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ABSTRACT

This final report describes activities and achievements of a 5-year project by San Francisco State University (California) to prepare doctoral candidates for careers in college teaching with an emphasis in urban, multicultural special education. The project was also intended to offer an alternative route to doctoral preparation for mid-career special educators, particularly those from groups underrepresented in educational leadership positions. The project identified and supported master's degree students, with a priority on minority and bilingual candidates. The project used supervised training in higher education, multidisciplinary instruction provided by general and special education faculty, an integrated cross-disciplinary curriculum, and extensive preparation in research skills. The following project goals were met: (1) recruitment of 9-12 doctoral candidates and 10 pre-doctoral candidates from underrepresented groups; (2) provision of financial assistance for doctoral and pre-doctoral candidates; (3) implementation of an integrated doctoral program in college teaching and research with an emphasis in urban, multicultural special education; (4) implementation of a leadership training model that uses doctoral students to teach and supervise interns in a credential/master's degree program; and (5) dissemination of information on an alternative model for recruiting and preparing doctoral candidates to serve urban, multicultural special education children and their families. (DB)

**Preparing Urban Leaders for Special Education (PULSE): An
Integrated Doctoral Program in Research and College Teaching for
Urban and Multicultural Special Education Settings
Final Report
Grant # H029E970023**

**Project Director
Susan Evans**

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Abstract: H029E970023

Preparing Urban Leaders in Special Education (PULSE): An Integrated Doctoral Program in Research and College Teaching for Urban and Multicultural Special Education Settings

In California, and in the San Francisco Bay Area region, there is a critical shortage of doctorally prepared special educators, particularly those who wish to serve culturally and linguistically diverse children with mild-moderate disabilities in urban schools. PULSE was implemented to prepare doctoral candidates for careers in college teaching with an emphasis in urban, multicultural special education. This professional development training project offered an alternative route to doctoral preparation for mid-career special educators, particularly those from groups that are underrepresented in educational leadership positions. The project also identified and supported master's degree students, with a priority on minority and bilingual candidates, to form a pool of potential doctoral candidates. PULSE proposed five objectives:

- 1) Recruitment of 9-12 doctoral candidates and 10 pre-doctoral candidates from underrepresented groups;
- 2) Provision of financial assistance for doctoral and pre-doctoral candidates;
- 3) Implementation of an integrated doctoral program in college teaching and research with an emphasis in urban, multicultural special education;
- 4) Implementation of a leadership training model which uses doctoral students to teach and supervise interns in a credential/master's degree program;
- 5) Dissemination of information on an alternative model for recruiting and preparing doctoral candidates to serve urban, multicultural special education children and their families.

The project used supervised training in higher education, multidisciplinary instruction provided by general and special education faculty, an integrated cross-disciplinary curriculum, extensive preparation in research skills, and a focus on urban, multicultural special education to prepare a diverse group of doctoral candidates for careers as teacher educators. The project

proposed that 9-12 doctoral candidates would receive a Doctorate in Education (Ed.D. degree).

Further, the project proposed that 10 promising pre-doctoral candidates would receive a master's degree for teaching diverse children with mild-moderate disabilities in urban schools. These goals were met. USF is now the largest producer of doctorally prepared special educators in California, with minority and bilingual doctoral candidates/graduates in the majority. This nontraditional and innovative leadership development training project could serve as an alternative model for recruiting and training teacher educators and researchers in urban, multicultural special education.

Objectives and Activities of the Training Project

- 1) Recruitment of 9-12 doctoral candidates and 10 pre-doctoral candidates from underrepresented groups;
 - A comprehensive outreach and recruitment plan was implemented to identify doctoral candidates and promising pre-doctoral master's candidates.
 - Recruitment was carried out in collaboration with urban school districts in this region.
 - Major recruitment efforts were directed toward increasing the number of African American, Latino, and Asian candidates.

- 2) Provision of financial assistance for doctoral and pre-doctoral candidates;
 - Financial assistance covered tuition costs for the program, books, fees, statistical software, etc. (two thirds of the budget was allocated for student support).
 - Master's students received tuition support for their courses in research methods and thesis development.

