Going Public:
Making Teacher Educators' Learning Explicit as a Model for Preservice Teachers

By Sally Hudson-Ross & Peg Graham

Theoretical Framework

Surveys, reports, and proposals for reform in teacher education across the 1990s advocate partnerships among school and university participants as sites for collaborative inquiry (e.g., Goodlad, 1990; Holmes Group, 1995; National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996). Most research in professional development schools and similar collaborations, however, focuses on the relationships, content, and logistics of connecting schools and universities as very different institutions (Brookhart & Loadman, 1992; McIntyre & Byrd, 1996) or on the professional development of teachers and teacher candidates (e.g., Abdal-Haqq, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Levine, 1992). Rarely is the lens turned to the work of university teacher educators (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). While many of us profess the power of teacher research or social constructivist stances, taking on roles that demand self-study as teacher educators is a relatively new but growing area of concern (Zeichner, 1998).

Shared inquiry within a college classroom is even more uncommon. While teachers invite university

Sally Hudson-Ross and Peg Graham are associate professors in the Department of Language Education of the College of Education at The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

researchers, student teachers, and students into their classrooms as co-researchers, only recently has the movement for the peer review of teaching suggested the importance of collaborative examination of teaching at the college level (Boyer, 1990; Hutchings, 1995; Shulman, 1993). University culture encourages and rewards isolation perhaps even more than public school contexts (Goodlad, 1990; Metcalf-Turner & Fischetti, 1996), yet some evidence suggests that professors are eager for team and interdisciplinary teaching (Anderson & Speck, 1998; Austin & Baldwin, 1992; Cruz & Zaragoza, 1998; Walker & Quinn, 1996). At the same time, university classrooms provide only "spotty" models of the best practice we expect of future teachers (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988; Goodlad, 1990, p. 259), including the demonstration of collaboration and constructivist theoretical frameworks in action (Anderson & Speck, 1998).

Everyone agrees that mentor teachers should be models of good teaching. As university teacher educators, however, we believe that we too need to engage in reflective practice, make public our teaching tensions and decisions, and explicitly engage our students and colleagues in the social construction of knowledge. We also believe that our co-teaching within a social constructivist framework in a year-long teacher education program positions us to model teaching in unique ways. We offer here a detailed case of our on-going self-study within one teacher education program (Zeichner, 1998).

Context

Each year, the two authors of this article along with one to four teaching assistants form a teaching *team*. This team provides 27 semester hours of integrated coursework and field experiences for approximately 25 teacher candidates across a school year. The cohort combines undergraduate seniors majoring in English Education and *modified* master's degree students adding English Education certification for grades 7-12 and a master's degree to an undergraduate major. During the fall semester, students enroll in five courses including Adolescent Literature, Teaching as Collaborative Inquiry, Teaching as Planning in Context, Supervised Field Experience, and Guided Field Research. The first three courses occur as three-hour blocks on three afternoons each week. For the latter two courses, teacher candidates spend 12 hours per week in their school settings. In the spring semester, the teaching team and cohort continue together into a 3-hour seminar and full-time student teaching for 9 hours. (Details of the University of Georgia Network for English Teachers and Students [UGA-NETS] program, including materials mentioned in this article, are available at <www.coe.uga.edu/uganets>.)

Teacher candidates report that they do not experience courses as distinct from one another. Our goal as teacher educators is to integrate teacher candidates' experiences, to create a seamless, safe yet challenging opportunity to learn across school and campus settings for a full year. To do so, the campus team works as co-

teachers. We define our co-teaching through a social constructivist lens as the coherent, integrated, shared, self-reflective, and self-critical responsibility for supporting the learning of common students. We agree with Anderson and Speck (1998) that teaming is more importantly an issue of pedagogical theory than of simple logistics, but a few logistics will help readers visualize the setting within which the following case data are situated.

