

Advanced Program Capstone Assessment Assignment Diversity/Global Awareness Core Value

Example of quantitative data from Entry Surveys (first course), Mid-Level Surveys (after six courses), and the Capstone Assessment Assignment (final course before graduation). The data indicate a positive trend in confidence levels as candidates progress through the advanced program. The Capstone Assessment Assignment sample statements that follow the chart provide support for reason the candidates increased their confidence levels.

5=extremely confident
4=very confident
3=somewhat confident
2=slightly confident
1=not at all confident

Self-Assessment of Confidence Levels at Key Transition Points

Teaching and Technology Advanced Program Self-Assessment	Entry Level Mean /Total	Mid-Level Mean /Total	Exit Level Mean /Total
Core Value: Diversity/Global Awareness	3.47 / 192	3.94 / 122	4.44 / 137
Technology Education Advanced Program Self-Assessment	Entry Level Mean /Total	Mid-Level Mean /Total	Exit Level Mean /Total
Core Value: Diversity/Global Awareness	3.50 / 62	4.15 / 48	4.44 / 41
Library and Information Technologies Advanced Program Self-Assessment	Entry Level Mean /Total	Mid-Level Mean /Total	Exit Level Mean /Total
Core Value: Diversity/Global Awareness	3.27 / 75	4.00 / 47	4.04 / 21
Teaching English Language Learners Advanced Program Self-Assessment	Entry Level Mean /Total	Mid-Level Mean /Total	Exit Level Mean /Total
Core Value: Diversity/Global Awareness	3.50 / 6	4.43 / 7	5.00 / 3

The Capstone Assessment Assignment asks candidates to complete confidence level items and then asks candidates to reflect on their education experiences and provide a written example of a learning example that made a difference for the candidate.

Research Core Value:

Identify a VCSU course and project or graduate program experience that helped make a difference in increasing your confidence level in this Core Value area. Explain how this learning experience was of value to you as a professional.

The EDUC 657 course was packed full of examining diversity topics. One of the topics I found value in was the study of the various Native Americans tribes/groups in my state and the means of the US government in applying education to these tribes/groups. I now see my native students in a different light and have a greater empathetic attitude towards them. I feel I am a better teacher because of this.

12/11/2013

The main artifact I selected to best reflect the VCSU Core Value of diversity/global awareness experience since I entered the graduate program was my diversity practicum. The two specific artifacts are my reflection from the diversity practicum and my diversity practicum proposal. I chose these artifacts because this practicum allowed for an expansion of my knowledge regarding the wide variety of backgrounds students can (and do) bring to the classroom. For my diversity practicum I observed a kindergarten classroom with diverse students, including several with severe disabilities and others from differing cultural backgrounds. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards proposition that corresponds to this Core Value is that teachers are committed to students and their learning. Teachers consider all students equally and believe that all students can learn. Especially through this practicum, I have noticed how every student is different and that each one brings a different background into the classroom. It is important that differences are celebrated and that each student is given the instruction he or she needs to succeed in school. From this practicum, I furthered my knowledge concerning the necessity of providing an equal opportunity for all students in the classroom. Through these observations, I also gained an understanding how to meet each student's specific needs as they approach the various learning tasks found in the kindergarten curriculum. The experience related to this artifact provided an opportunity for me to observe first-hand how a teacher meets the needs of all the students in her classroom. As a student in the field of education observing and having an opportunity to practice are the best forms of retaining information. Through this diversity practicum, I was able to be involved in a classroom experience that led to a greater understanding of how diversity affects a kindergarten classroom.

11/30/2013

Towards the beginning of my Master's career, I took the EDUC 625 course, titled "Issues in Schools, Communities, and Families." It was through the research and reflection of this course that I came to better understand the diversity that exists within each of my classes, not specifically those that are more culturally diverse. I am now much more open to the idea that outside factors, such as socioeconomic status, religion, and family issues, shape a student's motivation to learn within the classroom walls.