- 3) Implementation of an integrated doctoral program in college teaching and research with an emphasis in urban, multicultural special education;
 - Candidates attended classes with general and special education doctoral candidates.
 - Candidates are prepared by Department faculty including four special educators and four general educators.
 - Candidates were assigned an advisor from among the special education faculty but they could select any of the Department faculty for their dissertation committee.
 - Candidates completed a 60 unit doctoral program with an emphasis on serving

- multicultural urban children with mild/moderate disabilities.
 - The program of studies featured three broad areas of expertise: (1) research skills, (2) knowledge about instruction (both traditional and innovative), and (3) knowledge about the learning process (with an emphasis on diverse, urban, special needs populations).
- 4) Implementation of a leadership training model which used doctoral students to teach and supervise interns in a credential/master's degree program;
 - Doctoral candidates taught credential candidates enrolled in a field-based teacher credential program.
 - Doctoral candidates had increasing participation and responsibility for delivering instruction.
 - Doctoral candidates evaluated student projects and portfolios, advised credential candidates, participated in recruitment and admission, served on master's degree committees, and designed instruction for credential candidates working in urban multicultural schools.
 - Doctoral candidates supervised credential candidates in urban schools districts with enrollments of 75% to 100% minority and bilingual students.
- 5) Dissemination of information on an alternative model for recruiting and preparing doctoral candidates to serve urban, multicultural special education children and their families.
 - Candidate dissertation research published in professional journals and presented as papers at national conferences.
 - Descriptive reports of the leadership training model presented at State and national conferences and in professional publications (see attached article from [TESE](#)).

Conceptual Framework for the Training Project

In California, and in the San Francisco Bay Area, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of minority and bilingual K-12 students with mild-moderate disabilities, particularly in urban schools which has impacted both the State and the regional need for more doctoral graduates to fill special education teacher education positions. Special education enrollments in Bay Area urban classrooms range from 85% to 100% minority and bilingual students. Over 70 languages are spoken by the families sending their children to regional urban schools. It is

essential that doctoral candidates be well prepared to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse special education populations in urban settings and receive extensive training in a wide variety of research methods that have a direct connection to the needs of educators, families, and policy-makers who serve special populations.

This training project prepared doctoral leadership personnel as teacher-scholars for higher education positions in urban, multicultural communities with a priority on recruiting minority and bilingual doctoral candidates. In addition, pre-doctoral candidates were selected from a pool of primarily minority and bilingual special education credential/master's degree candidates. The following table shows the identified needs, expected outcomes and benefits of the project:

**Table 1
Needs, Outcomes, and Benefits of the Project**

Identified Needs	Meeting the Needs	Expected Outcomes	Future Benefits
Doctorally prepared teacher scholars to serve minority and bilingual mild-moderate populations	A core of 3 practica in college teaching and 5 practica in research in PULSE doctoral project	9-12 PULSE graduates will receive an Ed.D. with an urban multicultural emphasis plus 10 predoctoral interns	Increase in number of diverse special education faculty to serve minority special ed children
Dichotomy between teaching and research in special education teacher education and need for both	PULSE candidates teach in cred program and supervise in field with practice informing theory	Graduates will have skills in urban special ed and research and college teaching	Scholarship not decontextualized from classroom teaching environment
Limited availability of appropriate doctoral training in this region for urban special education classrooms	New program for doctoral candidates who will train cred interns in inner city multicultural special education	PULSE candidates will assume new roles as teacher educators with supervision & practice	Increase number and quality of teacher-scholars serving diverse students with mild-moderate disabilities
Gap between general and special education in higher education	Integrated doctoral training with general and special ed faculty and fellow students	PULSE candidates attend class, conduct research, and teach general and special ed students	Increase collaboration & interdisciplinary service delivery in urban special ed

Upon completion of the program, PULSE doctoral graduates demonstrated the following competencies to serve culturally and linguistically diverse urban children with mild-moderate

disabilities and their families:

- Skill in leadership-level research and teacher education
- Ability to serve the profession including expertise in grant writing and making presentations at professional conferences and skill in use of new technologies
- Ability to bridge the gap between general and special education
- Ability to connect research and theory with practical applications
- Ability to conduct and disseminate research on issues in urban multicultural special education

Description of the training model activities, and participants

Training Model Activities

All candidates completed 60 units of instruction and successfully defended a doctoral dissertation. Pre-doctoral candidates completed a 42 unit program and received their special education credential and M.A. degree. The project was jointly delivered by special and general education personnel with an emphasis on college teaching and research in urban, multicultural special education. In addition to specialized training in urban special education, candidates enrolled in classes with general educators, instructional designers, directors of educational technology, school administrators, and college instructors in a variety of related fields. Coursework and practica in research, instruction, learning, and urban multicultural special education, along with the requirement to conduct an original dissertation study, were used to prepare minority and bilingual doctoral candidates to assume faculty positions in higher education.