As co-teachers, the campus team plans together for two hours each Monday and stays in contact through e-mail and informal conversations within our departmental office. We are usually all in class at the same time; when we are not, teaching members share details via e-mail or in conversation. Different people take the lead for segments of each three-hour class or play support or teacher research roles (e.g., recording field notes). Often, however, we all assist during workshops, we all participate in activities, and we all engage in class discussions. Each of us assumes responsibility for four to eight teacher candidates in their field settings, but we share on-going school-based data via a team listserv and regular meetings.

Co-teaching of this sort is possible because class sessions are highly interactive, including lots of talk in small and large groups, workshops, and reading and responding to one another's research data and written work. Some class routines are in place (e.g., writing workshop, young adult book clubs, Friday *think piece* sessions, model lessons to demonstrate theories in action). Based on observations of and interactions with our teacher candidates, we fill out details of the syllabus each Monday in a published bulletin distributed to both teacher candidates and their mentor teachers.

Campus curriculum focuses on developing pedagogical content knowledge in English/language arts within the context of diverse and complicated school settings. Teacher candidate needs and issues set the agenda and are driven by their teacher research findings, experiences and discussions from school, and professional readings. Eleven overarching standards based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) for Adolescent and Young Adult English/ Language Arts (AYA/ELA) guide both teacher decisions and student work. Teacher candidates work within an emerging learning community which shares an elaborated and extensive discourse of shared knowledge, struggles, and stories about becoming a teacher (Fosnot, 1989). For most students, this community pervades their everyday lives.

While the focus of this article is on our campus-based teaching, it is important to note that the teacher candidates' school-based mentor teachers share with us a six-year history as a professional development network (see Graham, Hudson-Ross, Adkins, McWhorter, & Stewart, 1999; Hudson-Ross, 1998). The same 40-some mentor teachers and we two professors designed, created, and sustain the UGA-NETS program. We also extend our own professional development through weekly summer meetings and regular gatherings and a listserv during the school year. Each summer we assess the program and renegotiate changes in both campus

and school curriculum based on feedback and experiences with the previous cohort. The University of Georgia Network for English Teachers and Students (UGA-NETS) mentor teacher group has always focused on teacher research and collaborative inquiry as guiding principles. While mentors differ in their levels of buy-in (Hudson-Ross, in press), teacher candidates bring the voices of all their mentors to the campus community. At minimum, mentors clearly believe that each year a new teacher candidate challenges their thinking and forces them to articulate and examine intuitive beliefs, assumptions, and practices. At the other extreme, three UGA-NETS teachers have earned NBPTS certification and four others are working toward it, one was named a Promising Researcher by the National Council of Teachers of English, several are teachers of the year within their schools, and many thrive as professional learners through teacher research, writing and publishing, graduate programs, and professional organization affiliations.

Making our Teaching and Learning Explicit

Within this context, the authors have worked as co-teachers and co-researchers across six school years and six cohorts of students. Each year, students push us one step further to make our thinking more explicit, to articulate for them how our theories for teaching might work as alternatives to practices they previously experienced as learners. As much as possible, we have welcomed the disequilibrium they create as opportunities to dig deeper into our own assumptions, knowledge, actions, and professional growth needs. Because we have worked together, full-time and across time, and manage both school and campus aspects of our students' experiences, we have been able to slowly build a repertoire of explanations and learning structures that satisfy, engage, and challenge students more deeply each year. For example, students have led us to do the following:

◆ Articulate and invite them into our shared history and mission (see Graham, et. al., 1999);

◆ State or develop with them our expectations through formative assessment guidelines, a Quality Assurance Contract, and criteria for individual projects and products;

◆ Build a semester curriculum based on interrelated strands of logical, school-based learning rather than isolated areas of language arts or educational issues (e.g., not separating multicultural education from issues of assessment);

◆ Model lessons that demonstrate constructivist approaches;

◆ Model planning by sharing our own lesson plans, objectives, and assessment rationales;

◆ Create formative assessments and explain why we provide extensive feedback rather than grades (see case below);

◆ Adopt overall standards from NBPTS;

◆ Engage in action and discussions related to the politics of state and local education;

◆ Help students gain entrée into the professional community through our state and national organizations as speakers and as published writers.

