

Course number and Title:

MIT 530

Evaluation and Change in Instructional Development
Needs Assessment Plan

Project Topic:

Watson School of Education
Study of Diversity Statements within the Curriculum

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February 15, 2007

Problem Statement

Kathleen Benzaquin is the current co-chair of the Diversity Committee, within the Watson School of Education (WSE) at the University North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW). Mrs. Benzaquin on behalf of the Diversity Committee has expressed concern regarding the level of diversity portrayed within the curriculum of the Watson School of Education.

Currently, the percentage of WSE available syllabi that make reference to diversity curriculum is less than 100%. Therefore the Diversity Committee would like to know the level of diversity currently taught within the classroom environment. The combination of the syllabi references as well as an undefined number of professors who are incorporating diversity in their classroom prompted the Diversity Committee to question current practices.

The Diversity Committee, along with the WSE administration, desire 100% compliance regarding diversity in the syllabi and the curriculum.

Context Analysis

The Watson School of Education (WSE) is a subsection of the University of North Carolina Wilmington, a state college on the southeastern coast of North Carolina. The University will serve approximately eleven thousand eight hundred and forty eight students this year. Of those students, eight hundred and sixty two are education majors. The minority enrollment of the Watson School of Education is 13.1% with 7.1% of those being African American students, 2.2% Hispanic students, 1% Asian students and 2.8% classified as Native American or other.

The WSE is divided into four departments which include 1) Early Childhood, 2) Educational Leadership, 3) Elementary, Middle Level and Literacy, and 4) Instructional Technology, Foundations and Secondary. A singular committee made up of fifteen members from these four departments and administration has been established to provide guidelines and to assist professors in creating a curriculum which addresses diversity in a meaningful and applicable way to the students.

There are two main objectives for the WSE this year and these are to fulfill the mission statement of the WSE (Appendix A) and to reach the broad goal below in the area of diversity.

Goal statement for the 2006-2007 School Year

“The Watson School’s primary area of focus this year was the refinement of diversity initiatives in the areas of curriculum....” Watson School of Education Annual Diversity Report 2005-2006

Structure of the Organization

The Watson School of Education is led by Dr. Dean Barlow. Within the School of Education, there are four departments and each department has a department chair. The stakeholders of this initiative include the Dean of UNCW, the Dean of the Watson School of Education, the members of the diversity committee, the faculty of the WSE and the minority recruiter. Other staff that could be affected by and may have input into any changes in diversity curriculum could include lab supervisors, the director of the Science and Mathematics Education center, the Teaching Fellows staff and the web developer. The Watson School of Education must meet NCATE and University criteria for diversity curriculums.

Management and Leadership

Our contact for the diversity project is Kathleen Benzaquin. Mrs. Benzaquin will report directly to the Diversity Committee and Dr. Carol Chase-Thomas, a Department Chair within the Watson School of Education, who will then report to the Dean of WSE. The members of the diversity committee for the WSE are:

Dr. Anderson, Dean Barlow Ms. Benzaquin, Ms. Brown, Ms. Chandler, Dr. Fox, Dr. Fischetti, Ms. Joyner, Dr. McNulty, Dr. Nottingham, Dr. Pappamihiel, Dr. Schlichting, Ms. Sherrill, Dr. Smith, Dr. Thomas

Resources

According to a recent UNCW Climate Survey regarding diversity issues, over 90% of the faculty feel diversity is helpful in the areas promoting learning outcomes to teach tolerance and to make classroom learning more interesting. Over 90% also feel that learning about diversity increase students' success in their chosen careers after graduating college.

The Diversity Committee of the WSE is committed to assuring that all students are prepared to meet the challenges of teaching diverse populations and have the full support of the Chancellor in this endeavor.

There is a budget for use by the diversity committee but the amount toward this project is unspecified currently.

There are set standards that mandate cooperation among the faculty. These include NCATE Standards, UNCW Diversity Standards and WSE Standards.

Constraints

According to a recent Climate Control Study, there appears to be a difference in how professors view diversity issues within the curriculum and how well students feel that the professors are preparing them to deal with diverse populations.

