THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AMOUNTS OF TIME SPENT IN ONE SCHOOL DURING EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCES AND STUDENT TEACHER PERFORMANCE.

James Patrick Gregory
Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Liberty University
March, 2013
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ABSTRACT

James P. Gregory. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AMOUNTS OF TIME SPENT IN ONE SCHOOL DURING EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCES AND STUDENT TEACHER PERFORMANCE. (under the direction of Dr. Daniel Baer) School of Education, Liberty University, March 2013.

This quantitative non-experimental correlational study was designed to investigate the correlation between the amount of time a teacher candidate spent during their early field experiences at one school location and performance ratings on their student teacher evaluation sheet. The rating scale was based on the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Standards. The purpose of the study was to determine if there is a difference in the level of teacher candidates’ performance as outlined by the INTASC standards for secondary students in relationship to the number of hours of early field experience spent at one school location. All candidates were scheduled for a minimum of 100 hours in early field experiences, yet the actual amount of time spent in any one school varied widely between candidates. Using a Likert scale, the host teachers in cooperation with the candidates’ college supervisor rated the pre-service teacher based on each of the ten INTASC standards. The data for the study was provided by the cooperating teachers hosting the pre-service teachers and housed in the TK-20 database. The Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) statistic was chosen to provide insight into the magnitude of relationship between variables. Analysis of the data revealed a correlation at a significance level exists for one of the participating groups.
Dedication

God has been so good. He opened doors that were shut and carried me through the valleys. He answered the prayers of all those who prayed for me. Thanks to His faithfulness I was able to successfully complete the Liberty University doctoral program. “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (KJV Philippians 4:13)

Without the sacrificial love and support from my lovely bride of nearly 40 years, I would not be writing this page today. Gloria is the person who inspired me to enter the doctoral program at Liberty University and supported me every step of the way. She was my sounding board and proof reader. Always there with an encouraging word, especially when I felt it wouldn’t happen. She made sure I had uninterrupted quiet time to work on assignments, helped retrieve articles specifically for my dissertation I was having difficulty downloading.

They say behind every successful man is good woman. Gloria is much more than that, she is my best friend.
Acknowledgments

Thank you to my chair person Dr. Daniel Baer. You have been a blessing, providing guidance in a timely manner and quickly responding to my questions. Your willingness to be flexible and diligent work resolving issues along the way helped make the process less daunting.

Thank you Dr. Burrell for your kind and encouraging words over the past few years. I appreciate your willingness to do what it takes to make sure I had the data necessary for my dissertation. It was a pleasure working with you.

Thank you Dr. Benders for your keen eye for detail and ability to help us work through, what at times seemed impossible to do.

Thank you to the doctoral students, who worked with me for the past few years. Suzy Besson- Martilotta, Laurie Simpson, and Lorena Casanova Mendoza who selflessly spent time proof reading my work and constantly encouraging me to continue and see it through to the end. Most of all thank you for all your prayers. They did not go unanswered.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

Universities and colleges across the nation have been preparing individuals for entry into the teaching profession. During the first half of the 20th century, the focus was primarily on pedagogical content knowledge and as late as the 1980’s “most colleges and universities provided sophomore and junior teacher education students with merely one or two opportunities to actually go into a public school for the purpose of observing and/or teaching” (Strand & Jonson, p. 197). A variety of teaching and learning theories were taught in the college classroom, but little time was provided for the prospective teacher to gain hands-on experience. Through discussions with numerous field placement coordinators and professors during the State University of New York Field Experience Administrators Consortium (SUNY FEAC) and the Central New York Field Experience Administrators Consortium (CNY FEAC) conferences and meetings, it appears teacher education programs today provide some form of field experience for teacher candidates prior to graduation. These field experiences differ greatly from state to state, university to university, and even within the university between the schools of education programs. SUNY FEAC consists of field administrators within the SUNY system, while CNY FEAC consists for field experience administrators in central New York, public and private colleges and universities. New York State Chapter II Regulations of the Commissioner, Part 50 General, Section 52.21(b)(1), requires education majors to spend a minimum of 100 hours of field experiences within the classroom setting prior to student teaching. The university used in this study requires the field experience candidate to take initiative and participate during field experiences, unlike other area colleges that require observation only to take place in the classroom.
Some universities require the field placements be imbedded into the educational courses, while others provide detached field experiences spread out over two or three semesters. “Teacher-training programs have long been criticized for not putting enough emphasis on inside-the-classroom practice, and the recommendations suggest turning programs ‘upside-down’ by putting practical training first and foremost” (Bimbaum, 2010, November 16).

A few school districts at the elementary and secondary level have recently collaborated with the university in the study to be classified as Professional Development Schools (PDS). One school district in particular has entered into an agreement with the university. Teaching candidates placed in these PDS’s spend more time in the same school than teaching candidates placed elsewhere. The researcher was interested in if there was a correlation of time in a specific placement and the level of teacher readiness skills exhibited by the teaching candidate at the secondary level. Berrie, et al. (2002), outlined the effectiveness of partnership teaching versus single-placement teaching for the development of early field experiences for education majors. Prater and Sileo (2002) also outlined the impact Professional Development Schools have on pre-service teachers during their early field experiences prior to student teaching. The belief is that PDS’s support collegiality and enriches the field experience for both the cooperating teacher and the pre-service teacher.

Professional Development Schools work closely with a small comprehensive institution in central New York, providing professional development for the pre-service teachers and faculty. Two of the professional development issues addressed through the PDS initiative are peer coaching and working collaboratively. Bowman, (1995)
addresses the issue of teacher isolation versus collaboration by investigating the affect of peer coaching seminars on pre-service teachers’ ability to work collaboratively.

Typically, in New York State, field experiences have been restricted to junior and senior education majors during their final four fall and spring semester. The university in the study has recently implemented a new program for non-education majors with a Bachelor’s degree to complete a Master’s degree within one year. Teaching candidates enrolled in this program, called Masters of Science in Teaching (MST), will be part of this study. In order to ensure these candidates obtain the state minimum number of hours in the classroom might require the college to rethink its policies and look for ways to allow the candidates in this program to fulfill part of their field experience during the summer. Doster and Polter (2008) discuss an alternative, which would allow education majors to take advantage of summer camps for their field experience. Currently adolescent majors in the Masters of Science in Teaching (MST) program complete a minimum of 100 hours of field experience in one semester, followed by two student teaching experiences in the following semester.

Jenkins and Haefner (2011) explain the phenomena of excellent teaching through pedagogical content knowledge as it relates to the teaching-learning process. This supports the university’s alignment of field experiences with courses providing specific assignments which candidates complete while attending their field experiences.

The studies pertaining to field experiences are sparse, leaving colleges and universities with limited research upon which to base decisions regarding field placements for pre-service teachers. It is important to learn what constructs help build quality field experiences that will improve teacher readiness skills.
Problem Statement


Programs that train teachers need to be radically revised, according to a panel composed of some of the country's top educators, and eight states, including Maryland, have signed on to adopt the recommendations, scheduled to be released Tuesday.

Teacher-training programs have long been criticized for not putting enough emphasis on inside-the-classroom practice, and the recommendations suggest turning programs "upside-down" by putting practical training first and foremost. They advise creating formal mentorship programs for student teachers akin to those at medical schools and suggest that more scrutiny be given to teaching programs. (Bimbaum, 2010)

According to Berrie et al. (2002) one of the problems is the perceived inequalities of field experience placements. They concluded that partnership placements provided a “richer, more interesting, and more educative early field experience…than traditional practices” (Berrie, et al., 2002, p. 68). Education majors need to spend quality time actually working with students versus observation only during their early field experience within a classroom. In November 2010, the National Council for Accreditation of
Teacher Education (NCATE), commissioned a blue ribbon panel of top educators across the country to discuss “Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning.” The executive summary of the NCATE report states:

The education of teachers in the United States needs to be turned upside down. To prepare effective teachers for 21st century classrooms, teacher education must shift away from a norm which emphasizes academic preparation and course work loosely linked to school-based experiences. Rather, it must move to programs that are fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses.

(NCATE, 2010, p. ii)

Since a clinical approach to field experiences is rather new, there is scant research regarding best practices. There is a need to share the responsibility for teacher preparation. Universities and school educators are encouraged to work collaboratively to develop teacher preparation programs steeped in a clinical approach. Eight states have signed a commitment to implement the new changes in developing a national system for transforming teacher education with clinically rich programs. “Clinically based programs may cost more per candidate than current programs but will be more cost-effective by yielding educators who enter the field ready to teach, which will increase productivity and reduce costs associated with staff development and turnover” (NCATE, 2010, p. iv).

Various states differ on the amount of time necessary as well as how and where the field placements are served. The New York State Education Department and the United States Department of Education are two government bodies providing regulations for field placements. The SUNY chancellor, Nancy L. Zimpher, expressed her support for this initiative (Bimbaum, 2010). The university in this study requires a clinical approach to
field experiences. The candidates are required to not only observe, but to participate in classroom activities as well. This is in alignment with the push to transform teacher preparation programs. Prospective teachers need an opportunity to practice implementing the content knowledge and pedagogy they have learned under the auspices of a qualified mentor teacher. It has been more than ten years since NCATE produced the Table below and there is still a call for reform. Changes are slow in the field of education. Developing partnerships takes years, as does preparing highly qualified mentors. This movement will result in fewer opportunities for making field placements.

**Table 1- Continuum of Partnership**

A Continuum of Partnership Development for Clinically Based Teacher Preparation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Integrated</th>
<th>Sustaining and Generative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships that support: Development of clinical practice knowledge, skills, and dispositions</td>
<td>Beliefs, verbal commitments, plans, organization, and initial work are consistent with the goals of the partnership</td>
<td>Partners pursue the goals with partial institutional support</td>
<td>The goals of the partnership are integrated into the partnering institutions. Partnership work is expected and supported, and reflects what is known about best practice.</td>
<td>Systemic changes take place in policy and practice in partnering institutions. Policy at the district, state, and national level supports partnerships for clinically based teacher preparation and improved student learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry for continuous improvement</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: NCATE (2001). Standards for Professional Development Schools

Early field experiences prior to student teaching are the first opportunities for education majors to observe classroom teachers from a new perspective (Trepal, et al. 2010). Schools of education need to identify and provide field experiences yielding the
highest success rates for developing student teaching readiness skills for all regardless of age, gender, race, or ethnicity. The following is a partial list of organizations which provide the standards as a starting point for creating field experience programs: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), and Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and the University’s Field Placement Database.

Universities and colleges with teacher preparation programs vary from state to state regarding qualifications and experiences leading toward a teaching certification. “Field experiences and “practice teaching” have been recognized traditions of teacher-training programs dating back to the times of the American Normal School, one should not assume that all field experiences will actually help bridge the theory-practice gap and that merely requiring more field experience is necessarily better (Allsopp, DeMarie, Alvarez-McHatton, & Doone, 2006; Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006; Zeichner, 1980)” (Capraro, p. 132).

