

**REDESIGNING A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM:
HOPES, MOTIVATIONS, PROMISES, AND REALITIES**

by

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ABSTRACT

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Like a significant number of teacher Education Programs, Pinetree College encountered difficulty meeting new, more rigorous standards put into place in 1988 by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). As a result of failing to meet some standards in the spring of 1989, significant changes in the Teacher Education Program occurred. These changes began with the development and articulation of a conceptual framework, the informed, thoughtful decision-maker (I.T.D-M). The resulting program led to Pinetree College having accreditation of their Teacher Education Program restored by NCATE in the spring of 1991.

The purpose of this study is to attempt to answer the question, what evidence shows that the teacher education K-8 multi-subjects curriculum at Pinetree College serves to develop the behaviors, characteristics and skills that are thought to be important for teachers who are informed, thoughtful decision-makers? This study describes the influences the conceptual framework has had on the program,

the faculty who deliver it, and the students who are served by it. The participants in this study include K-8 multi-subject student teachers, faculty who teach required courses in the program, and public school personnel who work with student teachers. Data include program documents, required textbooks, assigned activities, course syllabi, transcribed audio interviews with faculty, public school personnel and student teachers and journals written by student teachers during their professional semester. These data sources were analyzed for the purpose of learning what the nature of the faculty's understanding of the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework is; how they provide opportunities for students to learn about classroom decision making; how students come to understand the I.T.D-M. framework; how that understanding influences their practice, and finally, how public school personnel perceives Pinetree College student teachers' skills in making informed decisions as they experience the demands of the classroom.

Findings indicate that multi-subjects K-8 student teachers do indeed make proactive and interactive classroom decisions. They report that their understanding of the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework came from faculty who teach required education courses. Faculty report providing experiences which promote an understanding of the framework and practical application of its basic tenets. Public school personnel view

Pinetree student teachers in a positive light. They report that recent student teachers are as well prepared or exceed earlier student teachers' level of competence. This suggests that the multi-subject curriculum and the faculty who implement it provide a context in which students develop a repertoire of skills, behaviors and characteristics that promote the development of a thoughtful, informed individual who makes effective classroom decisions.

for you, Norman

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Introduction

Teacher education programs, sensitive to the changing educational needs of our diverse society, strive to fulfill those needs in socially responsive ways. These programs first must acknowledge the need for change and then plan for, implement, and evaluate significant programmatic restructuring intended to bring about that change. The teacher education program at Pinetree College recently accepted the challenge for responsive change and embarked on a journey to redesign the way it prepares teachers for the classroom of the 21st century.

The teacher education program at Pinetree College is historically significant in the mission of the institution. The school was chartered in 1872 as a normal school whose mission it was to educate teachers. In 1931, the school became Pinetree State Teacher's College. It was not until 1943 that the name, and indeed the mission of the school, changed to reflect the expanding programs of study. The development of teachers, however, continues to play a significant role at Pinetree. Approximately twenty-five to thirty-five percent of the students graduating each May do so with degrees in education, with the greatest number of these certified in K-8 multi-subjects.

This commitment to teacher education combined with a mission statement that emphasizes high quality instruction created a context of high expectation for their teacher education program. Recently, however, Pinetree College's teacher education program, accredited since 1954, was judged as not meeting the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards in the review conducted in the spring of 1989. Changes in the NCATE standards for teacher education program accreditation, implemented in 1988, may have resulted in the program at Pinetree failing to retain accreditation. One of the most significant standards not met was Standard I, Design and Delivery of Curriculum, specifically the articulation of a philosophy, or conceptual framework, for Pinetree's teacher education program. Thus, in response to this challenge by NCATE, an extensive effort at program redesign was undertaken. This program renovation included faculty, students, administration and public school personnel. These participants came together in a spirit of collaboration to read, study, discuss, and write about their ideas on teacher preparation.

The collaboration led to the articulation of a conceptual framework, the Informed, Thoughtful Decision-Maker (ITD-M). This new framework provided the guide for the curriculum and

instructional redesign. Prior to developing the conceptual framework of the informed thoughtful decision-maker the program did not have a stated conceptual structure. The teacher education program could be described as an organized group of experiences and courses that were often disparate events rather than a cohesive approach to teacher preparation. The lack of a theoretical grounding tied explicitly to practice tended to have a limiting effect on facultys' and students' ability to communicate about teaching. The articulation of the I.T.D-M. framework is an attempt to establish a common language that faculty, students, and public school personnel could use for considering the complexities of teaching. The development and implementation of the framework is intended to help reduce the limitations on communication as well as guide the creation of worthwhile and connected course work and field experiences. In April, 1991, NCATE accreditation was restored to Pinetree College, with all standards met. The new conceptual framework and the accompanying curricular changes were judged to be responsive to original concerns.

The story is an ongoing one in that the conceptual framework for teacher education, the Informed, Thoughtful Decision-Maker has been in place for approximately three years. Curricular and instructional changes, as well as new

benefits which came about as a result of the development and adoption of this framework seem to be viewed in a positive light by students, faculty, administrators, and public school personnel. It seems reasonable then to consider how the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework has influenced the program for teacher education to this point in time. An evaluation of the infusion of the model into the content and practices of the courses/program and an examination of its influence on both the faculty and students would seem prudent. In fact, such self-reflection is consistent with the framework itself.

When the conceptual framework was put into place there was a general redesign and reorganization of courses. The very nature of most courses has changed to reflect the influence of the framework. Textbook selection, teaching and learning activities, journal articles, and course presentations have been selected to promote experiences which foster the development of decision making in students in the teacher education program at Pinetree College. Changes included revision of the course sequencing. For example, some courses were deleted and some two hour courses became three hour courses. Other changes reflected beliefs related to field based learning. The number of field experience hours were increased significantly and requirements for completion of these early field experiences became more rigorous.

Alternatives to early field experiences scheduled in traditional classrooms during the regular school day were developed. For example, some Education 210 (Foundations in Education) students now spend part of their required field hours working at a school in a nearby county in an after-school program designed for elementary students at risk. In addition, beginning with the fall, 1992, semester the student teaching experience was changed from twelve to sixteen weeks in length. Taken together these changes represent a significant departure in how Pinetree faculty believes they are preparing teachers. Thus, the purpose of this descriptive study is to examine the current status of the informed, thoughtful decision-maker framework infusion into the teacher education curriculum at Pinetree College and its relationship to the current teaching and learning in the program.

Model and Conceptual Framework Defined

The term "model" is defined in the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1991, pp.845) "as a preliminary pattern representing an item not yet constructed, and serving as the plan from which the finished work, usually larger, will be produced". A model, is a representation of how something will be after some action has been taken. In the case of a model for teacher education that "something" is a

program of study which represents the conceptualization of those who administer and deliver the program and possess the vision of the product. A framework, on the other hand, is defined as a structure for supporting something. Within the parameters of this discussion a conceptual framework is a structure which supports an idea or understanding of something; in this case that of what a teacher ought to know or be like. The difference in the terms "model" and "conceptual framework" seems to be that of process and product. A framework supports something while it is undergoing some change; a process. A model is representation of a product. The evolving nature of dynamic teacher education programs is viewed more as a process. The term "conceptual framework" is more descriptive of the principle which defines this teacher education program.

This investigation will focus on the implementation of the conceptual framework for students of the K-8 multi-subjects programs. A brief, general description of the program and the experiences of the students in the program will follow. See Appendix A for a diagram of the conceptual framework.

Pinetree's framework for teacher education, the informed, thoughtful decision maker, strives to provide a research based framework for the preparation of teachers for the twenty-first

century. The framework is grounded on a research supported knowledge base evolved from the work of Brophy and Good (1988), Bellon (1986), Gage and Berliner (1989) and others, as well as from experience, observation, and the world of practice of teacher educators and public school educators.

Pinetree College has historically been committed to the responsibility of liberally educating all students, and the general education component reflects this in the required courses. For example, Multi-subject K-8 majors are required to successfully complete a minimum of 16 hours of lab sciences, 21 hours of social science, 15 hours of English, as well as multiple course requirements in the Art, Music, and Math departments, making up approximately 41 percent of the credits required for graduation.

The I.T.D-M. framework acknowledges the importance of the general education component as well as the importance of education foundations, subject specialization, and methods and practice. The conceptual framework incorporates all of these important components in the development of a knowledgeable, beginning teacher.

Comparing the current program to the one that was in place before 1991 illustrates some significant changes, even though there has been continuity in the part of the program which is delivered outside the education department itself.

The most substantial changes have occurred in the sequence, content, and practice of the courses taught in the education department, specifically the educational foundations courses and methods courses.

K-8 multi-subject majors take more required courses in the education department than secondary education majors who take a substantial number of courses in their content area outside the department. It seems reasonable then to believe that if the I.T.D-M. framework is to have an observable influence on any group of students, then it would likely be the K-8 multi-subject majors, which is the reason that group was targeted for this study.

A general description of the sequencing as well as the nature of the course work is given here in order to promote understanding of the K-8 multi-subject major's experience in Pinetree's teacher preparation program. Education foundations courses, which begins with Education 210, Foundations in Education, is usually taken during the fall semester of the sophomore year. This course has a requirement of 20 field hours, and for most students this is the first experience in schools where their role is being transformed from that of "student" to that of "teacher". The next course in the sequence is Education 251, Human Growth and Development, followed by Education 305, Education Psychology, which is

followed by Education 306, Instructional Strategies and Processes, the general methods course that precedes enrollment in subsequent education methods courses. During the time students are striving to complete their general education and educational foundations courses, they are also enrolled in subject specialization courses outside of the department that relate to their particular certification. For example, K-8 multi-subjects majors are required to take two art courses specifically for classroom teachers which are taught by faculty in the Art Department. Music and Math courses designed for classroom teachers are also taught in their respective departments. These elements of the program attempt to provide "exposure to information, ideas, values, and ways of knowing and processing knowledge" (Pinetree College Catalog, 1991, p.1-7) and thus develop awareness and understanding of what it means to be an educated person who will some day teach.

It is the intent of the program that knowledge gained through meeting the requirements of general education, foundations, and subject specialization is integrated as students develop the ability to use that knowledge and expertise as they participate in planning and teaching experiences in both clinical and classroom based settings. Making and acting on decisions related to the role

of teacher, students' characteristics, the complexity of the classroom, curriculum, and student learning culminate in thoughtful reflection about those experiences. During the practice phase students apply, reflect and modify their knowledge base. At this point students have developed the skills and the confidence necessary to apply their restructured knowledge base and selected experiential knowledge to the demands of a teaching situation. They reflect on their experience and modify their knowledge and behaviors accordingly in order to gain broader understanding and improved performance. The broad base of knowledge, which is delivered as the result of the rigorous, carefully sequenced course of study, systematically transforms students as they progress toward becoming educational professionals, able to make the numerous decisions made daily by effective teachers.

The intent of the K-8 multi-subject program is to create graduates who possess a broad, liberal education, an awareness and understanding of that knowledge base for use in core courses in education as well as specific content knowledge. The graduate has had opportunity to transform that awareness and understanding into pedagogical action as they complete the methods course work and progress into the field of practice. The expectations on which the program is based include the

field of practice where students are encouraged to apply what has been learned, reflect upon the effects of their teaching on themselves and others, and then modify their teaching to make it better. The affective aspect of the framework, by its placement within the circle of cognitive concerns, (See Appendix A), suggests that only after those concerns are addressed or as a consequence of dealing with the cognitive concerns does the affective component emerge. The affect component includes a healthy esteem, an appreciation of self and others, which is built on a foundation of competence. Competence is built as students develop the expertise and confidence associated with effective teaching. A healthy sense of self permits a person to think and act creatively, and when these two components, self esteem and creativity, are present there is a valuing of others; empathy; a sense of what others are experiencing, and it is at this point that a teacher reaches high levels of competence (See Appendix A).

The framework for teacher education, the Informed, Thoughtful Decision-Maker, provides the basis for investigating the interrelated nature of the K-8 multi-subjects program, faculty who administer the program, and the students engaged in the program; each of which need to be examined within the context of the other. The K-8 multi-

subject curriculum, the faculty who teach it, public school personnel, and the students' perspectives as they complete the program are the focal points in this descriptive study. The question of whether the program produces informed, thoughtful decision-makers frames this investigation.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the status of the implementation of the Informed, Thoughtful Decision-Maker Framework into the teacher education program at Pinetree College and to describe the subsequent influences of the implementation on the perception of the program. Coming to understand the nature of the implementation process and the dispositions of the program participants toward the framework can provide valuable insights into future program planning for the faculty at Pinetree and serves as a case for reflection for other teacher education programs that are in the process of meeting the challenge of systemic change. The description will be constructed by answering the question, **what evidence shows that the teacher education curriculum at Pinetree College serves to develop the behaviors, characteristics, and skills that are thought to be important for teachers who are informed, thoughtful decision-makers?**

In sum, the description ought to create a clear picture

of the students' understanding, and some idea of how the faculty, curriculum, and field experiences are promoting the understanding. Through the perception of student teachers and public school personnel who have worked with them we may learn how the program influences the practical experience of student teaching. The result of this study should help the faculty at Pinetree judge whether their efforts have taken them in the direction they had intended and serve as reflective pause on the journey to provide high quality teacher preparation.

The chapters which follow will attempt to fill in the framework for this study provided in the introduction. Chapter Two of this study presents a review of the literature on the historical development of the idea of a conceptual framework. I discuss the influence that a conceptual framework has upon an education program and review the research about teacher decision making.

Chapter Three of this document contains a detailed description of the participants, and the data collection sources. In that chapter, I also describe the plan that guided data analysis. In Chapter Four, I frame the description around major concepts which emerged from the analysis of the data.

Finally, Chapter Five is a discussion of the implication

for further research and recognition of the impact the redesign has had on recent K-8 multi-subject graduates.

Chapter II

Literature Review

In this chapter three aspects of Pinetree's conceptual framework for teacher education will be discussed, first, from the salient feature of a conceptual framework according to bodies such as National Council for Accreditation of Teachers Education (NCATE), and second, the influence the presence of a framework may have on teacher education programs. Finally, the idea of I.T.D-M. will be discussed by reviewing the body of research which focuses on teacher decision-making from an historical perspective and the current discussion centering on novice teacher decision making.

Historically, those who have had as their mission the training of teachers have had a vision of what a teacher ought to know or be able to do; they had a plan or conceptual framework, an idea of what this teacher would be like upon the completion of the program. Indeed, notions about what teachers need to know or be able to do predates even the rise of normal schools. Hall, (1833) advocated the inclusion of the "science of education" in his teacher education program. Hall's definition of the "science of education" meant that

teachers needed to be adept in classroom management as well as instruction. Normal schools of the late 1800's and early 1900's shared Hall's view of teaching, and their curriculums included some attention to methodology and classroom management as well as content. During the 1940's, four year teacher education programs came into being, which have not changed significantly in form over time. The curriculum has managed to remain essentially unchanged since the beginning of four year teacher preparation programs, and with minor differences most programs consist of approximately the same curriculum, which includes two years of general studies, with the final two years of study focused on courses in educational foundations, content knowledge, methods (both general and content specific), and field based teaching experiences (Cruikshank, 1985). It seems, then, that there has been a notion of a "model" or framework for what a teacher ought to know and be able to do in place for a long period of time. The term "model" as it is used here, however, is found predominately in more recent discourse about programs. Lowther and Saltinski (1975), West (1986), and Barnes (1989) are among those who have discussed the importance of a conceptual framework or model. They have suggested that the presence of a carefully considered model, or conceptual framework for teacher education can aid articulation of

theoretical understanding, as well as make useful and relevant the professional practice of a teacher education program. Recent changes in the standards for accreditation for National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 1988), have also emphasized the importance of articulation of a model or conceptual framework for teacher education programs. Of the five standards which must be met for accreditation to be granted or extended, Standard I.A. "Design of Curriculum" is the one cited as the most frequently not met by teacher education institutions (Carrier, 1991). In the NCATE Activities Report from AACTE, Jones (1991) reported that one hundred twenty institutions had undergone on-site accreditation evaluations during the 1988-1990 period. Of the ninety-four schools who failed to receive accreditation, forty-three, or forty-six percent, failed to gain accreditation because of failure on standards in Category I, most specifically, Standard I.A. Design of Curriculum. Standard I.A. Design of the Curriculum, is stated this way:

"The unit ensure that its professional education programs are based on essential knowledge, established and current research findings, and sound professional practice. Each program in the unit reflects a systematic design with explicitly stated philosophy and objectives.

Coherence exists between (1) courses and experiences, and (2) purposes and outcomes" Gideonse, (1989), Pinetree Self-Study Report (1991).

Gideonse (1989) suggests that compliance with this standard can be demonstrated when the conceptual framework for a teacher-education program reflects practice which is informed through scholarship, practice, and research.

These design principles are reflected in the conceptual framework for teacher education at Pinetree College, the Informed, Thoughtful Decision-Maker, (Pinetree Self-Study, 1991). The articulation of this framework represents extensive scholarship, the world of practice and research about the existing knowledge base for teaching. The model, or conceptual framework, the I.T.D-M., reflects the philosophical perspectives of the diverse faculty at Pinetree who share a responsibility to a teacher-preparation program. The conceptual framework was developed as part of an intentional effort to meet the standards for NCATE accreditation. This was accomplished in the Spring of 1991, due in part to the successful articulation of the conceptual framework and the redesign of the teacher education program as a reflection of the framework.

Possible Influences of Conceptual Framework on Teacher Education Programs

The work of educational researchers, that is to say, the issues they choose to study ultimately have broad influence on the conceptual framework which drive teacher preparation programs (Grossman, 1992). Those who design, deliver and administer curriculum in teacher education programs are, in their effort to stay abreast of current thought and best practices, the consumers and very often the producers of educational research. Clearly, when faculty of teacher education programs engage in the study of relevant and problematic issues they encounter and extend the body of educational knowledge, the knowledge generated by their studies is relevant to their own education program concerns.

The effort of the Teacher Education faculty at Pinetree serves as an example of this. By virtue of the focus of study directed at solving the problems of the Teacher Education program new knowledge and understanding has been generated. This new knowledge and understanding has been the basis on which the redesign of Pinetree's Teacher Education program was achieved.

Grossman (1992) discussed an issue which is relevant to teacher preparation programs everywhere. Should teacher education programs prepare teachers to adjust to prevailing

classroom conditions or prepare them to be agents of change, or, as some experts contend that successful teacher education programs may need to do both? This is a monumentally important issue for teacher education programs. The reason this question is so important is that the adherence to either of these positions greatly influences the design of curriculums and have lifelong effects on those who journey through them. Kagan (1992) for example, discusses a framework which suggests that novice teachers first must attain a level of competence with procedural classroom routines such as classroom management issues, discipline policies, and planning, before they can attend to the teaching of content. Believing that procedural knowledge must precede content knowledge would call into question the prominent place of general education courses and specific content courses in teacher education curriculums and place in the forefront courses that deal with classroom discipline, teaching models and management techniques. If, on the other hand, it is believed that teachers ought to be prepared to become agents of change, that the role of teachers is to challenge current practice and policy and work toward positive change, (Grossman, 1992) then the curriculum design would take on a decided different shape.

Goals for a positive change program would be to prepare

teachers to gain knowledge about ways to help all students learn content. Teachers in a program like this would learn to ask worthwhile questions about their teaching as they learn from their practice, as well as face the ethical and moral dimensions of their classroom (Grossman, 1992). Content knowledge and procedural knowledge are, in the words of Grossman (1992) "married" to one another and they grow through the interaction that takes place as teachers gain procedural/management knowledge through the teaching of meaningful content.

