opportunities provide teacher candidates with further practical experiences.

Distinctive aspects of Trent’s IBEP include: participatory and experiential learning with Elders and traditional knowledge keepers (both inside and outside the classroom), Ojibway language as a teachable subject, a reading tutoring program, and an alternative settings placement.

**Program Format**

Trent’s IBEP is a full-time, five-year program with three years of undergraduate studies and two years of professional learning that leads to an Indigenous Bachelor of Education Degree and qualification by the Ontario College of Teachers.

All courses stress professionalism with reflection as a strong part of class activities and assignments. In Professional Teaching Portfolios, teacher candidates construct a philosophy and explicitly engage in critical reflection by noting the relation of Indigenous theory to practice. Each teacher candidate creates an Annual Learning Plan where they plan their professional development. Teacher candidates review their plan half way through their professional years and again at its end by sharing their Professional Learning Portfolios with others.

The Indigenous Bachelor of Education Program operates as a ‘community of learners’ including collaborative group assignments, networking opportunities, and cohorts of support in the practicum course.

**Placements and Practica**

During the undergraduate component (years 1-3) of the program, teacher candidates have opportunities to be in school classrooms as observers, helpers, mentors, or tutors. Direct experience in the classroom assists teacher candidates in their decision to pursue teaching as their career path. Since this direct classroom experience comes prior to the professional learning years (years 4 and 5), it allows the candidate either an exit from the five-year program (without losing their credits achieved thus far), or the experience becomes an added foundation for the teacher candidate’s placements during the professional learning years.

Teacher candidates in the program take one practicum course in each of the two professional years (years 4 and 5). The instructors of practicum courses act as faculty advisors for the Indigenous teacher candidates in their practicum courses and provide ongoing feedback and resources to support the teacher candidate throughout the program. In the practicum, faculty advisors, associate teachers, Elders, traditional knowledge keepers, and community members expect to see Indigenous teacher candidates conduct themselves with traditional Indigenous protocols and professional ethics and standards in mind. Faculty advisors, associate teachers, Elders, and community members/educators act as mentors to support Indigenous teacher candidates to develop and maintain communities of learners where pupils listen to and learn from one another. Teacher candidates are encouraged to co-plan and co-teach with associate teachers.
Teacher candidates complete a total of ninety-three days of classroom placement in years four and five. The shorter initial classroom practicum placement occurs in the fall. The extended classroom practicum placement occurs from February to April. The classroom placements are completed in public schools and First Nation/Métis/Inuit schools throughout the province of Ontario.

The supporting literacy placement occurs from September to December and is comprised of two mornings per week for eight weeks, for a total of eight days. In this placement, teacher candidates work with two students, each on an individual basis, to focus on reading, writing, and comprehensive literacy skills. This placement offers teacher candidates the opportunity to closely examine literacy and develop specific strategies for helping students develop positive identities and resilience and build students’ confidence in literacy skills.

In addition, teacher candidates are required to complete an alternative settings placement between years four and five in the spring or summer for a total of seventy-five hours. This placement allows teacher candidates to explore non-school settings, extending their scope of education beyond typical mainstream settings, such as early learning facilities, learning on the land, and international experiences.

Features of IITE Programs: Fostering Community Partnerships

The IBEP is offered in partnership with the Chanie Wenjack School of Indigenous Studies and the First Peoples House of Learning at Trent University. The Chanie Wenjack School of Indigenous Studies and First Peoples House of Learning offer the following opportunities for first-hand participatory and experiential learning while on campus: visiting Elders, Elders in residence, traditional teachings in the tipi, pine tree talks, Elders gathering, and an Indigenous women’s symposium. The program also has working agreements with offices within the university: Student Accessibility Services, the Office of the Registrar, Financial Services, and the Office of Student Affairs. An Indigenous scholarship program exists for teacher candidates in their third, fourth, or fifth year.

A Program Advisory Council (PAC) was established to assist with the design of the program and its preliminary years. Members consisted of Indigenous, First Nation, Métis, and non-Indigenous communities and institutes of learning.

The Teacher Education Advisory Committee (TEAC) of the School of Education includes external representation from a broad spectrum of educational partners, such as senior administration from the partnership Indigenous and/or FNMI educational institutes and district school boards, local teacher federation affiliates, elementary and secondary principals from the partnership, Indigenous and/or FNMI educational institutes and district school boards, provincial federations, local affiliates of teacher federations, the Regional Office for the Ministry of Education, and the Education Student Association.

The Teacher Liaison Committee (TELC) is composed of internal representatives from the School of Education and Professional Learning, the Chanie Wenjack School of Indigenous Studies, the First Peoples House of Learning, and teacher candidates. This committee works to establish cooperative relationships between the Ontario Teachers’ Federation, the School of Education and Professional Learning, the Chanie Wenjack School of Indigenous Studies, and the First Peoples
House of Learning. TELC also shares information and initiatives from affiliates as it relates to teacher education, including planning of Federation Days, providing professional development for teacher candidates, and for supporting matters of professional conduct.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF IITE PROGRAMS IN ONTARIO

In sum, the programs featured above in Tables 1 and 2 and the case studies of Lakehead and Trent Universities show that IITE programs have two features that distinguish them from mainstream programs. First, they offer community-based programs in First Nations communities (so students need not travel from their home communities) or with an Indigenous educational organization (i.e., Queen’s in partnership with Kenjgewin Teg on Manitoulin Island). Community-based course delivery models provide students with immersive learning environments that offer academic and cultural experiences in First Nations communities and at federally funded schools.

Second, IITE programs offer placements for preservice teachers at federally funded schools in Indigenous communities and provincially funded urban schools for Indigenous students. These placements support students’ ability to learn from Indigenous educators within schools and apply what they learned in their classrooms. IITE programs have varied relationships with Indigenous communities and other Indigenous partners and institutions. The tables and case studies show the scope of IITE programs in Ontario.

Yet, scholars have challenged the ability of public institutions to deliver Indigenous education programs (such as IITE) that meet the needs of Indigenous learners through relational approaches with communities (Grande, 2018; Hampton, 1995; Pidgeon, 2014). These challenges are historical and ongoing. Today, PSIs invoke cognitive imperialism when they “discredit other knowledge bases and values and seek to validate one source of knowledge and empower it through public education” (Battiste, 1986, as cited in Battiste, 1998, p. 20). Scholars espouse a both/and approach that seeks repatriation of Indigenous education by and for Indigenous peoples (AFN, 2010; Brayboy, 2005; McCarty & Lee, 2014; NIB, 1973; Task Force, 1976) and the need for PSIs to learn from communities to animate Indigenous education for all students in primary, secondary, and tertiary education in Ontario (ACDE, 2015; Task Force, 1976). This chapter focused on IITE programs within PSIs. True Indigenous education (Hampton, 1995) by, with, and for Indigenous communities extends beyond the IITE programs presented above; however, the Accord offers a comprehensive guide to augmenting IITE in faculties of education.

In the next section we explore the challenges and opportunities that IITE programs encounter when they accept the vision of the Accord “that Indigenous identities, cultures, languages, values, ways of knowing, and knowledge systems will flourish in all Canadian learning settings” (Archibald, Lundy, Reynolds, & Williams, 2010, p. 9). Activating this vision of Indigenous education requires “listening, contemplation, meditation, and deeper internal deliberation” (TRC, 2015, p. 18). In the spirit of reflective practices, we turn to the challenges and opportunities for IITE in Ontario.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IITE IN ONTARIO

Earlier in this chapter we considered the policy landscape of Indigenous education through practices of the OME within its schools and of IITE programs within faculties of education. To reflect on practice, teacher educators gathered at the University of Ottawa in 2015. Frank Deer
moderated a panel discussion with educators from several universities on *The ACDE Accord on Indigenous education five years on: What progress have we made? What challenges lie ahead?* Educators described challenges to meet the vision and spirit of the *Accord* (Archibald, Lundy, Reynolds, & Williams, 2010). Following this example of reflective praxis, we turn next to challenges and opportunities to implement Indigenous education in public schooling at elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

**FOLLOWING UP ON THE OME’S (2007) FNMI INITIATIVE**

The OME’s FNMI initiative for elementary and secondary schools began in 2007. The OME set itself two challenges by 2016: “to significantly improve achievement among FNMI students, and to close the significant student achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students” (Auditor General, 2012, p. 131). The OME collected data and reported its findings through three progress reports (2009, 2013, 2018) that were aggregated at the provincial level.

By 2018, progress reports (2009, 2013, 2018) showed that the OME had failed to significantly improve achievement among FNMI students and to close the student achievement gap between Indigenous students and non-Indigenous peers using the measures it set for itself (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007). In 2019, the OME published an updated FNMI curriculum guide for secondary students. By summer 2021, the OME had not yet published its updated FNMI policy guide. Moving forward, the OME has committed to a renewed path for FNMI students in publicly funded schools “in partnership with communities, school boards, the federal government and Aboriginal partners, to support First Nation, Métis and Inuit students across the province” (Auditor General, 2012, p. 132). Teacher educators in IITE programs are also potential partners for the next FNMI initiative offered by the province.

**FOLLOWING UP ON THE TRC CALLS TO ACTION & ACDE ACCORD IN IITE PROGRAMS**

To recap, the TRC’s (2015) *Calls to Action* include actions for administrators and faculty members within PSIs to create degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages and to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledges and teaching methods into classrooms. These calls [16, 62(ii)] address needs within IITE programs across Ontario, where Indigenous teacher candidates may not know their Indigenous languages due to historical and ongoing colonization, such as the Indian Residential School system and the intergenerational trauma that has accrued. As well, learners may not have learned from Indigenous knowledges and teaching methods in their elementary and secondary schools. The authors of the *Accord* offered a broad vision for Indigenous education to flourish in Canadian learning settings. They provided principles to guide faculties of education to value Indigenous knowledges, ways of knowing, and learning through multiple partnerships. They set goals for transformative educational change to activate a holistic approach for learning environments, pedagogies, assessments, and more in order to value and promote Indigeneity in education. To meet the vision and goals, the authors of the *Accord* direct faculties of education to work with Indigenous communities’ local ways of knowing, doing, and their educational needs in order to affect changes to teaching and learning (Archibald et al., 2010).

In the following sections we identify five challenges and opportunities for teacher education programs to connect to the TRC (2015) and the *Accord on Indigenous Education* (2010, 2015): (1)
initiating and maintaining community engagement, (2) affirming and revitalizing Indigenous languages, (3) moving beyond content and curriculum, (4) building faculty members’ capacities, and (5) offering placements for students within IITE programs. We use the program descriptions above (see Tables 1 and 2 and case studies) to frame our discussion.

**Initiating and Maintaining Community Engagement**

Community engagement provides opportunities for faculties to work with local Indigenous wisdom-keepers and knowledge holders to respond to local First Nations communities’ ways of knowing, doing, and their educational needs (Archibald et al., 2010). By doing this, IITE programs meet local needs for courses and curricula that are respectful and inclusive (p. 6) of local Indigenous knowledges. For both new and existing IITE programs, the path is clear: forge partnerships with local communities (2010, p. 6) and seek feedback on local Indigenous communities’ needs to make existing IITE programs responsive to these needs.

The IITE program descriptions above show various ways that faculties engage with communities. As one strong example of working with Indigenous communities, Queen’s offers a community-based Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) through Kenjgewin Teg, a community along the Manitoulin north shore.

While many universities have set Advisory Committees to guide them, faculties of education need community engagement processes too. Engaging with local Indigenous educators provides faculties with guidance and feedback to shape IITE programs. These educators hold Indigenous knowledges that are rooted in their communities and inform local Indigenous pedagogies. The authors of the *Accord* identified community engagement as a way for faculties to respond to Indigenous communities’ educational needs.

**Affirming and Revitalizing Indigenous Languages**

The ACDE’s goal to affirm and revitalize Indigenous languages guides work with local First Nations and community organizations for language programs that have three features. They (1) are locally and culturally responsive; (2) meet community needs and aspirations for revitalizing their languages; and (3) adhere to accreditation requirements of the OCT. This three-pronged approach increases the relevancy of IITE programs for learners and for communities.

The IITE programs described above show that several faculties of education in Ontario offer teacher education programs for Indigenous languages (i.e., Lakehead and Nipissing universities). Also, several faculties offer Indigenous languages as a teachable subject for preservice candidates (Lakehead, Trent). Taken together, these faculties offer language programs or courses in a variety of Indigenous languages—Cayuga, Cree, Mohawk, Lenape, Ojibwe, and Oji-Cree—that are spoken in communities across Ontario.

Affirming and revitalizing Indigenous languages present a challenge for IITE programs in faculties of education to invest in an ongoing, collaborative process for developing and revising language programs that integrate diverse and living cultural knowledge. For faculties of education, taking up this challenge presents an opportunity for IITE programs to model how to “infuse the cultural knowledge of Indigenous educators and knowledge holders’ visions to remain relevant to and supportive of local communities’ efforts to reclaim and revitalize languages” (Desmoulins et al.,
These challenges and opportunities allow IITE language programs to meet the principles and goals of the Accord on Indigenous education, work with local communities to meet their needs, and support language revitalization.

**Moving Beyond Content and Curriculum**

The TRC’s (2015) call for the integration of Indigenous knowledges [62(ii)] aligns with several of the ACDE’s (2010) goals, including: culturally responsive pedagogies (p. 6), mechanisms for valuing and promoting Indigeneity in Education (p. 6), and culturally responsive assessment (p. 7). Writing on decolonizing education in Canadian universities, Battiste et al. (2002) state, “Indigenous knowledge is not sufficiently and appropriately available through books, journals, monographs, theses, or dissertations, or from teachers or university professors” (p. 91). These authors assert that fostering relationships with Indigenous communities is needed to move beyond bringing Indigenous content into classrooms (see also Justice, 2004; Kovach, 2010; Pewewardy, 2013; Pidgeon, 2016). How do teacher educators in IITE and ITE programs move beyond an “add Indigenous and stir approach” (Settee, 2017)?

The IITE program descriptions above show supports offered within faculties of education. For example, Lakehead University’s summer ILTD program offers ceremonies, pot lucks, and childminding for students and faculty members. Queen’s ATEP offers an Elder-in-residence, Aboriginal education resource market, and Aboriginal speaker series. Through Queen’s relationships, Kenjgewin Teg and Omushkegowuk staff offer administrative and community support for IITE students. Many faculties offer annual powwows, access to Elders-in-residence, and special events through their IITE program, faculty, or the university. The Trent case study reveals that they offer IITE students participatory and experiential learning with Elders and traditional knowledge keepers (both inside and outside the classroom). These examples illuminate how IITE programs engage with Indigenous educators and communities to move beyond adding content into the curriculum.

Thus, community engagement is central to inclusive curricula and culturally responsive pedagogies and assessment. ITE and IITE programs that develop and maintain meaningful, ongoing relationships with Indigenous communities and urban Indigenous educators ensure that their programs move beyond content and curricula to include Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing, and teaching and learning (see National Centre for Collaboration in Indigenous Education).

**Building Faculty Members’ Capacities**

Archibald et al. (2010) express the need to “include, mentor, support, and retain Indigenous scholars within our institutions” (p. 6) to build capacity among Indigenous faculty members. However, as Battiste et al. (2002) explained earlier, “Educational institutions in general cannot depend on a few Aboriginal scholars to lead them along the bumpy community road to reveal all that is needed for educational reform: it needs an ethical, creative community effort (Battiste, 1986, 1998, 2000)” (p. 92). These authors suggest that Indigenous scholars are well-positioned to lead changes within faculties of education when there are sufficient Indigenous faculty members. However, Indigenous faculty members are often tasked with meeting larger educational reforms (e.g., the ACDE Accord and the TRC’s Calls to Action), in addition to the responsibilities they share with their non-Indigenous peers.
For the descriptions of programs above, we did not query faculties of education about the number of Indigenous faculty members or their capacity to address the vision and goals of the Accord and the TRC’s Calls to Action. Capacity is key to meeting the Accord and Calls to Action but is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Within IITE programs at faculties of education, the key task for Indigenous teacher educators is to develop and model respectful and inclusive local Indigenous pedagogies for Indigenous students. Within ITE programs, leaders’ key task is to compel faculty members across all programs to take up infusion work. This work may involve non-Indigenous faculty members unlearning and re-learning in order to collaborate respectfully with community members on localized, Indigenous models of teaching and learning. This work goes beyond Indian Residential Schools (that are one part of a long history) to include local Indigenous perspectives. These tasks present two challenges: not overtaxing Indigenous faculty members, while providing role models for non-Indigenous faculty members to follow. These challenges offer opportunities to work alongside community educators and Elders for educational leadership. Both IITE and ITE programs benefit from Indigenous community leadership, while meeting the principle of the Accord to create or renew relationships with local communities (p. 6).

Offering Student Placements

Neither the TRC’s Calls to Action nor the Accord offer guidance on student placements in ITTE programs. Yet, Archibald et al. (2010) call for comprehensive teacher candidate programs that provide “meaningful opportunities for learning about and practicing Indigenous pedagogies and ways of knowing” (p. 6). Faculty advisors show that they value Indigenous pedagogies when they support students on their placements.

The IITE program descriptions above show the length, timing, and scope (i.e., alternative versus in classroom settings) of placements for preservice teachers. We did not request further information on additional financial supports that faculties provided to students and/or the faculty advisors who support students. Placements in First Nations schools may add costs and travel for students and affect the faculty advisor’s ability to offer in-person support to teacher candidates.

Faculties of education will need to provide the faculty advisors that supervise student placements and teacher candidates with funding and technology to provide equitable supports and meaningful placements within Indigenous schools in remote First Nations communities. For example, teacher candidates need funding for airfare to travel to many First Nations communities in northern Ontario, which are only accessible by air. Indigenous and non-Indigenous students that accept placements in Indigenous communities accrue additional expenses, such as the high cost of food, accommodations, and other supplies in many northern communities. Faculty advisors need additional funds for travel to oversee teacher candidates’ placement experiences and technology to support them virtually during their placements. The added costs of placements in First Nations present challenges for faculties to support placements in these communities. It presents opportunities for teacher candidates to gain experience with Indigenous education and for faculties to work collaboratively with Education Authorities and associate teachers in First Nations communities. Faculties of education can learn from communities.
Thus, five broad challenges exist for IITE programs in Ontario to meet their commitments to the vision, principles, and goals of the Accord on Indigenous Education (Archibald, Lundy, Reynolds, and Williams 2010) and activate the Calls to Action (TRC, 2015). To meet these commitments, faculties need to collaborate with local Indigenous educators, Education Authorities, and Indigenous communities to enhance their IITE programs. Moreover, we recommend ongoing panel discussions among faculty members from IITE programs across Ontario for accountability to and progress toward the vision and goals of the Accord.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter explored Indigenous education practices in provincially funded classrooms at elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels within Ontario, with a focus on IITE programs in faculties of education. We also explored historical policy guidance (Ontario, 1976; NIB, 1972). Recent documents such as the TRC’s Calls to Action and the Accord on Indigenous Education (Archibald et al., 2010; TRC, 2015) compel action for practices to support Indigenous education more holistically. We juxtaposed this policy guidance with practices in Ontario’s publicly funded schools to show challenges and reveal opportunities for praxis. We outlined five opportunities to meet the vision and goals of the Accord for IITE programs in faculties of education. Finally, we recommended ongoing panel discussions for educators within Ontario IITE programs to meet and discuss progress on the Accord on Indigenous Education based on the challenges and the opportunities identified.

In this chapter we found that the OME and faculties of education alike face challenges to activate commitments to the TRC’s Calls to Action 16 and 62(ii) and the principles and goals of the ACDE Accord on Indigenous Education (Archibald et al., 2010). These challenges affect all students, particularly Indigenous students in elementary, secondary, and tertiary school settings. Also, these challenges tend to overlook the wealth of knowledge that Elders and knowledge keepers in local communities hold. Faculties of education, and especially IITE programs, have been provided with an opportunity: a guide for change set out by the Accord and the TRC’s Calls to Action. When we look back again 45 years from now, will we see substantive changes to Indigenous education in publicly funded schools? Perhaps the greatest opportunity we have is to move forward in collaboration with Indigenous communities to overcome the challenges identified in this chapter for Indigenous education and to take up changes identified by, with, and for communities.

REFERENCES


CHAPTER 24

TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION: PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION IN ONTARIO

Chloë Brushwood Rose and Candace Figg

York University and Brock University

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the teacher education programs in technological education in Ontario, highlighting the institutions with currently active programs. Following the provincially mandated development of the Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP) in 2015, and its subsequent verification accreditations of teacher education programs in 2016, four Faculties of Education began development of both concurrent and consecutive pathways for Bachelor of Education degrees (B.Ed.) and Diploma of Education certificates (Dip.Ed.) in Technological Education: Brock University, Queen’s University, Windsor University, and York University. Each of these institutions has taken a slightly different approach in the development and delivery of their respective four-semester programs for technological teacher education. Each institution faces different local demands, needs, and constraints, while also grappling with the unique complexities of technological teacher education itself, including, for example, ongoing recruitment challenges and a shortage of school placements.

It might be argued that the need for technological education teachers in Ontario has never been greater, made most urgent by the combined needs for people working in the skilled trades and for those who can teach those trades. While other institutions have for now suspended their technological teacher education programs, Brock, Queen’s, Windsor, and York Universities have tried to respond to the increasing need for technological education teachers in Ontario by innovating and enhancing their existing programs. The Ontario College of Teachers’ (OCT) recent Transition to Teaching Survey reports that the unemployment rate for first-year technological education teachers has dropped from 15% in 2017 to 0% in 2018 (McIntyre, 2019). With the potential for retirements in the next two to five years, Ontario will most certainly continue facing a significant shortage of qualified teachers in technological education. In order to respond to this shortage, Faculties of Education must be increasingly innovative, not only with regard to the quality and delivery of their technological teacher education programs, but in the areas of recruitment, access, and admissions.
WHAT IS TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION?

Technological teacher education in Ontario was inaugurated in 1925, when the Ontario College for Technical Teachers began its program to prepare vocational teachers in Hamilton (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2013). The program for ‘technical teachers’ was moved back to Toronto in 1946, and then absorbed into the universities, along with the Ontario College of Education, as Faculties of Education opened in the 1960s and 1970s. “In 1974, Regulation 269 defined teacher qualifications, prescribed curriculum, divided qualification in Primary/Junior, Junior/Intermediate/Senior, and Technological Studies,” solidifying technological education as its own qualification requiring a unique program of teacher education (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2013, p. 65).

Of course, the nature of technological teacher education programs in Ontario reflects our evolving understanding of technological education over the last forty years. In the 1980s, due to changes in the international economy and shifts in the nature of work, discussions around technological education began to emphasize a move away from the teaching of routine skills associated with particular vocations, and towards the acquisition of more general abilities, including communication skills, critical thinking, collaboration, adaptability, and problem-solving (Gardner & Hill, 1999). The emphasis on general skills that would be portable and transferable between areas of work as well as regions “would seem to constitute an argument against school technology curricula that are strongly tied to skills related to any one industry” (Gardner & Hill, 1999, p. 111). However, while other countries abandoned an approach to technological education that emphasized specific vocational areas, Canada (and Ontario) retained a “vocational orientation as a basis for organizing technological education in the senior secondary years” (p. 113). In the late 1980s, Technological Studies in the Ontario secondary curriculum was organized around ten groupings or subject areas relating to different vocational fields (Ministry of Education, 1985). Then, “around 1989, technology courses began changing from discrete courses such as welding to broad-based technology courses such as manufacturing technology … which laid the basis for the publication of Broad-based Technological Education: Grades 10, 11 and 12 in 1995” (Gardner & Hill, 1999, p. 122).