11/11/2013

The course that best taught me about Diversity/Global Awareness was my EDUC 657 course: Exceptionality, Diversity, & Differences. The project that best exemplifies my confidence was our culminating final portfolio for the class. It included 13 weekly assignments completed throughout the course of the class that displays my understanding of multiple areas of diversity and global awareness. The assignments within that portfolio show my knowledge of student diversity within my district, school, classroom, city, but also my global awareness of other communities, cultures, and races. It helped me to adjust my teaching to best meet the needs of all my students, their interests, abilities, skills, knowledge, family circumstances, and peer relationships. It showed me the importance of meeting the needs of all students to offer the best education and support to them. I learned how important it is to foster my students' self-esteem, motivation, character, and civic responsibility. I also learned how important it is to foster your students' respect for individual, cultural, religious, and racial differences. I learned to be aware of my student's cultures that I teach and to support them in my classrooms.

11/8/2013

The Diversity Project that I created for Education 657 helped make a difference in increasing my confidence level in this area. This learning experience was of value to me as a professional because I will be able to use the knowledge gained in this course to include equal educational opportunities in my instruction, and to demonstrate awareness in working with global readiness and diversity of all of my students. These opportunities will include how to provide equal educational opportunities to students with disabilities, and English Language Learners as well as culturally diverse students. In order to enhance student learning in the future, I will work with technologies that enhance effective approaches in working with students, parents and community members from diverse backgrounds. By understanding how

students differ in their approaches to learning, I will create instructional opportunities that are adapted to the students' diverse backgrounds exceptionalities. By using positive culturally responsive classroom management strategies, I will be able to provide a positive environment, which will enhance student learning. In this course, I learned that schools must make every effort to honor cultural diversity and strive for global awareness. Schools should commit to providing a learning environment free of bias and discrimination.

11/4/2013

I remember the epiphany moment I had while reading the textbook for my EDUC 625 course, Issues in School, Community, and Family. The chapter discussed how educators need to be cognoscente of the multitude of cultures and backgrounds that enter a classroom. I had recently started my course work for my master's degree at VCSU with an emphasis in Education and Technology, however, upon reading this chapter I was reminded of my true passion in education, which is to open the eyes of people around me to understand and respect the diversity in our midst. Previous to starting my course work I had developed an entire curriculum on Global Awareness, which I had implemented in grades K-6 at our school. Reflecting on my work, my passion, and my current course work, I easily decided to change the concentration of my degree to Teaching English Language Learners. My passion in education has now taken on a new avenue and includes a broadened scope of learners. I have reawakened my enthusiasm in education and gain confidence in the field of ELL with each student I encounter and have the opportunity to teach.

11/3/2013

The artifact that I chose was from Education 657 Exceptionality, Diversity and Difference. The project was going It allowed me to experience cultural diversity. This observation gave me a profound look at what measures another teacher does to instill learning in her students with diverse needs. Stepping back and observing a student is a profound experience. It allows you, as the teacher, to analyze and assess what the student needs to become successful. This changes year after year and is a valuable tool for all teachers. You can adapt your teaching to meet the needs within your room, once you understand your children. The teacher I observed was a first grade teacher at Osgood K-1 Center in Fargo, ND. She had 4 ELL students within her room. The ELL teachers, Mrs. Erickson, conducted a pull-out method with her kids. The pull-out model is accomplished by pulling students out of their classroom according to their language level. Students are pulled out during a time when they will not miss core content instruction. Mrs. Erickson uses supplemental materials from the current curriculum from the mainstream classroom, or things she has made/bought herself. (She is a big fan of the Words Their Way "theoretical" book and her friend is a Pierson curriculum consultant so she gets other things, too.) This artifact follows the last VCSU's core value which is Diversity/Global Awareness. It allowed me to see what a teacher does to modify/assist students with diverse needs. I have now had experience with a vast array of ELL students. I used what I learned in that observation to meet the needs of my students. It really opened my eyes and allowed me to truly get to know her students and see the learning that took place. This artifact shows that as a teacher, I am expected to deliver appealing, yet appropriate instructional curriculum to all students in the classroom. This really reflects the NBPTS propositions # 4 and VCSU core values because as teachers we really need to understand our students in order to deliver instruction. Once we understand where our students come from and their needs can we then deliver the content and assess the learning. I strive to keep students interested, motivated, engaged and focused. This artifact shows that I am aware that educational settings may need to be created, enriched, maintained, and altered in order to capture and sustain the interest of students. I am also aware that accomplished teachers are able to utilize a range of instructional techniques and resources to make the most effective use of their teaching time. I have now transferred to another school within the district. The school I am currently at, Freedom Elementary in West Fargo, ND has really increased in ELL population. The observation really helped me understand "tools" to help my students with diverse needs. Mrs. Markey taught me how to appreciate the cultural values that each child can bring to your classroom. I really keep that to heart. I had a polish student last year. We had a Polish party and he taught my kids how to count to 10 in Polish, how to say hi, bye, etc.