It is also reported by some pre-service teachers that they are not adequately prepared by the teacher education programs to meet the requirements of teaching in a real classroom environment (Stuart and Thurlow, 2000). They report that they are not able to cope with the problems they face during teaching practice. (Merc, p. 200)

There are many issues plaguing pre-service programs such as stress placed upon the college student in relationship to role responsibility, host teacher expectations, evaluation processes, limited time for communication with host teacher, student discipline/classroom management, differentiation between learners, unmotivated
learners, etc. (Merc, 2010)). Michael Bimbaum, staff writer for the Washington Post, wrote an overview of the results of a document that will be released mid to late November regarding the efficacy of teacher preparation needs, signed by five states. The following is a key point of the discussion for the document: “Teacher-training programs have long been criticized for not putting enough emphasis on inside-the-classroom practice, and the recommendations suggest turning programs "upside-down" by putting practical training first and foremost. They advise creating formal mentorship programs for student teachers akin to those at medical schools and suggest that more scrutiny be given to teaching programs” (Bimbaum, p. 1). The participating university requires students to spend one hundred hours in three separate classrooms observing/participating prior to student teaching.

There is a belief that there is a direct correlation between the amounts of time a candidate spends in contact with students within a classroom setting under teacher supervision (aka. Field experience). To what extent do age, gender, ethnicity, the student’s area of concentration, and the amount of preservice time spent in the classroom effect the level of pre-teacher readiness prior to student teaching? Since there are only so many clock hours in a day and limited amount of time for classes and field experience, universities want to ensure that teacher preparatory programs are developed to optimize the candidates time in preparing for the teaching profession.

Strand and Johnson (1990) explain that professionals in the 90’s claimed that candidates would be better teachers if provided more field experience. Even in the 80’s professionals were questioning “does just providing additional practical experience such as observational and teaching opportunities guarantee greater program meaningfulness or teaching competence (Dodds, 1985)” (Strand, 1990, p. 3). With that being said, not all
universities and colleges require a substantial amount of field placement time and activities for candidates to garner the full scope of the teaching profession. On the other hand, in addition to the educational courses and content level courses, some states do indeed require students to spend up to one hundred hours in a guided early field experience prior to student teaching. The field experiences provide these students an opportunity to observe and participate within the classroom with a host teacher.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of the study was to determine if there is a difference in the level of teacher candidates’ performance as outlined by the INTASC standards for secondary students in relationship to the number of hours of early field experience spent in one location. All candidates were scheduled for a minimum of 100 hours in early field experiences and two 7 week student teaching placements. During their early field experience group “A” was scheduled for 50 hours in one location while group “B” were scheduled for 75 hours in one location. There are three models used for assigning students to their early field experiences and student teaching assignments: Professional Development School (PDS), Master of Science in Teaching (MST), or the Standard Multi-school Placements (SMP). Unlike the PDS and SMP placements, the MST program consists strictly of graduate students who have not taken the educational courses previously. It is a condensed program designed to prepare these students to obtain a teaching certificate within a year. Utilizing these three placement models, this correlation study was an attempt to identify a nexus between the amount of field placement time in one location and the level student teacher performance as identified in Appendix A.

**Significance of the Study**
In order to avoid inadequately prepared teachers, one must reconsider teacher education preparation programs to ensure that effective teachers are enrolled into the teaching profession. A significant component of the teacher education preparation program involves practicum field experiences of preservice teachers” (Lee, p.545). This is not new information but one of growing concern. As stated earlier, there is a growing belief that universities and colleges are failing to appropriately prepare candidates to enter the teaching profession successfully. Strand and Johnson (1990) explain that historically universities and colleges only provided miniscule amounts of opportunities for prospective teachers to spend time in the classroom observing/participating.

Another very important experience in the professional preparation program is the pre-student teaching practicum; an experience that may set the stage for success or failure in student teaching. This experience has the potential to greatly influence students by providing them, in most instances, their first real hands-on experience with their chosen career. Therefore, an individual's future in education may hinge on what occurs during that individual's pre-student teaching practicum experience. Pre-student teaching practicums that have shoddy structure and haphazard organization will not prepare students adequately for student teaching. It is conceivable that due to a disappointing and unsuccessful pre-student teaching practicum and/or student teaching experience, many able students may never seek employment as teachers (Placek & Silverman, 1983). But, through careful planning, sound organization, and appropriate supervision, colleges and universities can institute valuable pre-student teaching practicum experiences that emphasize sequential learning with
opportunities to use effective observational and teaching techniques (McBride, 1984). (Strand, 1990, p. 1)

Therefore, with so much at stake for universities and colleges to properly prepare candidates for the teaching professions, it is imperative an adequate amount of quality time is provided for observation/participation prior to student teaching, and balancing that time with rigorous academic training.

It is important to continually improve the teacher education programs promulgating new teachers into the field. Investigating the level of student teaching performance as is relates to the number of hours of early field experience in one location will provide valuable information for improving field experience placements. The results of this study may help universities improve upon the inconsistencies found between the various field placements for teacher candidates during their early field experiences. This new knowledge could help improve early field experiences for education majors.

**Research Question**

The following research question formed the foundation of the investigation in identifying the effect of the amount of time in one location of early field experience placements have on teacher candidate’s rated performance for student teaching:

**Research Question.** Is there a relationship between the numbers of hours teacher candidates spend in one location with the student teacher performance he or she exhibits as reflected on the student teacher rating scale?

**Research Hypotheses**

Hypothesis: There will be a positive correlation between the numbers of hours teacher candidates spend at one school location with the student teacher performance he or she exhibits.
Identification of Variables of Interest

The variables of interest being studied is the amount of time candidates spend within the classroom, in one of the three placement programs, observing and participating with students in grades 7 - 12.

Of the ten standards used for evaluation throughout the candidates’ field experiences, six standards have been selected for the student teaching skills to be rated as the other variables of interest being evaluated: 1) Learner Development, 2) Learning Differences, 4) Content Knowledge, 5) Application of Content, 7) Planning for Instruction, and 8) Instructional Strategies.

The INTASC standards were developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, and have been adopted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The INTASC Standards represent those principles that should be present in all teaching regardless of the subject or grade level taught. The INTASC Standards have served as a national framework for the systemic reform of teacher preparation and professional development since their introduction in 1992 (INTASC, 2011) (See Appendix A for more detailed description of each of the variables of interest).

An average of the scores for these six variables for each candidate will be used for the statistical analysis.

The variables were evaluated by the host teachers at the end of each semester using a rubric developed by participating university’s professors and public school administrators and teachers. Although it is difficult to remove all subjectivity from the
evaluation process, this rubric helps to standardized the evaluative responses of the host teachers and maintain objectivity.

All successive field placements were evaluated using the six identified of the variables of interest. This allowed for documenting growth as the candidates proceeded through the remaining two field placements and increased the validity of any inferences made upon completion of the data analysis. The ten INTASC standards adopted by the Council of Chief State School Officers and acceptance of NCATE lend to the studies validity. Fully documenting procedures to allow replication will help with reliability. Hopefully the study will be replicated at other SUNY Universities and Colleges to test the reliability and see if any inferences could be generalized to all students attending a SUNY school of education program, not just the participating university within a small margin of error.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions. One assumption is that the coordinating teacher and college supervisor will evaluate each student collaboratively and objectively.

A forty percent sample size of the population would appropriately represent the population to the extent that any results of testing would be indicative of the population. Since the participating university has one of the largest schools of education programs for teacher preparation within the state and that all SUNY programs follow the same curriculum and procedures for field experience and student teaching, then it may be fair to assume that the findings may also be true for the entire SUNY program.

By following the standards for the accreditation board of NCATE, the results are based on the current knowledge base and best practices for deterring candidate readiness for student teaching.
Since all candidates were assigned one hundred hours of early field experience placements over a period of three semesters, the difference is the amount of time scheduled for one school or multiple schools.

**Limitations.** One limitation is that “correlational statistics can be used to explore cause-and-effect relationships between variables, but the obtained results generally do not lead to strong conclusions” (Gall, 2007, p. 336). Cooperating teacher biases could not be completely controlled, even though they were provided a rubric for grading each candidate’s progress. There is always a certain amount of subjectivity when determining the grade. External validity may be diminished since the sample population only includes candidates from one university; therefore, the results may not be accurately generalized to all university programs. The rating scale data is a snapshot of data collected during one semester and results might vary during the fall semester versus the spring semester candidates.

Although the sample population consists of an easily accessible population, the results could be generalized to a much larger population since the program being utilized at the participating university is the same program required in all New Your State Universities and Colleges with a teacher education program.

The nature of reality, or ontological assumptions, play a major role in the choice for this research design. The determination of teacher readiness is partly based on a subjective interpretation of data, even though some objective criteria was produced to help identify those skills. Axiological assumptions are also at play regarding the evaluators’ values in assessing readiness. There are various world views shaping this study. Biblical, constructivist, and advocacy/participatory world views meld together. It
is important to teach children in the way they should go. The diversity within cultural norms of educators varies greatly from district to district, and school to school.

**Definitions**

- IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) – “SPSS is a comprehensive, integrated collection of computer programs for managing, analyzing, and displaying data” (Gall, 2007, p. 161).
- Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) – “Is the ability to relate and transform content for students, and it separates…” (Jenkins & Haefner, 2011)
- Standard Multi-school Placements – Pre-service teachers placed in multiple schools during their field placements (term unique to this paper)
- Early Field Experience – All candidates are assigned 100 hours in the classroom setting for the purpose of observation/participation. The field experiences are linked to activities assigned through their education courses

**Research Plan**

In this quantitative correlation study, the researcher investigated the correlation of the amount of time a pre-service teacher spent at one school location, with the teacher readiness skills, based on the INTASC standards. The amount of time was actual time based upon the teacher candidates’ placement method during their early field experiences. There are three levels of early field experience placements. Typically, the teacher-candidates placements are made as follows: 1) the first field placement is a block one placement for 25 hours; 2) the second field placement is a block 2 placement for 25 hours; and 3) the third field placement is for 50 hours. Block one & two pre-service teachers were assigned 25 hours in the classroom while block three pre-service teachers were assigned 50 hours in the classroom. Pre-service teachers in the new MST program
were assigned 100 hours in the classroom for adolescent majors, with 50 hours at the middle school and 50 hours at the high school level. The pre-service teachers were placed in one of three types of field placements, Standard, PDS, or MST. The control group received a Standard field placement at random in a school they had not yet served. Most of the Block two pre-service teachers who completed their block one field placement in an urban setting were assigned to a Professional Development School (PDS). The preferred placement for MST candidates was in an urban setting when possible.

This researcher utilized newly collected data by the Curriculum and Instruction Department placed in their TK-20 database. Based on INTASC standards, the C&I department developed an evaluation tool that addresses the ten INTASC standards. At the end of the student teaching experience the cooperating teachers in the public schools, in collaboration with the college supervisor, used this instrument (see Appendix A) to evaluate and rate their assigned teacher candidate(s) using a Likert Scale. The candidates’ college supervisors took the evaluations and input the information into TK-20. After redacting all personally identifiable information, the C&I department released the data to the researcher for analysis via an excel spreadsheet. The correlation coefficient (Pearson r) was conducted to compare possible correlations between the amount of time spent at one school location for field placements and the pre-service teachers’ readiness skills. Determining the correlation coefficient helped with the process of identifying a possible correlation between variables.

