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Trends in professional education programs for teachers

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ABSTRACT:
Increasingly, politicians, bureaucrats, the business community, members of our communities and even members of the teaching profession, are asking questions about professional preparation for teachers, questions like: What is the value of teacher education? What should beginning teachers know and be able to do? How can we make judgements about what they know and are able to do? How can teacher preparation contribute to the retention of high quality beginning teachers who continue to grow and learn?

In this paper, I examine these issues and examine how effective teacher preparation has attempted to respond to these issues, particularly in graduate teacher education programs. I argue that we need to be cognisant of the following aspects when developing and implementing high quality professional education of teachers:

- Connect teacher education to the first year of teaching;
- Prepare teachers who investigate their professional practice within communities of learners;
- Prepare teachers with a strong professional knowledge base that helps them make informed professional judgments;
- A cohort model that builds strong relationships and professional networks;
- Early, regular and sustained school experiences that systematically build professional knowledge and skill. Closely monitored by suitably qualified university personnel and supervising teachers;
- Professional standards for beginning teaching and a capstone teacher performance assessment.
Introduction
Among Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperative (APEC) countries, teacher preparation programs usually fall into three categories:

1. Certificate or diploma programs housed in normal colleges, normal schools, and colleges of education established solely for the purpose of training teachers. These programs are usually for elementary teachers and emphasize pedagogical preparation more than subject area preparation. In most cases these are 2- to 4-year programs.

2. Bachelor's degree programs housed in universities. These programs often include more subject matter preparation and relatively less pedagogical preparation. These are generally 3- or 4-year programs, with the teacher preparation portion lasting one to two years.

3. Master's degree and/or 5th-year programs. These programs are offered to prospective teachers who have completed a bachelor's degree and lead to a master's degree or postgraduate diploma in education. The duration of these programs ranges from one to two years.  

(Cobb 1999)

However, these different types of teacher preparation programs often prepare teachers in very similar ways. The programs often have the same design features and they seem to consider the preservice teachers in each of the programs as identical, ignoring their different prior knowledge and experiences.

Though there exist some variations in the curriculum content of teacher education programs, most offer some combination of coursework in subject matter, teaching methods and materials, child growth and development, and other education courses such as educational psychology, history and philosophy of education, and practical teaching experience. The extent of education coursework varies by grade level to be taught, with more for primary teachers. (Cobb 1999, p.3)

While I acknowledge that we know from the research that there are some design features that are desirable for all teacher education programs, I also argue that various cohorts who are attracted to teaching for different reasons with differing aspirations and background experiences, we must think carefully how to differentiate teacher education programs.

Teacher education is now very much in the political spotlight: teacher education is now being framed as a ‘policy problem’. As Marilyn Cochran-Smith reminds us, in the US, teacher education was first positioned as a ‘training problem’, then as a ‘learning problem’, and more recently as a ‘policy problem’ (Cochran-Smith and Fries 2005). A similar framing is evident in Canada, the UK and Australia. Peter Grimmett (2009) analyses this positioning of teacher education in relation to its governance structures in three phases:

Phase 1 (1960-80): teacher education as training under government control
Phase 2 (1980-2000): teacher education as learning to teach under institutional governance
Phase 3 (1990-2010): teacher education as policy in a governance context of professional self-regulation and deregulation
Phase 1 was characterised by government control of teacher education which ensured that prospective teachers were prepared to display the behaviours of effective teachers. Those behaviours were the ones that effective teachers exhibited when students achieved high level learning outcomes according to various measures. This was the phase of research that came to be known as ‘process-product’ research. Phase 2 focussed on preparing a professional teaching workforce. In this phase, teacher education was informed by research that set out to codify the professional knowledge base of teaching and teacher education. Terms like ‘teacher training’ were replaced by ‘learning to teach’, and ‘reflective practice’ became the teacher education mantra. Teacher education students were engaged in activities that helped them reflect on their pre-existent beliefs and on the effect of their professional practice for all students. In the main, teacher education was self-governed by the institution responsible for the delivery of the teacher preparation program. However:

Things fell apart towards the end of the phase because research and practice became consumed with a focus on teacher’s beliefs, values and their learning as professionals, to the neglect of attention to quality assurance and outcomes. (Grimmett 2009, p.8)

As a result, since the mid-90s, teacher education governance has been characterised by an increasingly intense focus on outcomes, particularly student learning outcomes and whether or not teacher education makes a difference to student learning in classrooms. It is argued that the most appropriate policies and practices for teacher education should be decided according to empirical evidence about their value-addedness in relation to student achievement as measured by standardized tests. The policy debates around teacher education governance have become increasingly polarized, posing on the one hand, the deregulation and marketisation of university-based professional training (often in tandem with calls for increased centralized control of curriculum and pedagogy), against a defence of professionalism grounded in the academy. Those promoting deregulation (for example Finn and Kanstoroom 2000, The Abell Foundation, 2001 #1169) argue there is no valid evidence to support the value-addedness of teacher education as it is currently practiced, and argue instead for regulatory standards and performance indicators in lieu of traditional teacher education pathways. Those calling for increased professionalization argue for policies and practices that promote professional self-regulation and semi-autonomy in the face of these Neoliberal models of steering via performance indicators.