Professors have a very busy schedule and time research diversity related to their specific curriculum may not always be available.

Equipment and trainer availability for diversity issues are unknown.

Communication between the Diversity Committee and the faculty is not always clear.

From examining the available syllabi, it appears that professors have very differing views on what it means to “incorporate” diversity into the classroom. Some believe this simply means to put in an equal treatment policies; others believe that having speakers of other races, genders, religions, etc, is sufficient.

Performance expectations are not easily define and the student feeling about how well diversity is being taught is often determined by their own racial, gender, and religious experiences. The UNCW climate control study related a number of facts that were relative to the context of the gap we are trying to fulfill. The report showed a significant difference in how students from ethnic groups perceived their education at UNCW. These key issues were addressed. (Appendix B)

1. Minority students reported that they were far less satisfied with the number of courses dealing with diversity. Only 39.13% of African American students felt that their courses addressed the minority perspective and were far less likely to feel that non dominant cultures were emphasized in the curriculum.
2. A far higher percentage of Caucasian students felt the curriculum was balanced, although only 66.11% felt that way. Asian and Hispanic students fell in the middle of these two cultures in their viewpoints on these issues.
3. There is a divide between the opinions of Hispanic and African American students, and their Asian and Caucasian counterparts in their trust for the administration of UNCW.
4. All ethnic groups reported valuing the need to increase understanding of a multicultural society, while freshman seemed to value this need more than graduating seniors.
5. Less than 50% of all ethnic groups reported feeling that they had learned a great deal about the other ethnic groups.
6. The percentage of African American students who felt that UNCW needed to do more to bring outside speakers and course information from diverse group into the curriculum was at

least 10% more in each diversity area than their Hispanic, Asian and Caucasian counterparts. The diversity areas they included were more women authors, more gay authors, more disability speakers, and more ethnic variety in both areas. 90.44% of these African American students felt that more prestigious guest speakers of ethnicity should be brought to UNCW as guest scholars.

It also showed that while a very large percentage of professors valued diversity, approximately 19% felt it increased conflict in the classroom. Only 64.4% however said that they have included activities to promote diversity sensitivity in their classes.

84% of professors reported that their departments emphasize the importance of diversity but there is a large gap between how the minority professors view this as versus the Caucasian professors.

These statistics are for the whole of UNCW and it is the recommendation of this team that further research needs to be done to assess the Watson School of Education and its individual standing on these issues.

In order to achieve the goal of the diversity committee, a needs analysis must be conducted to see if and how diversity is being taught. There have been comments made by students graduating that they did not feel well prepared to handle the issues that come up while teaching diverse populations. Upon review of the syllabi, it appears that a large percentage of professors are dealing with the diversity issue therefore we must examine the difference in perception of what is valuable and applicable diversity education with the curriculum area.

Purpose of Needs Assessment

The purpose of the needs assessment is to determine the level of diversity as presented through the curriculum and the classroom setting in the Watson School of Education. Currently, the level of diversity mentioned within syllabi and the classroom is not known, leading the Diversity Committee's need to explore what is actually happening in the educational courses.

The needs assessment will use extant data, surveys, observations, interviews and small group sessions in order to fulfill the five purposes described in Allison Rossett's Purposed-Based Training Needs Assessment (TNA) model. The five purposes of the model are optimal, actual, feelings, causes and solutions.

Description of Model

The model to be used as a guide for completing the project is Allison Rossett's Purposed-Based TNA model. The model is based on five purposes; optimal, actual, causes, feelings, and solutions. "It is not only a quest for discovering the what is and what should be, but it is also a systematic effort to find out causes, feelings, and solutions." (Rossett 1987, p. 22) The

causes, feelings, and solutions are found through extant data analysis, subject matter analysis, and needs assessment. Emphasized tools in the model include interviews, surveys, observations, and small group sessions.