Both of these perspectives have support in research. However, these opposing perspectives are another way to think about the issue of teacher training versus teacher education (Cruikshank & Metcalf, 1990). Teacher training viewed as being "know how" and teacher education being "knowing that". Teacher training, then, as defined in the American Heritage Dictionary is the act, process or routine of one who trains. The phrase "routine" implying procedural, standardized forms. Teacher education, on the other hand, is defined as "the act or process of imparting knowledge or skill". Knowledge is a cognitive mental component acquired through study and experience, with little to do with routines and procedures endemic to the concept of training. Considering the implications these two positions represent is important in the

adoption of a model around which a teacher education program is developed. For example, if policy makers at the college and university levels believe that classroom experience is a worthwhile vehicle for learning to teach, then many, if not all courses might require field experiences. Both the Holmes Group (1986) and the Carnegie Task Force (1987) take the position that the world of practice is a powerful source for learning to teach. This seemingly well-intentioned assertion carries with it important implications. Choosing learning activities and experiences based on this assertion sends a clear message to the students that practical classroom experiences are very important ways of learning. Other learning, for example, learning theoretical frameworks in education, may not be viewed as being as useful or valued. The unspoken message being sent is that it is important to "fit in" with prevailing classroom conditions. This kind of thinking may not create "empowered" teachers. Empower means "invest with...power; authorize, to enable or permit" (American Dictionary). Within the context here the idea of an empowered teacher would be one that not only can function in the practical sense but is able to reflect and learn from practice and research and thereby move to higher and higher levels of competence and understanding.

When college and university teacher-education programs

send students into schools to work with experienced teachers they are generally learning to do "teacher stuff" like the experienced teachers who are their models (Grossman, 1992). By making that one decision about the importance of field experience a teacher education program and its faculty could be laying the groundwork for the teaching of courses that foster learning "how". In other words, one seemingly small decision can have far-reaching implications for the curriculum of a teacher education program, affecting big curricular decisions as well as the small ones, such as textbook selection, learning experiences and activities, sequencing of instruction and other decisions faculty make routinely (Grossman, 1992).

Conceptual frameworks for teacher education programs, then, ought to be adopted tentatively and cautiously so that there is full understanding of the implications of that decision. Whatever role models students are exposed to not only "influences their classroom instruction but also affects their orientations to career, colleagues, and supervisors" (Borman, 1990, pp393). Those who are charged with the delivery of the curriculum need to understand the implications of the adoption and articulation of a framework, whether it is a behavioristic, competency-based, instructional framework, or a framework for empowering teachers so that they become

directors of their own learning (Beyer & Zeichner, 1982, Tom, 1986).

The concept of a framework for teacher education programs brings with it several advantages. Aside from the obvious ones it becomes the driving force behind program redesign and articulation, it also may serve as the focal point for faculty discourse and research. Faculty discourse and research tends to take place both informally as well as in more formal contexts. Faculty interactions which take place informally tend to focus on discussions of students, pedagogy, content, and philosophical perspectives. Much of this discourse centers on narratives shared, which when unfolded, tell of ideas tested informally in the context of the classroom. These tests may lead to understandings by the faculty member.

In a more formal context, faculty discourse takes place in the various committee meetings on which all faculty members serve. Meetings which are devoted to curriculum revisions and development have served to provide a shared vision of the program while building the necessary connections of the program content. Student input and faculty expertise is sought regularly through systematic student, peer and course evaluation for the purpose of creating and recreating a program whose components are responsive to students' needs. Opportunities for reflection about teaching and learning are

provided as faculty and students come together to share their perceptions and understandings of the program. This kind of reflection fosters the possibility, indeed the probability of change, or growth, in the faculty as well as in the teacher education program itself. "To be a professional requires reflection, understanding and a desire to interrogate practice in order to discern hidden implications" (Romanish, 1993).

Decision Making Framework

"Any teaching act is the result of a decision, whether conscious or unconscious, that the teacher makes after the complex cognitive processing of available information. This reasoning leads to the hypothesis that the basic teaching skill is decision making" (Shavelson, 1973, pp18). Making decisions then, appears to be a constant in the professional life of a teacher. Some sources, Morine & Valence (1975), Fogerty, Wang, and Creek (1982) claim that teachers make on the average slightly more than one decision (.5 to .7) every two minutes of classroom time. If, as Shavelson (1973) suggests, decision making is the basic teaching skill, then it would seem that decision making ought to be developed and nurtured especially in those who aspire to teach. In this section research on teacher decision making will be discussed

from the 1970's, when preactive and interactive decision making dominated the teacher decision making research through the 1980's, when this research reflected an interest in the differences in expert and novice decision making. The last part of this section will focus on teacher education programs and how the experiences they provide may influence decision making in the pre-service teacher.

Preactive and Interactive Decision Making

During the 1970's, interest in decision making concentrated on studies which investigated preactive and interactive decisions made by teachers. Preactive studies focused on the teacher thinking that went into planning for instruction in its varied forms, such as daily, weekly, unit, and yearly plans. Investigations focused on objectives, activities, content to be taught, and the nature of the learners (Yinger, 1986). Some studies investigated the effects on the classroom. Most of the research undertaken during the 1970's focused on preactive decision making; some studies, however, did investigate the nature of teachers' interactive decision making. Interactive decisions are those decisions made by teachers which are best described as context bound or situational in nature. For example, the issues which seemed to have the greatest influence on interactive decisions

tended to be the learners, classroom management concerns, and instructional methods. A number of findings have informed teacher education programs, such as the assertion that teachers seldom follow a decision making model with any consistency (Carter, 1990). Teachers tend to make decisions based on their thinking about procedures, strategies and, most frequently of all, the nature of the learner. Content and learning objectives tended to play only a minor role in the decisions made by teachers (Clark & Peterson, 1986).

Other assertions were generated as a result of the studies which took place during the early 1970's. First, it was suggested that teachers' decisions are governed primarily by rules and routines that reduced the instances of decisions which were made judiciously and with intent (Yinger, 1977; Morine-Dershiner, 1978). Furthermore, MacKay and Marland (1978) found that teachers do not make as many interactive decisions as was supposed. If teachers did not have an alternative which was likely to bring about desired results, they generally chose to continue with the course of action they were following which is a decision, although a passive one (Nagel & Driscoll, 1991).

A number of studies have attempted to describe teacher decision making through presentation of models or algorithms (Peterson & Clark, 1978; Shavelson & Sterns, 1981). Both of

these models seemed to cast learners as the primary stimulus for teacher decision making, and both suggested that teachers tended not to make decisions by following any formalized algorithm.

Expert and Novice decision Making

During the mid 1980's the attention of researchers turned toward research which made explicit the differences in the decisions and the decision making processes of expert and novice teachers. As might be expected, differences were found in the processes as well as the product of decisions made by expert and novice teachers. Not surprising, it was found that expert teachers possessed a greater understanding of learners and this made a significant difference in the quality of the decisions they made. Expert decision makers tended to have broader, more elaborate schemata for classroom events which allows the expert to improvise when faced with an unexpected contextual or situational event (Carter, Cushing, Sabers, Stein, and Berliner, 1988; Peterson & Commeaux, 1987; Borko & Livingston, 1991). Ropo, (1987) found that expert decision makers tended to focus on concrete examples of interactions to facilitate learning. The planning of novice decision makers, on the other hand, tended to be less efficient and their lessons were more problematic when unanticipated events

occurred. Novice decision makers had more difficulty focusing on pivotal classroom events and often voiced a wide range of concerns as they reflected about their thinking as they engaged in decision making (Peterson & Commeaux, 1987).

Some assertions may be made drawn from the extensive research that has focused on teacher decision making. Many studies suggest that expert decision makers draw on elaborate knowledge structures that have been developed as the result of classroom experiences, both positive and negative in nature, and this knowledge structure assists in the making of situationally appropriate decisions in the classroom (Calderhead, 1981, 1983). Expert decision makers were more familiar with typical student behavior and situations associated with each event. They tended to focus on critical data rather than the superfluous kinds of data on which the novice teacher tended to focus. For example, Carter, Cushing, Sabers, Stein, and Berliner (1988) found that rather than focusing on the work in which students were engaged, novice decision makers tended to focus on unimportant issues such as the physical appearance of students. Expert decision makers were also able to make more accurate predictions about what might happen in the classroom as the result of a teacher decision (Carter, 1980). One overriding theme seems to surface in many studies reviewed; and that is that classroom

teaching experience seems to be the critical component in making effective classroom decisions (Kagan, 1992). That is, review of recent studies suggests that classroom experiences affords teachers the opportunities needed to learn how to discern critical elements from less important ones to the decision making process.

Decision Making in Teacher Education Programs

Effective decision making is an important attribute for a classroom teacher. Research informs us that teachers make more than one decision every two minutes (Morine & Valence, 1975, Marland, 1987, Shryer, 1984, Fogerty, Wang,Creek, 1982, Wodlinger, 1981). That is approximately one hundred fifty to one hundred seventy decisions in which alternatives are considered every school day. We also know that most teachers become more effective decision makers as they gain classroom experience. Classroom experience allows teachers to create knowledge structures that, in turn, are used to make better classroom decisions (Kagan, 1992). There are numerous descriptive studies which have investigated teacher decisions making, however there have been few attempts at systematically training teachers to be effective classroom decision makers. One such training model was developed by Bishop & Whitfield, (1972) which was called "critical incidents". Incidents were

designed as simulated events from classrooms which pre-service teachers could practice interactive decision making. Reflection about their thinking as they made decisions, and afterward, was an important part of the activity. To date, there have been no systematic studies of the effect of training on teacher decision making.

During the late 1960's, Donald Cruikshank and his colleagues developed and implemented simulations and a method he called "reflective teaching" to aid in developing high-level cognitive skills in pre-service teachers. The purpose of both strategies is to prepare teachers for the realities of the classroom by making them aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it.

In TEACHING AS DECISION MAKING, Pasch, Sparks-Langer, Gardner, Starko & Moody, (1991), discuss factors which influence teaching decisions. These influences included:

1. Teacher characteristics and beliefs
2. Subject matter, or content
3. Student needs and characteristics
4. Teacher knowledge of principles and techniques
5. Teaching and learning conditions

These components are considered within the framework of decisions made before teaching, during teaching, and after

teaching.

There seems to exist a body of knowledge that could serve as the framework for teaching the strategies and skills of classroom decision making to pre-service teachers. Indeed, in many teacher education programs the use of "cases", which are simulations, are used to help students learn how to make reasoned decisions (Shulman & Nelson, 1989). There seems to be indicators that these activities are happening, but the research to systematically study whether these kinds of activities help pre-service teachers become better classroom decision makers is to come; or, as some research suggests, teachers simply become better decision makers as a result of their experiences in the classroom (Shavelson, 1983). They may learn through immersion rather than direct teaching, much as discourse is learned (Gee, 1995).

In sum, it is reasonable to assert that decision making is an important skill for classroom teachers. Research informs us that expert teachers are better decision makers than novice teachers, and that this competence seems to correlate positively with increased classroom experiences. Pinetree College's focus on teacher as decision makers has support in the research on teacher decision making (Lortie, 1975; Norton, 1991; OBrian and Norton, 1991, Koss, 1992, Zeichner, 1992). Shavelson, (1973) for example, asserts that

the ability to make effective decisions is one of the criteria for success in the classroom.

The adoption of the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework has led to changes in the program as well as the mission of teacher education at Pinetree. For example, if the assertion that teachers become better at decision making as a result of classroom experience, then program changes such as extensions of some of the field experiences may result in better classroom decisions made by students simply because they have more classroom experience. Dewey, (1916 p.76) describes an educative experience as one which leads to the "reconstruction of experience, which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experience." This leads to reconstruction, or transformation, of experiences to produce new understandings of self and situations (Ross, 1992). Even though there are models for decision-making in existence some research suggests that teachers seldom use recognized, predictable models as they make their decisions. Pinetree's teacher-education program's conceptual framework, The Informed, Thoughtful Decision-Maker speaks to a commitment to developing decision-making skills in the participants of this program. As the faculty examines the effects of their program redesign, research so generated will play a crucial role in

the ongoing involvement of the program. Content and instruction will reflect the faculty's view of how best to engender effective decision making skills in the students who participate in the program. The perception of the faculty who deliver the program will reflect individual and a collective notion of what a teacher ought to be like; a teacher who "fits in" to existing frameworks, or an agent of change, empowered to make the myriad of decisions needed to promote learning for themselves and the children they teach. Decisions the faculty makes about the content and experiences they provide students will reflect the collective vision they share.

Chapter III

Introduction

I evaluated the teacher education program at Pinetree which has undergone significant changes in the last three years. The study examines the influence the conceptual framework, the informed thoughtful decision-maker, has had on the education program, faculty and the students as they complete their student teaching semester. To understand the program it will be necessary to examine the established curriculum, the beliefs and instruction of the faculty who implement it, and to describe the capabilities and perceptions of the students who successfully complete the program of study. Perceptions of public school personnel of the capabilities of student teachers will also be examined. In this chapter, I will elaborate on the question raised in this study and present a description of the procedures which will be used in the evaluation process.

Although the teacher education program at Pinetree College includes secondary education majors in the fields of Art, Music, Social Sciences, English, Science, Physical Education, and Business, as well as Early Education and Pre-

school Handicap programs, this study will include only the K-8 multi-subjects curriculum, faculty who teach courses required in the K-8 program, and the students who are pursuing degrees in that program. There are three reasons for this focus. First, the K-8 multi-subjects group of students comprise the largest group who graduate from Pinetree's Teacher Education program. Second, the K-8 multi-subject students take a larger portion of their courses from faculty in the education department and, because of this, should be more likely to reflect the recent changes in the program. Third, the qualitative nature of this study and the available resources to complete this study do not allow for the examination of secondary, early education, and preschool handicap components at this time.

A general description of the entire group of K-8 multi-subject student teachers for this semester is included. I recognize that although there were twenty-seven students in this program at this time, and the route they took was, at least on the surface, the same, the journey for each was unique. The faculty of the education department is described as well as selected members of the public school personnel who work with K-8 multi subjects student teachers. The data sources for determining the content of the courses are Pinetree Colleges 1990-2 catalog and course syllabi, texts,

and materials. In my examination of the data I am interested in the content, how the content is delivered to and transformed by students. I will also discuss how the data will be analyzed, and perhaps most importantly, what may be learned about the program. Data sources for this information include student surveys, student journals, and student interviews. Reflections on the role of the researcher within the framework of the teacher education program, will conclude this chapter.

Researcher's Role

The role of the researcher within the context of the K-8 multi-subject teacher-education curriculum needs to be described so readers will understand the researcher's stance.

The researcher arrived at Pinetree College in the summer of 1989, three months after the NCATE review which resulted in notice that some standards had not been judged as satisfied. NCATE was scheduled to return for another on-site visit during April, 1991. Accrediting concerns pervaded every aspect of the Teacher Education Program and everyone involved with it, including the researcher who had taken the leap from elementary school teacher to assistant professor in education, charged with working with early field experiences and teaching methods courses. The researcher played no large role in the

articulation of the model and subsequent programmatic redesign but was a participant in all aspects of the process. As reported in Chapter I, the April, 1991, NCATE review judged Pinetree's Teacher Education Program as having successfully met all standards.

The historical perspective of the researcher's role is important but also important is the functional role within the curriculum the researcher holds. The researcher is, by the nature of the courses taught, in the position of having in class at least two different times every student who goes through the program. For example, every student must take the general methods course, Education 306, Instructional Processes and Strategies. This course is team taught, and the researcher is one half of the team. K-8 multi-subject students take required methods courses, Education 307, The Teaching of Language Arts and Education 319, The Teaching of Reading, both of which are taught only by the researcher. Secondary education majors are required to take Education 318, Content Area Reading which is taught by the researcher. A small number of K-8 multi-subject students enroll in Education 318, Content Area Reading as an elective. The result of this degree of interaction with students tends to create extended involvement with large numbers of students not generally enjoyed by other faculty. The researcher tends to

have large numbers of advisees, all of whom are K-8 multi subject majors. One semester each year the researcher supervises student teachers and this extends the researcher's interaction with students through the final phase of the K-8 multi subject program as well as extending the interaction with public school personnel. The point of this description is that the researcher is in the rather unique position of working with many students in the K-8 multi subject program from the time they enter Pinetree College through completion of the program in some capacity; as advisor, course instructor, and college supervisor, or some combination of these roles.

The close relationship which exists between the students and the researcher is both an advantage and a disadvantage to the process of inquiry. The students and the researcher tend to have high levels of trust and regard for each other, and this trust probably resulted in very honest responses during the focus group interviews and with their journal writing. However, familiarity and shared experiences may have contributed to the researcher failing to ask the questions needed to get at important perceptions with all the interviewees. This problem existed to a great degree in student interviews, and to some degree with the interviews of the faculty and public school personnel.

Objectivity and clear vision were constant concerns for the researcher as the data were analyzed and interpreted. The researcher recognizes that the lines between one's own perceptions and those of participants in a study such as this are fragile at best. The researcher has striven to not go beyond the data with the analysis and interpretation, realizing that predispositions and biases may have affected data analysis and interpretations. An ongoing, informal, dialogue has taken place between the researcher, support staff, education faculty, administrators and students after data were collected. A concerted effort was made to examine and reexamine data from perspectives other than that of the "researcher" stance.

The Teacher Education Curriculum at Pinetree College

Pinetree College's Teacher Education Program has been accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and schools since 1931, with initial accreditation by NCATE earned in 1954. The influence of these two governing bodies has promoted a systematic study of the educational programs which has led, in turn, to redesign and enhancement of the twenty programs which make up the education division.

The teacher education program curriculum at Pinetree College underwent a rather major redesign as a result of the

NCATE review conducted in the spring of 1989. In the spring of 1991 the school successfully met all the new standards implemented in 1988. The adoption of a model for teacher education, the informed, thoughtful decision-maker, (I.T.D.-M.) has provided the framework for the restructuring of the entire program, however, for the purpose of this study only the redesign of the K-8 Multi-subjects curriculum will be described.

Four curriculum components integrate to provide a broad and rigorous program. They are general studies, content specialization, educational foundations, and methods and practice, which when successfully completed, results in certification of K-8 multi-subjects majors.

A major data source for the examination of the curriculum is the catalog for the years 1990-1992, which represents the first documented description of the multi-subjects program after the restructuring of the program. Another important source of data is the course syllabi of the faculty in the education department. These documents will undergo content analysis to determine how and to what extent they contribute to the students' understanding of the I.T.D-M. model for teacher education.

Pinetree College continues to express a commitment to provide a broad general education to all students. Sixty-

three of the total 128 hours required make up the general studies component of the K-8 program. Twenty-four hours of required course work are taught in the various departments, which includes the Art, Music, Math, and Physical Education departments. These courses provide students with content and methodology needed by multi-subject generalists. Forty-one hours are spent in courses which make up the professional education component and the remaining methodology courses. Twenty-nine of these hours are divided into four two hour courses and seven three hour courses with the remaining twelve hours designated as the student teaching semester. These courses are taught by the faculty in the education department, and will define the parameters of this description of the curriculum.

Building on the general studies, the professional education component is designed to provide a broad range of learning experience to help the pre service teacher develop the attitudes, knowledge and skills that will support successful classroom experiences. The sequence begins when students enroll in Education 210, Foundations in Education, a two hour course. This course is usually taken by most students during the spring semester of the freshman year or the fall semester of the sophomore year. The course exposes students to the nature of American schooling from social,

cultural, political, historical and philosophical perspectives (1990, p.82). A twenty-hour field experience is required for successful completion of this course. The next course in the professional education sequence is Education 251, Human Growth and Development, a three hour course. Human Development focuses on the various emotional, cognitive and physical developmental theories.