**The current policy context of teacher education: The challenges.**

In this contested context, politicians, bureaucrats, the business community, members of our communities and even members of the teaching profession, are increasingly asking pointed questions about the professional preparation of teachers: What is the value of teacher education? What should beginning teachers know and be able to do? How can judgements be made about what beginning teachers know and are able to do? This section examines each of these questions in turn and discusses the emerging debates related to each question.

1. **What is the value of teacher education? The deregulation and professionalization debates.**
A recent wave of conservative criticism of teacher education in the US, driven by powerful right wing public interest groups like the Abell Foundation and the Fordham Foundation, has prompted calls for deregulation of entry into the profession. Moreover, NCLB legislation has fuelled doubts about the value of teacher education offered by schools and colleges of education by suggesting that subject matter knowledge and verbal ability are the fundamental determinants of high quality teaching. This argument suggests that subject matter knowledge is best acquired outside schools and colleges of education and that other knowledge and skills for teaching are best learnt ‘on the job’ (US Department of Education 2003; US Department of Education 2004). Moreover, the government has repeatedly positioned traditional routes to teacher certification via teacher education programs in schools and colleges of education as ‘barriers to becoming a teacher among otherwise highly qualified individuals'(US Department of Education 2004, p.2). To support this view, the government generously funded the American Board for the Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE), an option for prospective teachers to bypass traditional teacher education on route to certification. Those with an undergraduate degree can pay to take an online examination to be an ABCTE ‘certified’ teacher. In addition, there has been strong support for Teach for America, a pathway into teaching after an intensive 6-8 week summer teacher preparation program. Likewise, Teach First in the UK provides a pathway into teaching after a short summer intensive teacher preparation program for high achieving non-education graduates. Recently, Teach for Australia has been established with a similar brief.

Many within the academy and the teaching profession are alarmed at what they see as this deskilling and deprofessionalization of teachers and their work. They argue that licensed teachers are more effective than unlicensed teachers in terms of student achievement (for example Darling-Hammond 2000; Wilson, Floden et al. 2001). They argue for a focus on the professionalization of teaching and posit that the basis for reform should be policy investment in the quality of teachers through teacher education, licensing and hiring arrangements, and professional development, not by doing away with teacher education. They argue for “professional accountability” where a self-regulated teaching profession would take collective responsibility for ensuring that all those permitted to teach are well prepared, have and use all available knowledge to inform professional practice and maintain a primary commitment to clients (i.e., students and the public). Such a professional accountability model represents a “policy bargain” the profession makes with society, whereby greater (self) regulation of teachers is guaranteed in exchange for deregulation of teaching (Darling-Hammond 1989; Mayer 2005).

2. What should beginning teachers know and be able to do? The professional standards debate.

Professional accountability and a self-regulated profession demands explication of what it is teachers know and can do, beyond knowing the content of the area they will teach and being articulate. But, teaching is complex and therefore recognizing and naming quality teaching is complex. Challenging curriculum expectations and more diverse learners mean that teachers have to be more sophisticated in their understanding of the effects of context and learner variability on teaching and learning. Instead of implementing set routines, teachers need to become ever more skilful in their ability to evaluate teaching situations and develop teaching responses
that can be effective under different circumstances: teaching is intellectual work requiring professional judgment. Given this complexity, there are many risks associated with trying to name and judge good teaching. It is important that we are not seduced into naming and assessing what is easiest to name, observe and assess – usually the technical aspects of teaching.

Despite these challenges, sets of professional standards for teaching have been developed to describe effective professional practice at various junctures in a teaching career (for example, beginning or new teacher, fully qualified teacher, accomplished teacher, and teacher leader). These standards seek to capture the nuances associated with teaching in different subject areas and grade levels as well as in different school systems and contexts. In the main, there has been rampant growth in the development and implementation of professional standards for teaching, and these are often unrelated to each other and used in differing and unrelated ways.

For example, in the US, professional standards and assessments are structured for reciprocity in the certification of new teachers across states (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium), as well as for the recognition of accomplished teachers (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards) and for reviewing and accrediting teacher education programs (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council). However, the states have consistently sought to control licensure entry into teaching against their own state developed professional standards. So, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing has sets of standards for teaching in California, as do licensing authorities in other states.

In Australia, a professional standards quagmire is also developing. State education systems have created teaching standards against which they make employment and career stage decisions, while the federal government has created a national standards framework through the Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs and Teaching Australia has develop standards for school leadership and advanced teaching. Various subject associations have created subject specific standards for accomplished practice, and in addition, each state’s teacher registration authority has developed its version of professional standards for graduates from teacher education programs and for more competent professional practice linked to ongoing registration. Recently, there have been moves to national accreditation/national standards for teacher education graduates and beginning teachers.

So, while statements of professional standards create a shared and public “language of practice” that describe how the specialised knowledge of teaching is used in practice and also becomes a vehicle for assessing and judging professional activity (Yinger and Hendricks-Lee 2000), we don’t seem to have got it together in the way one would expect of a mature profession. As a self-regulated profession, our first step is to articulate effective professional knowledge and practice at various junctures along the professional learning continuum and related career transition points. Many constituencies of the profession have moved to do this and to control and regulate their slice of the profession. As a result, ‘the profession’ looks uncoordinated and fragmented. To recall Linda Darling Hammond’s arguments:

For occupations that require discretion, knowledge, and judgment in meeting the unique needs of clients, the profession guarantees the competence of
members in exchange for the privilege of professional control over work structure and standards of practice. (Darling-Hammond 1989, p.67)

And also, that:

[A] profession assumes collective responsibility for the definition, transmittal, and enforcement of professional standards of practice and ethics. (Darling-Hammond 1989, p.67)

3. How can judgements be made about what beginning teachers know and are able to do? The teacher testing and performance assessment debates.