The principles guiding the 1995 document (Ministry of Education and Training, 1995) reflected what Hill (1997) has described as a shift from realism to reconstructionism, where technological education was understood as offering a unique context in which “to introduce values and concerns of human and environmental conditions, to encourage creativity through designing and making, and to acquire technological concepts and skills” (Hill, 1997, p. 137). In addition to the acquisition of specific skills, this broad-based approach framed technological education as in dialogue with the world outside of the classroom, as well as other disciplines and subject areas. In subsequent drafts of the curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2000, 2009), technological education has retained its broad-based approach, which, rather than focusing on specific occupations, explores “groups of related occupations and industry sectors” within ten broad-based technology areas. The emphasis continues to be placed on enabling students “to develop a variety of transferable skills that will serve them well in a complex and ever-changing workplace” (Ministry of Education, 2009).

Offered in grades 9-12, technological education encompasses ten technological subject areas or broad-based technologies (BBTs): communications technology, computer technology, construction technology, green industries, hairstyling and aesthetics, health care, hospitality and
tourism, manufacturing technology, technological design, and transportation technology. Technological Education Teacher Education programs prepare teacher candidates to teach one of these BBTs based on their previous training and work experience; they must not only complete an accredited program of professional education but also demonstrate a high level of “technological competence” – skill and knowledge in their technological area – through a combination of post-secondary education and work experience in business or industry (Ontario College of Teachers, 2017). Like their colleagues in the general education subjects, teachers of technological education come into Ontario teacher education programs with a significant level of preparation in their subject of specialization. Technological teacher education programs focus on preparing these candidates to teach in the classrooms unique to their technological subject area, whether a computer lab, kitchen, or wood shop. Programs must also reflect the curriculum’s philosophical approach to broad-based technological education: “an activity-based, project-driven approach that involves students in problem solving” through which they “develop knowledge and skills and gain experience in the technological subject area of their choice” (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 7).

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

While a traditional post-secondary degree may be the best preparation for teacher candidates in the Intermediate/Senior divisions in a general education subject area, the OCT recognizes that teachers of technological education are best prepared by a post-secondary education that enhances their technological competence in their broad-based technology field. Therefore, the OCT grants teaching certification to teacher candidates who not only complete an accredited teacher education program, but also present credentials that demonstrate this competence in the broad-based technology subject area in one of two ways:

1. Five years of work experience (1,700 hours represents one year) in business or industry where [the candidate] used knowledge and skill in the area of technology chosen in their program of teacher education.

OR

2. A combination of post-secondary education and work experience in business or industry where [the candidate] used knowledge and skill in the area of technology chosen in their program of teacher education. This must include at least two years of work of which at least four months must be continuous employment. (Ontario College of Teachers, 2017, p. 4)

Admissions requirements for teacher education programs vary slightly between institutions (see Table 1 below), but all technological education teacher candidates must meet the requirements for technological competence set out above to be nominated to the OCT. It is important to note that work experience must always comprise at least two years of the total required to demonstrate technological competence.

Depending on the institution, admission requirements to a professional program of education in technological education may include (1) a university or college degree, which may or may not be aligned with the technology area of choice; (2) a two- or three-year Advanced Diploma that aligns with a technology area; or (3) a Certificate of Qualification (CoQ) (regulated by the Ontario
College of Trades) that aligns with a technology area. Applicants with each of these post-secondary qualifications would also need documentation of work experience in their technology area – anywhere from two years to five years, depending on the alignment of their post-secondary education. Applicants may also be admitted to some programs with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and documentation of a minimum of five years of wage-earning work experience that aligns with the broad-based technology subject to be taught. This results in a variety of pathways to meet admission requirements. The chart in Table 1 describes those pathways and the variations in admission requirements at each university.

Table 1

Admission Pathways to Technological Teacher Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Secondary Ed</th>
<th>Work Experience</th>
<th>Brock</th>
<th>Queen’s</th>
<th>Windsor</th>
<th>York</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University or college degree aligned with technology area</td>
<td>Two years*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University or college degree not aligned with technology area</td>
<td>Five years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-year Advanced Diploma aligned with technology area**</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-year Diploma aligned with technology area</td>
<td>Three years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year of full-time study completed in a 2- or 3-year Advanced Diploma program aligned with technology area</td>
<td>Four years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of Qualification</td>
<td>Two years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Secondary School Diploma</td>
<td>Five years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All work experience must include at least one 4-month period of continuous employment.
**Each institution has slightly different mechanism for determining alignment of Advanced Diplomas and CoQs.

TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ONTARIO

Each of the Technological Education Teacher Education programs in Ontario offer quality technological education teacher education that has been designed to meet the accreditation standards of the Ontario College of Teachers while meeting the mandates of the Ministry of Education. However, each program is unique in their philosophical approach to the design and delivery of their programs. The next section of this chapter will describe the programs at Brock,
Queen’s, Windsor, and York, which are the programs currently offering teacher education in technological education in Ontario. Brock, Queen’s, and Windsor were collaborators, along with four college partners, in the Technological Education Consortium of Ontario (TECO), an organization founded to support the continuation of broad-based technological education teacher education in the Golden Horseshoe communities of Ontario and beyond to all corners of the province. TECO was established in 2013 with funding from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) through the Teacher Education Collaborative Initiatives Fund. In 2015, a couple of years after TECO was formed, York also received funding from MTCU through the same fund. Below, while we offer overviews of all four currently operating technological teacher education programs, we focus with more detail on the programs at Brock and York Universities.

BROCK UNIVERSITY

The Brock Technological Education Teacher Education program design grew out of conversations, discussions, and collaborations facilitated by TECO, through which three Faculties of Education (Queen’s, Brock, and Windsor), four colleges (Niagara, Fanshawe, Mohawk, and Connestoga), and a number of local school boards met consistently over several years to plan, design, and deliver a new model “of distributed technological education teacher preparation through the partner Faculties of Education with the support of school boards and community colleges in the local areas” (Western University Faculty of Education, 2019, para. 1). In addition to undertaking program development, TECO’s mission was to increase the interest in school boards across the province in Technological Education as an important and needed offering, as well as increase student interest in the training and knowledge of broad-based technologies as a possible career, resulting in an increased need for Technological Education teachers and teacher education. TECO sought to form connections across the province between teacher education programs with Technological Education streams and “engaged and committed partners” so that these partners would have “a voice in how technological education teachers are professionally trained and certified” (Western University Faculty of Education, 2019, para. 2). As well, the consortium worked to provide pathways to graduates of college and high school programs into the teaching profession through “greater program access, flexibility and support for tradespeople and degree candidates with documented work experience in broad-based technology” (Western University Faculty of Education, 2019, para. 2).

Although the initial conception of the consortium’s work was to create one Technological Education Teacher Education program that would be shared by the three universities, it became apparent that the pathways being created were distinctly regional and more appropriate for a Brock-based program. Thus, the consortium was dissolved so that Queen’s and Windsor could design a program more appropriate for the regional needs of their network of schools and colleges, as well as their teacher candidates. However, all three programs benefitted from the collaboration and networks built through TECO, which had significant influence over the direction and strength of the programs in those universities today.

The Technological Education Teacher Education program at Brock utilizes what is called “the Triple C model” and follows the program flow of Intermediate/Senior coursework in the general education program. The Triple C model describes the theoretical framework for all of Brock’s teacher education programs – Consecutive, Concurrent, Technological Education, and Indigenous Education – and emphasizes Coursework, a Cohort approach, and Community. In this model,
teacher candidates participate in a scaffolded learning experience that develops sound theoretical understandings of knowledge, skills, and dispositions with multiple opportunities to apply those understandings in practice in a field setting. This fundamental pattern of the program, an integration of courses and field experiences (community), emphasizes reflection in practice. Teacher candidates make connections between what they learn in their courses at the university and what they see practiced in schools, classrooms, and alternative placements.

The first element of the Triple C model, Coursework, refers to a set of scaffolded learning experiences that includes a set of courses considered foundation courses (instructional methods, assessment and evaluation, professionalism and law, and a course that blends educational psychology and special education) and a set of curriculum courses that introduce the subject matter teachers are expected to cover at each grade level in tandem with appropriate pedagogical strategies. The second element of the model, Cohort, is the heart of the program and serves as a base learning community for the teacher candidate. Each teacher candidate is admitted as a member of a cohort, a group of about 30 classmates who are mentored and supported by Brock faculty, in a two-year professional learning community that addresses the developing skill sets and diverse needs of beginning teachers. The cohort becomes the organizing structure in which teacher candidates have opportunities to form networks of encouraging colleagues and peers for the purpose of collaboration, connection, and support. Finally, the third element of the model, Community, refers to the wide network of school boards, the Ministry of Education, the Ontario College of Teachers, the Ontario Teachers’ Federation, and other community members who connect with and support the teacher candidates in understanding the Ontario context for teaching and learning.

In order to minimize the issues of marginalization and lack of equity in professional advancement faced by technological education teachers, careful thought was given to the characteristics and knowledge that the ‘ideal graduate’ should possess upon completion. Brock emphasized the following guiding principles in the redevelopment of the program:

- Pursuing a holistic focus that reflects the school as a community, not just a classroom
- Integrating cohort/professional collaborative communities and other learning experiences with self-directed and self-regulated learning models
- Developing a support network of passionate life-long learners who respect differences, advocate social justice, and extend community and global awareness
- Encouraging classroom activities that promote a strong understanding of the ministry initiatives and strategies
- Focusing on school culture and leadership knowledge and skills to support the ability to pursue leadership roles if desired
- Facilitating opportunities to develop expertise in STEM/STEAM instruction – an area where Technological Education teachers are emerging as leaders.

Coursework in the program has been adapted to promote the growth mindset necessary for the development of leadership qualities through opportunities for teacher candidates to deepen their understanding of Ministry documentation as well as policies or procedural strategies used at the administrative levels of schools. The program also includes opportunities to explore how to
encourage the development of STEM/STEAM learning through access to the technologies in the Brock Makerspace and numerous workshops.

The work of the consortium led Brock to create a set of courses specifically for Technological Education teacher candidates, including a Professionalism, Law and Principles of Teaching course that focuses on teaching in the Ontario context for Technological Education, the Special Topics in Technological Education in Ontario course, and the Grade 9/10 and Grade 11/12 teachable courses that provide in-depth and scaffolded instruction to promote the growth of knowledge for how to teach Technological Education in context. Graduates of Brock’s program receive a Diploma of Education, to be converted to a B.Ed. with documentation of completion of an acceptable undergraduate degree. Brock is pursuing approval of a B.Ed. degree for graduates of the technological teacher education program.

Program Overview
Brock’s program is delivered only in a consecutive model and consists of 10 credits (equivalent to 60 credits in other programs) delivered in face-to-face and online formats over a period of four terms with a January intake that runs Winter-Summer-Fall-Winter and a July start that runs Summer-Fall-Winter-Summer with a final placement following in the Fall. Teacher candidates complete required foundations and methods courses, multiple school practica, and special topic courses designed specifically for Technological Education. Progression is designed into the structure of the program and courses build upon each other across semesters.

Figure 1

Brock University At-a-Glance Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMESTER 1</th>
<th>SEMESTER 2</th>
<th>SEMESTER 3</th>
<th>SEMESTER 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Beginning Teacher — Understanding Teaching Practice</td>
<td>Building Professional Knowledge About Teaching Practice — Specialization Of Pedagogical Knowledge</td>
<td>Professional Growth Through Ongoing Professional Development</td>
<td>Making Connections Through Learning Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDDE 8911 Professionalism, Law &amp; Principles of Teaching in Ontario Part 1 (8 weeks F2F + 4 weeks online)</td>
<td>1 CR</td>
<td>EDDE 8912 Cognition, Development and the Exceptional Student (Online)</td>
<td>1/2 CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDDE 8917 Student Assessment, Practice &amp; Policy (F2F, 1/2 CR)</td>
<td>EDDE 8915 Programming for the Inclusive Classroom (Online)</td>
<td>1/4 CR</td>
<td>EDDE 8916 School and Society (Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8914 Sociomotor/Physical Processes and the Exceptional Learner (Online)</td>
<td>1/4 CR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8917 – School and Society (Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8918 – Special Topics in Technological Education (F2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8921-30 Teaching Technological Education Grades 9 &amp; 10 for Subject Teachable Part One (Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8922-30 Teaching Technological Education Grades 9 &amp; 10 for Subject Teachable Part Two (F2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8923-30 Teaching Technological Education Grades 11&amp;12 for Subject Teachable Part One (Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8924-30 Teaching Technological Education Grades 11&amp;12 for Subject Teachable Part Two (F2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8974 Professional Learning Communities (F2F/Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDDE 8975 – Practicum for Professional Learning Communities (Block Three) November 4 – December 20, 2019 – 30 + 3 OD Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– 30 + 3 OD Days; Day 4 – June 19, 2020 – 31 + 3 OD Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1 = 3 CR (credits)</td>
<td>Semester 2 = 2.5 CR (credits)</td>
<td>Semester 3 = 2 CR (credits)</td>
<td>Semester 4 = 2.5 CR (credits)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course credit: A course comprising 36 faculty instructional hours has a weight of 1/2 credits.

LEGEND: Foundation • Method • Practicum
As the “At-a-Glance Table” (Figure 1) indicates, the program is structured across the terms around four broad themes: The Beginning Teacher — Understanding Teaching Practice, Building Professional Knowledge About Teaching Practice; Specialization Of Pedagogical Knowledge; Professional Growth Through Ongoing Professional Development; and Making Connections Through Learning Communities.

QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY

The teacher education program at Queen’s University historically parallels the larger region’s commitment to reaching out to every student. The school boards surrounding Queen’s have long promoted the articulation of co-op programs in high schools and specialized high school majors so that the learning needs of all students are realized. This same philosophy became a guiding force in the redesign of Queen’s teacher education program, which recognized the value and importance of Technological Education Teacher Education as a part of that program.

The redesign of Queen’s Teacher Education programs remained focused on delivering a flexible program for completion earlier than other programs, with a strong emphasis on developing the global teacher. Queen’s Technological Education Teacher Education program begins in May and ends in August of the following year, which allows teacher candidates to complete the program more quickly. In addition, the focus on developing teachers with global experience was also embedded into Queen’s Technological Education Teacher Education program, which includes an alternative placement, during which teacher candidates have opportunities to teach anywhere in the world as long as it is related to the program. Queen’s provides travel fellowships to support this education-related travel outside of Canada. These alternative placements are typically outside of the public school system, in places such as tourist resorts, community colleges, radio and television corporations, and in businesses and industries where teachers are needed for teaching and training.

Queen’s Technological Education Teacher Education program mirrors the Intermediate/Senior teacher education program, with adaptations for teachables in Technological Education. Special courses, such as Teaching Technological Education, Curriculum Development in Technological Education, and Broad-Based Technological Education, are included in the program to further enhance teacher candidates’ understandings of teaching in Ontario in Technological Education classrooms.

**Program Overview**

Queen’s program is delivered in face-to-face and online formats in a consecutive model and consists of 60 credits delivered over a period of four semesters in four successive terms, starting in May and ending in August the following year. The program contains required foundations and methods courses, multiple school practica, and an alternative practicum. The “At-a-Glance Table” (see Figure 2) illustrates how the program is structured across the four semesters.

**Figure 2**
### Queen’s University At-a-Glance Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRAC 411 (3 weeks)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Studies Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 110 - Self as Teacher</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 210 - Self as Learner</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 310 - Self as Professional</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 500 - Supporting Learning Skills</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 504 - Educational Technology as a Teaching and Learning Tool</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Units in Summer 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CURR 360/3.0 Teaching Technological Education, Part 1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CURR 361/3.0 Teaching Technological Education, Part 2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CURR 368/3.0 Curriculum Development in Technological Education, Part 1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CURR 369/3.0 Curriculum Development in Technological Education, Part 2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elective Courses - Concentration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDST 476 - Exceptional Children and Adolescents</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCI 213 - Broad-Based Technological Education</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRAC 421/1.75, PRAC 431/1.75, PRAC 441/2.5, PRAC 451/0.0. Total</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of 10 weeks + 3 weeks alternative practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Studies Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOUN 100 - Psychological Foundations</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOUN 101 - Foundations of Assessment</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOUN 102 - Historical &amp; Philosophical Foundations</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 170 - School and Classroom Leadership</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 180 - School Law and Policy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 411 - Theory and Professional Practice</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Units in Fall/Winter</strong></td>
<td><strong>33.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRAC 461 (4 weeks)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Studies Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 501 - Building a Professional Career as a Teacher</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 502 - Intro to Aboriginal Studies for Teachers</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 503 - Supporting Environmental Ed in the Classroom</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 505 - Meeting the Needs of All Learners</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 506 - English Language Learners</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 507 - Transitions</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROF 508 - Teaching Grades 7 and 8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Units in Summer 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Program Units</strong></td>
<td><strong>60.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WINDSOR UNIVERSITY

In response to the needs of the school boards in the southwestern region of Ontario for teachers in Technological Education, Windsor’s Technological Education Teacher Education program was designed through consultation and continued communication with the regional school boards. As well, the philosophy behind the design of the technological education program for the region focused on experiential learning and coursework that promote reflective, caring, competent, and innovative practitioners involved in the life-long pursuit of continuous assessment of the needs of their communities and the active impact of new teaching on those communities. The Teacher Education program at Windsor encapsulates the belief that candidates learn best by giving and then reflecting back upon their work, so this focus is found throughout the program.

Additionally, the redesign of Windsor’s program recognized the fact that nearly all the students who constitute the Technological Studies cohort are mature students and anticipates this remaining the case in future years. As a result, the Technological Education Teacher Education program was designed as two summer sessions that serve to begin and end the program with face-to-face experiences, with internships, practica, and online coursework sandwiched between those experiences. This change was intended to accommodate student needs by decreasing the amount of time required for students to be residents in Windsor and therefore apart from their families. The change also reflected the Faculty of Education’s renewed commitment to online pedagogy and particularly to ensuring that the Technological Studies program is part of that renewed commitment.

Two additional features were included to ensure a strong connection between the program and the community. First, although teacher candidates spend their first two months in university coursework, the Fall/Winter semesters are used for completing internships and online courses that afford teacher candidates with the opportunity to get involved with co-op programs and helping secondary school students explore experiential learning opportunities. As well, where possible, these practicum and internship components occur within regions and school boards of the communities where the teacher candidates typically reside. Teacher candidates are encouraged to continue teaching in these schools on Letters of Permission (LoP) and the program counts these hours toward requisite practicum hours (a minimum of 60 days). The pace in the Fall/Winter semester is less compressed than the face-to-face summer component, which provides teacher candidates with the time to simultaneously satisfy practice teaching requirements, an internship, and potentially paid employment.

Secondly, teacher candidates are encouraged to keep the students’ homes and communities in mind at all times when preparing to learn, teach, assess, and give back to the community ‘family.’ For this reason, a mandatory component of the program is the completion of a service learning project based on reciprocal opportunities for secondary school-aged youth within their communities. The projects are research-based and practical. Candidates develop skills in research, project design and implementation, and reflexive practices. Collaborating with various skilled community members, candidates enrich their contributions to the community through knowledge exchanges with educational communities.
**Program Overview**

Windsor’s program is delivered in a consecutive model and consists of 60 credits delivered through face-to-face and online experiences over a period of four semesters in four successive terms, starting in July and ending in August the following year. The program contains a number of required foundations and methods courses, and multiple school practica, including a two-week community placement. As the “At-a-Glance Table” indicates (see Figure 3), the program is structured across the four semesters.

**Figure 3**

*Windsor University At-a-Glance Chart*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Year Schedule (July 2019 – April 2020)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technological Studies -- BEdTech / DipTech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year I and Year II Candidates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YEAR I CANDIDATES**

**SUMMER 2019**

- 5386 Curriculum Development, July 2 – 17
- 10:00 - 11:50 a.m. and 1:00 - 3:20 p.m., Monday through Friday **ON CAMPUS**
- 5388 Principles and Methods, July 18 – August 2
- 10:00 - 11:50 a.m. and 1:00 - 3:45 p.m., Monday through Friday **ON CAMPUS**
- July 26th – Professional Learning Day on campus
- 5203 Educational Psychology, August 6 – 30 **ONLINE**
- 5208 Assessment and Evaluation, August 6 – 30 **ONLINE**
- 5332 Digital Technology, August 6 – 30 **ONLINE**

**FALL 2019**

- 5201 Philosophical Orientation to Education, September 9 – November 29 **ONLINE**
- 5204 Differentiated Instruction, September 9 – November 29 **ONLINE**
  - 5497 Internship – Fall / Winter • 5498 Practicum – Fall / Winter

**WINTER 2020**

- 5202 Classroom Practice, January 6 – April 3 **ONLINE**
- 5209 Critical Analysis of Social, Global & Cultural Issues, January 6 – April 3 **ONLINE**
  - 5497 Internship – Fall / Winter • 5498 Practicum – Fall / Winter

**YEAR II CANDIDATES**

**SUMMER 2019**

- 5206 Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, July 2 – 9 **ONLINE**
- 5205 Educational Foundations, Law & Ethics, July 2 – 26 **ONLINE**
  - 5339 Career and Guidance, July 10 – 17 **ONLINE**
- 5334 Language Across the Curriculum, July 18 – 26 **ONLINE**
- 5387 Curriculum Development Part II, July 29 – August 14
  - 10:00 - 11:50 a.m. and 1:00 - 3:20 p.m., Monday through Friday **ON CAMPUS**
In 2011, the Faculty of Education at York began offering the Concurrent Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in Technological Education and then, in 2013, began offering a part-time Consecutive Program. Following the provincially mandated development of the ETEP in 2015, York developed a full-time Consecutive option in Technological Education. In order to launch the ETEP, it was decided to suspend the part-time Consecutive option in Technological Education and to integrate Technological Education teacher candidates with the rest of the full-time I/S cohort. York’s Faculty of Education currently offers the B.Ed. in Technological Education in full-time Consecutive and Concurrent options, with both cohorts completing the same required foundations and methods courses, community and school placements, as well as electives. In 2017, York began offering the Combined Program option through which qualified technological teacher education candidates can be certified to teach Technological Education (Grades 9/10 and Grades 11/12) and a General Education subject for Intermediate/Senior divisions.

In the Fall of 2015, York received a grant from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities through the Teacher Education Collaborative Initiatives Fund to enhance its technological teacher education programs. This granted supported York’s program development in the area of Technological Education and enabled York to convene three large consultations with Technological Education stakeholders from both the education sector and industry, including Technological Education teachers and administrators from ten school boards, Ministry representatives (Ministry of Education and MTCU), post-secondary partners (e.g., colleges), the OCT, the Ontario College of Trades, professional organizations (e.g., Ontario Council for Technology Education), educational organizations (e.g., Skills Canada), teachers’ federations, trade unions, and other industry partners (e.g., Toronto Transit Commission). These consultations provided an invaluable opportunity to clarify the current context and challenges for delivering technological teacher education and technological education in schools; to gain feedback on how teacher education programs might better support and enhance technological education in schools; and to assess the existing and potential links between secondary education, teacher education, and partners outside of the education sector. These consultations also laid the groundwork for York’s establishment of a Technological Teacher Education Advisory Council (TTEAC).