We listened to music that is popular in his country too. We also ate some Polish cookies. My students loved this cultural day and I try to incorporate it every year depending on the cultures within our school/room. I would have to say the observation in Mrs. Markey's room really helped me open my eyes to the global awareness we have in North Dakota and how I can help educate them.

8/7/2013

The project I selected was from EDUC 657, Exceptionality, Diversity and Differences, the project was my Diverse Practicum where I observed a fellow teacher teaching an Inclusion Economics class. I observed the class five times and met with the teacher following my observations. I asked the teacher specific question related to his teaching style, student note taking procedures, student assessments and behavior management. The project directly links back to the VCSU Core Values of Diversity and Global Awareness. This project provided me with feedback and insight on how I could have better awareness and readiness to provide for the diversity of all my students. It provided me with feedback on my flaws and areas of weakness as a teacher in order to develop the skills needed to handle the diversity of my students. This project helped me identify weaknesses I had and things I needed to work on to be a better teacher overall. Just speaking to a special education teacher after observing different situations gave me great ideas for situations that occur in my Technology Education classroom all the time. Giving positive feedback or reinforcement to change the inclusion students mind set when they get off topic or behave badly, was very helpful. I learned that modifying the way I presented new material using the special education teachers style of note taking provided me a better learning environment and created less classroom disruptions because the students were familiar with the AVID style of taking notes. They became more engaged and attentive. Overall the project was very helpful and gave me new ways to be committed to the students and their learning styles. It gave me more awareness of teaching styles and modifications I could make in my own teaching to better instruct the diverse set of students. I came to realize that modifications in my teaching style began to increase the motivation of my students because they felt more engaged and more successful. An additional benefit for the students was an increase in their self-esteem and confidence in class. This experience also showed me the value of networking with other professionals in my school community. Looking back on the experience, I think it has made me a much better teacher.

7/29/2013

Education 657, Exceptionality, Diversity and Differences was a graduate course that helped make a difference in increasing my confidence in diversity and global awareness. The course required a diversity practicum in which I interviewed a teacher and a student from different alternative schools in North Dakota. It was a great learning experience since I knew little about alternative school settings. I learned how effective they are for students that otherwise would probably not graduate. I learned valuable tools that I use in my own classroom like building significant relationships with my students and utilizing technology to help meet the needs of all my students.

3/25/2013

EDUC657 gave me confidence in my ability to recognize that diversity comes in many forms. I can use this knowledge in the future as I am committed to all students and their learning. Diversity can apply to many things from different learning styles to different cultures. During this course I observed and spoke with other teachers and how teachers adjust or accommodate for students. Learning more about the Native American cultures gave me a new outlook as I learned an important aspect in how to recognize student individuality and that when I know my students I can provide good teaching. In the future by knowing this important VCSU core value of Diversity and Global awareness I will be able to enhance and ensure learning takes place for all my students.