‘Guaranteeing the competence’ of the members of the teaching profession involves ‘the profession’ not only defining professional standards of practice, but also using them to regulate entry into the profession and ongoing licensure. In many countries, entry to the profession is regulated by state or district bureaucratic agencies, who use input models to make decisions teacher licensure. Judgments are made about the quality of a teacher education program usually by paper review involving a panel of stakeholders deciding on the likelihood that the program will prepare a competent beginning teacher. Employers and teacher registration authorities then use proxies to make a judgment about a graduating teacher’s level of professional knowledge and practice, about their readiness to teach. Proxies like grades in university subjects, completion of an accredited teacher education program, or teaching practicum evaluations and observations, are used. Only recently have some in the profession begun to think about a more outcome focussed model and ways of judging the actual professional practice of those who are beginning teaching.

In the US, there has been a steady increase in the use of various forms of teacher assessment for teacher licensing decisions over the past decade, usually in the form of written tests. In 2004, all 50 US states and the District of Columbia reported having a written test policy for teacher licensure (both initial and ongoing) (Council of Chief State School Officers 2005). While there was public outrage in some states about teacher failure in these tests (for example Cochran-Smith and Dudley-Marling 2001) and despite the fact that research on teacher testing has called into question their predictive validity and their capacity to actually measure a teacher’s ability to teach (Wilson and Youngs 2005), teacher testing continues. However, in response to the identified shortcomings of teacher tests and in an attempt to acknowledge the contextualised nature of teaching and learning, many US states are moving to include a teacher performance assessment in initial licensing decisions. These newer generation of teacher assessments based on observation and interrogation of classroom practice aim to authentically measure a teacher’s ability to use and contribute to the professional knowledge base, to be responsive to the learning needs of every student, and to inquire into and reflect on their professional practice. For example, in 2006, the state of California mandated a capstone teacher performance assessment for an initial teaching credential. In response, a consortium of teacher preparation programs at a number of California universities developed PACT (Performance Assessment for California Teachers):

The PACT assessments or teaching events (TEs) use multiple sources of data (teacher plans, teacher artifacts, student work samples, video clips of teaching, and personal reflections and commentaries) that are organized on four categories of teaching: planning, instruction, assessment, and reflection (PIAR). (Pecheone and Chung 2006, p.23)
As promising as these new assessments are however, Youngs, Odden and Porter (2003) found that only nine US states employed some form of performance assessment when making initial licensing decisions. The authors suggest that so few states are using teacher performance assessments in licensing decisions because of the high costs associated with implementing them and questions about their reliability and fairness.

4. How can teacher preparation contribute to the retention of high quality beginning teachers who continue to grow and learn?

In many countries, keeping good new teachers in the profession is a challenge. In the US, for example, attrition rates for new teachers run at about 30 percent at the end of the third year of teaching and 40-50 percent by the end of the fifth year (Ingersoll and Smith 2003). The turnover rate for teachers is very high compared to other professions (Ingersoll 2001). Not only does attrition create disruption and discontinuity for all schools, but it is often the schools with arguably the greatest need for quality teachers - those in urban and rural communities - that are most affected (Johnson and The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers 2004). In high poverty schools, teachers are 50% more likely to leave that in low-poverty schools (Ingersoll and Smith 2003).

Learning to teach occurs in multiple stages of a teachers’ career (Feiman-Nemser 1983; Feiman-Nemser 2001), and learning to teach is lifelong. In most other professions there is a structured transition into the profession that supports the new professionals and establishes conditions for ongoing professional learning. New teachers are left to ‘sink or swim’, and professional development becomes training in implementing the next policy initiative.

Features of effective teacher education programs

So, what do effective teacher education programs look like? Linda Darling-Hammond’s (2006) study of seven exemplary teacher education programs—public and private, undergraduate and graduate, large and small—that produce graduates who are extraordinarily well prepared from their first days in the classroom found that despite outward differences, the programs had common features, including:

- a common, clear vision of good teaching that permeates all course work and clinical experiences, creating a coherent set of learning experiences;
- well-defined standards of professional practice and performance that are used to guide and evaluate course work and clinical work;
- a strong core curriculum taught in the context of practice and grounded in knowledge of child and adolescent development and learning, an understanding of social and cultural contexts, curriculum, assessment, and subject matter pedagogy;
- extended clinical experiences—at least 30 weeks of supervised practicum and student teaching opportunities in each program—that are carefully chosen to support the ideas presented in simultaneous, closely interwoven course work;
- extensive use of case methods, teacher research, performance assessments, and portfolio evaluation that apply learning to real problems of practice;
explicit strategies to help students to confront their own deep-seated beliefs and assumptions about learning and students and to learn about the experiences of people different from themselves;

strong relationships, common knowledge, and shared beliefs among school- and university-based faculty jointly engaged in transforming teaching, schooling, and teacher education. (Darling-Hammond 2006)

[T]hree critical components of such programs include tight coherence and integration among courses and between course work and clinical work in schools, extensive and intensely supervised clinical work integrated with course work using pedagogies that link theory and practice, and closer, proactive relationships with schools that serve diverse learners effectively and develop and model good teaching. (Darling-Hammond 2006, p.300)

This study included one of the University of California Berkeley’s teacher education program, Developmental Teacher Education (DTE), a 2-year Master’s and credential program that prepares elementary school teachers. This is one of three teacher preparation programs that UC Berkeley offers, each one being a 2-year Master’s and credential program, even though the specific structure of each program is slightly different. In addition to DTE, UC Berkeley offers a Master’s and Credential in Science and Mathematics Education (MACSME) and Multicultural Urban Secondary English, in Language and Literacy, Society and Culture (MUSE).