Since the purpose of the study was to investigate possible correlations and “the degree of relationship between the variables being studied,” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 336) a
correlation study would be the best approach. There is sparse literature regarding any correlation between teacher readiness skills and the time and type of location of field experiences.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

A review of literature is necessary to develop an understanding of current knowledge concerning the perception of teacher readiness skills for teacher candidates. Review of the literature revealed two basic constructs selected for the study. The two guiding constructs of the study were the theory of social constructivism and mentoring pre-service teachers. Investigating social constructivism and mentoring provided a certain prospective toward understanding the various field placements of pre-service teachers. Since much of educational processes are now based on constructivism, it was useful to learn more about what both sides have to say.

Other related topics necessary for review are critical thinking, perceptions, professional development schools, and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Each of these areas may impact a teacher candidate’s teacher readiness skills.

Several individuals have advanced the knowledge base regarding field experiences for education majors. The following is a short list of some of these individuals whose research and writing will be useful for this study: Nihat Boz, Yezdan Boz, Mary Margaret Capraro, Robert M. Capraro, and Jack Helfeldt. These individuals have written several peer reviewed articles, books/chapters/research reports, peer review proceedings, non-peer reviewed articles, and have articles submitted or under revision. They have conducted research into the investigation of educational majors’ perception regarding field experiences and a study concerning the quality of field experiences – calling for reform. Key descriptors gleaned from their articles helped with research information pertaining to field experiences. The key descriptors are as follows:
prospective teachers, student teachers, school practice, formulation of partnerships, qualified teacher status, mentors, practice course, choice of mentors, coordination between university and schools, perceived level of competence, bridging the gap between theory and practice, types of field experiences, regression of novice teacher, codify knowledge skills, diversity of field based experiences, professional development schools, and inquiry based teaching.

The secondary PDS worked closely with the participating university providing professional development for the pre-service teachers and school faculty. Two of the professional development issues addressed through the PDS initiative were peer coaching and working collaboratively. Bowman, (1995), addresses the issue of teacher isolation versus collaboration by investigating the affect of peer coaching seminars on pre-service teachers’ ability to work collaboratively.

Typically, field experiences have been restricted to the fall and spring semesters college schedules. The participating university recently implemented a new program for non-education majors with a Bachelor’s degree to complete a Master’s degree within one year. As stated earlier, Doster and Polter (2008), discuss an alternative which would allow education majors to take advantage of summer camps for their field experience. This new program may require the colleges and universities to rethink policies and look for ways to allow the candidates in this program to fulfill part of their field experience during the summer.

This supports the participating universities’ alignment of field experiences with specific courses with assignments from those courses, which candidates complete while attending their field experience. Jenkins and Haefner (2011), explain the phenomena of
excellent teaching through pedagogical content knowledge as it relates to the teaching-
learning process.

**Theoretical Framework**

Adams (2006) explains that social constructivism is built on the premise that
knowledge for a learner is based upon their social interactions and how that is interpreted
and understood. It is believed that the construction of knowledge first takes place
between people socially before one internalizes the information as knowledge. For the
social constructivist, truth and reality only exists through consensus within a social group
(Adams, 2006; Raskin & Neimeyer, 2003; Richardson, 2003). Lev Semyonovich
Constructivists believe reality is only a perception based on ones “contextual point of
view” (Raskin & Neimeyer, p. 406). Constructivists also believe that knowledge is
constructed socially to give meaning and there are no absolutes (Adams, 2006). Two key
constructs continue to be in the forefront: essentialism – generalizing properties of a
group as universal and without context; and epistemology – debating the nature of
knowledge in relationship to social beliefs. The following are additional reoccurring
constructs:

Consensus – collective agreement of a social group of the same opinion (Adams,
2006; Rasin and Neimeyer, 2003; and Richardson, 2003)

Inter-psychological – Social interaction taking place during the construction of

Zone of Proximal development -- “the difference between that which a learner can
do independently and that which can be achieved with the support of a more
significant other.” (Adams, 2006, p. 252)
If knowledge is based on social constructivism, then social interaction within the cultural setting of schools may provide various degrees of learning for the pre-service teacher, which in turn may lead to a statistical difference in teaching readiness skills displayed by teacher candidates as recorded by cooperating teachers.

“Constructivism is premised on the assumption that what counts as the basic unit of observation is always decided upon by human beings, whose distinction-making is a function of their goals in pragmatic contexts” (Raskin & Neimeyer, p. 404). “Instead, constructivists and constructionists of a hermeneutic orientation remind us that even our best theories are the products of their time and place, and their sustaining assumptions and methodologies are most assuredly shaped by social as well as intellectual factors” (Raskin & Neimeyer, p. 406).

Richardson (2003) critiques constructivist pedagogy. Richardson paraphrasing Resnick: “The general sense of constructivism is that it is a theory of learning or meaning making, that individuals create their own new understandings on the basis of an interaction between what they already know and believe and ideas and knowledge with which they come into contact (Resnick, 1989)” (Richardson, p. 1623-1624). Constructivist pedagogy generally has the following characteristics: “attention to the individual; facilitation of group dialogue; planned and often unplanned introduction of formal domain knowledge; provision of opportunities to determine, challenge, and change; development of students’ metawareness of their own understandings and learning processes” (Richardson, p. 1626). “In this article, then, constructivist pedagogy is thought of as the creation of classroom environments, activities, and methods that are grounded in a constructivist theory of learning, with goals that focus on individual students developing deep understandings in the subject matter of interest and habits of mind that
aid in future learning” (Richardson, p. 1627). Jean Piaget is considered the father of constructivist theory of knowledge. In the 1930’s he was the Director of International Bureau of Education. What is social constructivism?

*Social constructionism or social constructivism.* A theory that bodies of knowledge or disciplines that have been built up are "human constructs, and that the form that knowledge has taken in these fields has been determined by such things as politics, ideologies, values, the exertion of power and the preservation of status, religious beliefs, and economic self-interest. (Phillips, 2000, p. 6)

This approach centers on the ways in which power, the economy, political and social factors affect the ways in which groups of people form understandings and formal knowledge about their world. These bodies of knowledge are not considered to be objective representations of the external world (Richardson, p. 1624).

Thus, consensus between individuals is held to be the ultimate criterion upon which to judge the veracity of knowledge and not some form of ‘objective truth test’. In this sense, learning becomes the development of personal meaning more able to predict socially agreeable interpretations. As Heylighen (1993, p. 2) explains, social constructivism ‘sees consensus between different subjects as the ultimate criterion to judge knowledge. ‘Truth’ or ‘reality’ will be accorded only to those constructions on which most people of a social group agree. (Adams, p. 246)

“It is then but a step to note that in order for learning to effectively occur, students must be enabled to access those social elements of learning that support the development
of personal interpretation (Hein, 1991)” (Adams, p. 246). If knowledge is based on social constructivism then gaining an understanding of the social interaction within the cultural setting of schools may provide various degrees of learning for the pre-service teacher. Since the participating university’s School of Education curriculum and field placements are based on constructivist pedagogy it is important to grasp an understanding of what it is along with its strengths and weaknesses.

**Review of the Literature**

The synthesis of the literature pertaining to teacher preparation field experiences help gain insight into the importance of providing an excellent field experience for teacher candidates and provide focus for the study. In the process of reviewing the literature pertaining to educational field experiences, specific jargon emerged to be beneficial in the search for knowledge in this field of study. Additional key descriptors to helped guide the search for printed knowledge pertaining to field experiences: partnership teaching, single-placement teaching, mentor teachers, shared ordeal, building facilitator, pre-service teacher, full teaming, team teaching, peer coaching, reciprocal coaching, Peer Assisted Leadership (PAL), Instructional Management Program (IMP), pre-service teacher, in-service teacher, teacher clarity behaviors, support group, quality field placement experience, traditional field placement, rich opportunities, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), general pedagogy, pre-service teacher (PT), integrated understanding, environmental contexts, teacher education programs, physical education teacher education (PETE), sequencing of movement tasks, teaching-learning process, practicum, constructivist-learning theory, time management, classroom management, lesson planning, epistemic knowledge, situated knowledge, and effective pedagogy, professional catalyst, National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER), Partner Schools,
Professional Development Schools (PDS), Institute of Higher Education (IHEs), mentor/cooperating teacher, field experience, educational preparation, aligned course syllabi, UTeach Program, candidates, field course, exploring teaching, and multiple intelligence.

Mentoring. A piece of the puzzle regarding field experiences is the role of the cooperating teacher during the candidate’s preparation for student teaching. A large portion of that role is serving as a mentor. Ye (2009) conducted a meta-analysis on “Strength-based mentoring in pre-service teacher education: a literature review” (p. 262). This author reviewed literature pertaining to strength based theories for mentoring for pre-service teachers. She covered past experiences, application, as well as, hope and optimism for the future relating to strength based mentoring. Why and how pre-service teachers receive mentoring to improve retention rate was thoroughly discussed. Ye (2009) provided a better understanding of the roles within the mentoring for pre-service teachers. Whether cooperating teachers consider themselves mentors officially or not, that is what they are. Do PDS teachers form a stronger mentoring relationship with pre-service teachers that enhance teacher readiness skills?

Strength-based theories pertaining to mentoring of pre-service teachers requires examination in determining teaching readiness, which will include past experiences, application, hope and optimism for the future. Knowing why and how pre-service teachers receive mentoring increases our understanding of improving the retention rate once they enter the teaching profession. A well designed and executed mentoring program for pre-service teachers better prepares them for the classroom and increases retention rates. (Friedman, 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; and Ye, 2009).
“In other words, an effective mentoring program not only grooms pre-service teachers for classroom instruction but also enhances their self-efficacy and prepares them for the potential ‘shattered dreams of impeccable professional performance’ during their first year of teaching (Friedman, 2000, p. 595)” (Ye, p. 263). According to Hascher (2004), teacher candidates tend to model their behaviors after their assigned mentor or cooperating teacher. It is with mixed feelings, in which they approach their field experiences. They are excited about entering their chosen profession but are anxious about the possibility of failure. Teacher candidates “arrive with a set of formative experiences (educational and environmental factors that influence teachers’ behaviors), demographic characteristics (race, ethnicity, gender, age, etc.), and personal properties (e.g., personality characteristics, attitudes, beliefs)” (Konold, et.al., p. 301). These experiences have some impact positively or negatively on the success of student teachers.

One aspect of mentoring is communication. “Teacher education programs have long recognized that in order to develop their pedagogical capacity, pre-service teachers must have teaching experiences and interactions with students during their program of preparation” (Doering, p. 52). Due to restrictions within school districts limiting student access to social media a “web-based discussion board” allows for this type of communication, helping student teachers to assimilate into the school culture.