It is at this juncture in the sequence that students are required to be formally accepted into the teacher education program. Acceptance is required before admittance into the next three hour course in the sequence, Education 305. The process by which students are admitted to the teacher education follows. The formal part of the procedure begins during the sophomore year, and includes obtaining and completing an application, and verifying that a number of semester hours have been completed with a grade point average of 2.50. Certain key courses and the 20 hour field experience are required. Passing scores on the Pre Professional Skills Test (PPST), documentation of attendance at two education information seminars and a portfolio are required. The documentation submitted by the student seeking admission to the teacher education program is reviewed by panels of faculty. If the requirements are met, the student is admitted. If all requirements are not documented students are

given the opportunity to resubmit documentation. Although students may continue to take required courses offered in other departments on campus, they may not take courses in the education department until their admission to teacher education.

After admission to Teacher Education, students take Education 305, Psychology of Teaching and Learning. Learning theory and research are the stated focus of this course. Education 305 has a forty hour field experience in which students participate in a variety of classroom experiences. Students are required to plan and teach a minimum of three lessons under the direction of the cooperating teacher. Because the students are placed in classrooms in which the content of their major field is being taught, they are expected to plan and teach at least three lessons in which they apply their content knowledge within the framework of current research, best practices and learning theory.

The next three-hour course in the sequence is Education 306, Instructional Strategies and Processes. This course is required before, or in the case of some students, concurrently, with content methodology courses in the education department. This course provides the student with instruction and practice opportunities for effective teaching and management models (Edwards, 1993, Frieberg & Driscoll,

1995, and Joyce & Weil, 1986). The content methodology courses which are offered in the education department are available to students who complete Education 306, however some of them have prerequisites, which continue to provide logical sequencing of learning experiences for students. For example, Education 320, Diagnosis and Remediation of Reading Difficulties may not be taken until the successful completion of Education 307, Teaching Language Arts. The methodology courses which are taught by faculty in the education department, an important part of this study, include the following:

	Hours
Education 304 Early Education Methods and Materials	3
Education 307 The Teaching of Language Arts	3
Education 310 Assessment and Evaluation	2
Education 311 Science in Early/Middle Childhood Educ.	2
Education 312 Social Studies in Early/Middle Childhood Educ.	2
Education 319 The Teaching of Reading	3
Education 320 Diagnosis/Remediation of Reading Difficulties	3

Pinetree College expresses commitment to the importance of a planned, orderly and focused field experiences for developing K-8 teachers. Field experiences provide opportunities for students to transform knowledge gained as a result of course work into patterns of thinking and acting necessary for

success in the classroom. The K-8 multi-subject major completes a minimum of 119 field hours before the student teaching semester. These 119 hours are distributed so that students are in schools throughout their program of study. Those courses which contain field components, the purpose and goals of the field experiences and the nature of the field experiences will be discussed in general terms here.

The first field experience is a 20 hour field component required in the first education course in the professional sequence, Education 210, Foundations in Education. Students participate, observe, and describe in field notes the school as a unit, the classroom to which they are assigned, and the nature of teachers and students. They write about and reflect on schooling in general, and the roles of teacher and student in that context.

The next field experience occurs as part of the requirements for successful completion of Education 305. Forty hours are required, and it is during this placement that students begin to assume a more involved role with instruction and with students. They plan and teach at least three supervised mini-lessons and assist the teacher in instructional and procedural activities.

Education 304, Early Education: Materials and Procedures is another course which has a field component. Students in

this course are required to spend 6 hours in a daycare setting and 20 hours in a kindergarten classroom. They are expected to plan and implement at least one unit of study, and otherwise become involved with the day-to-day activities of the classroom in which they are placed.

During the final semester before the student teaching semester, students enrolled in Education 319, The Teaching of Reading, are placed in classrooms during reading instruction or with Chapter I teachers who are using Reading Recovery as a strategy to help children at risk. The purpose of this placement is to refine observational skills, provide opportunity for students to work with children as they are learning to read, and to promote reflection about teaching, learning, reading and children through writing about the experience.

Education 401-401f is a method course taught in the physical education department which has an 18 hour field component. Students are placed in public schools where they teach physical education to three different developmental levels each week for 6 weeks. The lessons are planned in advance and reviewed by the instructor of the course as well as the cooperating teacher.

Guidelines set forth by NCATE regarding field experiences determine in part where students are placed within the eight

county service region. Students may not be placed at schools they have attended, have relatives in, or plan to use for their student teaching placement. Cooperating teachers must have certification in the area they are teaching and must have three years experience teaching the subjects and grade in which they are placed. The varied placement of each student is an attempt to provide a diverse experience in which the student may participate in various styles and philosophies modeled in the context of real classrooms with real learners.

Students: Coming to Understand the I.T.D-M. Conceptual Framework

In any examination of the process of recombination or transformation of objects, or, in this case, individuals, it is also necessary to look at the product. In the case of teacher education program evaluations, and more specifically, the K-8 multi-subjects program at Pinetree College, the study is a meaningless exercise if the developing teachers who are served by the program are not an integral part. The multi-subjects curriculum, faculty who deliver the curriculum, students who engage with that curriculum and public school personnel are interdependent. Students who complete the multi-subjects program are a source of information and can, because of their unique perspective, provide valuable insight

into the nature of the program.

Student Participants

The Spring, 1993 graduates of this program represent the first class to graduate since the redesign and implementation of the curriculum brought about by the articulation of the conceptual framework for teacher education, the informed, thoughtful decision-maker. A description of this group of K-8 Multi-subjects student teachers is included here. The description is the result of a survey administered the first day of student teaching semester.

The student participants for this study are twenty-seven pre-service teachers enrolled in their professional semester and engaged in student teaching. All participants have declared the K-8 multi-subjects program as their major and have completed appropriate course work required by that program. The group is composed of twenty-five females and two males, whose ages ranged from twenty-two to forty-seven. Seventeen participants were between twenty and twenty-five years of age, and four were between forty-one to fifty years of age, with the remaining students falling in the middle range. Based on self-reports the participants have spent a range of seven to fifteen semesters completing their course of study, with ten semesters being the average. Of the

twenty-seven participants, seven have completed their entire program at this institution; the remaining twenty reported hours of course work from other institutions ranging from 6 to 72 semester hours. Eight of the participants have additional certification areas completed. Four of these students have completed the requirements for Early Education PreK-K certification. One student has completed the requirements for certification in Math 5-8, and three students have completed certification requirements in Special Education.

While the grade point average required for admission to teacher education at Pinetree College is only 2.50, based on a 4.00 scale. The average grade point for this group is 3.09. The student participants in the group are predominately from the eight county area serviced by Pinetree, with nine students coming from outside the area. Four of those students are from counties outside the area defined but within the state, and the remaining five are from other states.

From this demographic survey a number of differences and similarities were uncovered. For example, most students had graduated from a secondary school in the eight county region surrounding the college. Most students have in excess of 120 field hours prior to the student teaching semester. One third of this group have completed additional course work for certification in other areas such as Special Education or

Early Education.

Existing Program Data Sources

It is important to this study to attempt to discover what the multi-subjects K-8 majors believe about teaching and learning as it relates to the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework for teacher education, and to find out to what extent it is manifested in their practice as they participate in the student teaching semester.

There are a number of data sources which have been in place since the restructuring of the program in 1990 that can contribute information related to students' thinking. For example, student teachers routinely keep a journal in which an entry is made every day they teach. The student teachers are instructed to write about their experiences as they occur, and to reflect on what they are learning as a result of those experiences. These journals are shared with college supervisors. The semester of this investigation the student teachers' journals were copied by the researcher for analysis of content, specifically to find out if instances of decision making could be found there. Focus group interviews conducted the last day of the student teaching semester were another source of data. These interviews are structured so that groups of five or six K-8 multi-subject student teachers

gather for the purpose of discussing the nature of their experiences. The guidelines for the interviews are included. (Appendix). The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed to facilitate analysis.

FACULTY: Promoting Understanding Within the I.T.D-M. Conceptual Framework

If decision making is an important skill, behavior or characteristic for developing teachers, then the instructional and pedagogical decisions made by the faculty who deliver the curriculum of the multi-subjects program are of significant importance. Philosophical frameworks, beliefs about teaching and learning and understanding and valuing of the informed, thoughtful decision-making framework are components which influence the decisions made by the faculty in their delivery of the curriculum. Examining faculty beliefs about teaching and learning is important in understanding the instruction they offer. Decisions about content and how that content is to be taught are influenced by what an individual believes personally, professionally, and how they understand the mission of the program. A general description of the faculty will be included. A discussion of data sources and procedures for data collection will be provided. I will also explain what may be learned as a result of the data collection.

The faculty of the education department at Pinetree College numbers fourteen. Of the thirteen faculty, nine teach courses required in the multi-subject K-8 program. Duties vary; there are three faculty who, in addition to administrative responsibilities, teach methods courses and supervise student teachers. Some members of the faculty have full teaching loads, while others teach and supervise student teachers. One position is administrative only. Of the fourteen faculty, eight positions are tenured and five faculty are tenure track probationary full-time positions. The remaining faculty are part-time positions. Public education teaching experience of the faculty varies. Some have had very little while others have extensive experience teaching in public education. Eight of the thirteen hold Doctoral degrees, with two faculty at the ABD stage. Nine faculty represent the influence of southern West Virginia, while four bring outside influence to the program. Three faculty have joined the program since the I.T.D-M. model was developed, articulated, and the subsequent redesign of the Multi-subjects Curriculum.

It is important to this study to understand how this faculty interprets its mission to educate those who wish to teach. The faculty's interpretation and consequent teaching of the tenets of the informed, thoughtful decision maker

conceptual framework will be investigated. The most direct way to find out what the faculty thinks about teaching, learning, and the conceptual framework is to ask them, so individual interviews were conducted with faculty. The interview itself varied somewhat to accommodate the newer faculty who have arrived after the development of the model and the redesign of the K-8 curriculum.

Another information source were the course syllabi, materials, and texts used in the required courses in the K-8 Multi-subjects program. There was evidence of the decision-making component found in these documents. For example, course syllabi may state objectively the intent to inform students about the I.T.D-M. framework or the concept of decision-making in the classroom setting, or that intent may be inferred by the nature of the materials or activities described. It seems reasonable that analysis of these documents ought to take place prior to the faculty interviews so that relevant questions about the content which may arise can be answered. This document analysis attempted to measure the degree to which decision-making as a concept and its requisite knowledge base are promoted in the required courses, and to what extent faculty believes this is accomplished.

THE SCHOOL VIEW: Practicing I.T.D-M.

To understand more fully the experiences of the pre-service teachers who are engaged in student teaching it seems reasonable to include the perspectives of the school personnel who have historically worked with Pinetree student teachers. It is important that the perceptions and reflections of representative cooperating teachers and building principals, where feasible, regarding the decision-making experiences of recent Pinetree student teachers be examined. Public school personnel's perception of student teachers' willingness to make decisions, the nature and quality of those decisions along with the thinking that accompanied the process will aid understanding of Pinetree College's teacher education program. Thus, interviews are conducted with public school personnel. The focus of the interviews is on three issues; one, willingness of pre-service teacher to make decisions in the classroom, two, the quality of the decisions (were the decisions appropriate, reasonable, etc.) and three, what was the nature of the thinking that led to a decision?

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to describe the status of the implementation of the informed, thoughtful decision-maker conceptual framework in the K-8 Multi-subjects program in the Teacher Education program at Pinetree College. The study will

encompass five foci, curriculum, field experience, college faculty, student teachers, and public school personnel.

Evidence showing that the teacher education K-8 Multi-subject curriculum at Pinetree College serves to develop the behaviors, characteristics, and skills that are thought to be important for teachers who are informed, thoughtful decision makers will be sought.

Chapter IV

The overall purpose of this chapter is to examine data which were collected from the participants in an attempt to understand the ways in which the K-8 Multi-subjects program, faculty and students of the program have been influenced as the result of programmatic changes which have occurred since 1990.

Data were collected from the participants during the Spring of 1993. The student teachers who completed their professional semester shared their daily journals, participated in focus group interviews and responded to exit interviews. Faculty members who teach required courses in the multi-subjects K-8 program were interviewed individually and provided copies of course syllabi as documentation of their intent and commitment to the program. Public education school personnel who have worked with Pinetree's student teachers prior to the program redesign as well as since also provide an important perspective to the understanding of the influence the redesign of the curriculum has had on the student who graduate from the program. Principals and classroom teachers were interviewed in order to understand how the recent

graduate of the redesigned program are perceived. The program itself serves as the framework for understanding how, and to what extent, students are transformed by cognitive, affective, and practical experiences. The shared experiences provided to this group of student teachers by the program itself establishes a common language with which they can articulate their experiences and reflect on them and transform this knowledge into higher levels of understanding.

The perceptions of public school personnel, faculty, and students of the program itself are necessary components of this study. These perceptions will be addressed in an effort to provide some answers to the question, "what evidence shows that the teacher education curriculum at Pinetree College serves to develop behaviors, characteristics, and skills that are thought to be important for teachers who are informed, thoughtful decision-makers?"

First, faculty who teach the required courses in the Education Department will be described. The findings of the individual interviews will be discussed in order to understand how the faculty perceives the informed, thoughtful decision-maker conceptual framework and how that understanding influences their thinking and planning in courses they teach. Other faculty interactions with students such as administrative and advisory ones will be considered and

reported from the perspective of the I.T.D.-M. framework.

Second, the students who participated in this study will be described. Their participation in information-gathering activities has resulted in data which may inform the ongoing development of the multi-subjects K-8 program. Students kept daily journals during their student teaching semester, participated in focus group interviews at the culmination of their professional semester, provided responses to the exit interviews, and informally shared their experiences and perceptions of those experiences and stories with this researcher.

Third, the perception of public educators who have played an important role in the professional semester of numerous student teachers will be examined in order to learn how recent student teachers compare to student teachers of more than three years ago.

Last, the Multi-subjects K-8 program itself will be examined. The examination of the program cannot be done outside the contexts of students, faculty, public education personnel, courses, practices and practicums. Discussion of the program must include data from sources provided by students, faculty and public education personnel and must address the interdependent relationship which exists among these three components and the program.

Faculty

The faculty whose mission it is to facilitate the development of competent beginning teachers for multi-subjects K-8 classrooms are diverse, yet, from the analysis of data collected appear to operate primarily in accordance with each other and the shared understanding of the program. Although the faculty of the Education department numbers thirteen, only nine of that number teach courses required in the multi-subject curriculum and therefore will be the focus of this description. The faculty have a wide range of professional backgrounds. The Multi-subjects K-8 faculty include individuals who graduated from Concord's undergraduate program, gained experience in public education, secured terminal degrees at other institutions and have taught education courses for more than thirty years at this institution, as well as faculty who recently earned their doctorates and gained their teaching experience in cultures far removed from southern West Virginia. Four of the faculty received their undergraduate degree from Pinetree; another from a neighboring institution. The remaining members bring influences from other geographic locations, which ranges in distance from across the state to as far away as across the continental United States. Of the nine faculty who participated in the study, six hold terminal degrees, two are

ABD and one is a part-time temporary who is scheduled to return to public education at the end of the fall 1994 semester. Experience in public education ranges from as few as three years to more than thirty years. Faculty differ in the amount of time they spend with students and the point of student development they foster. For example, some faculty teach courses taken early in the program, whereas others teach courses taken at the end of the program. All faculty serve as advisors but some tend to have larger numbers of advisees than others. Some faculty teach as many as three required courses and serve as supervisors of student teaching; others teach multiple sections of one course, while others teach, supervise student teachers and carry out administrative duties. Data, in the form of transcribed individual interviews were analyzed around two themes; how were these faculty alike and how did they differ in the way they perceived the program, and how this understanding influenced the decisions they made about implementation of the courses they taught. The perceptions of how these faculty perceive the student's in the multi-subject K-8 program propensity to make preactive and interactive classroom decisions.

Several diverse themes emerged from the interviews of the participating faculty. One major difference in viewpoint was that faculty who were instrumental in the development of the

decision maker conceptual framework have a different understanding of the model than those who were not involved in its development. Faculty who were present and worked on the development of the conceptual framework related how during their interviews the committee looked at research on teacher education, (Brophy and Good, 1988, Bellon, 1986, Gage and Berliner, 1989) and took into account the basic beliefs and philosophical assumptions they held when designing the framework. Those who were most influential in the design tended to provide rationales for the model. One respondent said "... teachers need to be decision makers in the classroom. We believe there is no one set right way or correct way to do anything. ... when teachers are faced with problems to solve, then what they need to do is examine the variables involved, whether it be class size, student age, inclusion, the subject matter, content level, and make decisions based upon those variables." Another respondent talked about the phrasing, "informed thoughtful decision maker" as being a "bumper sticker for what the faculty and program had attempted to do for the last 30 years." Another said "this is really what our people are doing."

Even though those who worked on the articulation of the framework discussed it from a different perspective than those who came after the implementation in 1991, both groups tended

to respond similarly when asked how knowledge of the framework influenced their classrooms. The three quotes above represent consensus of thinking about the framework and its influence on the program. For example, the first two quotes were made by faculty members who were instrumental in the articulation of the framework, and the third quote came from a faculty member hired within the last two years. This suggests that the vision and commitment to the decision making framework is shared by the faculty who were present when the framework was articulated as well as faculty who have been hired since the redesign. All respondents said knowledge of the conceptual framework was reflected in what they did in their classrooms in terms of decisions they themselves had to make, such as textbook selection, and curriculum design. Respondents reported that textbook selection is often influenced by the presence of the "teacher as decision-maker" framework, present either explicitly or implicitly. For example, in Education 306, Instructional Strategies and Processes, the current text, Universal Teaching Strategies, by Frieburg and Driscoll, discusses teacher decision making from two perspectives, first, from that of instructional decisions and then later decisions made which are based on assessment data reviewed. Not one respondent reported this as the overriding concern when selecting textbooks; however, one described the process

of selection this way: "all other components being equal, I would choose the text that used the terms 'decision-making' over a text that didn't promote that concept" ... simply because that's our model ... what we do here."

Faculty who were instrumental in designing the conceptual framework, or model, for the teacher education program have a different understanding of the model than those who were not involved in its development is a theme which can be supported by looking at responses in the interviews as well as at documentation such as course syllabi. The interview responses by those who helped develop the model tended to be explanations, definitions of terms, and a recitation of the historical perspective which included the visual representation, while those respondents who came to Pinetree less than three years ago tended to respond by naming the visual (Appendix) and telling how they came to know about it, and what it implies for their teaching. There were differences noted in the course syllabi of newcomers (those faculty who arrived less than three years ago) when contrasted to course syllabi written by faculty who participated in the design of the conceptual framework, or were present at that time. (See Appendix). The syllabi were examined for a number of components usually found in course syllabi.

Faculty respondents described the importance of designing

learning experiences for students which foster the development of a sound knowledge base, knowledge of best practices, as well as confidence and a willingness to make the multitude of classroom decisions required of teachers. They described the importance of a broad base of knowledge as important to decision making. A number of faculty expressed the idea that classroom decisions are not possible without that knowledge base. The example of classroom discipline was given. "If we let these folks leave here thinking that Canter (Assertive Discipline) is going to work every time we're doing them a disservice. They need to know about Glaser and T.E.T. and Kounin and all the rest then they can decide what works for them." Another said "I want to give them some tools - that's why I teach them about 'Concepts of Print'... they need this - it will help them make some decisions about children and reading instruction." Another said "they (students) need to know what they believe about teaching and learning, and what others believe, so they can consider other perspectives. What they believe is going to influence all their classroom decisions." The examples seem to suggest that both "new" and "old" faculty acknowledges the complexity of the classroom and in response to that, strive to provide knowledge they believe necessary for success in that environment.