These three programs are unusual, in that most credential programs in California are only one year in length; at most universities students with a Bachelors degree enrol in a one-year-long course in which they earn a teaching credential. The vast majority of potential teachers in California take this route to the credential. In contrast, UC Berkeley offers a two-year masters-plus-credential program in which students experience more diverse school placements, take more demanding course work, and complete a Master’s degree. Because it takes twice as long to finish the degree (and potential teachers are not generally among the wealthy!) and because of the rigor of the programs and pre-application screening, comparatively few students apply for the programs – thus they pre-sort themselves prior to applying and hence the high acceptance rate.

Table 1 provides data for UC Berkeley’s teacher education admissions over the admission cycles for Fall 2005, 2006, and 2007.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Degree Obj.</th>
<th>Apps</th>
<th>Admits</th>
<th>Admit Rate</th>
<th>Avg. Age</th>
<th>GP A</th>
<th>GRE-V</th>
<th>GRE-Q</th>
<th>GRE-A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DTE</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MACS ME</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSE</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All three programs are highly reputed, and data regarding the careers of graduates back up their reputations. As noted above, typically, 50% of the graduates of teacher preparation programs drop out of teaching within 5 years; 50% of those who work in urban districts drop out in 3 years. The data we have for MACSME indicate that of those who graduated in the past 5 years, 90% are still teaching; retention rates are similarly high for those who graduated earlier, and those graduates are now assuming leadership positions within school districts. In MUSE, the data indicate that about 95-96% are still teaching after one year, and 73-75% are still teaching after five years. In DTE, the data indicate that 80-85% are still in teaching after 3 years. Like MACSME, many of the ‘stayers’ are in leadership positions. In sum, these programs not only produce excellent teachers who stay in the profession; they produce leaders.

In the programs, on campus coursework is closely linked to professional experiences in schools. School experience or practicum starts early in the programs and occurs frequently during the semester, usually every week and sometimes every day. The experiences are developmentally structured in order to build professional knowledge and skills over the duration of the program. The experiences build the preservice teachers’ expertise developmentally, for example starting with structured observations for which they are well prepared, teaching individual students and small groups of students, peer teaching with the classroom teachers, and then finally a complete takeover of the class for a period of time. Preservice teacher are placed in a broad range of schools with carefully screened supervising teachers, ones who hold the same philosophy and teaching and learning to teach as the program; sometimes these supervising teachers are themselves graduates of the same program. University supervisors, who are usually the curriculum methods course instructors and who have recent relevant classroom experience, visit the schools regularly and provide written feedback to the preservice teachers on their practice, and also work with supervising teachers as needed. Weekly on campus ‘supervision groups’ lead by the university supervisor, help the preservice teachers deconstruct their school experiences and understand their professional learning accomplishments and their future needs.

Graduate teacher education: a master’s degree as the teacher preparation program
In the last two decades, many countries have moved much teacher education to the graduate level, adding in-depth curriculum and pedagogical study and an intensive internship or practicum in schools to strong preparation in the discipline content areas (Darling-Hammond 2005). This has been in response to concerns that teachers have less adequate general education knowledge and discipline-specific knowledge than most other professions. Preservice teachers often take a major but with fewer credits and less upper levels than other professions. A ‘license to practice’ in other professions is awarded only on completion of a full general education, a full university or college major, a professional education, a supervised induction, a period of practice, and a performance assessment. Thus, graduate teacher preparation contributes to the professionalisation of teaching.

Given the research and my experience at Berkeley, I believe that graduate teacher education offers distinct advantages when preparing teachers. A Master’s degree in education as the teacher preparation program ensures that all teachers have a broad or liberal general education, exactly the same as any other university graduate. Such
preparation also ensures that teachers have deep study in the subject areas they will teach and that they will know as much as any other graduates who major in that field. A Master’s degree also has the advantage of being able to package pedagogical and professional knowledge to those who have the intellectual tools and maturity to benefit from it. Moreover, graduate teacher education has the potential to improve the image of teacher education by making it look more like the education in other professions (Wise 1986). I move now to examine in detail one of UC Berkeley’s Master’s and credential teacher education program, MUSE.

The case of Multicultural Urban Secondary English (MUSE), UC Berkeley

The Multicultural Urban Secondary English (MUSE) master's and credential (teacher education) program at UC Berkeley aims to prepare well-qualified teachers committed to working in urban contexts and to redressing society’s inequities. It prepares candidates to teach secondary English to both native speakers of English and second-language learners. Graduates earn a recommendation for a California teaching credential and a Master of Arts (MA). Both coursework and school experience emphasise teaching strategies geared to California’s multicultural, multilingual urban classrooms.