Bullough et.al. (2002) conducted a study regarding the candidates placed either singly or in pairs during their field experiences. It was found that most mentors allowed student teachers opportunities to practice some of the methods and pedagogy learned in classes. The candidates who were paired during this process found it helpful to have a
sounding board for feedback. The quality of field placements experience affected candidates growth. “The partner-placed preservice teachers enjoyed greater control over not only how they would teach but what they would teach. Single-placed preservice teachers saw their role primarily as a minimal disruption, which was a source of disappointment for some” (Burlough, et.al., p. 73-74).

**Critical Thinking.** The meta-analysis by Abrami, et al. (2008) reviewed studies spanning approximately 40 years of empirical research from the 1960’s through 2005. There were 161 effect sizes determined from 117 studies. The studies supported the importance of critical thinking skills as a course requirement. It was determined that specific instruction is needed for students to develop their critical thinking skills. “Critical thinking (CT), or the ability to engage in purposeful, self-regulatory judgment, is widely recognized as an essential skill for the knowledge age. Most educators would agree that learning to think critically is among the most desirable goals of formal schooling” (Abrami, p. 1102). Critical thinking skills affect pre-service teacher’s ability to assimilate into the school and classroom culture, which in turn can impact teacher readiness skills.

**Perceptions.** TC stands for Teaching Candidates attending school of education teaching program. In 2010 one “study examined the perceived level of competence of TC’s completing three different field –based experiences within the same teacher preparation program at a research-intensive university.” (Capraro et al., p. 137)

Under the Research Purpose section of the article, there were two questions underpinning the study:

(1) Do different field-based experiences affect TC’s self-perception of their professional competence as defined by selected INTASC standards?
(2) Do TC’s completing different field experiences rate themselves differently on knowledge, disposition, and performance as measured by latent variables? (Capraro et al., p. 137)

Boz and Boz (2006) conducted a study to examine perceptions of preservice teachers during their field experiences. Students were placed in separate schools. Some of the schools were rated having students of high ability and some of low ability. Students felt there was little to gain from their field experiences, because they just repeated the activities from their first practicum. There was little or no transfer of pedagogical theory into practice. Most teachers continued to follow traditional paths of teaching, and did not demonstrate the new theories being taught at the university. Mentors interfered with practicum students’ teaching and at times were indifferent toward them.

We believe that wise choice of mentors and more coordination between university and schools would help students gain more in the practicum. In addition, we believe that school placement would be more beneficial for student teachers if they were given more chance to reflect on their observations or teaching. (Boz & Boz, p. 366)

Two concerns expressed by Boz and Boz (2006) were the need for providing professional development and linking the appropriate in-service teacher with the pre-service teacher.

Parkison (2008) conducted a comparative study pertaining to various field placement types including a range of hours spent in the placement. His findings indicate there is no one type of field placement that will meet the diverse needs of all teacher candidates. “The quantity of time spent participating in field experiences and interactions
within the school environment with teachers and students impact the preservice teachers’ sense of self-efficacy” (Parkison, p. 42). The range of field placement hours varied between 40 and 200 plus.

Since this dissertation study related to the field placement experiences for prospective teachers, it is important to understand the readiness of the cooperating teacher for hosting a practicum student. Various professional development opportunities are provided for the cooperating teachers at the PDS’s which may vary from professional development opportunities at non PDS’s. Just as the Capraro (2010) study investigated the candidates’ perception of teaching readiness skills, this researcher investigated the cooperating teachers’ perception of the candidates teaching readiness skills based on the same INTASC standards.

Caires and Martins conducted a study “to assess the relation between the socioemotional aspects of the practicum and the other dimensions of this experience, while controlling for personal characteristics” (Caires & Martin, p. 18). Since constructivism is considered the basis for learning, it is also important to realize that student teacher candidates are placed in a school setting with the expectation they will view education from a foreign perspective for them. They are now considered as the same as the teacher in the eyes of the public school students.

Our findings reflect the significant role of the teaching practice on becoming a teacher: a multidimensional and idiosyncratic process involving changes in different areas of the student teacher’s development (Caires, 2003; Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Flores, 2006)…. Yet, the data show that, gradually, most student teachers overcame the initial difficulties and accomplished growing levels of school belonging.
professional affiliation, and approval, as well as higher levels of satisfaction regarding the school’s resources and overall support.” (Caires, p.25)

For some teacher candidates, student teaching was like going through shock therapy. It takes them time to adjust and assimilate into the school culture before true learning takes place and candidates are ready to function appropriately. Black (2010) pointed out that the leadership of the school plays an important role in setting the climate for learning. This would include the assimilation of student teachers into the school, creating an atmosphere that would lessen the reality shock.

“In order to understand others, you need to understand yourself. A corollary of this statement is that, in order to understand individuals from other cultures, you first need to understand your own cultural identity. Narrative inquiry and reflection promote selfunderstanding in preservice candidates” (Fayne, p. 4). The participating university requires candidates to maintain a reflective journal through-out all field experience placements. This is one of the processes in place to help the candidate assimilate into the school culture.

**Professional Development Schools.** Professional Development Schools work in concert with universities in providing professional development opportunities for both cooperating teachers and teacher candidates. Teachers in these schools who do not provide a field experience for teacher candidates also benefit from the professional development opportunities. Schools of Education in partnership with faculty in public and parochial schools should endeavor to provide the highest quality experience for pre-
service teachers. If they cannot, then “we should let someone else do the job” (Capraro, p. 147).

In a study conducted by Capraro et al. (2010) the INTASC Readiness Survey (IRS) was administered during the last week of the semester in which they were enrolled in their methods class, just as the cooperating teachers rated the TC’s during their last week of field placement based on the INTASC standards.

**Constructs.** Rowan (1999) provided a critique of Maslow’s theory of hierarchy of needs. Maslow states there are various stages we pass through: physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Basic needs must be met before moving on to a higher level. He claims Maslow’s theory is not one way, but that we ascend or descend through the stages as needed. As we descend to a lower level, we do not enter that level the same as we did the first time. “In other words again, ascent is about acquiring a certain kind of insight, and descent is about using that insight as a new way of life” (Rowan, p. 126).

Two constructs that re-appeared throughout his study were Deficiency Motivation – coping with a situation, and Abundance Motivation – often referred to as “being values” by Maslow. The theory originated with Abraham Maslow in his 1943 paper *A Theory of Human Motivation* (Maslow, 1943).

In other words again, ascent is about acquiring a certain kind of insight, and descent is about using that insight as a new way of life. Or to put it the other way around, descent is about connection with the world, and ascent is about the ability to be independent of the world (Rowan, p. 126).

Weller (1982) provides a practical application of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Knowing and understanding these needs, the school administrator can provide a safe
environment for teachers and students to progress up the proverbial ladder toward self-actualization. “By nurturing a people-positive attitude and demonstrating an awareness of, and concern for, the needs of one’s fellow professionals, the principal establishes the primary ingredients for an effervescent and fluid climate that assists teachers in functioning at their optimal” (Weller, p. 36). The administrators set the climate in the school and will have a direct bearing on pre-service teacher’s success.

**Summary**

Research articles pertaining to pre-service teachers and field experiences are sparse and address the issues from varying perspectives. From the literature we know that field experiences vary greatly from state-to-state and there is a need to gain better understanding of how to best develop the skills necessary for education majors to become successful in-service teachers.

A number of factors are at play in developing teaching readiness skills. It is expected that Professional Development Schools (PDS) would provide the best opportunities to help hone teacher readiness skills (Parkison, 2008). The PDS focuses on professional development including mentoring and critical thinking which improves teachers and teacher candidate’s perception regarding the importance of field placements in the development of pre-service teachers. Many public universities strongly believe and teach social constructivism (Adams, 2006; Ozkan, 2011; Raskin & Neimeyer, 2003; Richardson, 2003). With that, one would have the belief that pre-service teachers would best learn in a field placement environment that provides a contextual social setting in which pre-service teachers can interact with highly qualified in-service teachers (Raskin & Neimeyer). “The quantity of time spent participating in field experiences and interactions within the school environment with teachers and students impact the

Much of the literature reviewed in preparation for this study centers around social constructivism, learning taking place in a social setting. The overriding belief is that preservice teacher would benefit most within the nurturing social environment, such as in a classroom where team teaching would take place (Abrami, 2008; Berrie et al., 2002; Bowman, 1995; Boz & Boz, 2006; Parkison, 2008; Prater & Sileo, 2002; Raski & Nemeyer, 2003; Richardson, 2003; Shroyer, Yahnke, Bennett, & Dunn, 2007). Professional Development Schools are designed to provide the nurturing social rich environment for preservice teachers to learn and grow (Bowman, 1995; Caparo, Caparo, & Helfeldt, 2012; Prater & Sileo, 2002; Shroyer, Yahnke, Bennett, & Dunn, 2007; Ye, 2009).

During the past couple of decades there has been a shift away from the belief “that learning to teach is an individual endeavor” toward the social constructivist theory that learning is a social endeavor and team teaching or collaboration as the method of choice for field placement opportunities (Nokes, et al., p. 2168). Universities are now sending preservice teachers out in pairs during their methods’ field placement expecting enhanced improvement in learning teaching skills necessary for success. (Bowman, 1995; Ikpeze, 2007; Nokes, 2008; Prater & Sileo 2007; Ye, 2009). The methods’ students are expected to plan and teach a lesson to the entire class for the first time. Finding quality placements is a difficult task which is becoming increasingly difficult; especially when the expectation is that there will be two additional people in the classroom.

In addition to collaboration and team teaching, “The role of the mentor as opposed to that of co-operating teacher is increasingly viewed as important in the process of guiding student teachers’ work in the field” (Awaya et al. p. 45). The expectation is
for the co-operating teacher to be a mentor for the preservice teacher. A special bond is forged through mentoring which enhances learning in rich learning environment. “It is important to: (1) place student teachers with mentor teachers who genuinely value collaboration and collaborative learning communities” (Nokes, et al., p.2175).

In 2010 the National Council for Accreditation (NCATE) spearheaded a Blue Ribbon Panel to review the standards for preparing candidates to enter the teaching profession.

The education of teachers in the United States needs to be turned upside down. To prepare effective teachers for 21st century classrooms, teacher education must shift away from a norm which emphasizes academic preparation and course work loosely linked to school-based experiences. Rather, it must move to programs that are fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses.

(NCATE, 2010, p. ii)

The panel considered the current programs and methodologies for placing candidates in classrooms a “cottage industry” (NCATE, 2010, p. ii). A systemic approach is needed nationally to create the much needed clinical approach to teacher preparation programs. The amount of time varies greatly throughout the states. Some candidates receive only eight weeks of training while others may spend an entire semester in a clinically rich environment where professional development is a shared responsibility between universities and schools. The training for host teachers as mentors varies greatly, with some being much better prepared to provide the professional leadership skills necessary to properly mentor student teachers. Professional Development Schools (PDS) is one
attempt colleges and universities are making to create the clinically rich environment, which has been lacking from current preparation programs.