Last year students awarded us 5.0 out of 5.0 in the university-mandated, anonymous evaluation of our overall teaching.

By our third year of paying attention to our students' struggles in learning to teach, we realized that we were co-constructing a theory and practice of teacher education that we would come to understand as social constructivist in nature (Richardson, 1997). From the beginning of our partnership, we asked students to make their histories, thinking, decisions, and actions public so that they could reflect upon them. We have made an even greater difference by doing the same ourselves. Anderson and Speck (1998) speculate that successful teaming, by its very nature, affirms constructivist principles. Co-teachers working from a constructivist stance model collaboration with one another and treat their students as fellow learners. Anderson and Speck agree with us that "what teachers do in *modeling* learning determines the level of success their students will have as learners" (p. 682, italics ours).

We reached a turning point in our third year when we decided to articulate for our students the assumptions from which we were working as teachers and learners. At first we simply handed out the assumptions with other beginning-of-the-year documents. Now and then we would point back to them when one of us realized that we could explain a class problem by reminding students where we were coming from. We stated our commitment to modeling our beliefs in Assumption 15:

> We believe that teachers (including us) should model their stance and theories in all they do. It is our obligation as university teachers to make explicit our beliefs and theories and to help you develop your own—perhaps like ours, perhaps not. We cannot, however, be theory or stance-free, nor would we be of use to you if we tried to be. We try in everything we do to LIVE our beliefs based on the best theory and research we have at our disposal, but we are always open to professional debate and dialogue and change in our own teaching. WE ARE STILL LEARNING AFTER MANY YEARS OF TEACHING.

But what does this assumption look like in practice? To examine how we model a constructivist stance as co-teachers and co-learners with our students, we reviewed and sought patterns across our published weekly bulletins, lesson plans, teaching and assessment materials, listserv communications about our teaching, written products we contributed to class (e.g., weekly think pieces), selected field

notes, and transcripts of classes. As we sifted through the data, we consistently found our written assumptions to be an important and helpful organizing framework. From this analysis, we finally identified four primary roles that we play as more experienced colleagues in a community of learners:

◆ *Teacher Researcher*: We model how teachers collect and use data with students to improve their teaching.

◆ *Reflective Practitioner*: We model how teachers reflect on students and their learning and how they engage students in debriefing and rethinking their practice and curriculum.

◆ *Member of a Professional and Collaborative Learning Community*: We demonstrate how teachers read and synthesize, how they think about issues in the field.

◆ *Assessor in a Constructivist Classroom*: We model and articulate how teachers plan for assessments that help every student succeed.

We describe here four brief cases out of many actual events to illustrate each role and to bring our classroom practice to life. Each case is representative not only of many similar events but also of the overall stance we take as teachers who continue to learn together about teaching. We begin each section with our stated assumptions about teaching and learning which the case represents. Within each case, we discuss how we expect our modeling to (1) help students examine their own experiences as learners, and (2) carry over into teacher candidates' own teaching in the public school setting. We conclude with a discussion and implications for teaching, self-study, and co-teaching within robust teacher education settings.

Teacher Researcher

Effective teachers of language arts conduct formal and informal research designed to refine and modify their approaches to teaching and learning. You will want to pose questions based on changing student needs and changing teaching contexts, conjecture about solutions, experiment with new techniques, test hypotheses, and engage in dialogue with other teachers about teaching and learning (Assumption 6).

We have always discussed ways to make visible and explicit our own teacher research efforts with our preservice students. We want teacher candidates to see how teachers—including their university professors—enact a teacher research mindset. So when we became concerned that males in the campus group were dominating discussions, we decided to model how to collect data which addressed our research question about gender and classroom discourse patterns and then invite our teacher candidates to analyze those data with us.