The mission of York’s Faculty of Education, which emphasizes equity, diversity, community, collaboration, interdisciplinarity, and social justice, has informed the development of their B.Ed. in Technological Education. In addition, several guiding principles relating directly to Technological Education were developed during the community consultations and inform the ongoing enhancement of York’s technological teacher education program:

- Teaching and learning in Technological Education are equal in importance to any other I/S subject area;
- Technological Education poses unique pedagogical opportunities and challenges (activity-based and hands-on, safety);
- Technological Education offers rich opportunities for cross-curricular collaboration and learning (in literacy, numeracy, STEM, environmental education, etc.);
- Teachers of Technological Education are pedagogical experts and instructional leaders; and
- Teachers of Technological Education should have full access to the profession.
York began their program development with a renewed commitment to offering Technological Education teacher candidates the Bachelor of Education degree, believing that all students should receive the same credential for undertaking the same accredited program of professional education.

Program development specific to the area of Technological Education focused on a substantial revision of existing methods courses (‘teachables’) and the creation of new methods courses that highlight the rigorous and cross-curricular nature of the ten BBTs in the Ontario curriculum. To achieve this goal, the methods courses in Technological Education reflect a combination of breadth and depth, preparing teacher candidates to teach a broad-based technology curriculum without sacrificing the unique expertise each teacher candidate must bring to their particular technological subject area. In addition to their primary methods course on Teaching Technological Education in the I/S Divisions, in which teacher candidates are both introduced to the BBT curriculum and focus on teaching the curriculum in their areas of specialization, they take two additional methods courses that offer advanced study in Technological Education teaching methods: Exploring Technologies: Curricular Connections and Teaching Design Thinking within Technology Frameworks (see Figure 4). These advanced courses allow teacher candidates to refine their understanding of the Technological Education curriculum and to explore, for example, the cross-curricular connections between the BBTs and other subject areas, as well as the nature of design thinking and the interrelationships within and between technologies, society, and the environment.

York’s program development also emphasized increasing access to the program by modifying admission requirements to allow the admission of Technological Education teacher candidates with a Certificate of Qualification (CoQ) (regulated by the Ontario College of Trades) that aligns with the Technological Education curriculum, in addition to those applicants with degrees or advanced diplomas. York also established pathway agreements with ten Ontario colleges. York reviewed and strengthened its guidelines for assessing technological competence and initiated new academic supports for the incoming cohort of Technological Education candidates, some of whom would be attending university for the first time (e.g., providing one-on-one writing support for teacher candidates admitted without a prior academic degree).

In order for Technological Education teachers to access opportunities in the teaching profession, York also developed a pathway with transfer credits into its Bachelor of Arts Degree for those teacher candidates with an advanced diploma or CoQ, rather than a prior degree. For example, students with an advanced diploma receive 30 transfer credits plus an additional 30 transfer credits for the completion of the B.Ed., giving them a total of 60 credits toward the 90- or 120-credit BA. A further modification to York’s program, approved by the OCT in 2017, was the addition of the “combined program” as an area of study through which qualified technological teacher education candidates (those with a previous undergraduate degree and an adequate number of post-secondary credits) can be certified to teach Technological Education (Grades 9/10 and Grades 11/12) and a General Education subject for Intermediate/Senior divisions. The significant number of candidates who come into the B.Ed. in Technological Education with a prior undergraduate degree unrelated to their technological teaching subject are in a unique position to take advantage of a combined area of study. These students are able to meet the requirements for technological competence through years of work experience in their broad-based technology area and have demonstrable expertise in another I/S general education subject area through a prior undergraduate degree. Being
able to offer this combined program option significantly increases access to professional opportunities for those students who qualify.

**Program Overview**

York’s program is delivered either in a Consecutive model (for those students who already hold an appropriate undergraduate degree or advanced diploma) or in a modified Concurrent model (for those students also studying for an aligned undergraduate degree at York), though the vast majority, if not all, of York’s Technological Education teacher candidates complete the B.Ed. consecutively due to the work experience requirements needed to demonstrate technological competence. The B.Ed. program consists of 60 credits delivered over a period of four semesters, currently in a Fall/Winter, Fall/Winter face-to-face format. The program contains a number of required foundations and methods courses, a community practicum, multiple school practica, and elective courses. As the “At-a-Glance Table” indicates (see Figure 4), the program is structured across the four semesters around four broad themes: Orientation to the Profession in the Community; Learners; Classroom & Curriculum; and Schooling, Society and Research. Progression is designed into the structure of the program and courses build upon each other across semesters.

**Figure 4**

**York University At-a-Glance Chart**

| YORK UNIVERSITY BEd TECH ED, including Combined Program – 4 SEMESTER MODEL (FW/FW) |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| **YEAR 1**                                  | **YEAR 2**                                  |                                             |                                             |
| **SEMINAR 1** Orientation to the profession in the community | **SEMINAR 2** Learners | **SEMINAR 3** Classroom/Curriculum | **SEMINAR 4** Schooling, Society, Research |
| Adolescent Development & Health (EDFE 1101) | Inquiries into Learning (EDFE 2100) | Teaching for Diverse and Equitable Classrooms in Ontario (EDFE 3100) | Research into Practice (EDFE 4200) |
| Foundations of Education and Theory into Practice (EDFE 2000) | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Studies in Communities and Their Schools (Community Practicum) (EDPR 1000) | 3 | Practicum (EDPR 3000) (min. 30 days) | Practicum (EDPR 4000) (min. 30 days) | 3 |
| Practicum (EDPR 2000) (min. 20 days) | 3 | 3 |
| **TECH ED ONLY** | | | |
| Teaching Technological Education in the IS Divisions - A (TECH 4000) | Teaching Technological Education in the IS Divisions - B (TECH 4001) | Exploiting Technologies: Curriculum Connections (TECH 4050) | Teaching Design Thinking within Technology Frameworks (TECH 4051) |
| New Media Literacies and Culture (EDUC 3610) | Elective 1 | Elective 2 | Elective | 3 |
| **COMBINED PROGRAM** | | | |
| Teaching Technological Education in the IS Divisions - A (TECH 4000) | Teaching Technological Education in the IS Divisions - B (TECH 4001) | Teaching XXXX in the IS Divisions – A (XXXX 4000) | Teaching XXXX in the IS Divisions – B (XXXX 4001) |
| New Media Literacies and Culture (EDUC 3610) | Elective 1 | Exploiting Technologies: Curriculum Connections (TECH 4050) | Elective 2 | 3 |
| Semester 1 = 15 credits | Semester 2 = 18 credits | Semester 3 = 15 credits | Semester 4 = 12 credits |

Semester start and end dates: While exact start and end dates vary, each semester is 12 weeks long and runs from September-December (Fall), January-April (Winter), or May-August (Summer). Currently, the program is offered Fall/Winter, Fall/Winter.

Course credit: A course comprising 36 faculty instructional hours has a weight of 3 credits.
CONCLUSION

In summary, the differences in the programs and the innovation behind the design of these programs provide individuals with a variety of delivery options and timelines to meet the learning needs for becoming teachers of Technological Education. The chart in Table 2 presents a summary of the programs.

### Table 2

**Technological Education Programs Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Structure (W = Winter, F = Fall, S = Summer)</th>
<th>Duration (months)</th>
<th>Type (CC = Concurrent, CS = Consecutive, MS = Multisession)</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brock</td>
<td>W, F, S, W or S, F, W, S+</td>
<td>16+</td>
<td>CS, MS</td>
<td>Two months face-to-face (F2F) followed by twelve months of online and practicums, and a final one-month F2F session before final practicum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s</td>
<td>S, F, W, S</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>CC, CS, MS</td>
<td>Blended; five placements of 3 or 4 weeks take place in boards close to Kingston + one Alternative Practicum (community colleges and business/industry locations).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>S, F, W, S</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>CS, MS</td>
<td>Two-month-long F2F summer institutes with online and Internship/Practicum being completed in the candidate’s home location during the intervening Fall/Winter school year; four 5-week practicums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>F, W, F, W</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>CC, CS</td>
<td>Face-to-face; year one includes coursework plus school and community practica; year two includes coursework and school practicum; Combined Program certifies candidates to teach Technological Education and a General Education subject for Intermediate/Senior divisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+ Some additional Fall practicum is required.

**NEXT STEPS IN TECHNOLOGICAL TEACHER EDUCATION**

The next steps for ongoing program development and enhancement across the province need to address the ongoing challenges in technological teacher education, but also in Technological Education more broadly, as issues at the secondary level have a profound impact on the changing nature of teaching in this area. Our discussion of next steps is focused on six key areas of challenge.
for our programs: teacher shortage, marginalization, recruitment, access, program quality, and collaboration.

**Teacher Shortage**

As noted in the introduction, there is currently a shortage of qualified Technological Education teachers in Ontario and many positions throughout the province are being filled with teachers hired on Letters of Permission (LOPs). The LOP process allows the boards to hire individuals without teaching credentials but with expertise in a broad-based technology to fill teaching assignments. Principals are often so desperate to keep Technological Education programs active that they will recruit teacher candidates to teach on an LOP while completing their program. Responding to this shortage and the need for teachers requires the development of more innovative program pathways that allow qualified Technological Education teachers to get into the system faster. For example, the OCT has recognized that there must be a process to support schools in subject areas where there exist severe teacher shortages, and offers the *Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration* as one response to this dilemma. Windsor, Queen’s, and Brock offer multi-session teacher education programs, which are designed so that teacher candidates qualify for this certificate early in their program. The *Transitional Certificate* is a temporary certification that allows teacher candidates who have completed a portion of the program to teach for up to six years while completing their program, as long as the candidate remains in good standing with the OCT and respective universities.

**Marginalization**

There has historically existed a marginalization of Technological Education in the cultures of both schooling and teacher education in Ontario, where Technological Education has at times been viewed as less important than what are perceived as the more academic subject areas. Our consultations with Technological Education stakeholders, as well as meetings with our own Technological Education faculty members, have revealed how Technological Education teachers have felt less valued than their colleagues in the academic subject areas. Those who teach in Technological Education, relegated to the metaphorical “basement” of the school, are often excluded from the kind of cross-curricular collaboration encouraged among teachers in other areas. Technological Education teachers also described how, for example, their years of work experience and industry expertise are not viewed as rigorous as the academic university credits of their colleagues, even though much of their teaching is directly based in STEM and project-based learning initiatives highly desired in ministry mandates. Faculties of Education have an opportunity to intervene in this culture of marginalization in several ways: by positioning technological teacher education as an area of specialization within secondary teacher education more broadly, and by valuing technological teacher candidates as equal participants within academic teacher education programs. In addition, Technological Education teachers who are completing the same professional program of education should be granted the same credential as their general education counterparts. Without a B.Ed., or a prior undergraduate degree, Technological Education teachers are prevented from pursuing many Additional Qualifications and leadership opportunities, thereby contributing further to the marginalization of these highly qualified teachers.

All four universities offering technological teacher education have renewed their commitment to granting Technological Education teacher candidates the Bachelor of Education degree, believing
that all students should receive the same credential for undertaking the same accredited program of professional education. In the past, the OCT regulations had been interpreted to mean that, in order to grant a B.Ed. (rather than a Diploma of Education), candidates had to enter our programs with a prior degree or three-year diploma. However, admissions requirements and prerequisites to any degree, the B.Ed. included, are established by university programs (and approved by university senates) – the legislation on teacher certification does not govern degree requirements but rather outlines the requirements for technological competence. York and Queen’s Universities both offer a B.Ed. to all graduates of their Technological Education Teacher Education programs. Both Brock and Windsor are pursuing approval to do the same at their respective institutions, but until such a time as approval is granted, they do provide for conversion of the Diploma of Education to a B.Ed. with documentation of completion of an acceptable undergraduate degree. Next steps in this area will also include institutions creating pathways to an undergraduate degree for those Technological Education teachers who complete the B.Ed. without a prior degree. For example, York provides credit transfer pathways to their Bachelor of Arts in Educational Studies, which promotes the acquisition of an undergraduate degree by those Technological Education teachers who would be further marginalized from professional opportunities – for example, in administration – without one.

Recruitment

The traditional recruitment strategies used by universities and particularly Faculties of Education, who are often able to recruit students already enrolled in other degree programs at their own institutions, do not reach many potential teacher candidates qualified to undertake the B.Ed. in Technological Education. Many potential Technological Education teachers are working full time in their technology sectors or have completed post-secondary programs in which the possibility of a pathway to teacher education is not generally known. Developing pathway agreements with college partners is one strategy being used to change this culture – to communicate to colleges and their students that many of their advanced diplomas and degrees can be the first step in a pathway toward the teaching profession in Technological Education. However, reaching qualified candidates who have completed a CoQ in an aligned technology area and/or are working full time in their trades is a challenge for faculties who are not used to recruiting students in such contexts. Faculties of Education need to develop new recruitment strategies that reach these potential teacher candidates outside of traditional post-secondary pathways. This might require innovation in developing relationships with industry partners to recruit qualified candidates in a way that respects their need for skilled workers.

Program Quality

Having implemented new programs in Technological Education, all Faculties of Education will need to conduct ongoing program review and evaluation, particularly taking into account feedback from teacher candidates and school board partners on the quality of the program in preparing new Technological Education teachers. In addition to this ongoing program review, practicum is an area that requires particular attention for Technological Education teacher candidates, not only because of the limited number of school placements available in Technological Education but also because these placements have unique challenges and opportunities associated with them (e.g., health and safety). Faculties will need to work with their school board partners to enhance the quality of Technological Education practicum placements to support professional mentorship in
technological education and to broaden exposure to the diversity of the BBT curriculum for teacher candidates.

**Access**

Continuing to build on the strides we have already made in increasing access to our technological teacher education programs, Faculties of Education need to further consider innovative program delivery models that would make our programs more accessible to those working full or part time in their trades, or those with other commitments that prevent them from enrolling in a full-time or face-to-face program. It will be important to continue developing part-time or blended and online programs for technological teacher education candidates who, perhaps more than any cohort, need these kind of innovative delivery models. Some question for Faculties to explore include: What accessible and innovative delivery models might best fit a Technological Education cohort? How could we mobilize the affordances of online and blended program design or program schedules that utilize evenings and weekends, rather than weekdays? With these innovative delivery models in place, there would be greater potential to explore opportunities for collaboration outside of the Greater Toronto Area in order to enhance access to technological teacher education for Francophone and Indigenous candidates.

**Collaboration**

Faculties should aim to build greater collaboration with stakeholders who can inform the ongoing enhancement of technological teacher education programs. As was already mentioned, recruitment strategies can be strengthened by maintaining strong ties with college partners and by forging relationships with industry partners who may, for example, be interested in exploring opportunities for cohort-based programs in their respective sectors. Collaborating with school boards can enhance the responsiveness of recruitment to respond to the technological subject areas with the greatest staffing needs. Finally, the authors hope to see greater knowledge sharing among the Faculties of Education offering Technological Education Teacher Education. We believe this knowledge sharing can only strengthen our respective programs.

In summary, it is safe to say that technological teacher education has never been more innovative or more necessary than at any other time in Ontario’s history. The trades in Ontario continue to face a labour shortage “that stems in part from a cultural bias that pushes young people toward university and office work” (Weikle, 2019). An understanding of the trades as a site of interdisciplinary and experiential innovation must begin in schools (arguably at the elementary level) with teachers committed to a socially responsive, creative, and rigorous technological education. Ontario needs more Technological Education teachers, and those teachers need access to excellent teacher education that addresses the unique demands of the Technological Education classroom. As this chapter indicates, Faculties continue to undertake innovative program development and enhancement. However, they require ongoing government support to address issues of recruitment and access, for example, by exempting Technological Education Teacher Education candidates from enrollment caps placed on Faculties of Education. Such commitments make it possible for Ontario’s four Technological Education Teacher Education programs to continue to evolve in ways that aim to be responsive to the cultural and economic context, as well as the complex demands of the school system and the broad-based curriculum.
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CHAPTER 25

FROM POLICY INTENDED TO POLICY LIVED:
INSIDE THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DURING TEACHER
EDUCATION REFORM

Kathryn Broad

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

INTRODUCTION

It was March 8, 2013 and moving day on the 13th floor at the Mowat Block. The offices of the Teaching Policy and Standards Branch (TPSB) of the Ministry of Education (EDU) were being renovated into cubicles and we were packing up for a temporary relocation. As a newly seconded education officer, I had only been in the office for six weeks. With my minimal packing complete, I was working on one of our “files”, or areas of branch responsibility, responding to correspondence regarding Ontario Regulation 274: Hiring Practices. Our Branch Manager stuck her head in my door and said that we were both needed in the Assistant Deputy Minister’s (ADM) office. When we arrived, the ADM told us that the work to lengthen and expand teacher education was about to take prominence among our many files. We needed to begin preparing materials to be shared widely across Ministries. As we left the office, the manager turned to me and said, “It’s on.”

With that conversation, the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) file hurtled into action.

In this chapter, I describe the often-hidden work of educational policy development from the perspective of a teacher educator seconded to provide research-informed knowledge and experience in program leadership. I offer a perspective into the messy, complex, and intense work of making policy change aimed to improve learning for teacher candidates and students in schools. I attempt to depict the constellation of factors that influenced policy development and implementation in ‘real time’: stakeholder input, competing urgent files, budgetary constraints, and continually changing contexts. I illustrate the principled, thoughtful efforts of my colleagues who worked with energy and commitment to enact their oath to serve our diverse communities in Ontario responsibly, wisely, and ethically.

In the section Policy Intended, I provide the historical, policy, and legislative context and then narrate the experience of policy development from drafting to enactment. Observations and learnings from the process are offered throughout. The section Policy Lived begins with contextual
information and then I describe the intended and unintended impacts, challenges, and reconsiderations that arose during policy implementation. I offer some personal Lessons and Learnings from implementation and conclude with recent experience of ‘living’ the policy change in my current context.

POLICY INTENDED

The political and historical context of the rapid drafting and developing of policies leading to the September 2015 inauguration of the enhanced programs is significant. I entered this context in February 2013 as Kathleen Wynne took leadership of a Liberal minority government and 18 months after the 2011 election platform announcement that teacher education programs would be “doubled in length with more emphasis on practical experience” (CBC, 2011).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

While the 2011 platform commitment to “double the length of teacher education” in Ontario heralded the beginning of action on policy change, a lot of activity had already taken place. Faculties of education had piloted programs at Brock University and the University of Toronto in the 1990s. The ITE file in TPSB contained studies, consultations, jurisdictional scans, and research articles dating back over seven years.

Beginning in 2006, a consultation was led by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), the arm's-length self-regulatory body for the teaching profession that accredits teacher education programs and certifies and oversees the professional conduct of teachers in the public interest (Salvatori, Ragunathan, & Tallo, 2017). The report Preparing Teachers for Tomorrow (OCT, 2006) summarized the data and developed recommendations for program length, delivery models, program designs, practica, and curricula for teacher education. From 2007–2011, data collection and review of the literature by EDU policy analysts continued apace. The Ministry and the Ontario Teachers’ Federation (OTF) both collected data regarding the role of the associate teacher. EDU commissioned a study entitled Teacher Preparation and Success in Ontario, in which four faculties of education—Brock, Laurentian, Trent, and Toronto—outlined their program designs and structures and gathered data on the sense of preparedness of their graduates (Herbert et al., 2010). Evidence from research literature was being examined in areas that included diversifying admissions processes, effective professional learning, and the designs and content of national and international ITE programs.

Changes in labour mobility across Canada had spurred attention to program duration. In 2013, at a minimum eight months, Ontario had the shortest program in Canada and while Ontario teacher education was viewed as strong nationally and internationally, there were concerns about fairness among other provinces as certified teachers crossed borders. There were further concerns about a burgeoning oversupply of teachers in Ontario who were spending five to seven years gaining full employment, as documented by the OCT in its annual Transition to Teaching Report (OCT, 2019). The implementation of Ontario Regulation 274: Hiring Practices heightened the focus on the serious underemployment of recent graduates.
POLICY ENVIRONMENT

By 2013, a decade of governing by Premier Dalton McGuinty had placed educational improvement and equitable attainment of excellent educational outcomes for all students as a central mandate. Drawing upon the advice of expert educational advisors, the government adopted a framework of educational change focused on whole-system improvement. This framework formed the foundation for the policy environment and activity of the Ministry of Education. This framework for change called for collaborative but central policy development, and local, contextualized implementation of policy with ongoing support and oversight. Excerpted key elements of the framework that seem particularly pertinent are:

- A central focus on improving teaching and learning;
- An emphasis on, and support for, respecting, valuing, and developing professional capacity (individual and collective) through a system of recruitment, training, development, recognition, working conditions, and career progression for educators;
- A commitment to continuous improvement and use of evidence to identify and spread effective practices and to innovate next practices; and
- Strong attention to implementation processes to deliver the strategies and improvements in practices and outcomes (Osmond & Campbell, 2018, pp. 242-243)

Changes to teacher education were framed as the next area for attention following significant reforms to K-12 education. The K-12 reforms had employed research and evidence, ongoing data collection, significant collaboration, and transparent, ongoing communication. These underlying approaches are evident in the work regarding teacher education that occurred prior to my arrival. Throughout 2012, EDU, the OCT, and the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (TCU) held focused consultations with representatives from the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE), faculties of education, OTF and all affiliate federations, the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE), principals’ organizations, school board organizations, and parent and community organizations. Submissions from dozens of other organizations and members of the public had flowed in as well. All of the data was compiled and analyzed alongside the earlier studies, collected data, and reviews of Canadian and international literature. I witnessed the referencing and extensive use of consultation documents, research, and stakeholder input throughout the drafting and development of the policy.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Key to understanding the complexity of policy work in initial teacher education in Ontario is the legislative context. The Learning Ministries, EDU and TCU, now Colleges and Universities (CU), have overlapping but distinct areas of jurisdiction, oversight, and responsibility in teacher education. EDU is primarily focused on program, particularly the connections to K-12 education, professional learning, and the ways in which teacher preparation enhances teaching and thus learning in schools. Teacher education content, pedagogy, school-university connections, field placements, and teacher educators are of paramount concern. EDU does not govern teacher education directly but works with the OCT, which oversees initial program accreditation, accreditation reviews, and program changes (Salvatori et al., 2017). As is true for all Post-Secondary Education (PSE) programs, TCU has authority over enrolment and funding, as well as
university planning and operations. In the case of changes to ITE, these separate but interdependent foci meant that communication and joint work were necessities.

Along with sustaining and supporting quality programming for ITE throughout the change process, TCU had concerns about perceived inequities in funding relative to other professional programs with clinical components such as social work and law. Goals for TCU also included parity in the funding provided to professional programs and greater institutional specialization as identified through the Strategic Mandate Agreement process being undertaken at the time.

The following excerpts from a media release on June 5, 2013 articulate the policy intentions outlined by both ministries (emphasis added) and set the table for the drafting of legislation and policy work.

Ontario is modernizing teacher education to help new teachers get jobs and provide students with the best possible education.

