Lessons Learned in Preparing 100 Teachers for the Urban Classroom

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As we enter the 21st century, the picture of urban schools and the plight of the nation’s urban students remains unchanged. The children continue to represent the growing population of ethnically diverse poor in our country, and those who teach them continue to be “White European-American females from middle class families who have little or no experience with minority groups, and who prefer to teach students with whom they identify racially and culturally” (Lowery, 2001, p.17).
U.D. is a Marianist institution that encourages service, community engagement, leadership and research.

Recruiting, hiring and retention of qualified teachers is necessary if society hopes to achieve the goal of providing ALL learners, including those in impoverished districts, with opportunities for academic success- a matter of social justice.
Urban Teacher Academy

- Designed in 2001, the Urban Teacher Academy (UTA) was developed by the University of Dayton School of Education and Allied Professions as a means of addressing the growing demand for quality urban classroom teachers.

- Ladson-Billings (2001) states that “one of the current concerns plaguing the nation’s schools is how to find teachers who are capable of teaching successfully in diverse classrooms” (p. 12).

- Working in collaboration with Dayton Public Schools, the Urban Teacher Academy’s goal is to “increase the number of highly effective, reliable teachers in the district by recruiting preservice teachers to the urban school setting, providing them with specialized training, and supporting them with mentors during their field experience and as they begin their careers” (UTA Memorandum of Agreement see appendix A).
UTA Grad – Veronica Valentino
Current teacher at DECA Prep
Collaboration with Lalanne Program

- Lalanne is committed to urban Catholic education. The collaboration between UTA and Lalanne is a natural alignment of programs designed to meet the needs of teachers seeking to teach in urban districts.

- Evolution of collaboration
  1. UTA grads identified as strong Lalanne applicants.
  2. Discussion forum on urban students, families and community resources.

  Collaborations do work:
  Several UTA Grads have been accepted into Lalanne.
  One UTA/Lalanne grad was recognized as an outstanding teacher in Cleveland, Ohio.
University of Dayton School of Education & Allied Professions with Dayton Public Schools

Advisory Council
- 2-Instructors, Urban Teacher Academy; 5-Faculty members from SOEAP (ECE, EMS, AYA, IS & chair of department); Dean, SOEAP; 2-Associate deans, SOEAP; Union president, DPS; Chief Academic Officer, DPS Superintendent or designee; DPS Human resources; 3-Funders; Director, Center for Catholic Education; 2-Fitz Center for Leadership in Community

Implementation and Planning Committee

JUNIOR (Year 1)
- Year long class with field placement
- Assigned highly qualified teacher as mentor for two year period
- 40-60 hours in classroom
- Service learning options in urban school community

SENIOR (Year 2)
- First semester: Teaching methods block
- Field experience (80 hours, AYA to 120 hours, ECE) in urban school with mentor teacher
- Second semester: Full time student teaching in mentor teacher's classroom (10-15 week duration)

POST-GRADUATION (Year 3)
- 3 Year In-Service
- Teacher Support
- Program for graduates teaching in Dayton Public Schools

Marketing/Recruitment
- Print, Electronic, Presentation

Selection Process
- Criteria, Application, Essay, Referrals, Interview

Activities
- Seminar Supplements, Adapted Field Experience, Mentor Teacher Meetings, Mentor/Student Meetings, Feedback Sessions, Networking

Evaluation
- Student/Mentor Teacher Assessment, Program Evaluation
Core Competencies Expected of UTA Graduates

As a result of participating in the UTA, preservice teachers are expected to:

- Demonstrate the ability to present information in a clear, direct way that students can understand.
- Demonstrate behaviors like varied delivery, frequent demonstrative questions, varied, dramatic body movements, varied emotional facial expressions, animated acceptance of ideas, and selection of varied words, especially adjectives.
- Demonstrate the ability to see things from the student point of view, showing positive regard toward the student. (Exhibits caring "desk-side manner").
- Demonstrate cultural competencies, i.e., respect and understanding for students' cultural rituals, icons, and historical experience so that new learning can be effectively connected to students' experiences.
- Demonstrate the ability to improve life in the classroom through self-analysis and action research related to student outcomes and teacher behavior. (Asks the question: What can I do to insure better results for my students?)
- Demonstrate the ability to break down complex concepts or tasks and sequence them in order of difficulty.
- Demonstrate the ability to view students on a developmental continuum as opposed to viewing some children as inherently deficient due to race, class, gender or other factors beyond the student's control. (moving away from the deficit model of learning)
UTA Grad – David Recker
Current teacher at Dayton Early College Academy
Grad Data

- UTA grads are teaching all over the United States. Grads are in Ohio, New York, South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Colorado, Louisiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Florida, Indiana, and Washington D.C.

- Currently 75% of UTA grads are teaching in urban school districts and an increasing number of grads have completed their Masters in Education.

- Currently 8 UTA grads are employed in roles other than classroom teacher but are still working in urban settings.
UTA Grad- Jasmine Roberts
Current Dayton Public Schools teacher
Lessons Learned

- Program Best Practices
- Important Factors
- UTA Graduates
- School Districts
- Preservice Teachers
Preservice Teachers

Selection
- Application
- Interview

Course Work
- Sophomore year (social justice & relationships)
- Junior year- EDT 318 (cultural competency)
- Senior year- EDT 414 (academic excellence – classroom management, data analysis and differentiated instruction and assessment.)

Field/Clinical Experiences
- Dayton Public Schools
- Local charter schools
- Local non-profits
School Districts

Partnerships
- Selection of schools and mentors
- Memo of understanding on procedures: timeline, interview and hire protocol.

Unions
- Memo of understanding on hiring procedures
- Support

Sharing Data
- Information on grad progress - frank conversations about grads ability to run a classroom.
- Access to teacher evaluation and test data.
UTA Graduates

Support
- Newsletter
- Monthly meetings for local grads
- Classroom observations with critical feedback

Evaluation
- Survey
UTA Grad Mtg
Administrative Factors

- **Funding**
  - University
  - Grant

- **Sustainability**
  - Course sequence
  - Urban Teacher Certificate
  - Faculty tenure track devoted to urban ed.

- **Advisory Council**
  - Advice
  - University
  - Local school districts and charters
  - Local non-profits
**Best Practices**

**Coordination with Stakeholders**
- Seminars
- Events

**Mentor Training**
- Seminars
- Book Club
- Conference Support

**Going Beyond the Classroom**
- Placements in nonprofits, afterschool programs and summer programs
- Conferences- Childrens’ Defense Fund
Governance and Leadership Considerations

- Administrator must know the staff and develop effective professional relationships.
- Build capacity in school teams.
- Tap (identify and develop) internal expertise of teacher leaders.
- Acknowledge the importance of building a balanced professional learning community.
- Establish school culture focused on students and student learning.
Questions and Discussion

- Through the lens of your current role in your community, school or district, what can and are you willing to do to bridge gaps and help all students become socially and academically successful?
- Questions for us?
UTA Grad - Haley Todd
On May 31 2012, Haley was named the KBCO Teacher of The Year!
Haley received a scholarship for the M.S. in Teaching and Learning program at Colorado State University Global Campus.
Selected Resources

**Texts**


