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Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities: One Urban University Re-Envisions Teacher Preparation for the Next Generation

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Ultimately, the national goals of improving learning outcomes for all students and reducing, if not eliminating, the achievement gap require a teaching corps that brings knowledge and professional competencies to have positive impacts on diverse learners in diverse settings (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006). As central actors in schools, teachers have the greatest impact on student achievement (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005). Nevertheless, due to varied challenges of preparing high-quality teachers within the context of traditional schools of education, preparation programs have yet to consistently and comprehensively produce teachers who accomplish these outcomes (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Larabee, 2004, 2010). While substantive reform and evidence of improved teacher education emerges (Ball & Forzani, 2009, 2010; Zumwalt & Craig, 2005), systemic change that contributes to better pre-kindergarten-through-twelfth-grade (PK-12) student outcomes remains elusive (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

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By fundamentally changing our model of teacher preparation to prioritize clinical practice through partnerships with schools and communities, as suggested by leading organizations of teacher education (American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, [AACTE], 2010; the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2010), we are taking a step in the right direction to improve teaching and learning.

In our Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities (TLLSC) program at Loyola University Chicago, we recognize the need to adjust practice to better prepare the next generation of teachers, i.e., the teacher candidates who enroll in our undergraduate and graduate programs. Like faculty at other schools and colleges of education, we face the formidable challenge of preparing teachers who are well-equipped to consistently make a positive impact on the social, emotional, behavioral, cultural, linguistic, and academic outcomes of all students (Heineke, Coleman, Ferrell, & Kersemeier, 2012; Ball & Forzani, 2009; Larabee, 2004; Wrigley, 2000), particularly those who have been historically marginalized in high-need urban schools (Oakes, Franke, Quartz, & Rogers, 2002). We envision teacher education as sharing the same mission and high expectations as those of effective PK-12 professionals at multiple levels of teaching and learning: supporting and sustaining successful students, innovative classrooms, exemplary schools, enriched communities, and global citizenship (Zhao, 2010).

To fulfill this mission, in the TLLSC program, teacher preparation faculty collaboratively re-envision teacher education by developing instructional partnerships and grounding programs in urban schools and communities. This enables us to respond to the needs of schools and communities in and around Chicago and to increase the number of skilled educators who are highly committed to and capable of teaching diverse student populations (García, Arias, Harris-Murri, & Serna, 2010).

Reinventing our Practice: Cornerstones of Teaching, Learning, and Leading

We focused our efforts to re-envision teacher preparation for the next generation on eight key dimensions of teacher education: approach, framework, research to practice, stakeholders, partners, faculty roles, teacher candidate growth, and definition of success. For each of these dimensions, the contrast between TLLSC and traditional university-based preparation, which recently has been characterized in academic and non-academic literature as increasingly outmoded (Larabee, 2004, 2010), is shown in Table 1. Each row of the table represents a continuum, and our redesign efforts represent a move from left to right: from the

Table 1
Comparison of Program Dimensions: Traditional Teacher Preparation and TLLSC

Traditional Teacher Preparation	Program Dimension	Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities
University courses followed by fragmented clinical experiences	Approach	Faculty and candidates embedded in schools and communities and developing through growth-based apprenticeship
Static, compartmentalized model of coursework and clinical experiences	Framework	Reflexive model aimed at responsiveness to diverse settings and reflecting the complexity of teaching
Separate roles for teachers and researchers	Research to Practice	Collaborative practice and field-based research inform one another
Clinical supervisors serve as link between university-based faculty and school sites	Stakeholders	University faculty, schools, and community agencies collaboratively facilitate on-site work
Teachers host candidates and follow university guidelines.	Partners	Partners join professional learning communities and collaborate in preparation of future teachers
Instruction of university-based courses.	Faculty Roles	Mentorship of candidates, facilitation of clinical work, coordination of professional learning communities
Course-based knowledge accumulated for later application in clinical settings	Teacher Candidate Growth	Reflective teaching and leadership through guided practice
Graduates pass certification examinations and are retained in professional settings	Definition of Success	Graduates enter the field with greater professional resiliency, having already made an impact on children, families, schools, and communities

traditional toward a field-based apprenticeship model (Rogoff, 1994) based upon engaged, mutually beneficial partnerships with diverse schools and community organizations.