- The enhanced program will extend learning time from two semesters to four semesters and give future teachers more practical experience by increasing classroom placements from a minimum of 40 days to a minimum of 80 days.
- The curriculum for teacher education will be enhanced and updated to provide new teachers with additional expertise in tailoring teaching methods to diverse student needs and working with students who have mental health and addictions issues.
- The program will also be updated to incorporate technology in the classroom such as electronic whiteboards and e-readers.
- In addition to expanding the length of teacher's college, admissions will be reduced by 50 per cent starting in 2015. This will help address an oversupply of graduates, enabling Ontario's qualified teachers to find jobs.
- Currently, teacher education has high per-student funding compared to other programs, such as social work and law. To bring it more in line with other programs, government funding for the program will be reduced. (Government of Ontario, 2013)

POLICY DRAFTED

March to June 2013 marked an intense period of creating information packages, drafting multiple decision notes, and producing PowerPoint slide ‘decks’ that synthesized overviews of data around all aspects of teacher education. As the plans for modernizing initial teacher education, as it was being framed at the time, were developing, these ideas and data were shared with many Ministry and inter-Ministerial committees, and Cabinet. There were five main areas of consideration for change: program length, practicum length, mandatory core content, enrolment, and funding. The informational materials served multiple audiences, with more detailed and comprehensive packages developed for the Deputy Ministers’ and Ministers’ Offices in EDU and TCU. Changes to program and practicum duration evolved through ongoing discussions drawing upon the multiple consultations and the review of research. Enrolments and funding for the programs and for the transition were modelled by TCU and deliberated across ministries.
The development of the mandatory core content was a major area of focus for TPSB’s work with Ministry and OCT colleagues. Three major areas: Curriculum Knowledge, Pedagogical and Instructional Knowledge, and Knowledge of the Ontario Context emerged from thorough review of the consultations and the literature. A set of shared ITE program outcomes prepared by the OADE in the spring of 2013 was analyzed thoroughly. Looking across multiple sets of data, there were many points of agreement on important broad areas of content. These shared elements weighed heavily in the listing of areas shared with OADE and faculties leading to the development of Schedule 1 in the regulation regarding the Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs (Regulation 347/02, 2017), which lists the mandatory content knowledge.

POLICY DECIDED

As I worked with colleagues in TPSB, the Deputy Minister’s Office (DMO), and the Minister’s Office (MO) in the late spring of 2013, I witnessed efforts to develop and enact research-informed policy decisions using the literature; studies commissioned by the Ministry, OCT, and other organizations; and data gathered from consultations with the broad range of stakeholders in 2012. A genuine desire to create conditions for improving learning for teachers, and thus for students, in schools was evident.

The intentions within EDU aligned with the framework for change as there was a desire to build consistency in content areas allowing autonomy in pedagogy, delivery, and use of research expertise in programming. A goal was coherence, in recognition of almost three decades of literature about the importance of integrating theory-practice and research connections in ITE programs (Buchmann & Floden, 1992; Darling-Hammond, 2006, 2014; Grossman et al., 2008; Hammerness, 2006; Klette & Hammerness, 2016). The “core content is intended to encourage coherence” (OCT, 2017, p. 7). The provincial process for initiating educational policy change was to delineate what to include but not how to modify programs in recognition of the diverse urban, rural, and remote contexts, and differing program models (concurrent, consecutive, and graduate) (Campbell et al., 2017; Salvatori, 2017).

Unlike other government ministries, along with policy analysts and policy advisors, EDU staffing includes education officers who focus on program and have experience in the education sector. As an education officer, I was rapidly learning the language and process of policy development from my patient colleagues steeped in policy expertise. My contribution was to bring research and lived experience of the teacher education sector to our discussions. For example, the era of the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test (Government of Ontario, 2002) had left a lingering impression that faculties of education were not employing Ontario curriculum and policy documents in their teaching. As a teacher educator, I could outline the ways in which these documents were being taken up in programs and identified through accreditation processes. This also included clarifying that practicum experiences did not reduce the required courses undertaken by teacher candidates or that the teaching load of faculty proved to be important for TCU colleagues. Ongoing internal communication and information sharing was central to developing policy as intended.

POLICY ANNOUNCED

As referenced in the media release, on June 5, 2013, (Government of Ontario, 2013) then Ministers Liz Sandals (EDU) and Brad Duguid (TCU) announced the modernizing of teacher education to
include mandatory core content, a minimum 80 days of practicum, and a four-semester program duration. Reductions in program enrolments and cuts to funding were also announced. The ambitious implementation date of September 2015 was declared, creating a very challenging timeline for universities. The choice of the 2015 date reflected an effort to balance a sense of urgency to make the promised changes during the government’s mandate with the realities of university governance and admissions processes.

POLICY DEVELOPED

On June 20th, 2013, the OCT, EDU, and TCU held a pivotal meeting with OADE to begin to jointly investigate elements of the core content and plan for the challenging implementation timeline. A draft listing of potential areas for inclusion in the core content was distributed, leading to a vigorous and healthy discussion regarding elements that had been addressed and those which had been missed. At this meeting, the rhetoric around framing the changes to ITE programs significantly shifted and all communications began to use the language of enhancement of teacher education rather than the term modernization. This change in language demonstrated valuing of the existing strong programs with a view to providing opportunities for them to become even stronger.

Most participants in the meeting agreed that two semesters did not provide enough opportunity for deep engagement with the complexity of teaching and learning to teach, though some concerns over doubling the time and the resulting significant increased costs for candidates were identified. Additionally, the intense timeline for program change and deep worries about reduced funding were articulated.

There was also consensus around the importance of greater attention to inclusive practice, differentiation, and attention to students and families in underserved communities; however, needs for more focus on Indigenous histories, pedagogies, and ways of knowing and other elements of the Ontario context were raised. In an effort to put more flesh on the bones of the ‘high-level’ content, an Accreditation Resource Guide (ARG) (OCT, 2014/2017) had been envisioned. At this meeting, there was a decision that faculties of education will work with the OCT to offer critical input for the ARG in order to provide more clarity around key aspects of content, examples of engagement with the knowledge and skills outlined, and possible demonstrations of learning.

This joint effort by EDU, the OCT, and OADE signaled the kind of collaborative input into policy development with planned local implementation envisioned in the change framework (Osmond & Campbell, 2018). Throughout 2013, there were ongoing meetings with the OADE and faculties of education, with sincere acknowledgement of the expertise of the faculty and the responsivity of the programs to the communities that they serve. EDU made a concerted effort to identify key areas of skills and knowledge in the regulation at a high-level in recognition that faculties, as the expert program providers, would address and enact the specified content within their contexts and to meet the needs of their communities. The language of the mandatory core content passed into law in October 2013 as Schedule 1 in Regulation 347/02: Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs (Government of Ontario, 2017).
POLICY ELABORATED

As the OADE and OCT worked together with the faculties and sought input from partners in school districts and federations for the ARG, at EDU we worked with all branches to amplify core content incorporating ministry perspectives. A policy advisor colleague warned me that we must not go too far ‘into the weeds’. I came to deeply appreciate this advice as I witnessed well-intentioned desires to prescribe specific pedagogies and content in the guide. Teacher education seemed to be viewed as a kind of panacea for issues or concerns in the field. It seemed that there was a hope that packing multiple aspects of content and pedagogy into preparation programs could inoculate teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills required to be complete, ‘finished’ teachers. Looking at the consultation documents and in conversations with colleagues, a great sense of irony arose. As Ducharme and Ducharme (1996) identified over 20 years ago, teacher education programs seem to be regarded as “both the cause of all school problems and the source of many of its solutions” (p. 705).

Many colleagues also had ideas about what was needed to improve teacher education. Particular practices or documents were promoted as essential, such as training in a specific classroom management program, first aid training, or specific teaching programs such as IBI. Significant components for teacher education were frequently strongly linked to a branch mandate or a colleague’s area of expertise. Despite recognition of the need to foster development of critical, responsive, inquiring teachers who could draw on research and multiple knowledge bases to make pedagogical judgments, it appeared that conceptions and preferences were deeply held. Consensus about these various perceived core elements was lacking. Four years rather than four semesters would not have provided enough time to incorporate all of the learning suggested.

Given that TPSB supported not only initial but ongoing teacher learning, the branch had an important role in highlighting the iterative nature of teacher learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) and the recognition of “teaching as the learning profession” (Darling-Hammond, 1998). There was a need to emphasize the research on engagement in continuing professional learning not only as one of the foundations of the profession in Ontario outlined in the OCT Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession (OCT, 2016) but also as a critical part of teacher preparation. As the branch housing the New Teacher Induction Program, we had data from longitudinal studies that showed the continuing, significant, and personalized learning needs of new teachers and their expectation that they would continue to engage in constant learning as they taught.

Gathering input from EDU colleagues about truly essential areas for inclusion in the ARG was an ongoing and negotiated process. My director suggested creating an online repository of key EDU resources to support ITE. This proved to be a helpful step in reducing the need for the document to be exhaustive. The Ministry input was combined with the results of the OCT’s deliberations with deans and faculties. In the end, the Accreditation Resource Guide, published in February 2014, stands as a document reflecting an increased sharing of understanding of ITE programming, goals, content, and pedagogy across stakeholders and within the Ministry (OCT, 2014/17). The guide represents an example of cooperation and relational trust among stakeholders and across constituencies, which speaks to efforts to genuinely collaborate, listen, understand, and respect all partners, faculties, educators, and communities.
Within TPSB, the ARG became a key component of the correspondence and communication with stakeholders, which was a central facet of the Initial Teacher Education file. We received continual questions from internal and external colleagues and stakeholders regarding how the enhanced program addressed particular areas of concern; for example: mathematics, special education, Indigenous ways of knowing and histories, mental health and well-being, French as a Second Language, youth in care, and financial literacy to name a few. My digital copies of the ARG document were highlighted repeatedly as I sought the references needed for responses. It is a testament to the thorough and comprehensive consultation and shared development of the guide that, from February 2014 to September 2016 when my secondment ended, we did not receive one request regarding content that could not be found in the ARG document.

As the implementation date of 2015 loomed, continued legislative changes devised by either TCU or EDU were made throughout 2014. The OCT communicated to any members who had not yet registered to alert them of the changes to certification commencing in September 2015. The verification process for faculties of education was established by the OCT. Transition funding and resources aimed to support specialized programs and faculties viewed as key to university health were created by TCU. Also, early forecasts of impacts of the legislated changes on specialized programs that focused on French Language, Technological Education, and Indigenous Education were receiving some attention. TCU provided Teacher Education Collaborative Initiatives funding for program development in these three areas.

POLICY ANIMATED

Throughout the time of development and preparation for implementation by faculties, I benefited from the examples of skill and commitment demonstrated by the directors, managers, and program and policy colleagues in the Teaching Policy and Standards Branch. I saw how responding to the new requirements and the realities of the rapid timeline and funding reductions could be navigated while still providing space for faculties’ agency and expertise. Every effort was made by TPSB to be responsive and thoughtful, to consider research and evidence, and to provide the best advice possible on any given issue or concern.

For example, the branch continued to support faculties to collaborate and share their experiences, research, and learning through the quarterly meetings of the Ministry-Faculty Liaison Committee, which brought together representatives from EDU, faculties, and subject associations. Liaison Committee meetings were designed to address areas of shared concern and discuss solutions. TPSB also continued to sponsor and co-plan the annual Ministry-Faculty Forum conference. These annual conferences continued to foreground coherence and collaboration in the themes and structures of the sessions, exploring Research into Practice, Relationship Building, and Learning and Teaching Out Loud. Goals were to facilitate sharing of research, knowledge, experiences, and practices and thus, the call for proposals prioritized partnerships among districts, faculties, and the Ministry.

As EDU cannot flow funds to universities, beginning in fall of 2014, funds were allocated to school districts to work with faculties on projects to support associate teachers. There was a recognition that our field-based teacher educators have critical mentoring opportunities and responsibilities and are under-recognized and under-resourced. These funded projects were intended to foster the knowledge, skill, and time for associate teachers to deepen their relationships with candidates and
faculty partners. It was identified that, due to the change of program, these field teacher educators would have greater opportunity to work with candidates and thus increased influence on teacher learning. Communication, collaborative learning, and funded projects were all efforts to connect EDU with faculties and field to attain mutual goals in supporting shared learning for teachers to support the learning of students.

POLICY LIVED

As stated, Fullan’s (2010) system change framework underpinned educational policy in Ontario throughout the Liberal government mandate. Educational policy implementation in the jurisdiction has been strongly influenced by Fullan’s notions that policy aims may be met differentially, change over time, and still cohere with the focus (Campbell et al., 2017). Policy implementation in this frame is understood as complex and dynamic, with coherent expression of policy enactment continuously in the making (Fullan, 2010). Policy is developed collaboratively and the government supports enactment and ongoing learning. However, leadership and monitoring of implementation are intentionally undertaken by the educational sector. It is intended that policy enactment be contextualized to meet the needs and strengths of constituents and communities and that the institutions lead and account for their individual implementation efforts. Accountability is proportionally more internal than external; for example, teacher education programs provide evidence to the regulator but have discretion in their organization and design. To assist with monitoring for each faculty and provincially, the OCT Transition to Teaching (OCT, 2019) survey included all graduates for the first years of the enhanced program in order to have a significant sample size. The survey was also modified to include items related to the program change and particularly to preparation in mandatory core content.

It can be argued that resting the leadership of enactment with the sector places a great deal of responsibility on those engaged in implementing while not explicitly acknowledging power relationships and dynamics (Coburn, 2016). However, my experience in TPSB demonstrated that this degree of distance can also be recognition of the autonomy and agency of the faculties and support continued active involvement with the sector. As implementation began in 2015, the work of TPSB became even more focused on listening, communicating, and problem solving as anticipated and unintended consequences and challenges emerged.

In the subsequent section, I first describe the context for enactment followed by the challenges that emerged and the efforts to support, respond to issues, communicate, and sustain relationships.

THE CONTEXT FOR ENACTMENT

Context is again pertinent in understanding the experiences of policy enactment. Despite a majority government and a strong public mandate, an unsettled labour environment continued to be the backdrop for all work within EDU. The move to provincial bargaining, which was passed in legislation in 2014, was breaking new ground and clarity around the roles of school districts and the province in the new more centralized collective bargaining process took time to establish. Forging new negotiating relations within existing stakeholder relationships meant that maintaining trust was prioritized. There was less time and less momentum for continued innovation in teacher education. The K-12 sector was already engaged in considerable efforts to sustain their continuing responsibilities in enacting the ongoing improvement efforts that had been underway for over a
decade. Program and Policy Memorandum (PPM) 159: Collaborative Professionalism (2016) and the creation of a Provincial Initiatives Committee to address workload issues and ensure that voices were heard regarding further policy development grew from consultations that documented fatigue within the education sector.

Ontario Regulation 274: Hiring Practices continued to be an area of ongoing debate and efforts to address competing agendas proved challenging and time-consuming for teacher federations and the government. Bargaining units representing occasional teachers and those representing teachers with permanent contracts frequently were representing related constituencies with differing needs. For example, inter-board mobility accompanied by some recognition of seniority was an identified aspiration for some federation members; however, this could also be viewed as parachuting teachers into positions by others. Only AEFO had withdrawn from the regulation due to a drastic undersupply of French-language teachers needed for their system. However, the issue of undersupply points to another challenge of policy implementation.

There was growing evidence that a number of forecasted impacts of the policy and funding changes were emerging even more quickly than expected. Effects on specialized programs and program entry for first generation candidates and candidates from underrepresented communities were being identified by stakeholders. At the same time, the moral imperative to respond to the Calls to Action in the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015) and societal concerns about student well-being and mental health became even more urgent. Results of province-wide testing in mathematics at Grades 3 and 6 were coming into sharper and sharper public focus as the steady improvement seen in literacy was not being experienced in mathematics. A major consultation on renewing the vision had articulated four goals: Enhancing Public Confidence, Achieving Excellence, Ensuring Equity, and Promoting Well-Being. The Minister’s mandate progress letter in 2016 (Ontario Government, 2016) indicated that while overall results in the four areas were improving, concerns about math, well-being, and service to underserved communities and students were beginning to enter conversations.

This was the complex environment in which faculties began to implement the enhanced program and to ‘live’ the policy. The following challenges emerged.

**Funding and Resource Challenges**

The rationalization of Basic Income Units, or the per candidate amount provided to faculties for teacher education, proved to be a looming challenge. Bridge funding during 2015-16 was provided until enrolments once again reached their full capacity across the four semesters. It was transitional funding that could not support sustained programmatic innovation.

**Admissions, Specialized Programs and Supply and Demand**

While TCU determined the target enrolment numbers for programs, the individual faculties determined how to apply the reductions to programs. In some cases, this meant that Technological Education programs and Indigenous Education programs, which tended to be smaller and more specialized, were closed or put on hold as faculties worked to meet the new program requirements and, at the same time, serve communities and school districts.
Faculties with both English- and French-language programs tended to apply the enrolment reductions evenly to both programs as it was challenging to attract a sufficient number of eligible French-language applicants to increase program size. At the same time, French-language systems were also experiencing increased interest and significant challenges in finding teachers. The need for French as a Second Language applicants was also being highlighted. School districts that had expanded their French Immersion programs were running short of qualified teachers.

With increased attention to preparing students in schools for the world of work, the Technological Education programs were recognized as needing support and attention. However, differential regional needs across the province increased the complexity of responding. In recognition of the many communities and stakeholders, the specialized programs’ advisory committees were composed of many different organizations. For example, in the Technological Education committee, EDU, TCU, OCT, Ontario College of Trades (OCOT), Technology Education Council of Ontario (TECO), CODE, and other groups came together to pool ideas and concerns and to problem solve. The sheer number of different organizations that were required and the multiple interests represented meant that multiple pathways and solutions needed consideration. Districts needed differing responses based upon their location and size. The pathways and requirements into the programs were still being determined and it seemed highly challenging for the faculties and OCT to be nimble and responsive when the program changes themselves had not been particularly nuanced. TCU had provided one-time-only Teacher Education Collaborative Initiative Funds to faculties to assist with program development, but ongoing funds were not available, making implementation efforts more difficult.

Other admissions worries appeared on the radar. It had been predicted that the longer and more expensive program designs were likely to create barriers for first generation university applicants, second-career applicants, and applicants from underserved and underrepresented communities. Widespread media communication that an oversupply of teachers meant a protracted entry to the profession seemed to be discouraging applicants who needed reliable teaching employment to offset the financial burden of a longer program. The supply and demand file at EDU received increased attention but it was challenging to track particular programs, applicants, and graduates as the existing model was built to report on more general trends at system levels. A looming impact from the dramatic reduction in supply appeared to be on the horizon. Developing responses to these concerns was challenging in a time of increasing fiscal restraint and without complete data sets.

Recruitment efforts required attention and thus messaging around over-supply became more nuanced as various stakeholder groups coalesced around French-language needs in particular. In many cases, the Technological Education and Indigenous Education programs were being revised to meet the new requirements and were awaiting accreditation or governance processes resulting in limited capacity for recruiting into these critical areas.

Challenges in Supporting Practica and Theory-Practice Connections
Along with the specified content, a key part of the efforts toward program coherence had been the increase in duration of the practica. The intention had been to ensure longer opportunities to synthesize learning in practice, focusing on shared and agreed upon learning areas. The conditions were in place to enrich and deepen the important coherence-making and construction of
professional knowledge that occurs when theory-research-practice coalesce. There was a definite agreement from all stakeholders that the practicum was an essential and critical place for making meaning and that associate teachers were a lynchpin in the creation of professional identity, knowledge, practice, and judgement. To that end, EDU continued to flow funds to school districts to work with faculties and support associate teachers from 2015 into 2019-20 through *Mentoring for All* funding.

Faculties indicated that budget restraints were causing them to move away from seconding highly qualified teachers from school districts to teach in their programs. Secondments had been a powerful strategy for building connections between programs and schools. It also appeared that the role of school supervision was being undertaken more consistently by educators hired for supervision visits who did not have ongoing connection to coursework in programs. These two realities seemed to challenge the coherence that had been designed for and desired in the policy as intended. Opportunities to more deeply solidify and support field-university partnerships by working with districts to review central placement procedures that remove direct, continuing relationships between schools and programs, or more deliberate ways to recognize associate teachers for their role as field teacher educators, were activities that had to be delayed for consideration in the future.

**LESSONS AND LEARNINGS**

In this section I offer some of my lasting learnings from living early stages of policy implementation.

**EVIDENCE MATTERS**

Despite the challenges described and multiple hectic files, strong efforts to be responsive, reflective, and not reactive continued within TPSB. With experienced policy analysts and advisors in the branch, we were attuned to potential unintended consequences of policy. For example, an effort to address perceived inequities with regard to seniority in hiring had generated new and arguably more complicated issues through the *Hiring Practices* legislation. As we responded to questions or offered advice to the MO throughout policy implementation, every effort was made to take a long and evidence-informed view. We attempted to offer considered, research-grounded, adaptive suggestions in an effort to minimize unintended consequences and address key areas of concern.

Having learned that teacher education could be viewed as a cure-all, a principled, researched basis for decisions was helpful to avoid overloading the program given the existing stipulated content. For example, concerns about declining provincial Grade 3 and 6 mathematics test results prompted multiple and conflicting suggestions from stakeholders about revamping mathematics in teacher education. The branch, in cooperation with other branches, undertook cross-jurisdictional research and consultations to move toward solutions that were evidence-based and foregrounded the role of faculties in determining their responses regarding the preparation of mathematics teachers.
COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONALISM EXISTS

Proactive efforts were also made to maintain and strengthen ongoing communication and cooperation among the various partners in the project of enhancing teacher education. For example, *Building Futures*, now reconceived as the *Professional Development Program for Teacher Candidates* (TV Ontario, 2020), was an annual program during which Ministry of Education officers visited each faculty of education and held seminars to introduce teacher candidates to the Ministry of Education and its resources and programs. In 2014, *Building Futures* was redesigned to increase and strengthen connections among faculties, school districts, federations, and local Ministry representatives. Focus groups involving these stakeholders were held as part of each *Building Futures* event to gather data and to initiate and facilitate cross-constituency discussions. At these focus group sessions, participants shared successful practices and processes; identified areas for attention and possible responses; and planned collaborative actions to be undertaken. The strengths, adaptations, and innovative structures of each faculty and its partners were showcased and new ideas were germinated. As members of TPSB attended the focus group meetings, we learned that faculties had frequently found affordances offered by the enhanced program elements, despite the reduced funding.

Ministry-Faculty Liaison Committee meetings where representatives of Ministry branches, OTF, Subject Associations, and faculties came together continued to provide opportunities for issues and successes to be shared. The creation of *Teach Ontario* (TV Ontario, 2020), an online professional learning hub ‘for teacher by teachers’ developed with colleagues from TV Ontario, provided an e-platform for cross-province teacher candidate and teacher sharing of ideas and resources. Ministry resources were housed there for easy access and allowed teacher candidates, faculty members, associate teachers, and Ministry colleagues to connect and share from anywhere in Ontario. The OTF held Teacher Education meetings called the TED Tables to bring constituents from across the province together to share their concerns, journeys, and experiences.

