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Kimberly D. I Caldwell

A thesis
submitted in partial in fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
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Abstract

The Ontario Ministry of Education, with the shortest teacher education programs in the nation, is proposing changes to the two-semester teacher education "Professional Year" in favour of a longer program. Rather than looking at either the semester length or the number of semesters of a program, an evaluation of the assessment culture and curriculum of the teacher education program may be more appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of Ontario's pre-service teacher education. This is one such assessment audit.

This mixed method analysis uses a course syllabus review, teacher candidate surveys and semi-structured interviews to identify the assessment culture of the initial teacher education program. The creation and comparison of ethnographic profiles of course assignments allow for a deeper analysis of the assessment protocols associated with the Primary/Junior, Junior/Intermediate, and Intermediate/Senior divisions.

Initial results show that the teacher education program at the Faculty in this study uses summative assessment through in-class presentations, lesson and unit plans, and reflective essays and that the teacher candidates exhibit characteristic of both achieving and deep achieving learners.

There is sufficient evidence to suggest that students would benefit from having all assignment information upfront on the first day of class with the course syllabi containing not only the assignment weight, name, and due date, but also all information required to complete the assessment of the course.

Keywords: program validity, program transparency, program fairness, assessment culture, teacher education, student workload, frequency of assignments, types of assignment, accelerated courses

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Dedication

To my grandmother, Mrs. Irene Matson, who has been looking over my shoulder throughout the project, wondering what exactly I was doing, why I was doing it and when I would be done. Gramma, to you I say, “I’m done!” until next time.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction and Background

Introduction

Many countries around the world have a central regulatory body responsible for the accreditation and implementation of initial teacher education programs. The Canadian government differs in its approach because, by virtue of the British North America Act (BNA, 1867), each province has a Ministry of Education which is responsible for regulatory policies associated with teacher certification. In consequence, it is up to the government of the region to make sure that teacher-training institutes develop teacher practitioners who have skills deemed relevant to the particular province. As such, there are currently 62 teacher education programs across Canada that have unique qualities in terms of length, curriculum content, delivery method, and accreditation procedure (Van Nuland, 2011).

Although autonomy exists within each province's Ministry of Education to decide the length and content of the teacher education programs associated with the particular province, a new federal legislation regulating the certification of a number of trades and professions states that teachers certified to teach in one province can be certified in all provinces, regardless of the training associated with the home province (Gambhir, Broad, Evans, & Gaskell, 2008). The various provincial governments have endorsed this accord.

The Ontario Ministry of Education, with the shortest teacher education programs in the nation, is proposing changes to the two-semester teacher education "Professional Year" in favour of a three- or four-semester teacher education professional program. Its intention is to decrease the number of graduates, and to ensure that new Ontario teachers are better prepared in order to educate students in the classroom. The change in format mirrors the requirements of teacher education programs in other provinces and reflects an underlying assumption that

Ontario teachers have not been as well prepared as teachers who have graduated from longer programs.

This implied belief that new Ontario teachers have not been as well prepared to teach as others is based in part on the relative brevity of the Ontario program. This, however, may be a fallacy, as participants in accelerated courses or programs have been shown to learn just as much as colleagues in a non-accelerated program. Literature suggests that, in some ways, accelerated courses provide a more memorable experience when created correctly (Lee & Horsfall, 2010). Rather than looking at either the semester length or the number of semesters of a program, an evaluation of the assessment culture and curriculum of the teacher education program may be more appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of a pre-service teacher's education "as it is the quality and use of the assessment tools that impact learning" (Torrance, 2007, p. 315).

The assessment culture of the teacher education program has an impact on teacher candidates' learning. Tian (2007) explains that "during the past decade, the world of assessment in higher education has been dominated by a plea for the implementation of an assessment culture, where learning in its various aspects and the learner are central to the process" (p. 131).

Assessment can be loosely defined as the feedback between student and teacher to communicate progress in the achievement of stated outcomes. The professional standard of assessment as defined in *The Principles of Fair Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* (1993) is

> the process of collecting and interpreting information that can be used (i) to inform students, and their parents/guardians where applicable, about the progress they are making toward attaining the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors to be learned or acquired, and (ii) to inform the various personnel who make educational decisions

> (instructional, diagnostic, placement, promotion, graduation, curriculum planning, program development, policy) about students (Joint Advisory Committee, 1993, p. 1).

This research focuses on the assessment that is gathered and used as evidence that the student has satisfied all the requirements of the Ontario Teacher Education program. This type of analysis is significant because "[i]mproving student learning implies improving the assessment system. Teachers often assume that it is their teaching that directs student learning. In practice, assessment directs student learning, because it is the assessment system that defines what is worth learning" (Havnes, 2004, p. 1 as cited in Tian, 2007, p. 387).

Statement of the Research Problem

What does the Assessment Culture of the "Professional Year" look like in an Ontario initial teacher education program?

Research Questions to be Addressed

The research questions to be asked are the following:

1. What types of assignments do teacher candidates receive across all courses offered in the teacher education program and how frequent are these?
2. Do assignments vary by teacher education stream, and if so, how do they differ? Is this difference equitable?
3. How do teacher candidates perceive the assessment culture of the teacher education program?

Purpose of the Research

The purpose and intent of this research is to provide a description of the assignments found in the Ontario teacher education program and to explore the perceptions and preferences of teacher candidates toward assessment.

Significance of the Research

As each teacher education program is unique in structure, Faculty offerings and assessment, there is limited research on course assessment in general and no other specific research on the assessment culture or workload in teacher education programs overall was found. However, in 2003, an external examiner did a comprehensive internal review of grading and assessment so that the studied Faculty of Education's Department of Undergraduate Studies could develop coherent policies on grading and assessment in the department.

This research will allow faculties to make major decisions that would support teaching, learning, research, and service within the teacher program. More importantly, it will provide open and transparent research to help in the governance of assessment. Finally, this study will show the unique assessment strengths that allow for the design of better assessment policies and alignment of instructors' assessment practices within the philosophy of course assessment practices. Other faculties of education will be able to extract information from the assessment practices that may be applicable in a faculty of education in general and those with one year post degree programs.

This comprehensive review of assessment practices is directly related to two strategic goals: the development of the best possible teacher education program through the use of a comprehensive review of undergraduate program assessment and the continued improvement of academic standards for all undergraduate programs to support ongoing professional development.

Research Limitations & Delimitations

Four areas of limitations & delimitations are as follows: generalizable research results, the use of the course syllabi, the program sections chosen to be studied, and the timing of the survey and semi-structured interviews.

1. The research results from this teacher education program may not be generalizable to the broader field of teacher education.

   Each university has a unique program. This Faculty of Education offers .25 FCE courses and the Ontario One-Year Teacher Education Program are the shortest in Canada. Internationally, and in other parts of Canada teacher education programs may have moved away from the lecture and assignment instructional method and, consequently, this research may be of no value to those programs. For example, in institutions that have adopted an internship model, the formal attending of lectures and preparing of assignments may not relate to the workload of teacher candidates.

2. The course syllabus may not reflect what actually happened in the classroom.

   Students and professors have the opportunity to engage in dialogue to change aspects of assessment involving the course. Hrycaj (2006) cautions that the use of course syllabi as a data collection tool can limit the data being collected because syllabi are typically concise, and therefore details are often left out since these course prospectuses are to be discussed in the classroom. This weakness, associated with the syllabi review, has been addressed through the collection of supporting data from a student survey and a semi-structured interview.

   Although assessment is represented by a relationship between professor and student, there is a belief that the perceptions and attitudes exhibited by the instructors

will tend to drive the attitudes of students toward the assessment culture as students have very little control in deciding which assignments they will or will not complete. As well, the syllabus "is also a document that comes directly from the instructor and so carries weight as an authentic representation of his or her expectations" (Graves, Hyland, & Samuels, 2010, p. 296). The data are limited to only the 2011-2012 academic course syllabi for the teacher education program.

3. The ethnographic profile uses only one section of each level for analysis and at the P/J level, all students were in the same cohort.

This research will provide only a snapshot of the assessment culture of the main campus's Faculty of Education "Professional Year" program. With only one section of the P/J stream which is situated on the main campus being chosen to be included in the research, the finding will not give a full picture of the assessment for this stream as the Faculty also offers two P/J programs variants.

4. The teacher candidate survey and semi-structured interviews were held in the final weeks of the first term prior to the student's first placement.

As quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the end of the first term prior to the students' first placement experience and before the students had received any final results on their progress in the program, Student's perceptions may have changed when the results of the first term evaluations were received.

To combat this limitation, students who responded to the survey were able to edit their responses through a link provided at the time of participation which remained active until mid January; however, no changes in data were made to the responses as tracked by the analytic software program. The teacher candidates, who

took part in the semi-structured interviews, were asked to validate their transcripts at the end of the second semester prior to their second placement. Out of the thirteen students interviewed, only one student added additional information to his interview based on new knowledge.

Definition of Terms

Primary/Junior (P/J): teacher candidates in this division are qualified to teach Kindergarten through to Grade 6 (OCT, Teacher Divisions, 2011) henceforth referred to as P/J division or stream.

Junior/Intermediate (J/I): teacher candidates in this division are qualified to teach Grades 4 through 8 with a specialization in one subject (OCT, Teacher Divisions, 2011) henceforth referred to as the J/I division or stream.

Intermediate/Senior (I/S): teacher candidates in this division have specialization in two subjects and are qualified to teach Grades 7 through 12 henceforth referred to as the I/S division or stream.

Concurrent Teacher Education Program: Students "take courses in a particular discipline and [foundation] education courses and clinical experiences throughout their years of study" (Van Nuland, 2011, p. 411) until their fourth (for the Concurrent B. Ed) or fifth (for the Honours Concurrent B. Ed).or "Professional Year."

Consecutive Teacher Education Program: Students first acquire a three or four year degree and then apply to participate in the One-Year Teacher Education program.

One-Year Teacher Education Program or "Professional Year": a full-time two-semester program that highlights professional, foundational and methodological courses designed from criteria provided by the Ontario College of teachers. (Van Nuland, 2011)

Professional Standards of Assessment: "the process of collecting and interpreting information that can be used (i) to inform students, and their parents/guardians where applicable, about the progress they are making toward attaining the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors to be learned or acquired, and (ii) to inform the various personnel who make educational decisions (instructional, diagnostic, placement, promotion, graduation, curriculum planning, program development, policy) about students" (Joint Advisory Committee, 1993, p. 1).

Ontario College of Teachers: the self-governing regulatory body for teachers certified in Ontario

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

The Ontario College of Teachers requires Faculties of Education to make available "exemplary professional learning opportunities [which] are based on the principles of effective learning" (Ontario College of Teachers, 2010, p. 23). This learning environment is facilitated through policies that are implemented by administration but are applicable to all members of the faculty or organization. The assessment culture perceived by the student is defined by two stakeholders: the instructor and the institution's administration.

An effective learning environment, according to Jennings (2005), requires the implementation of the following guiding principles: transparent learning objectives and outcomes; providing learning grounded in effective examples or authentic examples; providing a manageable student workload; emphasizing the time on a task; encouraging contact between faculty, administrators, and students; developing rapport, reciprocity, and cooperation between students and their cohort; encouraging active learning and deep understanding; having assessment relevant to the learning objectives or tasks; providing prompt and relevant feedback based on performance; rewarding critical thinking in assessment; having diversity of learning; and the communicating of high expectations for all (p. 161).

Although these principles have been designed for individual classroom settings and virtual learning environments, they can be applied to the evaluation of a departmental program such as the initial teacher education program.

Definition of Assessment

Assessment is a common thread that ties the principles of effective learning together within an organization's culture. Wright (2004) defines assessment as a circular process which begins with setting learning goals or curriculum that a student should know when

finished with the course. An instructor then gathers and interprets some sort of evidence based on this curriculum, usually through assignments, to evaluate whether the student has met the learning objectives of the course. Extended evaluation allows the instructor to reflect on the course delivery and make changes to strengthen the delivery, implementation, and assignments in the course. The purpose of giving an assignment is two-fold. The assignment becomes the evidence gathered by the instructor from the student. The instructor is then responsible for providing feedback to the student about his or her learning progress, and providing a grade which then leads to the second purpose, to inform the institution of a student's progress in developing the skills needed to achieve a satisfactory level of competence in the overall program. The instructor becomes a bridge between the institution and the student, a relationship which then directly influences the organizational culture of the institution, which in turn creates a climate of learning through assessment that can either be beneficial or detrimental to the student's perception of the overall program offered by the educational institution (p. 2).

The culture of assessment continues to evolve in an educational organization as it relies heavily on its key players, the institution, the instructor, and the student, to become a positive force that will help to enrich the atmosphere of learning at the institutional level. Because culture relates directly to "the shared norms and expectations that guide the thinking and behavior of members" (Cooke, 1988, p. 246), program "assessment can't be effective unless 'stakeholders' take 'ownership' of the process" (Ennis, 2010, p. 1) of developing and implementing an assessment culture.

Koehler (1979) states that the first step in developing an integrated assessment plan and establishing an assessment of culture is to "determine what essential skills, attitudes,

behaviors and knowledge it is possible for a teacher trainee to learn prior to becoming a teacher" (p. 200). The Ontario College of Teachers (2010) identifies the Standards of Practice for Certified Teachers in Ontario as a teacher's having a commitment to students and student learning, professional knowledge, professional practice, leadership in learning communities, and professional learning. All teacher education programs are required to emulate these standards in order to be accredited. The institution then through the administrative management aims to provide a standard of practice that is aligned with the Ontario College of Teachers through policy, and procedures that influence the practices associated with the delivery of the professional knowledge and practice taught to the teacher candidate, specifically the assessment of students by instructors. The instructor then internalizes the policies, procedures, and standards while aligning a personal philosophy of assessment that helps to create and implement learning objectives based on a courses description approved of by the institution. Students not only look to the instructor to provide a meaningful and engaging experience that will motivate and educate a student in a core area; but they also look to the instructor to model the principles underlying fair assessment practices. In the teaching program, the perception of the pre-service teacher can impact not only on the motivational level of learning, but also on the confidence level of preparedness when candidates enter the practicum environment.

This study looks at the standards of good assessment practice as outlined in *The Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* (1993) and how it impacts upon the assessment culture of the Faculty of Education's "Professional Year" through the roles associated with the institution, the instructor, and the pre-service teacher. This research will focus on two important concepts: transparency and validity. With the

concept of validity, "Assessment methods should be developed or chosen so that inferences drawn about the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours possessed by each student are valid and not open to misinterpretation" (Joint Advisory Committee, 1993, p. 4), and "should be suited to the background and prior experiences of students" (Joint Advisory Committee, 1993, p. 4). Through an examination of each key player's point of view, the ideologies of assessment should align to promote an overall "need to make learning more congru [ent] with assessment [where] there is a strong emphasis on the integration of learning, instruction, and assessment" (Segers, Dochy, & Gijbels, 2009, p. 298).

Assessment Practices

This integration of learning, instruction and assessment begins with an understanding of how good assessment practices should be implemented by instructors into an undergraduate course. Boud and Falchikov (2006) believe that "all assessment activities [in a course] need to be examined [by the instructor] from the point of view of what they contribute to prompting desired student learning in general and learning beyond the point of assessment in particular" (p. 36). Instructors then have a duty to reflect critically on their assignments to evaluate what that student is meant to learn and whether that learning will go beyond the objectives in the course to establish skills important to a new teacher. The assignments chosen by an instructor create a balanced assessment plan that includes types of assignments that represent assessment *for* learning, *as* learning and *of* learning in practice.

Formative Assessment

Assessment *for* learning (which in some cases may be also be referred to as formative assessment) is defined by Black, et al. (2004) as "any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning" (p. 10). Yorke (2003) adds to this definition by stating that formative assessment should also contribute to

student learning "through the provision of information about [a student's] performance" (p. 478). Stiggins (2002) cautions that assessment *for* learning is richer than formative assessment alone: "Teachers use the classroom assessment process and the continuous flow of information about student achievement that it provides in order to advance, not merely check on, student learning" (p. 4). Students are not only expected to learn from the feedback that is provided by the instructor; but they also learn how to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses through whatever feedback instructors provide. However, when "comments written by teachers [do not] supply guidance on how to improve the work and deflect students' attention from how well they had done … students will not use feedback to improve their work or openly review their understanding and difficulties as necessary for assessment to be used for learning" (Harlen, 2007, p. 20). Instead, students may feel frustrated and ignore the feedback.

A student's response to feedback requires, according to Price and Donovan (2006), the opportunity to engage with the feedback and use it to improve future work. As such, quality feedback should be designed with the following outcomes in mind: first, feedback should facilitate reflective learning; second, the feedback should relate back to clear assessment criteria; third, a student should be able to make connections with his or her personal work and the instructor's desired performance criteria for each course; and finally, "it is the nature, rather than the amount of commentary which is critical to learning" (p. 113). Simply stated, students will not take instructors' feedback seriously unless students have been taught how to reflect on learning and make connections with the course material. The feedback comments should have quality and substance.

Black et al. (2004) agree that feedback is critical to learning; however, they state that the big idea to remember about providing feedback to students is that the comments themselves should identify not only what has been done well, and what still needs to be improved, but also and most importantly the steps to how that improvement can be accomplished. By providing a student with a written task and orally questioning that task in the classroom, teachers encourage students to develop an understanding of the key features associated with assessment criteria and learning outcomes meant to be learned in the process of completing the assignment (Black et al., 2004, p. 14).

Although assessment *for* learning places more emphasis on assignments designed to give clear feedback to the student, an instructor has the opportunity to integrate and embed the learning outcomes into the curriculum and assessment design of the course which makes the assessment *for* learning process flexible and adaptable. At the same time, this section of an assessment plan gives strong gives evidence to support assessment of learning (Fry, Ketterridge, & Marshall, 2009); (Stiggins, 2002). Instructors benefit from integrating feedback into their instructional decisions because students become more engaged in the learning process. Stiggins (2002) states that students become active participants in their learning because the students have the wherewithal to identify their strengths and success within an assignment. Learners become confident in their abilities to contextualize information and ultimately understand that they are responsible for their own learning goals. As well, students are least likely to get resentful or frustrated with the assignment because they have been told the rationale behind the assessment task and how it relates to the overarching skill set. Learners who understand the reasoning behind their grades can identify overall strengths and weaknesses in a particular skill, and are able to refocus attention to

assignments that may require more time to finish (Brew, Riley, & Walta, 2009). This feedback cycle of assessment gives students more control over their process of learning required to develop professional skills such as time management and self-directed learning.

Summative Assessment

While assessment *for* learning involves the process of learning, assessment *of* learning is built upon the principles of providing evidence as to the student's acquisition of the learning objectives from a course. As assessment *of* learning is usually placed at the end of a learning module, it is sometimes referred to as a summative assessment. This type of assignment tends to drive the material and the method of teaching in the classroom as an instructor makes judgments about a student's overall understanding of the course materials presented (Fry, Ketterridge, & Marshall, 2009). Summative assessment therefore "summar[ises] and communicat[es] achievement in relation to a specified end point for the purpose of reporting, accountability and/or certification" (Hawe, 2007, p. 323). In the context of higher learning, Sadler (2009) points out that "by definition, all student works that contribute to course grades are summative" (p. 808). Graded assignments, thereby, take on two distinct purposes for the students: summative in the sense that they must prove what they have learned, and formative because they are looking for feedback prior to working on the next assignment.

