

## **2005 – 2006 Title II Report: Professional Education Programs at University of Delaware**

The preparation of professional education candidates at the University of Delaware is a university-wide commitment. The University offers 28 professional education programs for undergraduates and 16 programs at the graduate level through five colleges: Agriculture and Natural Resources; Arts and Sciences; Health Sciences; Human Services, Education and Public Policy; and Marine and Earth Studies. A University-wide governing body -- the University Council on Teacher Education -- is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the preparation of professional educators. All professional education programs are guided by a unifying conceptual framework: to develop professional educators who are reflective practitioners serving diverse communities of learners as scholars, problem solvers, and partners.

The fall 2006 enrollment in the University's professional education programs totaled 2,254 (approximately 11% of the University's enrollment), which included 1,641 undergraduates and 613 graduate students.

### **National Accreditation and High Standards**

The University of Delaware received initial accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education in 1998 and was reaccredited Spring 2004, when the professional education unit was judged to have met all accreditation standards. This is a level of excellence only rarely achieved by programs undergoing review. The individual professional education programs have also all received the State of Delaware "approved program status." In addition, the professional education programs have been recognized for meeting standards established by such national education specialty organizations as the Association for Childhood Education International, the Council for Exceptional Children, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the International Reading Association, the National Council for the Social Studies, the National Science Teachers Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Association of Schools of Music, the Educational Leadership Constituent Council, and the National Association of School Psychologists.

The University's goals for professional education candidates are consistent with Delaware state standards, with the standards of the various national specialty organizations, and with the performance standards identified by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium as essential for all beginning teachers.

### **High Quality Faculty and Candidates**

Outstanding preparation for educators begins with highly qualified candidates who are taught and mentored by a professional education faculty committed to excellence.

#### **Selection and Monitoring of Candidates**

After initial admission into a professional education program, program faculty carefully monitor each candidate's progress. All candidates are screened and must meet established program criteria for admission into upper-level courses and student teaching. Rigorous

academic and field-based performance standards are established for all professional education programs and are reviewed, approved and monitored by the University Council on Teacher Education. Candidates' content and pedagogical knowledge as well as teaching skills and dispositions are assessed throughout their programs. Suitable candidates are encouraged to take honors courses and honors degree options.

**Faculty Commitment to Excellence** UD's professional education faculty are known for their intellectual leadership in their fields and are committed to the integration of teaching, scholarship, and service. They are "teacher scholars" who engage in the generation of new knowledge, integrate their scholarly expertise into their teaching, and share their expertise with candidates and with their professional education colleagues within and outside of the academic community. They serve as teaching models and mentors and provide candidates with opportunities to collaborate through classroom instruction and through research projects. UD faculty also partner with teachers and administrators in P-12 schools to work on projects, solve problems, provide professional development opportunities, and engage in research aimed at improving student learning. Many professional education faculty have been recognized nationally and internationally for their scholarship, and many have been recipients of UD Excellence in Teaching and Excellence in Student Advising awards.

### **Best Practice Preparation**

Outstanding preparation for educators has always included both a strong academic background and a challenging variety of field-based experiences. Today's educators must also be able to incorporate new technology and resources into their classrooms and work in an ever-more diverse school environment.

**Academic Preparation in Content Fields** A strong academic preparation in what they will teach is a trademark of UD's professional education programs. Our candidates complete a general liberal arts core of courses, an academic major in the subject they plan to teach, and a professional education component of courses designed to prepare them for the teaching profession. Professional education candidates seeking to teach at the high school level complete degree programs in the college that offers the academic major (Arts and Sciences, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Health Sciences, or Marine and Earth Studies). The Elementary Teacher Education and Early Childhood Development and Education programs are offered in the College of Human Services, Education and Public Policy. These majors complete a comprehensive program of study in the core academic areas of the elementary school curriculum: language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and the fine arts.

**Graduated Component of Field-based Experiences** Learning through supervised, practical, real-world experiences is a hallmark of UD's professional education programs. As early as their freshman year, our professional education candidates begin a sequential program of experiences characterized by increasing involvement with, and responsibility for, children and youth in classroom settings. An on-line reporting system monitors UD candidates' completion of field-based experiences in a variety of classrooms with different age levels and with diverse populations. These experiences culminate in a 14- to 18-week full-time student teaching experience -- or 360 to 480 hours. University-based faculty and school-based teachers and

administrators share the responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of the candidates. The candidate/faculty ratio during student teaching is 6.2 to 1.

**Integration of Technology and Education** UD has been recognized nationally as a leader in the use of technology on campus, winning the CAUSE Award for Excellence in Campus Networking and earning a top spot on Yahoo Internet Life's list of "America's 100 Most Wired Colleges." Students at the University expect to use technology routinely in their classes, going on-line for research and web-based homework assignments. UD's professional education programs, in particular, take advantage of the technological resources on campus and emphasize the development and use of technology to better educate children and youth in the classroom and to learn about specialized tools in adaptive technology for persons with disabilities.