RESILIENCE AND CREATIVITY CAN CHALLENGE PRESSURE

For faculties, the implementation of the policy change resulted in an experience that could be compared to living in a house while renovating on a reduced budget. Given this situation, compromises and less significant design innovations might have been expected. However, like my Ministry colleagues, the faculties demonstrated fidelity and commitment to constructing programs that drew upon their expertise and research, supported their communities, and addressed plans and needs identified through consultation. It was evident that the faculties had been proactively and thoughtfully planning and redesigning their programs since the consultations held in 2012. They had clearly sought input from a wide range of voices and frequently had collaboratively developed programs with their district partners. They had used the additional program and practicum duration thoughtfully and altered designs, partnerships, coursework, and use of research in myriad strengthening ways. The first CATE volume, *Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs* (Petrarca & Kitchen, 2017), documents the impressive stories of the redesign efforts of each of the thirteen faculties of education. Through this time, faculties had continued their efforts to nourish and grow their enhanced programs in collaboration and communication with the stakeholders who both helped design and continue to enact the enhanced programs.
TOGETHER IS BETTER

Programs appeared to have experienced the double-edged sword of the changes. The new requirements led to collaboration and innovation through increased connection and communication with the field and each other. At the same time, enrolment and funding changes have placed constraints on ongoing development and specialized programs have continued to experience differential impacts. Many programs have continued to offer redesigned, distinctive components, such as international experiences and community service programs, but found that these must be carefully arranged to fit the new program parameters and frequently incurred additional costs for candidates. The OCT has taken steps to support placements in a variety of communities in order to respond to international and community-oriented experiences, which are seen as being of significance and value for our teacher candidates.

Faculties have engaged in continued dialogue with partners and stakeholders through their Teacher Education Liaison Committees, Teacher Education Advisory Committees, and other partnership and advisory committees. Frequently, the faculties have expanded these groups to include more community members, Ministry, district, and federation colleagues in beneficial and supportive ways.

AN ENDURING LESSON…

*Thinking outside of the box while working within it.*

For me, moving from the sometimes complicated and frequently opaque milieu of university politics to the overtly political environment of government in some ways was a shift to a more comprehensible political arena. The policies, procedures, and constraints of the government environment were readily apparent and addressing them was a given.

However, it was astonishing to see the agency of my Ministry colleagues. They taught me that working with the political parameters, or ‘within the box’ as one of my directors described it, did not preclude continued creative, positive, adaptive changes from being conceived, raised, developed, and eventually enacted. I was continually impressed and encouraged by the optimism, resilience, and energy of my colleagues. During my three and one-half years at the Ministry, there was an election, a minority government, a majority government, implementation of many policies and regulations, including Hiring Practices, as well as ongoing labour negotiations. I witnessed the ways in which these contextual realities influenced the timing, development, and implementation of some initiatives. Nonetheless, the Associate Teacher Funding continued for four years. *Teach Ontario*, the provincial virtual hub for collaboration for teachers, was developed. Working with Indigenous community members and colleagues in the Indigenous Education branch, online resources were curated for the *Teach Ontario* website. Responses to emerging issues were built and supported through providing research, outlining options, and sharing examples of policy missteps by other jurisdictions. I observed unceasing efforts to sustain and support the enhancement of teacher education in all circumstances.

In closing, I describe my own experiences of the enactment of the enhanced program in my faculty.

*Living in a house that policy built.*
Following my secondment to EDU and a delayed study leave, I returned to a renovated home at OISE. Four teacher education program pathways had moved to two graduate entry-to-practice programs in keeping with the University of Toronto’s Strategic Mandate to foster excellence in graduate education. While the OISE Master of Teaching (MT) and Master of Arts Child Study Education (MA-CSE) programs had been four semesters in length with 80 days of practicum prior to the enhanced requirements, some changes had been needed to address the mandatory core content and maintain School of Graduate Studies degree level requirements. Additionally, the MT program enrolment had tripled in size with resulting changes to staffing and program organization.

The speedy implementation of the enhanced teacher education policy meant that all faculties were rapidly required to assess their redesigned programs. OCT accreditation and university quality assurance processes, which provide continuing, cyclical review activities, had been paused while governance changes were made. For OISE, a full accreditation of the Masters’ programs and a decanal review occurred in 2016. These processes led to a visioning and curriculum mapping process beginning in 2017. As the Master of Teaching program had not ‘renovated’ as extensively due to meeting some of the enhanced requirements, there was energy to undertake a ‘walk through viewing’ to ascertain any potential for further renewal or construction. Thus, the process of ongoing self-review has continued.

For me, living policy change at the Mowat Block and more recently in our MT program has meant continual learning, reflexivity, and assessment, particularly as I understand the intentions with which the policy was constructed and the significantly changed context in which the policy is being enacted. I have learned that the constraint of time still challenges the program; that the ‘holy grail’ of strong clinical practice, as Darling-Hammond (2014) frames it, continues to be complicated on a large scale with limited resources; and that program structures such as cohorts, designed to foster collaborative professional learning, can become ‘too much of a good thing’, and may reduce diversity in voice, rather than increasing criticality and questioning. I have learned to observe, to listen, to read, to study, and to ask questions, particularly of my assumptions.

I have learned to approach structural or design changes circumspectly with a view to unintended consequences to the overall program architecture. I have learned that important design elements shift and change with new learners, new knowledge, new technologies, new tools, new social and political moments, and contextual changes. I have learned that any program is continually being constructed by teacher candidates, instructors, field partners, program leaders, and communities, and that all of these partners shape and are impacted by the policy ‘lived’.

Most fortunately, I have learned of the incredible power of individual and collective agency in varied settings. No matter how challenging the circumstances, our construction is strongest, most inclusive, and most enduring when we undertake renovation and continuous renewal in authentic, learning-focused collaboration and partnership.

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CHAPTER 26

THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS AND ENHANCING TEACHER EDUCATION THROUGH THE LENS OF RISK

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INTRODUCTION

Five years have passed since the province’s enhanced teacher education program (ETEP) reformed initial teacher education in Ontario. This change was explored in the 2017 CATE polygraph Initial Teacher Education in Ontario: The First Year of Four-Semester Teacher Education Programs. With this five-year milestone, it is now timely to reflect on the program’s implementation, some of the early lessons to be taken from design and development processes, and the transition to operations. From the perspective of the Ontario College of Teachers, Ontario’s regulator for the teaching profession, this period also includes a body of experience and data in program accreditation and member certification under the new program, and gives rich material for observations and reflection.

So how do we look at the experiences so far, and what lens is the most useful for this examination, given the timeframe and circumstances? From the perspective of a program lifecycle, five years might be somewhere between characterizing a program “in development” and “established” – particularly in the case of the ETEP, with a few full cohorts of teacher candidates having entered and now completing the program. On the other hand, considering that the new model of teacher education replaced one that was substantially unchanged for 35 years, we are still in the (comparative) infancy of the system.

As well, other ETEP program evaluation has occurred. However, the yardstick was unusual: given the external pressures from government to develop the program for a fixed date, a central measure was simply ascertaining “was the program ready on time, and as promised?” Through cooperation and resourcefulness of many partners, most notably Ontario’s faculties of education, the answer to that was affirmative, but now, with the immediate demands of implementation and support mostly behind us, we can begin to reflect and monitor the overall program from other perspectives.

Moreover, the College’s role in the ETEP has shifted during this period, from that of a lead partner to being one of many ongoing program stakeholders. With the program established, and our place in the program changed, we might use the lens that is most specific to our current role in the ETEP
now and in the future. With our mandate to govern the teaching profession in the public interest, looking at the ETEP from the perspective of public interest protection through managing risk is a compelling stance.

WHAT IS THE RISK AND WHY?

Among partners in the ETEP – and in the teaching profession, for that matter – the College has arguably the most explicit responsibility to accomplish public protection through its role and articulation of its responsibilities as regulator of the profession. This is far from saying that other partners are unconcerned with this dimension, but it does remind us of the centrality of risk to the College’s mandate, and to distinguish this mandate from those of other partners.

- Under that mandate, for the College, the risk driver is topical and timely. In October 2018, a newly-elected Governing Council of the College established strategic priorities that include, among others, the strategic management of risk. The articulation of this risk management is not narrow to any one function of the College – initial and ongoing teacher education are not elevated to any different level than other regulatory duties – but this examination of risk, and its emphasis as a strategic priority, elevates the College’s intentionality to plan, measure, and manage risk across all parts of its work.

- As the College continues to examine its orientation to risk-based regulation and consider this perspective when determining the degree of interventions arising from various risk assessments, a review of harm reduction and risk elements within teacher education helps establish tools for the specific application to the ETEP.

- The article by Black and Baldwin (2015), “When Risk-Based Regulation Aims Low: A Strategic Framework”, offers a model for risk assessment that discusses a useful approach by considering the intensity of intervention not only by risk type but also by “regulatee type” and the regulatee’s degree of compliance.

Nicholls (2015) adds to this notion, describing how and why it is particularly important for the regulator, noting that “the risk-based approach calls for the regulator to focus on harm prevention and the promotion of outcomes, and to choose the appropriate instruments to achieve performance” (p. 2). While this approach – and particularly the element of minimizing of harms – might be immediately resonant for College functions such as member complaints, investigation and discipline, it invites an examination of key ETEP elements such as teacher candidate admission, assessment and licensing, and professional program accreditation in a similar light and with similar tools.

RISKED BASED REGULATION

As a participant in the regulatory sector, Nichols (2015) writes we are living in the time of “the rise and rise of risk-based regulation” (p. 5). While well established among practitioners, governments, and other public services, the idea as a whole is new to the College inasmuch as it being a specific and deliberate tool for application to and reflection on its range of operations and regulatory functions. This dimension is described by Nichols (2015):
A more modern approach to regulation … has emerged in recent years that focuses on the delivery of outcomes and public value, in which the regulator seeks to partner with the regulated in the proactive prevention of harms. This is often described as a “risk-based” approach to regulation. (p. 2)

He continues:

The risk-based approach calls for a regulatory approach that is not solely focussed on technical compliance and enforcement, but rather a more purpose-driven and agile approach in while the regulator exercises choices about the issues to focus on and employs a range of instruments to address harms that impeded the achievement of outcomes … Sparrow calls this the ‘craft of regulation’ (Sparrow, 2011). (Nichols, 2015, p. 2)

Aside from any inherent good of this approach, it might be seen in the College’s context, and particularly with regards to regulating the ETEP, as the right time for the right stance. As an institution, the maturity (and acceptance in the field) of the College – now 25 years old – as an established and well-understood entity supports this. More to the point of the ETEP, the relationships between the regulator and the faculties of education has matured to mutual trust and partnership, and the ETEP has progressed from a centralized initiative that was imposed upon teacher education providers to an ongoing function of the profession as a whole. As such, the time has given way to a provincial approach where there is shared responsibility, and providers are seen as regulated, but as a “regulated partner.” (This “partner” approach is pragmatic, as well: recognizing teacher education providers’ expertise in research and pedagogical instruction, and acknowledging where the College’s expertise and responsibility begins and ends, is a natural state that preceded and has continued through the ETEP.)

Moreover, the risk-based regulation approach is already underway across the College. Although the forces that have taken it to this place are not specific or isolated, a combination of institutional maturity, a period of relative stability in education and the political environment (at the time of writing), and a culture change from “self-regulated body” to “professional regulator” have all contributed.

This risk-based regulation model relies heavily on the work of Malcom Sparrow. In his book The Character of Harms, Sparrow (2008) demonstrates that “an explicit focus on the bads, rather than on the countervailing goods, can provide rich opportunities for efficient and effective interventions.”

Mindful of the link of risk to minimizing harms, he provides a compelling description for action as a “sabotage of harms,” arguing that “scrutinizing the harms themselves, and discovering their dynamics and dependencies, leads to the possibility of sabotage … (and) across the spectrum of harm-reduction tasks, we observe practitioners thinking and then acting like saboteurs” (p. 27).

Of course, while this priority and its resulting culture change are new for some functions and operations of the College, it has long been at the centre of others. Risk-based approaches have long been employed in member discipline and related areas. Indeed, program accreditation and other
areas that are relatively new to risk-based regulation might profit from shared tools and mindsets from other areas that deal with more acute risk, or where harms may be more direct.

ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

This chapter is about the College’s unique experiences in the implementation of the program, and how these experiences might be considered through this risk lens to compliment traditional program evaluation. The concept of risk, as a tool for guidance and direction of work forward and as a tool for evaluating and assessing past actions, is particularly robust, and is a key animating feature of the College. With risk as a larger theme in both public administration and professional regulation, we introduce this concept to reflect on the work we undertook when designing the program, and consider how this might be applied to administering some of the dimensions of the program.

The chapter looks particularly at Ontario-based experiences during and after the ETEP from a risk-based regulation perspective, and in retrospect, describes how this mindset was applied during the development and implementation of the program. The chapter continues to discuss risk-based regulation of the ETEP during the sector’s transition to the program, and how risk-based tools were used to guide and influence regulatory approaches.

The chapter continues with consideration of emergent thinking in risk and harms, a discussion of risk actors and risk patients, and how these have come to be in our continuing perspectives on the ETEP. The chapter also provides distinctions between varying levels of risks and harms, the explicit use of traditional tools in risk and harm assessment, and how this would relate to continuing program accreditation.

Finally, the chapter looks ahead to consider how risk-based regulation might be applied to achieve even greater regulatory outcomes.

RISK IN PRACTICE, RISK IN REFLECTION: EXPERIENCE IN THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

REGULATORY RISK RESPONSE

The implementation of the ETEP reflected the principles of risk-based, right-touch regulation in that regulatory amendments and compliance measures were proportionate, consistent, targeted, transparent, accountable, and agile (Professional Standards Authority, 2015). We explained this experience in the College’s chapter of Volume 1 of this polygraph and explored its applications to the tools used in the development of the program. However, in our current stage of assessing the impact of the program, it is important to remember that “right-touch” does not mean “light-touch” as set out by the UK’s Professional Standards Authority (PSA) in its literature review (2015):

Whatever their impact, risk ideas appear still to be central to government policy on regulation. The financial crisis of 2008 provoked a review of prevailing regulatory approaches, particularly in the financial sector. In 2009, in the aftermath of the crisis, the Regulatory Reform Committee of the House of Commons made the following recommendation in its report on Themes and Trends in Regulatory Reform:
In future, analysts and commentators must avoid confusing risk-based regulation and so-called “light-touch” approaches. Risk-based “right-touch” regulation remains a valid approach provided there is: (a) diligence in understanding risk; (b) a willingness to accept some degree of failure (albeit that in certain sectors there must be maximum effort to eliminate failure); (c) an awareness that risk assessments, with their tendency sometimes to lead to a false sense of security, should be subject to appropriate challenge; and (d) the willingness to be intrusive rather than light-touch when appropriate. At this stage in the debate, better balance is required in order to ensure an effective delivery of the regulatory reform agenda. (pp. 5-6)

Looking back to the ETEP’s implementation and early program monitoring, a prevailing theme was diligence in risk assessment, predicated on trusted relationships with faculties of education. For example, the College modified and used two regulatory mechanisms to assess changes made by faculties to the ETEP: following the introduction of new programs on September 1st, 2015, the College began to receive requests from faculties of education to modify the ETEP as the opportunities for innovative program structures or delivery models began to reveal themselves. Changes to the new program were also necessary because faculties were only beginning to understand how to deliver the new program in accordance with pressing needs in the sector.

In order to accommodate changes to programs that had already been accredited, the College could use one of two different approaches, a “substantial change” or a more robust “addition to program”, as both are regulated and carry some degree of formality. However, where the substantial change process allows a faculty to present a relatively minor change to a program’s character, duration, or components to the College for review, the addition to program process allows the College to assess a new area of study, language of instruction, or addition of a program component designed for teachers of technological education, Native languages, teachers who are deaf or hard of hearing, or have First Nation, Métis, or Inuit ancestry. Both review processes allow the College’s Accreditation Committee to decide following the review of the change whether to continue to accredit the program, add or remove conditions, or revoke accreditation.

The introduction of the ETEP saw an increase in requests for both of these program changes by faculties. The College used a risk assessment approach (based on its strong relationships with faculties) and realized that the substantial change and addition to program review processes were too onerous for the level of risk involved with the changes and required streamlining. This had two drivers: first, there was no way in regulation for the faculties to determine if a change to duration, character, or components of the program rose to the level of being “substantial” without triggering a comprehensive review. So, the College developed regulatory amendments to allow for separate panels of Accreditation Committee members to conduct an initial assessment as to whether the change was significant enough to warrant a review. This process allowed from a low risk category to non-substantial changes, as these changes will not undergo extensive review. And, instead of relying on predetermined categories, the committee can carry out a contextual risk assessment for each change brought before it based on their review of the evidence related to the change. In contrast, the College has determined that the addition to program triggers for a review are so significant (high risk), that it cannot tolerate the risk of letting these changes occur to a program without a fulsome review. The second effort at streamlining related to both review mechanisms requiring the production of all materials normally required in an initial application for
accreditation. The College decided that it could rely on the past accreditation review of the whole program and only require documentation for the change itself. The College also allowed for the Accreditation Committee to conduct an assessment themselves and review the change in order to determine what documentation was required.

These efforts demonstrate the need for regulators to focus on the “right data” in conducting risk assessments as it is important not to get consumed, and potentially confused, by irrelevant evidence. The College also enabled this streamlining of the review because evidence gathering can be costly and time consuming, which may undercut the change review process itself should a decision be made to review the entire program or simply let the change go without audit. So, in order for targeted risk assessments to be effective, targeted data collection is required.

Another element of risk assessment that has been used in the implementation of the ETEP has been the proposal for a condition compliance mechanism in regulation. Prior to the ETEP, the College’s Accreditation Committee could accredit teacher education programs that substantially, but do not fully, meet accreditation requirements. These programs are accredited with conditions on their accreditation, which must be satisfied within a certain time period, and the faculty must report on their steps to satisfy their conditions. Once the conditions are satisfied, the Accreditation Committee may remove these conditions. This level of risk assessment is built into the imposition of conditions, as the committee can only place conditions on the program if it believes they will be satisfied within the time allotted. However, past non-compliance raises the level of risk in failure to meet all accreditation requirements. As such, the College assessed the risk in allowing teacher candidates to enrol in a program that did not fully meet accreditation requirements at the time of accreditation and determined that its strong relationship with faculty of education partners and their history of compliance with College requests reduced the level of risk as faculties could be trusted to comply.

Despite this, conditions placed on a program and faculties highlighted a problem: if conditions were not met, the Accreditation Committee had no recourse to ensure compliance. Thus, in 2018, the Governing Council of the College recommended regulatory changes that would allow the College’s Accreditation Committee to revoke a program’s accreditation should conditions not be satisfied in the allotted timeframe. The level of risk associated with teacher candidates graduating from programs that failed to meet accreditation requirements – potentially for years on end – was an intolerable risk to the College’s role of program accreditation, the education sector, and confidence in the College.

This dual approach of informal collaboration in meeting accreditation requirements with a failsafe of directing compliance is cited as an optimal approach to risk mitigation through behaviour modification. Compliance efforts through educating faculties about accreditation requirements and prioritizing dialogue cannot be relied on exclusively to guide behaviour, and sanctions must exist to ensure that the initial collaborative exercise is used in a good faith and transparent way.

In the ETEP’s implementation, and as it transitions one-time functions to regular operations, the College uses generally accepted principles of risk assessment and risk management. In their review of risk-based approaches in regulating the medical profession, Bostock and Hutter, as cited by the
Professional Standards Authority (PSA), articulate the hallmarks of the ideal risk-based approach in the regulatory sector:

Commitment to a risk-based philosophy, belief in the anticipation and manageability of risk (in contrast with a more traditional emphasis on retrospective learning), a more holistic view of regulation and risk management in which public and private sources of regulation co-exist, integrated approaches to regulating risks which conceptualize risks as interrelated, and the formalization of regulation/risk management through the employment of technical risk-based tools emerging out of economics. (p. 10)

The Authority conducted a literature review of academic articles on risk-based approaches related to the regulatory sector and used Bostock and Hutter’s above statement as a basis to expound on the key tenets of risk-based approaches in regulation. First, the PSA argues that the key tenet of regulatory risk management is that “some risks are more tolerable than others, and that it is possible to determine what is tolerable and what is not” (p. 26). The College’s development and the implementation of the ETEP reflects this notion of tolerable risk in that purposeful efforts were made to not overregulate in order to eliminate all risk. This approach was borne in the use of an accreditation resource guide, instead of strict requirements in regulation, and in the flexible and streamlined reviews of program changes. This tolerability of lower risk elements of the Enhanced Program played a part in later innovation in the areas of program delivery, location, or structure.

The College must tolerate risk due to the related notion dealt with by the PSA in their review of risk-based approaches, namely that it is possible to reduce some, but not all harms. Understanding that many factors, such as limited resources or political considerations, may prevent a regulator from eliminating all risks it identifies is important in understanding how to set up a successful regulatory risk management model.

For its part, the College understood that its strong relationships with providers allowed it to focus on transitioning to the ETEP quickly. The practical considerations of providers not being able to offer sufficient evidence of compliance with accreditation requirements by September 1st, 2015 meant that the College had to accept the risk that a program had not met the requirements by this date.

The March 1st, 2016 deadline date for providers to verify that their programs met the new accreditation requirements was a compromise that relied on the strong relationship with faculties and set up a more feasible timeline to allow the Accreditation Committee to carry out reviews. If the College had sought to reduce all harms and enforced a strict compliance audit prior to September 1st, 2015, the College would have had to shift priorities away from other important implementation objectives, and providers would have focused on the difficult task of producing evidence for a radically new teacher education program that did not yet exist. All of these consequential impacts could have led to a breakdown in the relationship between the faculties and the College due to the heightened challenges in this systemwide change process. Additionally, such efforts to reduce every risk would have allowed compliance to become the enemy of innovation.
The College is also able to tolerate risk at a higher level due to its dual accreditation and certification mandate. The certification requirements outside the scope of the teacher education program, such as undergraduate academic credentials and professional suitability, allow the College to have confidence in a candidate’s ultimate acceptability for licensure. Although many risks in the teacher education process are outside of the College’s control, the certification backstop enables the College to accept these risks at the outset because they can be managed later in the licensing process.

Another central tenet highlighted by the PSA in the ideal risk assessment approach is that multiple agencies and stakeholders are responsible for managing risk. In the initial development of enhancements to the teacher education program reflected in the 2006 Preparing Teachers for Tomorrow report, the College brought together an advisory committee of representative organizations for teachers, principals, supervisory officers, deans of faculties of educations, researchers, and others. The recommendations of these stakeholder groups helped identify needs for teacher candidates to be better prepared for the modern learning environment, and many of these ideas became the hallmarks for the new program, such as a longer program duration and longer practicum and core program components.

In the implementation of the program, the collaborative spirit to identify problem areas and manage risk was continued with extensive reliance on the expertise of faculties of education and the Ministry of Education in delivering teacher education programs and political considerations, respectively. The extensive efforts to consult at all stages of the Enhanced Program’s development and implementation played a significant part in the success of this systemwide change. The College took great efforts to ensure that risk identification and management were the vehicle by which consensus was built and many partners could have ownership of this initiative.