Hawe (2007) criticizes this approach to summative assessment as an initiative that fosters the belief that memorization and the reproduction of facts rather than the application of skill is what is valued in the learning process. This false assumption gives students "the messages [about] not only what they should be learning, but also how they should go about this learning" (p. 324).

Balanced Assessment Plan

Although summative assessment has its flaws, most educators agree that good assessment practice involves a balanced system of assessment that provides opportunities for assessment of and for learning. As well, this assessment plan must provide assignments that are fair, reliable, and valid. Suskie (2002) states that "to draw reasonably good conclusions about what … students have learned, it is imperative that [instructors] make [their] assessments and [their] uses of the results as fair as possible for as many students as possible"(p. 2). Sambel, McDowell, and Brown (1997) surmise that "the notion of consequential validity, that is the effects of assessment on learning and teaching, applies as strongly to alternative assessment as to conventional assessment" (p. 352).

Segers, Dochy, and Gijbels (2009) give guidelines that affirm that good assessment should be fair, authentic, transparent, generalizeable, and recognize educational consequence in using the assessment. Harlen (2007) agrees that to evaluate a system of assessment one must identify criteria associated with construct, content, and consequential validity, as well as reliability.

From the perspective of a higher learning institution, the use of assessment criteria for a course section becomes fractured because each instructor has academic freedom to deliver the course content as the individual instructor sees fit. Each instructor may be adhering to the principles of good assessment practices; however, the students in the various sections of a course may perceive the overall delivery of the program to be lacking in these traits because they are reflecting upon the program's assessment culture holistically rather than analytically, relying on information received on a course by course basis.

Barak and Gidron (2009) feel that this fracture in the overarching curriculum with relation to assessment practices is a weakness in a traditional education program as the learner

develops the rhetoric of the teacher, but not the deeper understanding of what it means to be part of the teaching profession. The learner's voice is not heard when it comes to the teacher education system as whole; consequently, the administration and faculty have a limited understanding of perceptions that students may possess about their learning environment.

At present, students are asked only to evaluate the program through individual course evaluations. A student may exhibit negative attitudes about the quality of the program based on the student's overall experience with one instructor, the teaching method, and the amount of student workload of an individual course. "Students often explained surface approaches or negative attitudes in terms of their experiences of excessive workloads or inappropriate forms of assessment. The experience of learning is diminished by assessment methods which are perceived to be inappropriate" (Struyven, Dochy, & Janssens, 2005, p. 328). This negativity can have an impact on a student's motivation to learn and understand the learning objectives beyond a surface level for all courses. Kosnick and Beck (2003) explain that there is power in an individual's negative perceptions of a course or program because this perception can spread to the peer group, thereby causing a ripple effect that reinforces the individual's original awareness of a program's reliability and that individual's belief of the learning environment as valid to scholarship. Basing their perceptions of the current assessment culture, the student population may feel that the program is not fair, transparent, or valid.

Fairness and Transparency

Fairness is defined by Sadler (2009) to have the four propositions. First, students deserve to be graded on the merits of their personal work and not have their work compared to the work of others. It is unfair to compare a student's work to another's because students have no influence over or knowledge of a peer's level of academic achievement. Sadler (2009) also states that this norm referencing should not be carried over from a student's previous

work. Each assignment should be graded independently on its own merit. The ranking of students should therefore come naturally from the student's own perceptions of abilities and the student's discussion with peers and not through norm referencing. Second, students have a right to know up front what criteria will be used to evaluate their work. This step then takes the personal preferences, tastes, or attitudes that may be exhibited from an instructor out of the equation. Students will have an opportunity to understand the criteria the instructor requires to evidence the learning objective has meant, thereby eliminating the adaptation of their assignment to meet the needs of one instructor over the other instructor. Third, grades issued to a student for one type of assignment should be comparable to the same assignment in other courses within the program. For example, if a teacher candidate completes a lesson plan for one course, and requires the completion of a second lesson plan for another course at the same time, these grades should be comparable, even though the lesson content submitted to each instructor is different. Finally, these grades a student receives should be comparable to grades received in other departments in the university, so that the grades stand the test of time within the institution and give credibility to the work an undergraduate student has completed to graduate from the program (Sadler, 2009). This concept of fairness encompasses the concepts of transparency and validity in an assessment culture.

Undergraduate students need a clear picture of what assignments will be required to pass the course, which criteria will be used to evaluate the assignments in order to evaluate them. The rapid pace of the teacher education program's 28-week timeline for some fourteen to eighteen courses, requires teacher candidates' to prioritize a large numbers of assignments in accordance with the due date and difficulty. This process requires teacher candidates to

make critical choices in their learning. A student who understands what must be done to succeed in the classroom provides positive feedback to the instructor and the institution.

Although transparency might seem to be a short term solution to guarantee high student evaluation scores in a particular course, Boud and Fachikov (2006) hold that transparency of knowledge is a pivotal component that helps to align assessment with long-term learning. By following the guiding concepts associated with clearness (task and purpose analysis; communication of information embedded in the curricula) and by drawing attention to the assignment constructs, an instructor can ensure that a student understands not only the purpose of an assignment, but also the skill that assignment has been designed to evaluate. In terms of the assignment purpose, transparency may be difficult to achieve without intervention by the instructor as "transparency of knowledge may be hard to reconcile with the use of authentic examples as situated problems are rarely transparently constructed" (Boud & Falchikov, 2006, p. 410).

This problem with communicating transparency can certainly be true in the context of teacher education, as each teacher candidate is required to recognize key skills in such concepts as classroom management and assessment practices, and then adapt and integrate these concepts into his or her own teaching praxis. Torrance (2007) cautions that transparency given too liberally by an instructor can cause learners to become complacent in their learning, and that therefore the challenge of learning a specific outcome can be diminished. Given this problem, transparency has the potential to devalue the learning process if not implemented correctly.

Fry et al. (2009) contradict the difficulties associated with implementing transparency from an instructor's point of view by stating that transparency is an easy principle to

implement in the assessment framework of a course or program. However, instructors may not recognize that the information provided to the student through a course syllabus or written task is not contextually transparent. Fry et al. (2009) provide three guidelines with which instructors should be familiar in order to identify whether they have practiced transparency in their assessment plan: first, assessment tasks and criteria should be published for all students to see; second, the assessment task should be published within a good time frame for students to complete the task; and, third, an appeal and complaints process should not only be provided, but should be accessible to all. The course syllabus can be used as a tool for faculty to deliver the information required for the student and to communicate the guidelines associated with the practice of transparency because all teacher candidates in a course receive the document, usually in the first class. One function of the course syllabus is to "provide information about the content of the course. Syllabi routinely include the course assignments, [and] due dates" (Thompson, 2007, p. 55), so that teacher candidates (who typically have an accelerated schedule with a work load of up to 10 courses per term) may use this document for time management, and may readily compare the expectations of one section of a course with those of another.

Institutional Transparency

It is not only instructors who have to maintain transparency in their assessment practices; an institution's administration has the responsibility of ensuring that the assessment practices of the department's instructors are in line with the overall assessment culture. Consequently, the learner is demanding increased transparency from both the instructor and the institution (Lombardi, 2008). Administration is charged with creating the policies and practices associated with assessment that will allow for an integrated institutional assessment plan.

The resistance for faculty to implement an integrated institutional assessment plan that is transparent can be daunting for even those institutional administrators with large budgets. According to Lombardi (2008), instructors may feel that the changes asked of them are time and labour intensive compared to their past praxis. Information dissemination can become difficult to manage, control, and coordinate. Grading may seem more challenging as the instructor is asked to grade in a consistent manner, but there may be problems inherent in attempting to apply these concepts to classrooms with large enrollments.

Kramer (2009) believes that to overcome this resistance, "faculty must clearly understand the potential value of assessment-related activities for them" (p. 8). The institution's administrators are responsible for discussing the strategy and implementing the changes in small doses. Some viable administrative strategies include talking one on one with each member of the faculty about the issue, speaking to the strengths of each faculty member in terms of transparency and assessment, and getting the faculty involved in creating a plan as a department. These measures will create a learning environment that allows for faculty members and contract lecturers to work together in learning the trends in assessment. Asking the members of the department to share their challenges and successes in a non-threatening manner will reduce this resistance and allow for a more transparent program and department (Kramer, 2009).

If institutional transparency can be achieved through an integrated assessment plan that emphasizes departmental policy and changes to the course syllabi, administrators have the opportunity to evaluate the reliability and validity of the assessment praxis associated with their department. In terms of reliability, the importance of reliability underlies Harlen's (2007) definition of assessment in which the assignment is classified as reliable to "the extent that the

results can be said to be of acceptable consistency for a particular use" (p. 18). In terms of a particular use, *The Principles of Fair Assessment for Education in Canada* (1993) illustrates that assessment found in teacher education programs serves to both collect evidence of learned skills from teacher candidates in regards to their completion of the program requirements and to inform the administration that the course requirements from an instructor have been met by the teacher candidate. With institutions often having more than one section of any given course, the course requirements may differ from section to section. From the point of view of the student, the inconsistencies may not be acceptable between the various sections because the course requirements are based on the course creator's personal preferences and academic background rather than the institution's assessment plan.

The other issue that arises is that of amount and quality of evidence collected to evaluate the student's progress. As instructors are individuals with a variety of strengths, each instructor may value or interpret the course description based on his or her research interests, past experiences, and perceptions of skills required of a teacher for this generation or perceptions of what is required by the institution's administrators through assessment policies. These perceptions may not align with either the *Ontario College of Teachers' Standards of Practice* or *The Principles of Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* (1993). Consistency in course content, marking, and the collection of evidence of an assessment plan from a student's point of view depends on who creates the course and who grades the assignment. Consequently, a teacher candidate's perception of program reliability influences that student's belief that the teacher education learning experience is valid as it relates to the teaching profession.

Validity

The principle of validity in assessment can be defined in three stratified ways: as construct, content, and consequential validity. Harlen (2007) defines construct validity as "the evidence that is collected and the criteria by which to judge must be related to the intended learning of a specific lesson" (p. 20): thus, the criteria used to evaluate the assignment should be task specific. This specificity relates well to the evaluation of a student's work or an instructor's course; but the connection to the evaluation of a program or assessment culture may not be so transparent. Tummons (2010) provides the connection by affirming that "construct validity relies on the extent to which assessment is appropriate to and based on the workplace skill or activity that is being assessed" (p. 850). From the perspective of teacher education, construct validity would then rely on skills that a teacher candidate should possess prior to becoming a certified teacher. It would then be up to the institution's administration to provide a framework of skills that emphasizes not only the overall assessment culture, but also, as Harlen (2007) explains, the workplace skills defined by a practicing teacher.

The Ontario College of Teachers (2010), the province's governing body for teaching practices, identifies the skills teacher candidates are required to learn prior to entering the profession as "developing": a commitment to student success through caring; ethical decision making; self-directed learning strategies; critical and creative thinking, collaborative partnerships and leadership skills, a reflective and knowledgeable praxis, and responsiveness to equity and diversity in the classroom. Consequently, the assignments in a teacher education program should provide evidence of one or more of these skills to be considered to possess optimum construct validity.

The methods associated with optimum construct validity require an institution to identify or in this case align overarching concepts of skills that are related and interpreted as goals of learning for a specific profession. From these goals, a curriculum support structure can be used to strengthen the content validity of an integrated assessment plan. Content validity relates to the extent to which an assignment aligns with skills taught in a course or program. Consequential validity can refer to not only the course assessment plan, but also to the assessment tasks involved in a series of courses or program. As such, consequential validity looks at the uses of this assignment in authentic assignment tasks.

As validity in the case of teacher education has a direct relation to workplace skills and concepts, (Wiggins, 1990) would identify this type of assignment practice as authentic in approach. Authentic tasks rely on specific criteria that relate to every day, real world tasks. Palm (2008) classifies the three perspectives associated with the "real world tasks": first, tasks are created with the idea that the tasks learned will move beyond school and into real life; second, course development and classroom practice are designed to be as authentic as possible; third, learning is based on a process of learning that goes beyond what has been learned in the classroom. The learning process relies on instructors' providing assessment tasks that emulate processes or products that can be used as strategies or tools beyond the classroom. Learning is then dependent on the figurative context of the assignment, the conditions placed on the quality assessment task, and the process of learning. Authentic assessment moves away from traditional teacher-centered assessment practices to a learner-centered pedagogy.

Learner Centred Assessment

As the Faculty of Education 2006-2011 strategic plan clearly states, the teaching culture should be committed to a learner-centered pedagogy. Consequently, it is important not only to align the perceptions of the student with the perceptions of the instructor and Faculty when improving the overall program delivery, but also to incorporate a learner-centered approach to assessment (University Faculty of Education, 2006).

Norman and Spoher (1996) state that

> At the heart [of a learner-centered pedagogy] is the idea that people learn best when engrossed in the topic, motivated to seek out new knowledge and skills because they need them in order to solve the problem at hand. The goal relates "to active exploration, construction, and learning rather than the passivity of lecture attendance and textbook reading. (p. 26)

In order to actively explore and construct learning, Gerdy (2002) provides a blueprint for learner-centred assessment that requires a student to learn by experiencing four modes of analysis: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. "When teachers understand why active experimentation, assessment, and feedback are critical to learning, and when they are equipped with tools to strengthen their individual assessment and feedback skills, they are better prepared to promote their students' learning" (Gerdy, 2002, p. 66).

An instructor has an obligation to promote the learning of students within his or her classroom; however, an instructor also has an obligation to look beyond the individual student or classroom to see the broad vision of assessment within the department. Weinstein, Chin, Shapiro, and Martin (2010) remind faculty members that one of the strengths of being an instructor is evaluating learning by "looking at performance of individual students on single assignments or exams or across all assignments in a course (for a final grade)" (p. 6). These same data used to look at the performance of an individual teacher candidate can also be

combined to consider the performance of assessment in a program. This evaluation can strengthen the overall assessment culture of an organization and thereby transfer this strength to its students through modeling and mentorship.

Examining Assessment Practices

The culture of assessment starts with an evaluation of the assessment practices within a faculty or department. Hill (2005) provides a comprehensive blue print for the establishment of an assessment culture. The first step is to measure student satisfaction with the overall teacher education program. The second step involves the creation of instruments to be used to evaluate the core course sections. During this phase, members of the department are likely to resist the implementation of an assessment culture because one might feel that the administration is critiquing personal praxis rather than evaluating an overall program; thus, administrators have a responsibility to bring the divided groups together to find common ground through education, awareness, and communication of the issues before the creation of an integrated assessment plan can be taken seriously and implemented properly. The development of program goals and learning outcomes form the framework for the assessment plan. Although the creation and implementation of an integrated assessment plan may seem like the last stage of development, the goals and learning outcomes need to be measured and revitalized at regular intervals to stay current. According to Brill (2008), integrating assessment into the everyday life of institutional administrators, faculty, and students takes clear leadership and a commitment to implementing an assessment culture based on overall program improvement for administration, tenured and tenure-track faculty, contract lecturers, and the learner.

"During the past decade, the world of assessment in higher education has been dominated by a plea for the implementation of an assessment culture, where learning in its

various aspects and the learner are central to the process" (Segers, Dochy, & Gijbels, 2009, p. 314). This Faculty of Education has not been immune to this plea. In 2003, the Dean commissioned a "review of evaluation practices and outcomes in B.Ed programs" (Crocker, 2003, p. i). This review concluded that the Faculty of Education should consider developing "appropriate policies and practices for student evaluation" (Crocker, 2003, p. iii) and provided a platform for the administration to begin to develop a unique assessment culture that would align the grading practices of instructors through the use of a common rubric and specific grading policy.

According to Sadler (2009), "grading schemes that employ fixed sets of criteria have become firmly established in higher education" (p. 159). The administration followed the recommendation and created both a rubric and grading policy to even out grading inconsistencies. Instructors are required to have a solid foundation from which to grade a student's work. The rubric outlines the expectations of the faculty in terms of a student's work rather than effort, attendance, or attitude. This assessment practice forms the backbone of the integrated assessment plan used in the Faculty of Education today.

Rubrics

Because the grading policy and rubric essentially govern the "Professional Year" assessment, it is important to look critically at the rubric as an assessment tool. A rubric, according to Griffin (2009), is a series of choices made by the creators to determine which information is deemed most important by the group and should be included in the document. Therefore, it becomes "a set of negotiating compromises" (Griffin, 2009, p. 4) in terms of the criteria and standards that are deemed relevant to the learning process. Reddy and Andrade (2010) define a rubric as "a document that articulates the expectations for an assignment by listing the criteria, or what counts, and describing levels of quality from excellent to poor" (p.

435). Jackson and Larkin (2002) reiterate that "the rubric becomes a scoring tool indicating 'what counts' (p. 40). Griffin (2009) states that, although the rubric has evolved into what is perceived to be a "precise, technical, scientific document [which]... carries the tone of certainty, authority, and exactitude, ...a rubric is still a creation of the people who made it" (p. 4).

From a student's point of view, a rubric is "systematic tool to guide student learning" (Jackson & Larkin, 2002, p. 41). This assessment tool is used to evaluate and grade the learner's performance on a particular assignment. Sadler (2009) verifies that a rubric is best used to evaluate and measure "response formats [which include] term papers, essays, written assignments, field and project reports, seminars, presentations, studio and design productions, specialized artefacts, professional performance, clinical consultations, creative works and client interviews" (p. 160).

To use the right type of assessment tool for the right type of assignment, an instructor must determine whether a rubric is appropriate to measure and evaluate the end product. If a rubric is deemed appropriate, the instructor has a choice between using an analytical or holistic rubric in the assignment design. Analytic rubrics look at the process of learning by separating the parts of an assignment individually and by providing specific criteria to represent that part. The assessor then scores the product by judging which standard among the criteria the product exhibits. The scores of the criteria are added up for a final mark (Jackson & Larkin, 2002). A holistic rubric does not use a scoring strategy; instead, the criteria's qualifiers are highlighted, and a grade is presented based on where the highlighted portions best fall on the scoring scale. Usually this type of rubric is used when the criteria can be interconnected when evaluating a product (Jackson & Larking 2002).

Whether the rubric is holistic or analytical in terms of its scoring strategy, Reddy and Andrade (2010) state that a rubric "has three essential features: evaluations criteria ... quality definitions ... and a scoring strategy" (p. 435). These features are set in a grid with the criteria to be evaluated down the left side in one row and the scoring strategy in a column across the top. The quality definitions are then placed within the square that relates to both the scoring strategy and the criteria. The quality definitions have typical features or qualifiers to distinguish between the levels (Sadler, 2009).

Although a rubric gives the appearance of providing an analytical judgment, instructors are still asked to judge a student's work qualitatively based on the interpretation of what they believe the pre-set criteria mean (Sadler, 2009) and how the rubric is to be implemented as a tool for the institution to monitor the progress of all students in the program. If there is no perceived policy for rubric implementation in terms of an instructor's evaluating a student's work, there is no consistency for the learner; as a result, students may perceive that what is clearly stated in the rubric is not achievable and therefore that validity and transparency are adhered to only on a surface level. If this perception is widely shared, the teacher candidates will not be motivated to deeper learning and feel that what they are learning is not relevant to the teaching profession. It is, therefore, imperative to examine criteria- and norm-referencing as each refers to the problems associated with the implementation of a faculty rubric as an assessment tool.

