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# White Novice Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Their Preparation for Teaching Culturally Diverse Students

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Karen Spader

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Walden University  
2015

Abstract

White Novice Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Their Preparation for Teaching  
Culturally Diverse Students

by

Karen Spader

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

Walden University

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## Abstract

At a Midwestern university, White novice teachers struggled to be prepared to implement culturally responsive pedagogy. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences had equipped them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students. The theoretical/conceptual frameworks of this study were White identity development theory, a multicultural education framework, culturally relevant pedagogy, and the motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching. Data were collected by interviewing 8 White novice teachers to convey their perceptions of teaching culturally diverse classrooms and how these perceptions influenced their behaviors. Data were organized by organizational, substantive, and theoretical categories. The themes that emerged from the data were the need for additional cultural knowledge, the implementation of supportive measures, barriers to supporting cultural diversity in classrooms, and the importance of cultural interpersonal skills. This study may lead to positive social change for teacher educators, novice teachers, as well as school districts by developing their understanding of how to support White novice teachers with strategies for teaching culturally diverse students.

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## Dedication

My inspiration to conduct this study came from my teaching experiences in elementary urban schools. I have dedicated this work to my former teaching colleagues who are devoted to improving the academic and social success of their urban school students. I hope this work will add to best teaching practice.

Additionally, I dedicate this work to all of my teachers, especially my second grade teacher, Ann Breiding, who believed that I would be successful. She always had high expectations of her students' work, and by doing so, she inspired me in my early years to always do my best.

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## Section 1: The Problem

### **Introduction**

Within the U.S. educational system, there is controversy over how issues such as race, religion, and ethnicity impact education (Ravitch, 1990). While there is consensus about the importance of education to the future of the United States, there are differences of opinion among educators about what that education should look like, and whether educational institutions should address issues of race, religion, and ethnicity (Morrison, Robbins, & Rose, 2008; Sleeter, 2011; Sparapani, Seo, & Smith, 2011). Historically, the curriculum has not included racial, religious, or ethnic issues (Ravitch, 1990). Textbooks might have included information on a famous African American man or a famous woman, but there was little emphasis placed on individuals from minority groups or women. In the 1960s, the dominant Anglo-Saxon focus in the curriculum was scrutinized by ethnic groups, and the curriculum was changed to reduce bias against minority groups. African Americans, Native Americans, women, and immigrant groups were more accurately portrayed in the revised curriculum (Ravitch, 1990). However, the melting pot concept, emphasizing all people's sameness, was maintained. More recently, there has been a shift in education to promote cultural pluralism that celebrates ethnic and racial differences.

With this shift to cultural pluralism and the United States becoming a more diverse nation, preparing teachers for culturally diverse classrooms is essential (Sparapani et al., 2011). Sparapani et al. (2011) examined ways to teach diversity in teacher education programs. The three researchers used their own "voices" to describe

their experiences within an urban culture; an Asian American culture; and a Native American, English-as-second-language culture. Sparapani et al. concluded that the following five key principles should be reflected in efforts to improve teacher education programs: (a) communication across cultures, (b) recognition of the personal nature of culture, (c) cultural boundaries, (d) setting aside stereotypes, and (e) getting to know people in another culture. To communicate effectively with those from another culture, teachers may consider comparing that culture to their own culture (Sparapani et al., 2011). Teachers might become more sensitive to what they say and do in their classrooms, so they do not hurt a student's sense of cultural pride. When understanding cultural boundaries, teachers may understand acceptable and unacceptable behavior within certain cultures. In order to teach cross-culturally, teachers might overcome stereotypes that they may have about a particular culture. Once teachers become familiar with individuals from different cultures, they are more likely to change their perceptions about those cultures.

While educational curricula have come to celebrate diversity, the majority of teachers in the United States are female, and more than 80% are White (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Based on these statistics, there is a need to prepare White novice teachers to support students from diverse backgrounds in their classrooms. White preservice teachers may face challenges with their identity when trying to implement culturally relevant pedagogy (Hyland, 2009). Because novice teachers are not likely to have strong role models to support them with pedagogy or making connections with

students from marginalized populations, teacher educators may consider implementing strategies to prepare White preservice teachers for teaching diverse students.

### **Definition of the Problem**

White novice teachers who were enrolled in the school of education at a Midwestern university (MU) needed an effective teaching model that prepared them to address a culturally diverse population of students. Approximately 60% of the students at this private, rural university were female (U.S. News & World Report, 2012). Almost 90% of the preservice teachers were White, with little to no experience with students from diverse backgrounds (D. Leialoha, personal communication, May 3, 2012).

### **Rationale**

The purpose of this study was to explore White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences have equipped them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students. Given the study's purpose, I collected data through interviews with White novice teachers from MU. The novice teachers who attended MU were not only almost 90% White but were likely to have had limited exposure or experience to students from diverse backgrounds (D. Leialoha, personal communication, May 3, 2012). One faculty member reported that, in his 13 years of teaching human relations classes at MU, the preservice teachers had never voluntarily discussed issues of diversity (K. Johnston, personal communication, November 29, 2012).

### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

Students in the undergraduate program in the school of education were asked to describe their multicultural knowledge on the following Likert scale: (a) 0 = *None—complete unfamiliarity*, (b) 2-3 = *Minimal—some familiarity*, (c) 4-5 = *Average ability to address the topic*, and (d) 6-7 = *Extensive ability to debate/explain/lead discussion on the topic*. On the presurvey, which the students took, they rated their knowledge of 33 out of 35 items related to multiculturalism as minimal. On the postsurvey, the students improved but still reported less-than-average knowledge on survey questions regarding such items as immigration laws, Asian American cultural groups, and Native American tribes. Some of the items included on the postsurvey on which students reported their knowledge as average were multicultural education, systematic racism in schools, and oppression in education.

### **Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature**

In addition to the problem at the local setting, researchers have suggested that there is a general need to prepare White preservice teachers for teaching a culturally diverse population of students (Chicola, 2007; Duncan-Andrade, 2007). In this section, I discuss two studies conducted at higher education institutions within the United States that investigated preparing White preservice teachers for teaching culturally diverse students.

In a mixed methods study conducted at the Buffalo State College in New York, 50 teacher candidates, who were mainly White middle-class women who did not have many experiences with students from diverse backgrounds, were examined for one



semester (Chicola, 2007). Chicola (2007) sought to determine how a new writing assignment added to a course in social studies, along with class discussions and presentations, would help prepare teacher candidates for teaching elementary students from culturally diverse backgrounds. Instructors of the social studies course developed a writing assignment that would meet the diversity requirement to ensure that teacher candidates were ready to function in a multicultural society by increasing their knowledge of diverse groups and allowing them to reflect on their biases influencing their behaviors and attitudes in their future classrooms. To enhance this writing assignment, teacher candidates participated in electronic forums and classroom discussions about diversity and implemented culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms (Chicola, 2007). At the end of the semester, the teacher candidates completed and submitted the writing assignment, which allowed them to write about ways to teach tolerance and how their experiences could become a part of an action plan for their teaching practice. In follow-up focus group interviews, the teacher candidates felt that they needed more cultural knowledge and additional support to create action plans for their own teaching practice (Chicola, 2007). The teacher candidates needed more multicultural curricular experiences throughout the semester and support for multicultural resources to cite in their papers. The creation of an action plan among teacher candidates requires scaffolding throughout the course. Guidance for discovering multicultural curriculum and knowledge is another area that must become a focus for future courses.

In another qualitative study, Duncan-Andrade (2007) examined four urban school teachers who taught at the secondary level and were living in South Los Angeles. The

focus of the case study was discovering effective teaching practices in urban schools linked to the increased academic achievement of the students and implications for improving the practice of teachers in this area. Duncan-Andrade focused on one student teacher, who was one of four participants. The student teacher was assigned to a third grade classroom located in the Southeastern part of the United States and was from a White middle class family. The demographics of the school were changing from mostly White to African American; other students were English language learners from various racial, ethnic, and lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Once the study started, this student teacher expressed resistance to cultural diversity (Duncan-Andrade, 2007). The student teacher based similarities among the students on attributes such as the school that they attended or their socioeconomic class. This student teacher based the differences among the students on attributes such as personality or race. Furthermore, this teacher's understanding of socioeconomic class was associated with students living in a particular area. While the student teacher did understand that cultural groups have similar practices and experiences, the teacher stereotyped the differences between the interaction styles of the African American and White students at her assigned school and did not recognize how race could impact lifetime opportunities for certain individuals. Thus, culturally responsive pedagogy may help student teachers become more socioculturally conscious, help them distinguish between similarities and differences of individuals, and help them understand that cultural identities do affect life circumstances.

## Definitions

*Cultural diversity*: “Characteristics or factors such as personality, work style, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, having a disability, socioeconomic level, educational attainment, and general work experience. Diversity refers to all of the characteristics that make individuals different from each other” (Purdue University, 2005, p. 1).

*Cultural pluralism*: The recognition of the contributions of many different cultures to society (Ravitch, 1990).

*Culturally responsive pedagogy*: “Pedagogy that supports empowered learning of diverse student populations in ways that neoliberal reforms do not” (Sleeter, 2011, p. 8).

*Culturally relevant practice*: “Teaching that considers the cultural, racial and ethnic, social class, linguistic, and religious backgrounds of students in planning inclusive, antioppression, and relevant curriculum and instruction” (Davis, Ramahlo, Beyerbach, & London, 2008, theoretical underpinnings and practice section, para. 1).

### *Multicultural education*:

A philosophical concept built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human dignity as acknowledged in various documents, such as the U.S. Declaration of Independence, constitutions of South Africa and the United States, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations. It affirms our need to prepare students for their responsibilities in an interdependent world. It recognizes the role schools can play in developing the attitudes and values necessary for a democratic society. It values cultural differences and

affirms the pluralism that students, their communities, and teachers reflect. It challenges all forms of discrimination in schools and society through the promotion of democratic principles of social justice. (National Association of Multicultural Education, 2012, p. 1)

*Novice teacher:* A teacher who graduated from the school of education at MU and has 2 or less years of teaching experience.

*Social justice pedagogy:* “A set of teaching practices that aim to create equitable social and academic outcomes for students in urban schools” (Duncan-Andrade, 2007, p. 618).

*White:* “Person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as ‘White’ or report entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Arab, Moroccan, or Caucasian” (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010, p. 1).

### **Significance**

Because the majority of preservice teachers are White and have little to no experience with cultural diversity, there remains a need to provide them with diversity training before they enter their classrooms (Chicola, 2007). Teachers must be prepared to mentor students and link theory to practice during their field experiences (Ferrara, Larke, & Lea, 2010; Thomas & Vanderhaar, 2008; Zozakiewiez, 2010). Teachers may learn to link theory to practice through reflective journals (Chicola, 2007), strategies for helping English as second language students (Ferrara et al., 2010; Lonquist, Banks, & Huber, 2009), more guidance for multicultural education resources (Chicola, 2007), consistent

infusion of multiculturalism in the education courses (Thomas & Vanderhaar, 2008), reduction of the impact of European American dominance in multicultural education classes on minority preservice teachers (Amos, 2010), and incorporation of dialogue concerning issues of White identity development in addition to placement of preservice teachers into diverse classrooms (Bloom & Peters, 2012; LaDuke, 2009), as well as before and after field experiences (Brown, Barkley, & Higgenbotham, 2011; Waddell, 2011). In this study, I investigated areas of improvement needed for training White preservice teachers by comparing valid current research to the novice teachers' perceptions.

### **Guiding/Research Question**

This study's research questions were the following:

1. What are White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences have prepared them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students?
2. How do White novice teachers perceive cultural diversity and the culturally responsive pedagogy that they are expected to implement?
3. How do White novice teachers perceive that their attitudes toward cultural diversity affect their behavior in the classroom?

### **Review of the Literature**

The purpose of this literature review is to provide an overview of the conceptual framework of the study and research about improving teacher education programs for White preservice teachers. The participants chosen for this study were White novice teachers because they might have acquired insight about how their training prepared them

or not for teaching culturally diverse students. Because little research exists about White novice teachers and their classroom experiences with culturally diverse students, in this literature review, I focused on the perceptions and experiences of White preservice teachers.

Most of the literature concerning this topic is qualitative, as qualitative research lends itself to discovering the perceptions or beliefs of the participants of the study (Merriam, 2009). A lack of U.S. pedagogy that is supportive of culturally diverse students has historical roots; the curriculum was initially developed for the White dominant culture (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ravitch, 1990). With the changing demographics of the United States, there is a need for the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy. Many of the qualitative studies that were found were dated, and I had some difficulty finding research that was more current. Although the research conducted in the United States was conducted in various regions, the school settings and participants were similar.

This literature review begins with an explanation of the theoretical/conceptual frameworks of my study, including White identity development, multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy, and a motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching. Next, I present themes gleaned from research studies. In the first section, details of qualitative studies conducted in K-12 schools are examined. In the following sections, I review characteristics of education programs preparing teachers for diversity, teacher candidates' perceptions concerning multicultural education, and the implications of teacher education programs.

### **Search Strategies**

A keyword search including the terms *cultural diversity*, *cultural pluralism*, *culturally relevant practice*, *culturally responsive pedagogy*, *multicultural education*, and *social justice pedagogy* was used for searching literature. I used the Boolean phrases *White preservice or White novice teachers' attitudes toward cultural diversity* and *White preservice or White novice teachers' attitudes toward cultural competence*. Other methods involved searching authors in the field of education and using citations in articles that related to the topic of my study. The databases searched included ERIC and the Teacher Reference Center. In addition to these databases, I searched Google Scholar and my local public library for journal articles.

### **Theoretical-Conceptual Framework**

The theoretical frameworks for this study were White identity development, multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy, and a motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching. Hardiman's (1982) theory of White identity development relates to this study, as White preservice teachers go through various stages of identity development during their student teaching assignments. After the preservice teachers become aware of their own identities, they may begin to appreciate the importance of the contributions of other cultures and multiculturalism in society and fight against policies, systems, and classroom practices that oppress marginalized groups in the United States. In the multicultural education framework, Ortiz and Rhoads (2000) expanded on this notion. The strategies recommended in the culturally relevant pedagogy by Ladson-Billings (1995) and a motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching by

Wlodowski and Ginseng (1995) served as a foundation for understanding how White preservice teachers incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices in their classrooms.

**White identity development theory.** Hardiman's (1982) theory of White identity development has five stages. In the first stage, Whites are naïve about race until they reach the end of their childhood. As society sends both covert and overt messages about race, the next stage of development involves Whites believing that they are superior to others (Hardiman, 1982). As Whites understand that the dominance of one group over another group is not right in the third stage of development, they learn to question and resist racial comments. In the fourth stage, Whites discover how to redefine their race and start to fight against racism. Finally, at Stage 5, Whites reach a heightened level of consciousness, have redefined White identity, and realize the social injustices and racism that exist in society (Hardiman, 1982).

**Multicultural education framework.** In a framework for multicultural education designed by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000), both White and non-White students analyze White culture. This framework involves individuals understanding the influence of culture in shaping lives and exploring other cultures. Other key tenets of this framework include the impact of White privilege, ways of challenging the norm, and the awareness of other cultures' contributions to society (Ortiz & Rhoads, 2000). This framework includes the impact of multiculturalism on society and the importance of restructuring systems in the United States for accepting all cultures.



