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## TEACHER CANDIDATES' INCOMING BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING: COMPARING CATHOLIC SERVICE-LEARNING AND TRADITIONAL PROGRAMS

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*This study analyzes a range of professional beliefs held by a sample of incoming teacher candidates in the Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE), a service-learning teacher education program at the University of Notre Dame, and a sample of preservice teachers in a traditional teacher education program at a state university. The key dependent variables in this study are preservice teachers' sense of professional responsibility and self-efficacy beliefs regarding the intellectual and moral aspects of their teaching. Findings indicate that ACE teacher candidates hold a greater sense of responsibility for helping disadvantaged students academically and for fostering all children's moral growth compared to their counterparts in the traditional program. This study is the first stage in a longitudinal research project that explores the effectiveness of ACE's model of teacher education in preparing professionally competent and responsible teachers.*

The 1996 study of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) found current practices in teacher training and induction to be detrimental to novice teachers' long-term commitment to the teaching profession (NCTAF, 1996). The NCTAF's findings reiterate earlier concerns with teacher preparation raised by the educational community, for example, by the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (1986) and the Holmes Group (1986, 1990, 1995). One major shortfall of conventional teacher training practices is the failure to prepare new teachers who are able and committed to ensure that all students in their classrooms succeed in learning, rather than who are merely trained to offer children learning opportunities. Another major shortfall of conventional teacher education is its fail-

ure to adequately prepare novice teachers to address the special learning needs of low-income and minority students and to place talented, competent, and responsible teachers not only in affluent suburban schools but also in underserved urban and rural schools (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996).

Responding to a need among Catholic schools for professionally competent and committed teachers as well as to criticisms of traditional teacher education like those above, the University of Notre Dame established Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE). This program provides a short-term solution to the shortage of teachers in Catholic schools in the Southern United States. ACE annually recruits some 65-75 recent college graduates who are committed to teaching disadvantaged children, enrolls them in a graduate program in education, and simultaneously places them to teach in underserved schools as members of AmeriCorps for two academic years. Notre Dame's ultimate goal, though, is to inspire committed young adults to become lifelong supporters of education of the disadvantaged children in this country.

## **ALLIANCE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION RECRUITMENT AND TEACHER CANDIDATES**

Recruitment of prospective participants for the ACE/M.Ed. program begins in August for the class that will begin the following June. In the fall semester, letters are sent to all University of Notre Dame and St. Mary's College graduating seniors, to all rectors of dorms, and to all Notre Dame faculty. These are followed by ads in campus newspapers, activity fairs, and information nights that are held on the Notre Dame campus by ACE staff and on campuses of other colleges by ACE alumni.

While interested prospective students are completing their applications, the ACE office forms selection committees, with 10 committees of three members each to conduct initial interviews. The selection committees comprise Arts and Letters faculty, university administrators, dorm rectors, and campus ministry staff. Before beginning the interviews, committees meet to discuss selection criteria, suggested interview questions, and the evaluation form.

The ACE program receives an average of four applications for each slot. The selection teams interview all local applicants in the first two weeks of February. Applicants from other universities are interviewed by ACE staff and alumni in their home states. In some cases, applicants are first interviewed by phone. Promising candidates then come to campus for personal interviews. Final selection is completed by the end of February.

During the first two weeks of March, the selected candidates are matched with diocesan profiles. Undergraduate preparation of candidates is matched to requirements for grade level and subject area. Placement also takes into account gender of the candidates to achieve gender balance in the communi-

ties where ACE teachers will live. The ACE staff sends these tentative matches to the dioceses and to the M.Ed. faculty for confirmation. Their approval is necessary because ACE participants enter contractual relations as staff teachers with the receiving dioceses and enroll as graduate students in the university. At a meeting of the final group of candidates at the end of March, they are provided with additional information about the proposed placement and the graduate program.

Primary consideration during recruitment is given to the quality of undergraduate preparation of the candidates to ensure that they have a high probability of success in their future teaching positions. Entering students typically have earned an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher. For example, the average undergraduate GPA was 3.23 for the 1998 cohort class (known as ACE V) and 3.40 for the 1999 cohort class (ACE VI). The average GRE scores were 503 Verbal, 606 Math, and 608 Analytical among ACE V entering candidates; and 501 Verbal, 594 Math, and 605 Analytical among ACE VI entering candidates. Thirty-eight percent of ACE V students and 43% percent of ACE VI students graduated with honors.

The ACE program also places special emphasis on recruiting a diverse group of candidates. This is especially crucial for the success of the program, as 37% percent of the schools where ACE participants teach have predominantly minority student bodies. Minority recruitment activities include specially focused mailings, dissemination through newsletters of reflections by minority teachers from previous ACE cohorts on their teaching experiences, and ethnic and cultural events such as dinners or parties for prospective candidates.

These special recruitment efforts have proved successful. Twenty-three percent of the ACE V students and 20% of the ACE VI students represent minority groups, compared to 0% minority in the first ACE cohort six years ago and to 12.7% minority teachers nationally (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997). In addition, the ACE program has been successful in attracting approximately equal proportions of candidates from both genders. Fifty-two percent of the ACE V students and 48% of the ACE VI students are male. This balanced composition compares favorably to the national situation in the teaching occupation, where only 27% of public school teachers and 25% of private school teachers in 1993-94 were male (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997).