When a Faculty of Education exhibits a learner centred approach to learning and assessment, there may be an expectation that the faculty's grading policy would therefore be required to focus on the individual learner and not the cohort. This expectation can become an issue with the implementation of a faculty rubric when the policy for use is not explicit to

all stakeholders. For example, instructors interpret the policy based on a personal philosophy of assessment. One instructor may mark assignments on the understanding that the faculty values criteria referencing over norm referencing and would therefore focus on criteria referencing by evaluating the individual learner based on the criteria set in the rubric rather than the cohort. On the other hand, if an instructor's philosophy of assessment leans toward norm referencing when grading assignments, the instructor could interpret the policy and the wording on the rubric to mean that all grading should be used evaluated on a bell curve against the student. If some faculty members believe the policy is talking about norm referencing rather than criteria referencing, faculty use rubrics in a criteria and norm referencing mode with some instructors perceiving that the policy set out by the administration means that norm referencing should be adhered to over criteria referencing when evaluating the teacher candidate's progress in mastering the criteria deemed important to acquire.

Student Workload

Another factor that is important to recognize in an integrated assessment plan is student workload. Marsh (2001) explains why looking at student workload is import to discuss at a departmental or course level as "workload that is seen by students to be far too much or far too difficult is … imposed without due consideration of their capacities or prior learning" (p. 185). Marsh's study found that, although workload can be defined as the number of hours a student must work outside of the classroom; there was a significant difference between what is considered to be good work hours and bad work hours. Contrary to popular belief, students were most satisfied when the workload was challenging and the work valid.

Unlike Marsh, Kember (2004) equates one quantitative definition of workload to mean the number of hours a student spends outside of class on school work, whether good or bad.

However, he puts more emphasis on the qualitative nature of a student's perception of the workload associated with a course or program. Factors such as time spent outside of class in studies, the stress a student is under, and the relationships between peers and instructors all play a part in the experience students have in their learning. However, Kember (2004) positions one of the biggest factors in the perception of student workload as the assessment practices of the instructor. "Assessment is a curriculum variable which has been shown to have an impact upon learning approaches. The effect is sufficiently strong, as students are normally assessment driven" (p. 180). Consequently, this study defines "student workload" as the number, the type and the frequency of assignments required not only for the students to complete in a course, but also in the program as a whole.

Accelerated Learning

The "Professional Year" in the Teacher Education Program is an accelerated program in that it has 9-week and 18-week courses rather than the traditional 12- and 24- week format. Lee and Horsfall (2010) reported in their study of accelerated programs that students have found the learning to be highly intensive compared to that in full-length programs, especially as it pertains to student workload. Ironically, the student may feel unprepared for the program because he or she entered the program with the perception that the shorter time frame would mean an easier workload. Lee and Horsfall (2010) also found that, when it comes to assessment practices, timing is everything: "Assessment need[s] to be planned more carefully to suit the accelerated time frame, particularly aligning assessment tasks with class work and pacing tasks so that they [are] not overlapping or concentrated at the end of the term" (p. 199). Assignment timing (i. e., setting the due dates) is crucial to not only the requirements for a course, but also for a program.

Assessment options and methods for one course should, therefore, according to Craddock and Mathias (2009), complement the options and methods used in all the other courses of a program. Each course would then be considered a unit of study of an overall program. This perspective would "encourage a holistic approach to assessment in which a high degree of co-operation between those teaching different parts of the program is essential" (Craddock & Mathias, 2009, p. 136). Adopting such an institutional perspective gives students the opportunity to move beyond a surface level of learning to be engaged in a deeper process of thought.

A course which has the potential for surface learning can be identified, according to Rust (2002), as having a heavy workload, high class contact hours, an excessive amount of course material, a lack of opportunity to study the subject in depth, and a lack of choice over method of study or subject of study. In a quarter-credit course, which can feature up to 18 hours of class time during one semester or across a full year, the challenge of an instructor would be to provide more meaningful learning as time and subject matter compete against assessment tasks and the method or choice of study.

Combating surface learning requires the integration of knowledge through a well structured knowledge base, interaction with peers both by the student and the instructor, engaging the student through the student's desire to know the material, and providing learner-centred activities or assignments that promote a deeper understanding of the content (Rust, 2002). This deeper approach to learning requires a student to be intrinsically motivated. There needs to be a perceived relevance to the assignment. "Departments would therefore be well advised to audit the range of assessment strategies that they are using, their appropriateness, and to examine critically the reasons why certain techniques may not be used,

and others perhaps overused" (Rust, 2002, p. 150-151). The information that follows is one such audit.

Chapter Three – Project Design Processes

Background

In order to become a certified teacher in Ontario, an individual must "have completed a minimum three-year post-secondary degree from an acceptable post-secondary institution [and] have successfully completed a one-year acceptable teacher education program" (OCT, Becoming a Teacher, 2011). An individual can participate in the program con-currently while receiving another degree or consecutively, after the applicant has received a degree. There are also Aboriginal and technological teacher qualification programs.

Individuals may choose to be qualified to teach in three separate divisions: Primary/Junior (P/J), which qualifies an individual to teach Kindergarten through Grade 6; Junior/Intermediate (J/I), whose qualifications allow an individual to teach Grade 4 through to Grade 8 with one specific specialization or teachable; on the other hand, Intermediate/Senior (I/S) teachers must have two specializations, and have the ability to teach Grades 7-12 (OCT, Teacher Divisions, 2011). At present, eighteen institutions offer a teacher education program in Ontario; all eighteen offer the Bachelor of Education degree program consecutively and ten institutions offer a Concurrent program that culminates in a "Professional Year."

This program is 28 weeks in length, with 18 weeks spent on course work and 10 weeks spent on placement. The two terms, fall and winter, are structured with 9 weeks dedicated to course work and 5 weeks of a teaching placement regardless of teaching division.

In terms of course work, the teacher candidate must successfully earn five and a half equivalent credits involving courses directly related to a teachable and/or stream. The credit hours are the same, but the number of courses vary. The P/J and J/I stream participants are required to complete 18 courses, while the I/S program participants are required to finish 14 courses.

These courses are evaluated based on a faculty rubric which was developed as a result of an internal report commissioned by the Faculty of Education to investigate the teacher education program's perceived grade inflation. As a result of this report, the Faculty of Education determined to develop a uniform grading policy in 2004. Charging a broadly based committee of faculty to take submissions, develop models, and facilitate assessment discussions, the faculty originally adopted a four step rubric that emulated the Ontario Ministry of Education's achievement chart (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004).

In consequence, this Faculty of Education Rubric, in general use since 2005, had tended to emphasize the caliber of written work in a criteria-referenced model. In 2007, the rubric was expanded to level 5 to make it congruent with the Senate policies on grading.

Simultaneous with the implementation of the rubric, the faculty adopted a uniform grading policy which outlined three expectations. Good attendance became a mandatory expectation; consequences for a student with poor attendance (missing more than two classes out of nine, for example) included dismissal from the program. All course and assessment requirements must be written on the course syllabus, and must be used for assessment purposes; furthermore, no late submission of work is tolerated. Assessment is to be a reflection of academic rigour.(University Faculty of Education, 2004)

With the implementation of the grading policy, a course syllabus template was created for instructors to outline all course requirements and assessment with the inclusion of due dates, assignment descriptions, and assessment criteria.

Introduction

In this mixed method study, the researcher created ethnographic profiles of the teacher education program. Through a textual analysis of course syllabi, quantitative data were collected to describe the assignment workload in the different streams of the program (Anson & Dannels, 2009) and then a qualitative ethnographic collection of data explored how teacher candidates perceive the assessment landscape in the teacher education program. These data created a snapshot of the assessment culture. Cooke (1988) states that the use of a mixed methodology is beneficial to the assessment of an organization's culture because the qualitative data allow for the key players in the organization to "describe itself" and "the intensive and in-depth information that can be obtained about the unit" (p. 246) is crucial when little information exists about the culture. The quantitative profiling provides a cross section of data analysis that allows for "comparisons (across individuals, organizations, or sub-units)" (Cooke, 1988, p. 246).

As such the research design has been broken down into two parts, part 1 is the quantitative research in which assessment profiles were created and part 2 is the qualitative research that collects and records the teacher candidates' perceptions.

Part 1 – Quantitative Research – Profile Development.

The researcher has created an ethnographic profile framework of the assessment culture which uses profiles to describe the assessment of the program as a whole, and compares three program streams. Anson and Dannel's (2009) profile approach allow for the data to be categorized effectively and gives a fair evaluation of the assessment culture in the Faculty of Education's Undergraduate Studies Department.

Stage 1: Data preparation. The research began with the request and collection of the course syllabi for 2011-2012 (145 in total) (University Office of the Registrar, 2011) from the

Faculty of Education Undergraduate Studies. A course syllabus was thought to be the right vehicle to gather such data because "many syllabi include a detailed description of what the students will be evaluated on" and "how those scores ultimately fit into the final grade at the end of the term. In this way, evaluative methods remain one of the primary focuses of the syllabi" (Ludwig, Bentz & Fynewever, 2011, p. 20).

As a result of this request, an electronic copy of the course syllabi for the 2011-2012 academic year, in both MsWord and PDF, were transferred to a memory stick by the Undergraduate department and given to the researcher. The researcher then transferred a copy of the course syllabi to an e-reader which allowed the content of the syllabus to be coded and inputted into a coding form simultaneously. Ten course syllabi associated with the student practicum were removed since this course is a pass/fail with two performance assessments by associate teachers and since no concrete course assignments outside of the duties found on practicum were found to be present. This then reduced the course syllabi sample size to 135.

A coding form, as shown in the appendix, was created using Google docs to input the data representing the nominal, ordinal, and scale variables. The form was set up using broad categories to limit the level of interpretation in coding the assignment. For example, in terms of the assignment type category, there were 17 choices ranging from attendance mark to undisclosed, which could be chosen based on the assignment label and description provided in the syllabus by the instructor.

Once the data were inputted into the Google docs form, the data were automatically sorted into corresponding categories on a spreadsheet by the Google analytics program. The

spreadsheet was then downloaded in an Excel format to be uploaded into SPSS (formerly known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software.

After the data were downloaded into SPSS, the researcher reviewed each of the 135 data records to verify that the information was accurate and to ensure that no discrepancies were found between the data on the spreadsheet and the data on the course syllabus.

To ensure reliability, a second researcher was asked to look over a sampling of ten per cent (14) of the syllabi to code independently and compare with the original data found in the course syllabus. The researcher found no discrepancies in the data. After the data had been inputted into SPSS, the same independent researcher was asked to verify the database contents for any transcription error by comparing samples of the code sheet against the individual assignment records in the data base. No discrepancies were found.

Stage 2: Profile creation. Once the information had been validated, the data collected from the syllabi were tabulated using descriptive and frequency statistics to create an "overall" program profile, which contains descriptive information on the number, type, nature, frequency, and weighting of assignments as well as the provision and use of a faculty rubric.

From there, a "P/J", a "J/I", an "I/S", an "Electives", and an "All Foundation" assessment profile (all five of which contain the average number of assessments per stream, the frequency of assessment, the most frequent type of assessment, and the most frequent nature of assignment) were created.

Once the stream profiles were created, the profiles featuring individual teacher candidates' schedules were formed using teacher candidates with English specialization from P/J, J/I, and I/S streams.

Stage 3: Data validation. To validate the data found on the course syllabus, a survey, found in appendix B on page 137, was designed and implemented, using the Google Docs Forms application, to ask teacher candidates their perceptions and preferences of assessment and evaluation found in the teacher education program

Since Sax, Gilmartin, and Bryant (2003) state that a survey response of 24% can be expected if both a paper and an on-line option for survey completion are given to students, the researcher elected to give students an opportunity to fill out either an on-line survey or paper survey. In consequence, a response rate of survey return of over 150 student surveys was calculated as a minimum to consider the on-line surveys to be complete based on an admission rate of 615 students entering the "Professional Year" of the Bachelor of Education Program.

Because Hamilton's (2009) findings state that "at least 2 weeks as a run time [is needed] for surveys in which it is important to get a full response" (p. 4), students accessed the survey through an e-mail sent through the Faculty of Education's distribution list four times in a span of two weeks, beginning in Week 8 and concluding in Week 9 at the end of the fall term prior to the first placement.

The survey was promoted in all but two classroom management courses, in which permission was granted by the instructor, by distributing a paper copy of the survey with the on-line link so that students had an opportunity to complete the survey on-line or via paper. This course was chosen because each student regardless of stream is required to take this course within the "Professional Year" in order to become a certified teacher. Teacher candidates were asked to submit the survey on-line or by submitting a survey into a lock box

installed in the Education student lounge. The surveys were collected by the researcher daily from the box and then inputted into the Google doc live form manually

Once the form was completed by the respondent, an e-mail of thanks was sent to each respondent with the note that their name had been submitted for the chance to win one of five $40 movie gift card packages. The Google doc's analytics program tallied the data and placed the information in a spreadsheet format. Those who participated by filling out the survey had the opportunity to edit their responses as the program provided a link to each respondent's survey entry and each response used the University user name to avoid duplication of results

Stage 4: Comparison of stream and student schedule profiles. Once the profiles were created and the survey sent to the teacher candidates, cross tabulation tables, and graphs were made to compare the differences in assessment between the three teacher education streams and the three student schedule. This comparison of profiles explains strengths and weaknesses of the assessment practices associated with the teacher education program as a whole and through each stream.

Sample

Course syllabus review. Data were collected through an analysis of 230 course sections, ranging from .25 FCE's or 18 credit hours to 1.0 FCE or 72 credit hours and representing all courses from the 2011-2012 academic year. Although there were 230 course sections offered in the P/J. J/I and I/S streams, some instructors chose to use the same syllabi for different sections of a course; as a result, a total of 135 course syllabi (10 syllabi associated with teaching placements were removed prior to analysis) were analyzed.

Course syllabi have been used as reliable vehicles to collect data because a course "…syllabus …functions to provide information about the content of the course. Syllabi

routinely include the course assignments, due dates, and book titles…as well as course or learning objectives" (Thompson, 2007, p. 55). In the Faculty of Education's Department of Undergraduate Studies, a template has been created to provide a superficial similarity in the information found on the course syllabi. The syllabi have been found to contain, at the very least, the course description, course objectives, and the assignments that a student is required to complete in order to pass the course.

To visualize the sample size breakdown associated with this study, a cross tabulation table (Table 1) that compares the course stream, the course weight and the course type has been provided on the following page.

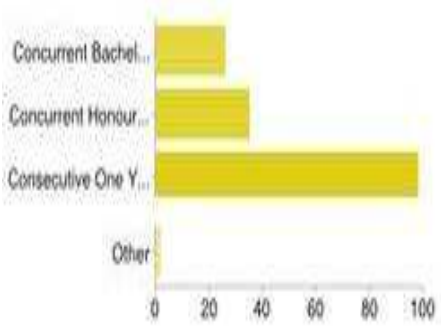
Table 1: Syllabi Sample Comparison

Course weight			Course Stream					Total
			P/J	J/I	I/S	Electives	All Foundation	
.25 FCE	Course Type	Curriculum and Instruction	5	15	7	0	0	27
		Electives	2	0	7	21	0	30
		Foundation/Core	8	9	12	0	9	38
	Total		15	24	26	21	9	95
.5 FCE	Course Type	Curriculum and Instruction	4	2	0	0	0	6
		Foundation/Core	2	3	5	0	1	11
	Total		6	5	5	0	1	17
1 FCE	Course Type	Curriculum and Instruction	0	0	17	0	0	17
	Total		0	0	17	0	0	17
.25 & .5 FCE	Course Type	Curriculum and Instruction	2	3	0	0	0	5
		Foundation/Core	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Total		2	4	0	0	0	6
Total	Course Type	Curriculum and Instruction	11	20	24	0	0	55
		Electives	2	0	7	21	0	30
		Foundation/Core	10	13	17	0	10	50
	Total		23	33	48	21	10	135

Teacher candidate survey. All teacher candidates from the 2011-2012 school year (615, approximately 115 concurrent, and 500 consecutive students) were asked to validate the findings of the overall profile by providing their input about the assessment practices in the program

At the time of the administration of the survey, the 615 students who were enrolled in the "Professional Year" had been divided into the course streams as follows: P/J, 242; J/I, 121; and I/S, 252 (personal communication, October 5, 2011). The survey had a 26% rate of return with 161 students responding to the survey (160 on-line and 1 on paper).

Table 2: Teacher Candidate Survey Respondent Program Break Down



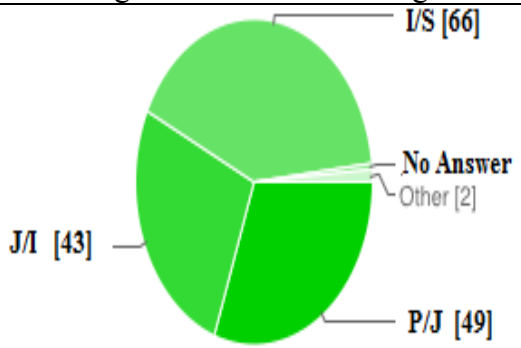
Concurrent B.ED Program	26	16%
Concurrent Honours B.ED Program	35	22%
Consecutive One Year B.ED Program	98	61%
Other	2	1%

Two questions on the survey asked respondents to identify the education program and division enrolled within the program. Table 2 indicates 61 per cent of respondents were consecutive students. Concurrent students made up 38 per cent of the respondents.

Table 3 indicates 41 per cent of the respondents were I/S teacher candidates. The P/J stream is represented by 30 per cent of the responses, and J/I teacher candidates make up 27 per cent of the responses.

Table 3: Survey Respondent Breakdown of Stream

I am registered in the following course stream of the Bachelor of Education Program:



Primary Junior	49	30%
Junior Intermediate	43	27%
Intermediate Senior	66	41%
I do not wish to answer	1	1%
Other	2	1%

Part 2: Qualitative Research – Teacher Candidate Perceptions

The end of term survey contained one question asking teacher candidates to comment on the student workload associated with the teacher education program. The rest of the information on student perceptions was collected through semi-structured interviews.

Step 1: Data preparation and recovery. 161 students responded to the surveys. From these, 13 students, four from each of the P/J and I/S stream and five from the J/I stream, were recruited to participate in a 15-20 minute semi-structured digitally recorded session (See page 139). The interviews were held in a private seminar room provided by the Graduate Studies Department. The interview period lasted five days during the fall culminating task week, prior to the students' heading to their first placement.

These interviews were digitally audio-taped using Evernote, an Apple IPAD 2 application, and transcribed by an outside transcription company from the recorded files. Respondents received a thank-you $10 Tim Horton's gift card.

Step 2: Data coding. The data was read line by line from the individual comments and transcripts. Each line was coded using one or more of the following themes associated with the course syllabi review: student workload (number of assignments), nature, type,

quality, and weighting of assignments as well as the provision and use of a faculty rubric.

Step 3: Data analysis. The coded data segments were removed from the transcript and comments and grouped together to analyze the theme more in depth and look for patterns in theme and context to the original code. For example, since the data line may represent information about the nature of the assignment, all data coded as to the nature of the assignment were brought together to highlight emerging themes and patterns such as issues with group work. This coding was done by hand using content analysis and emergent theme protocols

Sample

Survey. There were 96 comments made by the teacher candidates in response to the qualitative question in the teacher candidate survey. These comments were broken down by stream: 42 comments were made by I/S candidates, 29 by J/I candidates, and 25 by P/J candidates. From these comments, 148 data segments were extracted focusing on the emerging themes.

