

**Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
Connecticut State Improvement Grant (SIG)**

Project Final Report

PROJECT TITLE: Unification of Teacher Preparation Programs

DURATION: Beginning Date: January 1, 2001
Ending Date: July 30, 2005

PROJECT TOTAL CUMULATIVE COST (IDEA Part D.): \$ 311,000

PROJECT DIRECTOR and AGENCY Information

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TITLE: Interim Dean
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As Project Director, I affirm that the information contained within is true and correct to the best of my knowledge with the submission of this final report.

Name	Title	Date
Pamela Brucker, Vincent Breslin – Coordinators		203-392-5938
same		

(Person completing this report: Name, Title and phone.)

Collaborating Partners:

List of the collaborating partners/organizations or agencies that participated in the project.

Collaborating Partner	Agency/Organization
Vincent Breslin, Ph.D. Co-Director	Southern Connecticut State University faculty
Pamela Brucker, Ed.D., Co-Director	Southern Connecticut State University faculty
James Granfield, Ph.D., PI	Southern Connecticut State University interim dean
Barbara Valla, teacher	New Haven Public Schools
Shamain Mackey, teacher	Stamford Public Schools

Sharon Powers, teacher	Cheshire Public Schools
David Burn, Ph.D.	Parent of SPED students
Steven Barnwell	Disabilites Advocate
Robert Wolfe, Ed.D.	Superintendent, North Branford Schools
Nancy Boyles, Ph.D.	Southern Connecticut State University faculty
Maryann Ullman	faculty SCSU
Maria Diamantis, Ph. D.	faculty Southern Connecticut State University
Linda Olson, Ph. D.	Faculty Southern Connecticut State University
Scott Graves, Ph.D.	Faculty Southern Connecticut State University
Sharon Fuller, consultant	CT State Dept of Ed.
Peter Madonia, Ed.D.	Faculty , SCSU
*Kara Camera, teacher	New Haven, Ct Public Schools
*Amy Huff, student	Southern CT State University

2. Abstract:

This project is designing a unified teacher preparation program by establishing learning partnerships among faculty in the School of Education, the School of Arts and Sciences and local school districts. As part of this project, we are establishing collaborations through the integration of coursework, co-teaching classes, utilizing a variety of teaching strategies to meet diverse learning needs of students, infuse literacy strategies in General Education Requirements and the utilization of distance learning technology that will provide a link from the university to other educational institutions and focus on strategies of differentiated instruction and unifying general and special education.

Specific objectives of our project are to:

1. Establish a collaborative, inter-departmental/inter-school coordination committee responsible for meeting all project objectives.
2. Align the content in at least three general education requirements for a liberal arts education with the pedagogical course content in the Elementary/Special Education teacher preparation program within the School of Education.
3. Integrate performance-based teacher competencies across at least three different departments as measured by the NCATE standards of the professional associations of those departments.
4. Integrate effective, research-based teaching methods and practices into co-taught classes between and among faculty in the School of Education, the School of Arts and Sciences and faculty from two local school districts.
5. Integrate technology into all coursework and field-based experiences of students.

Outcomes of this project include the creation of new coursework, revision of courses to allow for collaboration between schools, course syllabus revision to demonstrate awareness of learner diversity, professional development for faculty for differentiated instruction, and the creation of a website with links to resources for diversity.

3. Description of Organization

Southern is a public, comprehensive, coeducational institution offering 115 undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the full range of academic and professional disciplines. Southern CT State University has an enrollment of approximately 15,000 undergraduate and graduate students. There are five schools within the university – Business, Health and Human services, Information and Library Sciences, Arts and Sciences, and Education.

As project director, Interim Dean James Granfield has been instrumental in developing the grant objectives and activities. Co- Coordinators, Pamela Brucker (School of Education) and Vincent Breslin (School of Arts and Sciences) have been responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of the grant activities, as well as monitoring progress. The director and coordinators have also been responsible for recruiting faculty, public school teachers, students, and parents to serve on the Council on Integrated Teacher Education and to participate in various grant activities. We have networked at various state and nationally meetings and conferences, presenting at two OSEP conferences, one in collaboration with faculty from St Joseph College.

4. Project Purpose and Description

The project is important because, historically Schools of Education and Schools of Arts and Science both are involved in preparing teachers but have little or no communication and collaboration. Additionally, teaching methodology in higher education can vary greatly. There is a need for students to have more connections between content and methodology in their coursework. Collaborations between the two schools must be established. Likewise, more connections are needed with IHEs and K-12 districts.

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Some activities have been development of an advisory council (CITE- Council on Integrated Teacher Education), creation of new coursework, revision of courses to allow for collaboration between schools, course syllabus revision to demonstrate awareness of learner diversity, professional development for faculty for differentiated instruction, and the creation of a website with links to resources for diversity. The project has involved over 30 faculty members, six K-12 teachers and administrators, a parent, and four students. Please refer to the website for descriptions of projects and bios of CITE members.

5. Evaluation Methods

1. Feedback from CITE on all activities (Quarterly meetings)
2. Rubric for scoring change in course outlines (three times)
3. Rubric for scoring minigrant proposals for collaborative projects (once)
4. Statistical assessment of course syllabi change (once)

The information on methods 2-4 can be found on the website with examples.

