

Impact of Implementing Strategies to Increase Retention of Under-Represented
Populations in a Special Education Leadership Doctoral Program

by

Patricia Barbetta

Elizabeth Cramer

&

Ann Nevin

Urban Special Education Academic Leaders (SEALS) Doctoral Program

College of Education

Florida International University

Miami, FL 33033

Paper presented at
American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education

New Orleans, LA

February 2008

Abstract

There are limited numbers of special education doctoral students from traditionally underrepresented populations. The impact of an urban doctoral preparation program with features to ensure retention to graduation is described.

Faculty in higher education do not represent the diversity that exists in the United States nor do the doctoral students who will become future leaders at the university or district levels (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Johnson, 2006). For example, full-time minority faculty increased from 12.3% to 14.9% in the ten years between 1991 and 2001 (TIAA-CREF, 2005) while the minority population in the US increased at a higher rate. Programs to prepare doctoral students from under-represented populations can make important contributions to preparing new members of the professoriate.

The under-representation of women and ethnically diverse faculty has been well documented for teacher education faculty as well as special education faculty specifically where there is an insufficient supply of special education doctoral candidates, including those from traditionally under-represented populations, to meet current demands (Smith, Pion, & Tyler, 2003; Smith, Pion, Tyler, & Gilmore, 2003; Tyler, Smith, & Pion, 2003). Some researchers have identified reasons for such under-representation. Retention studies of people from culturally and linguistically diverse populations as well as ethnically different populations indicates that peer groups and mentoring must be established early in the program. For example, Nettles (1990) reported that, among Black, Hispanic, and White doctoral students in special education programs at four major universities, Blacks received the fewest teaching or research assistantships which facilitate collaborative activities with faculty and other full-time students. The success of cohort models appears to be related to the extent to which cohort members support and mentor one another (Teitel, 1997).

The purpose of this article is to report the results of a descriptive study of the impact of the second year of implanting a specially designed doctoral program created to address (1) the critical shortage of special education university faculty, particularly those who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD); (2) the shortage of other special education leadership personnel, particularly those who are CLD; and (3) the need for special education leadership personnel knowledgeable in educational issues related to urban CLD students with disabilities. In this paper, the authors trace the impact of the second year of implementation of the program design features and report the results of a survey of cohort members regarding their coursework, teaching, research, and service activities.

The doctoral program is located in a large urban multi-culturally diverse metropolitan area in southeastern USA where the university had received a competitive federal grant award (Barbetta, Cramer, & Nevin, 2004) to fund tuition and stipends. Recruitment efforts as reported by (Barbetta, Cramer, & Nevin, 2006) resulted in a noticeable increase in the number of qualified special education doctoral candidates from traditionally underrepresented populations which seemed to be correlated with the expanded recruitment efforts (e.g., orientation sessions, brochures, personal contact with project personnel and faculty). Although it was not possible to state that the recruitment procedures *per se* were solely responsible for the increase, the doctoral applicants viewed the procedures as fair which match the results of other studies (e.g., Peterson & Gilmore, 2005; Prater & Wilder, 2006). Because over-representation of CLD students with disabilities (particularly Blacks and Hispanics) continue to be a problem in urban schools (e.g., Donovan & Cross, 2002), the mission of the program was to prepare urban

leadership personnel who teach for social justice as per principles recommended by Cochran-Smith (1999). Unique features built in to the program design include (a) diversity content and experiences; (b) a cognate of courses directly related to the education of students who are CLD; (c) community-based action research projects in the local urban, multicultural educational settings; (d) affiliation with the eminent scholars in the Center for Urban Education and Innovation; (e) field experiences with diverse K-12 students through community service-learning projects (Kinnevy & Boddie, 2001) that include action research as recommended by Reardon (2000); (f) a cohort model to promote and support group cohesiveness and motivate students to perform at an optimal level; (g) ongoing doctoral student involvement and development through participation in a variety of non-credit leadership activities (e.g., presenting at conferences, teaching undergraduate courses, community leadership projects); and (g) presence of an existing learning community of culturally and linguistically diverse individuals, including a CLD faculty (approximately 33% of the university's faculty, excluding administrators, are minorities) and a CLD student body.