**Culturally relevant pedagogy.** Ladson-Billings (1995) described teachers using successful strategies to teach African American students. Some teachers believe that all students can learn and that student-teacher relationships are equitable and reciprocal (Ladson-Billings, 1995). For example, students may have opportunities to fill the teacher role and teach their classmates. Every student is expected to excel in some area. Classroom environments are communities of learners in which all students are encouraged to learn from each other. Within these communities, students learn to be responsible for each other and learn collaboratively (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Teachers provide students with background knowledge, or scaffolded instruction, to facilitate the learning process. A variety of assessments are used to evaluate student learning.

**Motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching.** Instructors can implement strategies that address cultural diversity in their classrooms (Wlodkowski & Ginseng, 1995). One way to address diversity is to establish inclusion within a lesson by using collaborative learning, which involves having students work in small groups to share ideas about a topic of research classrooms (Wlodkowski & Ginseng, 1995). Inclusive strategies should be implemented at the beginning of each class. Another strategy to support cultural diversity is to help students develop learning as a positive experience through learning goals that are important to them (Wlodkowski & Ginseng, 1995). Learning goals that are significant to the students should also be incorporated at the beginning of a lesson. In order to create meaningful learning experiences for students, instructors can use critical questioning and predicting as a strategy for motivation. For instance, students can divide into teams to conduct research on the inquiries and

predictions that they have formulated. Students should record both their questions and predictions during the research process. At the end of a lesson, students can participate in self-assessments to evaluate their learning and to make real-world connections.

### **Current Research Literature**

Most of the research conducted about preservice teachers' attitudes toward diversity has been qualitative (Chavez, 2007; Davis et al. , 2008; Duncan-Andrade, 2007; Ferrara et al., 2010; Mills, 2009; Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011; Rose & Potts, 2011; Thomas & Vanderhaar, 2008; Zozakiewiez, 2010) and conducted primarily in K-12 urban schools (Banks & Huber, 2009; Brown et al., 2011; Chicola, 2007; Davis et al., 2008; Duncan-Andrade, 2007; Ferrara et al., 2010; Liang & Zhang, 2009; Lonquist et al., 2009; Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011; Rose & Potts, 2011; Thomas & Vanderhaar, 2008; Wiggins, Follo, & Eberly, 2007; Zozakiewiez, 2010).

The preservice teachers who were participants in the studies were mainly White and middle to upper class, with little to no experience with diversity (Chicola, 2007; Davis et al., 2008; Ferrara et al., 2010; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010; Owen, 2010; Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011; Rose & Potts, 2011; Thomas & Vanderhaar, 2008; Wiggins et al., 2007; Zozakiewiez, 2010).

**Qualitative studies in K-12 urban schools.** Most of the studies concerning preservice teachers have been qualitative and have been conducted in K-12 urban schools. In the following section, I reveal the need for more study of the perceptions of preservice teachers who teach diverse students in urban schools and the need for culturally relevant pedagogy. Preservice teachers enter teacher education programs with

preconceptions about teaching based on their personal experiences, values, and practices of the dominant culture (Ferrara et al., 2010). Traditional teaching programs tend to not work for preparing preservice teachers for meeting the challenges of teaching diverse students. Preservice teachers must know their own biases so that they are able to provide an equitable learning environment. There are links among a person's life experiences, values, and teaching style to enhance diversity.

The theoretical framework of a case study by Ferrara et al. (2010) was cultural pluralism and multicultural education. Cultural pluralism involves the notions that individuals do not choose their ancestry, every ethnic group has made positive contributions to U.S. culture, and all individuals should be considered equal. The main premise of multicultural education is the idea that all children deserve an equitable learning environment that will prepare them for living in a culturally diverse society. Participants in the study by Ferrara et al. (2010) were seven preservice teachers from similar White backgrounds who had similar educations. The participants attended a university in the southwest region of the United States. One male preservice teacher and six female preservice teachers were assigned to elementary schools where there were diverse children.

According to Ferrara et al. (2010), preservice teachers began the education program with similar philosophies. Changes in their philosophy of education were discovered in journals that were kept during their experience student teaching. Most of the preservice teachers entered teaching because they stated that they loved to watch children learn and grow. Prior to their student teaching experience, these preservice

teachers did not have any experience with children of diversity. After graduation, the philosophy of education of the teachers included comments about the challenge of teaching and how students can change daily, the importance of addressing learning styles, real-life skills, and cooperative learning groups. Also, there was mention of the role of education in teaching values, setting high goals for students, and the need for more instruction on classroom control.

Ferrara et al. (2010) stated that some of the preservice teachers' journals about a 5-week multicultural education course included no mention of the multicultural course, learning about various international holidays, or an interest in multicultural literature. Other reactions included the idea that children should learn about other cultures, the realization that bad things happen to individuals in poverty, and reflections on how the teaching style may conflict with a student's learning style. Finally, some preservice teachers had mixed feelings about the course itself. Three of the first reactions that the preservice teachers had of the diverse learners were that they (a) viewed students of diversity as those who grasped the big picture before understanding details, (b) needed to adapt to the learning styles and ability levels of the students, and (c) perceived that African American students were still being discriminated against at school (Ferrara et al., 2010). None of the preservice teachers classified their students by race or diversity when writing about them in their journals. One of the teachers was shocked that a student brought a condom to school, and another teacher felt helpless that she could not help an English as a second language student because of a language barrier. With the behavior

management of the students, the preservice teachers who saw discipline more globally had fewer discipline problems.

Ferrara et al. (2010) found that the preservice teachers thought that multicultural education was important for their students, but they did not seem to understand the impact of their perceptions about diversity on their students. Preservice teachers who were more reflective were more excited about teaching. In the study by Ferrara et al. (2010), implications for future research are to conduct a similar study in a large school located in an inner city and a more thorough analysis of the perceptions of student teachers. The case studies of the preservice teachers of the study by Ferrara et al. (2010), could be used for other preservice teachers to analyze in future studies.

In the second case study, Rose and Potts (2011) examined student teachers' perceptions about cultural diversity while completing their student teaching in a multicultural school. Rose and Potts focused on one student teacher, who was one of four participants. The student teacher was assigned to a third grade classroom located in the Southeastern part of the United States and was from a White, middle class family. The demographics of the school were changing from mostly White to African American. Other students were English language learners and were from various racial, ethnic, and lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Once the study started, this student teacher expressed her resistance to cultural diversity (Rose & Potts, 2011). If students attended the same school or were in the same class, this student teacher assumed that they shared similar values or ways of life. This student teacher based her understanding of the differences among the students on their

interaction style, personality, or race. Furthermore, this teacher's understanding of socioeconomic class was associated with students living in a particular area. The student teacher did believe that cultural groups have similar practices and experiences. The student teacher stereotyped the differences between the interaction styles of the African American and the White students at her assigned school but did not recognize how race could impact lifetime opportunities for certain individuals. Additionally, this student teacher was not conscious about sociocultural matters and other factors such as economic influences.

Rose and Potts (2011) concluded that culture does matter in the classroom and recommended that teacher educators provide a framework for deconstructing the similarities and differences among individuals for teacher candidates. A culturally responsive pedagogy would help student teachers to become more socioculturally conscious, to distinguish between similarities and differences among individuals, and to understand that cultural identities do affect life circumstances.

### **Characteristics of Education Programs Preparing Teachers for Diversity**

Certain characteristics of teacher education programs help preservice teachers to become prepared for teaching in diverse classroom environments. One element of teaching practice that empowers preservice teachers to become prepared is reflection on their attitudes, biases, stereotyping, and White identity development as they encounter diversity (Chavez, 2007; Chicola, 2007; Davis et al., 2008; Ferrara et al., 2010; Liang & Zhang, 2009; Lonquist et al., 2009 ; Wiggins et al., 2007; Zozakiewiez, 2010). Ten other characteristics empower preservice teachers to teach diverse students. These

characteristics are (a) the consistent infusion of multicultural education in the curriculum (Brown et al., 2011; Chavez, 2007; Ferrara et al., 2010; LaDuke, 2009; Lonquist et al., 2009; Potts, Foster-Triplett, & Rose, 2008); (b) providing a climate of safety for their students to take risks (Chavez, 2007; Duncan-Andrade, 2007); (c) having mentor teachers who link theory to practice (Assaf, Garza, & Battle, 2010; Chavez, 2007; Thomas & Vanderhaar, 2008; Zozakiewiez, 2007); (d) implementing varied strategies for their students (Chavez, 2007; Lonquist et al., 2009); (e) addressing learning styles, interests, and cultural backgrounds of their students (Chavez, 2007; Ferrara et al., 2010; Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011); (f) dialogue about cultural issues (Chavez, 2007; Davis et al., 2008; Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011); (g) instruction that is real life and meaningful for their students (Davis et al., 2008; Duncan-Andrade, 2007; Ferrara et al., 2010; Hussain, 2012; Lonquist et al., 2009; Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011); (h) the use of cooperative learning groups to gain new perspectives or ideas (Ferrara et al., 2010; Hussain, 2012; Lonquist et al., 2009); (i) holding high expectations of their students (Duncan-Andrade, 2007; Ferrara et al., 2010; Liang & Zhang, 2009; Lonquist et al., 2009; Wlodowski, 2008); and (j) the use of immersion in cultural experiences and field experiences in diverse classroom environments (Brown et al., 2011; Duncan-Andrade, 2007; Lonquist et al., 2009; Sparapani et al., 2011; Wiggins et al., 2007).

### **Teacher Candidates' Perceptions Concerning Multicultural Education**

In this section, I review two qualitative and one quantitative study involving the perceptions of preservice teachers and multicultural education within university programs. The majority of the teachers studied were White with little or no experience

with multiculturalism. These researchers reveal characteristics of higher education environments that help to prepare preservice teachers for supporting their students from diverse backgrounds.

Thomas and Vanderhaar (2008) examined a teacher education program that was developed by two teacher educators from the Northeast region of the United States. While incorporating multiculturalism into the curriculum, the focus of a 3-year undergraduate program was to help prepare mainly White teacher candidates who lived in suburban areas and would teach in urban schools. Five participants from a cohort of 17 were chosen for this study, and two questions that the study addressed involved ways that multiculturalism was hindered or supported. Because the conceptual framework of the study was based on social justice, the following were themes of this framework: communities in classroom, education that is inclusive, and multicultural education. Thomas and Vanderhaar used interviews of the participants, documents from the program, and samples from assignments to reveal differences between the objectives related to the multicultural aspect of the program and the participants' views about how much multiculturalism should be infused within the program. Teacher candidates responded to the multicultural components of the teacher education program.

Thomas and Vanderhaar (2008) found that teacher candidates needed to acquire the knowledge and skills to implement education that supports multiculturalism in the classroom. One reason that teacher candidates did not obtain the necessary knowledge and skills that were needed was that multicultural education was not consistently infused in every part of the teacher education curriculum. Teacher candidates in this study



resisted parts of the curriculum by ignoring or minimizing multiculturalism. Four out of the five teacher candidates who participated in this study expressed that they did not feel prepared to teach in classroom environments in urban settings. Although the two teacher educators noted that the teacher candidates did grow in certain aspects, they did not believe the program helped prepare them for multicultural practice. Thomas and Vanderhaar recommended that multiculturalism appear in all courses. Additionally, teacher educators should help teacher candidates make connections with theory and practice through ongoing assessments and self-study of strengths and weaknesses. Performance-based standards for infusing multiculturalism should become a part of the assessments. Teacher educators who are overt with multiculturalism in the classrooms through their behaviors and instructional practice will help teacher candidates gain the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare them for multiculturalism.

Price-Dennis and Souto-Manning (2011) interviewed three preservice teachers who were committed to their students and seemed to understand race, equity, and social justice. Among the three preservice teachers, Price-Dennis and Souto-Manning conducted a case study focusing on one White preservice teacher who used instructional practices to engage diverse learners at an urban middle school in the Midwest. The students were mostly African American students. The theory that was the basis of this study was Freire's idea that learning is not a passive process, but rather a place that allows learners to acquire knowledge actively. Data for this study included interview transcripts; field notes; observations; curriculum addressing diversity, equity, and social change; artifacts of student work; and pictures of classrooms. The White preservice

teacher had taken a course at her university about urban education (Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011). This preservice teacher had always wanted to make a difference in the lives of African American students at low performing urban schools. Thus Price-Dennis and Souto-Manning conducted eight observations, which were the primary data collection method during the study. The major themes that emerged from the observations were social justice, teaching for equity, and social change.

Price-Dennis and Souto-Manning (2011) found that the preservice teacher was able to address race, equity, and social change through her instructional practice. One practice that the preservice teacher used to address diversity was the use of dialogue during her lessons. This dialogue was incorporated through whole group and small group discussions, as well as partner activities. This strategy was student-centered and allowed students to make meaningful connections to the content. In addition to the use of dialogue, this preservice teacher established personal relationships with her students by sharing her stories (Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011). For instance, she would relate the content of the lesson to popular culture such as hip hop. She would share her memories of listening to hip hop on the car radio while traveling with her family as a child. Her goal was to blur the role of teacher-learner relationship using specific language to value what students had done. Finally, this preservice teacher expanded on the district curriculum by including other resources and creating projects that focused on diverse viewpoints. University programs preparing preservice teachers for teaching diverse students should integrate diversity, equity, and pedagogy of hope into their programs. Preservice teachers need to understand how to work with their mentor teachers to meet

the academic expectations of the students, as well as their interests and cultural backgrounds.

Wiggins et al. (2007) conducted a quantitative study to understand the degree of change of preservice teachers' level of comfort with teaching in culturally diverse classrooms after completing a long-term field experience. Participants of the study included Group A, who were mainly White, middle class, female, preservice teachers; Group B, who were substitute teachers used as a comparison group and predominantly African American; and Group C, who were individuals who either were students or employees in an urban school culture for a long period of time. The conceptual framework of this study was self-reflection. Self-reflection is essential for students to change their attitudes toward teaching in classrooms with cultural diversity. An immersion experience was used to allow preservice teachers to become more familiar with the urban school culture and community. Using a pre and posttest design using a questionnaire, Wiggins et al. suggested that the immersion experience helped preservice teachers change their attitudes toward teaching in urban school settings. A long-term field placement, support from colleagues and instructors, and course work that is meaningful has a significant impact on preparing preservice teachers with little or no experience with students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

### **Implications**

My study will contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of higher education, and the findings could be shared with other higher education institutions, departments of education, and school districts in the Midwest and other regions of the

United States. The best time to train teachers is at the preservice level (Glazier, Charpentier, & Boone, 2011). In order for White novice teachers to make positive contributions to society, they need training for teaching diverse learners. The majority of preservice teachers are White and need educators to model multicultural education to them so that they develop positive attitudes about multiculturalism (Hill-Jackson, 2007). The findings of this study were used to understand the perceptions of White novice teachers and whether they felt equipped for teaching diverse students. The preservice teachers' responses were used to develop curriculum for content-focused workshops that will help prepare them for cultural diversity.