Semi-structured interviews. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) state that rich data for more "high level, over arching themes [can be obtained] after only twelve interviews" (p. 78). To avoid coverage error, the researcher interviewed a multi-stage stratified sampling of 13 students: 4 representing the P/J stream, 5 representing the J/I division, and 4 representing the I/S stream. Students were chosen at random from within the strata based on the informed consent portion of the survey.

Chapter 4 – Results

This mixed method study was completed in two parts. Part 1 involved the creation of an overall program profile, the comparison of program stream (P/J, J/I, I/S) profiles and the comparison of English specialization teacher candidate's course schedule profiles. The overall profile uses the responses from the teacher candidate survey to validate the findings from the profiles.

In part 2, the transcription data from semi-structured interviews and comment data from the teacher candidate surveys were coded and analyzed based on the same assessment and evaluation areas found in the quantitative section. The seven overarching themes used to code the 96 comments and transcriptions of the 13 semi- structured interviews were: student workload (number of assignments), types, frequency, nature, weight, and quality of the assignments, as well as the provision and the use of the faculty rubric as an assessment tool.

Section 1: Overall program profile

An overall profile was created that features the total number, type, nature, due dates, and weightings as well as the provision and use of a faculty rubric. Each component of the profile contains both qualitative and quantitative data.

Total number of assignments.

Part 1: Profile creation. There were 70 courses offered in 230 sections during the 2011-2012. Course outlines were used in the analysis only once even if the professor used the same course outline for more than one section. Therefore, the analysis was done on 135 syllabi. Table 4 was created to illustrate the descriptive statistics for all course syllabi in the program.

Table 4: Overall Assignment Descriptive Statistics								
	Total Course Syllabi	Assignment Minimum	Assignment Maximum	Assignment Responses	Assignment Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
						error		
	135	1	10	523	3.87	.135	1.567	2.454
N	135							

A total of 523 assignment records were extracted from the 135 syllabi. The total number of assignments per course syllabus ranged from 1 to 10 assignments with the average total number of assignments being 3.87 per course syllabus. To ensure the course syllabi represent the total number of assignments per course sections, each course and section was analyzed to determine the course assignment mean. Table 5 indicates the Full Credit Equivalent (or course weight) assigned to a course, but the course average number of assignments has not been pro-rated to balance the differing weights of the courses.

When all 230 sections of courses were included in the count, the total number of assignments was 886 and the average number of assignments was 3.85 as specified in Table 5. This difference is negligible compared to the course syllabus assignment mean of 3.87.

As Table 5 has the course data ranked from the highest assignment average to the lowest average, it is clear that the I/S Curriculum and Instruction in Social Science General is ranked as having the most assignments (10) for a FCE course. The J/I Curriculum and Instruction in Mathematics course, a quarter credit course, has the most assignments on average at 5 per course on average. 6 assignments is the highest amount of assignments on average a student would encounter in a quarter credit course in the J/I Curriculum and Instruction in Science.

Table 5: Assignment Means in Relation to Course Sections						
Course Type Key: C= Curriculum & Instruction, E= Electives, F= Foundation or Core Course						
Course Name	FCE	Course Type	Stream	Total No. Sections	Total Course Assignments	Course Assignment Mean
Social Sciences – General	1	C	I/S	2	20	10
Mathematics	1	C	I/S	1	8	8
Geography	1	C	I/S	2	16	8
I/S Chemistry	1	C	I/S	1	7	7
I/S Physics	1	C	I/S	1	7	7
Outdoor, Ecological Education: I/S Environmental Science	1	C	I/S	2	14	7
Visual Arts	1	C	I/S	1	7	7
Health & Phys. Ed.	1	C	I/S	1	6	6
Biology	1	C	I/S	1	6	6
I/S French	1	C	I/S	1	5	5
I/S English	1	C	I/S	2	9	4.5
History and Related Curricula	1	C	I/S	2	8	4
Computer Studies (Accounting)	1	C	I/S	1	4	4
Business Studies	1	C	I/S	1	3	3
General Science	1	C	I/S	1	1	1
Mathematics	0.5	C	J/I	4	24	6
Language Arts P/J	0.5	C	P/J	5	28	5.6
Math	0.5	C	P/J	5	25	5
Language Arts J/I	0.5	C	J/I	4	17	4.25
Essentials of Classroom Management	0.5	F	All	15	62	4.13
Intermediate Science	0.25	C	J/I	1	6	6
Intermediate History	0.25	C	J/I	1	6	6
Intermediate Geography	0.25	C	J/I	1	6	6
Health and Phys. Ed.	0.25	C	J/I	1	5	5
French J/I	0.25	C	J/I	1	5	5
Mathematics	0.25	C	J/I	1	5	5
Physical & Health Education	0.25	C	J/I	4	20	5
Physical & Health Education	0.25	C	P/J	5	25	5
Intro to Teaching Primary Core or Immersion French	0.25	E	P/J	1	5	5
Educational Psychology	0.25	F	All	9	41	4.56

Course Name	FCE	Course Type	Stream	Total No. Sections	Total Course Assignments	Course Assignment Mean
Essentials of Planning & Evaluation	0.25	F	All	15	68	4.53
Digital Learning and Teaching	0.25	E	All	2	9	4.5
Cooperative Learning Strategies	0.25	E	All	1	4	4
School Based Health Promotion	0.25	E	All	1	4	4
School Based Outdoor Education	0.25	E	All	4	16	4
Native Studies	0.25	C	J/I	1	4	4
Teaching Kindergarten	0.25	E	P/J	2	8	4
Early Reading	0.25	C	P/J	5	20	4
P/ J Music	0.25	C	P/J	5	18	3.6
Outdoor and Experiential Education (Individual Action Project)	0.25	E	I/S	2	7	3.5
Educational Law	0.25	F	All	15	52	3.47
Foundations and Issues in Education	0.25	F	All	13	45	3.46
Educational Technology in the Classroom	0.25	E	All	4	12	3
Contemporary Issues in Native Education	0.25	E	All	1	3	3
Religious ED. in Roman Catholic Schools In Ontario	0.25	E	All	3	9	3
Teaching in a Multicultural Setting	0.25	E	All	4	12	3
Diversity in Education	0.25	E	All	1	3	3
Media, Education, and Gender	0.25	E	All	1	3	3
Drama in Education	0.25	E	All	2	6	3
Teaching English as a second language to native children	0.25	E	All	1	3	3
Outdoor Ecological and Experiential Education	0.25	E	I/S	1	3	3
Literacy and Learning in I/S Curriculum	0.25	C	I/S	5	15	3
Preparing I/S Teacher Candidates for J/I Classrooms	0.25	E	I/S	3	9	3
Social Sciences	0.25	C	J/I	1	3	3
J/I Art	0.25	C	J/I	4	12	3
Music	0.25	C	J/I	4	12	3

Course Name	FCE	Course Type	Stream	Total No. Sections	Total Course Assignments	Course Assignment Mean
Media Literacy in the Middle Years Language Arts	0.25	C	J/I	1	3	3
Visual Arts	0.25	C	J/I	1	3	3
Visual Arts	0.25	C	P/J	5	15	3
OE3 Authentic Group Project	0.25	E	I/S	3	8	2.67
Science and technology	0.25	C	J/I	5	13	2.6
Science and technology	0.25	C	P/J	5	13	2.6
Aboriginal Education	0.25	F	All	15	38	2.53
Teaching Exceptional Children	0.25	F	All	9	22	2.44
Holistic Teaching and Learning: Teaching for Happiness	0.25	E	All	1	2	2
Process Writing	0.25	E	I/S	2	4	2
St. Educational Internship	0.25	E	I/S	1	1	1
School College Work Internship	0.25	E	I/S	1	1	1
Guiding Student Choices	0.25	F	I/S	1	1	1
J/I Vocal/Music in the Classroom	0.25	C	J/I	1	1	1
Overall Total				230	886	3.85
All information is compiled from the University Course Calendar, Timetable and Electives Document. (University Calendar 2011-2012, 2011)(Education Electives, 2011)(University Course Time Table Education, 2011)						

The full-course equivalency (FCE) weighting of courses varies depending upon the number of credit hours. Courses were of four weights 25 FCE, .5 FCE, 1 FCE, and .25 FCE & .5 FCE. This last weight indicates that the instructors who teach integrated courses such as Essentials of Planning and Evaluation, a .25 FCE and Essentials of Classroom Management, a .5 FCE course may use the same course syllabi to integrate the course material rather than produce a separate syllabus for each course. This is the case for 6 syllabi as indicated in Table 6, a cross tabulation which was created to compare the course weight, assignment number, and course type.

Table 6: Cross Tabulation Course Type, Course Weight and Total Number of Assignments												
Course Type			Total Number of Assignments									Total
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	
Curriculum and Instruction	Course weight	.25 FCE	1	2	10	3	7	4	0	0	0	27
		.5 FCE	0	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	6
		1 FCE	1	0	1	3	2	2	5	2	1	17
		.25 & .5 FCE	0	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	5
	Total		2	6	11	9	12	7	5	2	1	55
Electives	Course	.25 FCE	2	3	16	5	4					30
	Total		2	3	16	5	4					30
Foundation/ Core	Course weight	.25 FCE	2	5	15	8	6	2				38
		.5 FCE	0	0	3	3	5	0				11
		.25 & .5 FCE	0	0	0	1	0	0				1
	Total		2	5	18	12	11	2				50
Total	Course weight	.25 FCE	5	10	41	16	17	6	0	0	0	95
		.5 FCE	0	4	3	3	7	0	0	0	0	17
		1 FCE	1	0	1	3	2	2	5	2	1	17
		.25 & .5 FCE	0	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	6
	Total		6	14	45	26	27	9	5	2	1	135

Quarter-credit courses (95 syllabi) have 3 assignments most frequently; while half-credit courses (17 syllabi) have 5 assignments and 7 assignments are most frequent in a full credit equivalent course (17 I/S syllabi). The combined .25 FCE & .5 FCE course syllabi (6) indicates that the total number of assignments is 4. If a course contains more than 7 assignments, such courses become outliers.

Results.

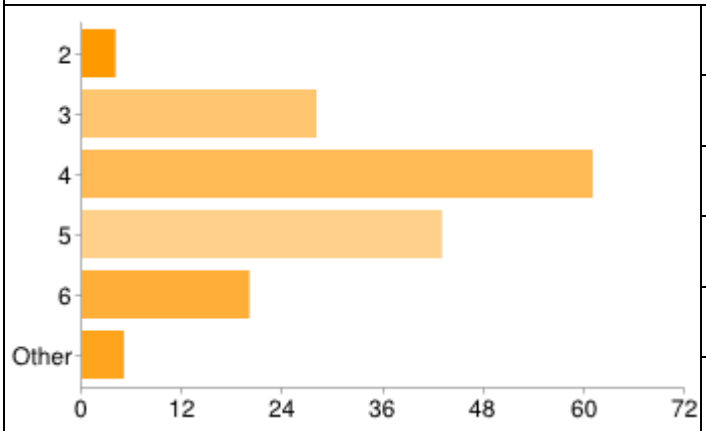
1. The average number of assignments per course syllabi is 3.87.
2. A quarter-credit course regardless of course type most frequently has 3 assignments per course syllabus.
3. A half-credit course has 5 assignments most frequently; however, the curriculum and instruction course type has 2 assignments most frequently, while the foundation course type has 5 assignments.

4. A full-credit course is found only in curriculum and instruction courses; the most frequent total of assignments is 7.

Teacher candidate survey perceptions. The teacher candidate survey asked students to verify the perceived average number of assignments per course. Table 7 denotes the teacher candidates' responses and reveals that teacher candidates perceive 4 assignments per course on average at 38 per cent. This finding aligns with the average number of assignments per syllabus and per course as indicated in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 7: Teacher Candidates' Perceived Number of Assignments

I feel that I have had the following number of assignments in each course on average.



2	4	2%
3	28	17%
4	61	38%
5	43	27%
6	20	12%
Other	5	3%

Part 2: Teacher candidate perceptions and preferences. There were 57 comments (15, P/J; 19, J/I; I/S, 23) that directly mentioned teacher candidates' perceptions of student workload. Fewer than 50 per cent reflected discontent with the number of assignments associated with the program. The majority of students felt that the workload was heavy, but adequate for an accelerated course.

This sentiment was reiterated in the semi-structured interviews when teacher candidates were asked how many assignments were too many for a quarter-credit course or a 9- week course. Teacher candidates felt that three assignments (a paper, a presentation, and quiz) per course would be appropriate to assess their learning. The perceived workload was

individualized to a teacher candidate's prior undergraduate assessment experience, that is, the number of assignments that the teacher candidates were required to complete in their undergraduate courses prior to entering the initial teacher education program.

Assignment types.

Part 1: Profile creation. The sample of 523 assignment responses taken from the course syllabi were coded according to the type of assignment in order to determine what kind of activities were thought to be valued for assessment by faculty in the teacher education program. Assignments that were coded as "student choice" were those which students decided upon a variety of tasks from a list of differentiated assignments. There are four categorizes that represent different types of presentations associated with the teacher education program; assignment presentation, creative presentation, presentation of unit and in-class presentation. "Assignment presentations" may include presenting written work like a reading response or article review, with "unit presentations" being categorized separately as the creation and presentation of a unit plan. "Creative presentation" refers to any presentation that requires the student to make an artistic artifact to convey information to an audience. These artefacts include but are not limited to songs, poems, sculptures, or photo collages. "Multi-media" is defined as any assignment requiring technology to complete such as a prezi, i-movie, or other applicable web 2.0 applications Table 8 shows the categories of assignment types ranked from lowest to highest.

Table 8: Frequency of Assignment Types, Overall Program		
Category Type of Assignment	Responses	
	N	Percentage
Undisclosed	4	0.40%
Assignment Presentation	6	1.20%
Creative Presentation	6	1.20%
Presentation of Unit	7	1.30%
Article Review	12	2.30%
Multi Media	12	2.30%
Student Choice	16	3.10%
Reading Responses	28	5.40%
Attendance	29	5.60%
Unit Plan	32	6.10%
Essay or Report	35	6.70%
In Class Presentation	55	10.60%
Lesson Plan	58	11.10%
Project	60	11.50%
Exams, tests or quizzes	67	12.90%
Reflection Paper	96	18.40%
Total	523	100.00%

Analysis. At first glance, when interpreting Table 8, the reflection paper (representing 18.4 per cent of all assignments) would seem to be the most frequent type of assignment found in the teacher education program with exams, tests, and quizzes (67, 12.9%) coming in second. However, if the categories of lesson-planning, unit-planning, and unit presentation are combined they total 97 assignments or 18.5 per cent of all assignments. This puts the reflection paper in second place by 1 response. In-class presentation categories (creative, presentation of unit, and assignment) have a total of 74 responses or 14.3% of all assignments, making it the third most frequent type of assignment found in the program

Results.

1. Most frequent types of assignments:

   Lesson-planning, Unit-planning and Presentation (97, 18.5%)
2. Second most frequent type of assignment: Reflection Paper (96, 18.4%)
3. Third most frequent type of assignment: In-class presentations (74, 14.3%).

Teacher candidate survey preferences. Teacher candidates were asked to indicate their preference as to the types of assignments that they would like to complete while studying in a teacher education program (Table 9).

Table 9: Teacher Candidates Assignment Type Preferences

I prefer the following types of assignments

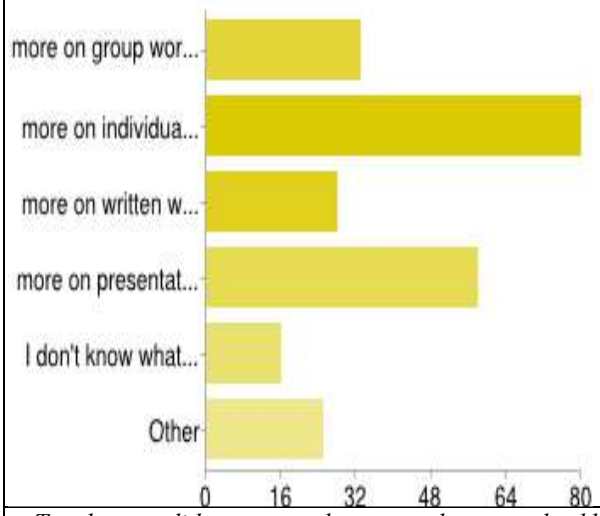
lesson & unit	106	67%
group presentations	79	50%
Projects	75	47%
multi- media projects	69	43%
individual presentations	57	36%
Portfolio	55	35%
article reviews, readings	51	32%
essays and reports	38	24%
exams and tests	24	15%
Other	8	5%

Students felt that presentations (group, 50%; individual, 36%) should be the most prominent type of assignment used in the program. Lesson-planning and unit-planning, at 67%, were also preferred. Projects (47%) and multi-media (43%) based tasks were also preferred. Less than 15 per cent of the respondents felt that the program should have exams, tests, or quizzes.

Teacher candidates were also asked whether assignments should focus more on presentations or written work in general. The results can be found in Table 10.

Table 10: Student Preference - General Type of Assignment Focus

I want assignments to focus



more on group work than individual work	33	21%
more on individual work than on group work	80	51%
more on written work than presentations	28	18%
more on presentations than on written work	58	37%
I don't know what type of assignments to expect	16	10%
Other	25	16%

Teacher candidates may select more than one checkbox, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Teacher candidates felt that the focus of assignments should be on presentations rather than written assignments (37%).

Part 2: Teacher candidate perceptions. The survey comments involving type of assignment represent 28% of all comments coded. These comments related directly to type of assignment, application of the assignment to placement preparedness and quality of the assignment. The semi-structured interview asked teacher candidates to comment both on their ideal type of assignment and the advice that they would give new instructors about assessment. From these questions, 26 answers revealed the ideal type of assignments for teacher candidates.

Authentic assessment, such as lesson-planning and in-class presentation, were mentioned most, whereas assignments such as essays, article reviews, and reading responses were considered to be second nature for a fourth or fifth year student, and as such have no value or application in the minds of the student toward the teaching profession. There is a

general feeling, that by this point; teacher candidates have proven themselves through their previous work in research and academic writing.

In the P/J stream (5, 25%) teacher candidates commented directly on the use of exams in the program. P/J students perceive exams, test, and quizzes to be an activity of memorization and not learning. One teacher candidate comments that "We are being taught that we should NOT teach to have the students memorize and spit it out in a test." J/I and I/S stream teacher candidates used the section on type of assignment as an opportunity to comment on the quality of assignments (19 % of comments), and their preparedness for teaching based on the assignments completed.

Teacher candidates appeared to search for the connections between the type of assignments that they are required to complete and the practice of teaching. These connections helped to frame the experience associated with the quality of work teacher candidates were asked to produce. If assignments were not framed by the instructor in a transparent way, the work was considered to be of little or no value to the practice of teaching. Teacher candidates claimed the work to be "busy work" not worth integrating into the teaching praxis: "the assignments are not typically difficult, but are rather just "busy" type work," and "it is sometimes difficult to see the purpose, or benefit of the assignment to our future careers."

In some cases, there was a disconnect between the curriculum associated with various classes and student understanding. Teacher candidates sometimes felt that the key concepts had not been taught and students were struggling to find the answers amongst their peer group. For example, one teacher candidate commented that "a major problem is that often we don't know how to do an assignment, because it was never properly explained in class."