As illustrated in the table, TLLSC aims to prepare resilient and reflective teachers to enter the field with well-developed knowledge, skills, and dispositions for effective practice with children, families, and schools in urban communities (Freedman & Appleman, 2009). In this way, TLLSC measures efficacy by PK-12 student achievement rather than by short-term successes, such as graduates' successfully securing credentials and employment. To accomplish such teacher preparation, TLLSC promotes cognitive apprenticeship (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989) and utilizes a field-based apprenticeship model (Rogoff, 1994) in which candidates develop and apply key competencies in schools and communities. This approach stands in contrast to compartmentalized programs in which candidates learn theoretical principles from textbooks and discussions in university-based courses, which are then followed by fragmented clinical experiences. With university faculty and candidates' working side by side with school and community actors, all stakeholders collaborate to respond to the needs of diverse children and families, rather than schools' *hosting* candidates and student teachers (García et al., 2010). In this way, TLLSC reflects and responds to the complexity of teaching in the field, rather than dictating candidates' and partners' experiences based on the rigid structure and schedule of the university. Further, this approach provides rich opportunities to link research and practice through the joining of university- and community-based research (Zeichner, 2006).

The dimensions presented in Table 1 are organized around four programmatic cornerstones: (a) partnerships with schools and communities, (b) teacher preparation for diverse classrooms, (c) a developmental trajectory of field-based experiences, and (d) stakeholders engaged in communities of practice. Each of these dimensions is discussed below.

Partnerships with Schools and Communities

Teacher preparation for the next generation requires an *all hands on deck* approach, whereby university, school, and community partners share responsibility to prepare effective educators to support PK-12 student development, learning, and achievement (Heineke et al., 2012; Kruger, Davies, Eckersley, Newell, & Cherednichenko, 2009; Wrigley, 2000). For this reason, rather than silo teacher education at the university, TLLSC embeds nearly all teacher preparation in partner schools and communities. This field-based program provides candidates with extensive opportunities to work alongside expert teachers in class-

rooms in high-need, yet still high-performing, educational settings that demonstrate success in enabling learning for all students, as seen in school and district-level indicators of school performance. We partner with schools and community organizations to ensure that candidates engage with diverse populations, including students with special needs and those labeled as English learners (García et al., 2010). Following the ecological approach to teacher education (Zeichner, 2010), we recognize that teachers must be prepared in the same context in which children are educated, which necessitates a commitment to non-hierarchical partnerships among universities, practitioners, and communities.

With our deep commitment to this cornerstone, we continue to develop and expand relationships with schools and community organizations. School and community leaders have welcomed the opportunity to jointly make decisions on program design and implementation to maximize benefits for all stakeholders (Kruger et al., 2009). In ongoing collaborative meetings, faculty and partners share strengths and generate ideas to transform a broad idea of community-based teacher preparation into practices that meet local needs. School and community leaders actively engage in putting forth ideas, setting goals, planning curricula, and offering feedback on the ongoing work of university faculty. As demonstrated by qualitative program evaluation data, collected during the program's design and implementation, partners' investment in TLLSC can be attributed, in large part, to the central focus on PK-12 student achievement. As a direct result of the program's foundation on a commitment to collaboration, excellence, and mutual benefit, our candidates teach and learn alongside expert teachers in high-need, high-performing educational settings.