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE ALLIANCE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

Alliance for Catholic Education follows an innovative approach in teacher preparation in order to avoid the failures of existing traditional and service-oriented models of teacher education and induction. Consistent with

NCTAF's recommendations, the primary element of ACE's model is a two-year teaching internship, with most of the participants serving minority and underprivileged children. Unlike many service programs that place their participants in underserved schools with little professional preparation, ACE starts with a 10-credit graduate-level summer session on Notre Dame's campus. In the fall, program participants begin full-time teaching in Catholic inner-city and rural schools in the South. Throughout the school year, the program provides weekly instruction via distance learning technologies and on-site supervision and continuous performance-based assessment, with the cycle repeated in the second year. All elements of teacher education in the program are articulated within ACE's conceptual framework that emphasizes professional competence, community, and spirituality as essential to effective teaching in Catholic schools.

The ACE program regards professional competence as entailing both academic competence and skilled teaching. Following recommendations of NCTAF, the ACE program starts by recruiting academically successful college graduates. Academic competence is further enhanced through graduate coursework that provides teacher candidates with a working understanding of contemporary educational theory and research. The program gives special attention to how such knowledge can be translated into effective and responsible classroom practices that result in student learning as well as moral and ethical development. ACE believes that the two years of full-time, closely supervised teaching in the site schools is the key to developing effective teaching skills. To ensure continuous growth of professional competence, the program employs performance-based assessments, consisting of regular evaluations over the course of two years by clinical supervisors, and a final evaluation of each teacher candidate's summative teaching portfolio.

All graduate coursework, supervised teaching, and performance-based assessment are grounded in the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium's (INTASC) standards for beginning teachers' licensing and development, and the Indiana Professional Standards Board's (IPSB) standards for licensing educators. ACE students' two years of graduate coursework and supervised teaching culminate in an M.Ed. degree and initial licensure in the state of Indiana in one of these three areas: Middle Childhood, Early Adolescent Generalist, or Adolescent-Young Adult.

The ACE program further distinguishes itself from other service-learning models through its emphasis on community. ACE students live in supportive community with one another on Notre Dame's campus and take a weekly class on community and spiritual growth during the summer sessions. During the regular school year, ACE students live together in communities of four to seven preservice teachers at the service-learning sites, with teachers from several schools living in one house. These communities are designed to support teacher candidates through the stresses and strains of their teaching

internship and to enhance their professional development. Communities facilitate participants' constant learning from each other's experiences in the classroom and reflecting on the role that community-based pedagogy plays in enhancing the learning and socialization experiences of children. In addition, ACE communities help to stimulate and support each member's spiritual growth. All ACE members participate in regular retreats which further enhance the communal aspect of the program as a whole. At the service sites, students receive help in community-building from resource people in the dioceses as well as from Notre Dame alumni clubs.

Another distinguishing feature of ACE is its focus on the moral aspects of teaching. Whereas some service-oriented programs rely solely on the sense of dedication of their participants, the Notre Dame program explicitly trains its teacher candidates in how to nurture ethical values, racial understanding, and social responsibility among children in a socially stratified and diverse society. This is accomplished through the program's coursework and its intentional communities, as well as through the program's emphasis on the spiritual and ethical development of each ACE participant.

The spiritual and ethical development component of the ACE program is rooted in the image of "Christ the Teacher" (ACE, 1999). A primary goal of ACE is to stimulate all members to form a personal relationship with Christ the Teacher and to use the model of Christ as Teacher in their own service to children and adolescents, as well as in their relationships with fellow ACE members. To help each participant accomplish this goal, ACE provides a strong sacramental life within the community, conducts regular spiritual retreats, promotes both personal and community prayer life, and emphasizes social justice. In addition, ACE teacher candidates have the opportunity to explore the spiritual and ethical components of the program each summer in a course devoted solely to topics related to spiritual and ethical goals. In this way, ACE faculty and staff hope to provide preservice teachers with the tools to become "reflective professional educators and people of faith" (ACE, 1999, p. 14).

## **FOCUS OF THIS STUDY**

This study analyzes a range of professional beliefs held by a sample of incoming ACE teachers and by students in a large state university in Indiana before they begin their preservice teaching. The key dependent variable in this study is preservice teachers' sense of professional responsibility for the intellectual and moral effectiveness of their teaching. This focus on particular dimensions of teacher responsibility follows suggestions that the content of teachers' sense of responsibility is more important for student outcomes than the overall level of that sense (Newmann, 1993) and that teacher responsibility should go beyond the general formulation of a professional ethic (Blase, 1986;

Durkheim, 1925/1961; Khmelkov, 1998). Many prominent educational researchers and practitioners have called attention to the importance of a sense of professional responsibility in teaching (Oser, Dick, & Patry, 1992); but as yet, no systematic attempt has been made to explore it empirically.