Candidates participated in four Practica in College Teaching, each covering a full academic year. In these Practica, doctoral candidates taught credential candidates enrolled in a field-based internship program. The credential program focuses on the preparation of teachers for culturally and linguistically diverse, inner city, special education classrooms. Doctoral candidates had increasing participation and responsibility for delivering instruction and supervising credential candidates who teach in Bay Area urban school districts with K-12 student populations ranging from 75% to 100% minority and bilingual students. The special education population includes children with

mild/moderate learning disabilities and behavioral disorders. These practica allowed doctoral candidates to progressively make the transition from classroom teachers to teacher educators.

In addition to the College Teaching Practica, students enrolled in a minimum of five Practica in Research and Statistics: (1) Applied Educational Statistics, (2) Advanced Statistics, (3) Research Methods, (4) Educational Measurement, and (5) Advanced Research Methods including one or more of the following design courses--Descriptive Research, ANOVA Designs, Correlational Designs, and/or Single Subject Designs. Candidates were advised to take a minimum of two of the advanced research methods courses. These research practica led to the candidates' dissertation research during years four and five of the program. At the dissertation stage, candidates took three culminating courses in Dissertation Research and Writing.

Candidates had extensive exposure to the literature in special education particularly with minority students in urban settings, and in the areas of learning and instruction. Because of the practica and research emphases, candidates were able to gather data for research studies which addressed the theoretical issues presented in their courses. Candidates had on-the-job exposure to some of the critical issues facing teacher educators who train credential level specialists for urban schools. Each candidate had a minimum of three hours contact per week, either individually or in groups, with the special education faculty to discuss how relevant empirical or theoretical research literature provides insight into the resolution of problems observed in their practica.

Five curricular themes of individual differences, learning processes, instruction, diversity, and outcomes were integrated across the coursework, practica, and seminars. The project has three emphases: Emphasis on College Teaching, Emphasis on Multicultural and Urban Issues, and Emphasis on Research. The goal was to provide realistic, high quality training for special educators as they move into new roles as teacher educators-scholars. The sequence of academic coursework is presented in Table 2.

Participants

Over the past decade, USF has made significant effort to recruit culturally and linguistically diverse graduate students. In 1986, 20% of all School of Education (SOE) students were minorities. Today 36% are members of minority groups and that number is growing. The SOE has an active outreach and liaison relationship with Bay Area educational institutions.

**Table 2
Curriculum Sequence**

Semester	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Fall	<i>Ed 706</i> App. Stat. (3 units) <i>Ed 704</i> Fdns of Educ. & Psych (3 units) <i>Ed 798</i> Practica in Higher Ed (3 units)	<i>Ed 707</i> Adv. Stat. (3 units) <i>Ed 701</i> Human Abilities or <i>Ed 732</i> Motivation (3 units) <i>Ed 798</i> Practica in Higher Ed (3 units)	<i>Ed 702</i> Problem Solving or <i>Ed 715</i> Instr. Design (3 units) <i>Ed 703</i> Perf. Assmt. or <i>Ed 721</i> Prog. Eval. (3 units) <i>Ed 798</i> Practica in Higher Ed (3 units)	<i>Ed 730</i> Desc. Res. or <i>Ed 710</i> ANOVA or <i>Ed 711</i> Correl. Designs (3 units) <i>Ed 790</i> Diss. Research (3 units)
Spring	<i>Ed 700</i> Cog. Psych. (3 units) <i>Ed 708</i> Res. Meth. (3 units)	<i>Ed 716</i> Ed. Measurement (3 units) <i>Ed 720</i> Models of Teaching (3 units) <i>Ed 717</i> Sem. in Sp. Ed. Res. Issues (3 units)	<i>Ed 730</i> Desc. Res. or <i>Ed 710</i> ANOVA or <i>Ed 711</i> Correl. Designs (3 units) <i>Ed 709</i> Diss. Prop. Sem. (3 units) <i>Ed 718</i> Sem. in Sp. Educ. Diversity (3 units)	<i>Ed 791</i> (3 units) <i>Ed 719</i> Sem. in Sp. Ed. Grant Writing/Publishing (3 units)