Steps to conduct Purposed-Based Training Needs Assessment:

1. Assess Context
2. Determine purposes
3. Choose tools and techniques
4. Create TNA plan
5. Create stage planners
6. Implement the plan
7. Communicate the results

TNA Stage Planner

The purpose of the needs assessment is to determine the level of diversity presented within the curriculum at the WSE. The assessment has been divided into 3 stages (see Appendix B), stages 1 and 2 with multiple levels, and will explore the five purposes; optimal, actual, feelings, causes and solutions. Stage three addresses subject matter analysis. A TNA stage planner (see Appendix C) has been developed in order to successfully obtain the desired information.

Stage one involves the review of the NCATE, UNCW and WSE diversity standards in order to obtain optimal.

Stage two investigates feeling and actual through the use of interviews, surveys and small groups. The target audience will include Kathleen Benzaquin, WSE professors, instructors and staff.

The final stage of the needs assessment will include interviews of WSE professors who are considered optimal performers, i.e., diversity is addressed consistently in their syllabi and classroom.

Data Collection

In order to collect the necessary information to study the volume of diversity statements infused within the WSE curriculum syllabi, the following techniques will be implemented: Extant Data Analysis; Needs Assessment; and Subject Matter Analysis.

The tools used to analyze the techniques for comparison of data are as follows: Interviews; Observations; One on one meeting; Small Group meetings; Printed surveys.

According to Rossett, the purpose for extensive data collection and analysis of the collection is to determine the true optimal, actuals, feelings, and causes, before providing recommendations to solve the problem.

The steps for collecting data are as follows:

Step one:

The collection of extant data:

Finding documentation of published facts concerning diversity and related diversity percentages. Finding documents regarding educating the public as to policies and procedures; standards and goals; and the mission statement. Finding extant data to reveal who wants the diversity problem solved and who is willing to cooperate to help achieve the diversity goals.

Extant data will disclose repetitive information helping to determine performance problems, or the cause of a performance problem.

Step two:

Determine the purposes of why the Diversity committee has chosen to explore the absence of curriculum syllabi diversity statements.

Step three:

Implement the selection of TNA techniques and tools to reflect a study of diversity action from individual professors.

Step four:

Development of the Needs Assessment:

TNA decisions are made to select pertinent tools depicting a triangulation of for a more accurate picture of the diversity problem.

The Needs Assessment will determine a definite gap between an optimal performance and an actual performance.

Step five:

Determine how each TNA collection approach will be implemented and the time-line to obtain the necessary information.

Step Six:

Report of the analyses; the development of recommendations; the communication of information to those who have participated in the surveys and those responsible for implementation of the recommendations.

Time Management

The WSE curriculum project began January 25, 2007 and is to be concluded March 20, 2007. (Appendix E) presents a day by day projected TNA structure. The timeline will demonstrate the necessary sequence of ordinal events. The Gantt chart provides information as to individual project resources and the duration of critical time allocated to each task. The accompanying Network diagram has been provided to detail each TNA task by group.

Appendix A

Mission statement:

The primary mission of the Donald R. Watson School of Education at the University of NC Wilmington is to develop highly competent professionals to serve in teaching and other educational leadership roles in southeastern NC, the state, and nation. The Watson School is committed to achieving excellence in teacher and administrator preparation in all of its programs. To realize the mission of the Watson School, thorough grounding in theoretical and empirical bodies of knowledge is provided, the educator's capacity to utilize knowledge to improve schools and enhance learning by children and youth is developed, and commitment to personal, professional and institutional development is fostered.

The Watson School of Education fulfills its obligation to serve the field of public education through support of individual faculty, public school leaders, educational systems, and state and national organizations engaged in efforts to develop policy, implement improved practice, and set new directions at local, state, and national levels. This obligation is addressed through commitment to general research, evaluation, policy analysis and development, collaboration to provide relevant public school experiences and programs, and other forms of technical and professional assistance.

The faculty of the Watson School of Education strives to demonstrate: excellence in teaching; engagement in the generation and dissemination of knowledge; infusion of technology as an instructional tool; development of new roles and relationships in the institution of education; and inquiry, continuous learning, creativity, and the valuing of diversity. As part of the commitment to excellence, the Watson School of Education engages in continuous assessment of individual, program, and institutional outcomes.