### **Summary**

Most educators in the United States agree that education is important (Sparapani et al., 2011). However, due to the shift to cultural pluralism, there is a need for effective training programs for White preservice teachers. The most effective teacher education programs allow White preservice teachers to reduce their biases, attitudes, and stereotyping as they move through stages of White identity development (Chavez, 2007; Chicola, 2007; Davis et al., 2008; Ferrara et al., 2010; Liang & Zhang, 2009; Lonquist et al., 2009; Wiggins et al., 2007; Zozakiewiez, 2010). After multicultural strategies are consistently modeled to these preservice teachers by their mentors, they may implement culturally responsive pedagogy to support the academic success of diverse learners. Although teacher education programs have characteristics that help prepare White preservice teachers, a need for improvements remains. Some improvements include the need for mentor preparation, the consistent infusion of multiculturalism in education

courses, and strategies for English as second language learners. In order to support White novice teachers and improve education programs, the question that still needs answering involves how White novice teachers define a higher education classroom environment that supports the learning process of diverse learners.

In the next section, I describe the methodology of this study. A qualitative analysis of the perceptions of White novice teachers concerning cultural diversity and the content-focused workshops developed to prepare preservice teachers will be described in the final section.

## Section 2: The Methodology

### **Introduction**

There is a need for an effective teaching model that prepares White novice teachers to address a culturally diverse population of students. Before this study was conducted, participants filled out informed consent forms to help them understand that their confidentiality would be protected. Out of a population of 100 potential participants, eight were chosen for this study. E-mail addresses of participants, White novice teachers, were retrieved from the director of elementary education at MU. Open-ended, semistructured interviews of eight White novice teachers from the school of education at MU were conducted. The interviews were approximately 60 minutes long, and I asked probing questions to gather additional data. While interviewing the participants, I used an audio recorder and later transcribed the notes. After the notes were transcribed, I used peer reviews and member checking to ensure accuracy. Data of this study are reported in narrative form and with visuals, such as diagrams and graphs.

### **Research Design**

I conducted a descriptive, qualitative study to understand the attitudes, biases, and perceptions of White novice teachers from the school of education at MU toward culturally diverse students and the culturally responsive pedagogy that they implemented. A qualitative study was appropriate for this topic to reveal the participants' perceptions and ways that they believed these perceptions influenced their behaviors. Additionally, qualitative researchers focus on a smaller sample of participants to comprehend how the context of the situation affects them. A qualitative approach is flexible and permitted me

to make changes during the study (Maxwell, 2005). In the field of education, qualitative research is often used for gathering opinions of preservice teachers (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2010).

### **Criteria for Selecting Participants**

In qualitative studies, the sample size can vary. If the researcher wants deep insight about a phenomenon, the sample size should remain smaller. If more than 15 participants responded to my request for an interview, I would have used saturation and redundancy to help determine the final sample size of my study. Because I wanted to report details of the teachers' perceptions, I did not want my sample size to become too large (Creswell, 2012). Data analysis can become time consuming, and I needed to limit the number of participants due to the time constraints of this study.

For this study, purposeful sampling was appropriate due to the relatively small sample size (Maxwell, 2005). To choose the novice teachers, I used maximal variation sampling. Maximal variation sampling is a type of purposeful sampling that allows the selection of participants who differ on a particular trait such as age or gender (Creswell, 2012). The sample of this study was composed of White novice teachers from the school of education at MU. Among the novice teachers, the factors that varied included the following: (a) age, (b) educational background, (c) experience with diverse populations, and (d) socioeconomic status. I included participants who differed along those four factors to the extent possible.

### **Assumptions**

I assumed that the novice teachers would respond to the interview questions with their sincere thoughts about their student teaching experiences and preparation for teaching students from diverse backgrounds.

### **Limitations**

The validity of qualitative research is influenced by the researcher's personal biases, theories, and beliefs. Researchers may choose data from a study based on their preconceived notions (Maxwell, 2005). One major limitation of my study involved my relationship to the higher education institution that I chose for my research site. MU is the place where I completed my undergraduate and graduate degrees through the school of education, and I had developed a rapport with some of the instructors who continued to teach education courses. The rapport that I developed with my instructors may have prompted me to make interpretations of the participants' responses that support the strengths of the training program for preservice teachers. In addition, I have 7 years of teaching experience in urban elementary schools. Keeping reflective notes helped me reduce bias related to the study.

### **Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants**

Gatekeepers help researchers with discovering participants of a study, gaining access to the research site, and determining the location for conducting the study (Creswell, 2012). Faculty and staff at MU including the associate dean of graduate studies; the dean; and director of elementary education served as gatekeepers to help me with gaining access, as well as choosing the participants and location for conducting my



study. A letter of cooperation confirmed approval of my study and permission to gain access to potential participants (Appendix B). I submitted my human research training certificate to the institutional review board (IRB) of Walden. After Walden's IRB approved my study, I sent out e-mails to my gatekeepers requesting a list of potential participants (aged 18+ and White novice teachers) from MU's school of education for approximately 2 weeks.

Once my study was approved, I spent approximately 1 hour addressing and sending a letter to each of the participant candidates (Appendix C). This letter included the goals of my study and requested the participation of the candidates. In addition to the invitation letter, I included informed consent forms (Appendix D) and explained the data collection method. The date, time, and location (at MU) were also included. If a potential candidate chose to participate, he or she was asked to return the letter and informed consent to me using a stamped, self-addressed envelope. After the potential candidates chose to become participants, I e-mailed a thank you note and sent it to them within 24-48 hours. If I did not have enough candidates (at least eight) willing to participate in my study, I would have called nonrespondents, following a phone protocol (Appendix E) to encourage their participation, within 2 weeks after inviting them to participate in the study. I would have addressed their questions and concerns. Table 1 provides demographic information about the eight participants.

Table 1

*Demographics of Participants*

Pseudonym	Age	Grade/Subject	Type of school
Amy	34	Reading K-6	Suburban
Sarah	25	1 <sup>st</sup> grade ESL	Urban
Mary	30	Reading Math K-6	Urban
Deanna	30	Middle school	Suburban
Alisa	25	SPED middle school	Urban
Laurie	27	1 <sup>st</sup> grade	Urban
Robin	28	Middle school	Urban
Gwen	23	1 <sup>st</sup> grade	Suburban

**Methods of Establishing a Researcher-Participant Working Relationship**

My invitation sent to potential research participants included a few paragraphs about my teaching background and desire to conduct this study. My 7 years of teaching experience as a White teacher working in urban schools prompted me to conduct this study. I did not feel completely prepared for addressing the needs of culturally diverse learners, and I was fortunate that instructional coaches, grade level team leaders, and principals provided the support and professional development that allowed me to help my students reach the highest levels of academic success. I explained how this study could benefit the field of education and improve teacher education programs to better prepare White novice teachers for teaching culturally diverse learners. When I interviewed my participants, I concentrated on remaining respectful, nonjudgmental, and nonthreatening

(Merriam, 2009). I desired that my participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts with me during the interview process.

### **Measures for Ethical Protection of Participants**

Before conducting my study, I obtained the consent of Walden University's IRB. A cover letter with a description of my research study and potential risks to participants was provided to my committee chairs, IRB, and study site. In addition, I provided participants of this study a notice of informed consent, confidentiality, and protection from harm (Lodico et al., 2010).

### **Data Collection Methods**

For collecting data, I interviewed each of the eight participants. Interviewing is the most effective strategy for case studies, as interviews capture individuals' feelings, behaviors, and ways of interpreting the world (Merriam, 2009). Observations do not easily capture individual behaviors and perceptions. Individual interviews were easier for me to facilitate, as focus group interviews often lead to side discussions that break the flow of the interview process (Glesne, 2011).

Interviewing is a common strategy in qualitative studies (Lodico et al., 2010). Individual interviews allow participants to communicate their thoughts. The qualitative methods I used were open-ended, semistructured interviews of individual White novice teachers from the school of education at MU. I scheduled each participant for an interview, which lasted approximately 60 minutes. I used an interview guide and also remained open to in-depth probing of the participants for unexpected leads that might

develop (Glesne, 2011). Although semistructured interviews called for me to use an interview protocol, probing questions allowed for flexibility in gaining additional data.

### **Process for Collecting Data**

To ensure that the details of the participants' comments during the interviews were described accurately, I used both audiotaping and notes (Lodico et al., 2010). To provide a distraction-free location for the participants, I requested to use a conference room at a mutually agreed-upon site (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). A pilot study was conducted with two participants from the target population for the purposes of improving the interview process (Glesne, 2011). I called participants to schedule and inform them that they would be a part of a pilot study. Each interview for the pilot study was held in a conference room at a mutually agreed upon location and lasted approximately 60 minutes. Improvements included changing the language of the interview questions and the length of the interview (Appendix F for interview guide questions). After changes were made, IRB review and approval were requested prior to data collection.

Before my study began, I informed the participants that their confidentiality would be respected by using fictitious names and not disclosing descriptions that would indicate their identity (Glesne, 2011). During the interview process, I listened carefully to the participants' responses. In order to maintain a strong interpersonal relationship with the participants, I conducted follow-up calls or e-mails.

After each interview, I wrote reflective notes and transcribed notes on the audio recording onto my computer. By keeping reflective notes, I began to organize my

thoughts for data analysis (Glesne, 2011). The beginning process of analyzing data allowed me to gain deeper insight about my study.

My experiences with urban school teaching may have influenced this study. This experience allowed me to make connections with the participants of the study, as I related to their perceptions about their preparation for teaching culturally diverse students. To avoid bias, I kept reflective notes after each interview session. A peer debriefer reviewed my notes and listened to the audio recordings of interviews for situations concerning bias.

### **Data Analysis**

Interview findings are usually in the form of themes or categories (Merriam, 2009). Once the data were coded using NUD\*IST, I wrote a thick description and discover emergent themes through data analysis (Lodico et al., 2010). In order to organize the data, I used organizational, substantive, and theoretical categories. Substantive categories provided deeper insight by using the participants' responses to interview questions. Theoretical categories were broader categories than substantive ones. In addition to storing and coding data on a computer using NUD\*IST, I used Inspiration Explorer to provide visuals of the data gathered from my study (Barry, 1998). Information from Inspiration Explorer can be imported back into NUD\*IST for additional coding.

To ensure the accuracy of the data, I continuously read and reread the interview transcripts for approximately 1 month. Member checks of the interview transcripts and my reflections about biases contributed to the credibility of my study (Lodico et al., 2010). I scheduled participants to meet in a conference room at a mutually agreed upon

location for member checks of the transcripts. Member checks lasted approximately 1 month. Another measure to help ensure validity involves using the feedback of others for dealing with discrepant evidence (Maxwell, 2005). I dealt with discrepant evidence by analyzing feedback from those individuals on the Walden committee and by discussing this analysis in the findings section of my study.

I e-mailed the participants and stakeholders to schedule a 60-minute summary of the results to be held in a conference room at a mutually agreed-upon location.

Stakeholders included instructors from the school of education, the dean of MU, and staff and principals of local school districts where participants were assigned for their student teaching.

## **Data Results**

### **Findings and Themes**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences equipped them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students. To determine White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences equipped them for teaching culturally diverse students, I conducted semistructured interviews of the participants. The data from these interviews were used to answer the guiding research questions of this study. The research questions were the following: (a) What are White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences have prepared them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students? (b) How do White novice teachers perceive cultural diversity and the culturally responsive pedagogy

that they are expected to implement? and (c) How do White novice teachers perceive that their attitudes toward cultural diversity affect their behavior in the classroom? In the following section, I discuss how the findings related to the research questions. Four major themes emerged from the findings and are discussed in the data analysis section.

### **Findings Related to the Research Questions**

Four themes that addressed the research questions emerged from the data. In the results of the study, I found that the participants believed that there was a need for equipping White preservice teachers for teaching culturally diverse students. Four themes emerged from the interview questions and were the following:

- The need for additional cultural knowledge: Teacher perceptions about ways their classroom and field experiences equipped them for multiculturalism
- The implementation of supportive measures: Teacher perceptions about strategies that support multiculturalism in classrooms
- Barriers to supporting cultural diversity in classrooms: Teacher perceptions about barriers to multiculturalism in the classroom
- The importance of cultural interpersonal skills: Teachers explained the importance of learning how to communicate effectively with their students and their family members from culturally diverse backgrounds.

In these themes, the White teachers conveyed their knowledge of themselves and their practices to help improve the achievement of diverse learners. The participants in this study strove to have high expectations of their students and seemed to believe that their students could learn academically and socially (Frederick, Cave, & Perencevich, 2010).

## Participants' Responses

**The need for additional cultural knowledge.** Most of the novice teachers felt that their classes at MU helped prepare them for diversity. Increasing the amount of time spent at the field experience and encouraging preservice teachers to take assignments in classrooms with diverse students were the most common responses concerning improvements to the education program at MU. Some of the other recommendations for improving the program at MU were adding an English as a second language (ESL) program and better preparing preservice teachers for special education. The novice teachers seemed pleased with their overall experiences at MU. One recurring theme among the novice teachers was the importance of effective communication with mentor teachers during their field experience, with their students in the classroom, and with the parents of their students.

The importance of being equipped for teaching culturally diverse students was discussed with Amy. Amy believed that the instructors from MU were caring and did their best job to prepare her. Amy thought that her field experience should have lasted longer and recommended that preservice teachers learn about how to teach both academic and social behaviors to students, especially those from culturally diverse backgrounds. Amy described a human diversity class that she had taken at MU as “eye opening.” During the time Amy was attending MU, there were some transitions in both staff and the curriculum. Amy spoke of her experience at MU by saying:

There was a change in staff at MU beyond their control which led to a drawback for my group. The instructors taught within the metro area and knew the current



trends/issues. The mentors were focused on learning MU curriculum, but did a great job of sharing their experiences [about diversity]. Perhaps the mentors did not have high enough expectations. Maybe they could have placed more emphasis on addressing cultural diversity.

Mary believed that MU cared and wanted students to be successful. Mary had the opportunity to teach in a third world country and noted that she “value[s] my students more because of this experience.”

One change that Mary recommended for communicating more effectively with mentor teachers would be for teachers to provide a checklist of expectations during the field experience. This checklist may include expectations of the preservice teachers’ performance during classroom transitions and aspects of classroom management to help learn about diversity. Mary added, “When you observe you may not notice what the teacher is doing, and you may not notice what the students are doing.” Mary’s reflections demonstrated her concern for addressing cultural diversity.

When speaking of being equipped for addressing cultural diversity, Sarah stated that a class that she had taken at MU was helpful because she learned about the lack of diversity in children’s literature. Sarah emphasized the importance of adding an ESL program at MU because schools, like hers, require teachers to have an ESL endorsement. She believed that learning about teaching strategies for ESL students would better equip many preservice teachers because ESL students need different strategies for learning the curriculum. Sarah believed that wait time should be added to allow the ESL students to

translate their thoughts from their primary language to the second language. Sarah expressed her perceptions about being equipped for culturally diverse students as follows:

MU does not have a program for ESL students to teach ESL strategies. I learned ESL strategies and will have an endorsement. Without this endorsement where I teach, I must have the ESL teacher in my room for one hour each day.

Deanna added that she did not think about cultural diversity prior to training to become a classroom teacher. She mentioned, "Before school [attending MU] I didn't think about or understand the importance in your classroom about different cultures. MU is diverse and through the curriculum and mentor sharing experiences, I learned about diversity." Deanna did become more aware of her own racial identity. Deanna recounted that the assigned school for her field experience as equipping her "a little bit" for teaching culturally diverse students. Deanna said, "My field experience did not address diversity. Because of the field experience, I had some [exposure] to lower socioeconomic students." Deanna also mentioned that the field experience should have lasted longer.