6. Project Outcomes:

Objective #1: We have held quarterly CITE committee meetings, and have expanded the membership to include a Science Education faculty member, another public school teacher, and a graduate student at SCSU. Activities of CITE have included feedback on all grant activities. For instance, this year CITE evaluated course outlines that had been revised, reviewed the request for proposals from faculty for mini grants, reviewed information presented by the Associate Dean Sharon Misasi on the proposed goals for general education course reform, and heard information in the guidelines for Highly Qualified Teacher under No Child Left Behind and IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) 2004. They have also participated in all of our grant reviews by Glenn Martin.

Objective #2: Over 20 Arts and Sciences faculty members who teach All University Requirements (AURs) in Exercise Science, Earth Science, Mathematics, Environmental Sciences, and Biology revised their course syllabi (outlines) to reflect the needs of diverse learners. CITE committee members scored the outlines using the rubric developed for this project.

The development of a request for proposals from faculty for minigrants to promote collaborations between and among faculty in School of Education and Arts and Sciences was completed with input from the CITE group and was issued to faculty. CITE members reviewed the draft prior to its issue. Proposals were received and scored using a scoring rubric, and five proposals were funded. The work is currently in progress.

RFP, scoring rubric, and proposals can be accessed on the website at <http://utpp.southernct.edu/grantactivity.html>

Objective #3: During the Summer of 2004, 3 secondary education faculty met with the Associate Dean to revise field experiences to align with NCATE standards. Detailed descriptions of these experiences were developed in Mathematics, Foreign Language, and Science.

The following secondary areas have participated in course outline revisions: Chemistry, History, Geography, Foreign Language, Physics, English, Computer Science, Earth Science, Mathematics, Biology, and Exercise Science. Each outline included correlations to NCATE standards for that discipline.

Most recently, a minigrant was approved to support the purchase of materials for environmental studies and education in the Science Department at SCSU. The materials will be used in support of an introductory course for education majors that focuses on inquiry and hands-on, minds-on observations and inference building through a program called GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment). This program is approved by the US State Department, NASA, and the National Science Foundation.

Objective #4:

Project coordinators have disseminated information about grant activities at two OSEP conferences, one collaboratively with faculty from St. Joseph College. Information has also been shared at yearly networking meetings.

Two faculty members disseminated information regarding the preparation of novice teachers to teach reading in an interactive poster session at the International Dyslexia Association.

Two minigrants were approved that will meet this objective. A Literacy Conference was planned and held May 14, 2005. Faculty, students, and public school teachers participated in the conference. Information was presented to the participants on the 4th Generation of the CT Mastery Test in Language Arts.

Five faculty from the School of Education and the School of Health and Human Services are working on a revision of a course to be listed as Interdisciplinary, and will address the mental health needs of students in schools. This will be an elective course for any SCSU student.

Information about all grant activities can be accessed on the website.

Objective #5: The CITE members scored four revised course outlines to assess faculty and student use of technology. The UTPP website is active and can be located at <http://utpp.southernct.edu>.

A minigrant was approved to purchase hi-tech science equipment of use in environment field studies. This will allow students to be trained on this equipment. Purchases include conductivity meters, a GPS receiver, PH meter, and various water quality testing kits. The equipment is for a new course being offered Fall 2005.

The UTPP website has been developed to include key grant information and activities, and resources.

7. Discussion/Conclusions/Lessons Learned

Challenges:

Change is difficult to achieve in a university system. Collaborations among faculty have to be purposefully developed and nurtured. Territorial issues exist between schools and departments. Time for collaboration and location of various departments on campus are further constraints to collaboration.

Successes: Aside from the end products of the grant which include course outlines, courses, materials, and conferences – all designed to improve learning for diverse learners, the grant activities have fostered communication and collaboration among faculty in the schools of Education, Arts and Sciences, Health and Human Services, and Disabilities Resource Office. These connections will continue long after the grant activities have ended. Collaborations have also occurred with our colleagues at St. Joseph College.

Overall Project Effects: Based on our statistical analysis of the course outlines, change in reflection of diverse learners needs is apparent. Likewise, our website will serve as a resource at the K-12 level, the university level, and the greater academic community.

Sustainability and Potential for Replication: Sustained change at the university level comes about by course development and revision, including the course syllabus. In that regard, the project has been successful in creating new avenues to address collaboration and meet student needs. As the university is revising its General Education curriculum, and faculty who have participated in the UTPP project will play an important role. The revised Gen Ed curriculum is, in spirit and practice, compatible with the objectives of the UTPP grant with regard to good teaching practice, use of technology, and collaboration among departments. The model for engaging faculty in “bottom up” change can be replicated at any university. Likewise, the advisory committee, CITE, can be replicated at any university and should be encouraged as a means of eliciting feedback from the greater educational community.

Recommendations for future program improvement: The following are areas for continued implementation of the project goals:

1. Extend information and activities to other IHEs:

We would propose holding an information meeting or meetings regarding the unification of teacher education programs and the activities that have occurred under the grant. We would attempt to find grant money to allow us to do information session and fund minigrants. Successful projects may include interdisciplinary course development, proposals for collaborative teaching, or seminars and symposia designed to improve faculty instruction. The CITE (Council on Integrated Teacher Education) would be reconvened to review the minigrant proposals. This would allow other universities to replicate our model.

2. Continue to institutionalize changes at Southern CT State University

- Develop a capstone course for the proposed Math, Science, Technology minor.
- Work with General Education Task Force to modify the outline template to be used more consistently and to promote information about the changes that have occurred under our UTPP grant.
- Work with incoming or new faculty to assist them in using the course outline template and developing a course outline that reflects the needs of diverse learners.

Attachments: Any new information not previously submitted can be accessed on the website.