Results

The impact of pedagogical and institutional support reported in this study show that doctoral students from traditionally under-represented populations can be sustained through the coursework and achievement demands of advanced graduate work. Analysis of the results of the survey, in terms of doctoral program participants' perceptions (reported as means and ranges of the ratings), were triangulated with verbatim comments written by the participants. Documenting and listening to their voices helped to show the depth of their thinking and the range of their values for specific program design features. Finally, participants' richly varied leadership and non-credit generating activities showed that they are attempting to actualize improvements in urban special education programs. Their activities reflected the program design features: the cognate of urban education courses related to education of students with disabilities who are CLD; the collaboration with CLD faculty and interaction with members of the Urban SEALS Leadership Advisory Board comprised of local, regional, and nationally recognized experts in urban and special education; engagement in urban-related, non-credit generating learning activities (e.g., service-learning activities, conference presentations, and university teaching); and learning from the expertise of urban and special education scholars through personal presentations and teleconferencing.

Discussion

The results from this study resonate with those reported by other researchers (e.g., Twale & Cochran, 2000; Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999). Overall it is clear that the current cohort of doctoral students in the Urban SEALS program have established working relationships with each other, the program faculty and other COE faculty. As a result, they have been sustained and supported throughout the first two years and two summers of the rigorous coursework. In addition, the qualitative and quantitative evidence gleaned from the assessment of doctoral students' perceptions of program design features help to confirm the importance and usefulness of the features. We believe that this study is

highly relevant to understanding how an exploration of quality impacts the presence of culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse doctoral students in doctoral-level leadership preparation programs, some of whom are sure to embark on careers in academia.

Implications

The participants as well as the faculty are actively engaged in thinking about program improvement through enhancing existing coursework and creating meaningful controls that will allow for better program planning for future cohorts. Their ratings and comments about program design features inform the faculty as to changes that may be needed in the structure of future coursework and doctoral program activities. For example, based on the survey ratings and comments about the first year implementation (reported by Barbetta, Cramer, & Nevin, 2006), the faculty arranged for more specifically focused experiences during the second year of program implementation (e.g., teaching at University level, team building, integrating urban education and service learning, and adding a writing-for-publication course).

Barbetta, P., Cramer, E., & Nevin, A. (2007). Proposal for 2008 AACTE Conference Theme: Quality Matters: Our Commitment to All Learners Strand I: Quality Matters in Equity, Access, and Advocacy

References

- American Association for University Professors (AAUP). (2001). Diversity and affirmative action in higher education. Retrieved May 25, 2007, from <http://www.aaup.org/Issues/AffirmativeAction/>
- Barbetta, P., Cramer, E., & Nevin, A. (2004). Urban SEALS (Special Education Academic Leaders). Miami, FL: Florida International University College of Education, USDE OSEP CFDA84.325D Personnel Preparation.
- Barbetta, P., Cramer, E., & Nevin, A. (2006, April). Strategies for democratizing the special education leadership workforce. Refereed paper presented at American Educational Research Association, San Francisco. ED491650.
- Barbetta, P., Cramer, E., & Nevin, A. (2006, November). Early lessons for planning and implementing a program to prepare urban special education academic leaders. Paper presented at refereed annual conference of Teacher Education Division, Council for Exceptional Children, San Diego, CA. ED494793.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (1999). Learning to teach for social justice. In G. Griffin (Ed.), *Ninety-eighth yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education—Part 1* (pp. 114-144). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Zeichner, K. (2005). *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Donovan, M.S., & Cross, C.T. (Eds.) (2002). *Minority students in special and gifted education*. Washington, D.C.: National Academic Press.
- Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2003). *Educational research: An introduction*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- Kinnevy, S. C., & Boddie, S. C. (2001). Developing community partnerships through service-learning: Universities, coalitions, and congregations. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 8(1), 44-51.
- Nettles, M. (1990). Success in doctoral Programs: Experiences of minority and white students. *American Journal of Education*, 98(4), 494-522.
- Peterson, P., & Gilmore, R. (2005, April). Recruitment and retention of diverse special education doctoral candidates at Northern Arizona University. Paper presented at Annual Conference of the Council for Exceptional Children, Baltimore, MD.
- Prater, M.A., & Wilder, L. (2006, March). Becoming a more culturally responsive preparation program: Lessons learned. Paper presented at American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, San Diego.
- Reardon, K. M. (2000). Participatory action research as service learning. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 73, 57-64.
- Smith, D., Pion, G., & Tyler, N. (2003). Leadership personnel in special education: Can persistent shortages be resolved? In A. Sorrells, H. Rieth, & P. Sindelar (Eds.), *Critical issues in special education: Access, diversity, and accountability* (pp. 258-276). NY: Pearson.
- Smith, D., Pion, G., Tyler, N., & Gilmore, B. (2003). Doctoral programs in special education: The nation's supplier. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 26(3), 172-181.