Teacher Preparation for Diverse Classrooms

We collaboratively designed TLLSC with the shared belief that *all* teachers must be prepared to serve *all* learners, including students from diverse social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive, cultural, linguistic, and academic backgrounds (Heineke et al., 2012; Wrigley, 2000). To meet the multifaceted and unique needs of children in today's diverse classrooms, teachers need to possess adaptive expertise and flexible teaching repertoires (Wasley, Hampel, & Clark, 1997; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). For educators to have a significant impact on diverse students' learning, accompanied by a sound rationale for when, where, why, and how to apply certain strategies, preparation must focus on research-based practices (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007; Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Levin, Hammer, & Coffee, 2009). Implicit in this notion is that schools provide equitable access

to education and, as such, that teachers' expertise must be inclusive of all individuals and groups (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Hollins & Torres-Guzman, 2005; Tomlinson, 2003).

In the design phase of TLLSC, we utilized backward design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) to ensure alignment and fidelity toward the goal of preparing all teachers to work with all students. We initiated our backward design process by brainstorming, writing, and refining a set of 11 core principles or enduring understandings (EUs; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Table 2 presents a list of these 11 EUs, which we determined were essential to guiding classroom practitioners to support all students' learning, development, and achievement and to work as change agents locally and globally (Zhao, 2010).

We drafted the EUs to support the mission, vision, and practice of TLLSC, the School of Education, and Loyola University Chicago, and then further refined and extended them based on the literature on teacher learning and professional practice frameworks and standards (NCATE, 2010). We then defined related indicators of knowledge, skills, and dispositions for each of the 11 EUs, which guided the design of assessments of candidates' development throughout the program. Table 3 provides an example of the link between an EU, its associated knowledge and skills at beginning, developing, and mastering levels, and corresponding assessments.

Extensive, focused, and mentored field experiences supported by integrated coursework form the foundation of preparation (García et al., 2010). As candidates progress through the program, experiences become increasingly tailored to specialty areas, which include bilingual/bicultural, early childhood, elementary, and secondary within a specific discipline (i.e., English, foreign language, math, science, or social studies). Early in the program, we expose every candidate to birth-to-grade-twelve (B-12) settings to provide experiences across diverse contexts, integrate learning and developmental theory across the developmental continuum, and emphasize the need for seamless support from B-12. Field-based experiences prioritize development of (a) a vision for the practice of teaching grounded in principles of social justice (Solomon & Sekayi, 2007), (b) strong pedagogical content knowledge to teach core subjects at high levels (Grossman, 1990; Shulman, 1986), (c) pertinent skills to assess student progress and making evidence-based instructional decisions (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007; Hollins, 2011), and (d) a reflective stance toward professional practice (Freedman & Appleman, 2009). In this way, field-based apprenticeship from the first semester of the program sparks the professional development of these central elements of effective teaching.

Table 2
Backward Design: Enduring Understandings in TLLSC

Enduring Understanding	Candidates will understand that effective educators . . .
EU 1 Social Justice	Reflect professionalism in service of social justice by promoting human rights, reducing inequalities, and increasing the empowerment of vulnerable groups.
EU 2 Collaboration	Engage in reflection and collaboration among teachers, students, administrators, families, and communities to improve achievement for all students.
EU 3 Instruction	Use evidence-based practices to design instruction that aligns goals, objectives, assessments, and instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of students.
EU 4 Assessment	Use data to drive instruction and assess teaching and learning effectiveness.
EU 5 Policy	Apply knowledge of policy and local, state, and national educational contexts to advocate with and for students and families.
EU 6 Content	Apply deep understanding of both content and pedagogy to provide developmentally appropriate instruction to all students.
EU 7 Diversity	Hold high expectations and build on the assets of diverse students, including, but not limited to, culture, language, socioeconomic status, and exceptionalities.
EU Literacy	Explicitly integrate the teaching of reading, writing, communication, and technology across content areas.
EU 9 Environment	Create and support safe and healthy learning environments for all students.
EU 10 Theory	Utilize information from theories and related research-based practices when making decisions and taking action in their professional practice.
EU 11 Global	Utilize global perspectives and international-mindedness, including awareness of the social, cultural, inter-cultural, and linguistic facets of student achievement.