11/17/2013

EDUC 657: Practicum Experience As an educator it is imperative to stay abreast of the current issues affecting education. By spending time on the Standing Rock Reservation I was able to become more aware of the current issues that affect many of my students. I gained a deeper understanding of the issues that affect Native American students. This practicum experience helped me grow as an educator because I learned new ways to differentiate my instruction to better suit my Native American students.

12/6/2012

Issues in Schools, Community and Family (EDUC 625) was one of my favorite courses throughout my graduate studies because I felt it dealt with real life issues we find today in education. I have been teaching for 15 years and have heard many of these issues debated for years yet this class enlightened me to see things from a new and deeper perspective. The artifact I selected is a paper on diversity because I feel it encompasses the most fundamental issues that go along with diverse learners. This class opened my eyes to the wide range diversity covers. Diversity includes race, socio-economic status, parent situation, home life, culture, location, and much more. This artifact demonstrates NBPTS Core Proposition 1: Teachers are committed to students and their learning. Teachers are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They treat students equitably and recognize the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another. They take account for these differences in their practice. They respect the cultural and family differences students bring to their classroom. NBCTs understand how students develop and learn. NBPTS Core Proposition 4: Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience. I will use this knowledge to enhance student learning in the future by staying abreast of current issues and trends. I will celebrate student diversity and use creative approaches to meet the needs of students that come from all back grounds. I will be dedicated to finding and reading research about best practices for teaching all students.

11/1/2012

The artifact I chose for NBPTS Proposition 1: Teachers are committed to students and learning and VCSU Core Value: Diversity and Global Awareness is my portfolio project for Education 657 Exceptionality, Diversity, and Difference during the spring of 2009. The reason I chose the portfolio project was because it contained so many of the elements related to these beliefs. Proposition 1 is based on the belief that all students can learn no matter what circumstances surround them and teachers accept, understand, and work with the many differences that these children bring to the classroom to provide the best education possible. The portfolio attached as my artifact addresses many of the differences that students and teachers need to adapt to such as gender issues, diversity of cultures and races, equality of educational settings, economic situations, religious issues, and mental and physical disabilities. These also fall into the realm of the VCSU Core Value. Every classroom has diversity in learning styles, behavior, achievement, and social skills, as well as the differences listed above. Our teaching needs to be differentiated and flexible in providing the best learning opportunities we can for our students. Being able to understand positive and negative aspects of diversity makes the learning community more tolerant and better able to handle all the differences. What I learned throughout this course is that schools need to honor cultural diversity and any other differences and give students an opportunity to teach other students about their culture and differences. I want my students to come to a school where the environment is free of bias and discrimination, and to not have to feel the sting of rejection or exclusion for any differences they have. Unfortunately, as much as we try with this idea, discrimination still has a way of occasionally rearing up. People who decide to make teaching their career choice really need to have the disposition to work with children and a love for being with them. This has to be the general foundation of their reason to become teachers in order for them to enjoy what they are doing, and for their students to enjoy being a part of their classroom. We have all worked with teachers who did not like being around children and made being in school a miserable place for many students. I think teaching needs to be a true calling, and the people who want to pursue it need to possess a passion for teaching, children, and improving their lives. They need to make a commitment to providing a safe, caring, learning environment for all students. The process of putting together the portfolio for Education 657 forced me to look at the negatives and

positives of diversity in my own school and teaching practices. At times I did not like what I saw, but it has given me an opportunity to change areas that I needed to work on to make learning and my own classroom environment better. Upon reflection of all the areas covered in the portfolio, it also solidified many of the ideas I am already incorporating into my teaching practices and reinforced the idea that I am on the right path and doing what is best for my students.