In addition to preservice teachers' sense of responsibility, this study investigates their sense of efficacy in teaching. Extant research has shown that self-efficacy in teaching is a crucial characteristic of teachers who are both effective in the classroom and committed to their work and their profession (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Rowan, Chiang, & Miller, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk, & Hoy, 1998). The paper also explores several aspects of teacher candidates' intended practices during preservice teaching, focusing on several key teaching activities that reflect current professional standards (Bidwell, Frank, & Quiroz, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 1997).

Analyses presented in this paper compare the mean responses on the dependent variables among participants in ACE and participants in the traditional program. The rationale for examining the level of incoming beliefs held by these two groups is that before the effectiveness of the service-learning, community building, and character education components in promoting prospective teachers' professional competence and commitment can be evaluated, it is necessary to ascertain whether incoming teacher candidates in a service-learning program differ from those in traditional teacher education programs. By so doing, this analysis lays a foundation for a longitudinal study of the development of responsibility for the effectiveness of teaching, self-efficacy in teaching, and professional competence among preservice teachers in different types of teacher education programs.

The nature of this study prohibits any conclusions about the effectiveness of the ACE model of teacher education in preparing competent and responsible teachers. Because we explore the incoming beliefs held among prospective teachers in two programs that from the outset attract candidates with very different motivational characteristics and educational backgrounds, it is reasonable to expect differences between the two groups. The contribution of this analysis lies in shedding light on how these incoming beliefs differ and the extent of variation both within and across the programs. Thus, this research helps to assess whether ACE's service orientation and its organization of recruitment is successful in attracting talented and committed individuals.

## DATA AND METHODS

This report uses a sample drawn from two teacher training programs. The Alliance for Catholic Education's data were collected from 211 participants in three incoming cohorts in 1997, 1998, and 1999. Three cohorts of student teachers at Ball State University (spring 1998, fall 1998, and spring 1999;

232 participants) represent a traditional program, in which teacher candidates teach for one semester in the final year of training. ACE teacher candidates completed the surveys on site at Notre Dame in the first week of their first summer session, with a response rate of over 95%. Preservice teachers in the three cohorts at Ball State (BSU) were mailed a baseline survey before they began their student teaching. The response rate to this single mailing was 55-60%.

The design of the survey began with pilot data collection from ACE participants in 1995 in the form of open-ended questions. The results were used to develop standardized surveys. In addition, items from national surveys (*National Education Longitudinal Study: 1988-94* and *Schools and Staffing Survey: 1990-91, 1993-94*) were incorporated in the instrument. The survey includes Likert-type items that were used to construct a number of scales, with scores based on the average response to the items in each scale. The reliability and validity of the scales were tested by administering modified versions of the questionnaires to several samples of ACE teachers in spring of 1996, and in winter, spring, and summer of 1997. The Appendix contains the composition of the scales and Cronbach's reliability coefficients.

The survey measures several aspects of responsibility in teaching. These aspects include responsibility for students' academic achievement, equity of access to resources and equity of learning outcomes, students' character and ethical development, fostering social responsibility, and promoting multicultural awareness and understanding among students (Khmelkov, Power, & Power, 1998).

This study identifies two conceptually separate dimensions of self-efficacy: efficacy beliefs about the teaching profession as a whole, or general efficacy, and the respondent's beliefs about his or her efficacy in the classroom, or personal self-efficacy (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Since extant research has shown teacher efficacy to be specific to context and situation (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998), the survey instrument differentiates self-efficacy beliefs regarding students' learning, socio-moral development, and discipline.

The study also looks at teacher candidates' reports of their intended practices in the classroom. These include the following four modes of teaching practices: focus on developing higher-order mental processes and intellectual independence, or progressivism; focus on forming beliefs, values, and normative commitments, or moral agency; focus on establishing positive relationships and ties between teachers and students, or trust and caring; and focus on setting high standards in the classroom without excuses for individual circumstances, or rigorism (Bidwell et al., 1997). In addition, the survey measures preservice teachers' anticipated flexibility in adapting instruction to students' needs and abilities and their expectations of a moral reasoning-based approach to discipline in the classroom (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989).

## RESULTS

### SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY IN TEACHING

#### Responsibility for Promoting Achievement

As suggested by previous research (Guskey, 1981; Ingersoll, Alsalam, Quinn, & Bobbitt, 1997; Lee & Smith, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1989), teachers widely differ as to the amount of responsibility they personally assume for promoting their students' academic success or failure. Some teachers believe that when children of different backgrounds attend the same school, it is the children's responsibility and the responsibility of their parents to take full advantage of the educational opportunities. Consequently, most teachers with this view can be expected to attribute little importance to how they organize instruction and see no value in changing or adapting their current teaching practices, even when a large proportion of their students fail. Carried to an extreme, teachers with this viewpoint tend to absolve themselves of any responsibility for children's success in learning.

Other teachers believe that responsibility to create achievement lies to a much greater extent with schools and themselves as professionals than with students or their families. Such teachers feel a strong need to improve their instruction when even a small number of their students fail, and they will rarely blame students for poor ability or lack of motivation. Carried to an extreme, teachers with this viewpoint tend to reduce children's role in the learning process to that of passive recipients of knowledge.

