

EDUCATION

Social Justice in the Teacher Education Program Curriculum

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The reinvigoration of the Black Lives Matter protests and the COVID-19 pandemic have made it increasingly apparent that there is a need to reevaluate curriculum as the world evolves. In this time of heightened awareness of social injustices, it is especially important to ensure that teacher preparation curricula includes knowledge and skills related to social justice issues in education. The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which social justice, diversity, and equity are addressed in the Teacher Education Program at Purdue University. In this study, a report of the frequency and nature of social justice references in the program curriculum will be generated through focused thematic analyses of the required courses' syllabi, readings, and assignments. Preliminary findings suggest the presence of explicit and implicit

references to social justice and related ideas (e.g., stereotypes, the changing role of the teacher, teacher and student rights), albeit to varying degrees. These analyses will evolve into a report that uses curricular analyses, faculty input, and student experiences to identify the ways in which social justice, diversity, and equity are incorporated into the curricula and also highlight productive connections that begin in the foundation courses and continue into the methods courses later in the program. With a better understanding of the current curriculum, program personnel can both enhance opportunities in their own courses and capitalize on experiences offered in other courses.

Research advisor Jill Newton writes: "Julia Pirrello participated in the conceptualization of this study as well as data collection/analysis and dissemination of the findings. She is a thoughtful and curious researcher, carefully attending to ethical and sensitive issues. Julia is committed to issues of social justice and providing equitable learning opportunities to her future students."