Appendix B

<http://www.uncwil.edu/aa/documents/SURVYERESULTSREADYFORFINAL91306.pdf>

Appendix C

Stage	Technique	Tools & Sources
1	Extant Data	a) Review NCATE report to determine standards
		b) Review WSE Diversity standards
		c) Review WSE syllabi to determine diverse commitment in the course curriculum
		d) Review UNCW Diversity Statement for Mission and Goals to determine standards
		e) Analyze material collected
2	Needs Assessment	f) One on one interview – Kathleen Benzaquin to determine level of commitment and to determine feelings and knowledge of professors regarding the infusion of diversity within the curriculum
		g) Small group - Diversity Committee professors to determine level of commitment and to determine feelings and knowledge of professors regarding the infusion of diversity within the curriculum
		h) Paper survey – all WSE professors/instructors/staff to determine level of diversity infusion within the curriculum
		i) Paper survey – randomly select undergraduate students within the WSE to determine their perception of the transference of knowledge regarding diversity as presented within the classroom setting
		a) Observation of Classes - to assess level of diversity presentations
3	Subject Matter Analysis	j) Interview – professors who are presently infusing diversity into their syllabi and curriculum

Appendix D

Stage: 1a

1. **Subject of TNA:** Review NCATE reports to determine diversity standards
2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
NCATE Standard 4: The unit designs, implements and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn... Goal 1: To assist faculty in expanding their

knowledge and use of curricular approaches to successfully meet the needs of all P-12 learners.

3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Optimal performance
4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
NCATE Diversity Reports
5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Extant Data
6. **If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?**
N/A

Stage: 1b

1. **Subject of TNA:** Review WSE Diversity Standards
2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
WSE Diversity Standards: NCATE Standard 4: The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates, and diverse students in P-12 schools.
3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Optimal performance
4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
WSE Annual Diversity Report
5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Extant Data
6. **If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?**
N/A

Stage: 1c

1. **Subject of TNA:**
Review WSE syllabi to determine diverse commitment in the course curriculum
2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
Little information is known; syllabi need to be analyzed for diversity related content
3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Current performance
4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
Departments, professors, courses, contact information, syllabi
5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Extant Data
6. **If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?**
N/A

Stage: 1d

1. **Subject of TNA:**
Review UNCW Diversity Statement for Mission and Goals to determine standards
2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
Some information available; need to confirm information with Diversity Committee
3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Optimal performance
4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
 - UNCW Board to Trustees
 - UNCW Strategic Plan for 2005-2010 as presented in the Strategic Vision
5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Extant data
6. **If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?**
N/A

Stage: 1e

1. **Subject of TNA:** Analyze material collected
2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
Little known at this point
3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Current and optimal performance
4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
Data collected in stages 1a – 1d
5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Extant data
6. **If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?**
 - What are the NCATE expectations for teachers regarding the implementation of diversity within the curriculum?
 - What are the WSE expectations for teachers regarding the implementation of diversity within the curriculum?
 - Has a mandate with implementation guidelines been presented to faculty?
 - What are various ways that diversity can be successfully addressed within the curriculum?
 - Is diversity addressed within the syllabi?
 - What percentage of professors has addressed diversity within their syllabi?
 - How does the WSE plan to meet the diversity goals as listed in the UNCW Strategic Plan and Mission Statement?
 - What are the steps to achieve this?

Stage: 2a

1. **Subject of TNA:**
One on one interview – Kathleen Benzaquin to determine level of commitment and to determine feelings and knowledge of professors regarding the infusion of diversity within the curriculum

2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
Little known at this point
3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Current and optimal performance
4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
Kathleen Benzaquin as a spokeswoman for the Diversity Committee
5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Interview
6. **If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?**
 - **May the group members attend a Diversity Committee meeting?**
 - **Has the Diversity Committee found any constraints in getting the current diversity plan implemented?**
 - **Are records of complaints involving diversity issues reviewed by the committee?**
 - **If so, what types of complaints have you received?**
 - **How often the issue of diversity is reviewed with the WSE professors/staff?**
 - **Is there currently a diversity mandate? If so, may we have a copy?**
 - **Where can we find the most updated standards?**