“Research has consistently demonstrated that pre-teaching activities led to increased academic outcomes and increased academic outcomes improve behavioral variables” (Beck, p. 91) If pre-teaching has a profound effect on school age students, then the same must be true for college students in preparation for student teaching. Nancy L. Zimpher, chancellor of the State University of New York and co-chairwoman of the panel that wrote a report calling for turning the teacher education programs upside down by placing a greater emphasis on internships similar to those in nursing and creating these internships at the beginning of the teacher education program (Birnbaum, 2010).

Teach America is an upcoming program that is on the move to change the teacher program paradigm. Teach America matches individuals with schools in need of their talent after providing five weeks of intensive training. Upon completion of this training the individuals (professionals making a career change) are placed in teaching position without having passed the rigors of university teacher preparatory programs. “This month, Teach for America won a $50 million federal grant that will help the program nearly double in the next four years” (Bimbaum, 2010). As much as we would like to think that we are constantly progressing and providing improved programming for teacher candidates through curriculum and field experiences, the truth is many universities and colleges are trapped in the dogma of tradition. They tout progressivism and improving standards yet they continue following in the same footsteps traveled twenty years ago. The use of field experience is becoming a key player between the school of education within universities and colleges and the private sector developing future teachers. “Individuals who have high self-efficacy tend to demonstrate more
dispositional preparedness for their student-teaching experience for their first years as novice teachers (Gordon & Debus, 2002; Reeves & Kazelskis, 1985; Watzke, 2003)” (Parkison, p. 30). It is the goal of the Blue Ribbon Panel to increase student teacher readiness skills through the clinical approach to field placements.

At the same time there is a movement to improve collaboration between schools and universities in developing a systemic approach to teacher preparation programs, the use of technology has increased dramatically the number of “online” college students earning a teaching degree. This adds a wrinkle into the concept of mentoring when students taking courses on line also fulfill their field experience on line. Puckett and Anderson (2002) assessed field experiences through on-line programs which is a move away from a clinical approach to more flexibility in satisfying the requirement for field placements. Professors now need to be more creative in the way they monitor and assess the candidate’s progress. Below is a sample used by one university.

Course info, published by Blackboard, was the software package used for on-line communication. In addition, students were required to tutor for one and a half hours a week, lead an on-line discussion forum that corresponded to chapter topics in the required class text, conduct a sixty-minute in-service presentation (part of which was computer generated) on a best teaching practice, and compile a portfolio that demonstrated their learning in the course. (Puckett, p. 54)

Due to the lack of a solid understanding of what is the best way to provide field experiences to ensure success for beginning teachers, this study helps fill that gap in the literature exploring the efficiency of various field placement options for improving teacher readiness skills.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The nature and purpose of the study was to identify possible correlations between time and school location in relationship to field experience placements for pre-service teachers as indicated by specific skill sets required for success as identified by INATSC standards. In this section the following topics are examined: Participants, Setting, Instrumentation, Procedures, Research Design, and Data Analysis. The methodology section is based upon the research question listed in Chapter 1.

Participants

The target population under consideration for the study was 111 senior education adolescent majors attending the participating School of education teacher preparation program completing their student teaching assignments during the spring of 2012. The final four semesters of the educational program are designed to provide candidates the opportunity to spend time in the public school classroom observing and participating in teaching activities with students, culminating in the final semester with two student teaching placements.

The targeted sample of 84 candidates was comprised of three groups of candidates attending the participating university’s Education Program representing the four semesters of field experience including student teaching experience. Data was collected regarding the number of hours each candidate actually served out during their early field experience (practicum) at each location. Following their assigned practicums, the students served two 7 week student teaching assignments. At the end of each assignment their teacher readiness skills were rated by the cooperating teacher and college supervisor. Beginning in their Junior year, pre-service teachers began three
semesters in the public schools completing their early field experiences prior to student teaching in the final semester of their senior year. During the pre-service teachers’ first semester’s early field experience, these block one juniors were assigned 25 hours in a school classroom. During the pre-service teacher’s second semester’s early field experience, these block two juniors were assigned 25 hours in school classroom. During the third semester’s field experience, these block 3 seniors were assigned 50 hours in a school classroom. Sometimes transfer students enroll in the program out of sync and complete their block three assignment before their block two assignment. After completing all three blocks of early field experiences, pre-service teachers should have completed a minimum of 100 classroom hours of early field experiences. One group of pre-service teachers under investigation in this study were graduate students enrolled in the new Master of Science in Teaching (MST) program who were placed in two 50 hour early field experiences during their first semester and then complete their student teaching in the following semester.

The preservice teachers were provided assignments/activities during their aligned classes. Early field experience 1 consists of course EDU 303 Observation & Participation. The related courses taken congruently are EDU 301 Schooling, Pedagogy & Social Justice as well as LIT 396 Teaching Literacy in the Content Areas. Early field experience 2 consists of course SPE 393 Small Group Instruction in 7-12 Inclusion Classrooms. The related courses taken congruently are LIT Adolescence Literacy: Assessment & Intervention and ADO 394 Interdisciplinary Methods. Early field experience 3 consists of course ADO 313-353 Content Specific. The related courses taken congruently are ADO 310-350 Content Specific Methods and EDU 380 Culturally Relevant Teaching. Student teaching consists of course ADO 420 Student Teaching
Culminating. The related courses taken congruently are ADO 421 Cross Cultural Student Teaching and EDU 430 Seminar: Professionalism & Social Justice. Pre-service teachers are expected to be involved in the following during their early field experiences: interact with children, conduct activities with children, work with teachers, and learns about the day in the life of a teacher. For a listing of pre-service teachers’ involvement during their early field experience (aka. Practicum) please see Appendix “C.”

Setting

The study took place in the central New York State region. The schools within the region provided the setting for the study. Within a 50 mile radius of the participating university, there are potentially 139 schools in which early field experience and student teachers are placed.

Instrumentation

The participating university’s Curriculum and Instruction Department Student Teacher InTASC Assessment Form was utilized for the basis of data collection (see Appendix A). The assessment form was developed by the participating university’s faculty, based on the national INTASC Standards (see Appendix A). The ratings for each of the ten INTASC Standards are based on Likert Scale 2 = Met, 1 = Developing, 0 = Not Met, and NB = No Basis.

Procedures

“The IRB requires that each prospective research participant receive a letter describing the research and the conditions of their participation” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 82). The letter must also make it clear that if a candidate chose to participate, they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions. Participant’s right to autonomy must be an integral part of the study and begin with identifying the education
majors included in the population. Since the data is collected by participating university for multiple purposes including program evaluation, which has already received permission from teacher candidates for this purpose, no further participation requests were needed. However, a “Data Use Agreement” was required with the university to obtain a Limited Data Set (LDS) (see Appendix B). The data was maintained in TK-20 and provided by the participating university. Upon approval from the Liberty University IRB number 1412.100512 under exemption category 46.101 (b)(4) (see Appendix D), and approval from the participating university’s IRB, the researcher began executing the research plan by first soliciting data maintained in TK-20 from the participating university’s Curriculum & Instruction department.

The data collection process began at the end of each student teaching experience when the cooperating teachers in collaboration with college supervisors assess the student teacher upon completion of their field experience. Host teachers completed the candidate’s INTASC assessments at the end of each semester. The college supervisors of the student teacher candidate input the data into the TK-20 database. The C&I department then released the limited data set to the researcher in an Excel spreadsheet. All personal identifiable information has been redacted. This information was then imported for statistical analysis using a software package such as SPSS. The researcher conducted statistical analysis tests for correlation.

**Research Design**

A quantitative non-experimental correlation research design was utilized to determine if higher teacher readiness skills are most prevalent in Professional Development Programs, MST Programs, or the Standard Placement Programs. Students
placed through the Standard Program were the control group, since this has been the placement method of choice at the college for the past ten years.

This quantitative non-experimental correlation survey was designed to identify the correlation between the amount of time and school location of field experiences with respect to the six beginning teacher INTASC standards utilized on the Field Placement Assessment. The research question is: Is there a relationship between the numbers of hours teacher candidates spend in one location with the student teacher performance he or she exhibits as reflected on the student teacher rating scale? The hypothesis is: There will be a positive correlation between the numbers of hours teacher candidates spend at one school location with the student teacher performance he or she exhibits.

An explanation of the variables of interest can be found in chapter one under Identification of Variables. The variables chosen for this study were identified as viable variables for the study since they were being utilized by the university in rating student teacher readiness and they were based on the INTASC standards. The other variable of interest used was time. All candidates were required to attend early field experiences and student teaching. The difference was the amount of time spent at one location during the field experiences based on the placement program in which the candidate was enrolled.

Data collected for all teacher candidates completing an early field experience through the participating university’s teacher education program during the semester of the study is maintained in the TK-20 database.

This study design allowed for the gathering of information relevant to the skills deemed important to the success of pre-service teachers entering the field of education. A review of literature has revealed the lack of consistency in preparation programs for prospective teachers. Identifying correlations of time and location with respect to
specific placement location options will allow colleges and universities to improve existing programs. “Another advantage of correlational designs is that they provide information concerning the degree of the relationship between variables being studied. This is an advantage over causal-comparative designs” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 336).

**Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics was conducted to ascertain measures of central tendency and a product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) was completed and analyzed. Results were examined to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the groups with respect to independent variables on dependent variables. Differential analysis helped compare correlation coefficients for predictive validity. The next step was to develop the theoretical constructs and then “…to compute statistics that show the strength of the relationship between each pair of variables” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 365). Using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) helped organize and display the data as well as help with statistical analysis. The results are displayed in graph and chart form to allow ease of identifying the data to allow support or rejection of the hypothesis (See Tables in Chapters 4 & 5). The charts and graphs allow the reader to identify the number of candidates in the sample, the narrowness of the mean scores between questions, the linear relationship between variables, and the significance level necessary used to decide whether to accept or reject the hypothesis.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS / FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to measure the strength of the difference in the level of teacher candidates’ performance as outlined by the INTASC standards for secondary students in relationship to the number of hours of early field experience spent in one location. During the initial stage of the study the researcher collected and reviewed literature related to field placements including early field experience (practicum) and student teaching experience. The second stage consisted of the researcher obtaining archival data from the university and analyzing it through the use of SPSS.

The culminating activities for education majors, following their 100 hours of early field experiences, in their quest to become certified teachers, requires them to complete two student teaching assignments approximately seven weeks in length each. At the conclusion of each student teaching assignment the teacher candidates were rated by their cooperating teacher and college supervisor. The instrument used is a rating scale based on INTASC standards. Six of the 10 skill areas rated were chosen for this study: 1) Learner Development, 2) Learning Differences, 4) Content Knowledge, 5) Application of Content, 7) Planning for Instruction, and 8) Instructional Strategies. Each skill area consisted of two sections each, which were rated by the candidate’s college supervisor and cooperating teacher. The college supervisor inputted the scores into the universities TK-20 data base. The raw scores were released to the researcher for use in this dissertation. Using an Excel spreadsheet, the researcher calculated each candidate’s mean score for each of the skill area along with an overall mean score (see Appendix G).

The data was then transferred to the SPSS program to identify and calculate the
frequencies (percent of participants per group), descriptive statistics, and correlations presented in this dissertation.

