

# Strengths and Research at Buffalo State College

## Conceptual Framework

### Strengths at Buffalo State:

#### **Elementary Education and Reading Department**

Since the last time the conceptual framework was revised and made transparent, it has been the model used for new curriculum, program review and reform, multiple initiatives in assessment and discussions of interdisciplinary program planning. Reflective practice is demonstrated in the activities articulated in syllabi for programs at the initial and advanced preparation of elementary teachers. For example, in the undergraduate programs, teacher candidates prepare a Personal Professional Development Portfolio in their first EDU 201 class. Portfolios submitted at the end of methods sections require students to both present their work and reflect on it and their improvement in the course of their education. At the graduate level, reflection is embedded in the curriculum starting with the seminar courses and culminating with the final action-based projects required of graduate students.

The greatest strength for BSC programs is in preparing our teacher candidates in dynamic cultural contexts. Of the 46 schools that are partners in our nationally renowned Professional Development School Consortium, 23 of them are in urban, rural or high needs schools. All teacher candidates who participate in EER programs will experience tutoring, service learning and guided practice in schools and community agencies that are part of our culturally diverse surrounding neighborhoods and in rural or urban settings from Lockport to Springville. Teacher candidates are also required to divide their student teaching experiences between one suburban context and one in a high needs area. Some of the students elect to remain for both placements in a high needs school.

The perennial programmatic commitment to the highest level of performance by teacher candidates in content, skills and pedagogy is demonstrated by the ongoing structures of review and assessment now embedded in our programs such as the convening groups where all faculty who teach one of the courses in our preparation sequence must meet to discuss issues of common concern, to revise assessments delivered by a universal (for EER) computer-based program specifically geared to standards-based programming, lesson planning and delivery and assessment (TASKSTREAM). At the graduate level, students deepen their knowledge base in all subject areas. The coherence of the graduate courses with the undergraduate courses is demonstrated by the hybrid courses in initial teaching certification. Syllabi in EER display the 3 concentric rings at the core of the conceptual model since all courses in the undergraduate and graduate programs provide strong evidence of a commitment to knowledge of pedagogy, a required broadening of content knowledge and an action-based, learner centered focus on teaching.

## **Exceptional Education**

### **Department wide:**

All faculty incorporate the conceptual model into their syllabi. In addition, the conceptual framework is discussed with candidates and considered when planning course objectives and instruction.

Courses are customized for various populations of diverse and exceptional learners [e.g., EXE 360 (mild) with EXE 364 (moderate/severe)]

Graduate level (advanced programs): scholarship, research, and inquiry are infused into each course as students are required to conduct literature reviews, use databases to search for empirical data to support concepts taught, research projects targeting diverse learners are conducted and presented to college community in an annual research symposium.

Courses within each program (i.e., Childhood, Adolescent, Early Childhood) are designed to reflect the various components of the conceptual model.

Department wide curriculum committee focuses on reviewing and revising curriculum to reflect best practices in addressing the needs of individual and diverse learners, effective pedagogy, and evidence based content that has shown to be effective with students with disabilities.

Commitment to infuse aspects of technology into all courses offered in department (e.g., use of Task Stream, Angel, web development, technology related assignments and development of computing skills).

### **Individual Faculty: (see vitae for more details)**

#### Focus on Knowledge of Learners:

Dr. Dray – developed reading blocks for Buffalo Public Schools, strategic planning campus wide committee, CEURE curriculum taskforce

Mrs. Sommerstein – CBTP implement alternate assessments, student CEC advisement, Best Bodies (knowledge of learners)

Dr. Green – NCREST modules

Consultation multiple schools and district (reviewer, clinical practice guidelines – see attached – Bondurant vita)

## **Speech and Language Pathology**

### Mission

The Speech-Language Pathology Department at Buffalo State College is dedicated to educating and graduating highly qualified professionals to serve all persons with speech, language, swallowing, and hearing disorders. The department's commitment to excellence in teaching, service delivery, and research ensures that its graduates are prepared to contribute to and advance the profession of speech-language pathology.

### Vision

The Speech-Language Pathology Department at Buffalo State College will strive for excellence in teaching, service delivery, and research.

### Core Values

The Speech-Language Pathology Department at Buffalo State College is committed to:

- *Promoting creativity and excellence in academic, research, and clinical learning environments*
- *Educating ethical, responsible, and competent professionals*
- *Fostering cultural and linguistic diversity*
- *Encouraging collaborative endeavors among faculty, students, and the community*
- *Incorporating new and emerging technologies throughout the curriculum*
- *Continuing professional development*
- *Providing excellent service to our students, the college and professional communities, and the public*

## **Related Research or Inquiry at Buffalo State:**

### **Art Education Program**

Michael Parks and John Siskar are collaborating on a book, *Navigating of Art Education*, wherein they discuss curriculum and lesson planning with a conceptual basis and using visual art content and art education pedagogy.

### **Speech and Language Pathology**

We are currently establishing a rubric to assess our established student learning outcomes (not shown here). We continuously review our mission to ensure that it is consistent with the department and the College's goals. As well, we strategically align curricular, advising, pedagogical, clinical, and other department activities with our mission.

### **Elementary Education and Reading Department**

Annual reports for EER demonstrate research and inquiry in action valued by the faculty and demonstrated by the faculty (**See EER Annual Report 2006-2007: Section III— Significant Accomplishments**). The focus on improving pedagogy, school improvement, faculty/student team work in high needs schools and reflective practice are demonstrated by the publications and presentations of the faculty named in each years' annual report.

All graduate students in the programs in EER must complete a master's project in action-based research related to school improvement. These are archived in Butler library.

Student research is mentored at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. This is displayed in the Scholarship and Creativity celebration each spring and at the Graduate Student Research Night in the late spring.

### **Exceptional Education**

Department research symposium is open to all in the teacher education unit. Coursework incorporates aspects of research and inquiry by students conducting database searches to find research studies that support concepts, strategies, and methodologies taught in major courses.

EXE 420- candidates conduct action research.

EXE 684/690- candidates are instructed on single subject research designs and then design own study and implement the data based research project with diverse learners. Results are disseminated via college wide research symposium.

Candidates' ability to be Reflective practioners is evaluated via 2 philosophy statements in EXE 360 and EXE 420 – (data collected and assessed via TaskStream)