Faculty syllabi provide additional data which address the faculty understanding of the informed thoughtful decision-maker conceptual framework. Course syllabi in the Education Department at Pinetree College tend to contain the same components. The syllabi generally contain descriptions of activities and opportunities to apply what is being learned and how it might relate to the curriculum. One of the components found in nine of the thirteen syllabi examined is the rationale for the course. Rationales tend to be somewhat subjective articulations by course instructors who make statements that explain or define their view of how the course represented fits the decision-making framework. Some rationales are even more subjective as the course instructor communicates explicitly or implicitly their personal perspective of the course and the framework. They generally relate the purpose of the course and how the experience fits within the framework of the curriculum, in this case that of the multi-subjects K-8 program. It is in these rationales that the terms, "informed, thoughtful decision making" is most frequently found. Nine syllabi of the thirteen studied contained rationales and of these nine, six contained the term "decision-making." An example of one rationale is, "They must learn to collect and carefully evaluate data in order to make the informed and thoughtful decisions required of the

professional educator on a continual basis." (Ed 210 syllabus). The rationale for another course is expressed this way: "This course enables the student to continue to progress towards being a competent decision maker. The activities and exercises help the student to evaluate effective teaching variables, make decisions about instructional processes and implement those decisions " (Ed 306 syllabus). Another rationale contained this statement: "Opportunities will be provided for students to practice instructional decision making in terms of a personal philosophy of teaching and learning, learning objectives, curriculum, textbooks, current research, and the learner." (Ed 307 syllabus). The other three examples not cited here are similar in content. The six examples suggest that this faculty believes decision making is a fundamental skill for classroom teachers, a skill which requires, first, a knowledge base sensitive to classroom variables, and second, the opportunity to engage in decision making as a process. The first two syllabi cited were from courses that are part of the professional core, whereas the last example is from a methods course typically taken during the first semester of the third year, as are the remaining three examples. Predictably, all six of the rationales which contained the term "decision making" were for courses taught by faculty who were either instrumental in the

articulation of the instructional framework or present at its inception.

Another source of data which, although is not usually considered a course syllabus, but, in many ways, serves that purpose, is the student teaching handbook. The Pinetree College Student Teacher Handbook is a guide for those who are engaged in their professional semester. This document has at least three areas in which the term "informed, thoughtful decision-maker" was mentioned.

First, under a section of the guide (page 1) under the heading "Philosophy of the Unit for Teacher Education" discusses the goals for the program which may be met by the "development of individuals as informed and thoughtful decision-makers." The philosophy statement affirms the importance of a broad knowledge base, the role of classroom variables, acting upon instructional decisions and finally evaluating the outcome. (p.1) The program also has a number of assumptions which form the basis for development of effective teachers. One of these assumptions (p.2) states, "effective teachers are capable of making decisions deliberately and expeditiously based upon their accumulated knowledge of learners, learning, subject matter, and instructional environments." In still another section of the handbook entitled "Model for Teacher Education", the informed,

thoughtful decision-maker conceptual framework is discussed from the research perspective (p.2) with the work of notables such as Gage and Berliner (1989), Brophy and Good (1988), Bellon (1986), and Grossman, Wilson and Shulman (1989) cited.

The results of that examination shows that there are more similarities in the syllabi of faculty having been present for four or more years than there were differences. Not surprising, the syllabi of newcomers tended to have more differences than similarities when compared to syllabi of designers of the framework. Appendix illustrates these similarities and differences in percentages. The biggest differences appear to occur in the areas of statements of course goals, rationales, description of teaching strategies, evaluation, course requirements, attendance policy and bibliography. There was more decision making language found in statements of course goals and rationales than other components of course syllabi.

Another theme emerged from faculty interviews. The response of faculty suggests that both groups, "old" and "new" understand and accept the conceptual framework for the program and therefore consciously promote the I.T.D-M. ideal through their textbook selection and selection of learning experiences. Instructors tend to design learning experiences which, first, promote the concept of teacher as classroom

decision-maker, and second, provide experiences which require students to make decisions within the parameters of the coursework. Faculty with the exception of one, reported that they refer directly to the model throughout their courses. They report that they attempt to have students build knowledge base connections as they use the concept of informed decision-making in a practical context.

The following section depicts particular ways in which the faculty attempts to foster the development of an understanding of the I.T.D.-M. One respondent who teaches an early foundation course reported that the conceptual framework, the I.T.D.-M., is referred to, explained through examples, and then as the knowledge base of that course unfolds, the teacher as decision-maker model is examined within the contexts of the students' growing knowledge base. The idea that teaching is a profession where one functions in a complex environment in which decisions are made based upon a knowledge base informed by research, best practices and experience is promoted. Hence, from the onset the multi-subject K-8 majors are immersed in dialogue about the conceptual framework, watch the professor engage in decision-making within a context, and participate in activities which foster the development of decision making skills, characteristics and behaviors. One respondent spoke

to the seriousness of decision-making by teachers because of the far reaching implications those decisions could have. According to this teacher educator, these implications often drive the discussions which take place between professors and students and are part of the experience provided in this teacher education program.

Knowing the usefulness of the theories which are taught and being capable of making thoughtful decisions based on this knowledge base are important goals for another respondent. This respondent said it was important for students to learn how to analyze a situation from different theoretical perspectives and then determine what the implications are for decision-making. For example, students may be encouraged to view a learning situation from two different theoretical perspectives, such as behaviorism and humanism, and then examine the veracity of each position in terms of classroom decision-making. "Students want algorithms, and there are none," this respondent said.

Delivery of a sound theoretical knowledge base in human development and educational psychology and promotion of students' transformation of this knowledge base to practical application is also the goal of the professors who teach Education 251 and Education 305. Indeed, the textbook used for the educational psychology course has a chapter devoted to

the concept of teacher as decision-maker. This textbook's adoption was influenced by the conceptual framework, the informed, thoughtful decision-maker. The purpose of the theories taught is to assist in making informed classroom decisions based on the variables that exist in that particular context. Knowledge of these theoretical frameworks is important to the decision making process if effective classroom environments are the teacher's goal, and this idea is promoted within the context of most course work.

Another respondent takes a more practice oriented approach. This respondent, who teaches a course in the professional core courses as well as a methods course said that the goal for the courses taught were to develop the notion in students that "knowledge is tentative and that decisions should be based on data or information." Activities and experiences are devised to promote that end. The metaphor of a loop was used to explain the classroom decision making sequence by this respondent. First a teacher needs to determine what is to be taught, how it might best be taught, then use information from students' papers to help frame future instructional decisions. This respondent added, ".... it's what we've been doing for at least 30 years trying to develop well informed teachers who make decisions based upon what is in the best interest of their students."

The idea that "there are no algorithms" resurfaced in the next respondent's comment when asked about the ways knowledge of the informed, thoughtful decision-maker framework influences the activities and experiences endemic to the course. A variety of models of instruction are taught in Education 306 as well as different approaches to classroom management. Hand in hand with a broad range of instructional models is the idea that the situation determine the best way to teach or organize an effective learning environment. These decisions need to be made based on a broad knowledge base and the variables present, such as age of children, subject matter, environmental contexts, special needs, ability and all other conditions which ought to play a role in classroom decisions, whether those decisions are preplanning or situational in nature. Students are expected to practice decision-making as they select curriculum to be taught using provided models. Through dialogue, journal writing, and peer review as well as verbal and written feedback from instructors, students are encouraged to observe variables, evaluate their influence and make reasoned decisions about possible courses of action. To further the position that there "are no algorithms" the course is team taught. The instructors bring to the course a variety of strengths not the least of which is their varied backgrounds and experiences

which enable them to model how sound decisions may be made from different perspectives. In addition, other instructors are invited to participate in the instructional design of the course where appropriate. For example, a faculty who has expertise in Teacher Effectiveness Training and one whose field of expertise includes special needs students participate on a regular basis, providing additional dimensions to the teacher as decision maker focus.

A respondent who teaches Education 311, Methods in Science said also that I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework is reasonable because "this is really what our people are doing.....the goal for the program is that graduates should be able to design instructional experiences, implement, evaluate, make necessary adjustments and remediate where needed." This faculty member, like many others, is concerned with whether students develop critical thinking skills and views this as directly connected to decision-making. To enhance the thinking process for students, activities and learning in this course tend to focus on two areas. First, knowledge taught and associated activities attempt to foster thinking skills through higher order questioning sequences; second, discussion about decision-making as a general concept and as a specific skill necessary for teachers plays an important role in the course.

"The conceptual framework definitely gives you the mindset that there is not one right way to do something...." is the way another respondent spoke of the influence the model has on what occurs in required courses. A broad range of experiences and knowledge coupled with a heightened awareness of the possibilities is the way this faculty reconciles the delivery of content with the concept of teacher decision-making.

Another respondent said the informed, thoughtful decision-maker fit with her personal philosophy of what a teacher ought to be like. However, students' reluctance to make decisions was a concern. This respondent explained that often students aren't encouraged to make any important decisions about how they learn, what or when they learn it from their earliest experience with education, so that it makes development of thoughtful, informed decision-makers a difficult task. This instructor views students becoming informed thoughtful decision makers as not only her responsibility but her students as well.

The activities and learning experiences provided in the methods course reflect this position. For example, a number of activities are negotiations between the instructor and the students. Students are encouraged to take an active role in selecting activities and defining how they will be completed

and evaluated.

Finally, one respondent did not refer to the I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework of teacher education when describing how the course she taught was designed or what it included. This respondent reported that she learned about the I.T.D.-M. framework from advising, department meetings, and hall talk. The course she taught was designed by others and "basically was planned out for me," said the respondent. Fulfilling teaching and advising responsibilities predisposed the respondent to realize she needed to understand the conceptual framework and so she sought out sources who could provide that information in order to understand how all the courses were expected to fit together and create a whole unit.

All respondents are supportive of the I.T.D.-M. framework for teacher education and through the design of the courses they teach attempt to promote understanding and experience in making informed, thoughtful decisions for the classroom. The faculty who teach required courses in the multi-subjects K-8 program articulate a similar understanding of the conceptual framework in the interviews conducted individually with each one. The examination of course syllabi reiterated this position. In several syllabi the informed, thoughtful decision-maker framework was actively defined and promoted. In all syllabi, instructors had consciously planned for

varied decision making opportunities within the context of the courses they teach. Real and simulated opportunities were provided throughout the program of study for students to engage in decision-making and then, perhaps most importantly, pause to reflect on decisions and consider alternatives based upon perceived results.

Public School Personnel

Public school personnel who interact with students as they fulfill early field experience and student teaching requirements as well as those who work with students after graduation as they become first year teachers or substitute teachers, are generous with their praise of the level of the students' classroom competence at all levels. Comments from public education personnel include statements such as "whatever you're doing there is creating more capable teachers". Graduates who are employed in public education as beginning teachers tend to have few problems and those they do have are one's which, according to the literature on beginning teachers, plague most new teachers. Faculty who supervise student teachers commented that public education people "feel very good about our people" with the term "people" referring to Pinetree students engaged in early field experiences or student teaching.

Observations and interactions with students as they fulfilled the student teaching requirement of the program by faculty provide additional support for the positive light in which students of this program are generally viewed. Faculty who supervise student teachers judge the multi-subject K-8 students as generally willing to engage in decision making, both proactive and situational in nature. The student teachers are frequently described as having high levels of flexibility in their classroom interactions by supervisors and cooperating teachers. One respondent reported that student teachers here, compared to another institution's student teachers, have a broader repertoire and willingness to try innovative ideas responsive to student needs. Student teachers are encouraged by their supervisors to verbalize not only their planning strategies but to examine the reasons for what they plan to do. Those who supervise report that student teachers tend to participate volitionally in dialogue about their planning, problems and their thinking about the classroom experience. Interestingly, a number of those who supervise student teachers report that most student teachers don't ask for solutions, or, for their decisions to be made for them, but only for the opportunity to talk about concerns. It may be that the college supervisors are witnessing the articulation of the informed, thoughtful decision-maker in

process of becoming.

The importance of the nature of the relationship between cooperating teacher and student teachers within the context of classroom decision making was a theme which emerged during interviews with faculty who supervised student teachers. According to supervising faculty some of these relationships were such that student teachers responded to situational demands by deciding to make changes in their actions and intentions. Supervising faculty related the following types of examples: The student teacher might decide to terminate a planned lesson, modify its content or the instructional strategy in order to more effectively meet the needs of the learners, depending in part upon the cooperating teacher. Whether a student teacher is willing to engage in this sort of responsive behavior, in other words, to respond to situational demands as he/she has been encouraged to do, often depends on whether the cooperating teacher is likely to approve or disapprove of the action. If cooperating teachers stay with planned activities even when faced with probable failure, then student teachers are more likely not to engage in situational, or interactive, kinds of decisions. Supervising faculty reported that student teachers tend to model cooperating teachers' behaviors even though they may believe it is in the learners' best interest to do otherwise.

It must be acknowledged here that the student teacher who does not make interactive decisions during the student teaching experience may behave differently in another context. Lack of observable instances of classroom decision making shall not be construed to suggest that the student lacks the skills necessary for making effective decisions. It does not seem reasonable to think that if interactive decision making is not observed during the professional semester that it does not or will not occur.

Summary

The examination of faculty interviews and course syllabi yielded many similarities and few differences in their perceptions of the program. The major differences were those found in the interviews of faculty with less than three years experience in this program and those who had been in the program longer than three years in terms of their understanding of the conceptual framework. The nine faculty members who teach required courses in the multi-subjects (K-8) program formed two groups; the "new" faculty (less than three years in the program) and "old" faculty (those who were in the program as the model and subsequent redesign took place). Even though there were differences noted in the degree of

richness in the descriptions provided by members of these two groups, all nine members articulated an acknowledgement of the soundness of the framework as they understood it. For example, those who were instrumental in the design of the framework tended to describe it in terms of the visual representation. Other faculty tended to describe the framework in terms of how it fit with their own personal philosophy of teaching and learning. Still others described it in terms of how they teach their courses. These differences notwithstanding, the evidence suggests that the faculty promote an understanding of the framework itself and the implications of it through a variety of planned experiences in the required coursework. Another common theme was the high level of confidence the faculty expressed in the ability and willingness of students to make effective classroom decisions. Faculty cited their own experience as they supervise students engaging in field work and their collected perceptions of public school personnel who work with the students in field experiences as the source of this confidence.

The evidence supports the premise that the faculty who teach the required courses in the multi-subjects K-8 program who are members of the Education Department have designed and implemented a program in which the behaviors, characteristics,

and skills thought to be important to informed, thoughtful decision-making are promoted. Clearly, the intention to do so has been documented, but to determine if, from the students' perspective this is indeed occurring it is necessary to look next at the students as they complete the program.

Students

The students who participated in this study were the first group of multi-subjects K-8 majors who received the majority of their program after the redesign of the education department to reflect the I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework. Data were collected from the twenty-seven multi-subjects K-8 majors who completed their student teaching semester in May, 1993.

Most of the students completed two different placements of eight weeks each, one in the primary grades (kindergarten through third) and one in the intermediate grades (fourth through sixth). However, a small number, two, who were seeking endorsement in an additional field, such as Special Education, Early Childhood or Preschool Handicap Education, completed three placements of approximately five weeks each. Field journals kept throughout the student teaching semester and a focus group interview conducted at the culmination of

the student teaching semester were the sources for the data reported in this study (see Appendix for initial questions). Historically, student teachers have been required to keep a daily journal which chronicles the day-to-day events of the student teaching experience. These journals were also to include the student teachers reflections about experiences. The students brought their journals to Pinetree campus for seminars during the semester and permitted them to be copied for this study. The field journal has been a standing assignment for several years, but, until now, the journals have not been examined in any comprehensive way. Typically, the college supervisor reads and initials the entries each time the student teacher is visited. Some student teacher reported that their college supervisors from time to time made general comments about context of the journals but no student teacher reported discussing journal entries with college supervisors.

Results of Field Journals

Students in the multi-subject K-8 program are engaged in journaling throughout their program of study. The first documented journal requirement is found in the syllabus for the Education 210 Foundations in Education course, which is the first education course in the professional sequence.

Education majors are required to keep a journal which focuses on assigned elements of the field experience and personal reflections regarding it. It is also an integral part of the forty hour field experience which is required for successful completion of Education 305, The Psychology of Teaching and Learning. Journaling continues to be a part of students curriculum as they complete requirements for Education 306, Instructional Processes and Strategies. Students engage in journaling as they take on roles of participant-observers within the college classroom. They are required to teach a number of lessons in small group and large group configurations. A major assignment is the teaching of a lesson, thirty-five minutes in length, using the Madeline Hunter instructional model. Students have two roles during this activity; one to participate at the appropriate age/developmental level for which the lesson is designed, and two, observe and write about what was experienced. In their writing, they reflect upon their experience for the purpose of enhancing understanding of what it is to teach.

Multi-subjects K-8 majors have two required courses in reading which are usually taken the semester before student teaching. One course, Education 319, The Teaching of Reading has a field component which requires participants to keep written record of their fifteen hour field experience. Each

student is placed in an elementary classroom during reading instruction or with a Chapter I reading specialist. Students are encouraged to interact with children by reading with whole classes, small groups, or working with individual children on reading. They are encouraged to talk to school personnel who are directly involved with helping children learn to read such as classroom teachers, building principals and reading curriculum specialists. Journaling for this field experience follows the established format in that students are asked to write about their experiences and their thoughts and feeling about those experiences. This consistent use of journaling throughout the K-8 multi-subject program as a way of attempting to understand and record professional growth was viewed as a reasonable predictor that the journals written during the student teaching semester ought to contain evidence that these student teachers engaged, and were aware of that engagement, in classroom decision-making.

The analysis of the student teaching journals began with an examination of the format the students used to fulfill this task through a thorough reading. It was determined that, although no two journals were exactly the same in format, they tended to adhere to one of three general writing formats. For the purpose of clarification the three formats will be named for their predominant surface characteristic; one is the

Procedural, the second is the Narrative, and third is the Subjective Pattern. Those journals which were written in the Procedural format tended to look like schedules. Three of these used time to organize and sequence the events of their days. An example of this format follows:

Procedural Journal Model

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Wednesday	February 10, 1993
7:30-----Lunch	
8:00-9:30----Reading: The students were involved with acting out the characters in <u>The Paper Caper</u> . I rotated individuals to assure that all students participated. I shared another story of <u>Encyclopedie Brown</u> . Summary questions were assigned for homework.	
9:30-10:00---Spelling: We played "I Spy" as a reinforcement of our mystery stories. I displayed the words on the board. Each student would locate a word and say, "I spy a word that means", calling on someone to use the correct word.	
10:00-11:00--English: The students listened to the taped story we told using a Rebus from small articles gathered. They discovered the characters--main and minor--setting, and plot. Following, we used the newspaper which included a rebus and other Valentine activities.	
11:00-11:30---Social Studies: The students worked on the log cabins, integrating Science--our discussion of habitats--and art.	
11:30-12:00--Lunch	
12:00-1:00---We made Valentine baskets as an art project and went outside for 20 minutes.	
1:00-2:00----Math: I reviewed the concept of angles and measuring degrees before proceeding with the test.	
2:00-2:30----Science: Those who brought in habitats presented a mini-speech--the habitat, environment, ecosystem.	
Reflections: My day went smoothly, the students worked productively and pleasantly. I enjoy the newspaper, including materials almost daily. The log cabins would have been made with popsicle sticks instead of milk cartons.	

Some of the examples of the Procedural format sequenced according to the order events occurred but did not write the exact times. Many of the entries labeled "Procedural"

included a "reflection" paragraph, usually brief. This group, in some cases, were somewhat similar to the journals that were identified as "Narratives". The salient characteristic that determined placement in this group was a prevalence for the journal to follow the pattern of the school day. Many of the entries began with "Today we..." or "Today the class...". As with all the journals the length of entries varied. Some student teachers wrote lengthy, descriptive passages of their daily activities. Interestingly, this group tended to focus on activities and procedures to a greater degree than did the other two groups of journals.