Chapter 4 has been organized into three sections: (1) demographics related to the participants, (2) data analysis of the correlation of the number of hours served in a school to the results of the teacher candidates score on a teacher readiness rating scale based on the INTASC standards, and (3) the findings, a summary of the results.

Demographics

There were 84 participants in this study comprising of 43 candidates placed through the SMP process, 29 candidates placed through the PDS process, and 12 candidates placed through the MST process. Eight candidates with incomplete data on file were removed from the study as follows: four SMP, one PDS, and three MST candidates, leaving 84 candidates with sufficient data to enter into the SPSS program for analysis. Upon learning that not all of the candidates placed through the PDS process actually served at least one of their student teaching assignments at the professional development school where they attended two of their early field experiences, the researcher divided the group into two sections. Only seven of the 29 candidates served a student teaching assignment at the professional development school as planned by the school of education.

The research question: “Is there a relationship between the numbers of hours teacher candidates spend in one location with the student teacher performance he or she exhibits as reflected on the student teacher rating scale?” was used to guide the study. The data was collected and analyzed to determine if the hypothesis could be accepted or rejected. The hypothesis formulated by the researcher is: There will be a positive correlation between the numbers of hours teacher candidates spend at one school location
with the student teacher performance he or she exhibits. In order to determine if the correlation is statistically significant, the research set out to first either accept or reject the hypothesis.

**Data Analysis**

A Pearson’s Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was initially conducted using SPSS analytical software to measure the relationship between the variables of interest. The Spearman’s rho was finally decided to be the correct process to identify a possible correlation. The rating instrument constructed by the university, is assumed to be reliable, based on the INTASC standards.

The INTASC standards were developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, and have been adopted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The INTASC Standards represent those principles that should be present in all teaching regardless of the subject or grade level taught. The INTASC Standards have served as a national framework for the systemic reform of teacher preparation and professional development since their introduction in 1992. (INTASC, 2011)

The decision to conduct a bivariate nonparametric correlation was chosen as the best statistical process to either reject or fail to reject the hypothesis. The Spearman’s rho was chosen to be the best method. Basic assumptions had to be met prior to calculating the correlation (r) through the SPSS program. These assumptions were normality, the variance of scores is the same across programs, ratings scores are independent of each other, and there is a linear relationship. The following identifies how the assumptions of normality were not met; the linear relationship can be seen in the
scatterplots in tables 6 - 9. Another assumption is that the coordinating teacher and college supervisor evaluated all student collaboratively and objectively.

Findings

Initially the researcher began to review data for candidates placed through the PDS program. Upon further investigation, it was discovered that not all participants were actually placed as per the intent of the university. Only seven of the 29 PDS candidates actually were assigned to at least 75 hours of early field experience and one student teaching assignment at the PDS school. Therefore the researcher examined both groups individually and as a whole. Below are the demographic statistics relating to the program placements.

Table 2 - Frequencies (percent of candidates)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Placement Type</th>
<th>Number of Candidates</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid MST</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMP</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All students in the SMP and PDS groups received the maximum mean rating of 2.0 with no standard deviation in the area of content knowledge, while the MST group had a mean of 1.92 and a standard deviation of .389. The MST group received a maximum mean rating of 2.0 with no standard deviation in the areas of application of content and planning for instruction. The overall mean scores between groups ranged from 1.7600 to 1.7994 with a difference of .0394.

### Table 3 - Descriptive Statistics

#### SMP - Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Six Standards</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Learner Development</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.930</td>
<td>.2578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Learning Differences</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Content Knowledge</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Application of Content</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>.213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Planning for Instruction</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Six Standards</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7994</td>
<td>.2702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### PDS - Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Six Standards</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Learner Development</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.793</td>
<td>.4913</td>
</tr>
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<td>2) Learning Differences</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>.435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Content Knowledge</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Application of Content</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>.310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Planning for Instruction</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>.310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Six Standards</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7600</td>
<td>.2789</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>29</td>
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### MST - Descriptive Statistics

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<tr>
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<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>.3215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Learning Differences</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Content Knowledge</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Application of Content</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Planning for Instruction</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Six Standards</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7958</td>
<td>.2362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### All Candidates - Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Six Standards</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Learner Development</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.867</td>
<td>.3648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Learning Differences</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Content Knowledge</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Application of Content</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Planning for Instruction</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Instructional Strategies</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Six Standards</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7853</td>
<td>.2663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Overall Group Descriptive Statistics

**For the Six Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Placement Type</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMP</td>
<td>1.799438</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>.2702225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>1.760057</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.2789879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MST</td>
<td>1.795833</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.2362774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.785327</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>.2663612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A correlation study is used to examine the relationship between variables. An excellent method of identifying if there is a linear relationship is by placing the measurements of the variables on a graph called a scattergram, scatter diagram, or scatterplot (Howell, 2009). The scattergrams below compare the number of hours
candidates spent in one location during early field experiences (x-axis) and their score on the rating scale used by the cooperating teachers and college supervisors (y-axis). The tighter the points cluster around the line of regression would indicate a “strong linear relationship” (Howell, p. 174). A regression line is a straight line through the data points and represents what is called the “best fit” (Howell, p. 174). In Table 6, 28 out of 42 scores cluster around the overall mean of 1.9167 on the rating scale for student teaching readiness skills. Table 6 represents candidates placed through the standard multiple placement method (SMP). Examining the plots on the scattergram indicates a linear relationship but not necessarily a correlation between the variables.

Table 4 - SMP Scattergram
In Table 7, 18 out of 29 scores cluster around the overall mean of 1.9167 on the rating scale for student teaching readiness skills. The clustering around the mean of 1.9167 indicates a linear relationship.

**Table 5 – PDS Scattergram**

![PDS Mean Scores Scattergram](image)

In Table 8, the MST group is quite small with only 12 candidates, making it difficult to relate findings to the larger population. Again the relationship appears to be linear in nature. As with the PDS groups not all the candidates in the MST group served at least one of their student teaching placements at one of the schools in which they served an early field experience as expected.
There were similarities in the scores between the and each of the three groups. The mean scores for PDS group was 1.760057, while the mean for the SMP group was 1.799438. That is only a difference of .039381 between the highest and lowest average scores between groups.
The assumption of normality may be addressed in a number of ways, such as Skewness, Kurtosis, Shapiro-Wilk’s test, and Kolmogorov-Smirnov D test. There are also a number of graphical methods used to test for normality, histogram, Q-Q plot, Box Plot test, and multivariate normality. A normal distribution would have a skewness of zero and a Kurtosis of three.

Skewness is a measure of symmetry, or more precisely, the lack of symmetry. A distribution, or data set, is symmetric if it looks the same to the left and right of the center point.

Kurtosis is a measure of whether the data are peaked or flat relative to a normal distribution. That is, data sets with high kurtosis tend to have a
distinct peak near the mean, decline rather rapidly, and have heavy tails.

Data sets with low kurtosis tend to have a flat top near the mean rather than a sharp peak. A uniform distribution would be the extreme case.

The histogram is an effective graphical technique for showing both the skewness and kurtosis of data set. (NIST, 2012, p. 1.3.5.11)

The three types of Kurtosis are Mesokurtic, Leptokurtic, and Platykurtic. A Mesokurtic is represented by a normal curve distribution with a kurtosis of zero. A Leptokurtic is represented by a distribution with the peak of the curve higher than a normal curve distribution with a positive kurtosis. The Platykurtic is represented by a distribution with a flat peak of the curve lower than a normal curve distribution with a negative kurtosis.

This researcher determined the use of histograms would satisfy this requirement. Below is a series of histograms depicting the data which falls within the normal curve except for a few outliers. One student in the SMP group clearly can be identified as an outlier. This was one criteria used in determining to move forward with the correlation study.

The following histograms represent how the mean scores for each group are displayed in relationship to a normal distribution. The overall mean represents the candidates’ mean of the scores assigned to the six standards representing their teacher readiness skills. “Frequency” represents the number of candidates within the group obtaining a specific mean score.
Each group was reviewed in light of these criteria. Not all data falls within the normal curve, but the data does sufficiently support progressing forward with the study since the scores reported above satisfied the assumption of normality.
Table 9– Histogram – Normal Distribution - PDS

PDS Candidates

Mean = 1.760057
Std. Dev. = 0.2758879
N = 29
Table 10 – Histogram - Normal Curve - MST

Mean = 1.795833
Std. Dev. = 0.2362774
N = 12
The correlation coefficient is simply a point on the scale between -1.00 and +1.00, and the closer it is to either of those limits, the stronger the relationship between the two variables” (Howell, p.182). Table 15 below, lists the correlation coefficient and significance for all program placements comparing the variables (1) group mean score and (2) program hours. The level of significance determined to minimize the probability of a Type I error was set at a rejection level of (alpha) $\alpha = .05$ to ensure $H_0$ is not rejected if in fact it is true. If the probability is greater than .05 then the hypothesis is not rejected. In an attempt to prevent a Type II error, accepting the hypothesis if in fact it is false, a one-tailed test was conducted with an $\alpha = .05$. Additionally, the table of “Significant
Values of the Correlation Coefficient” indicates how large the correlation coefficient must be in order to reject the hypothesis (Howell, p. 542). Upon examining the results as displayed in Table 11, the significance level of a two-tailed test indicates insufficient evidence to determine if a correlation exists between the teacher candidate’s rating scores and the number of hours spent in one school. Additionally, the data is not represented as a normal distribution as initially determined, but is negatively skewed. This indicated the need to use Spearman’s rho to determine a possible correlation. Therefore, based on the results obtained through SPSS, the significance level of the one-tailed test indicated sufficient evidence supporting a correlation between the variables for the students placed in the PDS by both the Pearson (r) and te Spearman’s rho. However, the Spearman’s rho supports a correlation for the SMP group as well.

Table 11 - Pearson Correlation (r)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SMP</th>
<th>PDS</th>
<th>MST</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation (r)</td>
<td>.241</td>
<td>.344*</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.866</td>
<td>.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.433</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spearman’s rho nonparametric correlation</td>
<td>.307*</td>
<td>.328*</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.392</td>
<td>.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

During the previous chapter the researcher presented data analysis using Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) utilizing SPSS to show the relationship between candidates’ score on the student teacher InTASC assessment form and the number of hours spent in one school during early field experiences. Descriptive statistics were calculated and presented, including frequency, gender, mean, and standard deviation.

The purpose for chapter 5 is to summarize and discuss the findings from chapter 4, as well as, explain limitations and recommendations for future research as it relates to the literature review, methodology, theoretical framework, and purpose statement. The chapter has been organized into four sections: (1) summary of findings, (2) discussion, (3) limitations, and (4) recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

The following research question formed the foundation of the investigation in investigating the effect of the amount of time in one location of early field experience placements have on teacher candidate’s rated performance for student teaching on the student teacher InTASC assessment form.

Research Question: Is there a relationship between the numbers of hours teacher candidates spend in one school location with the student teacher performance he or she exhibits as reflected on the student teacher rating scale? Hypothesis: There will be a positive correlation between the numbers of hours teacher candidates spend at one school location with the student teacher performance he or she exhibits.