Finally, the quantification of risk helps the regulator make assessments about the likelihood and impact of the risk and, therefore, how the risk should be managed. The College focuses on data collection and analysis in its risk management approaches and evaluates the effectiveness of the teacher education program through a myriad of diagnostic tools. For example, an annual survey of recent teacher education program graduates, the Transition to Teaching report, helps provide an understanding of the effectiveness of the program as well as how it measures against labour market trends. In addition, the College uses its Annual Report statistics to assess sources of graduates from the new program, qualifications, and other measures that, when combined with information received from the Ministry of Education, help to paint a fulsome picture of shortage areas and other risks related to the teacher education program.

The College focuses on a holistic understanding of the data it receives on the teacher education program as dealing with risks in one area of the program could have unintended consequences. For example, making modifications to program structure or delivery to meet shortage concerns may impact public confidence in the integrity of the program.

RISK, TRUST, RISK ACTORS, AND RISK PATIENTS

A further unexplored perspective in the ETEP is the extent to which the program, or the previous model of initial teacher preparation, may be seen to advance the public interest by contributing to
the development of trust in the profession and in practitioners, as well as the concomitant reduction in harm to students and reputational risk to the profession.

Let us first consider the notion of trust. Irish philosopher Onora O’Neill (2015) defines trust as a pedestal supported by three pillars: honesty, competence, and reliability.

The key to placing trust well is to discriminate between cases. It is well placed if directed to matters in which others are honest, competent and reliable, and poorly directed if directed at matters in which others are dishonest, incompetent and unreliable. Unavoidably, it is a matter of trusting some people for some tasks and of mistrusting others for those same tasks; of trusting some companies, office holders or professionals for some activities, but not for other activities. This reality is why tallying generic attitudes to trust is generally unhelpful.

What do O’Neill’s pillars mean for us as we consider the teaching profession and teacher education in Ontario? Honesty or integrity is at the heart of the profession as articulated in the College’s ethical standards, and as an ethical underpinning, guides the decisions and actions of teachers.

The College’s Accreditation Resource Guide (2017), outlines the teacher’s role regarding knowledge of education law and the College standards as “promoting respectful behaviour and dealing with inappropriate behaviour within the broader framework of legislation and policy is important as is understanding professional conduct and the standard to which teachers are held at all times” (p. 30).

It may be argued this reference has contributed to the explicit nature of the teaching of ethics in a program of professional education as opposed to its relegation to an implicit but perhaps invisible curriculum in previous models of the program. The reference to misconduct in the program, in fact, is perhaps the first overt reference to the harm reduction aspect within the content of teacher education. The articulation of the core content, for the first time in regulation, has contributed to the ETEP’s capacity to elicit trust. The public, practitioners, and prospective teachers are all aware of the content of the program, the expectations, and what they will know and be able to do in order to serve as competent practitioners, another construct in O’Neill’s definition of trust.

If we examine some of the content itself, we can draw some connections between the content areas and the foundations of trust of the profession: protection of students from harm and enhancement of their welfare. Within the core content articulated in both Ontario Regulation 347/02 and in the Accreditation Resource Guide, there is considerable evidence of content that advances a teacher’s role in protecting students and promoting their wellbeing including: Mental Health, Well-being and Addictions; Education Law and Standards of Practice; and Safe and Accepting Schools/Creating a positive classroom environment.

These topics and their impact on beginning teachers’ relationships with students and the development of their professional judgment are key elements in the mitigation of risk to students. The primary responsibility of the teacher is to keep students safe and to assure their welfare while in the care of teachers. It is the basis of the public interest that the Ontario College of Teachers is charged with serving and protecting. It is at the very heart of parental interest.
The enhancements to the initial teacher education program, which include a conscious and courageous articulation and examination of the potential of harm to students, is a critical step in identifying and mitigating risk.

Harm reduction and risk mitigation are the primary responsibilities of a professional regulator. While a focus on reducing harm and identifying behaviours and environments that can put student at welfare at risk may seem paradoxical when set against the backdrop of inspiring public confidence, this focus is necessary and timely.

What has been enhanced includes a renewal or refresh of pedagogy, learning and teaching strategies, and contemporary research. The more significant enhancement is the focus on risk by opening up the discourse to acknowledge the harsh reality that some behaviour or judgment that is not fully developed and guided by a professional regulator may and does put students at risk.

Enter professional judgment: the capacity to make sound, logical, and ethical decisions based on facts, guided by institutional knowledge, and nourished by the perspectives of other practitioners in whose company one practices.

The enhancements to the Ontario initial teacher education program may be measured in part by their capacity to help define professional judgment and its impact on the practitioner’s capacity to keep students safe.

Having made this critical step to illuminate the hidden or neglected curriculum, what is on the horizon, and what might further advance the primary mission of the teacher as an advocate and agent for student welfare?

The research and writing of Troy Hutchings (2016) might offer a valuable path that further considers the risk paradigm but from the perspective of an educator. Having more thoroughly examined the educator’s role in protecting students from harm and in identifying risks, is it time to more explicitly and thoroughly examine the risks the educator him/herself may incur in the practice of the profession?

It may be suggested that the limited social distance between teacher and student and the nurturing nature of the profession create a profession with inherent risks to those who practice it. Is it time to awaken educators to the risk they themselves face in building and sustaining relationships with students? How can this risk be identified and how can strategies to mitigate the risk be introduced without simultaneously discouraging entry into the profession? These questions may form the basis of future revision or reform in teacher preparation in Ontario.

LOOKING AHEAD: RISK DEPLOYMENT

With both the ETEP and the notion of risk-based regulation evolving and maturing, what are the applications and further points of intersection? Nichols (2015) offers one pragmatic and straightforward model:
At the outset, therefore, we should not see risk-based regulation as being the antithesis of using rules or prescription. In fact, the best response to some risks is through appropriate and proportionate levels of control or oversight, supported by systems of rules and compliance, with appropriate sanctions. Public safety programs are an example where high levels of prescription are often required having regard to the consequences of system failure. (p. 4)

The difference between the traditional rules-based approach and risk-based regulation is that in risk-based regulation, the use of ‘hard’ regulation is a strategic choice, not an end in itself. Put another way, risk-based regulation involves a ‘top-down’ viewpoint where solutions to problems are explored, whereas the traditional approach takes a ‘bottom-up’ approach in which the possibilities are bounded by what the rules allow. This approach allows the regulator to make choices based on priority, risk, and urgency, and allows a regulator to choose where it does and does not put its effort, rather than ensuring compliance across the board.

A risk-based approach can thus be seen as a tool for prioritization and allocation of a regulator’s scarce resources and will be influenced to a large degree by the purpose of the regulator’s role (e.g., customer protection versus public safety).

From this perspective, and as set out in Figure 1, risk-based regulation calls for the regulator to:

- Articulate the outcomes to be achieved to deliver public value;
- Develop rich and variable sources of data, metrics, and evidence;
- Take a proactive and evidence-based approach to assessing the consequence and likelihood of the risks of achieving the outcomes (the harms);
- Choose the appropriate and proportionate instrument for managing the risk, which, depending on the risks:
  - may be light- or heavy-handed; and
  - may vary between hard or soft regulation or a combination of both;
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of regulatory instruments over time; and
- Be agile in continually reviewing objectives and risks, and make changes in instrumental choices as necessary – as and when risks or objectives change.

**Figure 1**
*Cycle of Risk-Based Regulation*
So, for the ETEP, this might entail identifying, across a spectrum of possible harms, those with more acute or immediate areas and dimensions (for example, professional boundaries), objectives (education, awareness), approaches (in-depth coverage and incremental exposure during the initial teaching education program and practice teaching), and assessments (self-efficacy, graduate preparedness responses). This approach might differ from that of other core areas in the program that present fundamentally less risk of harm, have a lesser harm profile (expand), and may be more suited to other interventions in the program.

Applied directly to the ETEP and program accreditation, the College may explore and plot the spectrum of “core” areas that make up the program, establish the role of partners in each of those areas, and approach the overall accreditation exercise item-by-item, with an engineered approach to looking at certain areas in fundamentally different ways, as guided by risk-based regulatory approaches.

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INTRODUCTION

Teacher preparation has long been acknowledged as a critical factor in determining the quality of the education received by school-aged children the world over (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2017; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Flores, 2017; Schmidt et al., 2011). In May 2006, as she launched the first ever Canadian Accord on Initial Teacher Education, then President of the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) Dr. Alice Collins remarked:

If the Canadian public cares about its education system, then it must care about the preparation of teachers. The quality of the education provided in our public schools is directly dependent on the caliber of the teachers. For Canada to have the best possible teachers, provincial governments need to make a significant investment into university teacher education programs.

The issue of the structure, content, and length of teacher preparation programs formed the basis of successive sectorial consultations in the province of Ontario from 2004 to 2013. Between 2004 and 2006, and again from 2011 to 2013, the Ontario College of Teachers undertook an extensive consultation to review teacher qualifications. In August 2011, the provincial government surprised education stakeholders by announcing its intention, if re-elected, to extend Ontario’s Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs from one academic year in duration to two. After a further, 21-month-long consultation with stakeholders on the matter, the Minister of Education and Minister of Training, Colleges, and Universities jointly confirmed in June 2013 the final decision of the government to double the length of preservice teacher education programs in Ontario, from two semesters to four, beginning in September 2015.

As part of the many discussions and deliberations on the quality and impact of the province’s teacher preparation programs through this time period, the Ministry of Education contracted with four faculties of education (Brock University; Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto (OISE/UT); Trent University; and Université Laurentienne) in 2008-09 to
conduct research to ascertain the views of their graduates on teacher education. The resulting study, led by Dr. Monique Herbert and researchers at all four universities, involved 826 teachers and 314 principals employed in 21 school boards across the province. The teachers had graduated between 2003 and 2007, primarily – although not solely – from the four participating faculties of education. Entitled *Teacher Preparation and Success in Ontario*, the main outcome measure for the study was the teachers’ sense of preparedness (Herbert, Broad, Gaskell, Hart, Berrill, Demers, & Heap 2010).

In the fall of 2018, the Ontario Teachers’ Federation (OTF) and its four Affiliates – l’Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO), the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO), the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association (OECTA), and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation (OSSTF) – determined that it would be useful to conduct research into the insights of recent teacher graduates regarding various aspects of their preservice teacher education experience and their perceptions of preparedness as they entered the teaching profession. Building on the 2008-09 study commissioned by the Ministry of Education, the new study launched by the Federation had two main objectives:

- To explore how initial teacher education graduates in their first five years of teaching understand the skills and knowledge teachers need to be successful in Ontario schools; and
- To examine how teachers’ initial teacher education programs prepared them for entry into the teaching profession.

Recent graduates who have found employment as teachers in Ontario’s publicly funded school system (and who are accordingly members of the Federations) include:

- Teachers who graduated from Ontario’s two-semester programs and from the expanded four-semester programs;
- Teachers from Ontario’s consecutive and concurrent programs; and
- Teachers who received a Bachelor of Education, Diploma in Education, or Master’s degree in Ontario, elsewhere in Canada, or outside of Canada

This meant that the current study also allowed us to investigate whether there are any differences in the preparedness and perceptions of these various groups of teacher graduates.

**METHODOLOGY**

**SURVEY DESIGN AND DISTRIBUTION**

The previous *Teacher Preparation and Success in Ontario* study conducted in 2008-09 included an online survey of teachers, an online survey of principals, and follow-up telephone surveys of teachers and principals who indicated a willingness to be contacted for additional details. For the current study, we determined that we would create solely an online survey of teachers, and that we would replicate as closely as possible the questions asked in 2008-09. This was done primarily to enable comparisons of the responses received across time. In order to minimize the chances of
survey fatigue and noncompletion rates, we shortened the original survey instrument, narrowing down the number of questions it included. It was also necessary to update some of the terminology used in the earlier survey. For example, while induction was offered at some boards prior to 2008, the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) was not yet a fully implemented provincial requirement, so there is no reference to the formal program in the earlier research. Similarly, terminology regarding the teaching of students with special needs has changed over the years, so the language used in the new survey had to reflect this.

The revised teacher survey was posted in English and French to SurveyMonkey on Monday, May 13, 2019. Notifications to alert teachers about the survey and to link them to it electronically were sent out by OTF via Mailchimp, Twitter, and Facebook, with similar messages being conveyed by the teacher unions using their own communications vehicles. The survey remained live for just under four weeks, until Friday, June 7, with periodic reminders sent out via OTF’s online communications channels.

SAMPLE

In total, 1,469 teachers responded to our survey, with 1,437 responding to the English version and 32 to the French. Because we were particularly interested in the perceptions of the most recent teacher education program graduates and most recently hired teachers, our target sample included teachers who had graduated in the past six years (2014-19) and those who had found employment in the publicly funded school system in Ontario in the past six years (between 2013-14 and 2018-19). However, due to the wide circulation of the survey by OTF and its Affiliates via social media, teachers who were not in this intended sample also filled out the surveys. Thirty percent of the respondents graduated before 2013-14 and/or were hired before 2013-14 and, thus, they were eliminated from the sample. As a result, our analysis is based on 1,026 respondents who graduated from Ontario and non-Ontario teacher education programs between 2013-14 and 2018-19 and/or who were hired as a teacher/occasional teacher in Ontario between 2013-14 and 2018-19.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Frequency analysis was conducted for each of the closed-ended questions in the survey. The data were then disaggregated by the following criteria:

- Program location (Ontario and non-Ontario);
- Program type (for Ontario programs only: one-year (two-semester) B.Ed. consecutive, two-year (four-semester) B.Ed. consecutive, one-year (two-semester) B.Ed. concurrent*, two-year (four-semester) B.Ed. concurrent*, and Master’s programs);
- Division of initial teacher certification (Primary/Junior (P/J), Junior/Intermediate (J/I), and Intermediate/Senior (I/S));
- School characteristics (indicator of schools with high proportion of students: who are socially disadvantaged; for whom English/French is not the first language; with identified exceptional needs).
* It should be noted that Ontario’s concurrent programs, while delineated here as either one-year (two-semester) or two-year (four-semester) due to their credit equivalence, are typically delivered over three to four years of study.

Where possible (i.e., where sample sizes were sufficiently large), we computed effect sizes \((r)\) to measure the strength and magnitude of the difference between two groups and followed Cohen’s (1988) recommendation regarding its interpretation (.1 is considered a ‘small’ effect, .3 a ‘medium’ effect, and .5 a ‘large’ effect). Qualitative data in the comments fields (open-ended questions) underwent thematic analysis and are presented to strengthen and illustrate the quantitative data results. The analyses conducted were similar to the ones conducted by Herbert et al. (2010) in their study, which enables us to make more meaningful comparisons between the studies.

LIMITATIONS

There were four main limitations that challenged the design of the study. These are acknowledged by the researchers and identified below:

Survey Design

One of our major concerns as we undertook the design of a survey to assess the preparedness of beginning teachers and their attitudes about their preservice experiences was to avoid including items that would seem in any way biased or critical of the work of Ontario’s faculties of education. We also wanted to be able to track possible changes in attitudes of beginning teachers over time. For these reasons, we decided to use a survey instrument that resembled as closely as possible the one generated by faculties of education themselves in the 2008-09 study.

Additionally, our research team identified “experiential bias” as a possible limitation to our study, since we were asking beginning teachers in the new cohort to remember their preservice experiences that, for some, would have occurred as long ago as five or six years earlier. We reasoned that, by anchoring to the previous survey, where the cohort spanned a similar five-year period (2003-07), the impact of any experiential bias in the new cohort would be relative to that in the previous cohort and, therefore, at least somewhat mitigated.

Adhering so closely to the survey instrument used in the earlier study meant, however, that we did not include some of the core content areas reflected in Ontario’s most recent accreditation requirements, which may more closely reflect the current literature regarding what constitutes “effective” initial teacher education.

Sampling

It has become common practice in conducting online surveys to alert members of the target population to the survey’s existence and administration timelines electronically. This method of surveying teachers in Ontario is an approach that is routinely used by OTF and its Affiliates, and has been found to yield high uptake by the target population. A known limitation of the approach, however, is that it is impossible to gauge the population size and hence to calculate the participation rate. In the current study, the total number of teachers who actually saw the invitation to participate is unknown. Additionally, the survey would have been limited only to those teachers...
using social media and who actually saw the invitation to participate sent out by OTF and its Affiliates.

**Cohort Composition**

At the time of administering the study, Ontario’s extended initial teacher education program had only been in existence for four academic years, meaning that there had been only three graduating classes in that period of time. Since our study aimed to look at the outcomes for teachers who had graduated over the previous five to six years so that we could compare the current results with those from the earlier *Teacher Preparation and Success in Ontario* study conducted in 2008-09, this meant that the cohort we surveyed included graduates from both the previous one-year (two-semester) regime as well as those in the new two-year (four-semester) program.

To control for the cross-program composition of the cohort, we ran between-group comparisons to identify whether there were any significant or substantive differences in the responses provided by teachers who had experienced different types of initial teacher education programs. We have explained in each subsection of the Results whether any such differences were found. This method of analyzing the results enabled us to keep our cohort intact, while at the same time allowed for the richness of the various program types it included. It is also worth noting that the earlier study conducted by Herbert et al. (2010) also included a variety of program experiences (consecutive/concurrent; B.Ed./Dip.Ed./M.Ed.; and program length).

**Researcher Bias**

In the extensive, 21-month-long education stakeholder consultation leading up to the June 2013 decision by the Ontario Government to double the length of preservice teacher education programs from two semesters to four as of September 2015, OTF and its Affiliates presented a position paper on initial teacher education. In that paper, the Federations declared their preference for a program of 12 months’ duration. Over the course of the consultation, the Federations accepted a consensus position where program length would be three semesters, but did not at any point support the move to the four-semester model that was ultimately chosen by the Government.

To address our own perception of a possible bias against the four-semester model, we included on our research team individuals who supported the longer program length (including at least one who had herself experienced a longer program in another Canadian province and favoured it). Additionally, we contracted with an external researcher to undertake the data analysis and interpretation. Our external researcher had no prior involvement with initial teacher education in Ontario and had no bias towards any specific model. Finally, to further enhance the reliability of the study, we invited an author of the original study conducted in 2008-09 to review our draft research report.

**RESULTS**

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

The majority of the sample (60%) were under 30 years old. Twenty-seven percent of the sample were 30-39, 11% were 40-49, and only 2% were over 50. Eighty-six percent of the respondents identified themselves as females, and 13% as males.
Our sample included teachers of different races and cultural backgrounds. Three percent identified themselves as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. Fifteen percent considered themselves to be a member of a racialized group, such as Black, East Asian, Caribbean, Middle Eastern, East African, Jewish, Mixed Race, etc. In addition, 5% of our sample identified themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning. Four percent of the sample identified themselves as having some form of disability.

TEACHER EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Program Location

Ninety percent of the respondents graduated from Ontario publicly funded teacher education programs: all Ontario publicly funded university faculties offering teacher education programs are represented in the sample. Four percent graduated from other private teacher education programs located in Ontario, including private Catholic colleges (Tyndale University College & Seminary and Redeemer University College) and international universities with campuses in Ontario (the USA’s Niagara University and Australian Charles Sturt University). Just over 6% of the respondents in our sample graduated from programs outside of Ontario. Those who replied “Elsewhere in Canada” graduated from programs in British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Alberta. Most of the respondents graduating from programs outside Canada completed their studies in one of the popular cross-border programs that prepare teachers for Ontario teacher certification (e.g., D’Youville, Niagara, Canisius, and Medaille). Others were graduates from other parts of the United States, Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand, Philippines, Trinidad, Bangladesh, Gabon, India, and Jamaica.

Table 1.
Location of Initial Teacher Education Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where did you complete your teacher education program?</th>
<th># (1,026)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nipissing</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OISE/UT</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakehead</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brock</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Tech University</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trent</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurentian</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilfrid Laurier</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private ON faculties</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere in Canada</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside of Canada</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Type
Over 92% of the respondents were graduates of a Bachelor’s program. Almost two-thirds indicated completing a B.Ed. consecutive program (a one- or two-year program following completion of a Bachelor's degree), and 26% completed a B.Ed. concurrent program (the equivalent of a one- or two-year program completed at the same time as an academic Bachelor’s degree). Only 5 respondents graduated from a B.Ed. “alternatif” (a part-time French language program). Graduates of non-Ontario programs also specified Bachelor of Professional Studies in Education and Bachelor of Science in Education programs. Over 6% graduated with a Master’s degree: for those graduating from within Ontario, this included the Master of Teaching (3.9%) or MA in Child Study and Education (0.5%), both of which lead to Ontario teaching certification. For those graduating from non-Ontario programs, the degrees included Master of Science in Education, Master of Science in Childhood Education, or Master of Education leading to teacher certification (approximately 1.6%). Almost 2% received a Diploma in Education, a qualification commonly attained by Ontario teachers of technological education subjects at the secondary level who do not hold an undergraduate degree. Some of the non-Ontario graduates also indicated receiving a Graduate Diploma in Education. Only one respondent was a graduate of a Native Teacher Education program (a specialized program for Indigenous teacher candidates, preparing them to teach Indigenous students).

Table 2.
Program Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In which type of teacher education program were you enrolled?</th>
<th># (1,026)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.Ed. consecutive</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Ed. concurrent</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Ed. alternatif</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Teaching</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts in Child Study and Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma of Education</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Teacher Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Completion Year
Table 3 illustrates the program completion year of the respondents. The vast majority (74.5%) graduated between 2013 and 2018, with the largest proportions having graduated in 2013-14 and 2014-15, and smallest number having graduated in the 2015-16 academic year. This spread makes sense, given that prior to 2015-16 there were twice as many candidates who were admitted and who graduated from Ontario preservice programs. 2015-16 was a transition year from the two-semester program regime to the four-semester model, and there were therefore no graduates from Ontario consecutive programs that year and only a small number from concurrent programs. Additionally, 159 respondents who graduated between 2000 and 2013-14 are also included in our sample because they were only recently hired in a publicly funded school in Ontario. A large proportion of these previously worked as teachers abroad for a number of years, some for as long as 10 to 14 years.
Table 3.
*Program Completion Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When did you complete your teacher education program?</th>
<th># (1,026)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 2013-2014</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INITIAL CERTIFIED DIVISION AND TEACHABLE SUBJECTS

As seen in Table 4, the majority of participants in our study were initially certified to teach at the Primary/Junior level (Kindergarten to Grade 6), with close to 30% initially certified at the Intermediate/Senior level (Grades 7 to 12), and the remaining 16% certified at the Junior/Intermediate level (Grades 4 to 10). Again, this spread makes sense as it closely resembles the proportion of teacher candidates typically seen in each grade level division. Those in J/I and I/S programs took a variety of teachable subjects, the most popular of which were English, French, Math, Physical Education, History, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, Social Sciences, and Music.