The second group of journals labeled "Narratives" made up the largest number. These journals tended to be the longest and most descriptive. There was only one discernable pattern for these journals, which, like the "Procedural" group was in the way the writers began each entry. The journals labeled "Narratives" usually began with a statement of some major idea. For example, one began this way: "I have been having problems with one student not wanting to listen to me.", or "Spelling is getting better!" Another said, "This started out as a crazy day and...". Another said "All in all, today was pretty good day in fifth grade". "I'm seeing real improvement in (a child's name) now" another said. After making a statement which seemed to represent a theme, the

student teachers provided discourse related to the idea. These student teachers wrote descriptions of their classrooms, the content, and most importantly, about the children in their classrooms.

Narrative Journal Model

Day 1 - Tuesday, Jan. 19, 1993

Today was my first day of Student Teaching at _____ Elementary. My first placement is in Mrs. _____ Kindergarten class. She has an Aide, and her name is Mrs. _____. Throughout my Log I will refer to them as Mrs. F and Mrs. S.

Mrs. S. was sick today so she didn't come in. I arrived this morning at 7:25 am and met Mrs. F. in the Cafeteria for Bus Duty. When we went to our classroom at 7:40, the children all put their things away and sat at their assigned tables (red, yellow, green). They each began to sign in on a piece of paper that had been set upon their tables, with the day written on it. This gives them practice in writing their name and it is another way to check the attendance (to see who was tardy or absent). As they were writing Mrs. F. took the lunch count and snack money (ice cream).

The opening exercises for the day have become my responsibility. This consists of: the Pledge of Allegiance, the calendar, weather and announcements. After we finished with those activities they had play time and I watched and supervised them.

For the next hour the class worked in the computer lab on basic skills. The basic skills were their name, the alphabet and numbers. During this hour half of the

class worked on typing the basic skills and the other half worked on an alphabet game. After a half an hour the groups switched activities. The kids seemed to get bored really quick and they got a little rowdy.

At 9:30 am we went back to our classroom and we split the class up into two groups. Since Mrs. S. was absent, I took over her group work. My group worked on a worksheet on the initial C sound. The worksheet was brief so I tried to add-lib on some recognition of letters and sounds. We worked on this for about fifteen minutes and then Mrs. F put everyone in a big group. She did a writing lesson with the group. She printed the alphabet on the board and the kids copied them. This was to practise proper D'Nealian handwriting.

The kids each put their papers in their colored baskets that match the color of their table. Then they returned to their tables and we began the Math lesson. The math lesson consisted of another worksheet. This sheet was to be used to teach the number four.

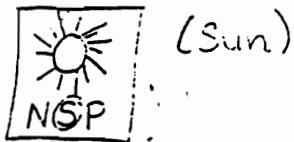
I had a big book that I used to demonstrate with. The children were to count the number of animals in each square. If there were four animals in the square they would circle them, but if there were more or less than four they put an 'X' over the animals. They finished the sheet really quick so I set up the big book easel and had them

- Each come up to the easel. Each child get a couple of turns to come up and answer my questions on the easel. They used the write-off pen and wrote the number of animals or circle four animals. I just wanted to give them some other type of practice.

At 10:35 am we got the children ready for lunch. They went to the bathroom, washed their hands and then lined up. Today I went to lunch with them, they have excellent food. When we returned from lunch they had a half-hour rest period. They all have a towel to lay on and they Watch Sesame Street. While the kids were resting Mrs. F. and I had a conference and went over the packet that I gave her.

When rest period was over we worked on a worksheet for letter recognition. We worked in two different groups again, just as we had been doing all morning. When we had finished, I went back over the sheet and had the kids tell me the letters. The paper was split up

into squares, for example:



(Sun)

Each square had a picture with letters underneath. They had to circle the letter that made the beginning sound that the picture represented.

Once we finished that lesson, I read a story to them, "Hansel and Gretel". They were all very well behaved and very attentive. Once I had finished they all kept asking me to read it again, so I did. This time as I read I asked them questions about what was going to happen next. They were eager to answer so I had to make them all sit down again and raise their hands. They really seemed to know the story.

The last 50 minutes of the day was full of fifteen minutes of snack and the forty-five minutes of play. At 2:35 pm the kids had to clean up and get ready for the bus. The last child left after the second bell at 2:50 pm.

Mrs. F. had a child coming in after school, so she could help him with his reading. So at 3:00 pm I went home.

Reflection

Today was very busy since I did a lot of teaching. One thing that I wanted to reflect on was the use of worksheets during the day. Most of them were simple and the children didn't seem to have much trouble with them at all. They seem to need some more enrichment than just worksheets. I believe that is what I am going to work on the most. Hopefully I can get some harder activities that will stimulate this group of kids.

A few of these examples tended to examine their roles and evaluate feelings and attitudes about what they were experiencing, but the instances of this kind of writing were few.

The third group of journals, labeled "Subjective Patterns" were rather diverse in their formats. The title "Subjective Patterns" was meant to describe the individual or "subjective" way these students organized their writing. The condition that led to placement in this group was that they did not fit the chronological pattern of the Procedural group, nor did they tell a story as did the Narrative group, but instead had an idiosyncratic pattern devised to help them make sense of the experience they were having. For example, one writer looked at daily experiences as "good" and "bad". The first paragraph in one entry began with describing an event

then the second part of the entry began "The best part of this day was..." or "The bad thing about today was...". Another writer described the day's events, or focused on one important feature of the day's experience, and then ended with a paragraph that usually began with the words, "What I learned from this....is....". Another writer, whose focus was very much herself, organized around "what I did well today" and "what I didn't do well". Another writer formatted her journal writing around three components; first, she wrote about the daily experience followed by a section called "observation" which focused more on people such as teachers, children and principals. The last part of the journal entry was entitled "Reflection", and in this section the writing described her feelings and thoughts about the experience.

Subjective Pattern Model

Experience:

Today we started "talking" about "Valentine Day" - that's all it took to get the whole class excited. Valentine's Day is "big stuff" in second grade! Any time there is a "party" or any change from the original schedule - watch out! We can hardly concentrate on anything else.

February 9, 1981
Tuesday

Observation:

We made Valentine holders today - it was all pre-cut and ready. I cut squares of (colored) paper and made "patterns" for the children to trace around. It was "wildsville" - needless to say Mrs. Bixen told me she had done the same project in the past and that it tended to create some chaos. She was right I sure am learning a lot from her! Everytime I learn a lesson it is a very valuable one. Today's lesson was have everyone's attention and dare them to not listen to directions!! Ha! I was very patient but, things will be different from now on.

Reflection:

I should have gone through every single step in making the Valentine "holders" and had the students stay with me. It probably would have been better not to have any choices either - just choose one and allow the children to cut those pieces out instead of having a central location where pattern and pieces. I should have handed everyone their pieces at the same time. I could have given them a choice also. ~~Too messy a~~ ~~Too much paper~~ ~~Too much time~~ ~~Too much paper~~

Another subjective pattern writer used a two part format which, as with many of the other journals, began with a description of the daily events followed by reflective writing which focused on some issue of concern to this student teacher. One of this student's entries began, "My reflection for today is just about the same as yesterday. I want to talk

about the benefits of role playing...for this group of kids". Each of the group of student teachers' main focus tended to be themselves, within the context of their student teaching experiences. Their discourse had to do with their thinking and feelings and tended to be evaluative in nature. For example, some entries talked about what had been learned, what meaning they were attaching to certain experiences, and how their thinking was being changed as a result of experiences.

The journals were analyzed and placed into three groups based upon their written format and content. These three basic patterns have been labeled according to a prevailing characteristic. The Procedural group of journals are rather like detailed daily schedules. The largest group of journals were labeled "Narratives" because their pattern is one of "story" with a main theme embedded in rich detail. The last group was labeled "Subjective Patterns", because each writer had a unique way of organizing their journal. The Subjective Patterns Group was the smallest group and journals were placed in this group because of the differences. After journals were placed in one of the three groups, a finer analysis of content began. Generally, it was found that the Procedural group of journals which numbered ten (37%) tended to focus on events, schedules, things, physical constructs of classrooms, and how things are, or ought to be done. The example on p. 86 seems

to illustrate the important role time and schedules play in this student teacher's life. The reflection was stated in generalities. This student may have chosen to design her journal around time constraints because procedures and structures are important to her or perhaps because they afford her a sense of control over an experience that may have risk for her.

There were eleven journals (41%) in the group labeled Narrative. The length of the Narrative entries was significantly greater than the length of the entries in the Procedural group. The content of the Narrative group tended to focus on students. The student teacher whose journal was labeled a "Narrative" wrote in detail about how she designed activities and interacted with her students. She included illustrations to aid a reader's understanding. These student teachers wrote about behavior of students, concerns they had about behavior of students, academic and social concerns they had about some of them, and the regard and attachment they felt for the children they came in contact with.

Six journals (22%) were grouped together and labeled as Subjective Patterns. Their unifying theme was "self". That is, the journals contained descriptions of how student teachers' experiences influenced them personally as emerging professionals. They wrote more about their own thoughts and

feelings, and how they were being changed by their experiences. Their entries were often self evaluative in content.

A third focus of the journal analysis was an attempt to identify instances of the student teachers referring explicitly to the framework for the teacher education program, the informed, thoughtful decision-maker. Approximately 2000 separate journal entries were collected. The twenty-seven multi-subjects K-8 participants were asked to make daily entries for 16 weeks of student teaching. Most of these entries were a page (225 words) in length, however, some entries, especially in the "Narrative" group, were of greater length. In not one instance did any of these student teachers make reference to the "informed, thoughtful decision-maker" framework for teacher education. The terms "the framework" or "decision maker(ing)" were not found in their discourse. It had been anticipated that these student teachers, who represented the first group to complete the program after the redesign and were the group with which the redesign and articulation of the model was most focused, would use the terms associated with the I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework, or, at the very least, write about classroom decision-making as a concept in an explicit way. This was not the case, so it was necessary to reframe the analysis and ask, "is there evidence

in the journals from which it may be inferred that the student teachers in this study made informed, thoughtful classroom decisions and were aware of the process?"

Decision-making could be inferred from twenty-six instances found in eleven journal entries and these inferences were found rather evenly distributed in all three formats, Procedural, Narrative as well as the Subjective Patterns groups. The student teachers in this study who wrote about alternatives in their actions or their cognitive processing about their alternatives tended to be sensitive to the same influences and precipitators; the most prevalent were, the cooperating teacher, some event or context, and, the students. These three precipitators of decision were found to be influencing whether the decisions were preactive, or interactive ones; that is, those decisions which are made in response to the context of the classroom experience. Nineteen other precipitators of decisions such as the influence of parents, principals, college supervisors, lack of appropriate equipment/material were also cited by the student teachers who engaged in discourse from which decisioning could be inferred, but occurred much less frequently. However, it needs to be noted that less than half of the twenty-seven student teachers engaged in writing which could, even by inference, be construed to suggest decision making discourse. In these

eleven journals twenty-six instances of decision making were found. For those eleven whose journal entries contained decision-making discourse as inferred by this researcher, a prevalence was found throughout their writing. This might mean that they did indeed engage in classroom decision-making or, it could simply be their writing style. For example, if one inference of decision-making discourse occurred, others were found.

In order to promote understanding of the nature of the decision-making inferred from the journals, data will be analyzed to determine whether the inferred decision making was preactive, interactive or both. Within the scope of these two foci the time frame was further examined in light of the three precipitators of decision; the cooperating teacher, an event, or the student(s).

Preactive decision-making, or advance work, are those decisions made by teachers before teaching begins. These decisions include instructional and classroom management decisions which all teachers make within the context of the classroom experience. Of the decision-making inferences, twelve were preactive and of the twelve inferences made about preactive decision making, two of that number were made as the result of a teacher concern about self, four were influenced by some issue with students, but the greatest number, six

decisions, were made as the result of some event. For example, the influence of student absences was a consideration for proactive decision-making. Student teachers described how, because of student absences it was often necessary to abbreviate, extend, or redesign lesson plans to accommodate the context. The student described how a thematic unit, seasonal in focus, had to be reconfigured to fit the time period available.

Another student teacher whose concern with student absences seemed to lead to interactive decisions, related the necessity of foregoing learning experiences because large numbers of students were absent. This student teacher said "I couldn't go on with the lesson as planned because six kids were out (absent) so we reviewed instead." The difference in these two examples is that the first example was known and adjustments were made prior to the instruction taking place. The latter example was one in which the students teacher was faced with the necessity of making an on-the-spot decision. The student teacher had to decide whether to go on with the existing instructional plan or to immediately modify those plans to accommodate the high number of absent students. The classification of the inferred decisions therefore, will be based on this criterion: if the decision was made ahead of time, such as instructional planning, room arrangement,

scheduling, discipline policies, or grouping, then the decisions are considered to be preactive decisions and will be classified as such. Decisions student teachers wrote about that were made and acted upon as the result of something that occurred unexpectedly within the context of the classroom experience will be classified as interactive decisions.

Preactive Decisions

Student teachers described how they themselves, the nature of the students to be taught, the amount of time available, and the attitude of the cooperating teacher toward the project, tended to cause the student teacher to adjust the unit of study to accommodate that context. Student teachers cited themselves as an issue in preactive decision making. One student described feeling incompetent at writing on the chalkboard in the handwriting style being taught in the school system of the placement. So until the student teacher judged the handwriting style to be mastered, the student avoided writing on the chalkboard and used, instead, charts that could be prepared in advance of the lesson. Other students described how thematic unit plans were often designed generically, that is, able to fit a variety of classroom settings, and then, customized to fit a specific group of students. One student teacher said, "we had this really big

week long unit for Ed 304 we had to do...I did mine on rain forests....I just love that unit....so I made some changes you know...some of the trade books and all, and I got to use it with my second graders." These students wrote about the influences which affected the decisions they made about what was to be taught and how this was to be accomplished. A number of factors were considered by the student teachers who designed thematic units of study, not the least of which was their own interest in the subject.

Attention to students a major impetus for preactive decision-making described by student teachers. Four examples of preactive decisions were found; two of these examples focused on management and two were instructional concerns. One student teacher described how she made the decision to arrange the classroom a specific way based on student characteristics. Boisterous, talkative students as well as a student with visual problems were considered as the seating decisions were made. Another student teacher described how isolating students was a prospect that was troubling to her. After trying a number of other interventions in the attempt to structure an environment in which one distractable student could concentrate, she finally made a decision to offer a study carrel option to the student. Interestingly, this student teacher credits her cooperating teacher with helping

her understand that isolation is not rejection and that all options need to be examined in order to make good decisions in the classroom.

Student teachers wrote about preactive decisions they made about instructional planning which were sensitive to children's needs. Lessons planned by one student teacher were structured in order to meet the special needs of an ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) child. This student teacher reported how having this child in class required that lessons reflect a more intense focus, be shorter in duration and have redundancy.

Planning motivating lessons so that children would like the lesson was a factor in preactive decision making for two student teachers. One of these student teachers wrote about the great lengths she went to in order to bring young rabbits to the classroom as part of a seasonal unit of study, because "the kids will really be excited about this". Another student teacher wrote about having the children in her class act out stories from their reading text "because they really love this kind of stuff".

Clearly, student teachers make preactive decisions, and these decisions are influenced by self and by the children in their classrooms, but classroom events were cited the most frequently as preactive decision making influences. A number

of these events are temporal in nature. For example, some influential events which were cited a number of times, were the effect holidays, special events, such as assemblies, early dismissal, and delays caused by inclement weather, had on instruction. One student teacher described students' behavior as "hyper" before holidays and early dismissals. Another described it as "off the wall". This student behavior was cited as the reason for planning instruction that was described as "more fun, relaxed, or review work". As described earlier, student absences were an influence on instructional decisions. One student teacher described her Thursday afternoon teaching as "almost nonexistent....six kids go to choir, three more go to math lab, and that leaves twelve kids.....I can't teach Social Studies to half the class, so we do review work and play games."

A student teacher described her frustration with trying to teach Science to her fourth grade children. There was never enough time for it. Other curriculum took longer than planned, and no time was left to teach Science, so the student teacher made the decision to integrate it into other curriculum areas. Other student teachers wrote about how time available to teach often forced decisions regarding the teaching strategies a teacher might choose to employ. One student teacher believes cooperative learning is an effective

way for children to learn, but does not employ this strategy as often as he would like because it is not time efficient. He chooses to use direct instruction most of the time because it is time efficient.

Interactive Decisions

Events, the nature of the children to be taught, and the students teachers' perceptions of self precipitate preactive decisions for this group of student teachers. They also wrote about their thinking from which we can infer that they did make interactive decisions in the context of the classroom. Their interactive decisions were responsive to the same influences found in the discussion of the preactive decisions made by this group of student teachers; the student teacher themselves, an event, and not surprising, the children were the greatest influence for interactive decision making.

Whereas events appear to be the most frequently mentioned influence on preactive decisions, only one event, student absences, was placed in a context which resulted in one student teacher making a interactive decision to modify instruction during the delivery of that instruction. The modification resulted in a change in pacing of the lesson as well as a change in the activity originally planned.

Self perceptions of the student teacher regarding their

competence in the classroom were cited as influences of interactive decision making. A student teacher described her feeling on a day when she felt she was losing control of the class. As a result of this feeling the student teacher changed structure mid-lesson and became more didactic in her teaching. "I really 'sat' on them, and they knew I was upset about their attitude....", she said. Another wrote of having to become assertive so that the children in her class would take her seriously. A student teacher related how she had learned the importance of giving directions and explanations clearly to her children. She made a decision to work on precision in language in order to avoid confusion for her students.

Interactive decision were made in response to the needs of the children more frequently than they were to any other influence. The student teachers wrote about instances of decision-making which were sensitive to a concern with a child or children. One described how the scheduled duty-free planning period was a time when the classroom aide had the children outside for a play period, but because of an injury and a fight, which demanded the student teacher's attention, she was unable to complete plans for an activity and as a result a different plan for instruction was implemented. Another wrote about how she learned her second grade students

needed to have a review before taking their spelling test. She related how a number of children appeared nervous or stressed about the test. She decided to review before the test and found by doing so the children appeared to approach the experience with greater confidence. Several other student teachers also made interactive decisions that resulted in change in instruction for the purpose of meeting the needs of the children in their classes. For example, one student teacher wrote about a lesson she planned which the fifth grade class found boring. One child said, "Can't we do something else--this stuff is so boring!" The student teacher modified the activity in response to the fifth graders' needs. Another changed her lesson because of her perceptions that her students were not learning the math concept she was teaching. She modified the lesson by doing more modeling and using hands-on manipulatives to ensure that her students did learn the concept. "They didn't get it (the concept of regrouping) at all until I used the straws to show them what we were really doing here....." Off-task student behavior was cited by a number of student teachers as an influence which resulted in revisions in instructional delivery. Student teachers wrote about including cooperative learning experiences in their instructional planning, but several wrote about instances when the children were off-task to the degree that

the student teacher was faced with making a decision to continue with a failing lesson or try to salvage it by changing the instructional pattern. All who wrote about this chose to change the instructional delivery. Interestingly, the student teachers did not see cooperative learning or the students themselves as having failed. They attributed the problem to the circumstances within their classroom environment, such as "it was Friday - you know how it is on Fridays." Another cited cramped, close quarters as the reason the groups didn't work well, while another student teacher attributed her students' off-task behavior while working in cooperative learning groups to the weather.

Clearly, these student teachers' journals reveal evidence from which it can be inferred that they did make a number of decisions, both preactive and interactive in nature. There appeared to be approximately the same number of interactive and preactive decisions related in the journals. It was also found that the same three influences prevailed whether the decisions were preactive or interactive decisions, and these three influences were the student teachers themselves, events, and/or the children who populate their classrooms. Teaching is a decision making process. The I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework emphasizes a classroom decision maker who acts purposefully within a given context. The evidence from the

eleven journals which contained inferences of decision-making supports the premise that these student teachers behaved strategically, that they demonstrated flexibility in their planning and that they acted with confidence and skill.