Program documentation highlights the program’s commitment to:

- **Preparing the best teachers possible for the students who need them most**
  The MUSE MA program is committed to excellence and equity for all students. University classes are aimed at connecting theory to practice and providing candidates with both the tools and dispositions to understand learners, learning processes and diversity both within ourselves and the students we work with at school sites throughout the Bay Area.

- **Addressing issues of inequity**
  The MUSE MA program takes a pro-active stance regarding issues of equity. Coursework and student teaching have candidates examine and respond to situations that involve prejudice, lack of inclusion, learning differences, single-perspective knowledge and inequitable school structures and school culture. Candidates are encouraged to see their students as resources and to develop the dispositions and skills to learn about students, their families and communities and to build on these resources in teaching and learning.

- **Promoting a vision of teachers as reflective professionals**
  The MUSE MA program prepares candidates to become reflective professionals who practice intellectually rigorous teaching, engage all students in active learning and accept the moral imperative to educate all students. Candidates develop visions of what is possible and desirable in teaching to inspire and guide their teaching and their learning to teach. The program engages candidates in a critical examination of their own entering beliefs about teaching and learning and helps them develop powerful images of good practice and strong professional commitment.

The program is underpinned by a socio-cultural approach to learning to teach foregrounding reflective dialogue and re-examination of personal theories through collaborative inquiry into one’s own and others’ professional practice. It draws on a theoretical and conceptual framework that is research based, responsive, and social justice oriented. It aims to engage teachers and their students in communities of
learning where knowledge is socially constructed and concerns about gender, race, social class and other differences are brought to the fore.

The program, while 2-years, has a different structure from DTE and MACSME. In the two-year MUSE program, students begin their course of study during the summer, then study for 2 more semesters – fall and spring. They are then eligible for a credential in secondary English at the end of the first year (having completed three semesters of study). This first year includes a yearlong methods seminar and preservice teachers are placed in two different secondary schools, one each semester.

During the second year of the program, candidates have already received their credential and most are in their first year of full-time teaching. In this second year, while teaching, students participate in a Master’s seminar focused on the completion of a teacher research thesis. In the seminar they learn how to conduct teacher research, define a question, gather evidence, analyse their data and write a research paper that is the final requirement for the Master of Arts degree. Through this process, students are supported both by their fellow beginning teachers as well as by a faculty advisor who meets with them regularly in a seminar group throughout the year.

Over recent years, we have been able to collect evidence in relation to the value of this graduate professional education program and its component design features. In summary, we have found that this program seems to increase the retention of teachers contributing to high poverty urban schools; supports the new teachers in their first year of teaching and helps them negotiate the dilemmas and challenges of the first year while maintaining their vision and purpose for teaching; prepare teacher leaders; authentically assesses the graduates’ professional practice using a TPA which also contributes to their ongoing professional learning and provides program evaluation information to the teacher educators.

**Increased retention of teachers in high poverty urban schools**
Freedman and Appleman (forthcoming) investigated a cohort of MUSE graduates and followed 26 novice teachers through to the fifth year after receiving their credential. They concluded that the establishment and continuity of a strong and cohesive cohort during the induction years appears to be essential. ‘The cohort constructed in the preservice program seemed to be durable and a continuing support as well as a social network’ (Freedman and Appleman forthcoming, p.24). The authors also concluded that providing entry to other kinds of challenging, nurturing, and high-quality professional networks and development also contributed to them staying in the profession, especially as many of these graduates moved to other high needs schools in their first years. They were mobile but they still stayed committed to urban schools and this was supported by the cohort network as well as other professional networks to which they were introduced.

After one year, 96% of the MUSE graduates were still teaching (compared to 76% nationally) and 92% were in the same school (4% had moved to another school) (Freedman and Appleman forthcoming). Similar retention rates were found for graduates from another graduate program at UCLA’s Center X which prepared elementary teachers in a two-year graduate masters program (Olsen and Anderson 2007). After 5 years, 73% of the MUSE graduates were still in the profession along with 71% of the Center X graduates. However, the MUSE graduates did begin
changing schools after 2 years or more; by the fifth year, 39% had moved schools (Freedman and Appleman forthcoming).

**Negotiating dilemmas and challenges during the first year of teaching**

My own research with teachers in the MUSE program suggests that the structure of this graduate program with a teacher research project (the MA thesis) in the final year of the program which is also the first year of teaching, provides a structured way for these beginning teachers to think about their work and it also provides a supportive learning community, both of which seem to help the new teachers negotiate beginning teaching in urban settings (Mayer 2007). These new teachers were often challenged with policies and practices that often conflicted with their own personal theories about teaching and learning and the visions they had of ideal classroom practice and of themselves as teaching professionals. Three main types of dilemmas were evident in the interview data:

1. *I didn’t think I’d be doing this.*
   This type of dilemma occurred when the new teachers found themselves teaching in ways inconsistent with their beliefs and vision. They did this because they felt it was ‘necessary with these kids.’ Working through this type of dilemma involved adjusting conceptions of success, with success being determined by whether the new teachers thought that their practices were in the best interests of the students.

   *I would never have wanted to do this whole procedure thing, but I see it as necessary. Clearly, these students need it.* (Lyn)

   ... *a real issue is seeing your original ideals not realized ... because I used to read Paulo Freire ... but then you think ‘oh man, that’s not going to keep kids in their seats!’ ... that’s not what I dreamed ... I did not think that I would be that type of teacher ...* (Cathy)

2. *Stepping on others’ toes. You’re only a second year teacher.*
   This type of dilemma emerged when the new teacher’s vision for her- or him-self as a teacher and their future career aspirations collided with the expectations of others. Working through this type of dilemma involved locating communities of support and seeking fulfillment outside the school.