In between these two viewpoints are teachers who feel that responsibility for creating achievement should be shared between themselves and students. In other words, although teachers are seen as personally responsible for facilitating achievement, students should also be held responsible for their learning. Although these teachers may believe that certain students are willing to fail, teachers in this middle-ground perspective will acknowledge that a large proportion of students are willing to learn and deserve individual attention and help from teachers.

The index of responsibility for achievement, presented in Table 1, indicates the extent to which teachers believe they should be responsible for promoting student learning, as opposed to students and family being solely responsible for student learning. The scale goes from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating that teachers shift full responsibility for achievement to students and their families, and 5 indicating that teachers assume full responsibility for achievement, thus potentially denying students an active role in the learning process. Scores in the middle of the scale (around 3) indicate that teachers believe in shared responsibility.



**Table 1**  
**Sense of Responsibility for Achievement**

	ACE (n=211)		BSU (n=232)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Overall sense of responsibility for students' achievement.	3.66	(.46)	3.66	(.50)
Teachers are responsible for promoting excellence in achievement and should give extra resources to most able and motivated students.	2.08	(.94)	2.07	(.94)
Teachers are responsible for ensuring equality of achievement outcomes and should give extra resources to disadvantaged students.	2.50*	(1.02)	2.27	(.98)
Teachers are responsible for ensuring equal access to educational opportunities for all students, irrespective of their background, ability, or motivation.	3.71***	(1.16)	4.19	(1.01)

NOTES: Scale: from 1 = *completely disagree* to 5 = *completely agree*

\* $p \leq .05$  \*\* $p \leq .01$  \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

The results show that on average both ACE and BSU preservice teachers believe that responsibility for learning should be shared between teachers and students. Moreover, they are more likely to assume personal responsibility for promoting student learning than they are likely to shift such responsibility to students and their families.

Teachers' sense of responsibility for promoting academic achievement is further conceptualized within the framework of views about equality of educational opportunity (Coleman, 1968) and equity in education (Valli, Cooper, & Frankes, 1997). These concepts are particularly salient in our society where the problems posed by social stratification are compounded by cultural diversity. The number of students who do not fit the traditional model of White, middle-class education is on the rise. Faced with poverty, limited proficiency in English, different cultural norms, and in many cases an environment of drugs, crime, and violence, those students who come from low socio-economic, non-White backgrounds often disengage from learning. Teachers, who remain predominantly of White and middle-class background, tend to lower their expectations for such students and relax their own standards in teaching.

Valli et al. (1997) argue that the liberal consensus about equity in education has been weakened by recent developments in the U.S. economic and political life. Influenced by renewed emphasis on market ideology, more teachers are now likely to shift responsibility for promoting achievement

from themselves to students and their parents. At the same time, in the 1990s, the public demands greater accountability from teachers. Prompted by these considerations, this study explored preservice teachers' beliefs regarding three ideal-typical orientations:

- 1) the primary responsibility of teachers is to promote excellence in achievement among the most able students, even if it requires reducing resources, teacher time, and attention given to other students;
- 2) the primary responsibility of teachers is to ensure equity of access to educational opportunities for all students, irrespective of their socio-economic background, ability, or motivation; and
- 3) the primary responsibility of teachers is to work toward equality of learning outcomes, even if it requires giving extra resources, teacher time, and attention to students from disadvantaged families.

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that both ACE and BSU teacher candidates believe that teachers' primary responsibility is to ensure equity of access to educational opportunities for all students. Both ACE and BSU preservice teachers disagree that teachers' primary responsibility is to promote excellence in achievement by focusing on the most able or better prepared and motivated students. Similarly, ACE and BSU preservice teachers tend to disagree that teachers should be primarily responsible for ensuring equality of achievement outcomes, (i.e., that teachers should provide additional instructional and social support to disadvantaged students). ACE teachers, however, are significantly more likely than BSU student teachers to agree that teachers should be responsible for equality in achievement outcomes, and less likely to agree that teachers should be responsible for equity of access to educational opportunities.

### **Responsibility for Promoting Socio-Moral Development**

Although academic achievement constitutes the core of the work that schools do, another major challenge for schools is the social and moral development of students. With the decline of intergenerational functional communities and the decrease in the strength of families as the primary socializing agents for children, schools and teachers are being asked to assume more responsibility for students' social and moral growth. It is no longer sufficient for schools to provide students with subject matter instruction alone; they must also foster student values, attitudes, efforts, and conceptions of self—the social outcomes of schooling (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1991).

Although it is possible for teachers to influence students' social and moral development directly through ethical and moral instruction and discussions, research suggests that they are more likely to enhance the socio-moral development of students indirectly, for example, through teacher behavior that leads to a specific kind of community within a school. The resulting

social interactions among students and teachers produce an atmosphere in which students learn to make moral judgements (Bidwell, 1987; Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993; Power et al., 1989). Catholic schools have traditionally been very successful in fostering moral communities among their students and teachers (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993); thus, they are particularly interested in new teachers who will be able to sustain and enhance this tradition.