Table 4.
*Division of Initial Certification*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What was the division of your initial teacher certification when you were first certified by the OCT?</th>
<th># (1,026)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior/Intermediate</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate/Senior</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

In addition, 85% of the respondents had completed at least one Ontario accredited Additional Qualification (AQ) course or Additional Basic Qualification (ABQ) course since completion of their initial teacher education program. This percentage is slightly higher than, but quite similar to, the findings reported in the previous study (81%). The majority of our respondents took at least three AQ/ABQ courses. About two-thirds of those who took AQs took a Special Education course. Around 40% took a Math AQ/ABQ course. Over a quarter took an English, ESL, or ELL course. Just over 20% took a Kindergarten course. Others took French, FSL, Reading, Religion, Physical Education, Social Sciences, Guidance, Teacher Librarian, Technology, Visual Arts, Music, Dance, Family Studies, Science, History, Assessment and Evaluation, as well as Primary, Junior, or Intermediate Education and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit studies, among others.
TEACHING CAREER BACKGROUND

Ninety-three percent of the respondents are currently employed as a teacher or an occasional teacher in a publicly funded school in Ontario. Of these, 95% received their initial teacher education in Ontario, while the remaining 5% were prepared outside of Ontario. Twelve percent taught in a jurisdiction outside Ontario since completing their teacher education program. Of these, 89% received their teacher education in Ontario, while 11% were trained outside of Ontario. According to their comments, the respondents taught across Canada (Manitoba, Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and various First Nations reserves) as well as around the globe: in Asia (China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, India, and Taiwan), the Middle East (United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar), Africa (Egypt, Cameroon), Europe (Poland, Germany, Sweden, and the UK), Australia and New Zealand, the USA, and the Caribbean (Jamaica, Trinidad).

Seven percent of the respondents were not employed as a teacher or an occasional teacher in a publicly funded school in Ontario. Almost half of the unemployed respondents were just graduating at the time of the study (2018-19), 6% graduated in 2017-18, and 8% in 2016-17. The remainder of the unemployed respondents (38%) graduated in 2016 or before.

We were able to calculate the number of years it took graduates to be hired as a teacher in Ontario’s publicly funded school system after their graduation from their initial teacher education program for those who graduated and were hired between 2014 and 2019. As indicated in Table 5, 80% of respondents were hired just before graduating from the program or during the school year following graduation. This finding is comparable to the previous study of Teacher Preparation and Success in Ontario, where 76% of teachers reported being hired in the same year they graduated (Herbert et al., 2010, p. 9).

Table 5.
Number of Years to Hiring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years to get hired as a teacher in ON</th>
<th># (669)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before graduation</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School year following graduation</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year after graduation</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years after graduation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years after graduation</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years after graduation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CURRENT TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Employment Status

Table 6 shows the employment status of the teachers in our study. Only a third of the respondents recently employed as teachers in Ontario’s publicly funded school system hold full-time permanent positions (34%). The majority are employed as occasional teachers: 36% are daily
occasional teachers and 33% are long-term occasional teachers. Nine percent have part-time permanent positions. A number of those who selected ‘Other’ are redundant teachers; some teach Adult and Continuing Education, some are on maternity/paternal leave, while others are on a leave of absence and still others teach oversees or in a private school.

Table 6.
Employment Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your current employment status?</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent, Full-Time</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent, Part-Time</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-Term Occasional</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Occasional</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Level
Table 7 displays the teaching level of the participants at the time of the study. Forty-two percent of respondents also reported teaching a combined grade.

Table 7.
Teaching Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At what level do you currently teach?</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>50.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Type
As seen in Table 8, the majority of respondents work in small (less than 400 students) and mid-size (400-800 students) schools, while almost a quarter work in large schools with over 800 students. Thirty-four percent teach in urban schools, 45% in suburban, and 22% in rural.

Table 8.
School Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximately how many students are there in your school?</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 200</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-400</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401-600</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601-800</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>801-1000</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 1000</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Board
At the time of the study, the respondents in our sample were employed in 61 school boards and one school authority, located across the province. Their employment includes 53 English-language school boards (30 public and 23 Catholic), eight French-language school boards (three public and five Catholic) and one provincial school. The larger school boards, such as Peel DSB, Toronto DSB, and York Region DSB, are represented in larger numbers, as would be expected from a representative sample. Thirteen percent of the respondents reported being employed by multiple boards, usually by two or three, but in some cases as many as five were mentioned.

Teacher Federation Affiliates
As indicated in Table 9, all of OTF’s Affiliates were represented in the survey.

Table 9.
Teacher Federation Affiliation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What teacher federation do you belong to?</th>
<th>#  (828)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEFO</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETFO</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECTA</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSSTF/FEESO</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIEWS OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Views on Quality of All Teacher Education Programs
In this section, we present the results for the entire sample of recent graduates (those who graduated from 2013-14 to 2018-19) and make comparisons to the findings of the previous study where appropriate.

As in the earlier study by Herbert et al. (2010), respondents were asked to rate their views of their teacher education program using the response options “very good”, “good”, “adequate”, “poor”, and “very poor” in relation to: (1) their overall teacher education experience; (2) their teacher education courses; (3) their practicum experience; (4) their courses in terms of integrating theory with issues of practice; and (5) the fit between learning in their practicum and learning in their coursework.

The purpose of using the same statements and rating scale was to enable us to make meaningful comparisons with the results of the previous study. The survey also included an open-ended question where the respondents were asked to suggest ways to improve the program courses.

The figure below indicates the percentage of respondents who rated various areas of their program as “very good” and “good”.
On average, recent graduates in our study had a good overall teacher education program experience. Two-thirds of the respondents considered their program experience to be good or very good. This is a considerable improvement, if we compare this survey finding to the one reported previously: 66% of 2014-2019 graduates rated their program experience “good” or “very good” versus 54% of 2003-2007 program graduates who rated their programs “good” or “very good”). The percentage of graduates viewing the program as “poor” or “very poor” was close to 10% in both studies.

In terms of their teacher education courses, 58% rated their courses as “very good”/“good”, while 13% rated them as “very poor”/“poor”. The ratings for courses in terms of integrating theory with issues of practice are about the same: 55% and 14% to be exact. Compared to the results of the previous study, we observe a slight increase (7%) in the ratings of the overall courses and a substantial increase (25%) in the ratings of the courses in terms of integrating theory and practice.

Over 500 recent graduates left comments in response to an open-ended question asking them how teacher education courses could be improved. The overwhelming majority of the respondents suggested making the content of the courses more current, relevant, and practical by making them “less academic” and including more “real-life examples”; by providing more practical content, strategies, and tools in the areas of classroom management, lesson planning, report card writing, working with students with diverse needs, working with school administration and EAs, dealing with parents; by offering a whole course on supply teaching; and by providing more practical and relevant assignments.

It was too theory based. There was nothing that helped me when I was in the actual classroom. How to get a job, what it's like as an OT, classroom management, dealing with parents, etc. I learned more in the first 2 weeks of my full-time LTO than I did in 2 YEARS
of my teacher education program. (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, technological education)

Some felt like their courses prepared them for “ideal” classrooms and situations rather than real ones.

The course work was designed for us to create lessons for a hypothetical class. Having no teaching experience, a hypothetical class is 20-25 well behaved kids with 1 or 2 behaviours or exceptionalities. The reality is, there should have been someone there to say that you should not be designing a lesson plan for the 'ideal' class. There needs to be much more focus on classroom management techniques and strategies before getting admin involved. (A 2-year B.Ed. concurrent program graduate, P/J division)

The respondents would also have preferred learning from instructors who understand the challenges and specifics of teaching in today’s classrooms. They also enjoyed the opportunity to learn together with their fellow students.

More seconded teachers as instructors who have practical experience. (A 2-year B.Ed. concurrent program graduate, P/J division)

More opportunity to discuss ways and strategies/techniques and put them into practice not necessarily in practicum (among fellow classmates). (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, P/J division)

Similar to the previous study, practicum experiences were rated the highest of all program components, with 88% of the respondents considering them “very good”/ “good” and only 4% “very poor”/ “poor”. In fact, the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data in our survey suggests that practicum is probably the most appreciated part of the entire teacher education program. Not only was practicum the highest rated area in all of the programs in the study (see Table 10), 41% of recent graduates would have preferred to have more practicum experience in addition to or, in many cases, instead of university coursework.

More practicum experience should be involved in program. That is where the real learning takes place. Not at university in courses. (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

The respondents’ views on the fit between the learning from practicum and coursework were less positive: just over half of the respondents in our study (51%) considered the fit to be “good” or “very good”, while 20% considered it to be “poor” or “very poor”. Similar numbers were reported in the 2010 study (49% and 18% respectively).

Non-Ontario programs were rated a little bit higher than Ontario programs in all of the areas but practicum. Nevertheless, between-group comparison tests showed no significant differences between the groups.
Views of Main Types of Ontario Teacher Education Programs

In this section we present the results on the program quality and length for five main Ontario programs – 1-year (two-semester) B.Ed. consecutive, 2-year (four-semester) B.Ed. consecutive, 1-year (two-semester) B.Ed. concurrent, 2-year (four-semester) B.Ed. concurrent, and OISE’s Master’s programs (see Tables 10-12) – and discuss any notable differences between the respondents’ views of the programs.

Table 10.
Percentage of Recent Graduates’ “Very Good”/“Good” Ratings of Their Teacher Education Program: A Comparison of Main Types of Teacher Education Programs in Ontario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Program</th>
<th>Consec 1 n=250-270</th>
<th>Consec 2 n=183-189</th>
<th>Concur 1 n=163-168</th>
<th>Concur 2 n=11-13</th>
<th>Master’s n=28-29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Program Experience</td>
<td>64.10%</td>
<td>57.70%**</td>
<td>73.20%**</td>
<td>61.60%</td>
<td>69.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>56.90%</td>
<td>49.20%**</td>
<td>51.00%*</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>58.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses Integrating Theory and Practice</td>
<td>52.70%</td>
<td>47.50%*</td>
<td>56.00%*</td>
<td>69.70%</td>
<td>69.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td>84.70%</td>
<td>88.00%</td>
<td>92.10%</td>
<td>74.70%</td>
<td>89.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit between Practicum and Courses</td>
<td>51.40%</td>
<td>43.70%*</td>
<td>52.20%*</td>
<td>54.60%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significantly different at the 0.05 level
** Significantly different at the 0.01 level

B.Ed. Consecutive Programs

In general, respondents in B.Ed. consecutive programs rated their programs somewhat lower than those in concurrent and Master’s programs. Even though respondents rated the 2-year consecutive program consistently lower than the 1-year consecutive program (or any other main Ontario program) in all areas but the practicum, the differences between the two groups are not statistically significant. It appears that graduates from both one- and two-year consecutive programs rate their overall program experience, coursework, practicum, and the fit between coursework and practicum in a similar manner.

Regarding program length, the majority of the graduates of the *1-year consecutive program* (68%) believe that the ideal teacher education program should be one year, while 27% would have preferred their program to be longer in order to delve more deeply into the topics that they found important but that were insufficiently addressed (e.g., report card writing, classroom management) and/or having more practicum time to get more classroom experience and apply what they have learned during the courses in practice, as comments indicate:

---

1 Please note that due to the small number of graduates of the 2-year (four-semester) concurrent program in the sample, the results concerning this program might not be as accurate and should be interpreted with caution.
I felt that a great deal of administrative aspects were missed or glossed over. IEP development and report card writing, for instance and dealing with administration as well. Policies for student assessments were also something I had to learn on the fly. (A 1-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

The placements seemed too short; need more time to put theory into practice and for things you are learning to connect. (A 1-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, P/J division)

At the same time, the majority believed that one year was an appropriate length, especially for more mature/experienced students:

Mine was 1 year and I liked that length. Being longer than that would be counterproductive and repetitive. (A 1-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, P/J division)

1 year is an appropriate length, especially for people coming in as existing professionals. Longer is probably better for students coming directly out of a 3 or 4 year program with no other life experience. (A 1-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

However, some of those who did not find it necessary to change the length of the program still felt that the quality of the program could be improved (e.g., by adding more practicum time and introducing more practical topics):

I think that it was an adequate length, however believe that more guided or specific courses should be taught about classroom management, how to support students with IEPs, how to create a unit plan, etc. (A 1-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

Table 11.  
Views of Length for Ideal Teacher Education Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Shorter</th>
<th>Same</th>
<th>Longer</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecutive 1-year program</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>68.4%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecutive 2-year program</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concurrent 1-year program</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concurrent 2-year program</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the majority of the graduates of the 2-year consecutive program (56%) think that the program should still be 2 years, 40% think it should be shorter. The comments left by some respondents shed some light on this division of opinion. The respondents disagreed on the amount and quality of the material that should be offered in teacher education programs. A number of respondents found some of their coursework repetitive and less useful and thus, unnecessary:

Does not need to be 2 years long. All material can be covered in 1 year. (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)
Many classes in second year became repetitive especially in terms of assignments. Overall, the classes did not do much to prepare me for actually teaching. The practicums should’ve been longer and more in depth for a better preparedness level. (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

At the same time, others felt like covering the same amount of material in a shorter period would be overwhelming and stressful:

I think 2 years is a good amount of time. If it was shorter, everything would be crammed together, making it an extremely stressful and intense program. (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, P/J division)

The cost of the program was also an issue for those preferring a shorter program:

There were many classes which were irrelevant to my current experience teaching in an LTO. It was also very expensive to do 2 years and now I am even more deeply in debt. (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

There were a few graduates who found it unfair that the University of Toronto graduates receive a Master’s degree after two years of the program while they received a Bachelor’s degree:

Those who completed the two-year program should be promoted to a Master’s degree (if they switch back to a one-year program) since it was more academic than practical. It is ridiculous that U of T grads receive a Master’s and all other grads don’t. (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

According to some of the comments, shortening the program does not necessarily mean going back to the two-semester program. There were suggestions for three-semester and four-semester programs, offered within a shorter time frame. Shortening the time frame would help reduce the financial burden and get teacher candidates ready for the labour market faster, as several survey participants suggested:

Remove the four-month break in between the 2 years, add more placement or create a program that ends 4 months earlier. Able to start career earlier and start working. The 4-month gap adds extra costs (housing). (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

Two years was too long for a B.Ed. Instead of Sept to April x 2, why not Sept to June, with some practicums served in April, May and June? (A 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

Ontario Tech University and Queen’s University already offer condensed 16-month, 4-semester programs. The responses from the graduates of these programs (37 respondents) show that 58% preferred the same length, while 24% preferred a shorter program:
I said the same length, but I want to point out that it was 16 months straight. Sept 2017-Dec 2018. Perfect timing and perfect time to get into the field. (A 16-month, 4-semester B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, P/J division)

16-month teacher program feels unnecessary—all courses except for 1 [course] in the final 4 months felt redundant. (A 16-month, 4-semester B.Ed. consecutive program graduate, I/S division)

Table 12.
Views on Length for Ideal Practicum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Shorter</th>
<th>Same</th>
<th>Longer</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All programs</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecutive 1-year program</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecutive 2-year program</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concurrent 1-year program</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concurrent 2-year program</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The graduates of both old and new consecutive programs seem to value time spent in practicum greatly and wish they could have had even more time in the classroom instead of, or in addition to, the time spent at the university. The majority (61%) of the respondents who took the 1-year program, for whom the requirement was only 40 days of practicum and of whom only a third had 80 or more days of practicum, would have preferred a longer practicum. The percentage of the 2-year consecutive program graduates who would prefer a longer practicum is also rather high (38%), despite the fact that 90% of these received 80 or more days of practicum.

B.Ed. Concurrent Programs
The 1-year concurrent program received the highest ratings of all main Ontario programs. The vast majority of graduates rated as “good” or “very good” their overall program experience (73%), courses (61%), and practicum (92%). Unfortunately, the very low representation of the 2-year concurrent program graduates in our sample (only 11 respondents) prohibited us from conducting any comparative statistical analysis with this group. However, our descriptive statistical analyses (presented in Table 10) show that the 2-year concurrent program is rated lower than the 1-year concurrent program in the overall program experience, courses, and practicum, but higher in the integration of theory and practice of the courses and in the fit between the practicum and the courses.

Unlike the graduates of the consecutive programs, the graduates of the one- and two-year concurrent programs were more in agreement with each other regarding ideal program length: over 80% in both groups were satisfied with the length of their programs. Some of the 1-year concurrent program graduates commented on how the structure of the 1-year concurrent program, which allowed for teacher education to be delivered during the entire length of the B.A.+B.Ed. program, positively affected their program experience and level of preparedness for the teaching career:
I think 5 years (1 year of teachers’ college) was enough with the con-ed program. Being in concurrent allowed for more time in the classroom. More practicing opportunities allowed for more progress year after year. (A 1-year B.Ed. concurrent program graduate, I/S division)

I said the same length, but only because I did concurrent education. I was able to get teaching experience for all 5 years in university so I feel as though I was better prepared than if I did not do concurrent education. (A 1-year B.Ed. concurrent program graduate, P/J division)

Only 12% of the 1-year concurrent program would have preferred a longer program, and 18% (out of 11 respondents) of the 2-year concurrent program would have preferred a shorter program (see Table 11). Those who wanted a longer program commented on not feeling prepared to teach in real classrooms and thus would have liked more practical and relevant courses and more practicum time:

In many ways it felt like an overview – neglecting some important topics such as working with English Language learners, students with special education needs, students with Indigenous background and more. (A 1-year B.Ed. concurrent program graduate, I/S division)

I was grandfathered into the one-year program. I felt there was so much more that I should have learned before entering the field, such as working with ELLs, how to write report cards, planning for students with special needs, etc. (A 1-year B.Ed. concurrent program graduate, P/J division)

Those who wanted a shorter program commented on the program being too stretched-out and time-wasting:

The 2-year program is too long – it’s really a drawn-out process of guest speakers and other time-fillers. (A 2-year B.Ed. concurrent program graduate, I/S division)

But again, no matter the length of the program, the practicum experience was considered to be invaluable and over 40% of graduates of both programs indicated a preference for more time being allocated to practice teaching (see Table 12).

Another interesting observation regarding the concurrent programs is that when we look at the overall ratings of main Ontario programs (see Table 10), we can see that there are small but statistically significant differences ($r = .11 - .15$) between the respondents’ views of the 1-year concurrent program and the 2-year consecutive program, the highest and the lowest rated programs in all areas but the practicum. Here again, this may point to the primacy of program composition over program length. Concurrent programs generally include more practicum and greater opportunities to implement and reflect on both theory and practice.

**OISE Master’s Programs**

The OISE Master’s programs are rated the second highest in the overall program experience and the highest (if we look at the whole range of ratings from “very poor” to “very good” rather than
just “good” and “very good”) in all other areas. All of these differences, however, are very small and not statistically significant.

With regard to program length, out of 27 respondents 67% felt the program was the right length, while 22% would have preferred it to be shorter and 11% would have liked it to be longer:

Other than the research component of the M.T. program I'd have preferred to complete the program in a shorter amount of time. I could've handled more courses at once. It's also hard for second career educators to complete the program. (An M.T. program graduate, I/S division)

Time spent in practicum is appreciated by the Master’s graduates as well. The majority (55%) would have preferred a longer practicum to be better prepared for the job ahead:

There are so many people who enter into the teaching profession without being sure of whether they enjoy the job and all that it entails. A longer/more rigorous teacher education experience with longer and more immersive practicums might be a way to ensure that people who graduate are better prepared and suited to the job! (An M.T. program graduate, I/S division)

PERCEPTION OF PREPAREDNESS IN VARIOUS AREAS OF TEACHING

As noted earlier, 93% of respondents in our sample were employed in the publicly funded school system, and of these, 95% received their teacher preparation in Ontario. In addition to the overall ratings of their teacher education program, we asked respondents to rate their teacher education programs with regard to 18 areas of teaching using the following response options: “very good”, “good”, “adequate”, “poor”, and “very poor”. These responses help us understand the perception of graduates regarding how well their teacher education programs prepared them in the following areas: teaching students with diverse needs, managing student behaviour, motivating students, conducting evaluations and assessments, working collaboratively with colleagues and families, and understanding educational content. The items and the scale are based on those used by Herbert et al. (2010), which makes the results of this survey comparable to the results of the previous study.

In this section, we present the results for the entire sample of recent teacher education program graduates, as well as any notable differences between various groups within the sample, based on the following criteria: program location (Ontario and non-Ontario), program type (1-year (two-semester) consecutive, 2-year (four-semester) consecutive, 1-year (two-semester) concurrent, 2-year (four-semester) concurrent, and Master’s), teaching division (Primary/Junior, Junior/Intermediate, and Intermediate/Senior), and school type (small, mid-sized, and large; and urban, suburban, and rural). We also make comparisons with the previous study results, where appropriate.

Figure 2 reports percentages for those who selected “very good” or “good” for each area of teaching.
The majority of recent graduates in our study (56%-71%) indicated that their programs prepared them well in the areas related to understanding educational content (namely, understanding and teaching the Ontario Curriculum, integrating theory and practice, understanding legal and ethical issues, understanding child and adolescent development, and thinking critically and creatively about educational issues). While this group of items received the highest scores in the previous
study as well (45%-60% of 2003-2007 graduates felt well prepared in the area of understanding educational content), the ratings for most of the items are even higher in the current study.

The graduates felt particularly well equipped in the area of understanding and teaching the Ontario curriculum, which is rated the highest among all items (71% selected “good”/“very good” and 9% selected “poor”/“very poor”).

In terms of any between-group differences, not surprisingly, we found that a significantly larger percentage of graduates of Ontario programs rated their programs highly (“good”/“very good”) on helping them understand and teach Ontario curriculum, compared to graduates of programs outside of Ontario (71% versus 51%, $r = .1$).

Another small but statistically significant between-group difference ($r = .11$) was observed in the ratings of the Ontario curriculum between Ontario 1-year concurrent program graduates (78% indicated “good”/“very good”) and those of the Ontario 2-year consecutive program graduates (70% indicated “good”/“very good”).

A significant difference ($r = .26$) between the 1-year concurrent program and 2-year consecutive program was also observed in the area of understanding child and adolescent development: while 60% of the 1-year concurrent program graduates indicated a rating of “good”/“very good”, only 47% of the 2-year consecutive program graduates attributed this rating.

More graduates of the OISE Master’s programs than graduates of the Ontario B.Ed. programs felt well prepared in the areas of understanding legal and ethical issues (86% versus 62%), understanding child and adolescent development (75% versus 58%), and thinking critically and creatively about educational issues (78% versus 64%).

**Motivating Students**

With 64% of the recent graduates in our study feeling that their programs helped them motivate students to learn, this aspect of teaching is the third highest ranked. This percentage is substantially higher than that reported in the previous study, where 47% indicated a rating of “good”/“very good” in the area of student motivation. There were no significant differences observed across the groups in this area.

**Teaching Students with Diverse Needs**

Similar to the findings of the previous study, recent graduates in the current study felt their programs prepared them better to teach students with identified exceptional needs (51%), students whose cultural backgrounds are different from their own (50%), and students with differing levels of preparedness (45%), than to teach students whose first language is not English (27% indicated “very good”/“good”, while 45% selected “poor”/“very poor”). The ratings for all four aspects are nevertheless higher in the current study than in the previous one.

It appears that teacher education graduates both now (2014-19) and a decade ago (2003-07) do not feel sufficiently prepared to understand and work with students whose first language is not English.

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2 Effect sizes could not be calculated due to the low sample size of the Master’s program graduate respondents (28 respondents).
According to our results, Master’s programs in Ontario were more helpful in this area than B.Ed. programs (43% indicated “good”/“very good” versus 26%). Graduates of the Master’s programs also felt better prepared to work with students whose cultural backgrounds are different from their own (64% of Master’s graduates versus 49% of B.Ed. graduates). No statistical differences were found between B.Ed. graduate groupings.