   *I have stepped on lots of toes ... in my position [as school trainer], I just have people simply ignore me. I mean, they just... totally ignore me! ... They don’t even come. They don’t come, they don’t answer emails, they don’t respond to memos.... Nothing! ... I’ve become this, sort of, vehicle for hatred. ... I’ve received notes, very passive aggressive notes, typed notes from teachers from my teachers that I’m crossing my boundaries, that I don’t seem to understand my place and that I’m only a second year teacher.* (Jo)

3. *The politics of the school is the tough part.*
   This type of dilemma occurred when the new teacher’s vision of appropriate curriculum for her/his students was stymied by state and district mandates of how and what to teach, and how and what to assess. Working through this type of dilemma involved negotiating the politics of the school and school community and all its players.
... how much am I willing to risk and is that worse than just quietly not abiding? Or aren’t the kids more important, and if I stay then I can be with them, or is it worth making a scene and losing my job and losing the kids too? And having someone come in who’s like a robot who can open the book and turn the pages.

(Beth)

In all cases, the dilemmas stemmed from a mismatch between the new teachers’ visions and the contexts within which they were teaching. The new teachers negotiated the dilemmas in a number of ways. When their vision and beliefs about teaching and being a teacher were challenged and they felt unable to enact them, they:

- adjusted their conceptions of success;
- located communities of support (from teacher colleagues, from the school administration, from the teacher education cohort); and,
- sought fulfillment outside the school. Interestingly, it seems as though being visionary and having a somewhat idealized notion of their professional practice and themselves as teachers, actually assisted these new teachers negotiate the challenges associated with beginning teaching in urban schools.

Findings from this study support Hammerness’s (2003) contention the teacher education can have a role in assisting new teachers recognize, understand and bridge the gap between vision and current practice. Like the teachers in Hammerness’s study, for many participants in this small study, the essential dilemma was a problem of vision match. When this happened, the teachers considered whether to ‘move on’ to a working environment where the match might be closer. Interestingly, the two teachers who were considering this were in their second year but neither was considering leaving the profession. Rather, they considered career moves that they believed would allow them to ultimately enact their vision. However, it was the idealism associated with their vision that kept them going in trying times. As Cathy pointed out, when this idealism diminishes the further one gets from the teacher preparation program, feelings of burnout start to appear. Thus, articulating a vision and sustaining the ideals associated with the vision is important in the beginning years of teaching. Teacher educators could help better support and sustain new teachers in their lives and work if they help them articulate a clear sense of purpose for their work their chosen profession. Such a clear sense of purpose is likely to sustain their commitment by reminding them why they choose the teaching profession when they encounter difficult situations in their first years of teaching. It might also help them recognize and celebrate their achievements, and thus contribute to their feelings of agency.

Likewise, this study suggests that if new teachers can maintain a vision focus beyond the classroom and keep an eye to the future, they might be able to more easily negotiate the early years. Therefore, in addition to helping new teachers articulate a clear vision and sense of purpose, teacher educators may be able to help beginning teachers plan actions in order to reach their vision and help them accept the time and determination that may be required to feel success in relation to their ideals.

The importance of communities of support, both in their schools and across the teacher education cohort, is highlighted as an important component in negotiating the vision-context dilemmas. The participants highlight the value of the peer support network in the second year and part time component of their MA program, but as time
goes on it is the communities of support at the school level that become more valuable. However, a community of like-minded colleagues, such as that provided by the program, was highly valued by these teachers. Thus teacher education needs to have a clearly articulated and coherently structured philosophy and purpose, as well as some way of connecting with the candidates as they move into full time teaching, both faculty-candidates connections as well as candidate-candidate connections. It seems that the structure of the MA thesis year with its focus on teacher inquiry and researching one’s own professional practice as the basis for a thesis, was less important in sustaining these new teachers in their first years of teaching than the opportunity to connect with other like-minded colleagues who would affirm the validity of their visions and sustain them in difficult times.

Finally, we need to remember that urban teachers work with great diversity of student needs but the conditions of urban schooling severely limit individualization (Weiner, 1993). They face the challenge of personalizing instruction and understanding and valuing each student’s special qualities in an environment and organizational context that discourages and works against this. The environment often robs teachers of their individuality. Thus, teacher education faces the challenge of educating teachers whose ideals and vision about teaching can prevail in settings that actively work against enacting their ideals. This underscores the importance of focusing less in urban teacher preparation on giving the prospective urban teacher knowledge about student characteristics and teaching skills and more on:

… helping the prospective teacher understand both how the teacher’s and student’s aspirations, abilities, and knowledge can be used to overcome the common obstacles that urban school systems and social and economic forces set before them. (Weiner 1993, p.106)

In teacher education we must examine the social and political conditions that frame and constrain teachers’ work (Liston and Zeichner 1990).

As Olsen and Anderson concluded, ‘the teacher preparation program gave shape and language to their initial reasons for entry, hooked them up with like minded colleagues, and strengthened their professional commitment’ (Olsen and Anderson 2007, p.23).

In relation to ongoing professional learning, Freedman and Curry concluded that ‘… the reflective stance required for sustaining a significant piece of teacher research in the second year helped foster the habit of mind of reflective practice to sustain good teaching’ (Freedman and Appleman forthcoming, p.25).