This study explored three content-specific components of the sense of responsibility for promoting students' socio-moral development: facilitating character and ethical development of students, fostering students' social responsibility, and promoting racial and ethnic awareness and understanding among students. The results presented in Table 2 indicate that ACE teacher candidates are significantly more likely than BSU student teachers to believe that teachers should be responsible for all three components. The difference is not only statistically significant but also substantively large: The difference between mean responses regarding character and ethical development is equal to one standard deviation; the difference between mean responses regarding social responsibility is equal to about half of one standard deviation; and the difference between mean responses regarding multicultural development although weaker in statistical significance ( $p \leq .05$ ) is still equal to about 20% of one standard deviation.

**Table 2**  
**Sense of Responsibility for Students' Socio-Moral Development**

	ACE (n=211)		BSU (n=232)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Responsibility for character and ethical development.	4.14***	(.60)	3.55	(.76)
Responsibility to develop students as socially responsible individuals.	4.13***	(.67)	3.82	(.74)
Responsibility to promote multicultural awareness and understanding.	4.07*	(.70)	3.93	(.77)

NOTES: Scale: from 1 = *completely disagree* to 5 = *completely agree*

\* $p \leq .05$  \*\* $p \leq .01$  \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

The results on responsibility beliefs indicate that Alliance for Catholic Education has been successful in recruiting individuals who feel highly responsible for the outcomes of their teaching. ACE teacher candidates are similar to teaching career-oriented students in the traditional teacher preparation program in their overall sense of responsibility for promoting student learning. At the same time, ACE teacher candidates feel more responsible for helping disadvantaged students to succeed in learning than do traditional pre-service teachers. ACE participants express a heightened sense of responsibil-

ity for promoting children's socio-moral growth, compared to their counterparts in the traditional program. Furthermore, members of ACE attribute more importance to teachers' role as moral educator than to their role as subject matter instructor.

## **SELF-EFFICACY IN TEACHING**

Teacher efficacy has been widely used in educational research since the late 1970s in several conceptual interpretations (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). The most widely accepted tradition of research grew out of the work by Bandura (1977), according to whom self-efficacy is a belief that an individual has a "generative capability" to perform the behavior required to achieve desired outcomes.

Self-efficacy, in other words, is a belief about the level of competence an individual possesses. Self-efficacy is, of course, self-perception of competence rather than an objective measure of competence. Bandura's recent findings, however, indicated that perceived self-efficacy is a strong predictor of effective behavior (Bandura, 1977). Studies in organizational psychology have shown that strong self-efficacy is associated with individuals' success in pursuing their goals, whereas weak self-efficacy is associated with low performance (Bandura, 1989; Cherniss, 1993).

Extant research on self-efficacy in educational settings reports similar findings for teachers. Teachers with high personal efficacy were shown to be persistent when facing obstacles (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), willing to experiment with instructional materials and activities (Allinder, 1994), and likely to agree that low-SES children should be placed in regular education classrooms (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Teachers' personal efficacy was also associated with levels of professional commitment among preservice (Evans & Tribble, 1986) and in-service teachers (Coladarci, 1992). In addition, research indicated a positive association of teachers' sense of efficacy with student achievement and other outcomes (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Newmann, Rutter, & Smith, 1989; Rosenholtz, 1985; Rowan et al., 1997).

The present study investigated two dimensions of teachers' efficacy: general and personal teaching efficacy. General teaching efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs about the profession's general capability to achieve its goals in educating children. Personal teaching efficacy refers to individual teachers' beliefs about their personal ability to achieve results in the classroom in accordance with the standards of the profession.

### **General Efficacy in Teaching**

As shown in Table 3, both ACE and BSU teacher candidates hold positive beliefs about efficacy of teachers in promoting achievement; however, the scores indicate that such beliefs are not very strong. ACE teachers' general teaching efficacy in promoting students' socio-moral development is stronger

than their general efficacy in affecting students' learning. In contrast, BSU preservice teachers hold similar general efficacy beliefs regarding achievement and socio-moral development of students. Comparing the two groups, ACE teachers' beliefs about general efficacy in promoting students' socio-moral development are significantly higher than those of BSU preservice teachers. Finally, both ACE and BSU teacher candidates neither agree nor disagree with the statement that teachers in general are able to discipline students who are not disciplined at home; this finding suggests that preservice teachers in both programs view discipline problems as the most challenging for the teaching profession.

**Table 3**  
**Self-Efficacy in Teaching**

	ACE (n=211)		BSU (n=232)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
General efficacy in promoting students' achievement	3.40	(.56)	3.42	(.63)
General efficacy in promoting socio-moral development	3.79***	(.76)	3.46	(.86)
General efficacy in establishing discipline among students	3.08	(1.14)	2.96	(1.18)
Personal efficacy in promoting students' achievement	3.97	(.46)	4.02	(.50)
Personal efficacy in promoting socio-moral development	3.94	(.53)	3.84	(.59)
Personal efficacy in establishing discipline among students	3.21*	(.62)	3.48	(.69)

