



**CHOWAN
UNIVERSITY**
Department of Teacher Education

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Brief description of your EPP

Chowan University's Educational Preparation Program is a small program that allows professors to work with aspiring teachers on an individual basis. This has allowed the department to create a positive learning environment and becomes a role model for how to establish a similar classroom environment.

The beginning of the redesign process

At the beginning of the redesign process, the Teacher Preparation Program was following the general reading programs used in the public schools. Reading instruction looked at common areas needed for teachers to understand before entering diverse school environments that are implementing varying reading programs. This provided aspiring teachers with generalized information relating to identifying students' strengths and weaknesses in reading development.

Changes have been targeted and how they have been/are being completed

Using the NCICU Self-Study questionnaire, the areas targeted for implementation were identified as the following: aligning practices to the science of reading, comprehension, interventions, phonological and phonemic awareness, etc. We also compiled the specific courses that would be affected by the redesign using the course outcomes and the assessments the aspiring teachers will be required to pass for licensure.

Changes made in the content and courses implemented in the redesign include the addition of research, concepts, and strategies aligned to the science of reading. The assignments were modified to

incorporate stages of reading development, reading instruction strategies, and scenario evaluation to provide the practical use of the various aspects of the science of reading research. An example of activities to encourage aspiring teachers to fully understand the stages and behaviors of student reading development by first creating a sorting activity where the students must work collaboratively to identify the characteristics of reading developmental stages provided by Science of Reading research. The aspiring teachers must determine the complexity of each characteristic and provide verbal justification before placing the specific characteristic under a category. After the sorting activity, the aspiring teachers debrief and discuss the challenges faced when looking at each component in the various reading developmental stages.

Once the aspiring teachers fully understand the stages of reading development, we begin learning interventions, remediations, and enrichments. Aspiring teachers work towards assigning activities and strategies to address the needs of students given a short scenario through gamification using a modified tower game (similar to Jenga with letters on the end of the pieces). Aspiring teachers select a piece from the tower but must use the letter to describe/name a reading strategy or activity to build the area of need in the scenario.

Challenges you have faced and how you overcame/are overcoming the challenges

The biggest challenge faced during the redesign is the challenge encountered with any change... the resistance to move from what is known and comfortable. This was seen mostly by the aspiring teachers when they visited classrooms. Veteran teachers were also undergoing Science of Reading training and facing challenges of their own paradigm shifts. To overcome these challenges, course discussion has been beneficial as the aspiring teachers work to incorporate and amalgamate the redesign in their lesson planning and instruction.

Where are you now concerning teaching based on the Science of Reading

Currently, we are implementing the strategies aligned to the Science of Reading and other areas targeted in the NCICU Self-Study in the courses relating to reading instruction. We are allowing the aspiring teacher to explore and implement materials aligned to the science of reading as a major component of the coursework and reading lesson plans. We have also begun to require aspiring teachers to observe and reflect on the instructional strategies utilized in fieldwork/clinical practicum, then use

those reflections in course discussions about the effectiveness of the existing instruction in the classrooms.

This semester will also include the inclusion of assignments that will be based on the concepts derived from Science of Reading research. We will be focusing on the explicit instruction of the various components of the Science of Reading throughout the coursework within the reading courses. The activities and lesson plans will be using the LETRS knowledge and materials to present with their peers and within public school classrooms to instruct the foundations of reading skills. Aspiring teachers will be presenting activities that reflect the research and developmental stages of reading instruction. Class discussion will allow the aspiring teachers to reflect on the activity or lesson, its appropriateness, its delivery, etc. as a method of self-growth.

Impact of these changes and how these impacts are to be assessed

The impact of the redesign changes is anticipated to manifest itself in the success rate of our aspiring teachers both on the licensure assessments and in their future teaching careers. As we continually circle back to our mission statement and conceptual framework, *Preparing Committed Professionals with Knowledge and Practices for a Continuously Changing World*, the redesign allows aspiring teachers to view education as a continuum – that requires us all to be lifelong learners and continue to evolve as professionals. These impacts will be assessed through coursework assignments, licensure assessments, licensure rates, and feedback from program graduates.