Preparing teacher leaders
We found that the graduates from all the graduate teacher education programs at UC Berkeley (DTE, MACSME and MUSE) moved into leadership positions quite quickly. Most take teaching positions, and most are still teaching five years later. In the sample summarized in Table 2 below, almost all who graduated in 2001 and 2002 were still in the profession, with a number of them assuming positions as teacher leaders quite quickly in their careers (e.g., department heads, reform coordinators, professional developers). Unfortunately, we did not have specific data on the type of schools in which they are teaching; however, our informal evidence suggests that the city centres (e.g., Oakland, San Francisco) and first ring of suburbs (e.g., Hayward, Richmond, El Cerrito), which are equally as diverse, are the preferred districts for our
graduates. Thus we feel confident that the large majority of our teacher education graduates end up working in the very sorts of schools we prepare them for—low income, ethnically diverse, urban schools.

### Table 2: Placement of UC Berkeley Teacher Education Graduates (2001-2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Information completeness</th>
<th>Placement types (expressed as a percentage of the total number of graduates)</th>
<th>#Tracked/total # of grads</th>
<th>Classroom teacher</th>
<th>Teacher-or other leader</th>
<th>Further education</th>
<th>Other/not known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DTE (Elementary)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>92/108</td>
<td>85%(^1)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MACSME (Secondary Mathematics/Science)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45/49</td>
<td>86%(^3)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSE (Secondary English)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>144/150</td>
<td>96%(^4)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)These may also be classroom teachers.  
\(^2\)90% of those are teaching in public schools.  
\(^3\)93% of those are teaching in public schools.  
\(^4\)100% of those are teaching in public schools.

It is likely that the MA project and thesis in the final year and the culture of inquiry it established supported the beginning teachers in ways that helped them develop quickly as teacher leaders. Certainly, a strong link was found between teacher inquiry and leadership in the Master’s program researched by Linda Valli and her colleagues.

The inquiry included in this program was based on the ‘premise that teachers become leaders in their schools when they engage themselves and their colleagues in inquiry about teaching practice and student learning (Valli, van Zee et al. 2006,p.99)

As with the MUSE program, peer support and collaboration was built into the course, developing a community of scholars that supported and sustained these teachers. They were quickly regarded as leaders in their schools and school districts, and able to make contributions in that capacity (Valli, van Zee et al. 2006).

### A capstone teacher performance assessment

In 2006, the state of California mandated a teacher performance assessment for an initial teaching credential. A consortium of teacher preparation programs at a number of California universities - PACT (Performance Assessment for California Teachers) - developed a teacher performance assessment (Pecheone and Chung 2006) which was approved as a requirement for a teaching credential in California by the bureaucratic state-legislated agency that accredits teacher education programs and credentials teachers in that state, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

The PACT assessments or teaching events (TEs) use multiple sources of data (teacher plans, teacher artifacts, student work samples, video clips of teaching, and personal reflections and commentaries) that are organized on four categories of teaching: planning, instruction, assessment, and reflection (PIAR). The PACT assessments build on efforts by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment...
and Support Consortium, which developed performance assessments for use with expert and beginning teachers. Like these earlier assessments, the focus of the PACT assessments is on candidates’ application of subject-specific pedagogical knowledge that research finds to be associated with successful teaching (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Fennema et al., 1996; Grossman, 1990; Porter, 1988; Shulman, 1987). What distinguishes the PACT assessments from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards assessments is that the TE tasks are more integrated (capturing a unified learning segment), are designed to measure teacher performance at the preservice level, and have no assessment center components. Moreover, the PACT assessment system also uses a multiple measures approach to assessing teacher competence through the use of course-embedded signature assessments. (Pecheone and Chung 2006, p.23)

We are able to say that the PACT was a legitimate and valid way to measure our beginning teachers’ professional practice, and in addition, we found that it provided us with valuable program evaluation. For example, as the preservice teachers completed the PACT and we scored it, we found that we needed to make programmatic improvements in the ways we were teaching the preservice teachers to assess student learning.

While we do need more research that examines the effects of teacher preparation and its component parts on subsequent teaching practices and on student learning, I conclude by highlighting current trends in the professional education of teachers. I argue that we need to be cognisant of the following aspects when developing and implementing high quality professional education of teachers:

- The importance of connecting teacher education to the first year of teaching. The first years in the classroom should be seen as a continuation of preservice teacher education and the first stage of ongoing professional learning. This connection seems to help beginning teachers negotiate various dilemmas and challenges in their first year of teaching.

- The importance of preparing teachers as reflective inquirers and teachers who examine their professional practice within communities of learning as they continually build their professional knowledge and hone their professional practice.

- The importance of preparing teachers with a strong professional knowledge base that helps them make informed professional judgements as they plan, teach and assess. It is also important that they are able to articulate their decisions to their colleagues, to their administration, and to the families and communities of the students in their care.

- The importance of a cohort model, which builds strong relationships amongst colleagues and the foundation for more professional networks that will sustain and motivate new teachers professionally and personally.

- The importance of school experiences which happen early and often in the program and systematically build preservice teachers’ knowledge and skill. These should include school experiences that start with structured observation for which the preservice teachers are well prepared and then include teaching tasks which require the preservice teacher to first work with individuals and
small groups of students, and then build to whole class teaching (perhaps team teaching with the supervising teacher) and finally to a sustained period of teaching ‘take over’ of the class. These experiences need close monitoring by suitably qualified university personnel and supervising teachers.