Alisa recounted her perceptions about being equipped for cultural diversity and did move through Hardiman's (1982) theory of White identity development to become aware of injustice by saying, "I remember a class [at MU] about human diversity. We read books that made me think differently [about diversity]. I grew up in a public school with the majority of students being White. I realized that I seemed spoiled." Alisa would like to have been more prepared for the legal issues related to individual educational plans. For example, some individual educational plans require that students are pulled out

of the regular classroom for a designated number of hours per week, and the teacher must follow these requirements to avoid possible legal repercussions.

Laurie reflected about how her training equipped for addressing cultural diversity. Laurie said, “I really enjoyed my experience at [MU]. Any university can only prepare you so much.” Laurie stated that her teachers [from MU] discussed multiculturalism and strategies, but not how to apply those strategies. Her field experience was not diverse. Laurie expressed her feelings about teaching culturally diverse students in classroom by commenting, “I recommend that it’s a wonderful experience to teach diverse students.” Laurie understood the importance of addressing cultural differences, aligning with the multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000).

Robin spoke highly of her experiences at MU. Robin stated that her field experience was in an urban school and believed that this experience helped equip her for culturally diverse students in her classroom. Robin said [as part of her preparation for teaching diverse students], “We walked out with usable projects and premade lessons.” Robin, and the other preservice teachers who were in her teaching cohort at MU, exchanged lessons that they had created and that were from various grade levels and subject areas. Many of these lessons incorporated varied instructional strategies, learning styles, and brain-based learning that are effective for addressing culturally diverse students aligning with culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Finally, Gwen expressed her satisfaction with the program at MU by saying, “I really enjoyed the education, and it’s a really good program. They did okay, but did not focus on how to teach multiculturalism, but how to be a great teacher.” Gwen stated that

some of the classroom experiences at MU helped her understand how students learn differently, including those students from diverse backgrounds. Gwen realized the importance of Maslow's hierarchy and meeting the basic needs of all students. Meeting the basic needs of culturally diverse students and their peers is important for supporting their academic achievement, which is culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

**Culturally responsive classrooms.** The novice teachers perceived that they were implementing strategies to support culturally responsive classroom. The novice teachers learned culturally responsive strategies from their program at MU and during their first year of teaching. Some of the most frequent responses among the novice teachers concerning classrooms that support multiculturalism included using literature from different cultures; classroom discussions and projects allowing students to share their home culture; and posters depicting students with disabilities and students from different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Other teachers commented about meeting the basic needs of students, ensuring a safe, welcoming environment, and the use of small group instruction and cooperative learning.

Amy was a K-6 reading teacher and taught in a suburban school. Amy was responsible for facilitating small group instruction for students needing added support with their reading skills. Special funding was available for this program. Amy remarked, "I support multiculturalism in my room by posting different languages on my classroom wall." Amy also used literature to help the students learn about similarities and differences among various cultures. Amy stated, "My students compare the similarities

and differences of the holidays, traditions, and foods of other cultures to their own culture.” Amy further stated, “Group discussions allow my students to share with their classmates about their culture, and projects emphasize traditions from different countries.” These classroom activities align with the multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000), as Amy and her students learned about the contributions of other cultures to society. The activities also align with culturally relevant pedagogy by Ladson-Billings (1995), as students learned collaboratively from each other.

Mary, a K-6 reading and math teacher who taught in an urban school, described a classroom that supports multiculturalism as one that meets the learning needs of all students. Mary remarked, “My classroom is a safe, welcoming environment where open communication is used...the classroom should be a home away from home.” Mary used data to determine what areas need to be worked on in math and reading. Mary stated, “I use individual conferencing [with students who are struggling] to determine what math or reading skills need to be improved.” Once Mary was certain that a student knows a skill, she had these students teach other students. For her ESL learners, Mary remarked, “I use small group instruction to help them improve their literacy and math skills. Students with similar learning needs are placed into these small groups.” Mary suggested how culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) is implemented in her classroom. Examples of culturally relevant pedagogy included students being allowed to fill the teacher role to help their classmates learn new skills and the use of small group and whole group instruction.

Robin, a middle school teacher who taught in an urban school, stated, “For assigned projects, my students do a pre-research with guiding questions and are provided with background knowledge about various cultures... students add their personal experiences about their cultures, and this helps other students to connect to the projects.” Robin’s response aligns with the motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching by Wlodkowski and Ginseng (1995), as her students were provided opportunities to make personally meaningful connections to the content. Robin added, “By teaching about various cultures, I have learned how to talk to my students and their parents.” Robin pointed out the importance of building a rapport with both the students and parents from culturally diverse backgrounds. Robin’s realization about the importance of a teacher learning about other cultures to be able to communicate effectively to both students and their parents does correlate to the multicultural education framework.

Sarah was a first grade ESL teacher who taught in an urban school. The majority of Sarah’s students were Hispanic and a small percentage were Black. To teach her students about cultures different than their own, Sarah stated, “I think that it [the classroom] would have literature from different cultures.” Sarah claimed, “For the Hispanic cultural awareness, I allow them to answer in Spanish. I allow students to share their home culture and what they do for traditions.” Sarah also used read alouds, music, and songs to help her students learn about various cultures different than their own. Sarah’s students learned about cultures different other than their own, and Sarah connected to the content by sharing their cultural background with classmates, which

aligns with both the multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000) and culturally responsive teaching (Wlodkowski & Ginseng, 1995).

Gwen was another first grade teacher who taught in a suburban school. The majority of the students in Gwen's classroom were White. Gwen commented that she supported multiculturalism in her classroom "when teaching English, and using different literature from different cultures." Examples of how literature can be used to teach about different cultures included the multicultural Cinderella stories. Some of the variations of this fairytale are the *Korean Cinderella* (Climo & Heller, 1993) and the *Egyptian Cinderella* (Climo & Heller, 1989). Gwen's use of literature from different cultures refers to the multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000), as she allowed her students to learn about other cultures in society. Gwen stated, "The [standard] books [or] curriculum is not focused on different cultures." Gwen revealed her awareness of how the standard curriculum does not address diversity and is associated with Hardiman's (1982) theory of White identity development that involves Whites challenging social injustice within their classrooms.

Alisa, a middle school special education teacher who taught in an urban school, stated that she represents "all cultures through literature, special projects, and visual representations of cultural diversity such as people from various parts of the world." Alisa shared that, for teaching her students about diversity, "Give more options for teaching English articles about different cultures and options for research such as, Black History or other cultures...try not to limit them." The freedom of Alisa's students to

choose their projects aligns with the motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching (Wlodkowski & Ginseng, 1995).

Alisa explained, "My students were recently allowed to read articles about people from different cultures for the sake of learning how to read and comprehend as well as learn about cultures." As a part of a multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000), Alisa believed that when students read about different cultures, they gain a deeper understanding and respect for other individuals. Students learn that all people have special traditions and celebrations within their cultures.

Laurie, who was a first grade teacher from an urban school setting, stated, "Where I teach it's very diverse. I have a lot of Blacks and Caucasians. It's up to the teacher to develop a community." Laurie developed a community in her classroom by ensuring that students feel comfortable about sharing their thoughts. Laurie stated, "With ESL students, we talk about what it's like." Other students in the classroom begin to realize the cultural shock that ESL students experience. ESL students must have more time to understand and comprehend both oral and written communication. Laurie explained that she used

Cooperative learning and lots of structure... In urban schools, we use many routines such as the hallway. Hallway routines may require students to remain silent while walking through the school building, to walk with both arms at one's side, and to stop at designate points until further instruction from their teacher.

This is important because students don't have structure at home.

Cooperative learning allows students to consider viewpoints different from their own and share their backgrounds, which is culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995).



Routines, classroom rules, and positive discipline provide students with the security and encouragement that they need to succeed (Marzano, 2003).

Deanna, a middle school teacher, taught in a suburban school. Deanna infused multiculturalism into her lessons and activities. Deanna stated, “Some of my students are from the Jehovah Witness faith, and they completed research about how Jehovah Witnesses were killed during the Holocaust in World War II for a project about the Holocaust.” This research allowed these students and their classmates to make meaningful connections to the content, which is a part of a motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching (Wlodkowski & Ginseng, 1995). Aligning with a multicultural education framework designed by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000), the students from the Jehovah Witness faith were allowed to discuss their findings with their classmates who gained a deeper understanding of their faith history.

**Lack of cultural sensitivity in classrooms.** The majority of novice teachers in this study perceived that they could manage issues related to the lack of cultural sensitivity in their classrooms. Strategies for addressing the lack of cultural sensitivity were learned during their training at MU and during their first year of teaching. Participants spoke about the lack of understanding or knowledge among both teachers and students concerning various backgrounds as being a barrier to supporting multiculturalism in their classroom. While barriers involve socioeconomic class and culture, religious differences can be a barrier that teachers find difficult to approach in the classroom. The majority of teachers concluded that to deal with the lack of understanding

of backgrounds or differences, the best approach is to allow the students to share their backgrounds with each other.

Robin said, “There may be a global broad view about cultures but not subcultures. For example, Native American students from Alaska may not be able to bridge their present culture to their past culture.” Sarah understood the importance of the teacher’s attitude for supporting multiculturalism in the classroom when she said:

For me having gone to school many years ago, in high school and that, you really did not have a lot of [cultural sharing]experiences. It was pretty much what the White culture went with. And that wasn’t taught. At least not near as broadly as it is now.

The responses of Robin and Sarah related to Hardiman’s (1982) theory of White identity development which states that Whites learn to challenge social injustice in their classrooms.

Gwen stated, “The [standard] books [or] curriculum is not focused on different cultures. The curriculum is one-sided sometimes.” Gwen explained that the school district had purchased curriculum that does not infuse various cultures. The literature was focused on the White mainstream culture. As Gwen’s thoughts may show some resistance to social injustice, a more advanced stage of Hardiman’s (1982) theory of White identity development was indicated in the following responses of Amy and Mary. Amy explained that education was more important to parents who were from a higher socioeconomic class. “Parents from the lower socioeconomic class maybe had a bad

experience themselves [with education] or had other priorities like paying the rent or feeding their family.” Mary stated:

We do not always know what is going on in their [the student’s] home life.

Students may be distracted about what is going on at home. Families with language barriers need an interpreter, and the child may be the interpreter for the parent.

Sarah stated that a barrier to multiculturalism in her classroom was her students’ lack of knowledge of some of the other cultures. Sarah clarified that both teachers and students should learn to understand cultures other than their own. For instance, in her classroom, one of her Hispanic students was singing a song that included the “N” word. One of her Black students was offended. In response to this situation, Sarah stated, “I couldn’t quite explain [to the student who sang the song] what that word meant. I just said you can’t say that word anymore.” This incident demonstrates that Sarah may have not known how to help her student understand the importance of not repeating this behavior and may relate to the beginning stage of Hardiman’s (1982) theory of White identity development

While barriers involve socioeconomic class and culture, religious differences can be a barrier that teachers find difficult to approach in the classroom. Alisa stated that a barrier to addressing multiculturalism in her school was discussing religious differences among students. She commented, “One big thing school in general is to be careful about talking about religions. It is better when there is someone [a guest speaker or a parent] to talk about their experience about a culture or religion.” Deanna explained, “I do not

believe that there are any barriers [to multiculturalism] in my classroom, but if there are any barriers, I would continue to allow my students to share their backgrounds for assigned projects.” Deanna may not have realized ways to resist social injustice and may be in the beginning stage of Hardiman’s (1982) theory of White identity development.

Laurie stated that culturally diverse students from other classrooms in her school told her that their teachers do not embrace diversity. For example, one of her teaching colleagues did not realize that she made her only Black student feel uncomfortable one day. This teacher announced to her class that they would be studying Martin Luther King’s Birthday, so they could understand this student’s background. Laurie stated, “This student felt very uncomfortable because all of his or her classmates turned around and just stared.” This experience indicates that Laurie may be aware of the covert and overt messages that teachers send to students from diverse backgrounds, which is a part of Hardiman’s (1982) theory of White identity development.

The majority of teachers concluded that, to deal with the lack of understanding of backgrounds or differences, the best approach was to allow the students to share their backgrounds with each other. The teachers moved beyond the first stage of Hardiman’s (1982) theory of White identity development because they were aware of injustices within their classrooms and schools. However, most of teachers did not mention that they challenged social injustice through their actions, such as meeting with school principals or educating their students about ways to confront these issues.

**Cultural interpersonal skills.** One reoccurring theme was that the novice teachers perceived that either they were equipped to address their interactions with both

students and parents from diverse backgrounds or understand the importance of developing more effective intercultural communication skills. Some of the participants emphasized the importance of the classroom teacher's approach to students from diverse backgrounds. Amy stated, "I am more aware of diversity. It's taught me more tolerance not taking everything at face value... investigating situations more deeply... why students are completing or not completing work... why they are acting out." For example, Amy stated that one student was being disrespectful to her. When Amy took a more personal interest in her students and changed her attitude, the students became aware of this, and it helped decrease that type of behavior. Amy's new approach for interacting with her students aligns with the multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000) involving the impact of White privilege and ways for challenging the norm.

Laurie mentioned that problems making connections with her students was not an issue in her classroom. She added, "It goes back to the teacher to create a safe environment. They need knowledge and to be careful about their approach with diverse students." Laurie claimed that likes to create a "community of learners" in her classroom, which is culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Other participants stated that novice teachers need to understand the importance of more parent communication efforts to encourage parents to support and encourage their child's learning. Sarah recognized that teaching students from diverse backgrounds involves more than using literature and songs to address diversity. Sarah believed that preservice teachers need to understand the importance of more parent communication efforts to encourage parents to support and encourage their child's learning. Sarah replied

I worry that parents don't think I understand their situation. I worry that what I send home is offensive toward their home culture. If a translator is available, I request assistance with writing notes. If not, I use Google Translate and hope for the best. My rapport with the parents is not strong enough to ask for their advice. Sarah added that she had a bad experience with a parent when she sent snack backpacks home with all of her students one day as part of her school's snack backpack program. When this student brought the snack backpack home, the parents returned to her school upset and threw the backpack in a trash can next to her desk. She did not realize how cultural influences may impact how parents and families perceive charitable acts and may align with the beginning stages of Hardiman's (1982) theory of White identity development.

Speaking of her international teaching experience, Mary stated, "I understand how individuals from different cultures relate to the world, so I can transfer this new perspective to culturally diverse students in my classroom." Mary's international teaching experience may have helped her understand "the impact of multiculturalism on society" which aligns with the multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000).

Alisa stated that she looked at how students in different cultures learn differently. Her views about how to approach education were different from the ways parents approached or viewed education. Alisa stated that it is not that the parents do not care. Rather, they express caring differently. Alisa claimed, "My parents were so involved in my education. Now society sees this as the teacher's responsibility." Alisa's comparison

of her own culture's viewpoints about education to cultures other than her own is a part of Hardiman's (1982) theory of White identity development.

One factor that Deanna reiterated throughout the interview was the importance of making connections to the parents and family members of culturally diverse students, which aligns with the multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000). Deanna mentioned that one of her students was nominated to go to art summer college. Deanna stated, "At first, the parents did not want their child to participate." In a meeting with the parents and with the student translating to the parents, Deanna was able to "explain the importance of this activity to their child's learning." After this meeting, the parents decided to allow their child to participate.