Working Collaboratively with Colleagues and Families
While the majority of recent graduates in our sample (58%) felt their programs prepared them to work well collaboratively with teacher colleagues, less than a third stated that their programs helped them to work with parents and families (31%), school administrators (30%), and educational assistants (29%). Similarly, the 2003-07 graduates also felt their programs prepared them better in the area of working with teacher colleagues than working with parents and families, school administrators, and educational assistants. The percentages reported in the current study are, however, higher than those reported in the previous study.

Interestingly, fewer graduates of the OISE Master’s program felt prepared to work collaboratively with school administrators, parents, and educational assistants than Ontario B.Ed. graduates (11% versus 31%, 14% versus 33%, and 16% versus 29%, respectively). No other statistical differences between the groups were found.

Managing Student Behaviour
In the areas related to managing student behaviour, graduates continue to rate their preparation as being less than optimal, with only 38% rating their preparation in the area of classroom management as “good”/“very good”. Just 26% rated their preparation in the area of managing student behaviour outside the classroom as “good”/“very good” and 43% rated it as “poor”/“very poor”. No significant differences between the groups were identified.

Conducting Evaluations and Assessments
The majority of our sample (52%) rated their programs as “good”/“very good” in terms of preparing them to assess student learning in order to guide their instructional plans. Conversely, the majority (57%) rated their programs as “poor”/“very poor” in terms of preparing them to do formal evaluations and report cards. Similar but marginally less extreme results were reported in the previous study. No significant differences between the groups were observed.

Differences Between Programs
In summary, we observed the following differences in the perceived level of preparedness among graduates of the various teacher education programs in our sample:

- There were no statistically significant differences between the graduates of the 1-year and 2-year consecutive programs.
- There were no significant differences between the graduates of the 1-year and 2-year concurrent programs.

---

3 Effect sizes could not be calculated due to the low sample size of the Master’s program graduate respondents (28 respondents).
Graduates of the 1-year concurrent program felt more prepared than graduates of the 2-year consecutive program in the areas of ‘understanding and teaching the Ontario Curriculum’ (small effect size) and ‘understanding child and adolescent development’ (medium effect size).

Graduates of the Ontario Master’s programs felt more prepared than graduates of the Ontario B.Ed. programs in the areas of ‘teaching students whose first language is not English’ and ‘teaching students whose cultural backgrounds are different from your own’, as well as in the areas of ‘understanding legal and ethical issues’, ‘understanding child and adolescent development’, and ‘thinking critically and creatively about educational issues’. However, they felt less prepared in the areas of ‘working collaboratively with your school administration to improve student learning’, ‘working collaboratively with parents and families to improve student learning’, and ‘working collaboratively with educational assistants to improve student learning’.

Graduates of non-Ontario programs felt less prepared than graduates of Ontario programs in the area of ‘understanding and teaching the Ontario Curriculum’ (small effect size).

INITIAL TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Several aspects of the initial years of professional practice typically present challenges for teachers. In jurisdictions where these challenges are recognized, the beginning years may therefore be a time when teachers receive specific professional supports geared towards orienting them and assisting their entry to the profession. In Ontario, a formalized induction program called the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) was introduced in 2006-07 for full-time teachers and has since also been made available to part-time and long-term occasional (LTO) teachers in their first year of practice.

We asked teachers in our sample to tell us about their early teaching experiences through a variety of questions in our survey. In this section we discuss the supports and challenges identified by the respondents.

INDUCTION SUPPORT

Close to 90% of teachers in our sample reported receiving some kind of induction support. Most of the teachers (80%) indicated that they received at least two of the induction supports listed in the table below.

Sixty percent of recently hired teachers (2013/2014-2018/2019) have participated in the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). Of these, 33% participated in NTIP as LTOs, 2% as daily occasional teachers, and 24% once they received their permanent contract. Moreover, of those who participated in NTIP, 83% received orientation, 86% mentorship, and 83% professional development.
Apart from NTIP, other main beginning teacher supports included informal support from other teachers in the school (received by 73% of the sample), resource sharing and collaboration (58%), workshops (57%), and assistance from a school administrator (51%). Only 27% reported receiving welcome and support from their Federation. Some teachers mentioned receiving support from Ontario teacher subject associations, mentorship and support from colleagues from other schools/jurisdictions, retirees, board-organized professional development, and assistance from fellow teacher education graduates.

Table 13.
Types of Induction Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Induction Support</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal support from the other teachers in the school</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>73.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTIP</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource sharing and collaboration</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance from the principal/vice-principal</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federation welcome and supports</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Table 14, a full 71% of teachers in our study indicated that the support they received either extended the skills and knowledge they acquired in the teacher education program (39%) or covered gaps unaddressed by the program (32%). Only 8% reported receiving support in the areas already covered by the program. Compared to the results of the previous study, fewer teachers felt that the supports dealt with the topics already covered in the teacher education program (8% versus 16%), and more teachers felt that the supports dealt with topics poorly/not covered in the program (32% versus 19%), which may suggest that the available induction supports have improved.

Table 14.
Beginning Teacher Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following statements best describes the supports you’ve received as a beginning teacher?</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The supports dealt with topics already covered in my teacher education program</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The supports extended the skills and knowledge I acquired in my teacher education program</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The supports dealt with topics poorly/not covered in my teacher education program</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

New teachers are frequently hired into schools with high needs and into special education classrooms, and these patterns potentially present additional challenges.

Forty-six percent of the recently hired teachers in our sample told us that they work in schools serving a high proportion of socially disadvantaged/low-income students, 36% work with students for whom English is not their first language, and 56% work with students with identified exceptionalities. These numbers are somewhat different from those reported in the 2010 study, where 42%, 42%, and 52% were reported respectively.

As Table 15 indicates, on average, 71% of the recently hired teachers in our sample teach more than five students with significant learning challenges (e.g., learning disabilities, attention challenges, Autism, mental health challenges) in a year while less than 2% teach none. Sixty-nine percent of all teachers reported teaching more than five students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) in a year, while only 3.6% reported teaching no students on an IEP. In addition, 32% of the recently hired teachers said they work exclusively with students with identified exceptionalities for part of their teaching day or week. These numbers are somewhat higher than the numbers reported in the 2010 study, where just over half of beginning teachers indicated working with more than five students with formally identified special needs, and 21% indicated working exclusively with students with identified exceptionalities for part of their teaching week. It is not clear whether this increase suggests an upwards trend in the number of students with special needs that beginning teachers interact with on a daily basis, or if it is due to higher numbers of students being formally identified with special learning needs than was the case a decade ago.

Table 15.
Number of Students with Learning Disabilities or with IEPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students in a year</th>
<th>with significant learning disabilities (n=802)</th>
<th>on IEP (n=802)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New teachers are also frequently hired into areas they are not formally qualified to teach. Twenty-six percent of the recently hired teachers in our sample reported teaching a grade level(s) they were not qualified to teach in the first two years of their teaching, 32% taught a subject area(s) they were not qualified to teach, and 15% were assigned to teach both a grade level and a subject area for which they did not hold formal qualifications. These results are somewhat different from those reported in the 2010 study: 29%, 23%, and 12% respectively.

In their comments, the survey participants described how they were obliged to teach grades and subjects they were not qualified to teach. Most of these comments are related to occasional teaching and part-time teaching experiences:
I was supplying in K-6 in addition to 7-12 when my qualifications are in 7-12. (An occasional teacher with I/S qualifications in an urban school district)

[I taught] Technology (all subjects), French, Phys Ed, native languages, history, English, art, music, drama, dance. (An LTO teacher with P/J qualifications and no teachable subjects in a suburban school district)

Specifically having to teach a subject I am unqualified for (Science or English) and not being given support by the school in terms of resources. In both cases, I did my best by following the textbook, but I think additional support would have meant better learning for my students. (An occasional teacher with I/S qualifications in an urban school district)

PERCEPTIONS OF CHALLENGES OF TEACHING

Our survey participants responded to a list of 17 statements about the challenges they face at work. These statements appear in question 35 on the survey. Answers were recorded using a four-point scale, where 1 = “not very challenging”, 2 = “slightly challenging”, 3 = “moderately challenging”, and 4 = “extremely challenging”. The statements and the scale are based on those used by Herbert et al. (2010). The survey also included an open-ended question where the respondents were asked to indicate any other challenging factors.

In this section, we present the results for the entire sample of recently hired teachers (n = 828), discuss any notable differences between various groups within the sample (based on the following criteria: program location, program type, teaching division, and school type), and compare our findings to those of the previous study where appropriate.

Figure 3 reports percentages for those who selected “extremely challenging” or “moderately challenging” for each area of teaching.

Teaching Students with Diverse Needs

Our beginning teachers reported that the most challenging issues they faced were teaching students with differing levels of preparedness and teaching students with identified exceptional needs. These areas were considered to be moderately or extremely challenging by the majority of the respondents (62% and 52% to be exact). These were top challenges across all of the groups in the sample, with no notable differences between the groups. These were also the top-rated challenges in the previous study, where 71% of the respondents considered teaching students with differing levels of preparedness and 61% considered teaching students with identified exceptional needs as moderately or extremely challenging. In their comments, many of our respondents describe how unprepared, stressed, lonely, and overwhelmed they felt when they were left alone (with no or minimal EA support) to teach and plan for students of all abilities, and particularly those with special learning needs and extreme behaviour issues:

The impracticality of helping all students improve when they are all such different levels of ability and they all need so much one on one guidance. The challenge of planning lessons for so many students due to split classes and IEPs. (An occasional teacher, P/J division, a suburban school)
The realities of a classroom consisting of 50% of students with IEPs or all types, with little or no EA support. Planning for grade 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5 for each and every subject and strand. Learning to balance teaching the class while also supporting high needs students because of an EA shortage. (A full-time teacher, P/J division, a small suburban school)

*Teaching students whose first language is not English* was perceived to be an extreme/moderate challenge during the initial years of teaching by 47% of the teachers in our sample. This number is somewhat lower than the one reported in the previous study (54%). This may point to some improvements that have been made over the years to support ESL/ELL teachers in Ontario and their students. Not surprisingly, a large percentage of those teaching in schools that serve a high proportion of ESL/ELL students found this area extremely/moderately challenging (53% versus 43%). Similar observations were made in the previous study as well.

Interestingly, *teaching students whose cultural backgrounds are different from your own* did not appear to be a significant issue according to the results of this or the previous study, where only 14% reported this to be a moderate/extreme challenge.

*Managing Student Behaviour*

Issues related to classroom management were identified as being among the top challenges experienced in the initial years of teaching. *Classroom management* was considered to be moderately or extremely challenging by 60% of the respondents in our study, and *managing student behaviour outside the classroom* was cited as challenging by 45%. Both of these areas were rated as being challenging in the previous study, but there appears to be a marginal increase from the previous study (56% and 41%, respectively).

Classroom management appeared to be particularly challenging, both for occasional teachers and for teachers teaching more than 10 students with significant learning challenges, with 64% of both of these groups considering it challenging. In their comments, occasional teachers (who are over 60% of the sample) shed light on some of the additional challenges they faced coming to a new school and dealing with discipline issues, including: not being aware of the discipline-related procedures in a particular school; not having enough time to build rapport with students and earn their respect; not knowing which students have special needs; not being sufficiently prepared to address potential behaviour issues; and lack of support to deal with the issues.

Sometimes it is challenging while daily OTing, to get support with students that have known behaviour difficulties. It makes classroom management very difficult as a whole when you have one or two students that would normally have a tough day with familiar surroundings, in your room having difficulties with the change of schedule and teacher. (An occasional teacher, P/J division, a suburban school)

Not surprisingly, *managing student behaviour outside the classroom* was a significantly greater issue in schools with a high proportion of students with identified exceptionalities (50% versus 39%, $r = .1$). The gathered qualitative data give us a glimpse into the range and severity of discipline and behaviour issues that beginning teachers have to address in their initial years of teaching, from observing violence in school to being verbally and physically abused by students with severe behaviour issues. The comments also show that teachers in our sample found it difficult
to communicate with administration and parents regarding more effective approaches to these issues. In line with the observations made in the previous study, responses tended to focus on individual students rather than the general classroom environment and connected classroom management with differentiation and programming options for all students.

Figure 3.
Perceptions of Challenges in Initial Years of Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Teaching</th>
<th>Extremely Challenging</th>
<th>Moderately Challenging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching students with differing levels of preparedness</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom management</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching students with identified exceptional needs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing formal evaluations and report cards</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivating students to learn</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching students whose first language is not English</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing student behaviour outside the classroom</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing student learning to guide your instructional plans</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working collaboratively with parents and families to improve student learning</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating theory and practice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and teaching the Ontario Curriculum</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching students whose cultural backgrounds are different from your own</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking critically and creatively about educational issues</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working collaboratively with your teaching colleagues to improve student learning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding legal and ethical issues</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working collaboratively with educational assistants to improve student learning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding child and adolescent development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yashkina with Amato, Bates, Languay, Laporte, & Perry   542
Conducting Evaluations and Assessments

The area of formal evaluations and reporting – which was not considered to be a very challenging area before, when only 37% perceived it to be extremely/moderately challenging) – has become increasingly challenging. Our results suggest that a full half of the teachers in our sample consider doing formal evaluations and report cards an extreme/moderate challenge. Here again, the differential between the previous and current studies may be due to changes in the education system over the past decade. Specifically, the move over this time period to electronic reporting has been repeatedly noted by teachers as being problematic.

Similar to the findings of the previous study, a greater percentage of teachers from the Primary/Junior and Junior/Intermediate divisions indicated the extreme/moderate challenge of doing formal evaluations and report cards compared to their colleagues in the Intermediate/Senior division (56% and 49% versus 37%). In addition, our quantitative and qualitative data suggested that occasional teachers found writing report cards somewhat more challenging (54% versus 47%, \( r = .1 \)), citing lack of training and experience in the area as well as very limited or no support available as the main reasons.

The area of classroom or school-based assessment appears to be a less significant challenge than previously reported. Fewer teachers than before (40% versus 49%) perceived assessing student learning to guide their instructional plans to be moderately or extremely challenging. Another interesting observation is that graduates of the 2-year B.Ed. consecutive program found performing student assessment to be a significantly greater challenge than their colleagues who graduated from the 1-year concurrent program (42% versus 32%, \( r = .13 \)). No significant differences were observed between other groups.

Motivating Students

With almost half of the respondents (49%) indicating it to be a moderate/extreme challenge, motivating students to learn remains a significant issue, despite a decrease by 7% when compared to the previous study results (56%).

Teachers working with students with high needs particularly struggled with student motivation. To be specific, teachers who worked with greater numbers of students with significant learning challenges and teachers who worked with more students identified by IPRC, as well as teachers working in schools with a high proportion of students with identified exceptionalities, tended to find the area of student motivation more challenging (\( r = .15, r = .20, \) and \( r = .09 \) respectively). In addition, a greater percentage of teachers certified at the Intermediate/Senior level (57%) compared to those at the Primary/Junior level (45%) felt that motivating students to learn was extremely/moderately challenging. In their comments, some teachers talked about feeling unprepared to manage, engage, and motivate students:

I found it very difficult to have the pressure of motivating students with a variety of backgrounds, while planning, assessing, communicating with colleagues and parents, attending school meetings, getting involved in extra-curriculars for the first time, without much actual guidance on how to do these things effectively from teachers’ college. As a new teacher, we need tools to help us with classroom management and student motivation.
I feel that we need more time spent on this. (A full-time teacher, I/S division, a large urban school)

Working Collaboratively with Colleagues and Families

The issue of working collaboratively with parents and families, teaching colleagues, and educational assistants was not considered to be a significant challenge by the majority of survey participants, with only 28%, 12%, and 10% respectively considering these areas to be moderately/significantly challenging.

At the same time, there were many comments where teachers bemoaned the difficulty of communicating with, and getting support from, parents, teachers, and administrators. For example, teachers struggled with “getting parents on board to help when all strategies we are trying in class to engage a student are not working”, and “parent interactions [and a] general lack of respect for teachers and the profession.” Many (especially occasional) teachers described the lack of respect and support from teacher colleagues, even feeling isolated and looked down upon:

The negative attitude and lack of assistance I have received as an occasional teacher when arriving at a new school to work an assigned posting. (A daily occasional teacher, P/J division, a suburban school)

Daily occasional is lonely. There’s not a lot of communication between occasional staff, we just float around not really knowing each other at all. (A daily occasional teacher, I/S division, a suburban school)

Another issue identified in some of the comments was the lack of support from the school administration. Once again, this was particularly true for occasional teachers. Some described not receiving adequate information about school procedures and operations, and others felt like they had to deal with student behaviour issues on their own, receiving little or no help from the administration or not even knowing how to ask for it. Still others did not want to ask for help because they did not want to look less professional and jeopardize their chances of being hired by the same principal again:

Not knowing specific things like photocopying report to put in OSR, not knowing where/what resources were available, feeling uncomfortable asking for help (especially as an OT because you didn't want to be looked at as a hindrance or someone the principal wouldn't want to hire). (A full-time elementary teacher and a former occasional teacher at the I/S level)

It should be noted, however, that the lack of support from teacher colleagues and administrators was experienced by only some beginning teachers; the majority of the respondents reported receiving support from school administrators and other teachers in the school and did not find these areas challenging, as discussed above.

Understanding Educational Content

Areas related to understanding educational content were not considered challenging either. The most challenging of them was *integrating theory and practice*, with 20% of respondents rating this
as extremely/moderately challenging. Some teachers commented on the difficulty of applying some of the teaching ideals taught in their preservice programs due to the complexity of real classrooms and teaching jobs, which caused stress in some cases.

Working from when I wake up until I go to bed every day and still barely scraping by, unable to help students the way you want or to apply theory and creativity the way you had hoped. No support from administrators for student behaviour and abuse. Daily breakdowns and dread returning to very challenging classes. (An occasional teacher, I/S division, a large urban school)

Additional Challenges
In addition to the challenges mentioned above, the complexity of teaching in today’s classrooms and the lack of available resources and support were also identified as factors that make the job of teaching extremely overwhelming and stressful for a number of respondents. These factors took a toll on their personal lives and even made some question their choice of career as a teacher. Many felt unprepared for the realities of teaching and wished they had received some tips in their programs on time management, personal wellbeing, and work-life balance:

Intense and unrelenting stress; the lack of support from colleagues; the lack of respect from students and colleagues; the isolation and loneliness felt while coming to terms with the reality that this as my career; how completely unrealistic the teaching practicums were compared to a real classroom environment; how professors who previously assured ongoing support simply shuffled off to the next cohort as they became 'too busy'; how self-care and wellbeing were not taught but briefly mentioned as merely something 'one should do'. (A daily occasional teacher, I/S division, a large suburban school)

The work-life balance was never discussed in teacher's college, but was something I struggled with immensely in the first two years in teaching. I was not given the tools, the resources, and the knowledge about where to go for help with managing the work load. (A full-time teacher, P/J division, a mid-size rural school)

Being overwhelmed by the sheer workload and expectations of the job. A FT teaching job, in my experience and based on conversations with peers also new to the profession, basically requires 200% of your time. I am grappling with whether or not I want to stay in the profession, because the demands and lack of supports, as well as workload, have had a significant impact on my wellbeing, health and relationships. (A long-term occasional teacher, P/J division, a small rural school)

Occasional teachers also commented on the instability of their jobs, on needing to have a second (or even third) job to make ends meet, and the difficulty of getting a permanent or long-term position:

Extreme competition for occasional teaching jobs, contracts. A lot of checkpoints and wait time to become a full-time permanent teacher. Negative perception and a lack of respect for new teachers/occasional teachers. Occasional teacher experience (daily and LTO) often counts as a fraction of permanent teacher experience. Difficult to move up pay grid, get
benefits and save for retirement. Uncertainty and a lack of job security. In spite of all of this, I wouldn't give it up for anything. I love my job dearly. The challenges have necessitated strength, competence, creativity, "resilience" even, but I don't wish this on the next generation of teachers. (A long-term occasional teacher, P/J division, a suburban school)

Dealing with the uncertainty of occasional teaching and work-life balance. I had to maintain a second job during the evenings/weekends in order to make ends meet. My record was going 73 days without a day off. (a long-term occasional teacher, I/S division, a rural school)

Overall Changes Over Time
As can be seen from the analysis provided, there were only three areas that more teachers in the current study than in the previous one identified as being challenging. These included: doing formal evaluations and report cards (50% versus 37%); managing student behaviour outside the classroom (45% versus 41%); and classroom management (60% versus 56%). As noted at various points in our analysis, it is difficult to say with any certainty whether these differences are due to changes to teacher preparation programs over time or are more likely a statement on new realities and expectations in today’s increasingly complex, technology-infused classrooms and integrated school systems.

Intention to Remain in Teaching
Encouragingly, despite all of the above-mentioned challenges experienced by beginning teachers, 83% of teachers in our sample intended to remain in teaching in the next five years, while 2% did not, and 15% were not sure. Similarly, Herbert and her colleagues (2010) reported that 82% of recent graduates planned to remain in teaching.

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CHALLENGES AND AREAS OF PREPAREDNESS
We conducted correlations analyses between the respondents’ perceptions of how well their program prepared them in a particular area of teaching and how challenging they found this area during their initial years of teaching. Predictably, we found significant correlations in all of the areas. These correlations are of small and medium degree, ranging from $r = .14$ to $r = .36$. This means that teachers who felt that their program prepared them well in a particular area tended to find that area less challenging. The strongest associations were observed in the areas of: integrating theory and practice ($r = .36$); understanding legal and ethical issues ($r = .33$); assessing student learning to guide your instructional plans ($r = .33$); doing formal evaluations and report cards ($r = .31$); understanding and teaching the Ontario Curriculum ($r = .34$); and working collaboratively with parents and families to improve student learning ($r = .30$).

DISCUSSION
Ontario is still at the very beginning of implementing one of the largest changes to initial teacher education since emerging from the era of normal schools and teachers’ colleges. The current study included graduates from as many as five different program structures that were delivered over six years and asked these beginning teachers to reflect on their preparedness in those programs for the multi-dimensional and ever-challenging profession of teaching. In spite of the range of program
types, many of our findings were very similar to those of our colleagues, Herbert et al. (2010), uncovered almost a decade ago. This may lead us to question whether the recent changes we have worked so hard to bring about are having the desired consequences of improving the preparedness of beginning teachers in our province. It is likely that more time is needed before we can properly assess the true impact of the newly-expanded four-semester program structure. To this end, we would suggest that further research into the impact of the programs should be conducted.

Many of our findings, such as the ongoing tension between the balance of theory and practice and the strong preference expressed by graduates of our teacher education programs for more practicum experiences, are entirely consistent with the research literature. In Ontario, like in most other jurisdictions, the teaching profession and those who hold responsibility for initial teacher education have not yet landed on an essential agreement as to which pieces belong within the teacher preparation program and which belong more appropriately within induction structures and supports. While we have happily all moved away from the old-fashioned notion of “teacher training”, the comments uncovered in this research underlie the persistent and currently unresolved question of what actually constitutes effective “preparation” for the professionals embarking on a career as teachers!

Finally, we would be remiss not to draw attention to the troubling comments by those in our sample, 40% of whom were employed as occasional teachers, regarding the lack of supports and feelings of isolation and despair experienced in their early years of teaching. Here again, further research should be conducted to ascertain how our education system, and we the principal players within that system, might more effectively address these concerns.

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