Barbetta, P., Cramer, E., & Nevin, A. (2007). Proposal for 2008 AACTE Conference Theme: Quality Matters: Our Commitment to All Learners
Strand I: Quality Matters in Equity, Access, and Advocacy

Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS). (2004). Version 13.0. Chicago, IL: SPSS Inc.

Talbert-Johnson, C., & Tillman, B. (1999). Perspectives on color in teacher education programs: Prominent issues. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 50(2), 200-209.

Teitel, L. (1997). Understanding and harnessing the power of the cohort model in preparing educational leaders. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 72(2), 66-85.

TIAA-CREF Institute. (2005, September). Trends show faculty diversity still below par. *Review News & Notes*. NY: TIAA-CREF Institute.

Twale, D. J., & Kochan, F. K. (2000). Assessment of an alternative cohort model for part-time students in an educational leadership program. *Journal of School Leadership*, 10(2), 188-208.

Tyler, N., Smith, D., & Pion, G. (2003). Doctoral students in special education: Characteristics and career aspirations. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 26(3), 294-205.

**Urban SEALS (Special Education Academic Leaders) Survey *
 (2007)**

Please help us evaluate the Urban SEALS program design and procedures utilized by project personnel. We'd appreciate your candid appraisal so that we can accurately assess and re-design our procedures. Your responses will be treated anonymously, and no personally-identifiable information will be reported.

Sincerely, *P. Barbetta, E. Cramer, and A. Nevin*, Co-Principal Investigators

Overall, how would you describe your doctoral program experiences during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms-- coursework, seminars, and non-credit bearing leadership activities in which you've participated? [Please write 3 to 4 sentences explaining your reactions.]

Demographics <i>Directions: Please fill in the blanks or check the items that apply to you.</i>		
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female Experience teaching: <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 11 - 20 years <input type="checkbox"/> 21 years +	Ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Native Alaskan <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Black (non-Hispanic) <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> White (non-Hispanic) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	Age: <input type="checkbox"/> 18 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 35 <input type="checkbox"/> 36 - 45 <input type="checkbox"/> 46 - 55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56 -

Program Procedures: Please write comments below:

1. What supports were in place to help you be successful in your doctoral program during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms?

2. What barriers or challenges, if any, have you experienced during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms? (Please explain.)

3. Do you have any recommendations for modifying or improving the program?

* Note: This survey has been approved by FIU's Institutional Review Board (Approval # 091806-00).