NOTES: Scale: from 1 = *completely disagree* to 5 = *completely agree*

\*p.<.05 \*\*p.<.01 \*\*\*p.<.001

### **Personal Efficacy in Teaching**

ACE and BSU teacher candidates hold similarly positive beliefs about their self-efficacy in promoting students' learning and socio-moral development (see Table 3). BSU preservice teachers hold somewhat weaker beliefs regarding their self-efficacy in promoting socio-moral development among students compared to their self-efficacy in promoting achievement, while ACE preservice teachers have similar levels of self-efficacy in these two areas. Both ACE and BSU preservice teachers, however, hold slightly lower personal efficacy beliefs regarding discipline compared to their self-efficacy in achievement or socio-moral development aspects of teaching. Furthermore, ACE teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about discipline, although positive, are significantly lower than those of BSU preservice teachers; this result indicates concern among ACE teachers about their preparation for classroom management. This

concern, however, is natural because ACE teacher candidates had not yet had any training in classroom management by the time they responded to the baseline questionnaire, unlike BSU preservice teachers, who had completed most of their coursework.

In sum, preservice teachers in both programs hold similar general and personal efficacy beliefs regarding students' academic achievement. ACE teachers, however, are more likely to believe that teachers in general can successfully promote children's socio-moral development and are somewhat more likely ( $p < .1$ ) to believe in their own personal efficacy as moral educators than career-oriented preservice teachers. ACE teachers' lower self-efficacy in discipline suggests a need for special attention to classroom management and discipline issues during their training.

## CLASSROOM PRACTICES

This study also investigated preservice teachers' reports of their intended classroom practices that reflect professional standards set forth and shared by the teaching community on the national level (Bidwell et al., 1997). Today, professional practices are those that place a strong emphasis on teaching for understanding, including development of students' conceptual understanding, skills in critical thinking, problem solving, and intellectual independence. Professional practices include continuous adaptation of instruction to diverse learners, based on the knowledge of variability in learning styles, exceptionality in learning and learning disabilities, as well as differences in learning needs based on students' socio-cultural experiences.

Professional practices also focus on establishing a positive climate in the classroom as a means of encouraging active engagement in learning, promoting self-motivation, and fostering an ability to work cooperatively with others in complex social settings. This approach to promoting motivation is further evident in the use of moral reasoning-based classroom management practices, rather than conventional notions of discipline based on teacher authority. In addition, professional practices provide learning opportunities that support students' social, moral, and emotional development, in addition to their cognitive and physical growth.

Current standards for professional practices have been developed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and by the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium. They specifically focus on the demands of the knowledge-based economy and the requirement to meet the needs of all learners, and thus reflect the shared understanding of the educational and research community about current goals of schools and effective means of achieving these goals (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

This section begins with results for indicators of teaching modes, (i.e., four general patterns that characterize goals that teachers set in their class-

rooms and methods they use to achieve these goals). The four modes include progressivism, or instructional practices directed at development of higher-order mental processes and intellectual independence in students; moral agency, or practices directed at formation of children's beliefs, values, and normative commitments; trust and caring, or behavior directed at establishing positive relationships and ties between teachers and students; and rigorism, or teacher practices that set high standards in the classroom without excuses for individual circumstances (Bidwell et al., 1997).

The results show that ACE teachers are most likely to agree that they will pursue progressivism and moral agency as goals and modes of instruction in their classrooms (see Table 4). BSU preservice teachers are similar to ACE teachers in reporting the highest likelihood of progressivist practices, but their ratings of moral agency practices are significantly lower when compared to either their own ratings of progressivism or to ACE teachers' ratings of moral agency (the difference equals almost half of the standard deviation). Both ACE and BSU preservice teachers rate trust and caring practices third, yet they are somewhat likely to agree that they will utilize such practices in their classrooms. Both ACE and BSU preservice teachers are somewhat likely to disagree that they intend to use rigorist practices in their classrooms.

**Table 4**  
**Anticipated Classroom Practices**

	ACE (n=211)		BSU (n=232)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Progressivism	4.15	(.52)	4.06	(.47)
Moral agency	4.05***	(.53)	3.85	(.48)
Trust and caring	3.54	(.66)	3.57	(.58)
Rigorism	2.87	(.62)	2.77	(.66)
Adapting instruction when some students fail to achieve	4.27	(.46)	4.30	(.45)
Moral reasoning-based discipline practices	4.29***	(.52)	4.08	(.53)

NOTES: Scale: from 1 = completely disagree to 5 = completely agree

\* $p \leq .05$  \*\* $p \leq .01$  \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

Both ACE and BSU teacher candidates are highly likely to agree that they will adapt their instructional methods to the individual needs and abilities of students in their future classrooms. Similarly, both ACE and BSU preservice teachers are likely to report that they intend to use moral reasoning-based discipline practices in their classrooms, with ACE teachers holding significantly higher beliefs on this scale (see Table 4).

Results on preservice teachers' reports of intended practices in the classroom are consistent with findings on participants' responsibility and self-effi-

cacy beliefs. Compared to career-oriented preservice teachers in the traditional teacher preparation program, ACE teacher candidates report higher preference for moral agency practices and for using moral reasoning-based means of establishing discipline in their classrooms.