Table 3
Example of an Enduring Understanding and Disposition Development in the TLLSC Program

EU 2: Candidates will understand that effective educators engage and promote reflection and collaboration among teachers, students, administrators, families and communities to improve achievement for all students.

Beginning: TLSC 110	*Developing: TLSC 320*	*Mastering: TLSC 300*
Knowledge: EU2 K1: Identify conditions and contextual factors necessary for successful collaboration. EU2 K2: Explain the benefits for students, schools and communities of effective internal (e.g., teacher-teacher) collaborative relationships. *Assessment:* Complete a reflective summary of interviews with teachers in instructional (e.g., grade level, departmental) and school-based (e.g., problem-solving) teams and shadow experiences, including candidates' observations of collaborative relationships. The reflective summary will address essential questions, as well as connect theory to practice by describing the relevant working principles from theories and research related to collaborative relationships.	*Knowledge*: EU2 K2: Explain the benefits for students, schools, and communities of effective internal (e.g., teacher-teacher) collaborative relationships *Skills*: EU2 S2: Collaborate with teachers to co-plan and co-teach instructional units that meet the academic social, and emotional needs of all students *Assessment*: Working in collaborative teams (e.g., with peers and a cooperating teacher educator), candidates collect assessment data, analyze student data, formulate an action plan for the class and specific students based on data, carry out instructional activities of action plan using co-teaching strategies, and evaluate the action plan and make appropriate revisions. *Candidates will*: 1. Present data analysis, action plan, and evaluation results to colleagues. 2. Keep journal on reflections about analysis, interpretation and action plan developed, and the collaborative processes during each step.	*Knowledge*: EU2 K1: Identify conditions and contextual factors necessary for successful collaboration. EU2 K2: Explain the benefits for students, schools, and communities of effective internal collaborative relationships. EU1 K2: Identify qualities of collaborative learning communities. *Skills*: EU2 S1: Engage in PLCs around issues related to curriculum, assessment, and instruction; engage in reflection and professional discourse about learning and practice. *Assessment*: Fourth-year candidates take leadership roles in PLCs to mentor candidates. Candidates lead discussions, provide resources, and describe practice experience to assist other members to acquire the knowledge and skills. Candidates' reflective journal provides evidence of active involvement in collaborative relationships within one-year internship.

Disposition 4: Demonstrate professionalism and reflective practice in collaborating with teachers, students, administrators, families, and communities to improve achievement for all students.

Disposition Beginning:	*Disposition Developing*:	*Disposition Mastering*:
Candidate gains awareness of and communicates the importance of collaborative relationships to enhance student learning and development as well as the role that educators, families, and communities play in student successes.	Candidate actively participates in collaborative relationship focused on enhancing student learning and development.	Candidate actively seeks out or organizes opportunities to engage in and lead collaborative efforts with a variety of stakeholders (e.g., students, family) to enhance learning and development of students.

Thus, TLLSC represents a single, comprehensive teacher preparation program in which all candidates are prepared to work with all students (García et al., 2010; Hollins & Torres-Guzman, 2005). Regardless of certification area, candidates receive targeted and integrated preparation to support in-depth understandings related to students' diverse language, literacy, and learning needs, specifically focused on English learners and students with special needs. While our traditional program has been successful, we acknowledge that a fragmented preparation program lacks the unified and coherent goals, standards, assessments, and experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007; Feiman-Nemser, 2001) necessary to achieve extensive integration of traditionally separate areas. A central decision in the design phase was for TLLSC to reject the conventional structure of isolated courses taught by individual faculty from separate academic departments. Infusion of experiences and content to address the needs of diverse groups necessitates collaboration of faculty across initial teacher preparation. Additionally, the broader aims of the program provide opportunities to collaborate with faculty across the School of Education, such as with experts in educational policy and instructional leadership. Thus, faculty members from diverse areas contribute to the development and refinement of the teacher learning experiences.