Two sets of values were identified by the researcher to decide whether or not to reject the null hypothesis. According to the chart computed by David C. Howell the correlation coefficient (r) would have to exceed the following significant values to have
to reject the hypothesis: All Placements ≈.215, SMP ≈.276, PDS “.367”, and MST “.576” (Howell, p.542). The Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) scores calculated through SPSS were all below the significant values presented by Howell. Furthermore, examining the same scores against the p-values (see Table 7) of All Placements .164, SMP .120, PDS .068 and MST .866, as determined through SPSS, would have to be less than the predetermined significant level of .05 for the two-tailed test. All the p-values were above .05. The one-tailed test indicated sufficient evidence of a correlation between the two variables of interest for the PDS candidates.

**Discussion**

The researcher followed two guiding constructs for the study, theory of social constructivism and mentoring pre-service teachers. Adams (2006) explains that social constructivism is built on the premise that knowledge for a learner is based upon their social interactions and how that is interpreted and understood. It is believed that the construction of knowledge first takes place between people socially before one internalizes the information as knowledge. Richardson (2003) stated:

constructivist pedagogy is thought of as the creation of classroom environments, activities, and methods that are grounded in a constructivist theory of learning, with goals that focus on individual students developing deep understandings in the subject matter of interest and habits of mind that aid in future learning (p. 1627).

Candidates placed through the SMP program spent an average of 51.88 hours in one school and approximately 25 hours each in two different schools. Candidates placed
through the MST program averaged 58.67 hours each in two schools. See Table 14 for descriptive statistics regarding hours spent in early field experiences in one location for the entire sample. Based on the theoretical constructs it was expected that the amount of time a candidate spent in one location would improve his/her teaching readiness skills. The overall mean scores between groups ranged from 1.760057 to 1.799938 with a difference of .039381 and based on the one-tailed test a significant correlation between the amounts of time spent in one school with the ratings on the assessment for the PDS was found.

**Table 12 - Program Hours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SMP</th>
<th>PDS</th>
<th>MST</th>
<th>ALL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>51.88</td>
<td>91.86</td>
<td>58.67</td>
<td>66.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>96.00</td>
<td>57.00</td>
<td>62.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouped Median</td>
<td>50.29</td>
<td>102.25</td>
<td>57.00</td>
<td>62.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error of Mean</td>
<td>2.923</td>
<td>7.580</td>
<td>4.330</td>
<td>3.141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>144</td>
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<td>Range</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>114</td>
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<td>367.296</td>
<td>796.052</td>
<td>224.970</td>
<td>828.494</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Limitations**

This study was based on the gap in literature regarding research pertaining to best practices for early field experience assignments. A number of research studies conducted between 2006 and 2010 focused on teacher candidate’s perception of their competence level as a student teacher. (Boz & Boz, 2006; Capraro et al. 2010; Friedman, 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; Parkison 2008; and Ye, 2009). This study was designed by the researcher to examine the possible correlation between the number of hours spent in one school to the perceived readiness skills of teacher candidates by their college supervisor and
cooperating teacher. Initially the study was going to focus on teacher candidates final early field experience only, but upon further review decided to identify all early field experience hours and utilize the archival data provided at the end of the teacher candidates two student teaching placements. The assumption that the teacher candidates would be displaying vs. learning teaching skills would be a more accurate representation of their teaching readiness skills.

There are a number of limitations within this study that relate to research design, data collection and analysis, and sampling. One weakness in the research design is that a correlation study only measures “the degree of or strength of this relationship” (Howell, p. 171). A correlation does not infer causality (Gall, 2007). The study was limited to reviewing the scores for only six of the ten INTASC standards listed on the student teacher InTASC assessment form. For example, the scores for the six standards were run through SPSS to identify a possible correlation with the number of hours in one school. Not investigated was a possible correlation between the six standards or the possibility that a certain combination of the six may have indicated a correlation with the number of hours in one school. The researcher also limited which variables would be examined for correlation. Only the overall mean scores for each type of field placement (SMP, PDS, and MST) were used for calculating the correlation coefficients.

Since the data utilized for the study was archival, there was no control over how the assessments were rated. Even though there were over 400 candidates attending the education program at the university, the sample was limited to those who completed their student teaching assignments during the spring of 2012 and sufficient data was inputted into the TK-20 database.
Even though it is the intent of the school of education that all teacher candidates serve as participant/observers during their early field experiences, there have been documented incidents of cooperating teachers only allowing the candidates to observe and not participate. It is not known if any of the candidates in the sample were restricted to only observe during their early field experiences. This is quite rare, but may slightly skew the results. Cooperating teacher biases cannot be completely controlled, even though they are provided a rubric for grading each candidate’s progress. There is always a certain amount of subjectivity when determining the grade. External validity may be diminished since the sample population only includes candidates from one university; therefore, the results may not be accurately generalized to all university programs. The data is a snapshot of data collected during one semester and results might vary during the fall semester versus the spring semester candidates.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Highly qualified teachers are needed within our schools. Public law PL 107-110 known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) addresses the need to train highly qualified teachers in sections 2101 and 2151. Schools of education desire to produce the same, therefore, it is necessary to study the effects early field experiences have on developing or improving upon teacher readiness skills. The use of a different instrument or utilizing a larger Likert scale may provide a stronger outcome. Studying the possible correlation between the average mean for each variable within each placement group with the overall mean of all variables for the entire sample, may yield stronger results as well. Another piece that would provide insight would be to have the candidates rate themselves using the same instruments to see if the results are similar or dissimilar.
Conclusion

A correlation at a significant level using Spearman’s rho was found between the mean scores on the student teachers InTASC assessments for the candidates placed in PDS and SMT placements. However, no correlation was determined for the SMP and MST placement groups.

The candidates in the PDS group were supposed to serve one of their student teaching assignments at the PDS assigned during their early field experiences. Only seven candidates actually student taught at the PDS, while the 22 candidates did not. If all candidates had student taught at the PDS, the correlation found may have been stronger.

There are many variables that were not accounted for or controlled in this study that may have negatively impacted the results, such as training for the cooperating teacher and college supervisor in completing the rating scales. The quality of each field placement varied from school to school. The range of hours actually spent in schools during early field experiences was much broader than what was anticipated. The range of hours in each program placement type varied between 56 and 130 hours between candidates for each group. Some schools required only tenure teachers accept candidates for early field experience while other schools allowed less veteran teachers accept candidates into their classroom.

With public schools clamoring for highly qualified teachers as a result of NCLB, universities and colleges are searching for best practices to turn out the highest quality teachers possible. With that being said, it is important to continue to improve teacher education programs including the type and length of field placements. This study adds to the knowledge base regarding field placements even though it does not fully support Parkison’s (2008) perspective: “The quantity of time spent participating in field
experiences and interactions within the school environment with teachers and students impact the preservice teachers’ sense of self-efficacy” (p. 42).

References


http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/resultsadvanced?vid=9&hid=122&sid=f0afc07f-7b1a-47f7-b88c-b66eab1593ff%40sessionmgr112&bquery=(Caesar%u2019s+closure%3a)&bdata=JmRiPWE5aCZ0eXB1PTEmc2l0ZT11aG9zdC1saXZlJnNjb3BlPXBNDU%3d&error Code=failed_login


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b66eb1593ff%40sessionmgr112&bquery=(Caesar%u2019s+closure%3a)&bdata=JmRiPWE5aCZ0eXBIPTEmc2l0ZT1laG9zdC1saXZlJnJb3BlPXNpdGU%3d&error
Code=failed_login

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Appendix A - Student Teacher Assessment Form

Curriculum and Instruction Department
Student Teacher InTASC Assessment Form

Student Teacher ____________________________
_________ Fall _________ Spring

Host Teacher (Print Name)_________________________ Grade(s) or Subject__________________
Host Teacher Signature __________________________ Host School__________________________

Supervisor Name_________________________ Date________________________

Directions: Please complete this form in collaboration with the supervisor.

Use the following rating scale to assess the teacher candidate’s performance on the standards described in the left-hand column below. These standards are the InTASC Standards, a set of knowledge, dispositions, and performances deemed essential for all teachers. The ratings on these standards represent the expectations the participating university’s School of Education has for its teacher candidates.

2 = Met The teacher candidate has demonstrated clear evidence of meeting the target standard.

1 = Developing The teacher candidate has begun to demonstrate evidence toward meeting the target standard, but has not yet met it.

0 = Not Met The teacher candidate has not demonstrated evidence of meeting the target standard.

NB = No Basis The teacher candidate has not yet had the opportunity to demonstrate evidence of meeting the target standard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>InTASC Standards and Descriptions</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1: Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the</td>
<td>1a. Demonstrates understanding of the range and variation of learners’ development. 2 1 0 NB</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1b. Designs learning activities that are</td>
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<td>#2: Learning Differences.</td>
<td>The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.</td>
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<td>#3: Learning Environments.</td>
<td>The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.</td>
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<td>#4: Content Knowledge.</td>
<td>The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.</td>
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<td>#5: Application of Content.</td>
<td>The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.</td>
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#6: Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher’s and learner’s decision making.

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6a. Demonstrates understanding of the purposes of assessment and its relationship to learning goals and objectives.

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6b. Implements a range of assessments before, during, and after instruction.

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#7: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

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7a. Demonstrates knowledge of the role of curriculum and standards in planning instruction.

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7b. Develops relevant goals and objectives for diverse learners.

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#8: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

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8a. Identifies appropriate low- and high-tech strategies for delivering meaningful instruction.

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8b. Designs questions and activities to promote learners’ deep understanding of content.

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#9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

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9a. Demonstrates commitment to on-going professional learning and ethical behavior.

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9b. Actively engages in reflection on outcomes of practice and demonstrates growth as a result of reflections.

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#10: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

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<th></th>
<th>Demonstrates commitment to working with the host teacher and other school professionals for the benefit of learners.</th>
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<th>Seeks and engages collaborative and leadership endeavors to promote student learning and well-being.</th>
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Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this assessment form and for serving as a mentor to this teacher candidate.
Appendix B – Data Use Agreement

DATA USE AGREEMENT

This Data Use Agreement (“Agreement”), effective as of September 12, 2012, is entered into by and between James Patrick Gregory and , Director of the Office of institutional Research and Assessment and , Interim Dean, School of Education. The purpose of this Agreement is to provide Data Recipient with access to a Limited Data Set (“LDS”) for use in research in accord with the HIPAA and FERPA Regulations.

1. Definitions. Unless otherwise specified in this Agreement, all capitalized terms used in this Agreement not otherwise defined have the meaning established for purposes of the “HIPAA Regulations” codified at Title 45 parts 160 through 164 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, as amended from time to time.

2. Preparation of the LDS. Data Provider shall prepare and furnish to Data Recipient a LDS in accord with any applicable HIPAA or FERPA Regulations.