Another teacher candidate said: "it just seemed like we were going there [to class] and just sitting there and we had no clue what was going on the whole day. And so we're like, can you just tell us like learning outcomes that you expect us to get out these days that we can kind of figure out where we should be focusing" (Student 10, 2011). These comments exemplify instances of the disconnection between instructor expectations and the students' learning. This disconnection seemed to cause teacher candidates to think negatively toward the teacher education process and the quality of instruction: "so much emphasis is placed on us providing meaningful assignments and assessment when we become teachers. It would be wonderful if the faculty lived up to these expectations." There was an undercurrent of discord felt by the teacher candidates toward learning in the program.

Some students felt that the various courses' content and assessments were repetitive with 6 or more of the same type of assignment being assigned: "I find that a lot of the work between courses is very repetitive" and "teachers do not collaborate between each other on what will be covered. Therefore because of this we cover and get assessed on a lot of the same material."

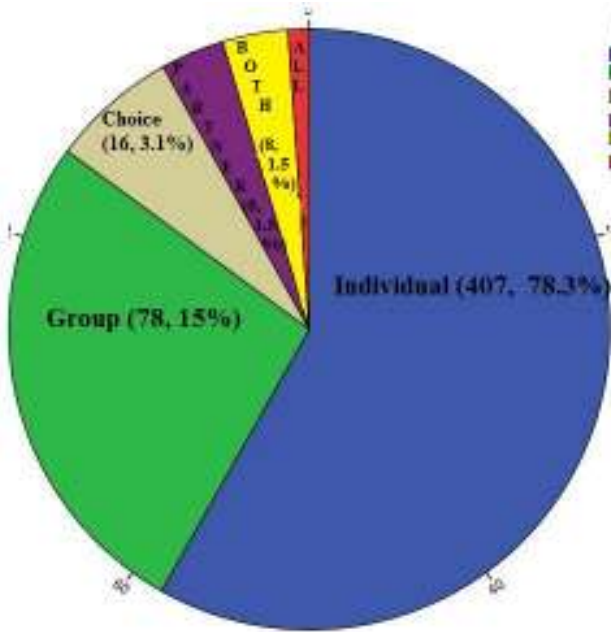
Another perception that emerged from the data was the lack of consistency between core course sections and the assignment type, number, and evaluation process. An I/S student said "There is a lack of consistency and the lack of consistency between one classroom management [section] with the course and the assignments and the marking compared to another teacher's classroom management and their assignments and their marking scheme and their level of difficulty"(Student 13, 2011). A J/I student said "it would be beneficial if similar courses with different professors decided as a whole what that course entails together

as opposed to having one section that is more casual and one section that is extremely intense"(Student 11, 2011).

Nature of Assignment

Part 1: Profile creation.

All but four assignments (that is, excepting those four which did not provide adequate information to identify the nature of the assignment) were classified as one of the following: a group assignment, individual assignment, partner assignment, both group and individual assignment, choice of group or individual assignment or an assignment having components that require a student to do all three, that is work in a group, individually and with a partner (See Figure 1).



Legend Nature of Assignment		Responses N	Responses Per cent
	Individual	407	78.30%
	Group	78	15.%
	Choice of Group or Individual	16	3.10%
	Both Group and Individual	8	1.50%
	Partner	8	1.50%
	Group, Individual and Partner components	2	0.40%
Total		519	100.00%

Figure 1: Nature of Assignment

Analysis. Figure 1 indicates, most assignments are individual in nature at 78 per cent of all assignments while 15 per cent of all assignments ask students to work in a group exclusively. The remaining 7 per cent is split between a choice of working in a group or individually, assignments that require both individual and group components to the work, partnerships, and assignments with components that require partnerships, group and individual components.

Results.

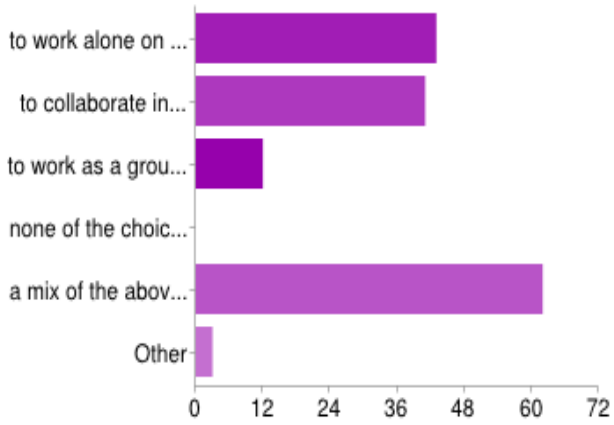
1. Assignments are most frequently individual in nature at 78 per cent.
2. Group assignments represent at minimum 15 per cent of the nature of assignments given in the program.

Teacher candidate survey preferences. In the survey, teacher candidates were asked as part of a two part question to identify whether they preferred to work on individual assignments or group assignments. Respondents were also asked preferences as to the nature of assignments the teacher candidate would prefer (Table 10, page 71). Teacher candidates felt that the focus of assignments should be on individual assignments rather than group assignments (51%).

The preferences as to the nature of assignments for teacher candidates differed from the focus. Table 11 indicates that 39 per cent of the respondents feel that they would like to have a mix of the assignment choices. These choices were to work alone on an assignment, or work collaboratively in a group and be graded individually or to work in a group and receive the same grade as the group members.

Table 11: Teacher Candidate Nature of Assignment Preferences

In regards to assignments, I prefer



To work alone on assignments	43	27%
To collaborate in a group but be graded individually	41	25%
To work as a group and be graded as a group	12	7%
None of the choices provided	0	0%
A mix of the above choices	62	39%
Other	3	2%

Part 2: Teacher candidate perceptions. There were no direct questions in the survey related to the nature of the assignments; however, group presentations were mentioned repeatedly in over half of the interviews, and 10 per cent of the comments. An underlying perception emerged in that teacher candidates believed that there were too many group presentations, even though the majority of assignments are individual in nature.

Other issues that were raised about group presentation include grade equitability, course content delivery and time management. Grade equitability issues were characterized by comments such as "everyone has different work and ethics and not everyone deserves that one same mark" (personal communication, 2011). Some teacher candidates believed that "there is a heavy reliance on the communication of information upon student group presentations." Students encountered issues coordinating groups in order to present or create the material. One teacher candidate stated "students can barely get together and put more than one day's effort into group projects. I currently have one project due where the group just cannot meet except for the day prior to the due date and so we are working on this project through Facebook." The use of group work was clearly a concern to many.

Due dates.

Part 1: Profile creation. The teacher education program that is being studied is structured to have 9 weeks of study during the fall term with a culminating task week prior to the 5-week placement and 9 weeks of study from January to March with a culminating task week prior to the second 5- week placement. The 135 syllabi represent all course sections for both fall and winter term course sections. Most quarter-credit courses are 9 weeks in length and can be taken in either the fall or winter term. Five quarter-credit courses are the exception in that they are classified as year-long courses and span both the fall and winter terms. Half-credit and full-credit courses span both the fall and winter terms respectively.

Each assignment due date was classified according to 23 weeks in the school year. The "undisclosed" category represents all assignments that did not have a due date disclosed in the course syllabus. "Week 2" through "Week 9" are during the fall term, while categories "Week 10" through "Week 18" are during the winter term. The "student choice" category refers to all assignments that allow students to choose between one week and another. For example, presentation days may be split by the instructor so students can choose certain topics on certain days. The "attendance" category has no due date but relates to a teacher candidate's participation in class and "Each Class" represents assignments such as reading responses which are to be completed prior to the next class. The "fall culminating task week" is the week after official classes end and the week before placement begins. The "winter culminating task week" is the week after the official end of the winter term before the final placement.

The sample size for this analysis has increased for two reasons: the first is that 14 syllabi represent course sections for both the fall and winter term; and the second is that 35

assignments have multiple due dates. For those quarter-credit course syllabi that represent both fall and winter course sections, due dates for both terms were inputted into the data base. For those assignments that had multiple due dates, all due dates were entered into the data base. The Assignment due dates frequency table (Table 12) has been ranked from highest to lowest to identify peak assignment weeks.

Table 12: Assignment Due Dates, Overall Program

Due Dates	Responses	
	N	Percentage
Undisclosed	76	11.9%
Week 9	72	11.3%
Student Choice	65	10.2%
Week 18	55	8.6%
Each Class	35	5.5%
Week 8	34	5.3%
Fall Culminating Task Week	31	4.9%
Winter Culminating Task Week	28	4.4%
Attendance Mark	29	4.6%
Week 5	27	4.2%
Week 7	20	3.1%
Week 16	20	3.1%
Week 4	17	2.7%
Week 6	16	2.5%
Week 14	16	2.5%
Week 17	16	2.5%
Week 15	14	2.2%
Week 12	13	2.0%
Week 11	12	1.9%
Week 3	11	1.7%
Week 10	11	1.7%
Week 13	10	1.6%
Week 2	9	1.4%
Total	637	100%

Analysis. A frequency line graph shows a visual representation of the peak weeks in the program (Figure 2). There are spikes present at the "undisclosed" category, week 9, week 18 and the "student choice" category. Results from Figure 2 indicate that the teacher education program is summative in nature.

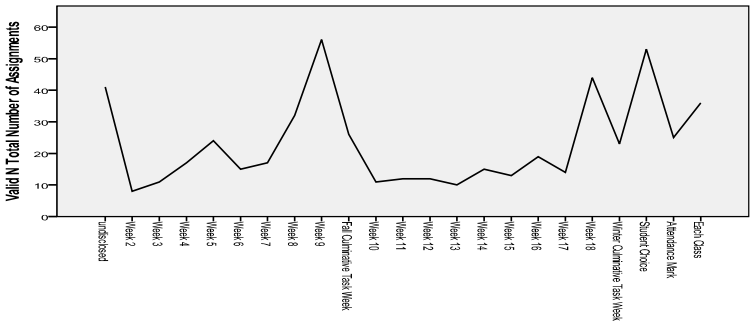


Figure 2: Weekly Program Assignment Due Dates

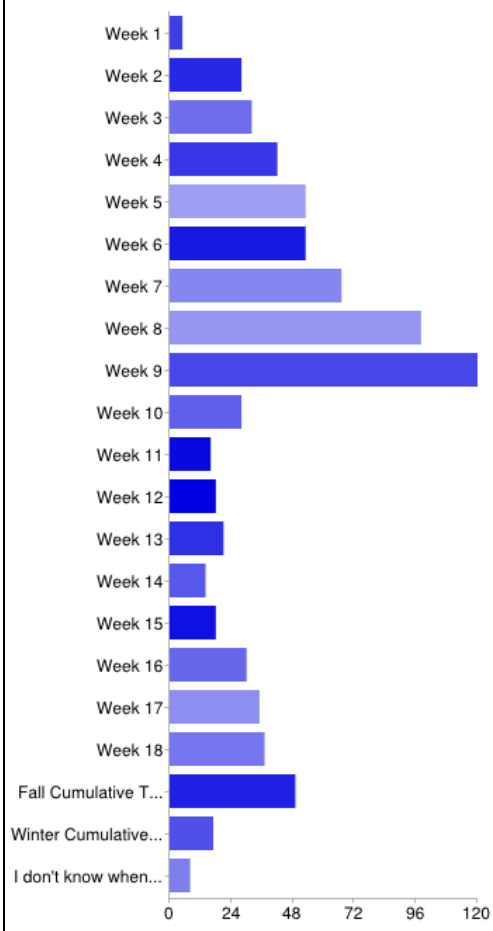
Results.

1. "Undisclosed" is the most frequent category associated times at which assignments are due.
2. The program is summative in nature with many assignments due on Week 9 (end of Fall Term) and 18 (end of Winter Term).

Teacher candidate survey preferences. The survey contained one question that asked teacher candidates when they felt their assignments were due. Table 13, which has been ranked in order of program weeks, shows that most teacher candidates perceive the most assignments are due in Week 9 (75%). This perception validates the results found in the course syllabus review.

Table 13: Teacher Candidate Perceptions of Due Dates

I have found that all my assignments are due on the following weeks:



Week 1	5	3%
Week 2	28	18%
Week 3	32	20%
Week 4	42	26%
Week 5	53	33%
Week 6	53	33%
Week 7	67	42%
Week 8	98	62%
Week 9	120	75%
Week 10	28	18%
Week 11	16	10%
Week 12	18	11%
Week 13	21	13%
Week 14	14	9%
Week 15	18	11%
Week 16	30	19%
Week 17	35	22%
Week 18	37	23%
Fall CumulativeTask Week	49	31%
Winter Cumulative Task Week	17	11%
I don't know when my assignments are due	8	5%

Teacher candidates may select more than one checkbox, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Part 2: Teacher candidate perceptions. 13 per cent of all data segments (148) were associated with teacher candidates' perceptions of the frequency of due dates. Teacher candidates felt that most major assignments were due during the same week as such there was a concern about assignment quality. Students suggested that instructors spread out due dates and work together as a collective to avoid overlap. Teacher candidates appreciated an instructor's permitting them to choose when an assignment is due.

Assignment weights.

Part 1: Profile creation. Assignment weights for the overall program are found on Table 14 ranked from highest to lowest frequency. Labels for percentages were taken directly from the course syllabus.

Table 14: Assignment Weight, Overall Program

Assignment Weightings	Responses	
	N	Percentage
20 %	103	19.8%
30 %	88	16.9%
10 %	76	14.6%
25 %	70	13.4%
15 %	40	7.7%
40 %	36	6.9%
50 %	26	5.0%
35 %	23	4.4%
0 %	16	3.1%
5 %	13	2.5%
45 %	7	1.3%
80 %	4	0.8%
100 %	4	0.8%
4 %	3	0.6%
60 %	3	0.6%
6 %	2	0.4%
70 %	2	0.4%
8 %	1	0.2%
9 %	1	0.2%
28 %	1	0.2%
65 %	1	0.2%
75 %	1	0.2%
Total	521	100 %

Table 14 indicates that the assignment weightings range from 4 per cent to 100 per cent. The 0 category indicates assignments with "undisclosed" assignment weights; 16 assignments (3.1%) do not have assignment weighting disclosed to the student.

The most frequent assignment weighting is 20 per cent with 103 assignments (19.8%) assigned to the category. The second most frequent assignment weighting is 30 per cent (16.9%).

Analysis. The assignment weightings were placed into ranges representing 10 per cent intervals until the final range (representing a 20 per cent interval) to determine the most frequent range of assignment weightings.

Table 15: Range of Assignment Weightings, Overall Program

Assignment Weightings	Responses	
	N	Percentage
0 - 10 %	112	21.5%
11 – 20 %	143	27.5%
21 - 30 %	159	30.5%
31 - 40 %	59	11.3%
41 - 50 %	33	6.3%
51 - 60 %	3	0.60%
61 - 70 %	3	0.6%
71 - 80 %	5	1.0%
81 -100 %	4	0.80%
Total	521	100%

Table 15 indicates that the most popular range of assignment weights is 21 – 30 per cent at 159 assignments (30.5%). Assignments weighted at over 40 per cent represent less than 10 per cent (48, 9.3%) of all responses while assignments weighted below 10 per cent represent a little over 20 per cent of all assignments (112, 21.5%).

Results.

1. Assignment weightings range from 4 per cent to 100 per cent.
2. The most frequent assignment course weighting is 20 per cent per assignment. (103, 19.8%)
3. 3.1 per cent of assignments do not have their assignment weightings disclosed on the syllabus.
4. Assignments weighted at 10 per cent or less represent a little over 20 per cent of all assignment responses (112, 21.5%)

Part 2: Teacher candidate perceptions. Although there was no direct question in the survey related to the weighting of an assignment, each student who was interviewed mentioned both the time and effort taken to complete an assignment or unknown expectations associated with high stakes assignments (those worth 40 per cent or higher of the overall course grade).

Student 12 reminds professors that an instructor's idea of the amount work should correspond with the perceived amount of effort when she states: "if you are spending x amount of time on one thing we are spending over 30 hours and it's worthy only 20% of our mark. That's a lot. It's a lot of effort and a lot of work for such a little thing." An example she gives is a multiple lesson plan assignment worth 4% of her overall mark. When discussing the experience, she explains her strategy for learning could have gone one of two ways: "So I thought I could do a lot of this work or I could not and who cares I am just losing four percent" (Student 12, 2011). A similar sentiment was expressed by Student 5, who stated: "I think it's important for them [instructors] to actually look at how much time it's going to take you [the student] to complete that assignment and then weigh them accordingly.

In terms of grading expectations, Student 4 states: "It's really hard when your first assignment is worth 40%", she goes on to say that it important to have a benchmark assignment for students to gauge when they are going over and above expectations.

Provision and use of a faculty rubric.

Part 1: Profile creation. As noted earlier, the faculty has an official rubric outlining assessment expectations. The assignments on the course syllabi were analyzed to determine whether a rubric was provided with the assignment description or if the assignment used the faculty rubric. Assignment types such as "exams, tests, and quizzes" that did not require a rubric or those assignments that used the faculty rubric were placed under the "not required/faculty rubric" category. If the assignment indicated that a rubric would be created as a collective in class or prior to the assignment, the response was placed in the "yes--it will be provided at a later date" category, an assignment that had a rubric attached to the syllabus was placed in the "yes – it is provided" category. If the syllabus did not indicate how the assignment would be evaluated, and the faculty rubric would not be appropriate for evaluation purposes such as "in-class presentations," these assignments were placed in the "no -- it is not provided" category (See Table 16).

Table 16: Cross Tabulation Provision and Use of a Faculty Rubric

Provision of a Rubric		Use of Faculty Rubric		
		Yes	No	Total
not required/faculty rubric	Count	261	97	358
	% of Total	50.3%	18.5%	68.8%
yes -- it is provided	Count	0	103	103
	% of Total	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%
no -- it is not provided	Count	0	43	43
	% of Total	0.0%	8.3%	8.3%
yes -- it will be provided at a later date	Count	0	15	15
	% of Total	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%
Total	Count	262	257	519
	% of Total	50.5%	49.5%	100.0%

The sample size associated with assignment responses diminished to 519 assignment responses because 4 assignments did not disclose enough information about the assignment criteria to classify them correctly.

Table 16 indicates that assignments use the faculty rubric or do not require the use of a rubric (358, 68.8%) most frequently. An assessment tool is not provided in fewer than 10 per cent of all assignments (43, 8.3%). The faculty rubric is used to evaluate 50.5 per cent of all assignments

Analysis. The 96 assignments that did not use the faculty rubric fall under two categories; "exams, quizzes, and tests" and "attendance."

Rubrics, either the faculty rubric or a created rubric, were used 91.7 per cent of the time. However, the faculty rubric was used only 50.5 per cent of the time.
Of the 55 "in-class presentations" assignments, only 30 per cent had a rubric provided in the course syllabi.

Results.

1. An assessment tool such as a rubric, when required, is provided to students 91.7 per cent of the time.
2. When a rubric is required, the faculty rubric is used 50.5% of the time.
3. Assignment criteria is "undisclosed" on the syllabus in 8.3 per cent of all assignments.

Teacher candidate survey preferences. Teacher candidates were asked if they had had an instructor explain the faculty rubric and how it related to the course assignment and whether or not they had seen and understood the faculty rubric in a four part question on the survey.

As per Table 17, teacher candidates felt that they had seen and understood the faculty rubric 56 per cent of the time. 62 per cent of the respondents had an instructor explain how the faculty rubric related to the coursework assigned.