Focused Interview with Student Teachers

Multi-subject K-8 student teachers participated in focus group interviews during the last day of the professional semester. The students were on campus for their final seminar. The twenty-seven student teachers were randomly assigned to five groups, each of which met with the researcher for the purpose of reflecting on their recent experience as student teachers in light of the informed, thoughtful decision maker conceptual framework which defines the teacher education program at Concord College. The group interviews ranged from 65 to 78 minutes in length. They were audio taped and the tapes were then transcribed for analysis. The interview focused on the students' understanding of the informed, thoughtful decision-makers, how they make decisions and what influences their classroom decision-making.

A number of themes emerged from the analysis of the interview tapes, and unlike the student teachers' journals, discussion of classroom decision-making and the I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework pervaded the interviews. Student

teachers reported that they gained an understanding of the I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework for teacher education and an initial understanding of the nature of classroom decision-making from teacher education faculty and required coursework. Interestingly, two students knew nothing of the conceptual framework, but the remaining twenty-five student teachers knew about the Pinetree College conceptual framework for teacher education. They knew the name of the framework and discussed it conceptually. In the student teachers' responses there was a tacit acknowledgement of the rightness of the concept of classroom decision-maker. Their discussions suggested that decision-makers define how they perceived themselves; that teaching and decision making were connected to each other. Students reported learning about it in classes from teacher education faculty, "classes encourage us to be decision makers....intelligent decision makers....they show us all our options so we can think on our feet....and they tell us how many decisions you make in a day...." The two students who reported that they had not knowledge of the I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework readily agreed that decision making was an important skill for classroom teachers. The explanation for why two students from a group of twenty-seven didn't know about this framework may be that they transferred from other institutions and did not take the professional core courses at

Pinetree College. These courses are the ones mentioned most frequently as the courses in which the conceptual framework, the I.T.D.-M. was promoted. If these two students had taken comparable courses at other institutions they could conceivably emerge from the program without the nomenclature, the informed, thoughtful decision-maker. Interestingly, during the focus group interviews both student teachers' responses suggested that conceptually they had the same characteristics, skills and behaviors the other twenty-five student teachers had in relation to classroom decision-making.

The professional core sequence which includes Education 210, Foundations in Education, Education 251, Human Growth and Development, Education 305, Philosophy of Teaching and Learning, and Education 306, Instructional Processes and Strategies, are courses in which the instructors tend to speak more about classroom decision making from the perspective of the conceptual framework. The I.T.D.-M. is discussed conceptually and to a limited extent, practically. Instructors in these courses report a commitment to aid students' understanding of classroom decision-making as a conceptual framework, which in turn, leads to the development of decision-making skills necessary for effective classroom management and teaching. This process is continued as students move from the professional core courses to methods

courses, where the emphasis changes from that of the conceptual framework, or model, to that of practical application of the process of decision-making. This sequence of learning experiences described here may account for two students in this study lack the I.T.D.-M. nomenclature, but have a conceptual and practical understanding of classroom decision-making. One student said, "It was just recently that I really heard much about it...(the conceptual framework) because I went to (another institution) and some of the classes at (another institution).... I don't think they had a conceptual framework."

As might be expected, students identified courses in which they learned about the informed, thoughtful decision-maker conceptual framework. These courses, predictably, include the professional core courses and certain other methods courses. Student teachers identified certain learning experiences within these courses as being conducive to becoming effective classroom decision makers. For example, students reported that the experience of planning and teaching to peers who were acting out at age appropriate levels "made you learn to think on your feet". Another said, "you have to handle all kinds of problems without stopping your teaching". Students mentioned that the cooperative group activities encouraged them to practice decision-making. They reported

that a number of methods courses used cooperative learning activities. Students also reported that role playing activities in certain other courses contributed to the development of interactive decision-making. They described how the instructor presented situations in which students participated and were presented with opportunities to make interactive kinds of decisions. Some of the vignettes described by these respondents included confrontational parents and off task or disruptive student behavior. Interestingly, although students did not use the terms "preactive" or "interactive" to label the kinds of decisions they talked about within the perspective of the learning experiences they described, they appeared to be aware that both kinds of decisions were important in the classroom, and that learning experiences in required courses had been designed to foster the development of both preactive and interactive classroom decision making.

Student teachers were aware of the integral part of the student teaching experience played in promoting classroom decision-making. One student said, "It's the student teaching, that's what made us....I think that Pinetree (teacher education program) gave us the background to be the informed person and to make decisions....but in student teaching....that actually gave us the chance to make real

decisions and find out for ourselves which (decisions) were right and which (decisions) were wrong....". These student teachers told countless stories about events of their student teaching experience which led to opportunities to make both preactive and interactive kinds of decisions. One respondent spoke of the variability of her teaching experience. She described an interview she had with a personnel director from a school system in another state, in which she was asked to describe a typical day of her student teaching experience. Her response to this was that there "were no 'typical' days....all are different....sometimes unpredictable, so I try to stay flexible and go with the flow." This idea of the variability of the classroom experience was echoed by a number of respondents. One said, "I really believe I make more decisions everyday than you guys (faculty) told us we would....and this is only student teaching." Another said, "I have made decisions....just because I wanted to find out if this (teaching strategy, activity) would work in a certain situation....and many times I have found out that this did work and I would make a note of it....then there were other times that it (teaching strategy, activity) didn't work....but that doesn't mean it won't work in another situation in another classroom....I found myself wanting to make that decision just to see if it did work on a certain group of

student or in a certain situation."

Although preactive decision-making was an integral part of the dialogue in the focus group interviews the student teachers tended to talk most about their experiences with interactive decision making. Indeed, it appeared that almost anything that occurred in the context of school had the power to mitigate a decision. There were two perspectives which seemed to dominate the thinking of these student teachers as they engaged in interactive decision-making. All the external conditions that exist in a classroom, influence decisions. Additionally, the perceptions, knowledge and beliefs of the student teacher influence decision-making. These respondents described a broad range of external conditions which they cited as causes for interactive decision-making. Some causes they acknowledged were rather global, like the weather' "you can always tell when its going to rain....noise levels and kids bouncing off the walls." Student teachers seemed to accept generally that this was a real phenomenon and they reported acting on it by changing the learning environment to accommodate the weather's effect. "This is not a good time for group activities....they need lots of structure," one student teacher said. Others agreed that they, too, had reorganized instruction to accommodate weather changes. School cancellations as a result of snow also caused student

teachers to make decisions to change instruction to fit the demands of abbreviated classroom time. Changes seemed to occur primarily in the way instruction was delivered rather than in the amount or depth of content. For example, student teacher reported using more direct instruction and less cooperative group learning when school hours were reduced. Several student teachers did report having to leave out some "fun activities" they had included in units of study. All, however, believed that the unit still provided the necessary conceptual understanding for which it was intended.

Student teachers cited other external events which caused them to engage in interactive decision-making. Specific people such as principals, cooperating teachers and parents all influenced the decisions these student teachers made. Of these influences, the cooperating teacher was cited many times as a catalyst for decision making. Some of these student teachers related that they felt their cooperating teachers sent mixed messages which resulted in confusion for the student teacher. For example, one student teacher said, "she told me I should pick and choose from the text (what is to be taught), but at the same time she's saying, you have to cover this and this and evaluate this." Another described how her cooperating teacher told her to "do whatever she liked"; then after the student teacher had designed the lesson, the

cooperating teacher informed the student teacher she (the cooperating teacher) "would not have done it (the lesson) that way". "I didn't know whether to throw out my plans and start over or what," this student teacher said. Of the four student teachers who recounted similar experiences it is interesting to note that even when the cooperating teacher urged the student teacher to use the plans as the student teacher had designed them every student teacher reported changing their planned instruction in their effort to gain the approval of the cooperating teacher.

Perceptions, knowledge and beliefs held by the student teachers also played a role in their interactive decision making. This is most observable as they interact with the children they teach. The children who populate these classrooms influence interactive decision-making. Student teachers seem to be more highly sensitive to the children they teach than to any other stimuli. In both journals and interview transcripts they talked more about the children in their classrooms and this talk seemed to suggest a preoccupation with the children they teach. Without exception every student teacher in this study cited at least one interactive decision made in response to a perception or belief about a child or children in their classroom. For example, student teachers related stories about how they had

planned units of study to include cooperative group activities because they believed that children gained important knowledge through these kinds of experiences. Student teachers related experiences in which children had difficulty learning. They described how they redesigned the strategy in use, or sometimes the focus of the lesson, in order to promote learning for these children. Sensitivity to the nature of children precipitated many of the interactive decisions of these student teachers. One student related how she changed a lesson on how to fill out job application forms because some of the students were very frustrated...."I went to something I knew they were interested in....next day I came back to the forms and this time they were more enthusiastic about it and they seemed to respect me more for doing it (changing the lesson)....so it worked out real well."

The responses from these student teachers seem to suggest that of all the variables of the classroom that affect interactive decision-making by student teachers, it is the children to whom they are most sensitive. One explanation for this may be that the teacher education program at Pinetree College tends to promote a child centered approach to schooling; for example most, if not all, core and methods courses focus on the developmental nature of learning and how it relates to children. Therefore, students who graduate from

this program probably do so with a rather broad base of knowledge about children and a heightened sensitivity to their needs. It may be that because of this sensitivity they tend to focus more intensely on the children they teach than they do on the other variable in the classroom. Both journals and transcripts of the focus group interviews are supportive of this assertion.

The relationship which exists between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher has a significant influence on most aspects of the student teaching semester, including the decisions they make. Student teachers tended to mention their cooperating teacher second only to the children in their classrooms. Cooperating teachers were described in such ways as to suggest that they were more varied in personalities and teaching styles than the group of twenty-seven student teachers who were the focus of this study. The relationships that evolved between the individual student teachers and their cooperating teacher were varied, ranging from some pairs who developed sustained friendships to others who had rather formal professional interactions. In this group there were few student teachers who reported less than positive relationships with cooperating teachers, although a small number expressed philosophical differences. Attitudes of cooperating teachers who supervised the student teachers in

this study were not directly addressed and therefore cannot be reported here. However, the attitudes of the student teachers toward the cooperating teachers is directly known in some cases and may be inferred in others. Generally, student teachers spoke of positive experiences with their cooperating teachers. Several reported that their cooperating teachers told them that the classroom was theirs and so were all the decisions. In many of these cases the student teachers did indeed have the opportunity to design the learning environment as they saw fit. One said "my first placement said 'this is your room and you can do whatever you want'....I decided to give the afternoon group five minutes to talk after lunch in order to get them to settle down and pay attention. It worked our great....she (the cooperating teacher) said she had never thought of that (giving the class five minutes free time after lunch)....I give up five minutes so that they can talk but you gain thirty minutes so that you don't have to discipline all of them." Another student teacher shared her reaction to the two very difference teaching styles of her two cooperating teachers. The first eight weeks with a traditional teacher was described as "very structured". This was followed by eight week in a vastly different setting; "at first it scared me to death because I didn't see her teach for an entire day before she said "its yours - yours - just do it'. I kept

going, well exactly how much can you do with sixth grade in a day and she would say, well you'll find out....and she gave me the total control! It scared me to death the first two days, I thought 'I have no idea how much to assign....how much work to even try to do, whether or not I was on track or off....' but I think that the teacher has a lot to do with the type of decisions you make and I am glad now that Ms. _____ did that because by the second week I was completely in control of the class....it was really something." Another student teacher shared an experience similar in the amount of control she was given.

She said, "both my teachers had twenty-four years experience so they know what they were doing....what worked and what didn't. So to me, they were really helpful. If I asked a question they were always really willing to give me their opinions or what worked for them....and they were both really open for me to do what I wanted to do in the classroom. She said, you can do whatever you want and she would give me her gradebook. She just gave it to me and said, 'here's the gradebook - here's the attendance and here's how you do this!' I felt privileged....that she trusted me with her kids."

Still another student teacher was empowered by her cooperating teacher. The student teacher described the experience this way:

"My first placement was excellent. She (the cooperating teacher) was one of those overachieving teachers....but she just said 'whatever you want to do however you want to do it.' She was in the room and saw a major discipline problem that I didn't see, but she never said anything, I did everything...if they (the children) were in trouble and it took some form of discipline they would go to her. She would look at them and say 'I'm not here, it's her (the student teacher) class now.' I made decisions every day....not so much about what to teach....but how to teach it....if I saw that it wasn't working I was always free to change that....maybe not what the lesson was about, though."

This seems to suggest that this student teacher understands that although she would not be able to make a large number of decisions generally about what to teach, she would need to make many decisions about how to teach it.

Student teachers described some experiences in a less positive light. One student teacher said, "Mine was like

that, too....very traditional. The class was never mine - she just sat at her desk the whole time and just watched me. She would interrupt, like if a kid was doing something, not really bothering me....she would yell at him in the middle of my discussion. Whew!" A few student teachers experienced embarrassing moments as the result of interactions with their cooperating teachers. One related one of these experiences when she said "Isn't it embarrassing when she (the cooperating teacher) tells you....no, Ms. _____, that is not right. I just died!" Another student teacher described a similar encounter with her cooperating teacher. "She would cut me off in the middle of my lesson and take over....and one entire day I did not get through one lesson without her interrupting. If one child asked her a question she would reteach everything that I had just taught. I finally asked her about this one day after school and from then on she didn't do it to me...." Student teachers tended to explain these behaviors on the part of their cooperating teachers as functions of their personalities or professional stances rather than any inadequacy on the part of themselves. For example, one said that she believed her cooperating teacher may have felt some jealousy because the children really liked her and this in turn may have caused the cooperating teacher to act in a way that was embarrassing to the student teacher.

Some student teachers viewed their cooperating teachers as very traditional, with the term "traditional" meaning structured and procedural or rule bound in their approach to teaching. One described her perception of some teachers this way: "...my experience is limited, but the teachers I've met, not being critical of them, but they are all ingrained in this thing that once something (a lesson) is started....you go with it....and you go strictly by administration's rules, when there are always exceptions that can cause you to change...you can see it....they go with it, good or bad." Another student teacher described her cooperating teacher by saying, "She was programmed....the same subject at the same time in the same way everyday".

One student teacher contrasted the differences in the two placements that she experienced. She said, "my first teacher let me do anything and she loved my ideas and she would say 'I'm going to do that next year.'.... and then I went to my second placement and they wouldn't even let me think." Still another described a teaching episode which, because of an external influence, specifically, a scheduling change, the student teacher chose to modify the content of the lesson and the instructional mode to fit the time available in a more reasonable way. She said "well, my (cooperating) teacher let me do that, but she herself wouldn't...she would have stuck

with whatever she had in that planbook." This suggests that, at least for some cooperating teacher-student teacher pairs that there is tolerance for the differences which exist in the way they perceive the demands of the classroom. This tolerance seems to exist not only in the cooperating teachers willingness for student teachers to make and act upon classroom decisions that they themselves would not choose to do, but perhaps to a lesser degree in the student teachers toward the more conservative, or traditional, stance which many of the cooperating teachers have taken.

One student teacher described her first placement this way: "I remember thinking that Ms. _____ was so traditional that I didn't think I could stand eight weeks of this....but after the first two weeks she loosened up and we did some really great things in that classroom." Two explanations may account for this change in the student teachers perceptions; first, the cooperating teacher may have indeed relaxed the conservative stance which was in place at the beginning of the student teaching placement or, second, the student teacher's perception of this may have undergone some change as the result of the experience.

The relationship between cooperating teacher and student teacher is a complex one not readily defined with any predictive validity. These data seem to suggest that

successful student teaching experiences can, and do, take place amidst seemingly dissonant variables. A desirable outcome seems to be dependent upon commitment to success on the part of both participants, the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. All other variables seem to be secondary to this.

The twenty-seven student teachers in this study tend to view themselves as both willing and competent to make the myriad of decisions, both preactive and interactive, that are required by the dynamics of the classroom. Student teachers repeated the same sentiment: "I think I do pretty well with that (decision-making)....some days you have your plans and something comes up and you have to decide what you're going to do....follow the plans or change what you do." Another indicator of the student teachers' confidence in themselves as classroom decision-makers was their rather high rating of themselves with 10 being very competent and willing to make classroom decisions. The range of responses was a low of six and a high of nine. Interestingly, seventeen rated themselves as an eight and one half. This seems to suggest that based upon the responses to the self rating and the corroborative verbal responses provided, these student teachers believe they are competent to make necessary classroom decisions, both preactive and interactive in scope. The descriptions they

gave of what they do and how they think about what they do provides a wealth of support for the assertion that this group of student teachers feel competent to make decisions and are willing to do so. One respondent said, "I think about it (decision-making) a lot. Sometimes I will make a decision and then I will think, well, was that right or was it wrong....and, why did I make that decision....so I think this (lesson) didn't work as well as I had thought it would, so I'm going to try a different approach next time." This student teacher's response was illustrative of a rather reflective stance as is the response from another student teacher who said "I feel I am an informed, thoughtful decision-maker because I will analyze what I do and see if that (some teaching event) went the way I wanted it to....so I'll do this next time....or, I should have done this....so I think I am capable of looking, judging and seeing what is working and what isn't and be able to make that decision to change....and do it and not be afraid." The words "very confident" were the way most of the student teacher responded directly to the question regarding their competence and willingness to make classroom decisions. Being an "informed" decision maker is how some student teachers describe themselves as they complete the student teaching experience. A number of experiences are provided in the teacher education program that represent

intentions to inform. For example, coursework and field experience are integrated so that students have opportunities to synthesize knowledge and experience, and thereby become "informed". Another spoke of this confidence this way" "I feel that I am an informed, thoughtful decision maker because I can, if necessary, in midstream stop what I'm doing and if I see that it is not working I can find another way that maybe I haven't written in my lesson plan....but with just what knowledge I have I can use another approach to get at what I am trying to get across." A number of students said that "flexibility" was an important trait for a teacher. One said, "I haven't had a single lesson plan that went exactly as I planned. You just have to adjust." One student teacher viewed decision-making as an important life skill which has implications for his actions in the classroom. He said, "well, you might make the wrong decision, but just because you make a wrong decision doesn't mean failure....to me, I have made lots of wrong decisions in my life, not just in teaching....but I have learned from those decisions and that is who I am now....and it makes me a better person for learning from them [wrong decisions] and trying not to make the same mistake twice....in teaching or my life."

The focus group interviews conducted on the last day of the student teaching semester for the twenty-seven

participants in this study yielded data to support a number of assertions about their classroom decision-making. Insights into their thinking as they made decisions and acted upon those decisions were provided. These student teachers spoke with confidence about themselves as classroom decision-makers. They attributed their competence and willingness to make classroom decisions to the required coursework as well as the student teaching experiences just completed. They identified external factors which influenced preactive as well as interactive decisions; individuals, which includes learners, administration, parents, cooperating teachers, and their own self perceptions. The environment of the classroom which includes curricular demands, scheduling, and external influences such as those caused by non curricular events were cited as influences which precipitated classroom decision making.

The faculty responsible for the required courses for the multi subject K-8 students believe that the students who come through this program have the knowledge base and the willingness necessary to make the preactive and interactive decisions that are needed in classrooms. The students themselves report that they do indeed make informed, thoughtful decisions as they complete their student teaching semester. Public school personnel who have worked with

Pinetree College's multi subject K-8 student teachers are a third source of data which provide an important perspective which may answer the question, "What evidence shows that the teacher education curriculum at Pinetree College serves to develop behaviors, characteristics, and skills thought to be important for teachers who are informed, thoughtful decision makers?"