Robin stated, "It [the teaching experiences] helped me as a teacher to teach various cultures and how to talk to students and their parents." Based on her response, Robin may have analyzed how multiculturalism has affected society and was willing to address diversity in her classroom by her approach to students and parents.

During the interview, Gwen shared that her mother, "who is a veteran teacher and who has taught in urban schools for several years, has mentored me to become equipped for teaching culturally diverse students." The words uttered by Gwen seemed confident. Gwen understood how to make meaningful connections and communicate effectively with students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The conversations that Gwen had with her students about their cultures permitted everyone to compare the similarities and differences of everyone's own culture to other cultures, which aligns with the multicultural education framework by Ortiz and Rhoads (2000).

### **Evidence of Quality**

When conducting this study, I followed the guidelines of Walden University's IRB. I developed an interview protocol that was used with each of my eight interview participants. During the interviews, I transcribed notes and used audio recording. After the interviews, I analyzed the data by reading and rereading the transcripts to code for themes. To ensure the confidentiality of my participants, I de-identified the responses to the interview questions. The raw data will be stored on a password-protected computer for a minimum of 5 years. I have provided examples of transcripts, member checking, and peer review in Appendix G.

### **Outcomes**

The eight participants believed that White preservice teachers should have longer field experiences and that these experiences should be in urban schools. They believed that training for White preservice teachers should include both learning about strategies for teaching culturally diverse students and applying these strategies. In addition, teachers mentioned the importance of effective communication with their students and parents, especially regarding how to approach cultural diversity. Some teachers recommended adding an ESL program at MU and better equipping special education teachers for understanding individual educational plans and the possible legal implications for noncompliance.

The White novice teachers in this study implemented various multicultural strategies, such as using literature from different cultures, encouraging students to share their home culture, and displaying posters depicting students with disabilities and



students from different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds on the classroom walls. Other teachers mentioned that they supported multiculturalism in their classrooms by meeting the basic needs of students by ensuring a safe, welcoming environment, and by using small group instruction and cooperative learning.

The lack of understanding or knowledge among both teachers and students concerning various backgrounds was a barrier to supporting multiculturalism. Differences in socioeconomic class, culture, and religion were other barriers that teachers found challenging to approach in the classroom. The majority of teachers concluded that to deal with the lack of understanding of backgrounds or differences, the best approach was to allow the students to share their backgrounds with each other. The novice teachers stressed the importance of effective communication with both their students and their parents. Some participants emphasized the importance of the classroom teacher's approach to students from diverse backgrounds.

### **Conclusion**

In this study, I collected data necessary for revealing the attitudes, biases, and perceptions of White novice teachers from the school of education at MU toward culturally diverse students and the culturally responsive pedagogy that they will be expected to implement. Because this was a qualitative study, the sample size remained small using approximately 15 participants or until saturation and redundancy had been reached. Once the data were coded and organized into emergent themes, a thick description was written. My study may be of interest to teacher educators, novice teachers, as well as school districts for understanding how to support White novice

teachers with strategies for teaching culturally diverse students. In the following section, the content-based workshops designed for the preservice teachers are described.

### Section 3: The Project

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences had equipped them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students. In response to the findings, I created noncredit, optional minilessons. Both the findings of this study and professional literature served as a driving force while designing this training to address gaps in practice and ongoing training. Four themes emerged from the data: (a) culturally responsive classrooms, (b) cultural sensitivity in classrooms, (c) cultural knowledge, and (d) cultural interpersonal skills. I created curriculum for a series of four workshops lasting 2 hours each (Appendix A).

Appendix A includes the details of the professional development workshops designed to better equip White preservice teachers for cultural diversity. An agenda with a listing of the times and activities will be provided to the workshop participants to anticipate upcoming activities and allow for more time on task. Pictures will be included in each workshop agenda to appeal to visual learners. In the following section, I present the goals, rationale, theoretical frameworks, literature review, implementation, project evaluation, positive social change implications, and conclusion.

#### **Description and Goals**

The goal of the minilessons is to equip White preservice teachers for addressing diversity in their classrooms. The objectives of the minilessons provide (a) preservice teachers with current best practices for addressing diversity, (b) opportunities for the

preservice teachers to implement culturally responsive pedagogy, (c) mentoring by teacher educators to confirm acquired skills for addressing diversity, and (d) ongoing support and resources for the retention and transfer of learning for the first year of teaching.

### **Rationale**

The eight participants of this study implemented culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms. These participants learned about how to address culturally diverse students either through their education program at MU or through professional development offered by their school district. However, participants believed that professional development workshops should be designed to better equip White preservice teachers for diversity in their classrooms. The workshops that are based on the findings and theoretical frameworks of this study establish culturally responsive pedagogy through the following: (a) implementing strategies to provide safe classroom environments, (b) comparing and contrasting cultures different than an individual's own culture, (c) applying strategies for interacting effectively with individuals with different communication styles, and (d) using strategies to address ESL learners.

### **Theoretical Frameworks**

Relevant characteristics of adult learning theories were resources for the creation of the curriculum. The two learning theories were a theory by Gagne, Briggs, and Wager (1988), which involves modifying instructional design, and Bandura's (1986) social learning theory, which recognizes learning as a being a reciprocal process. Gagne et al. identified instructional design as including the following five components: (a) the

introduction captures the learners' attention and announces the objectives; (b) the directions allow for the clarification of the learning goals to the learners; (c) the activity permits the learners to implement the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to support the objectives and learning goals; (d) the practice and feedback provide an opportunity for learners to demonstrate the acquired skills; and (e) retention and transfer promote the application of new skills to settings outside of the university classroom.

In the social learning theory, Bandura recognized the importance of learning as a reciprocal process as a person interacts among cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors. Learners anticipate from their environments what they will choose to learn. The beliefs that learners have about their abilities determine how they will learn and their learning outcomes. Educators should understand how their students' beliefs influence their ability to learn. Another tenet of Bandura's theory is that individuals learn by observing others. The decision-making process of individuals is based on their social experiences as well as possible actions and their consequences. Six characteristics of Bandura's cognitive apprenticeship were considered: modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulating, reflecting, and exploring.

### **Review of Literature**

The development of workshops for White preservice teachers was influenced by the findings of this study. The educational theories of Gagne et al. (1988) and Bandura's (1986) social learning theory served as the foundation of the curriculum design. To find recent literature about professional development, terms such as *professional development*, *effective professional development*, and *teacher training* were searched. The electronic

databases used included Academic Search Complete, EBSCO, Proquest, and Google Scholar.

In research about effective professional development, scholars have stressed the importance of teachers' collaboration as they attain and implement new skills (Burke 2013; Cafferella, 2010; Hoaglund, Birkenfield, & Box, 2014; Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2011). Several articles listed characteristics of effective professional development (Burke, 2013; Caffarella, 2010; Croft, Cogghall, Dolan, Powers, & Killion, 2010; Evans, Williams, & Metcalf, 2012; Linder, 2011; Merriam, 2007; Wlodkowski, 2008). Some researchers specifically targeted professional development for multicultural education (Akiba; 2011; Brant, 2013; Catapano & Huisman, 2010; Gross & Maloney; 2012; Picower, 2011).

This literature review is categorized as follows: (a) characteristics of effective professional development, (b) professional development for multicultural education, and (c) assessing professional development.

### **Characteristics of Effective Professional Development**

Choosing highly qualified instructors and facilitators is one characteristic of effective professional development (Caffarella, 2010; Croft et al., 2010; Linder, 2011). Instructors should be knowledgeable about the content, should be able to implement various instructional strategies, and should be able to work well with learners from diverse backgrounds. Instructors and facilitators should also demonstrate a caring attitude toward adult learners and be credible. Highly qualified instructors and facilitators should show enthusiasm for the subject that they are teaching, have their materials organized and

prepared, and possess some basic knowledge of the participants and the culture of the organizations where they will be teaching. Most importantly, instructors and facilitators of professional development should teach from the heart by being authentic in what they say and do.

Peer coaching is another characteristic of effective professional development (Burke, 2013; Evans et al., 2012; Wlodkowski, 2008). One purpose of peer coaching is to allow teachers the opportunity to seek assistance or support with their teaching practices. Both novice and veteran teachers can grow professionally by linking theory to practice (Burke, 2013). Peer coaching does not tell teachers how to implement pedagogy, but rather allows teachers to demonstrate their skills through hands-on practice with a coach to guide them. Another purpose of peer coaching is to allow teachers to vent with each other about issues related to implementing pedagogy. Peer coaching gives experienced teachers the opportunity to teach others how to implement pedagogy through modeling (Croft et al., 2010).

Videotape technology is useful during peer coaching to record lessons for both self and peer reflections for evaluating the use of effective teacher behaviors (Evans et al., 2012; Ma, Mazur, & Murray 2009). Video clips allow both the peer coach and his or her mentee the opportunity to view specific aspects of a lesson. Recalling details of a lesson can be difficult; thus, videotape technology increases the likelihood of peer coaches providing more effective feedback.

Some teacher behaviors that both peer coaches and their mentees should observe as they watch a videotaped lesson include the following: (a) allowing opportunities for

their students to respond, (b) offering verbal praise for appropriate behavior or correct academic response, (c) providing cues to help students remember an answer, (d) rewording questions to help with student comprehension, and (e) providing corrective feedback for incorrect responses (Evans et al., 2012). Peer coaches may observe mentees who provide index cards that their students can hold up if they know the answer to a question. Verbal praise such as “Excellent answer” or “I like the way that you completed your work” can be used with individuals or groups during a lesson. Cues such as “Remember how we used the number line” can be used to help a student respond with the correct answer. Rewording a question or command with a phrase such “Let me reword the question to” may help a student understand a question. Finally, corrective feedback such as “No, the capital of Missouri is Jefferson City” acknowledges a student’s mistake.

One barrier to peer coaching is scheduling and time (Ma et al., 2009).

Administrators must provide the necessary time and scheduling for peer coaching. Peer coaching or peer review should ensure that mentees or partners are thinking more deeply about their teaching practices during conversations about their lessons. Mentors should be experts trained for encouraging deeper thinking among their mentees.

Peer coaches should consider the teacher’s stage of career (i.e., novice to veteran; Berg & Mensah, 2014). Novice teachers are more anxious about learning the content and classroom management strategies, so content-specific coaching for a particular subject area such as science may be more difficult for them. A coach may need to provide more scaffolding for content-specific coaching and spend more time modeling specific strategies to a novice teacher. Teachers who are in the next stage of their career may



benefit from coplanning or coteaching with their coaches, who should encourage them to take risks and learn new strategies. Veteran teachers may also benefit from coplanning or coteaching. Coaches should encourage veteran teachers to take risks by veering from the curriculum as well as adding more rigor to their lessons.

Action research is another characteristic of effective professional development (Burke, 2013; Hoaglund et al., 2014; Shanks, Miller, & Rosendale, 2012). Action research allows teachers to study their teaching practice, conduct research, and collect data that will help in making improvements in their classrooms or schools. Teachers can collaborate with their peers to conduct research that is relevant to issues in their classrooms. The data from the research are analyzed for patterns, and an action plan is created to improve classroom or school practice. For example, teachers could look for patterns in their students' standardized test scores. The data may reveal that vocabulary is the weak area causing lower scores in all content areas of the assessment. Teachers could design pedagogy to increase their students' vocabulary by introducing new vocabulary when teaching a new unit in the grade level curriculum. Content area vocabulary questions could be used to assess the students' comprehension.

Reflective practice is also a characteristic of effective professional development (Evans et al., 2012; Merriam, 2007). Reflection about teaching practice can take place either after a situation has occurred or while it is occurring. For example, after teaching a lesson, a teacher may reflect about reasons that students were displaying disruptive behaviors and were not engaged. Another type of reflective practice includes teachers changing their routines to meet their students' needs. For instance, a teacher who

observes students falling asleep during a social studies lesson about family traditions may decide to engage the students by asking them to share their family traditions with the class.

Effective professional development involves principals who maintain an organized school environment, who listen to the teachers' concerns, and who lead teachers by providing them with meaningful and continuous feedback (Johnson et al., 2011; Lutrnick & Szabo, 2012; Marzano, 2003). Principals should work collaboratively with teachers to help students reach academic success. Time, resources, and money should be used wisely. Principals should consider both teacher and student data when planning workshops.

Principals can help teachers set goals aligned with state standards for making improvements (Coggshall, Rasmussen, Colton, Milton, & Jacques, 2012). Professional conversations should include the principal's assessment of the teacher's classroom. The data collected during classroom observations may include such information as how many times students were not on task or the types of questions that the teacher asked. The feedback that teachers receive from the principals may include questions such as "What types of questions did you ask during the lesson?" or "How would you rate yourself on the rubric with a scale of 1-5?" The evidence from the observations allows teachers to reflect on making improvements in their teaching practice.

### **Professional Development for Multicultural Education**

In three qualitative research studies, scholars examined preparing preservice teachers for diversity in their classrooms and emphasized the importance of mentor

support and modeling of multicultural practices (Akiba; 2011; Brant, 2013; Picower, 2011). Mentors can help preservice teachers link theory to practice by allowing them to become immersed in culture within their local communities during field experiences or during social action projects. Mentors can support preservice teachers by teaching them about using critical inquiry and reflection. For example, mentors can model how to dispel myths in the standard U.S. curriculum by having discussions with students about the truths that are never revealed. Field experiences can provide preservice teachers with knowledge about how cultures affect the local community and the world, as well as how individuals from various cultures interact with each other.

Preservice teachers can become highly qualified urban school teachers through year-long, community-based field experiences in urban schools within their local community, mentor support, and reflective practice (Catapano & Huisman, 2010). Activities that can help prepare preservice teachers for diversity include the following: (a) bus tour of the local community, (b) poverty simulation, (c) community-based semester long project, and (d) documentation of children's learning. The bus tour of the local community can help preservice teachers realize that the community has assets and not just crime, and a poverty simulation can help preservice teachers understand the impact of poverty on the local community. Community-based projects, such as working in a local food pantry, can help preservice teachers learn to develop lessons and curriculum that will allow their students to make meaningful connections to their everyday lives. The reflective practice and mentor support can help teachers realize the skills that they

learned to help prepare them for diverse students, including classroom management, curriculum development, and student learning.

Gross and Maloney (2012) explained how service learning can increase preservice teachers' awareness of themselves and teach them to become more culturally sensitive. A teacher education program at an urban Jesuit university required secondary education teacher candidates to complete service learning in the local community during their first year of college. Candidates fulfilled their 20 hours of service learning through participating in conversational dialogues with adult immigrants who were learning English. The assignment took place at a ProLiteracy America chapter, a nonprofit, national organization providing English language literacy training. The majority of the teacher candidates had little or no experience interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Teacher candidates met with their assigned English language learner at a regular meeting time and location. The English language learners were from various continents, including Asia and Africa, and had no written or spoken English skills. The English language learners were involved in 2-hour sessions with their assigned teacher candidate. These English language learners improved their reading, speaking, and writing skills through learning logs, reflections, and simple conversations. Gross and Maloney indicated that the teacher candidates increased their cultural competence through this service learning project during the cultural exchanges with immigrants who were struggling to learn a new language and culture. The service learning helped the teacher candidates to validate their career choice, to improve their interpersonal relations skills, and to develop cultural competence.