## CONCLUSION

This paper documents several statistically significant differences in the initial beliefs among preservice teachers in a service-learning program (ACE) and in a traditional program (BSU). Whereas both groups are similar in their positive sense of responsibility for promoting student learning, ACE teachers differ from BSU preservice teachers in their beliefs about equity of access versus equality of outcomes. Both groups tend to view ensuring equity of access to resources as the primary responsibility of teachers. Yet, ACE teachers are less likely to agree that teachers are responsible for equity of access and more likely to agree that teachers are responsible for equality of outcomes than BSU preservice teachers. Both programs' participants view themselves as teachers who will be consistently adapting instruction to the needs or abilities of students in the classroom.

Incoming ACE teachers report a higher sense of responsibility for promoting character and ethical development, fostering social responsibility, and promoting multicultural awareness and understanding among their future students. Similarly, although preservice teachers in the two programs do not differ in their beliefs about the teaching profession's efficacy in promoting achievement or discipline, ACE teachers hold stronger efficacy beliefs about the teaching profession's ability to foster socio-moral development among children.

Participants in both programs are most likely to see themselves utilizing progressivist classroom practices during their preservice teaching. Moral agency practices are rated second, with ACE teachers giving them significantly higher ratings than BSU preservice teachers. Establishing trust in relationships with students is third, whereas rigorism is the least likely teaching mode for both groups of preservice teachers. Finally, ACE teachers are more likely to choose moral reasoning-based ways of establishing discipline than preservice teachers in the traditional program, although both programs are quite high on this variable.

The findings in this study suggest that on the whole ACE's innovative conceptual framework and service-learning approach to teacher preparation appeal to individuals who are committed to making a difference in the education of children in this country, and reflect the core concern of the most recent teacher education reform proposals for recruitment of academically competent and responsible prospective teachers. Furthermore, insofar as ACE teacher candidates demonstrate a greater sense of responsibility for helping



the least advantaged students academically and for fostering children's moral growth compared to their counterparts in a traditional program, ACE's innovative approach appears to be successful in reflecting the specific ideals of Catholic education in its recruitment. The next stage in this longitudinal research project will investigate the impact of extended teaching internships on ACE teachers and explore the effectiveness of ACE's model of teacher education in preparing professionally competent and responsible teachers.

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## APPENDIX

### VARIABLE DESCRIPTION

#### SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

##### **Teachers' Sense of Responsibility for Promoting Achievement ( $\alpha = .6454$ )**

- It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that even difficult or unmotivated students achieve at a high level.
- It is teachers who are usually responsible when their students fail to achieve to the best of their potential.
- It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that all students grow in their learning according to their individual abilities.
- Since it is a personal choice of individual students at what level to achieve, teachers are usually not responsible for students' poor academic knowledge (reversed).
- Teachers should organize their instruction in such a way that all students exceed a satisfactory level of achievement.
- Teachers should tailor instruction to the individual abilities of their students to ensure that all students learn to the best of their potential.
- Making sure that children exceed a satisfactory level of achievement is to a larger extent the responsibility of the family than of teachers (reversed).
- Making sure that children grow in learning according to their individual abilities is to a larger extent the responsibility of the family than of teachers (reversed).

##### **Teachers' Sense of Responsibility for Promoting Equality of Educational Opportunity (analyzed as separate items)**

- Schools should promote excellence by providing extra resources for the higher achieving students, even if this means doing less for others.
- Schools should promote equality in achievement by providing extra resources for the disadvantaged students, even if this means doing less for others.
- Schools should promote equity by providing the same amount of resources to all students, irrespective of their background or motivation for learning.

##### **Teachers' Sense of Responsibility for Promoting Character and Ethical Development ( $\alpha = .6609$ )**

- Teachers are just as responsible for the character and ethical development of their students as they are for academic instruction.
- Character and ethical development of students should not take time away from the academic curriculum (reversed).
- Students' character and ethical development is the job of their family and schools should not interfere with it (reversed).

### **Teachers' Sense of Responsibility for Developing Students as Socially Responsible Individuals ( $\alpha = .6802$ )**

- Teachers are just as responsible for fostering social responsibility (e.g., concern for helping others in the community, correcting social and economic inequalities, protecting the environment) among their students as they are for instruction.
- Fostering social responsibility among students should not take time away from the academic curriculum (reversed).
- Fostering students' social responsibility is the job of their family and schools should not interfere with it (reversed).

### **Teachers' Sense of Responsibility for Promoting Multicultural Awareness and Understanding ( $\alpha = .7285$ )**

- Teachers are just as responsible for promoting multicultural awareness and understanding among their students as they are for academic instruction.
- Promoting multicultural awareness among students shouldn't take time away from the academic curriculum (reversed).
- Promoting students' multicultural awareness is the job of their family and schools shouldn't interfere with it (reversed).

## **EFFICACY BELIEFS**

### **General Efficacy in Promoting Achievement ( $\alpha = .6938$ )**

- The influences of a student's home experiences can be overcome by good teaching.
- A teacher is very limited in what he or she can achieve because a student's home environment is a large influence on his or her achievement (reversed).
- Even a teacher with good teaching abilities may not reach many students (reversed).
- When it comes right down to it, a teacher really cannot do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment (reversed).
- The hours in class have little influence on students compared to the influence of their home environment (reversed).
- The amount a student can learn is primarily related to family background (reversed).

