



Greensboro College Science of Reading Sub Grant Report

A brief description of your EPP

Greensboro College is an independent, coeducational college affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Greensboro College aspires to provide all students with a transformative, universally designed educational experience that positively affects their lives so they may realize their full potential. Greensboro College now serves approximately 1000 men and women. The College serves a diverse population from 30 states and 15 countries. More than one-third of the students are adult learners. Through its professional, pre-professional and career-oriented programs, both undergraduate and graduate, Greensboro College encourages, as well, the professional development of its students.

The Educator Preparation Program is committed to cultivating teachers who are reflective practitioners and is designed to help prospective teachers become more literate, articulate, intellectually independent, and professionally competent. Active learning, critical reflection, and disciplined inquiry are central to this program. Theory and practice are combined to facilitate the development of professional educators who are prepared to meet challenges, celebrate diversity, and respond compassionately to their students. The small, personable nature of the college and the nurturing qualities of the Educator Preparation Program faculty offer traditional, non-traditional, licensure-only, and graduate students the encouragement, support, and guidance needed to become productive participants in their communities and chosen professions. The Educator Preparation Program offers a flexible schedule and small class size making it possible for adults and working students, as well as traditional students, to complete licensure programs while balancing other demands. Enthusiastic, competent faculty members, informed caring advisors, and supportive and knowledgeable staff work together to provide students with quality programs in teacher education.

Greensboro College offers initial licensure programs in the following areas: Birth through Kindergarten; Elementary Education (K-6); Middle Grades Education (6-9) in Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science; Special Education: General Curriculum (K-12) and Special Education: Adapted Curriculum (K-12); English as a Second Language (K-12); Health/Physical Education (K-12); Art (K-12); Music (K-12); Theatre (K-12); and Secondary Education (9-12) in English, Comprehensive Science, Mathematics, and Comprehensive Social Studies. Greensboro College offers master's degree programs leading to advanced licensure in Birth through Kindergarten Education, Elementary Education (K-6), Special Education: Adapted Curriculum (K-12), Special Education: General Curriculum (K-12) and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (K-12).

Where you were at the beginning of the redesign process?

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the Greensboro College Teacher Education Committee established a Literacy Task Force to analyze, organize and implement literacy strategies. Members of this Task Force include the program coordinators and faculty in Elementary Education, Special Education, Birth through Kindergarten Education, and English as a Second Language Education.

All course syllabi in literacy related courses were examined and intentionally aligned with the Foundations of Reading and International Dyslexia Association competencies and objectives. It was affirming to note that the Science of Reading goals were firmly in place in the existing courses but that the intentional alignment of objectives with course goals needed to be made more explicit. The Task Force also analyzed the fieldwork and clinical experiences of candidates and developed a specific literacy requirement for the candidates taking the initial fieldwork classes. This assignment asks the candidates to observe the practices of the cooperating teacher/clinical educator in relation to the Test Objective of Foundations of Reading and the International Dyslexia Association's Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading. The Literacy Task Force also examined the NC State Board of Education Literacy Task Force recommendations regarding Professional Development for faculty and cooperating teachers/clinical educators.

What specific changes have been targeted and how they have been/are being completed?

The Task Force continues to provide workshops for Teacher Education Committee members that focus on the Science of Reading and course integration. The Task Force continues to meet assuring that the NC State Board of Education Literacy Task Force recommendations remain in place in the Greensboro Teacher Preparation Program. Two faculty members completed the LETRS training process during the 2022-2023 academic year. In addition, Greensboro College participated in TPI-US evaluation to further analyze the Elementary and Special Education literacy curriculum. An initial self-review helped identify SoR components less emphasized in our current program: a) the Elementary Education Program needed to address understanding of high frequency, irregular and sight words; stages of spelling development, three layers of orthography, modeling and scaffolding to support spelling development; and how to support students' use of anaphora; b) the Special Education Program needed to address understanding of encoding and decoding; high frequency, irregular and sight words; and how to support students' use of anaphora. Elementary and Special Education faculty have been working to address these specific areas. One of our courses in the Elementary Education program (ELE 3780) was revised with an updated course text (*Teaching Reading Sourcebook*) which supported a redesigned sequence that made the course goals and class session objectives—with focus on SoR—more explicit. Modeling through in-class demonstrations, video analysis, and clinical observations served as direct instruction for candidates learning to teach reading comprehension strategies. Opportunities for practice designing and enacting lessons were supported through the gradual release model of instruction, with scaffolds in place such as lesson plan templates, graphic organizers, class slides, sentence starters, and glossaries of terms. These changes were presented as a poster titled “Making Explicit Reading Instruction Explicit to Teacher Candidates” at the NCICU’s Science of Reading Institute.

The TPI-US review report indicated that in general, the Elementary and Special Education General Curriculum programs are on track regarding the alignment of the courses with the Science of Reading competencies. Syllabi review allowed us to examine specific course expectations. This review indicated that we need to expand our syllabi to intentionally and explicitly state how assignments, readings, lectures, and field experiences address Science of Reading components. Thus, beginning with the end-in-mind, we created a crosswalk in which we identified where concepts and competencies are being introduced, reinforced, and assessed in our literacy courses. Next, we are examining our assessments for these competencies. Faculty took the Foundations of Reading practice test to review the ways in which SoR competencies were being assessed there and concluded the following: a) we needed to integrate more case studies and written responses requiring candidates to analyze student reading behavior and data; and b) we needed to be consistent and constantly have candidates use and revisit terms throughout literacy courses to

retain knowledge. Using the *Teaching Reading Sourcebook*, *CORE Assessment*, and one file of glossary terms across all of our literacy courses will support this consistency and alignment. We are now in the process of adapting individual course assessments to utilize a variety of formats—open responses, multiple choice, and performance-based assessments—and aligning faculty expectations regarding assessment criteria. Finally, we are examining our field work experiences in order to ensure those hours support our instruction of SoR competencies. Candidates will have tasks in which they are specifically observing and analyzing instructional materials and practices in the field. Recognizing that candidates need ample opportunities to practice implementing learned competencies in the field, we are considering additional fieldwork hours as requirements in conjunction with our introductory course, but we have to take into consideration the full impact these adjustments would have on other courses and on our overall elementary education program.

What challenges you have faced and how you overcame/are overcoming the challenges?

The major challenge across all efforts is time. We have faced constraints in time to meet **with faculty** as we redesign syllabi and course activities (readings, assignments, delivery of lectures, etc.). Because we are a mix of full-time faculty and part-time adjunct faculty, we have addressed this barrier by meeting during the summer and on weekends. We are faced with constraints in time **in program hours** for candidates to develop proficiency in SoR competencies. Considering LETRS training as a bar for excellence, which teachers complete over two years, we are challenged to provide knowledge, skills, and practice in the classroom and placement within our course program. Candidates need support in additional content areas and pedagogical expertise in order to demonstrate proficiency on edTPA, so careful and intentional alignment and integration has to occur (again, requiring more time on the part of our faculty to plan). Additional challenges occur in connection to placements and application in the field—our small group of candidates come from numerous neighboring school districts and charter schools, all with varying curricula. Without access to these resources ourselves, there is a struggle to help candidates make connections from our course work to their school setting. Finally, a challenge was the lack of materials needed to effectively address the SoR components but grant funding has greatly helped.

Where you are now in relation to teaching based in the SoR?

Our current status is described above; the following are ways we are assessing our changes:

- Candidates' scores on the Foundations of Reading test
- Candidates' proficiency on revised individual course assessments, particularly their use and application of concepts and practices in a) open response analyses of student reading behavior/data; b) lesson plan development and implementation

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