Table 17: Faculty Rubric and Grading Policy Survey Results

Please check all that apply:		
I have had an instructor explain the Faculty rubric and how it relates to course assignments to me.	83	62%
I have had an instructor explain the Faculty grading policy to me in my courses.	76	57%
I have seen and understood the Faculty rubric.	75	56%
I have seen and read the Faculty grading policy.	70	53%

Teacher candidates may select more than one checkbox, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Part 2: Teacher candidate perceptions. Only 9 out of the 96 survey comments spoke of the provision and use of the rubric. Two themes emerged: inconsistency of implementation and inconsistency of the provision of assessment criteria for assignments. In some cases, the faculty rubric was provided and it was explained to the teacher candidates as a criteria referencing document. However, another class instructor may have explained the implementation of the rubric as a norm referencing process. One student stated that, in a curriculum and instruction class, there was a discrepancy between one section of the course and other. The student stated: "Our class is doing much more work and receiving much lower grades" (student comment, 2011).

Another issue with rubrics was the inconsistency of the provision of assessment criteria for assignments like the in-class presentations, and assignments where the rubric was

provided after the assignment had been handed in: "A major problem is that often we don't know how to do an assignment, because it was never properly explained in class" and "expectations aren't clearly stated."

From the semi-structured interviews, it is clear that teacher candidates have learned a great deal about the role of assessment in a short time and can articulate that inconsistency between the use of the rubric as an assessment tool, and the implementation of the grading policy throughout the department. Student 12, a teacher candidate in the I/S stream, reassures herself after telling a story about a fellow Concurrent student who took the same Aboriginal Education course in the winter semester that she had taken in the fall semester. Although her friend put in the same effort as she, the grade that the respondent's peer achieved was lower. This perceived inconsistency of grading made her state emphatically that "they can't take my grade away from me."

When asked about grades, those students who had a true understanding of the rubric and grading policy validated the grades received for the completed assignments. Student 12 stated that "My level four means something" because the rubric sets out clear expectations as to the value of the grade achieved.

Section 2: Comparison of Individual Teacher Education Program Streams

Program profiles for each individual teacher education program stream (P/J. J/I, and I/S), along with a two separate profiles were created for Electives and Foundation courses that are taken by students in all streams. These profiles feature the most frequent number of assignments, the assignment type, the frequency due dates, the assignment weighting and the provision and use of a faculty rubric. These profiles were created in order to compare the streams assessment culture to each other and to the overall program profile.

Table 18: Descriptive Statistics of Individual Teacher Education Program Streams

Course Stream	Course weight	Mean No. of Assignments	Total Syllabi	Std Deviation	Std. Error of Mean	Total No. of Assignments	Minimum No. of Assignments	Maximum No. of assignments
P/J	.25 & .5 FCE	5.00	2	1.414	1.000	10	4	6
	.5 FCE	4.00	6	1.549	.632	24	2	5
	.25 FCE	3.93	15	.884	.228	59	3	5
	Total	4.04	23	1.107	.231	93	2	6
J/I	.25 & .5 FCE	4.25	4	.500	.250	17	4	5
	.25 FCE	3.75	24	1.327	.271	90	1	6
	.5 FCE	2.80	5	.837	.374	14	2	4
	Total	3.67	33	1.242	.216	121	1	6
I/S	1 FCE	5.82	17	2.186	.530	99	1	10
	.5 FCE	4.20	5	.837	.374	21	3	5
	.25 FCE	3.31	26	1.490	.292	86	1	6
	Total	4.29	48	2.062	.298	206	1	10
Electives	.25 FCE	3.38	21	.805	.176	71	2	5
	Total	3.38	21	.805	.176	71	2	5
All Foundation	.25 FCE	3.20	10	1.476	.467	32	1	6
	Total	3.20	10	1.476	.467	32	1	6
Total	1 FCE	5.82	17	2.186	.530	99	1	10
	.25 & .5 FCE	4.50	6	.837	.342	27	4	6
	.5 FCE	3.69	16	1.250	.313	59	2	5
	.25 FCE	3.52	96	1.240	.127	338	1	6
	Total	3.87	135	1.567	.135	523	1	10

Total number of assignments. Table 18 compares the assignment means based on the five categories (P/J/J/I, I/S, Electives and All Foundation) and the course credit weighting to determine the total number of assignments per teacher education program stream.

P/J stream. In the P/J stream, there were 93 assignment responses found in 23 course syllabi from 60 course sections. Teacher candidates, at minimum, are asked to do two assignments or at maximum 6 assignments per course which could have a course credit weighting of either a quarter-credit or a half-credit. There are no full-credit courses associated with the P/J program. Teacher candidates take 18 separate courses for a total of 5.5 FCEs. As there are two course syllabi that combine two courses together, one being a quarter-credit course and the other being a half-credit course, a special category was created to accommodate the difference.

A P/J course, on average, has 4 assignments. The means associated with assignments for quarter- (3.93) and half-credit (4) courses are in line with the descriptive statistics for the overall program with only the combined credit course equivalency of .25 and .5 courses had a higher mean of 5.

J/I stream. The J/I stream sample size was 121 assignment responses from 33 course syllabi representing 73 course sections. Teacher candidates may encounter at minimum 1 assignment per course to a maximum of 5.

The 5.5 FCE for J/I is made up of 18 courses. Like the P/J program, the J/I stream has no full-credit courses and has course syllabi that represent two separate courses, one course being a quarter-credit offering and the second course being a half-credit offering in one document.

Courses in the J/I stream have on average 3.67 assignments. Quarter-credit courses have 3.75 assignments on average, while half-credit courses have only 2.80 assignments per course. The 4 course syllabi which represent a quarter-credit plus a half-credit course have an average of 4.25 assignments.

I/S stream. The I/S stream had 48 course syllabi from 91 course sections which contain 206 assignments. Teacher candidates at minimum would complete 1 assignment per course or at maximum 10 assignments per course.

I/S teacher candidates are required to specialize in two teachable areas each worth a full-credit course as part of the 14 courses that comprise 5.5 FCEs. There are no syllabi that combine more than one course in this division.

A course in this division had an average of 4.29 assignments. A quarter-credit course had an average of 3.31 assignments, while a half-credit course had an average of 4.2 assignments and a full-credit course had an average of 5.82 assignments.

Comparison of stream profiles. As each stream profile contains a different sample size representing assignments and as there are differing means, a one-way ANOVA between streams was conducted to compare the effect of the number of assignments on the overall teacher candidate workload. Although the ANOVA showed a significant effect in the number of assignments in the teacher candidate workload within the streams at the $p<.05$ level for three conditions [$F(3,131) = 2.809$, $p = .042$], post hoc comparisons using a Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score between the Intermediate/Senior stream ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 2.062$) was significantly different from that of the all streams elective ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 1.045$); however, there was no significant effect between the three streams overall.

Assignment type. On Table 19, the assignment types are ranked from most frequent to least frequent. The per cent of total for each category represents the percentage of the assignment type in each stream. For example, the P/J stream had a reflection paper featured in a course 23.3% of the time.

Table 19: Comparison of Stream Assignment Types

Assignment Type		Course Stream					Overall Profile Total
		P/J	J/I	I/S	Electives	All Foundation	
Reflection Paper	Count	21	25	39	10	1	96
	% of Total	23.3%	20.5%	18.9%	14.1%	3.1%	18.4%
Exams, tests or quizzes	Count	17	14	22	7	7	67
	% of Total	18.9%	11.5%	10.7%	9.9%	21.9%	12.9%
Project	Count	6	16	25	9	4	60
	% of Total	6.7%	13.1%	12.1%	12.7%	12.5%	11.5%
Lesson Plan	Count	14	11	27	4	2	58
	% of Total	15.6%	9.0%	13.1%	5.6%	6.3%	11.1%
In Class Presentation	Count	13	12	20	8	2	55
	% of Total	14.4%	9.8%	9.7%	11.3%	6.3%	10.6%
Essay or Report	Count	3	9	12	6	5	35
	% of Total	3.3%	7.4%	5.8%	8.5%	15.6%	6.7%
Unit Plan	Count	2	8	18	3	1	32
	% of Total	2.2%	6.6%	8.7%	4.2%	3.1%	6.1%
Attendance	Count	2	4	15	5	3	29
	% of Total	2.2%	3.3%	7.3%	7.0%	9.4%	5.6%
Reading Responses	Count	2	7	11	5	3	28
	% of Total	2.2%	5.7%	5.3%	7.0%	9.4%	5.4%
Student Choice	Count	4	6	3	3	0	16
	% of Total	4.4%	4.9%	1.5%	4.2%	0.0%	3.1%
Multi Media	Count	1	0	1	10	0	12
	% of Total	1.1%	0.0%	0.5%	14.1%	0.0%	2.3%
Article Review	Count	3	3	4	0	2	12
	% of Total	3.3%	2.5%	1.9%	0.0%	6.3%	2.3%
Unit Presentation	Count	0	1	6	0	0	7
	% of Total	0.0%	0.8%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%
Creative Presentation	Count	0	5	0	1	0	6
	% of Total	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	1.2%
Assignment Presentation	Count	2	0	3	0	1	6
	% of Total	2.2%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	3.1%	1.2%
Undisclosed	Count	0	1	0	0	1	2
	% of Total	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	0.4%
Total	Count	90	122	206	71	32	521
	% of Total	17.3%	23.4%	39.5%	13.6%	6.1%	100.0%

P/J stream. In terms of type of assignments in the P/J stream, reflection papers account for 23.3 per cent of all assignments used to assess students in the program. The second type of assignment most frequent in this stream is the category of exams, tests, and quizzes, which totals 20 per cent. Although lesson - and unit-planning is the third type of assignment (16, 17.8%) used in the stream, the unit-planning assignments (2) account for only 2.2 per cent of the assignments. This is equivalent to marks associated with attendance and reading responses.

J/I stream. The most frequent assignment type found in the J/I stream is the reflection paper, with 25 assignments. The second most frequent assignment type is lesson-planning and unit-planning (20, 16%). In-class presentations represent 15 per cent (18) of all types of assignments in third place. Multi-media projects are not mentioned explicitly in the assignment types associated with the J/I stream. There are no undisclosed assignments.

I/S stream. The most frequent type of assignment that an I/S student encounters in the program is lesson-planning and unit-planning at 51 responses (25%). The reflection paper category comes in second with 18.9 per cent and in-class presentations (30, 14.5%) are the third category of assignment type used in the program. The 'attendance' category is significant as this represents 7.3 per cent of all assignments.

Comparison of stream profiles. When the top categories associated with the individual streams are compared, two out of the three top categories remain constant with the "reflection paper" and "lesson and unit-planning" being represented; however, the P/J stream has exams, tests, and quizzes as a third option, while J/I and I/S have in-class presentations. Attendance is also significant for the I/S stream while the P/J and J/I streams have attendance represented less than 4 per cent of the time.

Due dates. The number of assignments due in each stream are tabulated Table 20, which compares and ranks the frequency of due dates for each stream. The per cent of total refers to the total dates due in the individual stream.

P/J stream. The sample size has increased from 90 to 120 assignments because 18 assignments have a secondary due dates for the same assignment and 6 syllabi have both winter and fall course sections. These due dates have been included in the analysis. Students in the P/J stream have some freedom of choice as to when their assignments are due, with 12.5 per cent of the assignments being classified under this label. Most assignments are completed in Week 9 and Week 18 at 9.2 per cent. Week 4, 10 12, and 13 have fewer than 1.5% of all assignments due in the stream.

J/I stream. As there are multi-tiered assignments (20) and course syllabi (8) representing more than one course section, the sample size has increase from 120 to 156 assignment due dates.

Table 20 shows that assignments are most frequently not disclosed (17, 10.9%) on the course syllabus. If a student is aware of the due date, he or she finds Week 9 (17, 10.9%) and Week 18 (14, 9%) to be challenging. "Student choice" is tied as second most frequent time due (14, 9%). The weeks in which the fewest assignments are due are as follows: Week 16, Week 12, and Week 3 with .8% (1) and Week 7 (0).

I/S stream. The I/S stream has an increased sample size (206 to 244) because 8 assignments have multiple due dates, and 15 course syllabi have both fall and winter course sections.

Table 20: Comparison of Each Streams Due Dates							
Due Dates		Course Stream					Total
		P/J	J/I	I/S	Electives	All Foundation	
Undisclosed	Count	4	17	33	11	11	76
	% of Total	3.3%	10.9%	13.5%	14.7%	26.2%	11.9%
Week 9	Count	11	17	28	13	3	72
	% of Total	9.2%	10.9%	11.5%	17.3%	7.1%	11.3%
Student Choice	Count	15	14	24	11	1	65
	% of Total	12.5%	9.0%	9.8%	14.7%	2.4%	10.2%
Week 18	Count	11	14	25	3	2	55
	% of Total	9.2%	9.0%	10.2%	4.0%	4.8%	8.6%
Each Class	Count	6	13	9	5	2	35
	% of Total	5.0%	8.3%	3.7%	6.7%	4.8%	5.5%
Week 8	Count	9	9	10	4	2	34
	% of Total	7.5%	5.8%	4.1%	5.3%	4.8%	5.3%
Fall Cul. Task Week	Count	9	3	15	3	1	31
	% of Total	7.5%	1.9%	6.1%	4.0%	2.4%	4.9%
Attendance Mark	Count	2	4	15	5	3	29
	% of Total	1.7%	2.6%	6.1%	6.7%	7.1%	4.6%
Winter Cul.Task Week	Count	6	7	13	0	2	28
	% of Total	5.0%	4.5%	5.3%	0.0%	4.8%	4.4%
Week 5	Count	6	8	7	3	3	27
	% of Total	5.0%	5.1%	2.9%	4.0%	7.1%	4.2%
Week 7	Count	0	7	7	3	3	20
	% of Total	0.0%	4.5%	2.9%	4.0%	7.1%	3.1%
Week 16	Count	1	6	11	1	1	20
	% of Total	0.8%	3.8%	4.5%	1.3%	2.4%	3.1%
Week 4	Count	6	2	6	3	0	17
	% of Total	5.0%	1.3%	2.5%	4.0%	0.0%	2.7%
Week 6	Count	7	5	0	4	0	16
	% of Total	5.8%	3.2%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	2.5%
Week 14	Count	6	3	5	0	2	16
	% of Total	5.0%	1.9%	2.0%	0.0%	4.8%	2.5%
Week 17	Count	4	4	7	0	1	16
	% of Total	3.3%	2.6%	2.9%	0.0%	2.4%	2.5%
Week 15	Count	4	5	4	1	0	14
	% of Total	3.3%	3.2%	1.6%	1.3%	0.0%	2.2%
Week 12	Count	1	2	8	1	1	13
	% of Total	0.8%	1.3%	3.3%	1.3%	2.4%	2.0%
Week 11	Count	3	5	3	0	1	12
	% of Total	2.5%	3.2%	1.2%	0.0%	2.4%	1.9%
Week 3	Count	1	5	2	3	0	11
	% of Total	0.8%	3.2%	0.8%	4.0%	0.0%	1.7%
Week 10	Count	2	2	7	0	0	11
	% of Total	1.7%	1.3%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%
Week 13	Count	4	1	4	1	0	10
	% of Total	3.3%	0.6%	1.6%	1.3%	0.0%	1.6%
Week 2	Count	2	3	1	0	3	9
	% of Total	1.7%	1.9%	0.4%	0.0%	7.1%	1.4%
Total	Count	120	156	244	75	42	637
	% of Total	18.8%	24.5%	38.3%	11.8%	6.6%	100.%

The most frequent week for assignments to be due is "undisclosed" (33, 13.5%) to the student on the course syllabus. Week 9 is the most challenging week that is disclosed with 11.5% of all assignments due during this week. Week 18 (25, 10.2%) is the third most frequent week to have assignments due. The least most frequent weeks for assignments are Week 2, Week 3 and Week 6.

Comparison of stream profiles. Regardless of stream, Week 9, and Week 18 are the most frequent due dates for assignments. The Junior/Intermediate and Intermediate/Senior streams have undisclosed due dates. P/J and J/I streams have Week 12 as having the least assignments due.

Nature of assignments. The natures of the assignments in the individual streams are compared on Table 21.

Table 21: Comparison of the Nature of Assignments Per Stream

Assignment Nature		Course Stream					Total
		P/ J	J/ I	I/S	Electives	All Foundation	
Individual	Count	73	94	156	60	25	408
	% of Total	81.1%	77.0%	75.7%	84.5%	78.1%	78.3%
Group	Count	13	18	34	6	6	77
	% of Total	14.4%	14.8%	16.5%	8.5%	18.8%	14.8%
Choice of Group or Individual	Count	3	4	8	1	0	16
	% of Total	3.3%	3.3%	3.9%	1.4%	0.0%	3.1%
Partner	Count	0	4	2	2	0	8
	% of Total	0.0%	3.3%	1.0%	2.8%	0.0%	1.5%
Both Group & Individual	Count	0	0	6	2	0	8
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	2.8%	0.0%	1.5%
Group, Individual & Partner components	Count	1	1	0	0	0	2
	% of Total	1.1%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Undisclosed	Count	0	1	0	1	2	4
	% of Total	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	0.4%
Total	Count	90	122	206	71	32	521
	% of Total	17.3%	23.4%	39.5%	13.6%	6.1%	100.0%

P/J stream. The assignments in the P/J stream are most frequently independent in nature (73, 81.1%). There are no assignments that require work with a partner or assignments asking students to work in both a group and as an individual. Students are required to work on assignments collaboratively 14.4 per cent of the time.

J/I stream. Students were asked to complete independent assignments 77 per cent of the time in the J/I stream. Students may have assignments that require partnership or a choice of group work (3.3%, 4).

I/S stream. Students in the I/S stream are required to complete individual assignments 75.7 per cent of the time. Group assignments are limited to 16.7 per cent. Students in the I/S stream have more opportunity to choose whether the assignment should be completed alone or with a group of individuals (3.9%, 8).

Comparison of stream profiles. The program requires all students to work independently most frequently regardless of the stream. P/J and J/I streams have one complex assignment that requires a student to work individually, in a partnership and a group while I/S students have more choice in due dates.

Provision and use of a faculty rubric. The cross tabulation table (Table 22) compares the use of a rubric, the provision of a rubric and the streams of the program.

Table 22: Provision and Use of A Faculty Rubric Comparison

Use of Faculty Rubric			Provision of a Rubric: not required/ faculty rubric	Provision of a Rubric: yes - it is provided	Provision of a Rubric: no - it is not provided	Provision of a Rubric: yes - it will be provided at a later date	Total
Yes	P/J	Count	34				34
		% of Total	38%				38%
	J/I	Count	62				62
		% of Total	52%				24%
	I/ S	Count	111				111
		% of Total	54%				42%
	Electives	Count	36				36
		% of Total	51%				14%
	All Foundation	Count	19				19
		% of Total	62%				7.%
Total		Count	262				262
		% of Total	50.5%				50.5%
No	P /J	Count	19	29	8	0	56
		% of Total	21%	32%	8%	0%	22%
	J/I	Count	18	26	12	3	59
		% of Total	15%	22%	10%	1%	23%
	I/ S	Count	37	32	14	12	95
		% of Total	18%	16%	7%	5%	37%
	Electives	Count	12	17	6	0	35
		% of Total	17%	24%	8%	0%	14%
	All Foundation	Count	10	0	2	0	12
		% of Total	32%	0%	6%	0%	5%
Total		Count	96	104	42	15	257
		% of Total	18.5%	20%	8%	3%	49.5%

P/J stream. The P/J stream has 70 per cent of all assignments for assessment and evaluation on the syllabus. The faculty rubric is used for 56% of all assignment responses, while 32% provide a different rubric to measure the progress of the student in the course. For those assignments that indicate that the faculty rubric was not used, 8 per cent fail to

include an assessment device in the syllabus.