- The importance of a set of professional standards for teaching which describe effective beginning teacher professional practice and the knowledge that informs that practice, and an authentic way to judge that practice against these standards; a teacher performance assessment.

Graduate teacher education can do these things and more. It specifically helps to professionalise teaching and prepare teachers with a sound content knowledge base. It also seems to be very effective in preparing teachers who actively participate in ongoing professional learning. Also, as my experience at Berkeley as shown, Master’s degree teacher education programs seem to prepare professionals who move into leadership positions soon after beginning teaching. Graduate teacher education seems to help prepare teachers who are resilient and continually learning to teach, and who will be our future leaders.

**Researching teacher education: The research we have to have.**

Given the challenges to teacher education exemplified by these questions and the related analysis of teacher education as a policy problem, how is current teacher education research responding? Grossman suggests that ‘as researchers and practitioners in the field of teacher education, we seem ill prepared to respond to critics who question the value of professional education for teachers with evidence of our effectiveness’ (Grossman 2008, p.13). This is not a recent realisation. Successive reviews of teacher education research have come to similar conclusions. Where teacher educator researchers seem to be particularly vulnerable is justifying the value of teacher education. There are too few studies which follow teacher education graduates into their teaching posts and analyse the effectiveness of their professional practice, particularly as it impacts student learning. The major review of teacher education research by Division K of AERA in 2005 points out that there are almost no studies that demonstrate direct causal links from teacher education programs to student learning (Cochran-Smith and Zeichner 2005). Of course, there are many reasons for this. Major grants are rare in the field of teacher education and consequently teacher educators study their own programs, producing many small-scale and often unconnected studies of teacher education practice. The findings from these studies do not produce convergent findings; indeed they never set out to do so. Moreover, it is important to remember that there are at least two causal links in the teacher education field, one linking teacher preparation with what the pre-service teachers learn (their professional knowledge), and another linking their knowledge, skills and dispositions as enacted in the classroom (their professional practice) with student learning or other outcomes. The type of research needed to examine all these links requires far more resources than has traditionally been available to teacher education.

However, it must be said that teacher education practice has benefited greatly from the currently available research. Teacher educators have learned about how to design and implement effective teacher education programs by drawing on studies like that conducted by Linda Darling Hammond which examined the features of a number of
teacher education programs identified as producing well prepared teachers from their first days in the classroom (Darling-Hammond 2006). In addition, large-scale reviews of relevant research help us understand the subject matter and pedagogical preparation of prospective teachers, the content and character of high-quality field experiences and alternative routes, and the effects of various policies on teacher preparation (for example, Wilson, Floden et al. 2002). From the major review of teacher education research conducted by the AERA panel mentioned above (Cochran-Smith and Zeichner 2005), we have learnt a great deal about the curriculum of effective teacher education – its coursework, field experiences, assessment, and pedagogical approaches – in addition to effective preparation for teaching diverse populations and working with students with disabilities.

However, the issue still remains: [A]s a research community, we have spent relatively little sustained effort trying to determine how teacher preparation, of any kind, affects either teachers’ classroom practices or their influence on student learning, outcomes that are arguably those that the public – including parents and policy makers alike – care about most (Grossman 2008, p.14).

Given the macro-political context that teacher education now finds itself, teacher educators need to be able to respond to our critics who ask: What is the value of teacher education? What should beginning teachers know and be able to do? How can judgements be made about what beginning teachers know and are able to do? And we need to be able to do so in a research informed way.

First and foremost, we must work together to design rigorous research projects that investigate the value added by teacher education, especially in terms of enhanced student learning outcomes. We need to engage the deregulation agenda and follow teacher education graduates into the classroom to examine what they are doing and what the students are learning. There are some attempts in the US to do this in a large and systematic way. For example, in New York city, a team of researchers is examining a number of different pathways into teaching, the characteristics of those programs and the impact of their characteristics on a range of things including student achievement in reading and mathematics (Boyd, Grossman et al. 2006). Another large-scale study is under way in Ohio (Lasley, Siedentop et al. 2006).

If we are to respond to our critics in the current policy context, we also need large-scale empirical studies aimed at furthering our understanding of what it is that effective teachers know and do, and how we can establish systems for judging this professional knowledge and practice in relation to research-informed professional standards for teaching. For example, at the University of Michigan, Deborah Ball and her colleagues are developing multiple measures of teachers’ pedagogical knowledge and exploring the relationships between teacher knowledge and student achievement (Hill, Schilling et al. 2004; Ball, Thames et al. 2008).

While large-scale empirical studies employing a mixed-methods approach will go a long way to helping us respond to our critics, there are other measures we can take with the case study and ethnographic work which typifies a lot of our teacher education research. We can systematically connect with other studies that have asked similar questions and conduct research which builds on its own findings and where
possible use common instruments and outcome measures that make it possible to aggregate findings. In addition, we can follow graduates into the classroom and look for connections between teacher education and the quality of their instructional practice in the classroom.

In conclusion, I echo Pam Grossman’s caution, ‘[T]eacher educators are dangerously close to losing jurisdiction over two key professional tasks – the preparation of new professionals and the production of academic knowledge for the profession.’ (Grossman 2008, p.10). Let’s do something about it.

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