By the second month of one school year, our research questions about gender

and discourse surfaced. Based on our informal observations and during our reflective talk following each class session, we had both noted a shared concern that the 10 men in the class spoke more often and held the stage for much longer periods of time than the 10 women. We wondered how do female and male participants in campus discussions interact differently? What influences students' contributions to that talk? What changes, if any, could/should we make to those discourse patterns? In a reflective journal entry on e-mail, Peg wrote to Sally:

> I found it interesting that even with two women designated to call on speakers, the men dominated this discussion again. True, Jennifer got in some of her thoughts, but Bill has found his voice again and along with Brian, tends to speak out without noting if anybody else is trying to get into the discussion.

We decided to transcribe a discussion and then share the transcript data with the class as a means of helping them to appreciate the usefulness of studying classroom discourse patterns. The teacher candidates would soon be asked to transcribe excerpts of audiotaped classroom discourse in their own schools, so the opportunity seemed ripe for addressing our research question while also modeling transcription methods and group analysis of that data.

While Peg facilitated a discussion about recent school experiences, Sally transcribed that talk in real time. In this way, teacher candidates often observe firsthand how we function as co-researchers together on campus, alternating our roles, but always exploiting the presence of two teacher researchers. Our collaboration allowed the class to run smoothly as one of us taught and the other one assumed the role of research assistant/data collector—roles we were encouraging teacher candidates and their mentors to take on in high school classrooms. We asked teacher candidates to read the transcript of classroom discourse, determine who spoke, how often, how long, and how participants gained entrée into the discussion.

With transcript data available to them to scrutinize for discourse patterns, teacher candidates speculated that female class members were being excluded from the discussion, in part because males were blocking opportunities for female students to enter into the conversation. But we also complicated those seemingly easy answers by posing new questions. Were women really trying to gain entrée or were they allowing the men to dominate the talk? What were the power issues involved? And what other influences besides gender might be working here? Together, we were able to examine (1) individual and group assumptions about how certain norms and conventions surrounded talk in our campus classroom, (2) how speakers' reasons for speaking differed and accounted for longer turns, and (3) how teachers consciously or unconsciously facilitated and constrained student exchanges. In that way, we were able to speculate about influences on classroom discourse in order to account for the asymmetrical contributions of male and female students. Teacher candidates could see how our research assisted them as student

participants to perceive the complexity of our classroom discourse and to consciously alter those dynamics; in turn, it helped all of us to see the shared responsibility of teachers *and* learners to reshape those dynamics rather than to simply ignore them or accept them as normal.

The episode illustrated for teacher candidates how our efforts to change group dynamics played out in the campus classroom context and how those efforts were initiated by campus teachers' questions and felt tensions. We also modeled how students in any classroom—high school or university—could be brought into inquiry projects in meaningful ways. We believe it is important for teachers professing a constructivist framework to place data in the hands of students in order that pupils might become active participants in the research process. The challenge for teacher candidates, then, is to take that new awareness into their school contexts and question how and why their own classroom settings influence high school learners and learning.

Reflective Practitioner

Teaching as a teacher researcher / life-long learner is full of uncertainty, tension, struggle, and even intermittent crises and senses of failure. You should expect to feel frustrated or uncomfortable sometimes and view those experiences as necessary and predictable aspects of learning to teach (Assumption 2).

We assume that all teachers (including us) are open to suggestion, to constructive criticism, to input from colleagues and students, and to professional dialogue. Examining and adapting or changing one's teaching is expected, not a sign of failure (Assumption 14).

One of the most important aspects of our role as teacher educators is to make explicit our reflections about what transpires in our classroom. As teachers, our thoughts are invisible to our students, particularly the thinking that we do during and after we teach—the "reflection-in-action" and "reflection-on-action" that Schön talks about (1983). In truth, experienced teachers can make teaching look easier than it is, so we want teacher candidates to see how perceived failures in class can create important opportunities to learn. A thinking teacher's work is not done once she has planned and executed the lesson unless she spends a significant amount of time considering what she would do differently if she could reteach the lesson or what she might reconsider next time.