Barbetta, P., Cramer, E., & Nevin, A. (2007). Proposal for 2008 AACTE
 Conference Theme: Quality Matters: Our Commitment to All Learners
 Strand I: Quality Matters in Equity, Access, and Advocacy

Perceptions						
Directions: Please use the following scale to rate your perception of each statement, where 1 = not at all and 5 = to a great extent N/A=not applicable to you						
1. To what extent do you believe the courses you've taken at FIU during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms were taught by faculty who were fair and unbiased? COMMENTS:	1	2	3	4	5	NA
2. To what extent are you satisfied that your experiences during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms have been facilitated by project personnel (project co-Principal Investigators, Project Coordinator, or faculty)? COMMENTS:	1	2	3	4	5	NA
3. To what extent do you believe the coursework and experiences during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms were designed for culturally and linguistically diverse individuals to be successful? COMMENTS:	1	2	3	4	5	NA
4. I believe the teaching strategies during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms were fair and unbiased. COMMENTS:	1	2	3	4	5	NA
5. I was treated respectfully by faculty during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms. COMMENTS:	1	2	3	4	5	NA
6. During the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms, I felt supported throughout the coursework. COMMENTS:	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Barbetta, P., Cramer, E., & Nevin, A. (2007). Proposal for 2008 AACTE
 Conference Theme: Quality Matters: Our Commitment to All Learners
 Strand I: Quality Matters in Equity, Access, and Advocacy

Program Design	
<i>Directions: Please indicate to what extent the features of the Urban SEALS doctoral program were reflected in the coursework and experiences you faced during the Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007 terms. Please use the following scale to rate each feature, where 1 = no influence and 5 = a great influence.</i>	
1. diversity content and experiences	1 2 3 4 5
2. cognate of courses directly related to the education of students who are CLD, (e.g., urban education and TESOL programs)	1 2 3 4 5
3. community-based action research projects in the local urban, multicultural educational settings facilitated through the COE Center for Urban Education and Innovation, research or presentation collaborative activities with faculty and/or other doctoral students, and so on.	1 2 3 4 5
4. field experiences with diverse students through service-learning projects or applied research projects supervised by faculty	1 2 3 4 5
5. cohort model to promote and support group cohesiveness and motivate students to perform at an optimal level	1 2 3 4 5
6. an existing learning community of culturally and linguistically diverse individuals	1 2 3 4 5
7. ongoing student involvement and development through participation in a variety of non-credit leadership activities that require ongoing doctoral student development and involvement (e.g., presenting at conferences, teaching undergraduate courses, participating in community leadership projects)	1 2 3 4 5
8. Is there any other program design feature you'd like to evaluate?	

Thank you for completing this survey.

Impact of Implementing Strategies to Increase Retention of Under-Represented Populations in a Special Education Leadership Doctoral Program

Patricia M. Barbetta, Elizabeth Cramer, & Ann Nevin
Florida International University, Miami FL

AACTE, New Orleans, LA
2008

Purpose

- Describe program need, goals, and features
- Summarize 1st and 2nd year program evaluations
- Discuss implications and recommendations for urban special education leadership preparation



Need for Project Urban SEALS (Special Education Academic LeaderS)

- Critical shortage of special education (SE) leaders, particularly those who are culturally and/or linguistically diverse (CLD).
- Limited number of SE leaders with expertise in diverse students with disabilities.
- Need for research in issues related to urban special education.



Goal of Project Urban SEALS

- Prepare doctoral-level special educators to assume leadership roles in the education of culturally linguistically diverse (CLD) urban students with disabilities.



Unique Program Features

- Cognate of urban education courses related to education of students with disabilities who are CLD.
- Collaboration with FIU's Center for Urban Education and Innovation.
- Guidance from National Urban SEALS Board
- Engagement in urban-related, non-credit generating learning activities (e.g., conference presentations, university teaching.)
- Use of urban special education scholars through personal presentations and teleconferencing.


Urban SPED Competencies I

- Recognize the unique strengths and needs of minority urban students w/ disabilities and the influential variables.
- Understand and develop effective leadership skills to facilitate the education of urban students with disabilities.
- Identify and maximize the resources available in urban settings to facilitate the education of students with disabilities.
- Understand the effects of community and culture on CLD urban students.

Urban SPED Competencies II

- Develop vast knowledge and skills in instructional approaches in the education of urban students with disabilities.
- Conduct applied research that contributes to the knowledge base related to urban special education.
- Establish alliances to provide effective special education through interagency, community and family collaboration.
- Apply knowledge/skills through urban service-learning projects.