Public School Personnel

Public school personnel, principals and teachers who have served as cooperating teachers for multi subject K-8 student teachers were interviewed. Principals of schools which have had student teachers in their school on a rather consistent basis were selected for interviews. They were selected because they routinely accept large numbers of early field placement students and student teachers. Because of the large numbers, these principals would be most likely to have the broadest experiences with students who go through Pinetree's program. Teachers were selected on the basis of having had student teachers both before the redesigned teacher education program was in place, and after it became the prevailing influence. Both principals and teachers participated in the interview with enthusiasm. Of the six public school personnel interviewed only one person knew the I.T.D.-M. conceptual

framework. Another said that he thought it had to do with decision-making. The other four knew there was a conceptual framework but they didn't know what it was. However, all six respondents acknowledged that decision-making is an important skill for teachers to have. One said "teachers make hundreds of decisions everyday....it's automatic....there's not always time to think things out....most of my decisions are spontaneous."

Interestingly, the principals and teachers articulated the proposition that classroom experiences were the most important factor in teachers learning to become effective classroom decision-makers. When asked about Pinetree's recent student teachers the respondents described them as "the same as" or "better" at decision-making than earlier graduates. One respondent, a principal, said "they're better at everything....they just seem to know more....content and how to teach it....they know more about kids." This respondent went on to say that as classroom managers they (recent Pinetree student teachers) were "about what can be expected....they learn that stuff after they get into a classroom." This assertion was reiterated by all the principals and by one of the teachers. (In reviewing the interview data this idea was not probed with two teachers). Two respondents said that they believed that Pinetree's

student teachers did not make interactive decisions as effectively as they made preactive classroom decisions. "They need classroom experience to learn to make interactive decisions" one added.

When reviewing the data collected from public school personnel who work with Pinetree College student teachers three prevailing themes emerge, one, the ability to make effective classroom decisions, both preactive and interactive in nature, is an important skill for teachers. Second, Pinetree's recent student teachers are viewed as equal to, or exceeding, the decision making skills of earlier student teachers, and third, the public school personnel interviewed strongly believe that the skill of interactive, and to a lesser degree preactive decision-making, is learned as teachers gain classroom experience.

Pinetree's faculty, whose mission it is to deliver the K-8 multi-subject curriculum, public school personnel and the students who meet the challenges of the program each have a story to tell. Each provides as essential element, which when assembled and viewed as a whole, create a reference for understanding the K-8 multi-subject program in light of the informed, thoughtful decision-maker conceptual framework.

There is evidence that the faculty who are framers of the K-8 multi subject curriculum intentionally create learning

environments for the purpose of enabling K-8 multi subject majors to develop the skills, behaviors and characteristics thought to be important for teachers who are informed, thoughtful decision-makers. The program curriculum provides students with a knowledge base, systematically arranged experiences, clinical and practical in scope, in order to allow them to transform this knowledge.

Student teachers, as they complete their student teaching semester, believe that they are informed, thoughtful classroom decision-makers. Evidence of this was found in the transcripts of the focus group interviews as they described in rich detail their day-to-day experiences in their all important first teaching experience. Although student teachers keep journals of their student teaching experiences, their entries did not contain explicit discourse about their classroom decision making. However, there were examples of their discourse from which it could be inferred that some student teachers made classroom decisions.

Public school personnel view recent student teachers positively in terms of their willingness and skill at making classroom decisions, both preactive and interactive in nature.

Summary

This study serves as a progress check and an opportunity

to reflect on the K-8 multi-subject program as it exists for those whose mission it is to implement it. If this program is to continue to be responsive to the needs of the teaching profession then systematic, orderly review and growth ought to continue to be part of the design. Review and change are consistent with the I.T.D.-M. conceptual framework. As knowledge grows about what it is to be an effective teacher the Teacher Education Program at Pinetree will remain sensitive to that knowledge and willing to make the responsive changes needed. Examination of the program and all its participants; students, faculty and public school personnel through studies such as this one may yield insights which inform the design of the K-8 multi-subject program.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Results

This research project is a case study of a teacher education program which underwent redesign precipitated by the demands of revised NCATE standards. The programmatic changes were included and became framed around the conceptual framework, the Informed, Thoughtful Decision-Maker. The purpose of this study is to discover what evidence shows that this teacher education curriculum serves to develop the behaviors, characteristics and skills thought to be important for teachers who are informed, thoughtful decision-makers. Three groups of participants provided their unique perspectives to the quest for this evidence. The first group is that of the faculty who teach required courses in the teacher education department, second, is that of the K-8 multi-subjects student teachers and finally, the third group is selected public school classroom teachers and principals who have extensive experience working with K-8 multi-subject student teachers from this program. Each group of participants contributed their unique perspectives, which

suggested that the curriculum does develop behaviors, characteristics and skills that are consistent with the stated framework and classroom decision-making in teachers who graduate from this program of study.

Faculty

The faculty in the Education Department who teach required courses number nine. Seven of the ten were present and involved in the articulation and subsequent redesign of the K-8 multi subjects program. Three members of the faculty arrived after the redesigned program was implemented. Interviews with faculty members revealed some differences and a number of similarities between these two groups. The major difference noted in transcriptions of the interviews was the ways in which new faculty described their understanding of the informed, thoughtful decision-maker conceptual framework, compared to the way those faculty who worked on the redesign and articulation of the model described it. New faculty tended to describe the visual representation which was part of the 1991 NCATE report, and they tended to acknowledge the importance of classroom decision making. Faculty who were present and involved with the redesign and articulation of the framework tended to describe the model from an historical perspective. One faculty said that in designing the framework

the committee looked at the beliefs of Pinetree's teacher education faculty and how they acted on those beliefs. It was through this introspection, study of current research, and best practices that the informed, thoughtful decision maker conceptual framework was created and articulated.

Understandably, these faculty described their understanding in greater depth and from a position of "authorship" which new faculty did not voice.

Although new faculty did not voice authorship of the conceptual framework which guided the program redesign there was unanimous acceptance of it. All faculty members in the teacher education program voiced a commitment to providing educational opportunities conducive to students developing the skills, characteristics and behaviors thought to be important to classroom decision-making. Every faculty member articulated this commitment, and concrete evidence of this commitment was found in the examination of course and program documents. Course syllabi contained intent to extend student decision-making skills, characteristics, and behaviors through planned learning opportunities. Faculty talked about classroom decision-making conceptually. Required textbooks and other reading also focused on decision-making; courses with field components examined classroom decision-making from a practical perspective. Clearly, there was an intent by this

faculty to provide opportunities for students to acquire the skills; behaviors, and characteristics of effective classroom decision makers.

Faculty who teach required courses in the K-8 multi subject program expressed a belief that students who complete the program are willing and able to make the myriad of classroom decisions teachers are required to make on a daily basis. Faculty rated students' ability and willingness to make preactive decisions somewhat higher than they did their ability to make interactive decisions. Two faculty justified their positions of rating students' ability and willingness to make effective interactive decisions as lower than that of preactive decision-making but likely to grow as they gain classroom experience, which reiterates the position held by the public school personnel interviewed for this study. Interestingly, one of these two faculty was one who had been in higher education for more than twenty years while the other was one who had recently left public education.

Students

The K-8 multi subjects students who participated in this study kept daily journals and took part in focus group interviews at the conclusion of the professional semester. The journals were analyzed for evidence of documented

instances of classroom decisions they made during their student teaching experience. Although not explicitly stated, eleven of the twenty-seven contained entries from which it could be inferred that the author was making classroom decisions.

The focus group interview transcriptions yielded evidence of the participant's understanding of the conceptual framework, the informed, thoughtful decision maker. Twenty-five of the twenty-seven student teachers could recall the name of the conceptual framework; two said they had never heard of it. Participants reported learning about Pinetree's conceptual framework for teacher education from education faculty who taught required courses. All twenty-seven articulated an understanding of classroom decision-making as a concept, however. The transcripts of the focus group interview contained many examples of classroom decisions made by the participants in this study. The student teachers tended to talk almost entirely about interactive decisions, however.

In a few instances, decisions related to instructional planning were discussed. These discussions tended to be best described as expected; as though they were considered a "given" by the student teacher. The interactive decision making process, however, was related in great detail that, in

some cases, took on elements of an internal dialogue made public as some student teachers related how they made decisions. These internal dialogues were attempts on the part of the student teacher to articulate processing related to instances of their decision-making. It can best be described as an oral dialogue with self which included examinations of alternatives and descriptions of contexts. The participants described a number of elements as having influence on their classroom decision making. The most influential elements were the children they were teaching, individually and as groups, their cooperating teachers, and classroom events. Student teachers said they believed themselves to be competent classroom decision makers. They assessed this confidence in their decision making ability and willingness in the "most confident" quadrant (8.2) on a scale of 1-10. Students attributed required coursework and the student teaching experience with their high levels of competence and confidence in making classroom decisions. Most student teachers, however, said that the classroom experience was the most significant factor in becoming informed, thoughtful, classroom decision-makers.

Public School Personnel

Three teachers and three principals were interviewed for

the purpose of learning how those most closely involved with the student teachers viewed the students who came through and were in the process of completing the program, (the student teachers who had begun their Pinetree matriculation after the program redesign). These participants were interviewed about the student teachers' ability to make preactive and interactive classroom decisions. Public school participants viewed Pinetree College students in a positive light. They said that, compared to earlier student teachers (those who came through the program before the redesign had influence), the recent student teachers were better prepared in all aspects of teaching. Both principals and teachers reported that recent student teachers had the skills and knowledge base needed to make reasonable classroom decisions, both preactive and interactive in nature. These public school teachers and principals reported that recent student teachers tended to approach all aspects of the classroom, including decision making with confidence.

One teacher said, "I wish I had this level of confidence about this (the classroom) when I started teaching eleven years ago." Both teachers and principals said they believed that most decisions made by recent student teachers were competent and the results of the decisions were usually positive.

Principals and teachers were asked how they believed teacher education majors acquired the characteristics and skills needed to make competent classroom decisions. All interviewees believed that the teacher education program played a role by providing a sound knowledge base, but four participants said the most critical aspect of the development of sound decision-makers was the opportunities provided by classroom experiences to engage in decision making. These interviewees were emphatic about interactive classroom decisions; they believe that classroom experiences teach one to make sound interactive decisions and that this skill is developed over time. These participants said that as a rule, the recent student teachers make reasonable classroom decisions with confidence. Further, decision-making skills, especially interactive decisions, increase as teachers gain classroom experience.

The other two interviewees tended to take the position that the teachers education program and classroom experience were of equal importance in the development of decision making skills. These two interviewees, both teachers, believed that recent Pinetree student teachers made both preactive and interactive classroom decisions equally well, whereas the other four interviewees believed these student teachers were more competent at making preactive decisions and that

interactive classroom decision making ability comes as the result of classroom experience.

Interestingly, none of the public school participants suggested any other factors that might influence the development of decision making skills and competence.

Discussion of Negative Results

Student teachers who participated in this study expressed willingness to make both preactive and interactive classroom decisions and a confidence in their ability to do so effectively. Members of the Education Department who teach required courses to K-8 multi subjects majors expressed understanding of the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework and an intent to transmit an understanding of the conceptual framework as well as the skills, behaviors and characteristics thought to be important to effective classroom decision makers.

Public school personnel said recent graduates of Pinetree's K-8 multi subjects program were equal to or exceeded earlier student teachers' who came through the program ability and willingness to make preactive and interactive classroom decisions. "Earlier" student teachers are defined as those who completed their student teaching semester prior to the spring semester of 1993.

There were few negative results found in this study. However, this may have occurred as a result of the size and focus of the study. This small study looked only at twenty-seven K-8 multi-subject majors who take a greater number of courses taught by Education faculty. Secondary education majors who also completed their student teaching during this semester, on the other hand, took fewer courses with the faculty in the Education Department. Most of their courses were taken in the department of their content area. Because of this, their understanding of the informed, thoughtful decision making framework is probably different. If indeed their understanding is different, it is conceivable that their actions and attitudes are different. This difference may manifest itself in differences in classroom decision-making which, would in turn affect the perceptions of these student teachers held by public school personnel. Had this study examined the entire field of student teachers for this semester the results might have been different on a number of issues; specifically, in the understanding on the part of students of Pinetree's I.T.D-M. conceptual framework. The ability and willingness of secondary student teachers to make preactive and interactive classroom decisions, as viewed by themselves as well as public school personnel who work them, might be perceived as different from that of K-8 multi-

subject majors.

Two concerns should be noted here. First, the two students who were not familiar with the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework point out the need for a plan to orient transfer students to the basic framework and aims of this Teacher Education program. A concerted effort in every course to orient those students who come into the program with, in some cases, as many as 72 hours credit from other institutions may need to be made. Having orientation to Teacher Education seminars for all transfers students may be another way to systematically ensure that all Pinetree Teacher Education students understand the goals and intent of the program.

A second concern is that some of the public school personnel who agree to act as cooperating teachers for K-8 multi-subjects majors may not have an understanding of the goals of the program. From the focus group interviews this group of student teachers acknowledged that the cooperating teacher was a significant factor in the classroom decisions they made. In most of the instances the cooperating teacher was a positive influence which encouraged the student teacher to take risks and learn from their experiences. A few, however, related less than positive support from their cooperating teachers for their all important first classroom decisions. A number of factors could explain this condition.

It could be a real or perceived lack of competence on the part of the student teacher, a breakdown in communication between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. It could be an unwillingness on the part of the cooperating teacher to trust the student teacher, no matter how competent, to assume the role of teacher in his/her classroom.

Pinetree strives to send out competent student teachers. They have frequent interaction with their college supervisor. The expectations for those who complete this program are high and the program is justifiably proud of the calibre of its graduates. Pinetree needs to continue the mission of securing cooperating teachers who:

- (1) want to serve as a cooperating teacher.
- (2) have the communication and professional skills needed
- (3) know and understand the goal of the K-8 multi-subjects program
- (4) have confidence in self and student teachers to make and act upon his/her own decisions.

The public school personnel who were interviewed represented a very small number; three principals and three classroom teachers, when compared to the large number of teachers in the eight county service area who have worked with Pinetree student teachers. Had time and resources permitted a larger number of principals and teachers might have yielded

a different perception of recent graduates. Finally, no actual observation of teacher practice was conducted in this evaluation. Had time and resources permitted classroom observation and interviews with cooperating teachers, the data might have yielded additional corroboration of decision making and to what extent the decisions made were informed.

Theoretical Implications of this Study

The construction of a conceptual framework by a teacher education program needs to reflect the shared vision of the purpose of the program held by the faculty and participants in the experience. The informed, thoughtful decision maker framework as a part of the redesign has directed the transformation of the teacher education program at Concord College and continues to influence the changes which occur in the program. The implications of being an informed and thoughtful classroom decision maker are important when considering the direction the program will take as growth and change occur. Making effective classroom decisions which result in learning for all students commensurate with their needs is a reasonable goal for teachers, and one shared by many teacher education programs.

Teacher education programs, as they reflect upon purpose and practice, face difficult issues which must be addressed if

growth is to occur. For example, if a teacher education program believes teachers ought to be agents of change in the classroom, the knowledge base as well as the learning experiences would be very different from one designed to create teachers who would perpetuate the status quo. Kagan (1993) supported the position that novice teachers need to first master procedural and routine aspects of the classroom before they can deal effectively with content. Routines and procedural decisions appear to be learning which takes place in the context of real classrooms, during early field experiences, student teaching and during the first three years as novice teachers according to Kagan, (1993). This learning takes place under the auspices of practitioners, who, in their effort to help the beginning teacher "fit in" may be promoting the conditions which perpetuate the status quo rather than change in the system. Grossman (1992) on the other hand supports the proposition that content and procedural knowledge are connected in such a way that as a teacher develops in one area, growth is realized in the other. In other words, teachers learn how to manage their classrooms as they engage in providing meaningful content knowledge to their students. A reciprocal relationship exists between content knowledge and procedural knowledge, according to Grossman (1992).

Pinetree's conceptual framework, the informed, thoughtful

decision-maker, establishes an intent on the part of the teacher education program to foster the development of teachers who are able and willing to make effective instructional and managerial classroom decisions. The ability and willingness to make classroom decisions on the part of the twenty-seven student teachers who participated in this study suggests that to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the individual, that intent is realized. The implications of this intent is that Pinetree's teacher education program views the role of teachers to be more closely aligned with the concept of teachers as agents of change, and as such, needs to create the conditions in which its graduates "will need to struggle simultaneously with issues of management, social roles and routines in classrooms, instruction and learning" (Grossman, 1992, p.175). As faculty who deliver the teacher education programs and its graduates engage in making informed, thoughtful decisions at the classroom level it is reasonable to expect them to question their own teaching which may lead to examination and challenge of current practices, and ultimately to change.

Practical Implications

Teacher education programs need to meet the challenge of focused self-examination for the purpose of designing

programmatic growth which reflects best practices and current knowledge base. This programmatic examination ought to be multi-dimensional in scope, including examination of the students who graduate from the program, the public school personnel who work with teacher education students at various levels, the curriculum, and the faculty, both as a group and as individuals. The conceptual framework, the informed, thoughtful decision-maker needs to be examined for fit in light of the most current research. It is important that the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework undergo planned reevaluation to ensure that it does indeed represent and define the teacher education program.

Triangulation of data sources, the students, faculty and public school personnel provide a consistent view of the efficacy of the multi-subject K-8 program at Pinetree, but this is not to say that the program does not require further study. If it is to grow and remain responsive to best practices and current research findings it must undergo constant scrutiny by those who deliver it.

Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to examine existing data in order to understand the nature of the teacher education program and to what extent the students in the program become

effective classroom decision-makers.

There are a number of areas which may provide productive foci for further research. This study examined the K-8 multi-subject program and its participants only. However, if we are to fully understand the nature of the program and the extent of its influence on the students it serves, then the entire class of student teachers will need to be studied.

Clearly the experience for the secondary education majors is different in a number of ways. For example, they have fewer required courses taught in the education department and significantly more courses taught in their content fields. This variable creates a condition that causes the teacher education experience to be very different for secondary content specialists from that of elementary school generalists. An investigation of the nature of these differences could add to the general understanding of this teacher education program. It is important to find out if there are differences in the influences these two groups of student teachers respond to as they make classroom decisions; what kind of decisions they make as well as how effective these decisions are.

Another area which could add to the understanding of this program are the public school personnel who work closely with Multi-subject K-8 majors as well as those who work with

secondary education majors. The interactions which take place between cooperating teacher and student teacher could yield important data regarding that all-important relationship. It is important to the program to know whether that relationship is more like an apprenticeship or more like a collaboration. Knowing about the nature of this relationship would be useful in selecting public school personnel for cooperating teachers who would share the programmatic vision of what a teacher ought to be like.

An orientation program for cooperating teachers for the purpose of ensuring that those who work with student teachers share the vision being promoted by the teacher education program might result in more opportunities for student teachers to engage in classroom decision-making. Akin to that proposal is the creation of professional development schools who would share the responsibility of developing empowered, effective classroom decision-makers with the teacher education program at Pinetree. With dwindling school populations, school closings and consolidations, quality field experiences become more difficult to arrange; professional development schools could play a significant role in the reconfiguration of field experiences for teacher education majors in this area.

This study has yielded some concerns in the area of

practice that may serve to promote exchange of ideas among participants which may in turn stimulate growth in the K-8 multi-subject program. The first is one which is currently in development in the Teacher Education program at Pinetree; that of an ongoing, systematic evaluation of the program. A plan to do this is in draft at the present time and a director to assume this responsibility is being sought.

A systematic orientation to the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework for new faculty and transfer students is warranted. Attendance at a special seminar could be required of all transfer students for the purpose of explaining the conceptual framework and the goals of Pinetree's teacher education program. A concerted effort on the part of education faculty who teach methods courses to directly teach how the courses and program fit the framework. Transfer students could be scheduled to meet with their advisors weekly for four to six weeks to ensure that they do indeed understand the philosophical stance of the program as well as what that means in a practical sense. A similar format could be put into place in order to orient new faculty to the informed, thoughtful, decision-maker conceptual framework.