A Developmental Trajectory of Authentic Field-based Experiences

We espouse the perspective that expertise is not an endpoint but, rather, involves a process of continual growth (Feiman-Nemser, 2001); even expert teachers with years of practice repeatedly undergo an abbreviated version of this growth cycle of beginning, developing, and mastering, as they respond to the dynamic nature of the profession (Ball & Forzani, 2009, 2010). Teachers adapt practices, not only in response to complex classroom situations and diverse students' needs (Gándara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006; Hollins & Torres-Guzman, 2005), but also to shifts in programs and policies at the school, district, state, and federal levels (Heineke et al., 2012). To prepare teachers for this central role in educational policy and practice (Heineke et al., 2012), TLLSC prioritizes teachers' responsive and adaptive practices and dispositions. We view candidates as novice professionals from the time that they enter the program, and we foster the development of their adaptive teaching, reflective learning, and responsive leading (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; García et al., 2010). We designed and implemented TLLSC to acknowledge that expertise develops most effectively through interactions; in this way, the program promotes intrapersonal development through reflection as well as interaction with other candidates and

with professionals in school and community settings (Anderson, 1995; Driscoll, 2005; García et al., 2010).

By conceptualizing candidates' growth as deepening levels of expertise related to EUs, we avoid the segmented and discrete training approach typically present in teacher preparation programs (Larabee, 2004). The beginning, developing, and mastering levels reflect the degrees of sophistication in candidates' comprehension and application of knowledge and skills (Anderson, 1995), commitment to personal and professional dispositions (Zumwalt & Craig, 2005), and critical reasoning and metacognition in regard to the decisions and actions in practice (Anderson, 1995). In this field-based program, candidates have continuous opportunities to engage in contextual and situational recognition and application of knowledge and skills (Anderson, 1995) as well as to engage in continual development related to the EUs (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) in varying and diverse contexts of teaching and learning (García et al., 2010). Moreover, through strategically planned learning activities across diverse educational contexts conducted in a series of six- or eight-semester-long clinical sequences, for graduate and undergraduate students respectively, the program encourages increasing complexity in candidates' practice.

Each TLLSC sequence is comprised of three- to eight-week modules that target specific EUs and expose candidates to diverse learners, settings, and professionals across the B-12 continuum.[1] As sequences progress, to challenge and support candidates' professional development, the modules, activities, and assessments become more complex. Candidates begin with three semester-long sequences to explore the fundamentals of teaching and learning through diverse experiences across B-12 settings; and sequences focus on the importance of understanding the role of the community in the education of children, including how faculty, teachers, and community professionals collaborate to support students' development. In the next phase, candidates delve into an area of concentration. In the next three sequences, candidates develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions in teaching language and literacy across grade levels and content areas and use data to inform instruction; they broaden the scope of their teaching to incorporate a global framework and to engage students in service as they work with mentor teachers and university faculty to co-design and implement interdisciplinary instructional units of study. Candidates' final phase of training consists of a yearlong internship, with the first semester spent in a part-time capacity in the school where they assume responsibilities as full-time teachers to demonstrate effective design, implementation, and reflection on instruction. Throughout the program, as they move through the continuum of sequences and revisit EUs in a spiraling curriculum, candidates take an active professional

role in clinical experiences, supported by B-12, university, and community leaders (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).[2]

Stakeholders Engaged in Communities of Practice

Our program acknowledges that teacher learning occurs through authentic practice with professional apprenticeship in formal and informal manners within practicing communities (Rogoff, 1994). By aligning theory with practice, we conceptualize the TLLSC program as a community, wherein faculty members, school and community partners, and teacher candidates collaboratively guide and support one another through the ongoing and dynamic participation of communities of learners (Rogoff, 1994). In addition to the communities of practice among teacher educators from the school, community, and university settings, we utilize professional learning communities (PLCs) to foster meaningful collaboration among teacher candidates. Although regularly implemented and documented in schools with in-service teachers (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006), PLCs are not widely used in the context of pre-service teacher preparation.