**Emphasis on Diversity** Preparing candidates to work with diverse populations and to serve the needs of all learners is an important element of our professional education programs. Diversity -- whether related to gender, ethnicity, disability, economic status, developmental level, learning style, or any other characteristics -- is treated as a potential source of enrichment. Throughout the curricula and field experiences, our candidates acquire the knowledge and skills to help all students learn.

This commitment to diversity extends to active recruitment and retention programs for students and faculty on campus. A university-initiated program, ASPIRE, promotes the recruitment and retention of a diverse corps of undergraduate students preparing to become teachers.

### **Unique Clinical Opportunities**

UD professional education candidates can take advantage of four unique clinical sites as part of their graduated field experiences. UD has also developed an innovative vertical model for teacher candidates' field experience that will further enhance the clinical component of their preparation and further strengthen the ties between the University and our cooperating schools and districts.

The new **Early Learning Center (ELC)** is a unique university-based child-care facility with 22 classrooms--five for infants, six for toddlers, six for preschoolers, one kindergarten classroom and four for school-age children. The goals of the center are to provide the best services possible to children and their families through year-round, full-day early care and education, as well as family services and support programs, and to conduct research in prevention, intervention and education in early childhood development. The center's mission is to offer year-round, full-day early care and education for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years, in spaces specifically designed for children, including a full-day kindergarten program, before and after school care and summer camp for children 5 to 12. Many professional education faculty and candidates from various disciplines (music, early childhood education, health and physical education, foreign languages, elementary education, and psychology) participate in research and on-site field experiences with the Center.

**UD Laboratory Pre-School** A fixture on campus since 1934, the UD Laboratory Pre-School is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. It offers programs for children in four age groups, from 2 through 5, including kindergarten.

Teacher training is, of course, a key component of the preschool. Early childhood development and education majors see firsthand how young children learn and develop and discover how high-quality programs and teachers can help them grow. It also serves as a resource for faculty research and for teachers and other educators in the community, who frequently visit to observe its operations or to attend professional development programs offered by the staff.

**The College School** The College School, located on main campus since 1988, offers children with learning differences unique opportunities to surmount academic, social or other problems they have experienced in their previous schools. With the high level of individual attention, made possible in large part by the involvement of UD professional education students, most College School pupils thrive. After an average of two or three years, the children normally move into a more mainstream educational environment.

The school benefits University students, too, with many of them involved each semester in some aspect of the program. Most are enrolled in education courses, which require practical experience in the classroom, and they spend time each week assisting College School teachers by working with individuals or small groups, teaching a lesson or tutoring. The College School is a valuable research site for faculty and students as well.

**Milford Professional Development School** This partnership between the University and the Milford School District in southern Delaware provides a unique opportunity for candidates in the last two years of UD's Elementary Teacher Education major. Students are assigned to an elementary or middle school in the district for their field experiences, and UD professional education faculty teach courses on-site in Milford. Students are thus a part of every aspect of school life and have an unparalleled opportunity to connect theory and practice in an actual school setting. This extended clinical experience gives them the knowledge and experience to be confident professionals as they begin their first year of teaching.

**The Vertical Field Experience Model** In an effort to enhance students' field experiences and to build better partnerships with schools, CHEP's School of Education has developed an innovative vertical model for field experience. Elementary Teacher Education majors are grouped in cohorts (10 students from each year -- freshman, sophomore, junior and senior) that are mentored and supervised by the same student teaching coordinator for all field experiences. Furthermore, each cohort is assigned to a cluster of four or five schools in two school districts for all field experiences. Student teaching coordinators, who are all UD faculty members, work closely with the teachers in those schools to insure the best possible field experiences for the teacher candidates and the best possible learning experiences of their pupils.

## **Career Success of Graduates**

UD graduates are actively recruited. More than 145 school districts and organizations from across the country visit our campus annually to recruit our graduates. School district personnel comment on the high caliber of our graduates and of their preparation program. In addition, in response to surveys conducted over the last four years, our graduates indicate a high level of satisfaction with the preparation they received.

UD professional education graduates go on to successful careers. For example, many of the Delaware Teachers of the Year have earned a UD professional education degree or are currently enrolled in one of UD's graduate professional education programs. In addition, many of the National Board Certified Teachers in Delaware have completed professional preparation programs at UD.

### **Licensure Requirements**

The University of Delaware prepares candidates for teacher certification in a variety of states and thus no one state's mandated content knowledge tests are required for graduation. The University of Delaware pass rate on the Praxis I tests required by the State of Delaware for 2005-2006 was 100%. The aggregate pass rate on the Praxis II Academic Content Areas (Math, English, Biology, etc.) was 97%; the aggregate pass rate for teaching special populations was 96%. The summary total pass rate for the University of Delaware was 98%.