The description of the I.T.D-M. conceptual framework needs to be reviewed and made easily assessable to faculty and to the students in the program. Additionally, the framework

should be examined regularly in light of current research and knowledge of best practices for fit as the undergirding of this teacher education program. Discourse among faculty, students, and when possible, public school personnel ought to focus on the implications of this framework for program design and for the field of practice.

The field journals student teachers are required to keep during the student teaching semester were generally viewed by this group of student teachers in less than a positive light. In only eleven were inferences of decision-making found. The students were directed to write about the events of their day and then reflect on the experience in order to learn from it. The journals were very diverse in their organization and many of them were little more than a schedule of the student teacher's day with no evidence that the experience of the day had promoted any learning on the part of the student teacher. If the journals are to be used then they need to be structured in a way that encourages the student teachers to think about important issues, such as the decisions they make in their classrooms and why they make the decisions they do.

In an effort to ensure success for student teachers supervising faculty often respond to the student teachers' question, "What if you have taught us something and the cooperating teacher doesn't do it that way. What do we do -

what we have learned at Pinetree or the way our cooperating teacher wants us to do it?" the supervising faculty encourages the student teacher to act on the wishes of the cooperating teacher. This is done to ensure that the student teacher gets through the experience successfully. The faculty needs to consider the message being sent to the student teacher each time this is done. The message is that practical experience is more important than the sound theoretical knowledge base that required coursework has provided. It also says that it is good to "fit in". As the framework is measured for fit the faculty needs to consider the role teachers ought to assume, that of "fitting in" or "agents of change", and be mindful that seemingly unrelated actions taken often carry messages not intended. A study of novice teachers (recent Pinetree graduates) needs to be done in order to learn about the kinds of classroom decisions they make and what influences these decisions. It is important to find out to what degree these novice teachers "fit in" or are agents of change.

Finally, individual and collective faculty in the Education department need to study themselves and engage in discourse about their growth. A part of this study includes staying abreast of current research and best practices. In order to do this faculty needs to participate in professional organizations through reading, attending conferences, and

making opportunities to visit schools and talking with their colleagues in public schools. A number of important questions could focus productive self examination. One, do we model effective classroom decision-making? Do we promote the development of characteristics, behaviors and skills that are thought to be important for teachers who are effective classroom decision-makers? How do we do this? Do we challenge current practices and work for change or do we promote apprenticeship models for our students to emulate? Should we teach a decision-making algorithm? How can we structure learning for our students which prepares them to make decisions in the face of challenges of the profession as we approach the twenty-first century?

A study such as this represents only one perspective rather than absolute truth. For the researcher this exercise has resulted in new understanding of the inquiry process itself as well as a more comprehensive view of the Teacher Education Program at Pinetree College. This understanding has raised more questions than it has provided answers. The process has caused the researcher to engage in critical self reflection as the issues of defining the roles of teachers for the classroom of the twenty-first century are examined both from a personal perspective as well as a programmatic one. The experience of studying this teacher education program has

not yet changed the program but changes have been wrought in
the researcher who is in turn a member of the program.

EPILOGUE

Changes have occurred since the data for this study were collected. The changes to be discussed here are twofold; one, the changes that have occurred in the Teacher Education program, and two, the changes which have occurred in the researcher. An attempt to articulate what these changes may mean within the context of Pinetree College's Teacher Education program will be made.

As with all dynamic, viable organizations change is an ongoing process within Pinetree's Teacher Education program. Some faculty have left the program and the division is now under new leadership. These changes have necessitated reconfiguration of course loads. This change means that courses now may be taught by different instructors than those who taught them at the time data were collected.

Another change has to do with course syllabi. A format has been developed and course instructors are encouraged to use the format as the model for their syllabi.

Slightly fewer students make up each student teaching semester now as compared to the semester in which data were collected. However, the academic calibre of the students

seems somewhat higher.

More attention is focused on the advising process now and advisors are monitoring academic progress more closely. Communication between advisors and advisees takes place more frequently and the nature of these interactions is more comprehensive. A by-product of this study has been an increase in the discourse among faculty about the multi-subject K-8 program and the instructional framework. This discourse has the effect of promoting a reexamination of the informed, thoughtful decision maker framework; not in concept; because the faculty acknowledges that the concept is sound and reflects the intent of the program. There is voiced a concern, tentative at this point, in the visual representation of the framework. A beginning has been made, largely among informal faculty talk, to examine the framework in light of new knowledge and experience.

There have been changes in public schools in the eight county service area which surrounds Pinetree College. These changes include substantial budget cuts resulting in decreases in teacher salaries, more consolidations and decreasing number of students. Money to fund classroom materials is very limited. These changes may affect Pinetree's program in a less than positive way.

Some of the changes which have taken place in the last

two years will have adverse effects on the program while others may have little effect. Most, however, will have the effect of promoting positive growth.

The changes in an individual who undertakes a task such as this study are less predictable, and, like the changes which have occurred in the context of the Teacher Education program at Pinetree College, the changes that I have experienced are for the most part positive. I expected to come from this research experience knowing more about the program of which I am a part, and I did. I expected to find that our students can and do make reasoned classroom decisions, and I learned that they do. I expected to have positive encounters with the participants in this study, and I found that to be the case. I expected that upon completing this study that I would feel competent, confident and a certainty about my role as a part of the faculty in this Teacher Education program. This is not the case. Many years ago in a reading course the term, "teacher-proof curriculum" was used to describe basal reading systems. The idea that curriculums were designed so that even an incompetent teacher could not mess up was an outrage to me. That I was expected to use these materials to teach reading to children compounded the feelings I had (and still have). This experience caused changes in me as a reading teacher. This event in my

educational experience brought about positive changes for my students in terms of their reading experiences, for me as an educator, it ended forever my willingness to accept curriculums, textbooks and materials at face value.

Now, because of experiences with this research, I am facing another issue of equal importance. The research of Kagan (1992) and Grossman (1992) has raised the question of what our purpose is in preparing teachers for the 21st century. Are our teachers to "fit in" to existing structures or are they to be "agents of change"? The answer is unequivocal. I believe teachers need to be prepared to be agents of change. Having declared this, I have begun to examine everything I do, think, and say, in terms of my role as an educator of teachers. My colleagues' actions and words are similarly scrutinized. What I have discovered is that we say yes, we want our teachers to become agents of change, but some of the things we say and do send a different message. For example, in this study a recommendation in Chapter 5 was to systematically assist new faculty in understanding the conceptual framework. In other words help new faculty understand the framework as we understand it. Are we not, if such a suggestion should be taken, promoting the status quo within our own ranks? How can we promote the ideals of the Informed, Thoughtful Decision-Maker conceptual framework and

claim to give our graduates the knowledge base and experience they need to become competent classroom decision-makers if we, ourselves, model conformity?

Another recommendation from Chapter 5 is to structure the journals that student teachers write during their professional semester in such a way that they must write about what WE think are important issues. It now seems that this recommendation may promote the same kind of behaviors in future teachers who are predisposed to allowing others to make decisions for them.

Faculty of a Teacher Education program charged with preparing teachers of the classrooms of the future have a responsibility to promote empowerment and self-efficacy in those who graduate from the program, more so if the mission is to create competent classroom decision-makers. Future discourse among the faculty of Pinetree College's Teacher Education program will certainly focus on this issue.

Examination of my own practices as a teacher educator in light of the new levels of understanding gained as a result of the investigation just completed will be ongoing. Involving my students in discourse about the roles of teachers; "fit in" or "agents of change", and how these characteristics are developed and promoted will be a consistent part of my teaching and personal quest for understanding.

Clearly, growth cannot occur without change. Changes have occurred in the Teacher Education program at Pinetree College and will no doubt continue to take place. Changes have also taken place in the me, and, like the pivotal event described earlier, aspects of this research process has not answered questions but instead has challenged my thinking and hopefully raised my levels of consciousness about my beliefs and subsequent actions in my role of teacher educator.

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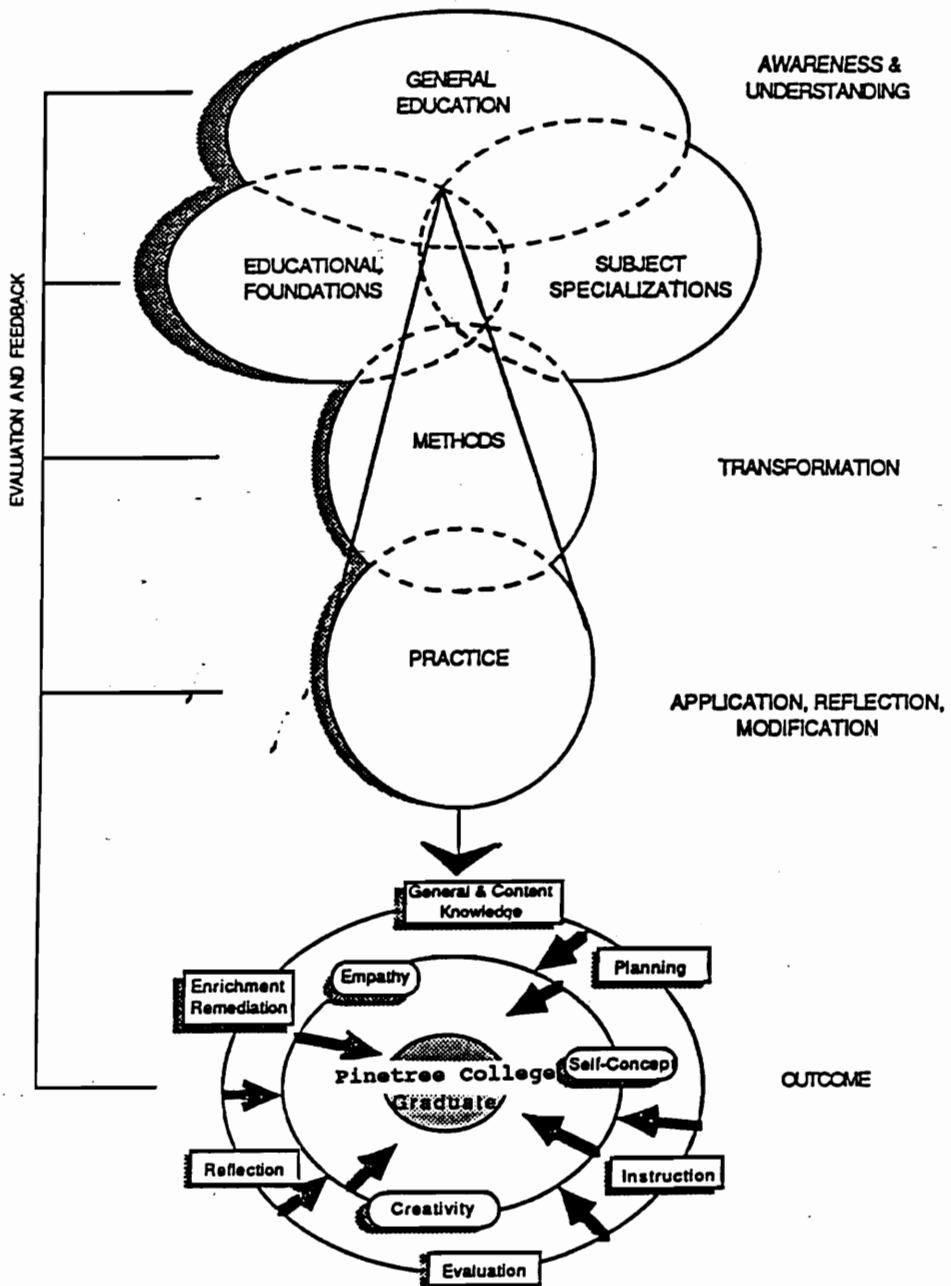
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Appendix A

Figure I.1, Model of the Knowledge Base



Appendix B

The Multi-Subjects Programs K-8 A 2.5 Grade Average Required

Freshman Year

ENGL 101-102	Composition and Rhetoric.....	3-3
CART 101	Fundamentals of Speech.....	3
P ED 101A-N	General Physical Education.....	2
BIOL 101-102	General Biology I and II.....	4-4
MATH 101	General Mathematics.....	3
MATH 110	Mathematics for Elementary School Teachers...	3
	(Select two courses from the following)	
ART 101A	Introduction to the Visual Arts	
MUS 101A	Introduction to Music.....	6
CART 102	Introduction to Theatre	

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Sophomore Year

ENGL 203-204	World Literature.....	3-3
EDUC 210	Foundations of Education.....	2
EDUC 251	Human Growth and Development.....	3
HIST 101	History of Civilization.....	3
SOC 101	People and Their Social Environments.....	3
GEOG 100	Principles of Physical Geography.....	3
HIST 203-204	History of the United States.....	3-3
PHSC 103-104	Introduction to Physical Science I and II....	4-4

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Junior Year

EDUC 305	Psychology of Teaching and Learning.....	3
EDUC 310	Assessment and Evaluation.....	3
EDUC 306	Instructional Processes and Strategies.....	3
ENGL 329	Children's Literature.....	3
HIST 307	WV History, Geography, and Government.....	3
MUS 102	Music Skills for Classroom Teachers.....	2
ART 102	Art Education I.....	2
MUS 305	Music Materials and Procedures.....	2
ART 310	Art Education II.....	2
S ED 216	Principles of Safety Education.....	2
H ED 208	School Health.....	2
EDUC 307	Teaching the Language Arts in Early and Middle Childhood Education.....	3
EDUC 319	The Teaching of Reading.....	3
GEOG 201	World Cultural Geography.....	3

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Senior Year

MATH 305	Mathematics of the Public School.....	3
E ED 304	Early Education Curriculum, Methods and Materials.....	3
EDUC 311	Science for Early and Middle School.....	3
EDUC 312	Social Studies for Early and Middle School...	3
EDUC 320	Diagnosis and Remediation of Reading Problems	3
P ED 401-401F	Methods and Materials in Early and Middle Childhood Physical Education.....	3
EDUC 456	Supervised Directed Teaching.....	12

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Appendix C

STUDENT TEACHER INFORMATION

SS# (last 4 digits) _____

Male Female

1. Program of study: _____

2. Additional certification: _____

3. Total number of field hours: _____
4. Total number of semesters in pursuit of this degree: _____
5. Grade point average: _____
6. Coursework taken at this institution: (All) (Most) (3/4)
(1/2) (1/4)
7. Other coursework completed at: _____

8. PPST:
Reading passed on (1st) (2nd) (3rd) (4th) (5th)
(more than 5 tries)

Math passed on (1st) (2nd) (3rd) (4th) (5th)
(more than 5 tries)

Writing passed on (1st) (2nd) (3rd) (4th) (5th)
(more than 5 tries)
9. High school attended: (Fayette) (Greenbriar) (McDowell)
(Mercer) (Raleigh) (Summers)
(Wyoming) (other WV county)
(out of state)
10. Age: (20-25) (26-30) (31-35) (36-40) (41-45) (46-50)
(51-55)

Appendix D

INITIAL QUESTIONS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FACULTY

- 1. Describe your role in the department.**
- 2. Describe your classes ---- other duties.**
- 3. Pinetree has a model of teacher education. Please describe your understanding of this model and how you came to have this understanding.**
- 4. How and to what extent does your understanding of the model influence what you do and say as you interact with students?**
- 5a. Comparing student teachers form before the redesign of the program to now do you believe Pinetree K-8 majors are less able and willing, more able and willing or about the same at making interactive classroom decisions?**
- 5b. Comparing student teachers from before the redesign of the program to now do you believe Pinetree K-8 majors are able and willing, more able and willing or about the same at making interactive classroom decisions?**

(both parts, 5a and 5b were answered by responding to a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being very able and willing.)

Appendix E

INITIAL QUESTIONS STUDENT TEACHERS FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

1. Pinetree's model for teacher education has been in place almost two years. How would you describe your understanding of it?
2. How did you come to understand the model before student teaching?
3. To what degree do you consider yourself an informed decision maker?

Used a scale of 1-10, with 10 being highly competent.

4. Does the informed, thoughtful decision making model seem reasonable in light of your recent experience as student teachers?
5. Is this model relevant to the world of practice?
6. Describe a lesson you designed and taught.
7. What guided you in making those decisions?
8. In the school setting what are some things that influence decisions you make in your classrooms?
9. Describe a very successful lesson.
10. Describe a less than successful lesson.

Appendix F

INITIAL QUESTIONS PUBLIC SCHOOL PERSONNEL

I. Introduction:

The purpose of this interview is to collect your perceptions of the student teachers from Pinetree College who have completed their professional semester at your school.

II. How many student teachers would you say have been in your school (classroom) in the past 6 years?

III. How many of those have completed their professional semester at your school (in your classroom) during the last two years?

IV. Compared to student teachers of 5 or 6 years ago how would you rate the more recent ones on these five factors? (Using a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating much less, 3 indicating about the same, and 5 indicating much more)

	5+ years ago	2 years or less
a. sensitivity to students	_____	_____
b. content knowledge	_____	_____
c. decision making	_____	_____
1. preactive	_____	_____
2. interactive	_____	_____
d. Knowledge/implementation of effective teaching strategies	_____	_____
e. classroom management	_____	_____

V. Pinetree has a conceptual framework for our teacher education program (allow time for respondent to come up with "informed, thoughtful decision maker" or even "decision maker".)

VI. In your opinion, is this a reasonable framework to guide the development of teachers?

VII. Do you see evidence of effective classroom decisions made by recent Pinetree student teachers? (ask for examples if not forthcoming)

Appendix G

Initial Questions Public School Personnel

	P.1	P.2	P.3	T.1	T.2	T.3
a. Sensitivity to students	5	5	5	5	5	5
b. Content knowledge	5	4	5	5	5	4
c. Decision making						
1. preactive	4.5	5	5	5	5	4
2. interactive	4.5	4	4	5	4	4
d. Knowledge/ Implementation of effective teaching models	4	4	5+	4	5	5
e. effective classroom management	3.5	4	4	3	3.5	4
	Principals			Teachers		

Appendix H

Variability of Most Common Syllabi Components Between Faculty with More Than Three Years and Faculty with Less Than Three Years Service in the Teacher Education Program at Concord College

	Faculty of more than three years	Faculty of three years or less
Course Goals	78%	25%
Rationale	89%	25%
Teaching Strategies	89%	25%
Evaluation	67%	25%
Course Requirement	78%	25%
Attendance	89%	25%
Bibliography	67%	00%

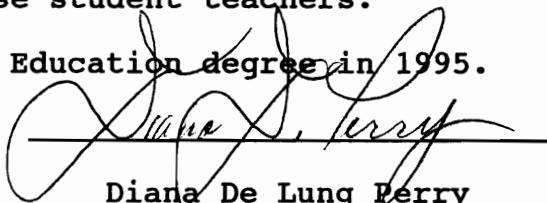
VITA

I was born March 28, 1938, in Bluefield, West Virginia. I graduated from Old Dominion University in 1974 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education. In 1975, I began teaching fifth grade Language Arts for Virginia Beach City Public Schools. I completed requirements for and was awarded a Master of Science in Education in 1978 from Old Dominion University while continuing to teach fifth grade.

In 1983, I was enrolled in a post graduate program in Curriculum and Instruction, with a concentration in Reading, at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. During the year of 1986, I worked as a graduate research assistant and completed the residency requirement at VPI, and received a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Curriculum and Instruction in 1987. I then returned to Virginia Beach to resume teaching fifth grade.

In 1989, my family and I moved to Princeton, West Virginia. As an Assistant Professor in Education at Concord College, I teach methods courses to elementary and secondary education majors and supervise student teachers.

I received my Doctor in Education degree in 1995.



Diana De Lung Perry