There are an extremely limited number of IHEs which offer doctoral degrees in special education in this region and a lack of programs which allow mid-career working professionals to complete a doctoral degree. USF has offered doctoral degrees for working professionals for over 20 years. The project marked the beginning of a new and much needed specialization in research and college teaching in urban multicultural special education at USF. A more diverse faculty and teaching force may reduce mislabeling, facilitate crosscultural understandings in the classroom, and provide role models for multicultural students. To facilitate the recruitment of minority doctoral candidates, priority was given to qualified culturally and linguistically diverse applicants. Pre-doctoral students were also recruited to form a pool of qualified future applicants for the doctoral program.

Project Outcomes

Alternative routes to preparing doctoral candidates may be one answer to shortage of qualified teacher educators. Projects specifically designed for working professionals attract more diverse mature candidates who are more likely to be successful. On-the-job training has long been used

with credential candidates. This project offers an alternative model for doctoral preparation to universities in other regions that are experiencing critical shortages of doctorally prepared special educators.

This is the sixth year of leadership training in special education. Thus far, we are more than pleased with project outcomes.

- The number of doctoral and master's candidates prepared by the project exceeded projections. The objective to train 9-12 doctoral candidates was exceeded (17 doctoral students were funded by the project. Since the project was funded for four years and this is a five year doctoral program, several candidates are now at the dissertation stage). The objective to train 10 pre-doctoral candidates was exceeded (24 master's candidates were funded by the project).
- The project is fully institutionalized at USF. USF is now the largest producer of doctorally prepared special educators in California, with minority and bilingual doctoral candidates/graduates in the majority.
- Currently there are 18 doctoral candidates enrolled in the USF program. They range in age from mid-20s to late 40s and include six African-Americans candidates, three Asian candidates (Filipino with some fluency in Tagalog; Chinese and fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese; Okinawan with some fluency in Japanese), one Latino candidate, and one parent of two children with disabilities.
- Eight graduates of the master's program funded by the project entered the doctoral program at USF.
- In 2001-02, the first group of seven candidates completed the doctoral program (including two African-Americans, one Latina fully bilingual in Spanish and one parent of a child with disabilities). Six were hired by universities in California; five were hired at the rank of Assistant Professor; one was hired as an Associate Professor. One graduate is relocating to Washington State to assume a federally funded grant position in higher education. Three graduates serve as Director of the Special Education Credential Program at their respective university. One graduate serves as co-director of an \$800,000 OSEP grant to train urban special educators from underrepresented groups (in the Minority Competition). Four more candidates will complete the program in Spring, 2003 and will seek higher education positions.
- One recent graduate received an OSEP Student-Initiated award to conduct her dissertation research. There were 76 applicants in this competition; 12 grants were awarded nationwide. The USF candidate's application was ranked number one.
- While in the doctoral program, one candidate served as a national Vice-President of Student CEC and another served two terms as California Student CEC president. All graduates/candidates are active members of CEC, AERA, and the California Association of Professors of Special Education (CAPSE).
- Sixty percent of doctoral graduates and current doctoral candidates are from underrepresented groups.

- The presence of minority doctoral candidates has had a profound effect on the student composition in the special education teacher credential program. In six years, the percentage of credential candidates from underrepresented groups has risen from 11% to 40% of enrollment.
- In 2001, USF received another Leadership grant in the Minority Competition to prepare minority and underrepresented doctoral candidates for careers as special education teacher educators.

Many university faculty would like to continue the traditional model of doctoral preparation, much like the one they experienced. The situation in California required USF to think outside the box in order to solve a critical personnel preparation problem. Many faculty attended a highly regarded traditional doctoral program yet upon graduation they were ill prepared to assume many duties required of a faculty member. Unlike the doctoral candidates at USF, traditional candidates do not co-teach or teach in a credential program during their training. Nor did they participate in candidate recruitment, program assessment, thesis preparation, curriculum development, student advisement, grant writing, etc. which are required experiences in the USF program for all doctoral candidates. We tell our candidates these are tools for their professional tool box. When they interview for a faculty position and are asked whether they have experience performing any of these professorial activities, they will be able to say "yes." As for research productivity, all recent graduates are preparing or have submitted articles for publication based on their dissertation and/or subsequent research.



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