J/I stream. In the J/I stream, Table 22 shows that 73 per cent of assignment responses have a rubric provided for the assessment and evaluation of students on the course syllabus. When a rubric is required, the faculty rubric is used 52% of the time. An assessment tool is provided on the syllabus for 10 per cent of the assignment responses.

I/S stream. The I/S stream assignment responses have the rubric provided on the course syllabus 72 per cent of the time. The faculty rubric is used 54 per cent of the time and 16 per cent of the time; an instructor will provide a different rubric for assessment and evaluation. Of all assignment responses, 7 per cent do not have a rubric or assessment criteria for evaluation of the work.

Comparison of stream profiles. The instructors provide a rubric when appropriate at minimum 90 per cent of the time regardless of stream. The P/J division will use a different rubric from the faculty rubric more often that the J/I and the I/S division.

Assignment weights.. Table 23 compares the stream and the frequency of assignment weights.

Table 23: Assignment Weight Stream Comparison

Assignment Weighting		Course Stream					Total
		P/J	J/I	I/S	Electives	All	
0	Count	0	2	9	3	2	16
	% of Total	0.0%	1.6%	4.4%	4.2%	6.3%	3.1%
4	Count	0	0	3	0	0	3
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
5	Count	0	1	11	1	0	13
	% of Total	0.0%	0.8%	5.3%	1.4%	0.0%	2.5%
6	Count	0	0	2	0	0	2
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
8	Count	0	0	1	0	0	1
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
9	Count	0	0	1	0	0	1
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
10	Count	11	13	42	7	3	76
	% of Total	12.2%	10.7%	20.4%	9.9%	9.4%	14.6%
15	Count	11	8	17	2	2	40
	% of Total	12.2%	6.6%	8.3%	2.8%	6.3%	7.7%
20	Count	24	27	34	10	8	103
	% of Total	26.7%	22.1%	16.5%	14.1%	25.0%	19.8%
25	Count	12	29	22	6	1	70
	% of Total	13.3%	23.8%	10.7%	8.5%	3.1%	13.4%
28	Count	0	0	1	0	0	1
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
30	Count	14	15	32	20	7	88
	% of Total	15.6%	12.3%	15.5%	28.2%	21.9%	16.9%
35	Count	5	4	6	6	2	23
	% of Total	5.6%	3.3%	2.9%	8.5%	6.3%	4.4%
40	Count	8	14	6	7	1	36
	% of Total	8.9%	11.5%	2.9%	9.9%	3.1%	6.9%
45	Count	0	1	5	1	0	7
	% of Total	0.0%	0.8%	2.4%	1.4%	0.0%	1.3%
50	Count	2	5	6	7	6	26
	% of Total	2.2%	4.1%	2.9%	9.9%	18.8%	5.0%
60	Count	1	1	1	0	0	3
	% of Total	1.1%	0.8%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
65	Count	0	0	0	1	0	1
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.2%
70	Count	0	0	2	0	0	2
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
75	Count	0	0	1	0	0	1
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
80	Count	2	2	0	0	0	4
	% of Total	2.2%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
100	Count	0	0	4	0	0	4
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Total	Count	90	122	206	71	32	521
	% of Total	17.3%	23.4%	39.5%	13.6%	6.1%	100.0%

Like the overall profile, a cross tabulation table has been created to show the range of assignment weightings. This comparison uses an interval of 10 per cent per category until the 80% category where the interval increases to 20 per cent and can be found in Table 24.

Table 24: Range of Assignment Weight Per Stream

Assignment Weightings	Primary/ Junior	Junior/ Intermediate	Intermediate/ Senior	Electives	All Foundations	Total
0-10%	11	16	69	11	5	112
11-20%	35	35	51	12	10	143
21-30%	26	44	55	26	8	159
31-40%	13	18	12	13	3	59
41-50%	2	6	11	8	6	33
51-60%	1	1	1	0	0-	3
61-70%	0	0	2	1	0	3
71-80%	2	2	1	0	0	5
81-100%	0	0	4	0	0	4
Total	90	122	206	71	32	521

P/J stream. As per Table 23, the assignment weight value most frequently used in the P/J stream is 20 per cent of the overall course grade, with 24 per cent of all P/J assignments falling in this assignment value category. The range of the assignment weighting which is found in Table 24 shows that the assignments weighted between 11-20 percent cover 38 per cent of the assignment responses. Assignment weights range from 10 per cent of the overall course grade to 80 per cent of the total marks. The assignments that are worth 80 per cent of the course weight are not one single assignment, but a series of assignments due each class.

J/I stream. The J/I stream assignment weightings range between 5 and 80 per cent of the overall course marks. In Table 23, the predominant assignment value is 25 per cent.

Table 24 shows that the category range of intervals between 21-30 per cent represents 36 per cent of all assignment responses. The category corresponding to 80 per cent of the mark refers to one assignment that is required to be completed for each class. This is not

based on one project or paper as one might assume, but on a written assignment that is required to be completed for each class. The assignment weight value that is the least frequent is the 5 per cent category.

I/S stream. As per Table 23, there were 9 assignments from the I/S stream which did not identify the assignment weight; as such, they have been placed in the 0 category. Assignment weightings range between 4 per cent and 100 per cent per assignment. The assignment weight that is most frequently used in the I/S stream is 10 per cent.

According to Table 24, the range value of assignment weighting between 11 and 20 per cent represents 27 per cent of all assignment responses associated with the I/S stream.

Comparison of stream profiles. All assignment responses regardless of stream are weighted predominantly between 0 and 30 per cent at a minimum of 70 per cent of the time. The I/S stream has more assignments valued at 10 per cent or less.

Section 3: English teacher candidate schedule profile comparison

The core schedules for cohorts in the P/J, J/I, and I/S English specialization were used to compare, through profiles, the assignments that an individual student may encounter in the teacher education program. These profile comparisons have been used to determine if the workload is equitable between teacher candidates regardless of the stream.

Total number of assignments. Table 25 compares the descriptive statistics, specifically the assignment means, of each student schedule.

Table 25: Descriptive Statistics Student Schedule

Course Stream	Assignment Mean	N of Syllabi	Std. Deviation	Assignment Minimum	Assignment Maximum	Assignment Total
P/J	4.07	14	1.072	2	6	57
J/ I	3.46	13	1.198	2	6	45
I/ S	3.30	10	1.337	1	5	33
Total	3.65	37	1.207	1	6	135

Comparison of student schedules. A P/J teacher candidate would be responsible for 14 foundation and curriculum and instruction courses and 4 electives to graduate. According to Table 25, 14 syllabi which represented 6 year-long, 6 fall, and 2 winter courses have 57 core assignments. For the fourteen core courses, 10 quarter-credit, 3 half-credit and 1 combined quarter-credit and half-credit syllabus have an average of 4 assignments per course syllabus.

An estimate can be taken to indicate the total course assignments by adding an average of three assignments per three electives to make up the 5.5 FCE. As such, an additional 9 assignments can be added to the core total of assignments, bringing an overall total of 66 assignments in an 18 week period or 3.67 assignments per week at minimum.

The minimum number of assignments in a course is 2 while the maximum number of assignments that a student may encounter in a course is 5.

A teacher candidate with an English specialization in the J/I stream completes 15 foundation and curriculum and instruction courses. Those students who have English as a teachable are required to take 3 electives as the literacy course is not required. According to Table 25, in this cohort, 13 syllabi which represented 4 year-long, 8 fall, and 1 winter course. 10 quarter-credit, 1 half-credit and 2 combined quarter- and half-credit syllabi make up the 5.5 FCE.

Some 45 assignments from the curriculum and instruction and foundation courses which represent 3.46 assignments per syllabus on average must be completed along with 3 electives with an average of 3 assignments, bringing an overall total of 55 assignments in an 18- week period or 3 assignments per week at minimum.

The minimum number of assignments in a course is 2 while the maximum number of assignments that a student may encounter in a course is 6

An I/S teacher candidate's schedule has 10 curriculum and instruction and foundation courses as well as 3 elective (literacy course is not required) courses. 10 syllabi represent 5 year-long, 3 fall, and 2 winter courses. 10 courses were weighted as quarter-credit, 1 as half-credit and 2 syllabi which combines a quarter-credit help to make up the 5.5 FCE.

An I/S teacher candidate with an English specialization have completed 33 core (curriculum & instruction, and foundation) assignments, with an average of 3.3 assignments, and at minimum 9 elective assignments (3 assignments per course on average) for a total of 42 tasks in 18 weeks or 2.38 assignments per week at minimum.

The individual English student schedule profiles for each stream, like the stream profiles, contained different sample sizes and differing means. A one way ANOVA between the schedule profiles was conducted to compare the effects of the number of assignments on

the teacher candidate workload. The ANOVA showed no significant effect of the total number of assignments on student workload with the schedule profiles at the $p<.05$ level for three conditions. [$F(2,34) = .18$, $p = .982$]

Assignment types. A cross tabulation table, Table 26, was created to compare the assignment types found in each individual stream.

Table 26: Student Schedule Profile Comparison of Assignment Types

Assignment Type		Course Stream			Total
		P/J	J/I	I/S	
Exams, tests or quizzes	Count	13	5	7	25
	% of Total	21.8%	13.0%	21.2%	18.7%
Reflection Paper	Count	13	8	3	24
	% of Total	23.6%	17.4%	9.1%	17.9%
In Class Presentation	Count	7	6	5	18
	% of Total	12.7%	13.0%	15.2%	13.4%
Project	Count	6	7	3	16
	% of Total	9.1%	17.4%	9.1%	11.9%
Lesson Plan	Count	7	4	4	15
	% of Total	12.7%	8.7%	12.1%	11.2%
Essay or Report	Count	5	4	1	10
	% of Total	9.1%	8.7%	3.0%	7.5%
Reading Responses	Count	2	4	3	9
	% of Total	3.6%	8.7%	9.1%	6.7%
Unit Plan	Count	0	1	5	6
	% of Total	0.0%	2.2%	15.2%	4.5%
Creative Presentation	Count	0	4	0	4
	% of Total	0.0%	8.7%	0.0%	3.0%
Student Choice	Count	1	1	1	3
	% of Total	1.8%	2.2%	3.0%	2.2%
Assignment Presentation	Count	2	0	0	2
	% of Total	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%
Attendance	Count	1	0	1	2
	% of Total	1.8%	0.0%	3.0%	1.5%
Total	Count	57	45	33	135
	% of Total	41.0%	34.3%	24.6%	100.0%

Comparison of student schedules. The top three assignments a P/J teacher candidate will have to complete are exams, tests, and quizzes (13), reflection papers (13), and in-class presentations (2 assignment and 7 in-class presentation, 9) as part of the evaluation process.

No unit plans are completed in this stream.

The top three assignments a J/I teacher candidate will have to complete are reflection papers (8), projects (7), and 6 exams, tests, and quizzes and in-class presentations as part of the evaluation process.

I/S English teacher candidates, as part of the assessment and evaluation process are required to complete 9 lesson and unit plan assignments, 7 exams, tests or quizzes, and 5 in class presentations.

Due dates. A line graph has been created to compare the three student streams and their due dates. The results can be found in Figure 3.

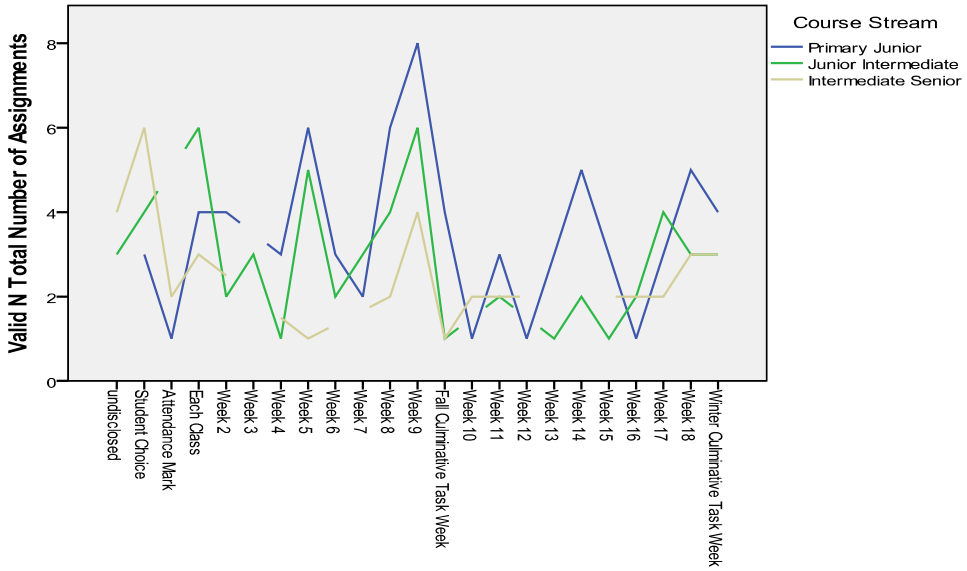


Figure 3: Student Profile, Due Date Line Graph

Comparison of student schedules. The peaks in Figure 3's line graph, show that P/J students have the most assignments due in Week 9 (9, 10.7%), and Week 5 (7, 8.3%). There are no undisclosed due dates and weeks 10 and 12 have very little assignments to hand in as shown by multiple line breaks.

The J/I student has assignments to be handed in during Week 9 (9.1%), and has undisclosed due dates on the syllabus as shown by the spikes associated with the line representing the J/I student. Weeks 4, 10, and 12 have very little assignments to hand in as indicated by the valleys and breaks in the line.

Like the P/J, and J/I streams, Figure 3 shows a peak period for Week 9, and there are due dates on the syllabi associated with this student's schedule. I/S teacher candidates have the choice of due dates for 8 (21.6%) assignments.

Assignment weight. The weighting of each student assignment has been compiled and compared within Table 27.

Table 27: Assignment Weight Student Schedule Comparisons

Assignment Weighting		Course Stream			Total
		P/J	J/I	I/S	
5	Count	0	1	0	1
	% of Total	0.00%	0.79%	0.00%	0.79%
10	Count	3	3	6	12
	% of Total	2.38%	2.38%	4.76%	9.52%
15	Count	5	2	2	9
	% of Total	3.97%	1.59%	1.59%	7.14%
20	Count	12	13	6	31
	% of Total	9.52%	10.32%	4.76%	24.60%
25	Count	5	9	3	17
	% of Total	3.97%	7.14%	2.38%	13.49%
30	Count	9	5	8	22
	% of Total	7.14%	3.97%	6.35%	17.46%
35	Count	2	3	0	5
	% of Total	1.59%	2.38%	0.00%	3.97%
40	Count	5	5	2	12
	% of Total	3.97%	3.97%	1.59%	9.52%
45	Count	0	0	1	1
	% of Total	0.00%	0.00%	0.79%	0.79%
50	Count	5	4	5	14
	% of Total	3.97%	3.17%	3.97%	11.11%
80	Count	0	1	0	1
	% of Total	0.00%	0.79%	0.00%	0.79%
100	Count	0	0	1	1
	% of Total	0.00%	0.00%	0.79%	0.79%
Total	Count	45	46	34	126
	% of Total	36%	37%	27%	100%

Comparison of student schedules. These assignments vary in weight from 10 to 50 per cent in value. The most frequent weight value found in this schedule of assignments for the P/J stream is 20 per cent. Assignments within the J/I schedule vary in weight from 5 to 80 per cent in value. The one assignment that is 80 per cent is a multi-tiered exercise that requires work each week; it can therefore be considered an outlier from the rest. The most frequent weight value found in the J/I schedule is 20 per cent. The I/S schedule has assignment weightings that vary between 10 to 50 per cent in value. The most frequent weight value is the 30 per cent category.

Nature of assignment. A bar graph has been created to show the difference in the nature of assignments between the P/J, J/I, I/S stream. Figure 4 compares the nature of assignments in one bar graph.

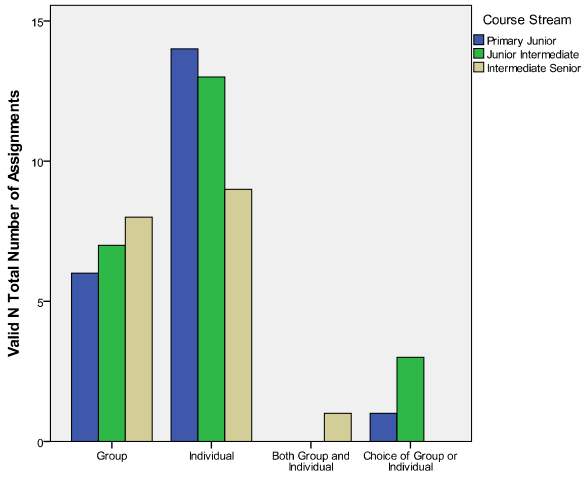


Figure 4: Student Comparison Nature of Assignment

Comparison of student schedules. As per Figure 4, the assignments in the P/J stream schedule are most frequently individual in nature. Teacher candidates are asked to work in groups for 14.5 per cent of the assignment responses. The P/J student also will have a choice in working in a group or alone for 1 assignment.

The assignments in the J/I stream are most frequently individual in nature. Teacher candidates are asked to complete 9 (19.6%) group assignments within the 18 weeks.
The I/S stream has assignments that are individual in nature most frequently; however, an I/S student will have to complete 9 group assignments. The I/S stream has an assignment that requires both individual work and cooperative learning.

Provision and use of a faculty rubric. P/J and J/I teacher candidates' assignments are pre-dominantly evaluated with the faculty rubric at 75 per cent. The 25 per cent which do not use the faculty rubric provide a rubric with the syllabus. I/S students have 70 per cent of the assignments use the faculty rubric as an assessment tool.

Chapter 5 – Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

The results in Chapter 4 indicate that the assessment culture found in the three streams of the teacher education program is aligned with the overall program culture. When a particular stream indicates a difference from the norm, this difference is subtle as shown in the area of the use and provision of a faculty rubric. The use of a rubric is the predominant means of evaluating teacher candidate assignments; however, instructors in the P/J or J/I division are more likely to create their own rubric rather than use the Faculty rubric. Another difference for the P/J division is the use of exams, tests, and quizzes, as an assessment method. J/I and I/S students would be exposed more to in-class presentations.

When these assessment methods are compared with the assessment methods outlined in a 2003 internal review on grading and assessment, one sees that the methods of assessments used in the teacher education program have changed only slightly in 2011. The 2003 report featured the top assessment methods as participation and attendance, unit and lesson-planning as well as written assignments. The results from this study indicate that lesson and unit-planning, reflection papers, and in-class presentations are featured as the top three types of assignments.

Where the Faculty of Education differs today is the expectation of class attendance. With the recommendation from the report stating that a shift away from participation and attendance marks would be beneficial, this finding is not surprising. Lesson-planning and unit-planning are considered to be core competencies of the teaching profession as outlined by the Ontario College of Teachers along with the in-class presentations and reflection papers.

In terms of how these assessment methods compare on a national scale, Crocker and Dibbon (2008) reported that "the most common teaching techniques are presentation ... being done by close to 80% of the faculty" (p. 88) in Canada. The second assignment method was the reflective essay.

The assessment tasks are usually individual in nature with in-class presentations usually having some type of group component and allowing students a choice of presentation date. This choice balances out other type of assignment due dates which can be "undisclosed" to the teacher candidate. Teacher education programs regardless of streams seem to be summative in nature with the most assignments due on Week 9 and 18. Almost 6 per cent of all assignments were classified as "attendance" marks found only in the J/I and I/S streams.