3. Data Fields in the LDS. No direct identifiers such as names may be included in the Limited Data Set (LDS). In preparing the LDS, Data Provider shall include the data fields specified as follows, which are the minimum necessary to accomplish the research (list all data to be provided): Gender, Concentration, Q3 School, Q4 School, Block 1 School, Block 2 School, Block 3 School, and Scores from the Student Teacher InTASC Assessment Form for Q3 and Q4: 1) Learner Development, 2) Learning Differences, 4) Content Knowledge, 5) Application of Content, 7) Planning for Instruction, and 8) Instructional Strategies.

4. Responsibilities of Data Recipient. Data Recipient agrees to:

a. Use or disclose the LDS only as permitted by this Agreement or as required by law;

b. Use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of the LDS other than as permitted by this Agreement or required by law;

c. Report to Data Provider any use or disclosure of the LDS of which it becomes aware that is not permitted by this Agreement or required by law;

d. Require any of its subcontractors or agents that receive or have access to the LDS to agree to the same restrictions and conditions on the use and/or disclosure of the LDS that apply to Data Recipient under this Agreement; and
e. Not use the information in the LDS to identify or contact the individuals who are data subjects.

f. Students’ records will be excluded in cases where there are less than five students in a concentration area.

g. The name will not be mentioned or associated with this study, the results and all subsequent publications.

5. **Permitted Uses and Disclosures of the LDS.** Data Recipient may use and/or disclose the LDS for its Research activities only. Data Recipient will destroy all data upon completion of dissertation project.

6. **Term and Termination.**
   a. **Term.** The term of this Agreement shall commence as of the Effective Date and shall continue for so long as Data Recipient retains the LDS, unless sooner terminated as set forth in this Agreement.
   b. **Termination by Data Recipient.** Data Recipient may terminate this agreement at any time by notifying the Data Provider and returning or destroying the LDS.
   c. **Termination by Data Provider.** Data Provider may terminate this agreement at any time by providing thirty (30) days prior written notice to Data Recipient.
   d. **For Breach.** Data Provider shall provide written notice to Data Recipient within ten (10) days of any determination that Data Recipient has breached a material term of this Agreement. Data Provider shall afford Data Recipient an opportunity to cure said alleged material breach upon mutually agreeable terms. Failure to agree on mutually agreeable terms for cure within thirty (30) days shall be grounds for the immediate termination of this Agreement by Data Provider.
   e. **Effect of Termination.** Sections 1, 4, 5, 6(e) and 7 of this Agreement shall survive any termination of this Agreement under subsections c or d.

7. **Miscellaneous.**
   a. **Change in Law.** The parties agree to negotiate in good faith to amend this Agreement to comport with changes in federal law that materially alter either or both parties’ obligations under this Agreement. Provided however, that if the parties are unable to agree to mutually acceptable amendment(s) by the compliance date of the change in applicable law or regulations, either Party may terminate this Agreement as provided in section 6.
b. **Construction of Terms.** The terms of this Agreement shall be construed to give effect to applicable federal interpretative guidance regarding the HIPAA Regulations.

c. **No Third Party Beneficiaries.** Nothing in this Agreement shall confer upon any person other than the parties and their respective successors or assigns, any rights, remedies, obligations, or liabilities whatsoever.

d. **Counterparts.** This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

e. **Headings.** The headings and other captions in this Agreement are for convenience and reference only and shall not be used in interpreting, construing or enforcing any of the provisions of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the undersigned has caused this Agreement to be duly executed in its name and on its behalf.

**DATA PROVIDER**

Signed: ____________________________

Print Name: ________________________

Print Title: Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

Liberty University

Signed: ____________________________

Print Name: ________________________

Print Title: Dean, School of Education

**DATA RECIPIENT**

Signed: ____________________________

Print Name: James P. Gregory

Print Title: Doctoral Student,
Appendix C – Cooperating Teacher Info

Field Placement / Practicum
Cooperating Teacher Info

Hosting a practicum student should be a rewarding experience for you and your class. Your role and responsibilities as a practicum host teacher are to:

- Welcome your practicum students into your classroom.
- Provide them with opportunities for active involvement in the learning environment.
- Model professional behavior.
- Offer suggestions whenever appropriate.
- Verify attendance on candidate hour log.
- Complete final assessment: Field Experience Checklist.

Involve your practicum students in the learning environment by having them:

Interact With Children
- Small Groups
- One on One
- Part of whole class activities
- In conjunction with centers

Conduct Activities With Children
- Read to small groups/whole class
- Tutor individual students
- Team teach lessons
- Help resource students
- Conduct art/craft activities
- Assist with seat work
- Assist in reading groups
- Assist in individual projects
- Assist in cooperative learning sessions
- Attend field trips/special events
- Attend extra-curricular events/after-school activities

Work With Teachers
- Grade papers
- Look for resources/materials
- Assist in classroom routines such as lunch, recess, etc.
- Attend parent/teacher conferences
- Attend staff development sessions
- Attend curriculum/team teaching program planning meetings
- Help with clerical duties
- Make copies
Expect that your Practicum Students should:

- Be punctual and dependable; if absence is unavoidable, they should notify you and make arrangements to make up any missed time.
- Share all practicum related college assignments with you as soon as possible.
- Show initiative, enthusiasm, and a willingness to be actively involved in your classroom.
- Display professional behavior and confidentiality at all times.
- Dress appropriately.
- Graciously accept constructive criticism and suggestions for growth.
- Accurately record their attendance on their hour log.
- Provide you with a copy of the final assessment:
  Field Experience Checklist.
- Collect their attendance log and Field Experience Checklist at the end of the semester.

Focus of Practicum Students’ Observations are To Learn How a Teacher:

- Plans activities, lessons, units, curriculum
- Plans for managing behavior
- Plans class activities, student movement, daily schedules
- Communicates with parents, other teachers, aides and teaching assistants, secretaries, principals, other administrators
- Contributes to the larger community (clubs, sports, projects)
- Continues to learn and grow (professional development, conferences)
- Operates within the larger organization of the school (budget, copying, AV equipment, library, supplies, finding and getting other resources, field trip logistics)
- Participates in union activities
- Deals with social issues around gender, race, disability, poverty, sexuality, and so on
- Incorporates educational programming, changes, new ideas: teaching for inquiry, DBQ, technology, portfolio assessment, literacy development, cooperative learning, peer mediation
- Chose education (teaching) as a career

The School of Education is accredited by

NCATE
The Standard of Excellence in Teacher Preparation
Appendix D – Liberty University IRB Approval

October 5, 2012

James P. Gregory
IRB Exemption 1412.100512: The Amount of Time Spent in One School During Early Field Experiences Impacts Student Teacher Performance

Dear James,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(4), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

(4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054

Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971
Appendix E – NIH Certificate

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that James Gregory successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course “Protecting Human Research Participants.”

Date of completion: 07/04/2012

Certification Number: 945730

Protecting Human Subject Research Participants — NIH Office of Extramural Research
Appendix F – Professional Competencies

State University
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Professional Competencies for
Teacher Education Candidates
December 2002; Revised October 2004

Section 1. General Professional Competencies.
The professional competencies required of candidates for successful completion of the professional education programs at SUNY are based upon:

A. the individual’s educational, work, and other life experiences related to the education profession;

B. the individual’s ability to communicate and work effectively with others, including individuals from different backgrounds, individuals with exceptional needs or limitations, individuals from different racial or ethnic populations, and individuals of both genders and different sexual orientations; C. the individual’s moral character and fitness for the profession for which he or she is training, including but not limited to any felony conviction(s) that would bar state certification;

D. the individual’s general and specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to successfully complete the particular program and to function effectively in the profession for which he or she is training; and

E. the individual’s behavior in light of appropriate professional and ethical standards.

Section 2. Specific Professional Competencies.

A. The specific professional competencies that apply to admission, retention, and completion of professional education programs at SUNY are guided by the School of Education Conceptual Framework (http://www.oswego.edu/academics/colleges_and_departments/education/about/conceptual_framework.html) and incorporate the standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC, http://www.ccsso.org/Projects/interstate_new_teacher_assessment_and_support_consortium/projects/standards_development/791.cfm#special) and the School of Education Professional Dispositions.
The INTASC standards were developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, and have been adopted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The INTASC Standards represent those principles that should be present in all teaching regardless of the subject or grade level taught. The INTASC Standards have served as a national framework for the systemic reform of teacher preparation and professional development since their introduction in 1992. The School of Education Professional Dispositions describe the
habits of mind and resulting behaviors that make it possible for educators to use their professional knowledge and skills to promote authentic learning for all students in socially-just school environments. They incorporate all the INTASC dispositions required of professional educators.

B. The knowledge, skill, and dispositions associated with the following standards must be developed and demonstrated by candidates to complete a professional education program and be recommended by SUNY for New York State teacher or pupil personnel certification:

1. Knowledge of Subject Matter. Understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE).

2. Knowledge of Human Development & Learning. Understands how children learn and develop, and provides learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development (KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE, AUTHENTIC LEARNING).

3. Adapting Instruction for Diverse Learners. Understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners (SOCIAL JUSTICE, AUTHENTIC LEARNING, PRACTICE).

4. Multiple Instructional Strategies. Understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills (PRACTICE, AUTHENTIC LEARNING).

5. Classroom Motivation, Management Skills & Rapport. Uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and selfmotivation (SOCIAL JUSTICE, COLLABORATION & LEADERSHIP, AUTHENTIC LEARNING).

6. Communication & Interpersonal Skills. Uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom (PRACTICE, COLLABORATION).

7. Instructional Planning Skills. Plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals (PRACTICE, KNOWLEDGE, SOCIAL JUSTICE).

8. Assessment of Student Learning. Understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner (PRACTICE, KNOWLEDGE, REFLECTION, SOCIAL JUSTICE).
9. **Professional Commitment, Growth & Reflection.** Reflects upon and evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally (REFLECTION, COLLABORATION & LEADERSHIP, SOCIAL JUSTICE).

10. **Partnerships.** Fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students’ learning and well-being (COLLABORATION & LEADERSHIP, SOCIAL JUSTICE).

11. **Professional Ethics & Dispositions.** Understands the ethical, moral, and legal complexities of schooling, and the professional dispositions and behaviors expected of educators as delineated by institutional, school district, state, and national standards; and has developed and acts upon a complementary set of values in relation to ethical, moral, and legal issues (KNOWLEDGE, REFLECTION, SOCIAL JUSTICE). The **School of Education Professional Dispositions** are:

   a. **Commitment to authentic learning and teaching** – Educators exhibit enthusiasm, initiative, and dedication to the task of providing a safe, inclusive, equitable environment for all students* to learn at high levels; and seek effective new ideas, diverse perspectives, and relevant information to develop continuously as educators for social justice.

   b. **Advocacy** – Educators understand how social structures and power relationships disadvantage some groups of learners; assume an effective leadership role in recognizing and challenging injustice; and act with courage and patience to ensure that all students can learn authentically at high levels in socially just schools.

   c. **Critical reflection** – Educators exhibit self-awareness and critical inquiry into their own biases and teaching practice within a socio-cultural perspective; and seek and respond appropriately to constructive feedback from others* to improve their own practice.
### Appendix G – Candidate’s Mean scores

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