SEALS Program Components



- Coursework w/ Urban Special Education Track
- Leadership Activities (Non-credit generating)
- Urban Special Education Teleconference
- COE Urban Center for Education and Innovation Student Associates Program

Professional Studies Core (6 hrs.)

- EDP 7057: Educational Psychology: Advanced Applications
- EDF 7937: Advanced Topics in Social Foundations of Education

Special Education Core: (21 hrs.)

- EEX 6535: Seminar in Special Education: Supervision and Leadership
- EEX 7933: Advanced Topics in Special Education (3)(Topics vary, repeated)
- EEX 7795: Advanced Issues in the Ed. of CLD Students with Exceptionalities
- EEX 7977 Candidacy Research and Evaluation in Educational Psychology & SPED
- EEX 7930: Professional Seminar in Special Education (repeated 6 times, 1 credit seminar)

Research Methods and Statistics: (12 hrs.)

- EDF 6472: Research Methods in Education: Introduction to Analysis
- EDF 6486: Advanced Data Analysis in Quantitative Educational Research
- EDP 7058: Behavioral Intervention Research and Evaluation in Education
- EDF 6475 Qualitative Foundations of Educational Research

Urban Special Education Cognate (15 hrs.)

- EDF 6689: Urban Education: Defining the Field
- EDF 6942: Multicultural Seminar and Practicum in Urban Education
- EDF 6925: Special Topics in Urban Education (2 times)
- ADE 6074: Writing for Publication



Comprehensive Examination and Dissertation Study (24 hrs.)

- EEX 7964 Comprehensive Examination
- EEX 7980 Special Education Dissertation



Non-credit Leadership Activity Areas w/ Examples

Research and Evaluation

- Conduct independent research*

Professional Communication

- Submit proposals for conference presentations

Personnel Preparation

- Independently teach one SE undergraduate course.

Community

Leadership/Advocacy

- Provide leadership to a community agency project.

Grantsmanship/Administration

- Co-development of proposals of funded project

Designing Interventions

- Consult w/ families/agencies

Urban SEALS National Board

Function of Board

- To help ensure meaningful connections w/ stakeholders.
- Provide curricular and administration advise.
- Support recruitment and placement efforts.
- Participate in guest lectures and teleconference calls.

Board Membership includes Grant PIs and

- Local members (e.g., SPED & Urban Ed. Faculty from local universities)
- National members (e.g., Drs. Gwendolyn Cartledge, OSU; Cheryl Utley, Juniper Gardens, U of Kansas)



Urban Special Education Teleconferences

- One to two times per year, a teleconference session or face-to-face with recognized experts in urban issues.
- Co-directors and Leadership Board members recommend experts in collaboration with SEALS.
- Prior to the session, doctoral students agree to read articles submitted by the "visiting" expert and pose questions.



Dr. Cheryl Utley, U of Kansas—1st Year



Dr. Geneva Gay, U of Washington—2nd Year

SEALS Cohort Building Activities

- Moving students through coursework as a cohort as much as possible to promote support and continuity
- Each semester for six semesters, SEALS register for 1 credit seminar to bring all students together regularly.
- Group collaboration on projects and presentations
- Urban SEALS Newsletter to share information and successes
- Several times a year, organize social gatherings such as pot lucks, and barbeques.



Urban SEALS Recruitment

Recruitment Facilitators

- A SPED doctoral program with urban special education leadership focus,
- Expanded recruitment efforts
- Broadened admission process
- Ensured financial and academic support
- Option to attend full time or part-time
- Cohort model

Recruitment Activities

- Emailing announcements to Universities
- Announcements on local district e-mail list
- Announcements through leadership board member
- Urban SEALS website link via FIU's website



SEALS Recruitment Outcomes

- During 2005-2006, recruited SEALS 16 students (14 females, 2 males): 4 Black (25%), 3 White (19%), 9 Hispanic (56%)
- During 2006-2007, recruited added 2 additional students, (1 female, 1 male): 1 Black, 1 Hispanic



SEALS Survey Administration: Year 1

1st Year--Administered October 2006 during a Graduate Class*

- N = 14 SEALS students responded: 12 females, 2 males
Ethnicity (Hispanic=7, Black=3, White=3, Other=1).
- Ages: 12 between 25-35 years old and 2 between 36-45.
- Years of teaching experience: N = 5 for 0-5 years; N= 5 for 6-10 years; N= 4 for 11-20 years; and 0 for 21 years or more.

