

## Cross-Cutting Themes—Gevirtz Graduate School of Education

As a context for the identification of cross-cutting themes in the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education (GGSE), the School's mission is as follows:

*(1) To conduct scholarly inquiry into education, especially into educational responses to the challenges posed by individual, economic, linguistic, and cultural diversity in our multicultural society; (2) To educate scholar researchers and scholar practitioners to address educational challenges arising from diversity; (3) To develop and maintain exemplary programs that serve as models for teaching, research and service.*

In this context, education refers to the life-long development of individuals in multiple domains (academic, language, cognitive, social, behavioral, and emotional) across multiple contexts (school, families, communities). Our mission clearly identifies the importance of our dual emphases of scholarship and practice. We seek to further knowledge and research that contributes to understandings that will enhance the ability of educational institutions to provide high quality programs and that maximally benefit students, families, and communities. AND as a professional school, we seek to prepare educational professionals (teachers—in general and special education, school administrators, and psychologists) who will serve as innovative leaders for learners in Preschool through college (P-20) and beyond. This commitment to P-20 education is mirrored in the UC Regents January, 2005 policy affirming engagement in the Preschool through postsecondary education system, as a fundamental to the University of California Mission as a land grant institution (see <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/regents/aar/jane.pdf>)

Our school ensures excellence in scholarship through opportunities to develop methodological rigor in quantitative and/or qualitative research traditions and through intensive mentoring and research collaborations. Excellence in the preparation of educational professionals is achieved through classroom and field-based instruction enhanced by strong partnerships with community agencies and schools.

This mission and these strategies are evident in the major units within the School. As an overview, within the GGSE, the Education Department houses two major academic programs; the Program in Education and the Counseling/Clinical/School Psychology Program. Emphases within Programs provide specialized instruction for masters and doctoral students in the subfields of Education<sub>1</sub> and Applied Psychology. Closely aligned to the Education, Leadership and Organizations emphasis within the Program in Education is the newly initiated Joint Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership. Outside of the Department structure and under the Dean's supervision is the Teacher Education Program and additional state-approved credential programs in special education and school psychology.

Across these programs, we identify four themes that exemplify the strengths and opportunities for future growth:

### Life-long (P-20 and beyond) Education for a Diverse Society

A common thread throughout the GGSE is the goal of recognizing the diverse nature of students, families and communities as an impact on the provision of educational and mental health services. Accessibility, equity, and effectiveness of programs and services vary by race, gender, social class, (dis)ability, and sexual orientation. Each of our units designs courses by planfully infusing of issues of diversity in conceptual, methodological, and experiential dimensions. Faculty study and teach about the critical issues of second language learning, teaching and providing classroom environments to develop literacy and subject matter competence, and understanding the impacts of cultural contexts on students, families, and schools. We have faculty who focus specifically on educational issues of gender and disability. Issues of diversity are also studied from organizational and policy perspectives. A multicultural theme is threaded throughout the coursework in school-based psychological interventions and counseling process. The School also houses several centers that facilitate the collaborative work of faculty focused on issues of diversity; e.g., National Coalition for Equity and Education, Center for Teaching for Social Justice, and Center for Equity in Mathematics and Science Education. One of our faculty directs the University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute (UC LMRI), housed on this campus. Several faculty and numerous graduate students have been involved in research funded through this center.

### Development Embedded in Social Contexts

Children, youth and adults learn, growth, and develop in contexts of the home, school, and community. Our faculty and their research/scholarly work are particularly focused on development and education as it occurs in these critical contexts. Development is seen in its broadest sense and includes academic, language, cognitive, social, behavioral, and emotional dimensions. Example topics of research include how teachers create classroom contexts that help children acquire literacy skills, how children's acquisition social and language skills is impacted by their peer group, how families of children with disabilities support development of their children, how communities and schools support families to help their children succeed in school. Schools (policies, practices, organization), families, and communities are studied, as well, for their impact on issues such as student drop-out and exclusion rates, school safety and violence, child abuse, and school retention. These themes can be seen in the work of GGSE's Centers as well; e.g., Center for School-Based Youth Development, Gevirtz Research Center, Autism Training and Research Center.

### Preparing Leaders for All Facets of Education

Consonant with our life-long view of education, many of our graduates have the goal of continuing their research and scholarship in university settings where they may also be involved in the preparation of teachers, leadership personnel and psychologists. In both our Education and Applied psychology units, curriculum is available which prepares

these future scholars for educating future practitioners; e.g., methods for teacher education, professional development strategies, and counseling supervision.

Despite being one of the smallest in the elite group of American Association of Universities Research 1 Schools of Education, we prepare state and national leaders in the professions of teaching, school administration, and psychology. We do not see our mission as producing large numbers of professionally-based graduates, rather we aim to prepare smaller numbers of educational professionals as scholar-practitioners capable of providing leadership in the school systems within which they will work. While all of our professional preparation programs meet the standards of preparation set out by the California Commission for Teacher Credentialing (teacher education, moderate/severe special education teacher specialists, school psychologists), our programs also provide “value-added” preparation that will allow our graduates to serve as models and leaders in the educational settings within which they are hired. For example, our teacher education students participate in the innovative Performance Assessment for California Teachers. Our special education teacher and school psychology students receive preparation in translating research to practice and constructing evaluations of school-based practices.

In addition pre-service preparation, the GGSE’s Center for Educational Leadership, School University Partnership, and SCWRP provides excellent professional development assistance to K-12 partnership schools through improved teaching and facilitated school change. Our teacher education program maintains a close connection and alignment with the California Beginning Teacher Support Assessment Induction Program, which supports first and second year teachers as they clear their preliminary teaching credentials.

#### Education Viewed from the Disciplines

A particular strength and unique characteristic of our School is the wealth of scholarly expertise associated with the disciplines of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and linguistics. These disciplines are used as methodological and substantive lenses through which we view pressing educational issues such as learning in subject matter areas, literacy, language acquisition, understanding atypical development, and providing effective mental health services. Our faculty have been involved in the initiation of and leadership within several campus interdisciplinary emphases that facilitate collaborations, teaching, and research from a multidisciplinary perspective; e.g., Language Interaction and social Organization (LISO), Cognitive Science, Interdisciplinary Human Development, Applies Linguistics, Women’s Studies, the Writing Program, and Quantitative Methodology for the Social Science.