Picower (2011) emphasized the importance of service learning for social justice opportunities that allow both preservice and novice teachers to advocate for or against policies concerning their students' best interests. These opportunities can encourage preservice and novice teachers to become change agents who make a positive impact for social change within their communities and throughout the country. For example, they can participate in movements such as the No Child Left Behind that fight against corporate agendas and that are based on educational research. Teacher educators should either be members of such activist groups or provide opportunities for their preservice teachers by creating partnerships for them. All teachers, parents, and students can join together to promote democracy and transparency in public education.

Teaching Tolerance (<http://www.tolerance.org/>) is a website for educators to read about current news and to seek support for issues involving diversity and equity in schools. This website includes magazine archives, professional development, classroom resources, film kits, and mix-it-up-at-lunch activities. Professional development resources include articles and presentations to share with K-12 schools and are designed to strengthen these schools by welcoming diversity and providing opportunities for every student to learn. Classroom lessons that are available to teachers cover topics involving gender equity, racial and ethnic identity, and sexual orientation. These activities include strategies to teach kindergarteners how to develop friendships and show empathy for others and strategies to teach high school students how to break down cliques and decrease intolerance.

## **Assessment of Professional Development**

Lutrick and Szabo (2012) considered five characteristics when evaluating high quality professional development programs: (a) ongoing, (b) collaborative, (c) data-driven design, (d) interest-driven design, and (e) interactive. Successful professional development requires that staff members and students are ongoing learners. Learning communities can allow principals, assistant principals, and teachers to examine current issues within their schools and to promote active engagement, which helps teachers link new knowledge to previous knowledge to change their teaching practice. Collaboration gives teachers and their leaders opportunities to discuss issues in their classroom, plan lessons, or resolve student problems in a safe environment.

Data-driven designs are developed from student scores, walk-throughs, or observations (Lutrick & Szabo, 2012). For example, a walk-through in a classroom may reveal to a principal that the teacher is not using varied questioning techniques during a lesson, so an action plan can be created to address the use of higher-order questions. Each week the principal can observe the teacher for improvements with the use of varied questioning. In addition to the data-driven designs, principals can ensure that professional development programs engage teachers in the learning process by discovering what teachers would like to learn. Teachers can take the new knowledge back to their classrooms. Principals can create more interaction among teachers by scheduling designated days and times for them to participate in grade-level or content-specific professional development.

Selecting a focus for evaluating professional development is important (Zepeda, 2011). Spaulding (2008) stated that evaluation objectives should state the type of information to be collected and can have benchmarks to further support them. For instance, the objective could be “to record changes in the first graders literacy levels” or the benchmark could be “first graders will increase their literacy scores by 20% on state standardized assessments.” Objectives are not definite, can change over time, and should align with the project goals and activities.

Collecting data to evaluate programs is essential for various stakeholders including policy makers, administrators, practitioners, students, and parents (Zepeda, 2011). Data can be used to answer questions about the quality of a program, activities that make a program successful, and any improvements or changes that need to be made. Data collection methods include interviews, observations, focus groups, and case studies. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods can be used to determine the quality of training programs. The most important step of data collection is reporting data to stakeholders for demonstrating accountability, promoting change, and educating individuals about best practices.

Both formative and summative evaluations determine changes needed in professional learning (Zepeda, 2011). Formative evaluation assesses primarily internal changes that need to be made and is used during training. For example, a group of teachers may not be collaborating well, so a session about working effectively in cooperative groups could address this issue. Characteristics of formative evaluation include the following: (a) rapid feedback, (b) documentation of professional learning

progress, (c) strategies used, (d) problems encountered, and (e) impacts made during the early and middle stages of work. Formative evaluations can help with revising program goals and objectives and determine future planning. The audience for formative evaluations includes teachers, staff, and administrators. Summative evaluations lead to decisions about the continuation, revision, or termination of professional development. The audience for summative evaluations includes teachers, staff, administrators, and decision makers.

One model of program evaluation by Guskey (2002) involves five levels. The first two levels include how the participants felt about their training and reveal the knowledge that they found useful in their teaching practice. The third level inquires about the organizational support that the participants received to implement the new skills, and the fourth level determines that participants are using the new skills that they learned. The final level of the evaluation model questions how the participants' knowledge impacted their student outcomes.

## **Implementation**

### **Professional Development Project**

The goal of the professional development program that I developed is to create workshops to equip White preservice teachers for addressing diversity in their classrooms. The program will provide (a) the preservice teachers with current best practices for addressing diversity, (b) opportunities for the preservice teachers to implement culturally responsive pedagogy, (c) mentoring by teacher educators to confirm



acquired skills for addressing diversity, and (d) ongoing support and resources for the retention and transfer of learning for the first year of teaching.

Learning strategies for this program include an analysis of curriculum and lesson plan revisions. First, teachers will analyze the standard curriculum to determine revisions that could be made to address diverse learners. Next, teachers will make changes to an instructional unit and have a peer review the revised curriculum. Finally, teachers will implement the new pedagogy and reflect on the impact that their new teaching practice had on student performance. Student performance will determine additional training that may be needed to support teaching practice.

### **Significance—Transfer of Learning**

According to Kolb's experiential learning model, adults prefer learning that involves problem solving using real-world examples and can serve as the basis for the transfer of learning (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). The first stage of this model allows concrete experiences for learners, such as demonstrations and simulations. In the next stage, observations and reflections allow learners to participate in discussions and small group experiences. The facilitator can help participants make generalizations about what they learned and how they can apply what they learned to their situations. Finally, the new skills can be applied in new contexts, such as on the on-the-job or internships.

Developing a sense of community and implementing varied instructional strategies help promote learning (Tomlinson, 2014). Learners who feel safe and accepted in their environments and know that educators care about them are more likely to be successful. Educators who discover the learners' culture, background, and interests can

plan lessons to meet their needs. Educators who plan lessons to address the different learning styles and to make meaningful connections provide opportunities for learners to grasp the content.

Workshop participants will learn how to effectively address the diverse learners in their classrooms with the support of their mentor teachers assigned to them for their student teaching or from their education professors from MU. Both mentor teachers and education professors from MU can provide the participants with ongoing assessments of their skills. The workshops will help provide the knowledge and practical application to better equip White preservice teachers for diversity in their classrooms. Opportunities for practice may increase the level of confidence of the preservice teachers who may influence their students' ability to succeed.

### **Resources and Supports**

Workshops for the preservice teachers will be conducted on the MU's campus to defray costs for the site and utilities. The library and the computer lab adjacent will provide the computers and additional resources required for the workshops.

I will approach education professors at MU about offering additional training for the preservice teachers. If they do not volunteer, I will request approval by MU to lead the workshops (Please note that throughout this document, I will describe workshops as if they are being led by MU faculty members). Participants will complete this training on Saturday mornings, which will not interfere with their regularly scheduled classes. The participants' completion of the workshops will result in an additional certificate acknowledging their diversity training.

Announcements during the weekly education classes will be made to promote the additional training to preservice teachers. A sign-up sheet will be maintained by the education professors. The cost of instructional materials will be minimal and will be covered by the university. Lessons and the scheduling of each workshop that I created will be shared with the workshop presenters. The library will be available for Internet access and for other reference materials.

The professional development program will be created using the needs assessment of the participants as a guide. A written survey will be used to assess the following information: (a) the preservice teacher's perceptions of being equipped for teaching culturally diverse students, (b) prior experiences with diverse students, and (c) preferred learning style. The last section of this survey will allow teachers to make additional comments about their professional development training needs. This survey will be available to preservice teachers interested in the workshops during regularly scheduled class sessions.

The professors of education at MU involved in this project will request that interested participants take the survey. The survey responses of the participants will remain anonymous. A sample of questions can be found in Appendix A.

A summary of responses will be displayed in a pie chart with percentages to indicate each of the areas accessed. The data will be e-mailed to the education professors and mentors and will be used for designing workshops targeted to meet the individual needs of the preservice teachers electing to participate in the professional development workshops.

**Supports—Peer Networks**

The professional development training for preservice teachers from the school of education at MU will provide face-to-face support from the education professors and assigned mentors for student teaching experiences. During the workshops, the participants will have opportunities for collegial inquiry and for the application of newly acquired skills. The education professors will model strategies and provide exemplars, guide the participants through the process, and continue to provide support throughout the entire education program through classroom observations and practical applications during regularly scheduled education courses. Participants will learn in a safe environment with the objectives of each workshop clearly stated. Collaboration will allow the participants to learn from each other.

**Reflection**

Reflective practice is a characteristic of professional development for the participants. Participants will end each session by answering questions in a paper journal concerning what they learned from each session. The journal writing will serve as a self-assessment for the participants to understand their strengths and weaknesses and to help them gain confidence in their teaching abilities. Education professors, who will review the journals, can use them to understand how to modify the workshop strategies to meet the individual needs of the participants. For example, a participant may write that he or she is more apt to learn a new skill when hands-on learning is implemented. The education professors may modify a future workshop to incorporate a hands-on activity for

the participant or require that the participant demonstrates the newly acquired skill during a regularly scheduled class.

### **Peer Coaching**

Participants of the workshops will have opportunities to practice and to be observed by their education professors during field experiences and through simulations in regularly scheduled education courses. The observations of student teaching experience will include checklist of various areas of lessons to be evaluated. Areas of the preservice teacher's performance to be evaluated include the following: (a) clearly stated learning objectives, (b) a safe learning environment, and (c) varied instructional strategies to students from diverse backgrounds. Education professors and assigned mentors for the student teaching experiences will offer a debriefing session after each lesson is observed. The debriefing will allow time for the participant, education professor, and assigned teaching mentor to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their pedagogy. The debriefing will prompt reflective practice for making improvements or modifications for future lessons based on the individual needs of the students in the classroom.

### **Potential Barriers**

The demands of technology require highly qualified teachers who are knowledgeable about the content that they are teaching and best practices. Attrition rates of first-year teachers is high, as they often feel isolated with no one to provide them with the support that they need to succeed (Hoaglund et al., 2014). Teacher education programs that emphasize collaboration among teachers and that are aligned with school expectations increase the success of novice teachers. Designing professional development

to prepare teachers takes time for planning, resources, and effort (Coggshell et al., 2012). The education professors and mentors may be challenged by the additional time required involved with the planning and implementation of the workshops.

### **Proposal for Implementation and Timetable**

The workshops will require 10 hours of collaboration among the preservice teachers during scheduled Saturday sessions. The preservice teachers will be attending regularly scheduled education courses or fulfilling their assigned student teaching experiences Monday through Friday. The workshops will be scheduled from 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. with one 20 minute break per session (Appendix A for Sample Schedule).

The first session will build the background knowledge that participants need to successfully address culturally diverse students. They will learn about the characteristics of creating a safe learning environment for their students through professor modeling of strategies, discussion, and hands-on experiences. The second session will allow participants to compare and contrast their own culture to other cultures through discussion, active learning, and research. The third session will help participants to evaluate the importance of understanding intercultural communication skills through scaffolding, role play, and creating a minilesson to teach their students about intercultural communication skills for succeeding in a global economy. In the final session, participants will learn about strategies for teaching ESL learners through education professor modeling, the creation of bilingual vocabulary books, and lesson plan analysis.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

I have designed workshops to help equip White preservice teachers for teaching culturally diverse students. Scheduling the dates of the workshops, location, and tracking the attendance of the participants will be my responsibility. The workshop survey created to assess the quality of the workshop sessions will be collected by the education professors, and I will report the results to the education professors, participants from MU, and mentors of cooperating school districts. The education professors will be responsible for facilitating the sessions and modeling instructional strategies. Mentor teachers, when applicable, will be informed about the skills presented in each workshop session and will provide additional support or feedback as participants apply their skills during student teaching. Participants will be expected to arrive promptly to each workshop and to respect the opinions and feedback of their professor, peers, and mentor teacher. The participants will use reflective practice by writing in journals and will apply their skills through demonstrations during workshops, education classes, or student teaching experiences.

## **Project Evaluation**

Each workshop session will allow time for participants to write reflections in a journal about how they could apply the skills in their teaching practice and additional comments, questions, or suggestions about the session. A ticket-to-leave will also be requested of each participant using a targeted question about what they learned during the workshop.

Workshop participants will be encouraged to complete a survey at the conclusion of the final workshop session. Names of the participants will remain anonymous. The formative evaluation will answer questions, such as the following: (a) the facilitator knowledge and enthusiasm about the content being taught, (b) clarification of the objectives and goals of each workshop, (c) what they liked best, (d) what they liked least, and (e) additional comments or suggestions. Data from the evaluations will be categorized by themes and will be displayed in a table to use for future workshop planning.

Follow-up support will be provided to the participants through their regularly scheduled education classes and student teaching experiences. Information gathered from the workshop sessions about the strengths and weaknesses of the participants will be shared with their education professors and with their mentor teachers.

### **Implications Including Social Change**

#### **Local Community**

The workshops were designed to better equip White preservice teachers for teaching culturally diverse students. The education professors at MU and mentor teachers assigned to the preservice teachers for student teaching can encourage the development of White preservice teachers by modeling strategies and attitudes to address diverse learners. The ultimate goal of the workshops is to ensure the academic and social success of students in the local school districts. White preservice teachers may learn how to support their students through the knowledge and skills that they acquire through the training. Some strategies that will be modeled to them include the following: (a) creating



a safe environment and a community of learners, (b) exploring cultures other than their own, (c) intercultural communication skills, and (d) strategies for ESL learners.

### **Far Reaching**

These workshops may serve as a model program for improvements of pedagogical practice and preparation of White preservice teachers at MU, pedagogical practices within K-12 schools, and higher education institutions within the United States. Effective professional development that better equips White preservice teachers for teaching culturally diverse students may decrease the attrition rate of first-year teachers, especially in urban schools. Students may become more successful academically and socially.

### **Summary**

Effective professional development for teachers involves highly qualified facilitators, peer coaching, reflective practice, and the support of principals. Targeted professional development of multicultural education includes mentor support, community and service learning for preservice teachers, and encouraging teachers to join activist professional groups. The data collection, data analysis, and data results were discussed in this section. Participants revealed how their higher education classroom experiences equipped them for teaching culturally diverse students, their perceptions of cultural diversity and culturally responsive pedagogy, and how their attitudes toward cultural diversity affect their behavior in the classroom. In the following section, I will interpret the findings of my study and the impact for social change.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to address research questions concerning a problem at the school of education in a Midwestern university and the need to prepare White preservice teachers to implement culturally responsive pedagogy. However, the eight participants who were interviewed felt that they received adequate preparation for addressing cultural diversity in their classrooms. At the national level, educators agree that this kind of education is important, but they do not agree on the most effective training to equip White preservice teachers for cultural diversity (Groff & Peters, 2012; Ritchie, 2012; Whipp, 2013).

The findings of this study are aligned with the literature (Gunn, Bennett, Shuford, Peterson, & Welsh, 2013; Watson, 2012). These four areas need to be considered: (a) the White preservice teachers' need for additional cultural knowledge during classroom training and field experience, (b) the implementation of supportive measures, (c) barriers to cultural diversity, and (d) the importance of the White preservice teachers' intercultural communication skills in their classrooms. In the following section, I discuss the project's strengths and limitations of the workshops designed for White preservice teachers.