*Barbetta, P., Cramer, E., Nevin, A., & Moores-Abdul, W. (2006, Nov.). Early lessons for planning and implementing a program to prepare urban special education academic leaders. Paper presented at refereed annual conference of Teacher Education Division, Council for Exceptional Children, San Diego, CA. ED494793.

Year 1 Survey: Program's Fairness Perceptions*

Survey Item related to Perception Scale: 1=Not at all to 5= A Great Extent	range	mean	SD
1. . . . Courses fair and unbiased?	3-5	4.5	.65
2. satisfied w/ 1st year's experiences were facilitated by project personnel	4-5	4.4	.50
3. 1st years courses & experiences designed for CLD students to succeed	4-4	4.4	.75
4. Teaching strategies fair and unbiased	4-4	4.4	.65
5. Treated respectfully by faculty	4-7	4.7	.61
6. Supported during coursework	4-5	4.5	.85

*Cronbach alpha coefficient for internal consistency of responses = .78. Gall, Gall, & Borg (2003) report that alpha coefficients of .52 and above considered evidence of good reliability in exploratory research such as this study.

Year 1 Survey: Program Design Features

Survey Item related to Perception Scale: 1=Not at all to 5= A Great Extent	range	mean	SD
1. Diversity content and experiences	3-5	4.5	.65
2. Urban ed courses	4-5	4.4	.50
3. Community-based action research projects through Urban Center	3-5	4.4	.75
4. Cohort model to promote and support group cohesiveness	2-5	4.4	.65
5. Existing learning community of CLD individuals	3-5	4.7	.61
6. Involvement in non-credit leadership activities	2-5	4.5	.85

Year 1 Survey: Open Ended Responses

How would you describe your experiences during the first year and first summer of the doctoral program?

- 36 statements (13 of 14 respondents) to open-ended question
- 25 statements (66%) were coded as "positively valued" (e.g., "I was completely in awe by the quality of most (98.5%) of my classes.")
 - 12 statements (31%) coded as "negatively valued" (e.g., "...first summer was very labor intensive and challenging" and
 - 1 statement (3%) coded "neutral" (e.g., "It was difficult adjusting...")
 - The most frequently mentioned challenge was the demanding expectations of the course load, particularly in the summer (N= 5).
 - Appreciation for the cohort was the most frequently mentioned feature (N=4) of the program.

Year 1 Survey: What barriers or challenges, if any, did you experience?

- 13/14 respondents completed this item.
- 2 of the 13 listed no barriers or challenges.
 - 11 listed barriers or challenges,
 - Six mentioned course expectations, work, and time.
 - Four respondents mentioned challenges related to instructors
 - One respondent mentioned "being out of university for so long"

Year 1 Survey: Do you have any recommendations for modifying or improving the program?

- Adding more specifically focused experiences (e.g., teaching at University level, infusing urban education)
- Improved scheduling classes (e.g., avoid pairing 2 demanding classes same semester).
- Increase communication between urban and special education program faculty
- Monitoring instructors selected to teach coursework

SEALS Year 2: Survey Administration

2nd Year—Administered September 2007 during a Graduate Class [those absent or not enrolled in the class contacted separately]

- ★ N = 16 SEALS students responded: 12 females; 3 males; 1 No Response
- ★ Ethnicity (Hispanic=7, Black=4; White=3; Other=1; No Response=1)
- ★ Age: 11 between 25-35; 3 between 36-45; 1 between 46-55; 1 No Response
- ★ Years of teaching experience: N=1 (0-5 yrs); N=6 (6-10); N=5 (11-20); N=2 (21+); N=2 No Response