Stage: 2b

1. **Subject of TNA:**
Small group - Diversity Committee professors to determine level of commitment and to determine feelings and knowledge of professors regarding the infusion of diversity within the curriculum
2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
Little known at this point
3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Current and optimal performance
4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
Diversity Committee Members
5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Interview

6. If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?

- How would you rank syllabi statements on diversity in WSE's effort to achieve the goals and mission statements as listed in the Strategic Plan?
- What is your commitment to diversity within WSE
- What is your commitment level to this MIT project?
- What is your perception of the profession/instructors and staff commitment to the diversity issue?
- What would your ideal classroom include in the way of diversity curriculum?
- How is the diversity curriculum requirements passed on to professors?
- What assistance is currently available to professors who feel uncomfortable about dealing with diversity issues in the classroom?
- Are there any areas of diversity that you feel should be included in the curriculum that are currently not mandated?

Stage: 2c

1. Subject of TNA:

Paper survey – all WSE professors/instructors/staff to determine level of diversity infusion within the curriculum

2. Summary of what you already know about the subject:

Little known at this point

3. Summary of information being sought during this stage:

Current performance

4. Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?

Professors/instructors/staff

5. What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?

Survey

6. If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?

- Have you altered the ways you present diversity within your syllabi or classroom as a result of information from the Diversity Committee?
- How do you address diversity within your classroom?

- How comfortable are you with implementing diverse resources within your curriculum?
- Do you feel you have all the resources you need to create a diverse curriculum?
- Are you willing to allow us to survey your students?
- May we contact you again if further information is needed?

Stage: 2d

1. Subject of TNA:

Paper survey – randomly select undergraduate students within the WSE to determine the transference of knowledge regarding diversity as presented within the classroom setting

2. Summary of what you already know about the subject:

No knowledge is known

3. Summary of information being sought during this stage:

Current performance

4. Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?

Undergraduate WSE students

5. What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?

Survey

6. If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?

Rate these items: Agree strongly Somewhat Agree Disagree

1. I have learned much about diversity in the Watson School of Education
2. Most of my professors in WSE have addressed diversity in class
3. I feel the Watson School of Ed has prepared me well to deal with diverse populations within the educational systems.
4. My professors have shown that my understanding of diversity issues related to teaching is important to them.
5. Understanding the cultural differences of my students is important to being the best teacher I can be.

Short Answer

- Can you give examples as to how diversity has been presented within this classroom setting?

- Which diverse populations do you feel that you have a better understanding of since starting at the WSE?
- Are there any diverse populations that you feel have not been covered in your classes here at WSE?
- May we contact you again if further information is needed? (The students will probably want to be anonymous. We may not get honest answers with this)

Stage: 2e

1. **Subject of TNA:**
Observation of Classes - to assess level of diversity presentations
2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
No knowledge is known
3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Current performance
4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
Undergraduate WSE classes
5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Observation
6. **If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?**
 - How has diversity been presented within this class?
 - Diverse presentations and materials within the classroom.

Stage: 3a

1. **Subject of TNA:**
Interview – professors who are presently infusing diversity into their syllabi and curriculum
2. **Summary of what you already know about the subject:**
 - Diversity committee has expressed a desire to have written confirmation statements regarding diversity within the syllabi
 - Desire 100% performance

- Some known, need more information
3. **Summary of information being sought during this stage:**
Optimal performance
 4. **Who or what are the sources of information for this stage?**
Professors
 5. **What TNA tool(s) will be used to carry out this stage?**
Interview
 6. **If you will be interviewing or surveying, what questions will you ask? If you will be observing, what will you be watching? If you will be using a group meeting, what is your agenda?**
 - How did you decide what issues to address about diversity within your syllabi/classroom?
 - How did you find your diversity resources?
 - What do you feel will be the social impact of what your students have learned about diversity once they go into the teaching field?
 - How much did the Diversity Committee influence your diversity inclusion?

Appendix E