### **Project Strengths**

One of this project's strengths was the use of a qualitative design to provide a rich description for capturing the perceptions of the participants. The participants of this study shared their perceptions about how their training at the school of education at MU both

equipped and failed to equip them for teaching diverse students. The findings of this study may lead to positive social change for teacher educators, novice teachers, as well as school districts to understand how to support White novice teachers with strategies for teaching culturally diverse students.

Participant responses served as the foundation for the development of the workshops for training preservice teachers about strategies to address culturally diverse students in their classrooms. Some of the training will provide the preservice teachers with opportunities to learn about creating safe classroom environments and about exploring cultures that are different from their own culture. Additionally, the preservice teachers will acquire strategies to interact effectively with individuals with different communication styles and strategies to address ESL learners.

The workshops were designed to provide preservice teachers with additional practice through collaboration with their peers and education instructors and to be taught in a series or stand-alone format. The absence of a formal grading system may reduce the anxiety of the preservice teachers who are practicing new skills and allow them to be more receptive to constructive feedback from their peers and their education professors.

### **Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations**

This project had some limitations. One limitation was that a qualitative methodology with a small sample size of eight participants from schools in the Midwest did not allow the data to be generalizable to a larger population (Lodico et al., 2010). A future study could be conducted in other regions of the United States to make the data more generalizable.

Other limitations of the project were the voluntary nature of the workshops and the Saturday morning schedule. Preservice teachers with busy schedules and outside responsibilities of family life may not attend noncredit workshops on Saturday mornings. Education professors could award the participants with a certificate of completion and inform the participants that the additional training could help them become more marketable in their future job search. If possible, a make-up schedule could be created to encourage the attendance of preservice teachers who have scheduling conflicts.

### **Scholarship**

During my journey as a scholar, I have learned that organizational skills and careful planning are key to the completion of a doctoral program. My short-term goals were created to achieve the desired progress. Reading inspirational articles of other successful doctoral candidates and staying connected with Walden colleagues were essential to my continued engagement in the program.

The findings of this study remind me of the importance of a scholar practitioner implementing best practices to support the success of students, especially for at-risk youth and adults from culturally diverse backgrounds. Students from culturally diverse backgrounds need teachers who will ensure safe classroom environments and who will implement varied instructional strategies. Students need teachers who use reflective practice to improve their pedagogy. Finally, students need teachers who will help support their success by collaborating with other educators. As a scholar-practitioner, my responsibility is to implement best teaching practices for all learners and to strive for making the world a better place.

### **Project Development and Evaluation**

I used critical thinking skills to develop curriculum to equip preservice teachers with best teaching practice to support the success of students from culturally diverse backgrounds. Before writing the curriculum, I recalled the knowledge that I acquired from my former instructional coaches and teaching peers to assist my students with academic success and listed the strategies for infusing this information into the curriculum. I reviewed the curriculum several times to ensure that the preservice teachers would have opportunities for both independent and collaborative work. Additionally, I provided opportunities for the preservice teachers to use self-reflection to assess both their strengths and areas needing improvement.

### **Leadership and Change**

The participant responses reminded me about the importance of my role as an educator. In my current role as a career readiness instructor, I will remain passionate when teaching at-risk youth and adults the skills that they will need for navigating a challenging job market and global, technologically advanced society. My classroom will remain safe and welcoming to individuals from diverse backgrounds. I will continue to promote positive social change by conducting follow ups with my clients to inquire about their employment status and determine if they need more skills or training to advance in their careers.

### **Analysis of Self as Scholar**

My growth as a scholar occurred through collaboration with other Walden colleagues who shared a passion for making a positive impact on society, especially for

individuals from diverse backgrounds. I knew that choosing a research topic that was both interesting to me and timely was critical to beginning the research process. During my doctoral journey, I discovered the time required to conduct research and code the findings for themes. I was challenged by the academic rigor of the Walden program and the high expectations of my committee chair, second member, and URR. The completion of this study satisfied my thirst for knowledge, and I hope that it will contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of higher education. I learned that through perseverance and hard work goals can be achieved.

#### **Analysis of Self as Practitioner**

The development of this project helped me to gain deeper insight into facilitating the learning process of individuals from diverse backgrounds. I realize the importance of providing a safe environment and building rapport with my clients in my current role as a career readiness instructor so they are open to learning the necessary tasks or acquiring skills to increase the likelihood of their success. This doctoral journey has caused me to use reflective practice more frequently in my work so that I can improve my multicultural competence.

#### **Analysis of Self as Project Developer**

I chose to write a curriculum that may better equip White preservice teachers for teaching culturally diverse students. The curriculum was designed to address some of the gaps identified by the novice teachers who graduated from the education program at MU. In the future, I hope to design ESL curriculum so that MU and other universities in my region can award certifications to teachers entering this area of teaching.

### **Overall Reflection**

I was not alone in this journey. My colleagues and I encountered such challenges as time management issues related to work and family responsibilities. My committee chair provided me the encouragement that I needed to keep moving the process forward. The development of this project has allowed me to grow as a scholar-practitioner and may benefit others by making an impact on social change.

### **The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change**

Before the completion of this study, little research had been conducted about White preservice teachers and their perceptions about being equipped to teach culturally diverse students. The results of the study add to the growing research about how to equip White preservice teachers for cultural diversity in their classrooms. As defined by Walden University (2012), social change entails “the development and application of ideas, strategies, and actions to promote the worth, dignity, and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and societies” (Introduction Section, para 4). Aligning with Walden’s mission for social change, I explored White preservice teachers’ perceptions about how their higher education classroom had equipped them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students.

Ultimately, this study may impact positive social change through the mentors encouraging the development of White preservice teachers. After mentors read the findings of this study, I imagine that social change may occur when they model strategies and attitudes to help White preservice teachers move through more advanced stages of their identity development. I think that positive social change may occur when mentors

advocate for changes in the education program at MU requiring White preservice teachers to accept field experiences in urban schools for a longer duration so they can become more equipped for diversity. I believe that social change may occur when mentors recommend that the gaps in the current training program be addressed. These gaps would involve strategies and issues involving ESL learners and special education students. I expect that the results of this study will help mentors to develop personally and professionally as their support changes for themselves, in the current education program, and for the preservice teachers.

Finally, I believe that this study may impact positive social change with the improved training of White preservice teachers to support their culturally diverse students. Improvements in White preservice teachers' attitudes, recognition of barriers and supports to cultural diversity, and effective interpersonal communication may support culturally diverse students to achieve more both academically and socially. I believe that a positive social impact may occur when White preservice teachers empower their students to fight against injustices within the classroom and in society. Students can recognize the bias in the standard curriculum and other inequitable practices, such as the lack of services for ESL learners and special education students. Students can learn how to improve their communities through volunteer projects. With improvements of pedagogical practice and preparation of White preservice teachers at MU, the program may serve as a model program for improved pedagogical practices within K-12 schools and higher education institutions within United States.



### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

In this study, I analyzed the perceptions of eight White novice teachers from the school of education at MU, a public university in the Midwestern region of the United States, regarding their preparation for teaching culturally diverse students. Based on my belief that conducting this study with a larger population might present comparable results, I would recommend further studies with a larger group of participants, including participants attending other local universities in the Midwestern region. If the gaps in the current program were addressed through a series of workshops offered to the preservice teachers, I would conduct a follow-up study 5 years later to discover whether they contributed to improvements with equipping White preservice teachers for diversity in their classrooms.

One recommendation for some workshops could be to address specific strategies for addressing ESL learners. For example, strategies to teach ESL students new vocabulary could be taught to the participants. Another recommendation for workshops could be to cover how to address gender differences in the classroom and the importance of teacher reflection for evaluating current practice for addressing gender differences in the classroom.

### **Conclusion**

In this study, I revealed the attitudes, biases, and perceptions of White novice teachers from the school of education at MU toward culturally diverse students and the culturally responsive pedagogy that they were expected to implement. I interviewed eight participants from the school of education at MU about their perceptions regarding their

preparation for teaching culturally diverse students. I conducted open-ended, semistructured interviews of each participant. The findings contribute to the body of knowledge by addressing gaps in the school of education at MU. Recommendations for improvement include adding an ESL program and providing additional resources and training for special education teacher candidates. I believe that enhancing the current program at MU will better equip White preservice teachers for cultural diversity.

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## Appendix A: The Curriculum Project

Day 1 Workshop		
Participants: Pre-Service Teachers		
Setting: University Campus		
Topic: Safe Classroom Environments		
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize characteristics of safe classroom environments</li> </ul>	
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To practice strategies to provide characteristics of safe classroom environments</li> </ul>	
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To demonstrate strategies to provide safe classroom environments</li> </ul>	
Time Required	150 minutes	
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction Letter</li> <li>Video Clip: Strategies to create safe classroom environments</li> <li>Venn Diagram</li> <li>Markers, papers, and magazines for classroom environment project</li> <li>Journals</li> <li>Post It's for Ticket-to-Leave</li> </ul>	
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome: Introductions</li> </ul>	7 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify: Read letter about Objectives and outcomes for day one</li> </ul>	3 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Icebreaker: Video about Safe Classroom Environments: How Can We Create Safe and Supportive Learning Environments. <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDIS1q1dai4">www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDIS1q1dai4</a></li> </ul>	3 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow up discussion of the video</li> </ul>	7 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brainstorm using Venn Diagram Compare/Contrast: Identify characteristics of safe vs. unsafe classroom environments.</li> </ul>	20 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pair-Share: Characteristics of safe and unsafe classrooms</li> </ul>	20 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Break</li> </ul>	20 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a partner design a classroom using markers, paper, and magazines for pictures- consider-physical environment, posters, and plants. What is your plan for teaching rules and routines?</li> </ul>	25 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group presentation: Demonstrate and model strategies for creating a safe classroom environment</li> </ul>	20 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Discussion:</li> <li>What evidence did you see in classrooms that are safe learning environments? What strategies can teachers use to promote safe, welcoming classroom environments?</li> </ul>	10 minutes
Self-Assessment	Reflective Writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why are safe, welcoming environments important to students and teachers?</li> <li>How can I apply the information that I learned today to my teaching practice? Name at least one change that you will implement.</li> <li>Write any additional comments about today's session including</li> </ul>	10 minutes

	suggestions for improvement.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ticket-to-Leave-Identify three characteristics of safe classroom environments.</li> </ul>	5 minutes

<b>Day 2 Workshop</b>		
Participants: Pre-Service Teachers		
Setting: University Campus		
Topic: Exploring Cultures		
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore different cultures</li> </ul>	
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To compare/contrast cultures different than one's own cultures</li> </ul>	
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To apply the cultural knowledge in the classroom</li> </ul>	
Time Required	150 minutes	
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colored paper, string, and hole punch for cultural mobiles</li> <li>• Eight foot piece of rope for icebreaker</li> <li>• Computers with internet access(basket of books as a backup)</li> <li>• Graphic Organizer</li> <li>• Journals</li> <li>• Post It's for Ticket-to-Leave</li> </ul>	
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify: Objectives and outcomes for day two</li> </ul>	3 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Icebreaker: Our similarities (Each time the answer is true participants will take two steps toward the rope line in the middle of floor)Ask participants these questions:</li> <li>• How many of you know someone who is incarcerated? How many of you have been affected by domestic violence? How many of you know someone who is addicted to drugs or alcohol? How many of you recall a time when you felt very unsafe?</li> </ul>	5 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner activity: Brainstorm words or images to define culture</li> </ul>	7 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent activity: Create a mobile to define attributes of your family cultures(food, music, clothing)</li> </ul>	30 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break</li> </ul>	20 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Discussion: Share attributes of your family culture.</li> </ul>	10 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent activity: Using the internet research two cultures and compare/contrast these cultures (include holidays celebrated, typical houses, traditions, food, religion, languages) to your own and write a report using the organizer.</li> </ul>	30 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group presentation: Share similarities/differences of your culture to two other cultures. What assumptions or biases did have about another culture?</li> </ul>	30 minutes
Self-Assessment	Reflective Writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is it important for teachers and students to compare their culture to other cultures?</li> <li>• How can I apply the information that I learned today to my teaching practice? Name at least one change</li> </ul>	10 minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that you will implement.</li> <li>Write any additional comments about today's session including suggestions for improvement.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ticket-to-Leave- Name three attributes of another culture other than your own.</li> </ul>	5 minutes

<b>Day 3 Workshop</b>		
Participants: Pre-Service Teachers		
Setting: University Campus		
Topic: Intercultural Communication		
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize low contact and high contact communication styles</li> </ul>	
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To practice strategies for interacting with individuals with different communication styles</li> </ul>	
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To apply strategies for interacting effectively with individuals with different communication styles</li> </ul>	
Time Required	150 minutes	
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computers with Word-lesson plan template and a printer</li> <li>Journals</li> <li>Post It Notes for Ticket-to-Leave</li> </ul>	
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify: Announce objectives and outcomes for day three</li> </ul>	3 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role play a teacher making an assumption about student not giving eye contact-student must be lying.</li> <li>Group Discussion: What assumptions may the teacher have been making? How could the teacher have handled this situation differently?</li> </ul>	5 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scaffolding-Explain differences about high contact and low contact cultures.</li> </ul>	5 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Break into groups-1, 2, 3, 4 Ask all 1's to talk with the 2's and the 3's will talk to the 4's. Using the observation assess for differences in body language, gestures, posture, eye contact, tone of voice. After completing the observation, write your interpretation of your interaction</li> </ul>	40 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Break –</li> </ul>	20 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Discussion:</li> <li>What were some differences between your communication style and your partner's style?</li> </ul>	7 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperative group: Each group will design a minilesson for your student about the importance of intercultural communication skills. using the Word program.</li> </ul>	35 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Sharing-Exchange lessons and share them with the group. Questions or comments?</li> <li>Why do you think considering an individual's cultural background is important when communicating with them?</li> </ul>	15 minutes



Self-Assessment	<p>Reflective Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you think considering an individual's cultural background is important when communicating with them?</li> <li>• How can I apply the information that I learned today to my teaching practice? Name at least one change that you will implement.</li> <li>• Write any additional comments about today's session including suggestions for improvement.</li> </ul>	10 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ticket-to-Leave- Identify some strategies you will use when interacting with individuals different than your own.</li> <li>• Announce bring a lesson plan with for next Saturday workshop</li> </ul>	5 minutes

<b>Day 4 Workshop</b>		
Participants: Pre-Service Teachers		
Setting: University Campus		
Topic: Strategies for ESL Learners		
Purpose	To recognize different strategies to address ESL learners	
Learning Objectives	To practice strategies to address ESL learners	
Outcome	To demonstrate strategies to address ESL learners	
Time Required	150 minutes	
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson plan to model</li> <li>• Rubric by Rubistar-<a href="http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php">http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php</a></li> <li>• Popsicle sticks with each participant's name-demonstrate equity pull popsicle stick out of can and call name</li> <li>• White poster paper with graphic organizer and 4 markers to write</li> <li>• Objects: cork, marble, square piece of sand paper, and piece of faux fur</li> <li>• Journal paper</li> <li>• Paper and markers for books</li> <li>• Lesson plans to evaluate(teachers to bring their own lessons)</li> </ul> Internet access	
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify: Announce objectives and outcomes for day four</li> </ul>	3 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson to introduce matter ESL strategies</li> </ul>	30 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break</li> </ul>	20 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Discussion: What strategies were used in this lesson to support ESL learners?</li> </ul>	7 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair-Share (use popsicle sticks to call on different participants)- How would you help a student who did not understand the difference between the word "clothes" and "close." "eight" and "ate"?</li> </ul>	5 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent work: create English/Spanish vocabulary books using 10 content related terms of your choice.</li> </ul>	30 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group presentation: Share and examples of your books with the group.</li> </ul>	20 minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate a lesson plan to address ESL learners</li> </ul>	20 minutes
Self-Assessment	<p>Reflective Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compare ESL learners to other learners. What strategies will you implement to help improve your teaching for supporting ESL learners?</li> <li>How can I apply the information that I learned today to my teaching practice? Name at least one change that you will implement.</li> <li>Write any additional comments about today's session including suggestions for improvement.</li> </ul>	10 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ticket-to-Leave-Identify strategies to gain support and help others when teaching ESL learners.</li> </ul>	5 minutes

### A.1 Needs Assessment

The purpose of this needs assessment is to determine how to better equip White pre-service teachers for addressing culturally diverse students.