Year 2: Perceptions of Program Fairness *

Survey Item related to Perception	range	mean	SD
1. courses fair and unbiased?	3-5	3.9	.90
2. satisfied w/ 1st year's experiences facilitated by project personnel	2-5	3.9	1.01
*3. Courses & experiences designed for CLD students to succeed	1-5	4.5	.66
4. Teaching strategies fair, unbiased	3-5	3.8	.81
*5. Treated respectfully by faculty	3-5	4.6	.63
6. Supported during coursework	1-5	3.6	1.04

*Cronbach alpha coefficient for internal consistency of responses = .78. Gall, Gall, & Borg (2003) report that alpha coefficients of .52 and above are considered evidence of good reliability in exploratory research such as this study.

Year 2: Program Design Features

Survey Item related to Perception Scale: 1=Not at all to 5= A Great Extent	range	Mean*	SD
Diversity content and experiences	1-5	3.5	1.45
Urban ed courses	4-5 2-5	4.4 3.6	.50 1.04
Community-based action research projects through Urban Center	2-5	2.5	1.20
Cohort model to promote and support group cohesiveness	4-5	2.5	1.05
Existing learning community of CLD individuals	2-5	4.5	.88
Involvement in non-credit bearing leadership activities	2-5	4.0	1.05

Year 2: Responses to Open Ended Questions

- Second Year (2007)
- 46 statements (14 of 16 respondents)
 - 56% (N= 26), coded as positively valued (e.g.,
 - I have great opportunities and expert advice.*
 - I enjoyed having the opportunity to teach a course as an adjunct professor this summer.*
 - 36% (N=16) coded as negatively valued (e.g.,
 - I started to perceive fatigue from professors and students and*
 - The coursework has been somewhat redundant and repetitive.*
 - 8% (N=4) coded "neutral" (e.g.,
 - ... avoid over killing on theory or pedagogical style*
 - The most frequently mentioned challenge was the course load and expectations.
 - Appreciation for the cohort and certain supportive faculty most frequently mentioned feature of the program.

Year 2 Survey: What barriers or challenges, if any, did you experience?

- Second Year (2007)
- 14/16 respondents completed the item.
 - 2 of the 16 listed no barriers or challenges.
 - Of the 19 factors, 90% (17) were coded as barriers.
 - All related to the overwhelming course expectations.
 - Another barrier was the repetitive nature of many seminars and courses.
 - Another barrier was mentioned by one respondent: *The diminishing interest of supporting individual members by the cohort as a whole.*
 - 5% (1) was coded as a challenge.
 - Guidance on focus of research plan, finding out that leadership was not part of our coursework for certification*
 - 5% (1) was coded as neutral—"Looping"

Year 2: Improve/Modify the Program

Improve


- Allow input on POS and dissertation Committees
- More online course options
- More dialogue on processes for the dissertation and comprehensive exams

Modify

- The recommendation I would make is that if this is a degree in Urban/SPED leadership, then we should finish the degree with a certification in leadership.
- It seems we are guided specifically for research/professorships when many of us were looking toward other forms of leadership at the school/district level.

Urban SEALS Non-Credit Generating Outcomes

SEALS Professional Activities: To Date

Publications/Presentations	Number Submitted	Number Accepted	Under Review
Paper Presentations	8	6	2
Publications	1	1	x
Book Reviews	2	x	2
Courses/Conferences	Number		
Undergraduate Courses	1		
Graduate Courses	1		
Conferences Attended	6		

Overall Conclusions

- Open-ended questions corroborate and instantiate the survey ratings.
- This means that the results seem to have validity and reliability.
- We can trust that the doctoral students report their perceptions without fear of reprisal.
- We can take action on the results with confidence.

Acknowledgment

- We acknowledge the support of the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, through a grant award (CFDA 84.325D) which funds this project.



Urban SEALS PIs
Dr. Patricia M. Barbetta,
Dr. Ann Nevin &
Dr. Elizabeth Cramer