### **General Efficacy in Promoting Socio-Moral Development ( $\alpha = .7537$ )**

- Even good teachers cannot do much to affect students' character and ethical development compared to family, peer, and media influences (reversed).
- Even good teachers cannot do much to overcome students' racial or ethnic prejudices (reversed).
- Even good teachers cannot ensure that all of their students develop as socially responsible individuals (reversed).

**General Efficacy in Promoting Discipline (a separate item)**

- If students are not disciplined at home, they are not likely to accept any discipline (reversed).

**Personal Efficacy in Promoting Achievement ( $\alpha = .7126$ )**

- I expect all my students to succeed.
- If I try really hard, I will be able to get through even to the most difficult or unmotivated students.
- By trying a different teaching method, I will be able to significantly affect a student's achievement.
- There is really very little that I will be able to do to ensure that most of my students achieve at a high level (reversed).
- Without support from parents, there is little that I will be able to do to improve my students' achievement (reversed).
- If a student's peers discourage classroom participation and/or doing homework, there will be little that I will be able to do about it (reversed).
- When it comes right down to it, I really will not be able to do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depend on his or her home environment (reversed).

**Personal Efficacy in Promoting Socio-Moral Development ( $\alpha = .7571$ )**

- By adjusting my practices, I will be able to meet the special social needs of at-risk students and students from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Using different methods, I will be able to overcome the cultural (racial, ethnic) prejudices of students in my classes.
- I will feel inadequate relating to the social issues presented by students who come from cultural backgrounds different from my own (reversed).
- I do not feel prepared to deal with many of the social and behavior problems that at-risk students bring into the classroom (reversed).
- I will have little influence on my students' character and ethical development compared to the influence of their home environment and/or their peers (reversed).
- Given the constraints of the curriculum, I will have little if any opportunity to address concerns related to character and ethics (reversed).
- Given the constraints of the curriculum, I will have little if any opportunity to address issues related to social responsibility (reversed).
- Given the constraints of the curriculum, I will have little if any opportunity to address concerns related to racial or ethnic relationships (reversed).

**Personal Efficacy in Promoting Discipline ( $\alpha = .6242$ )**

- Without support from parents, there is very little I will be able to do to promote discipline in my classroom (reversed).

- I will be able to convince students in my classroom to follow the rules without having to threaten them.
- I feel that discipline in my classroom will depend on whether student leaders in the class will cooperate with me (reversed).
- Maintaining good discipline will not be a problem for me.

## **CLASSROOM PRACTICES**

### **Progressivism ( $\alpha = .7618$ )**

- I encourage students to express opinions different from my own.
- My assignments require students to gather information on their own.
- My homework assignments require students to think in new ways about what I have presented in class.
- The class material I choose stimulates students to reflect on their values.
- In my classes, I encourage students to interact with one another.
- I teach students how to learn.
- I regularly give students a chance to discuss issues among themselves.
- My students must do more than learn basic facts.
- I regularly give students the opportunity to explore subject matter on their own.
- I regularly engage students in question and answer activity.

### **Moral Agency ( $\alpha = .7079$ )**

- I try to instill a common set of values in my students.
- In my classroom, I usually set a well-defined task for each student.
- In my classes, I know what each student is doing.
- My lessons are based on an explicit set of values.
- Students see me as someone they can look up to.
- More than anything else, I set a good example for my students.
- I write detailed lesson plans.

### **Trust and Caring ( $\alpha = .7671$ )**

- Students talk to me about their friendships.
- Students talk to me about what they do outside school.
- Students see me as a friend.
- Students know what I do outside school.
- I know a great deal about students' families.
- Students see me as someone they can relate to.
- I try to keep a certain distance from students (reversed).

### **Rigorism ( $\alpha = .6839$ )**

- Order and discipline come first in my classroom.
- So far as behavior is concerned, I rarely make exceptions for special cases.
- I refuse to negotiate with students about grades.

- So far as missed tests are concerned, I rarely make exceptions for special cases.
- I require a quiet classroom.
- I refuse to negotiate with students about homework assignments.

### **Adapting Instruction ( $\alpha = .6372$ )**

If some students in my class are not doing well:

- I will change my approach to the subject.
- I will try various techniques that can improve their performance.
- I will allocate additional time to work with failing students.
- I will give these students extra help so that they can catch up.
- I will not need to change my instruction, since other students perform in a satisfactory way (reversed).

### **Moral Reasoning-Based Discipline Practices ( $\alpha = .7594$ )**

When my students misbehave in class:

- I will usually ask students to explain why they acted as they did.
- I will usually look for ways to help my students develop their character and/or social skills.
- I will usually try to help them understand the moral implications of their misbehavior.
- I will usually try to help them see that their misbehavior interferes with their own learning.
- I will usually try to explain to them that their misbehavior interferes with other students' learning.
- I will usually see this as an opportunity for class discussion about responsibility and character.