

# Extending the Learning and Teaching Beyond the Classroom: The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE)

Thomas A. Lucey, Assistant Professor, Curriculum and Instruction



## Atlanta, 2006 San Diego, 2007



### Classroom Practice

**Classroom management.** Rick Smith conducted a workshop that encouraged establishment of classroom procedures such as inquiries of difficult students, minimization of private student conversations, and transitioning into consequences. This session imprinted the importance of respecting student individuality, while preserving predictable classroom structures.

**Inquiry in social studies.** Eula Fresch demonstrated manners to enable student connections with social studies content. She employed child labor photographs as exemplars for stimulating student awareness of historical concepts and modern parallels, and presented a plethora of authentic historical texts and resources. This session stressed the importance of employing tangible sources that allow students' social connections.

**Teachers' classroom citizenship practice.** Veronica Stephen reported that teachers generally employed low-risk activities, such as classroom discussions and recycling projects, to promote student citizenship. Teachers reported less engagement in higher risk service endeavors, such as adopting a highway, participating in Habitat for Humanity, writing letters to newspapers, or attending school board meetings. This session serves as a reminder that citizenship includes elements of social activism that in methods courses must explore.

### Teacher Education

The Robert J. Stevenson Memorial Lecture, given by Linda Darling-Hammond, previewed content from Darling-Hammond's book *Powerful Teacher Education*. Darling-Hammond identified five characteristics of successful teacher education programs:

- Clear vision of good teaching with common teaching vision in classrooms.
- Clinical placements where teachers reflect upon the marriage between theory and practice
- Well identified standards for practice and performance
- Curricula grounded in child development and contexts of adaptable pedagogies.
- At least 30 weeks of clinical experiences

### Research Presentations

I presented findings of three research projects.

- Interpreting the effects of orienting pre-service teachers to financial education with an added math focus
- The benefits of student orientation and teacher/university collaborations toward improving "block" clinical preparation processes.
- Exploration of relationships between financial education and social justice

### Classroom Practice

**Values Education.** Walter Polka facilitated several activities to illustrate the different patterns of societal values and to facilitate related classroom discussions. His observation that "Nazi Germany had one of the highest literacy rates in 1930" was a chilling reminder of the challenges of reading emphasis of No Child Left Behind, and its de-emphasis of critical thinking about social challenges.

**Moral Learning Environments.** DarylAnne Whitemarch blended the ideas of Lickona and Wong in her presentation about moral learning environments, mentioning the importance of routine. This session reminded me about the dangers of reducing morality to an automated process that forces children to homogeneous thinking. Morality includes an element of individuality that teachers should respect.

**Grant Writing.** Jan Waggoner presented about pre-service teachers' grant writing and provided an excellent example of how to prepare candidates for the financial realities of their practice. She described how she facilitated grant writing experiences for volunteer students. The opportunity produced a number of collaborations among students, parents and communities.

**Reflection.** Rachel Woodarsky informed members about patterns of reflection among faculty at an institution of higher learning. Her study grounded in general reflective theory and concluded that through reflection processes, faculty made judgments about their practices to prompt change in practice.

**Ethics and Teacher Preparation.** Charley Bowen's session provided a clear example of the challenge with the mindset of our educational processes. Bowen presented arguments for and against the teaching of ethics in teacher preparation courses. His argument for the teaching of ethics was largely standards-based, with references to quotations of ethicists supporting the modeling of ethical behavior.

### Research Presentations

- The stipend afforded an opportunity to present or co-present on three projects.
- A conversation about using music creation and performance to facilitate classroom conversations about social justice topics.
- A presentation of research about student discovery processes to foster understandings of financial education.



The association offers a variety of opportunities for member involvement, including the editorial board of *Action in Teacher Education*, a nationally recognized journal. As a member of the President's Council, I had an opportunity to serve on the planning committee for the 2008 conference in New Orleans. This involvement has prompted my opportunity to participate in ATE's Leadership Academy at the winter meeting New Orleans and the summer meeting in Washington D.C. The president also invited me to serve on the committee to revise the association's by-laws.

# Service Opportunities