1. How many years of experience do you have with interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds? (think about volunteer or community organizations as well as your personal life).
  - a) no experience b) 1-5 years of experience c) more than 5 years of experience
2. What are some of your issues or challenges about teaching? (classroom management, content area knowledge, lesson planning).
3. How do you best learn new content? (visual, auditory, tactile)
4. How do you prefer to learn?
  - a) independently only b) in a group only c) both independently and in a group
5. Are there any accommodations that you need to support your learning?
6. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make?

## A.2 Welcome Letter Example

(Here is an example of welcoming your students at the beginning of a school year. You can mail a letter before school starts.)

# Welcome!



Dear Education Students,

Welcome to the workshops that we hope will better equip you to address culturally diverse students. During the four sessions, you will learn about strategies to create safe learning environments for your students, to explore cultures other than your own, to communicate more effectively with individuals from other cultures, and about strategies to teach ESL learners.

If you should have any questions or concerns, you can email or schedule an appointment with your workshop facilitator. Do not hesitate to contact us. We are so excited about mentoring you during these workshops!

We will work very hard to provide you with a rich and meaningful experience during these workshop sessions. Again welcome to the workshops.

Sincerely,

The Education Professors of MU University

### A.3 Graphic Organizer (saved to computer desktops in lab) for Researching Different Cultures



## A.4 Mini-Lesson Checklist

Here is a guide for you while creating your lesson.

Created a role play script for students.	
Lesson will remain within the time limit of 8-10 minutes.	
The objectives of the lesson were included.	
Materials (if needed) and procedures were listed.	
Informal assessment to check for student understanding was included.(list some example questions)	

### A.5 Example Science Lesson for ESL Learners

Objective: Identify the properties of solids.

Materials:

Paper with background information definition of matter-Matter/La Materia is something that takes up space. Things in our environment take up space. Solid/Solido-rock Liquid-water Gas-Steam, solids, liquids, and gas with pictures to demonstrate examples of each form.

White poster paper with graphic organizer and 4 markers to write, cork/ el corcho  
Journal paper

Anticipatory Set: Play Solid Liquid Gas Rap Song-

<http://www.schooltube.com/video/87e8803d34342a6f2919/Bill-Nye-the-Science-Guy-Solid-Liquid-Gas>

Procedures:

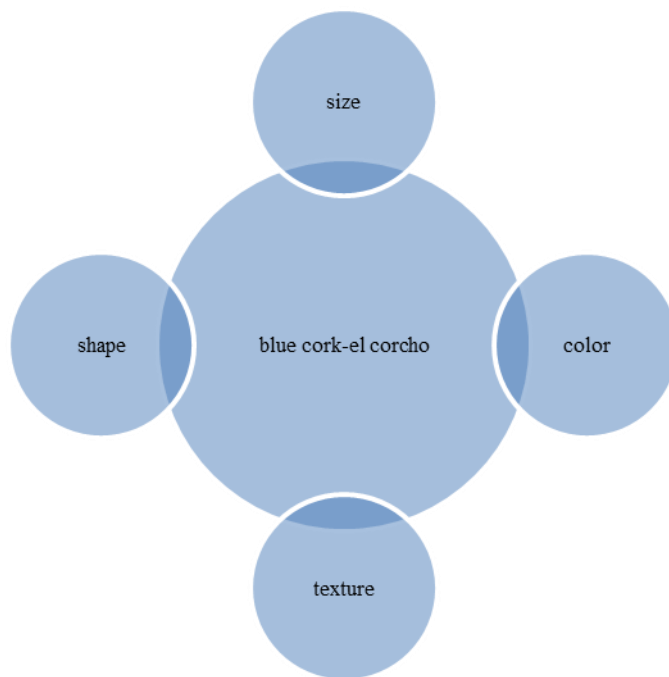
1. The teacher will have a chart paper for students to read out loud about matter and showing pictures of solids, liquids, and gases (also define these terms in Spanish). In unison the teacher and students will read “Matter is something that takes up space. Things in our environment take up space.” The teacher will ask class “What is matter? Yes, matter is something that takes up space.”
2. Students will demonstrate solids, liquids, and gas by using their hands to demonstrate.
3. Think-Pair-Share-Students will observe their environment for solids.
4. The teacher will say, “Everything that you named is matter. Matter is put together in different ways. Molecules in a solid are packed tight. Liquid molecules are not packed as tight. Gas molecules are loose, they float. The teacher will ask students to say with him/her, molecules in solids are packed tightly. Your turn students, describe molecules in solids: Yes, molecules in solids are packed tightly. (If students, don’t have the correct answer- the teacher will say my turn, the molecules in solids are packed tightly. Your turn say it with me, Molecules in solids are packed tightly. Yes, molecules in solids are pack tightly
5. Students will form groups to demonstrate how molecules are packed for solids, liquids, and gases by standing close together for solids, farther apart for liquids, and floating around for gasses.
6. The teacher will say, “Remember particles of matter are molecules. Matter is made up of tiny particles called molecules. Solid matter has a definite shape and

volume. Solid matter stays the same. Today you will observe solid matter. Describe matter by size, shape, texture, and color.

7. Students will be reminded of the expectations of group work on the provided rubric. Students will divide into groups of 4 per group. Roles of each group- Materials Manager- makes sure the materials are cared for Team Leader-makes sure the team is working responsibly Reporter-reports data Custodian-cleans up
8. Teacher will hand out graphic organizer and place and object in the center of the organizer and label it i.e cork etc.
9. Students will determine the size, shape, texture, and color of their object and write each description on the appropriate on the graphic organizer. (The teacher will monitor the groups to answer questions)
10. While waiting, students will write in their journals to describe the properties of their object.
11. Group discussion-share the properties of your object (size, shape, texture, and color).
12. Assess: Draw a picture of how the molecules of a solid are arranged. What do you know about the properties of a solid? Did the solid change size, shape, texture, or color?
13. Teacher: How are molecules packed in solids? Yes, molecules in solids are packed tightly?
14. Home extension: Put water in your freezer. What form does the water take?



A.5.1



## A.5.2 Cooperative Learning Rubric

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Working with Others	Almost always listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Tries to keep people working well together.	Usually listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Does not cause \"waves\" in the group.	Often listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others, but sometimes is not a good team member.	Rarely listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Often is not a good team player.
Focus on the task	Consistently stays focused on the task and what needs to be done. Very self-directed.	Focuses on the task and what needs to be done most of the time. Other group members can count on this person.	Focuses on the task and what needs to be done some of the time. Other group members must sometimes nag, prod, and remind to keep this person on-task.	Rarely focuses on the task and what needs to be done. Lets others do the work.
Attitude	Never is publicly critical of the project or the work of others. Always has a positive attitude about the task(s).	Rarely is publicly critical of the project or the work of others. Often has a positive attitude about the task(s).	Occasionally is publicly critical of the project or the work of other members of the group. Usually has a positive attitude about the task(s).	Often is publicly critical of the project or the work of other members of the group. Often has a negative attitude about the task(s).
Problem-solving	Actively looks for and suggests solutions to problems.	Refines solutions suggested by others.	Does not suggest or refine solutions, but is willing to try out solutions suggested by others.	Does not try to solve problems or help others solve problems. Lets others do the work.

## A.6 Final Workshop Evaluation Questionnaire

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions**

Please circle your response on a 1 to 5 scale.

1="Strongly disagree," or the lowest, most negative impression

2=Disagree

3="Neither agree or disagree," or an adequate impression

4=Agree

5= "Strongly Agree," or the highest, most positive impression

**Content** (Circle your response to each item)

1. I was well informed about the objectives of this workshop.

1 2 3 4 5

2. This workshop met my expectations

1 2 3 4 5

3. The content is relevant to my teaching experience.

1 2 3 4 5

**Planning** (Circle your response to each item)

4. The objectives were clear to me.

1 2 3 4 5

5. The activities stimulated my learning.

1 2 3 4 5

6. The activities gave me sufficient practice and feedback.

1 2 3 4 5

7. The difficulty level of this workshop was appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5

8. The pace of the workshop was appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5

**Instructor/Facilitator** (Circle your response to each item)

9. The instructor was well prepared.

1 2 3 4 5

10. The instructor was helpful.

1 2 3 4 5

**Results** (Circle your response to each item)

11. I accomplished the objectives of this workshop

1 2 3 4 5

12. I will be able to apply what I learned in this workshop

1 2 3 4 5

**Suggestions/Comments**

13. What did you like best about this workshop?

14. What did you like least about this workshop?

15. What other improvement(s) would you recommend for this workshop?

## Appendix B: Letter of Cooperation

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Schubert-Spader:

Based on my review of your research study, I give permission for you to conduct the study regarding White pre-service teachers' perceptions toward diversity within

[REDACTED] School of Education. As part of this study, I authorize you to invite pre-service teachers, whose names and contact information I will provide, to participate in the study as interview/survey subjects. Their participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Appendix C: Invitation Letter

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Karen Spader, and I am conducting a qualitative research study for partial fulfillment of my doctoral degree at Walden University. My seven years of teaching experience as a White teacher working in urban schools prompted me to conduct this study. I did not feel completely prepared for addressing the needs of culturally diverse learners, and I was fortunate that instructional coaches, grade level team leaders, and principals provided the support and professional development that allowed me to help my students reach the highest levels of academic success.

My study concerns exploring White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences have prepared them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students. Since I have chosen to interview recent graduates of the School of Education at Graceland University, I request your participation.

As a participant of this study, you will be invited to a personal interview to discuss your perceptions about your higher education classroom environment prepared you or not for teaching culturally diverse students. Your feedback will be used to improve training programs for White pre-service teachers by preparing them to teach culturally diverse students. Responses to interview questions will be kept confidential and will follow Institutional Research Guidelines set forth by Walden University. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be required to sign an informed consent form.

You will participate in one personal interview that will take place at \_\_\_\_\_ and that will be approximately 60 minutes long. The interview will be audio taped to help ensure accuracy of your responses and to assist with the flow of the conversation. Once the interview is finished, you will be invited to read the transcript of the interview.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. The risks and benefits of participation are described in the informed consent form. If you can participate in this study, please contact me [REDACTED] or send me an email at [REDACTED] by \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

(Signature) Karen M. Spader

## Appendix D: Informed Consent

You are invited to take part in a research study of White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences have equipped them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students. The researcher is inviting recent graduates from the School of Education at [REDACTED] to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Karen Spader, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

### Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to explore White novice teachers' perceptions about how their higher education classroom experiences have prepared them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students.

### Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in a 60 minute audio taped personal interview  
(Audio taping the interviews will assist the researcher in accurately capturing participant responses and facilitate the flow of the conversation.)
- Provide feedback about how accurately I captured your experiences and perceptions.  
(Approximately 30 minutes).

The interview questions are as follows:

1. How do you describe a classroom environment that supports multiculturalism?
2. What strategies do you implement to support multiculturalism?
3. What do you think are barriers in the classroom environment that detract from multiculturalism?
4. As a result of your classroom experiences and field experience at [REDACTED], have your attitudes toward multiculturalism changed? If so, how?
5. In what ways did your classroom experience and field experience at [REDACTED] prepare you for multiculturalism?
6. In what areas of your classroom experience and field experience at [REDACTED] do you think need improvement for preparing White pre-service teachers for multiculturalism?

7. Do you have any additional comments about your classroom experiences at [REDACTED]?

#### Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. The researcher will not treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

#### Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue, stress, social discomfort, or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

The potential benefits of this program evaluation will be to improve training for White pre-service teachers enrolled in the School of Education at [REDACTED] by preparing them to teach culturally diverse students.

#### Payment:

There are no payments or compensation available for participating in this study.

**Privacy:** Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by storing study data in computer that is password protected. Once the audio tape data is recorded, the audio tape will be stored in a secure location (combination lock safe) at the home of the researcher. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

#### Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via by calling ([REDACTED]) or emailing the researcher at [REDACTED]. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-866-492-5336, extension 3121210. Walden University's approval number for this study is IRB will enter approval number here and it expires on IRB will enter expiration date.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep for your records.



## Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make decision about my involvement. By signing below, "I consent", I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of

Participant \_\_\_\_\_

Date of consent \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Phone Script

Hello (Mr. /Ms.). How are you today? My name is Karen Spader, a Walden University Doctoral Candidate. I am calling to inform you about my qualitative research study. May I take a moment of your time to explain this study? If no, is there a better day and time to reach you? If yes, let me tell you more about this study.

This research study involves the perceptions of White novice teachers and how their higher education classroom experiences have prepared them for teaching a culturally diverse population of students.

Since I have chosen to learn about the perceptions of White novice teachers, who have recently graduated from the School of Education at [REDACTED], your participation in this study is requested.

Study participants will be scheduled for a personal interview that will last approximately 60 minutes and that will be audio taped. The interview questions will involve your perceptions about how your higher education classroom experiences at [REDACTED] prepared you or not for teaching a culturally diverse population of students. Data gathered from the interviews will be used to improve training for White pre-service teachers enrolled in the School of Education at [REDACTED].

I assure you that your responses will remain confidential and will adhere to Institutional Research Guidelines set forth by Walden University. If you agree to participate, you will be required to sign an informed consent form.

Are there any questions that I can answer to help convince you to be a participant of this study? Your participation in this study is voluntary. I have the following days and times available to interview you. What day and time would you like to schedule your interview? The risks and benefits of participating in this study are outlined in an informed consent form that I can email to you.

If you cannot make the scheduled interview, please call me at ([REDACTED]) or send an email to [REDACTED] within 24 hours prior to the scheduled interview.

Thank you for your time and agreeing to participate or Thank you for your time and consideration.

## Appendix F: Interview Questions

1. How do you describe a classroom environment that supports multiculturalism?
2. What strategies do you implement to support multiculturalism?
3. What do you think are barriers in the classroom environment that detract from multiculturalism?
4. As a result of your classroom experiences and field experience at MU, did your attitudes toward multiculturalism change? If so, how?
5. In what ways did your classroom experience and field experience at MU prepare you for multiculturalism?
6. In what areas of your classroom experience and field experience at MU do you think need improvement for preparing White pre-service teachers for multiculturalism?
7. Do you have any additional comments about your classroom experiences at MU?