8/6/2012

The diversity practicum in EDUC 657 helped increase my confidence level in the area of diversity and global awareness. I have always been aware of diversity, but this practicum allowed me to observe a diverse classroom and attend a diversity panel where students discussed how North Dakota differs from where they are from. It provided me with new perspectives and increased my confidence as a teacher. I am now more aware of diversity in the classroom and I have implemented techniques to increase diversity awareness into my classes. This learning experience was of great value to me as a professional because it provided me with great insight on diversity on our campus.

7/18/2012

EDUC 650 opened my eyes to the differences in not just races, but sexes, religions, and academic levels as well. My diversity practicum allowed me to sit in on several meetings with our Native American students and spend time tutoring students of lower ability. This experience has made me a better teacher and has caused me to look at my students as individuals with different backgrounds.

4/19/2012

Great Falls, Montana is a pretty homogenous population for the most part. We have a sprinkling of black, Hispanic and Native American students but most of the population is overwhelmingly white. The diversity class, EDUC 657, exposed me to the importance of recognizing not only racial, but other types of exceptionalities (learning disabilities, bad family lives, etc.) and gave me the knowledge necessary to plan lessons for diverse students.

4/5/2012

Throughout the course of VCSU Master's program I have learned how to create a classroom culture where all students are welcomed, respected, supported, and provided with the best learning opportunities regardless of their learning disabilities, cultural, or linguistic background. In the course EDUC 625, , allowed me to look closer at cultural diversity and how it relates to education and how a child learns. Through various lessons, I understood the cultural differences in how students learn, such as in learning styles, communication styles, and language differences. I also became aware of many misconceptions about multicultural education. I am more aware and understand the different diversities that I am exposed to and work with everyday. This understanding and awareness has allowed me to provide a better education for all of my students.

4/2/2012

Educ 657 Portfolio PowerPoint that I created back in 2010 was an eye opener. This class was so worth while as it helped me understand our need as educators to channel our efforts to include so many different types of peoples and cultures throughout this course offering. Considering socioeconomic status, ethnicity and race were just a few topics that we touched upon.

3/21/2011

EDUC 657 was an eye opener. The various assignments we conducted were very helpful in changing how I look at situations or even students. We had an assignment that wanted us to look at a local school and try to notice the diversity and discrimination that may be present. I used the school I teach in, and after spending some time I never realized how students really treat each along with the adults. I interviewed a

minority faculty member and asked how he felt about his experience in our rural school. The whole experience taught me how to pay attention and gave an awareness about these issues.

4/10/2011

Education 625: Issues in School, Community and Family was a course that opened my eyes to a variety of topics that teachers see every day. We learned a great deal about the differences in racial groups, religious groups and family dynamics that influence the students we see in our classrooms. This course required me to create TIP sheets (Theory into Practice) for every chapter of the book. I found this experience to be very thought provoking because it forced me to look at different issues that diverse students face every day. From the reading and my own perspectives and experiences I was better able to understand the different students I have in my classrooms and be better able to design instruction that will meet their individual needs. Perhaps the greatest part about his class is that now as a practicing teacher I had a frame of reference to help me understand and have perspective for the issues that we learned about. This helped me learned the subject matter so much more and have the ability to see the application of the material I learned in this course. Education 625 helped me understand some of the bigger issues that we as teachers see in my teaching and to understand the diversity of the students in my courses.

3/26/2012

Educ 657: Exceptionality, Diversity, and Differences I participated in a facility analysis of my school from the perspective of a blind student. It was very profound for me to reflect on the appropriate design for accessibility of a building. I put myself in the student's shoes and thought about how they get from class to class. I contemplated how they could become comfortable and stay safe. This little study expanded my viewpoint for all students with disabilities in our school. I was able to visualize their paths through the halls their struggles they must overcome with each step. In addition to learning about students with physical and cognitive disabilities, Educ 657 made me reflect on minorities and racism. We focused on community, school, and classroom situations that led to changes in my philosophy in dealing with sensitivity of these students. I believe what I learned strengthened my relationship with all students and provided me with new avenues to reach all students with equal learning opportunities they expect and deserve.

5/2/2013