These assignments have a range of assignment weighting between 4 and 100 per cent with the most frequent assignment weighting at 20 per cent and a little over 20 per cent of all assignments in the program under 10 per cent.

When analyzing the perceptions and preferences of the teacher candidates, it is important to recognize the teacher candidates' strategies for learning. Willis (1993) cites Biggs' work to explain that, along with surface and deep learning, some students move towards "achieving" and "deep achieving" strategies of learning. Teacher candidates in this program exhibit characteristics of both achieving and deep achieving learning. Achieving students are motivated to learn by achieving high grades. The teacher candidate who is an achieving learner creates strategies by organizing his or her time and working space, and by using the syllabus information in the timely and effective manner. The deep level achieving student values grades, and uses similar strategies as the achieving learner; however, this

student is more intrinsically motivated to learn the material; this type of student is searching for deeper meaning in the material presented. (Willis, 1993).

These motivations for learning take on new challenges when the teacher candidate is in an accelerated program with quarter-credit courses lasting 9 weeks and having 16 hours of class time on average. Faculty members have time constraints to teaching in an accelerated program. Johnson(2009) explains that accelerated programs as a whole do not reduce the academic rigor of the teaching and learning; however, "teachers in accelerated courses do not have the luxury of wasting classroom time; therefore, they must be consistent in achieving course objectives" (p. 153). These course objectives are then translated to the course assignment plan and student workload.

The nature, quality, and weight of the assignment are an integral part of the strategies teacher candidates use to navigate the workload. Comments regarding group presentations are positive only in the fact that teacher candidates see a connection between the type of assignment and the teaching profession; however, problems with scheduling, and delivery of key content mar the assessment tasks connection to the individual candidate's teaching praxis.

These connections also help to frame the experience associated with the quality of work teacher candidates are asked to produce. If assignments are not framed, the work is considered to be of little or no value to the student. A student may claim the work to be "busy work" and of no value to the teaching career. The instructor, however, could have had a clear plan to provide knowledge to the student with said assignment.

Another aspect of the quality of learning has to do with the type of assignment. Teacher candidates are looking for more opportunities to deepen their knowledge in their

teaching praxis. Rote learning and memorization of readings that require an exam or test to prove competency are frustrating as there is the implication that the material has no relevance or practical application.

The weight of an assignment is used as a cue for the teacher candidate as to how much effort and time should be put forth in the completion of an assignment. For those assignments less that 10% in nature, the learning curve, time needed to complete the assignment and the depth of the assignment are all considered to be at surface level learning.

Student workload issues paired with frequency of assignments also hinder deep learning. In terms of issues around due dates as related to workload, there are two separate factors to consider in order "to give students the best opportunity to show what they have learned"(McMillan, Hellsten, & Klinger, 2011, p. 154). The first is the issue of transparency of assignment due dates and instructions.

The due dates of 12 per cent of all assignment in the teacher education program were reported "undisclosed." Teacher candidates expressing sentiments like "I really like hand-outs right at the start of the year so like from the opening class they give us the rubric and it explain all the expectations and we go pass out the entire syllabus and everything they clearly done" (Student 6, 2011). Some teacher candidates perceived undue stress in completing the assignments.

As the initial teacher education program is accelerated in nature, both administration and faculty alike must recognize the importance of front-loading information to the student at the very beginning of the course. This point is even more important when summative assessment is a cultural norm. Most assignments are due in the last week of class, specifically the last week in the fall term prior to the first placement.

There are two possible reasons why the workload falls heavily into the final weeks. It is evident that instructors care about the success of their students by giving ample opportunity for feedback before the teacher candidate enters his/her placements.

The other reason is the number of quarter-credit courses that a teacher candidate is required to complete in this program. Instructors are required to evaluate the student's clear understanding of the criteria associated with the completion of a course or program for certification (Boud & Falchikov, 2006, p. 401).

Although, on an individual level, not all students experience the same assessment workload due to the course section, or division, Kember (2004) states that a student's perception of workload as being overwhelming trumps the amount of time spent doing the assignments. Students will vary the amount of time spent on assignments based on outside commitments, the weight of the assignment and their perceived value of the assignment to their learning. Dependent on the division, the average workload in "Professional Year" is equivalent to between 3.5 and 4.0 assignments per course. This average number of assignments for a university education undergraduate course is slightly higher than the analysis of the frequency of assignments (2.5 assignments per course) found by Graves, Hyland, and Samuels(2010).

Prichard and Mackenzie (2011) have shown that a variety of "studies indicate that contributing factors to the 'success' of these shortened formats from the student's perspective relate to the necessity for instructors to be enthusiastic, motivated, and flexible in their teaching and assessment practices, and this positive attitude results in a positive learning environment, or else the experience becomes 'painful for all'" (p. 341)

At present, some teacher candidates are finding the "Professional Year" painful when it comes to receiving information about assignments, completing group assignments, and the lack of content and pedagogical integration of the program. In the survey comments, teacher candidates voiced concerns about missing the overall core objectives of the assignments. They could not perceive the connections between the content taught in the course and its application toward the teaching profession. There is an assumption that, because the learners have completed undergraduate degrees, they have all the skills needed to translate content into pedagogy.

When the content is delivered by groups or becomes a group assignment because of time constraints associated with a 9- or 18-week program, instructors are asking the teacher candidates to have faith in their fellow students' abilities to research and present appropriate course content as well as work well within the group when their time comes to present. Working in a group requires specialized skills including trust of a stranger in the creation of an assignment that will be evaluated for all members. This is especially true with the delivery of course material. When group presentations comprise a large amount of the content of the course, students experience angst because they are asked to trust that another student's work is accurate, relevant, and worthy of retaining.

The assumption that teacher candidates have the skills to work effectively as a team is made with little evidence of community-building. Collaboration, according to the OCT, is an essential skill for a 21st century teacher(OCT, Teacher Divisions, 2011). Specific training in group dynamics, and community building would greatly enhance the program.

Tenured and tenure-tracked Faculty and contract lecturers have a responsibility not only to teach the art of collaboration, but also the opportunity to model Professional Learning

Communities within the Education system. Johnson (2009) stated that "faculty might benefit from being aware of content in other courses. This could eliminate duplication of course content, as well as allow the individual faculty members to assist student in making connections between the courses" (p. 162). Comments were made in regards to duplication of content in various courses. Integrated content and assessment plans are an integral part of working within an accelerated program, and can help with the evolution of the program's assessment culture.

Conclusions

The 2003 internal review gave recommendations to the Faculty of Education for ways to improve the grading process. The implementation of some of the recommendations provided began the evolution of an assessment culture aimed at improving both the student experience and the integrity of learning in the Faculty.

The faculty grading policy is very specific in regards to the three expectations of assessment and evaluation. Attendance and participation are mandatory expectations in the "Professional Year." Therefore, assignment marks for attendance and participation are not necessary. As per the second expectation that the course syllabi would disclose all assessment expectations, issues of information not disclosed to the student have been revealed, specifically with due dates (12 % undisclosed), and third academic rigour should be defined as to the quality of the learning opportunity rather than the number of assignments. These points could indicate a misinterpretation of the faculty grading policy by instructors.

Like the faculty grading policy, the faculty-wide rubric seems to both validate and confuse the students in terms of grading. With the implementation of the rubric and grading policy, students developed a sense of value for their achievements; however, there still lingers confusion as to how the rubric and policy should be implemented as individual

instructors have different interpretations of the policy and assessment tool. This confusion can be alleviated by creating new policies and professional development training for present and future instructors that clearly establish ground rules as to how the rubric should be used and explained to the students. As well, the creation of a rubric for oral presentation would fully integrate the assessment process as the current rubric seems to have been created for written academic assignments. The grading policy and rubric does not take into account the high number of oral presentations or unit and lesson plans given in the program.

As oral presentations and unit-planning assessment are usually collaborative in nature, training in group dynamics and processes for both instructors and students would help to move students along the team performance continuum from "storming" to "performing" more effectively. Collaborative skills are highlighted as a standard for members of the Ontario College of teachers to possess; as such, the assumption that teacher candidates have innate skills as team members and leaders can be detrimental to their professional development when working in Professional Learning Communities in school boards.

Universities would benefit by modeling the professional learning community protocols found in Education at the university level through training initiatives associated with building a community that extends beyond the "Professional Year" for the teacher candidates, no matter the division or stream, by providing opportunities within the program to practice these skills through program delivery.

Although the Faculty of Education has a clear framework that extends from the administration, this vision is not clear for the students. Overlapping, inconsistent, and non-integrated course content impedes the teacher candidate from moving beyond surface learning to deep learning of core teaching competencies. The creation of a more curriculum-

centered program based on key competencies would be ideal; however, such an initiatives maybe unrealistic due to the concept of academic freedom for instructors who value their independence. However, with a buy-in from the tenured and tenure track faculty and contract lecturers, the administration could develop an integrated assessment and curriculum teacher education program that would focus on the strengths of each Faculty member and contract lecturer.

This integrated assessment and curriculum plan would thereby eliminate overlapping content, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and emphasize deeper learning through meaningful and authentic assignments that would help teacher candidates identify connections between the theory of teaching and their personal teaching praxis. This initiative would also move the assessment culture from a more summative approach with assignments clustered at the end of the program toward a formative approach, which would provide more opportunities for higher order thinking, and away from tasks involving rote memorization with tests and quizzes.

At the very minimum, the Faculty of Education Undergraduate Department should look at enforcing the grading policy which has the content on the course syllabi as being consistent. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that students would benefit from having all assignment information upfront on the first day of class with the course syllabi containing not only the assignment weight, name, and due date, but also any information required to complete the assignment. This practice would allow teacher candidates sufficient time to prioritize their learning and complete the tasks in a timely manner without losing sleep.

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Appendix

Coding Sheet - Assessment Project

Coder Date:

Course Information

Course Name		Course Section		Assignment code number (assigned after inputted into data base)	

This course is: (check appropriate boxes)

Course Streams	P/J		J /I		I/S		All	
Course Type	Required Course		Elective		Foundations			
Credit Weight	Full credit		Half credit		Quarter credit			
Section	Fall		Winter		Year Round			

Assignment Information

Number of Assignments in total:

Assignment Code (assigned after inputted into data base	No.	Assignment Type (professors label)	Assignment Due Date: Week #	Nature of Assignment	Assignment Weight (Mark Value)
	1.				
	2.				
	3.				
	4.				
	5.				
	6.				
	7.				
	8.				
	9.				
	10.				
	PM				
	Total				

Data Base Input Date: Inputted by: Verify by:

Teacher Candidate Consent Letter and Survey

By participating in this survey, you could win one of five $40.00 Cineplex Odeon Movie Gift Cards. You are being invited to take part in a research study. Your participation would take place at the end of the fall semester. This research entitled: What Is the Assessment Culture of the "Professional Year" in the Bachelor of Education Program?, involves the exploration of the assessment practices associated with the Professional Year in the Bachelor of Education Program. This research will involve completing an on-line survey and may involve an interview during the day on October 29 or during the evening of November 2 and 3, 2011. The purpose of this research is to determine if there is a difference between the assessment workload associated with the Primary/Junior, Junior/Intermediate, and Intermediate/Senior streams of the Professional Year in the Teacher Education Program.

If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete a survey asking about your attitudes toward the program's assessment workload and practices. The survey will be completed after the fall term and takes approximately ten minutes to complete. Some students will be asked to take part in an individual interview which will be conducted during the day on October 29 or during the evening of November 2 and 3, 2011, before the fall placement begins. These interviews will last ten to fifteen minutes, giving you the opportunity to explain your ideas further. These interviews will be digitally audio-taped. All participation is voluntary, if you choose to participate in the study, you are free to refuse to answer any questions asked of you, as well as the opportunity to clarify or remove any information previously stated prior to the research being written up.

You can refuse to participate in any or all parts of this study and can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequence. Students will not be marked or graded on any aspect of their participation or lack of participation in the research. Your confidentiality and anonymity is assured: Survey information will be kept confidential and coded by your user name to allow the pairing of the data associated with each survey and avoid duplication of survey results. Interviews will be digitally audio-taped and later transcribed. Pseudonyms and reference to students' role in the study (i.e. "student 1") will be used in all transcripts and later write-up of findings. Raw data will only be accessible to me, Kym Caldwell, and to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Philip Allingham.

This study does not pose any known risks to participants. The study is designed to allow students the opportunity to talk frankly about their expectations of assessment practices and their perceptions of such practices. Students are expected to benefit from participation in this study at minimum through having the opportunity to explain their viewpoint on assessment practices. Through their active participation, students will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and perspectives on the workload associated with the Professional Year of the Bachelor of Education program.

The information from this study will be used for a Masters of Education thesis. Reports of the findings may also be published in professional academic journals, or at professional conferences, where your identity and other university information will be kept strictly confidential. Neither the final thesis, nor any other product of the research such as journal articles, will contain any identifying references to individuals or institutions.

All electronic data will be stored on an encrypted and password protected key. All data that are collected will be kept confidential and securely stored for five years in a locked filing cabinet in Dr. Philip Allingham's office. After the five-year period, all raw data (electronic, notes, or tape) will be destroyed. If you are interested in the findings or analysis of this study please contact myself, Kym Caldwell, either through email or through the Faculty of Education. If you agree to participate in this study please proceed with this survey and complete the attached consent form. If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my thesis supervisor, Dr. Philip Allingham. Thank you for considering participating in this research. For those that do choose to participate, their name will be entered into a draw to win one of five entertainment packages valued at approximately $40.00. This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact at the Research Ethics Board.

Sincerely,

Kym Caldwell Dr. Philip Allingham Office of Research

I have read and understood the above cover letter * ☐ yes My user name is _____

To complete this survey on line, please go to the following link: https://docs.google.com//spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dGh2S1BYU3NZc2tqdUhTN0lvX1ZpTnc6MQ Or you may drop a paper copy off in box located in the Student Lounge.

Participant Consent Form

Thank you for your participation in this study.

By checking the following boxes, I am agreeing to participate in a study supervised by Dr. Philip Allingham and conducted by Kym Caldwell, M'ED student entitled "What is the Asssesment Culture of the "Professional Year" in the Bachelor of Education Program" I have read and understood the following statements. *

- ☐ I voluntarily agree to participate.
- ☐ There are no known or anticipated potential risks of the study.
- ☐ Participants are expected to benefit from participation in the study by sharing their viewpoint about the assessment practices associated with the Professional Year of the Bachelor of Education Program.
- ☐ I can withdraw from the study at any time, and/or may choose not answer any question at any time without undergoing any consequence to me.
- ☐ Any information I may provide will be confidential and securely stored at Lakehead University in a filing cabinet in Dr. Philip Allingham's office for a period of five years.
- ☐ I can request a copy of the research findings from Kym Caldwell by completing the section below without committing to participation in the study, and it will be provided to me at the conclusion of the study when the findings have been written.
- ☐ I and the University will remain anonymous in any publication/public presentation of the study research findings.
- ☐ Consent for this research has been obtained from the University Research Ethics Board, and the Faculty of Education.

I agree to participate under the above conditions. *

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no

Student Assessment Workload Expectations Survey

I am registered in the following program:

- ☐ Concurrent Bachelor of Education Program
- ☐ Concurrent Honours Bachelor of Education Program
- ☐ Consecutive One Year Bachelor of Education Program
- ☐ Honours Aboriginal Bachelor of Education Program
- ☐ Aboriginal Bachelor of Education Program
- ☐ Native Language Instructors Programs
- ☐ Native Teacher Education Programs
- ☐ Other: _____

I hold a Bachelor degree of _____ My Bachelor degree is from _____

I am registered in the following course stream of the Bachelor of Education Program

- ☐ Primary Junior
- ☐ Junior Intermediate
- ☐ Intermediate Senior
- ☐ I do not wish to answer
- ☐ Other: _____

My teachables are (check all that apply)

- ☐ History
- ☐ Social Science
- ☐ English
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Physical Education
- ☐ Biology
- ☐ General Science
- ☐ Chemistry
- ☐ French
- ☐ Geography
- ☐ Physics
- ☐ Environmental Science (OE3)
- ☐ Native Languages
- ☐ Music - Vocal
- ☐ Visual Arts
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Computer Science
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Other:

I am registered in the following number of courses

- ☐ 14
- ☐ 18
- ☐ Other:

I feel that I have had the following number of assignments in each course on average.

- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6

I have spent the following number of hours per assignment on average

- ☐ 1/2 an hour
- ☐ 1 hour
- ☐ 1.5 hours
- ☐ 2
- ☐ Other:

I want assignments to focus: (please check all that apply)

- ☐ more on group work than individual work.
- ☐ more on individual work than on group work
- ☐ more on written work than presentations
- ☐ more on presentations than on written work
- ☐ I don't know what type of assignments to expect
- ☐ Other:

I prefer the following types of assignments (check all that apply)

- ☐ group presentations
- ☐ exams and tests
- ☐ lesson plans, and unit plans
- ☐ article reviews and reading responses
- ☐ individual presentations
- ☐ essays and reports
- ☐ portfolios
- ☐ projects
- ☐ multi- media projects (pod casts, prezis, movies)
- ☐ Other:

In regards to assignments, I prefer

- ☐ to work alone on assignments
- ☐ to collaborate in a group but be graded individually
- ☐ to work as a group and be graded as a group
- ☐ none of the choices provided
- ☐ a mix of the above choices
- ☐ Other: _____

I have found that all my assignments are due on the following weeks (check all that apply)

- ☐ Week 1
- ☐ Week 2
- ☐ Week 3
- ☐ Week 4
- ☐ Week 5
- ☐ Week 6
- ☐ Week 7
- ☐ Week 8
- ☐ Week 9
- ☐ Week 10
- ☐ Week 11
- ☐ Week 12
- ☐ Week 13
- ☐ Week 14
- ☐ Week 15
- ☐ Week 16
- ☐ Week 17
- ☐ Week 18
- ☐ Fall Cumulative Task Week
- ☐ Winter Cumulative Task Week
- ☐ I don't know when my assignments are due

- **Please check all that apply**
- ☐ I have had an instructor explain the Faculty rubric and how it relates to course assignments to me.
- ☐ I have had an instructor explain the Faculty grading policy to me in my courses.
- ☐ I have seen and understood the Faculty rubric.
- ☐ I have seen and read the Faculty grading policy.

I would like to be part of the assessment culture research being done for the Professional Year of the Bachelor of Education Program

- ☐ Yes I would be available for an interview
- ☐ No I do not wish to be interviewed.
- ☐ Please send me a copy of your final report

Comments that I wish to make about the student workload associated with the Professional Year of the B'ED program.

Student semi-structured interview questions

1. What is your personal philosophy of assessment?
2. What do you know about the Faculty Grading Policy? How do you feel about the Faculty policy?
3. If you had the power to change the faculty policy, what would you change and why?
4. How much assessment is too much for a 9-week? 18-week course?
5. How much assessment is too much for a ¼ credit, ½ credit or full credit course?
6. How many hours a week on average did you dedicate to your assignments in each course?
7. How did you feel about the assignments you were required to complete?
8. Did you feel the assignments you were required to do helped you to learn the course material?
9. What is your ideal type of assessment?
10. What advice would you give a new instructor when designing the assignments for a course?
11. What information can an instructor give you to help you understand the assignments and assessment policies?
12. Is there anything else you would like to talk to me about involving assessment practices and policy at the University?