PLCs serve as the touchstone of teaching and learning in the TLLSC program, bringing together candidates within specialty areas and across developmental levels (i.e., beginning, developing, and mastering) to share and co-construct knowledge, skills, and dispositions applied to diverse classroom, school, and community contexts. Facilitated by faculty members with expertise in each specialty area, the PLCs serve as communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), whereby candidates come together with a common purpose and learn through regular social interactions with one another. Utilizing the cognitive apprenticeship model of learning communities (Brown et. al. 1989; Rogoff, 1994), our PLCs bring together individuals at different developmental stages of their teacher education program, and more experienced and advanced members apprentice newcomers by sharing experiences of success and failure with them and offering advice and support to novice candidates within the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Within PLCs, teacher candidates (a) share learning from various school-based experiences, (b) apply learning through completion of summative assessments, and (c) synthesize learning through reflection and discussion related to EUs and dispositions. Candidates come together to make meaning of the learning that takes place in modules and sequences. The knowledge acquired interpersonally through this collaboration is appropriated by the individual teacher candidate and used to guide subsequent problem-solving behaviors (Moll, 1990). This more effectively

ensures that candidates apply learning within their chosen specialty areas and increase their content and pedagogical expertise (Grossman, 1990; Shulman, 1986).

Conclusions and Implications for Re-Envisioning Teacher Preparation

With the TLLSC program, we purposively disrupt the traditional model of teacher preparation that has been consistently and widely used for the past century (Larabee, 2004). Through TLLSC, we prepare all teachers to meet the sophisticated and changing needs and realities of urban schools and communities so that they can ultimately support all students' learning, development, and achievement (Heineke et al., 2012; Kruger et al., 2009; Wrigley, 2000). Through a field-based apprenticeship model, TLLSC teacher candidates engage in increasingly complex and authentic practices that make up the dynamic work of teaching (Ball & Forzani, 2008, 2009) in and with schools and communities (Edwards & Mutton, 2007; Kruger et al., 2009). Through engagement in a professional preparation continuum (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) of modules and sequences developed through backward design around central EUs and related knowledge, skill, and disposition indicators, as well as active participation in PLCs, candidates evolve as adaptive and responsive professionals that effectively meet the needs of all students (García et al., 2010).

Connecting theory to practice necessitates a research agenda that parallels program development and implementation as well as assesses the impact of TLLSC on students, families, schools, and communities (Zeichner, 2006). Our research agenda also includes a collaborative self-study for ongoing examination of how the dynamic actors of TLLSC shape the program and the processes involved in its design. Our preliminary findings support the cornerstones presented in this article, inform our continuing work with program implementation, and contribute to the research on quality teaching and teacher preparation. We will continue to share our findings as the process evolves.

We want to emphasize that this work is not a prescription for other universities and teacher education programs but, rather, an outline of our own cornerstones and processes that re-conceptualize how to prepare teachers for the next generation (AACTE, 2010). We challenge other teacher educators to take responsibility for collaboratively generating creative and innovative approaches to improve the quality of teaching and learning, while partnering with actors and stakeholders in schools and communities who work daily to create settings where PK-12 students can not only achieve, but thrive.

Notes

[1] Please see http://www.luc.edu/education/programs/bsed_%20program-phases.shtml

[2] For more specific descriptions of the field-based experiences that comprise the TLLSC program, please see Heineke, A. J., Kennedy, A., & Lees, A. (2013) and Smetana, L.K., Coleman, E.R., Ryan, A., & Tocci, C. (2013).

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