The teaching dilemma in question centers on an overly long lesson using *To Kill a Mockingbird* in which Peg, Elaine, and Sharon (graduate teaching assistants) used a fishbowl method in order to model particular planning concepts important to teacher candidates' emerging planning processes. The day after the class, Peg published to the teacher candidate listserv her disappointment with the lesson and her reflections on what she thought could have been improved. What appears below is the extended e-mail conversation that ensued as the teacher candidates talked

back about their expectations for a constructivist approach and what happens when those expectations are not met. Peg began:

We've been pushing you to think about reflecting upon discussions and readings and teaching episodes, so I thought I'd let you in on some of my reflections concerning yesterday's class.... We anticipated that by using a fishbowl approach, we could model productive, collaborative talk about planning. In the meantime, yesterday Jennifer [a teacher candidate] turned up with a set of difficult constraints for her unit, and so we decided to incorporate the context for her teaching into our campus lesson in hopes that we could help her to think through the plans she would need to make. But what happened is that the concepts of the lesson we had set out as our guides were lost in the complexities of Jennifer's case—too much context, not enough concept building. If it were possible to redo yesterday's plan alto-gether, we'd need to drop the problematic situations facing Jennifer as part of our discussion in favor of scaffolding for that more advanced conversation AFTER we had other concepts firmly in place. In essence, we gave short shrift to the difference between goals and objectives, the matches/mismatches among objectives/activi-ties/ assessments, and launched into a case study of planning that we weren't prepared for. Granted, many of you are faced with complexities similar to Jennifer's, but it's important to get those learning experiences in their proper order—and we skipped a step or two....

One of the heartaches in teaching is having precious little contact time with students, so when I feel as if an hour of time was wasted doing the wrong stuff and watching the lights go out in your eyes, I'm really sad and frustrated and irritated with myself for letting it happen. It may not make up for a less-than-productive class period, but I do think it's important for you all to know that we're aware of bad situations we create as teachers—and we're learning all the time about how to recognize those failures and think carefully about "next time" plans in order to avoid future problems. Somehow, it's not such a failure if you learn something valuable from it and studiously seek to avoid it in the future.... I'm going to let go of my disappointment now in order to move on to other things, but I did want you to know that this is the kind of reflection all teachers have to do on a regular basis.

♦ ♦ ♦

Peg, I would like to say thank you for addressing the situation in class on Wednesday.... To say that I learned as much about being a teacher reading your e-mail as I did sitting in class would be the most honest comment I could make. I do hope that you...take it as...a compliment to your honesty and how helpful it has been to this teacher candidate. (Jamie)

♦ ♦ ♦

I agree with what Jamie said. I was thinking, though, (and Cathy and I discussed this) that what made that day stand out is that every OTHER day is so awesome.... In any class, as you said, Peg, there are going to be days when the plan bombs or doesn't quite work the way you wanted it to; in this class, though, a day like that stands out only because every other day, pretty much, has been so much fun. (Kristen)

◆ ◆ ◆

I learned how "spoiled" I am when I come into a three-hour class and I'm never bored. I also realized how engaged we are on the other days in class — I guess I just take it for granted, but it made me think of my students at school who fall asleep and do other things instead of pay attention. There's a reason that they're doing that, and it's because they're not engaged! The thing is, that coming into class everyday and LEARNING and being engaged in the lesson shouldn't make me feel "spoiled." My education could have been like that all 900 years I've been in school, and it can (and should!) be like that. (Cathy)

◆ ◆ ◆

Peg, I read your e-mail about Wed.'s class.... I left thinking that I hadn't accomplished much, but I'm like the other "reflective e-mailers" and am seeing the value of a lesson going somewhere other than where it was intended. (Josh)

As thinking teacher educators, we must sponsor this kind of open dialogue in order to impress upon beginning teachers that in spite of our best intentions and plans, we, too, flounder. Like other teachers, we worry about making our teaching failures public and chance losing the respect of our students and colleagues. However, as teacher educators who are supposed to know it all, it's particularly important for us to swallow our pride and make explicit our failures. An e-mail to the class from Hope, a teacher candidate, one month after this event suggests that she applied the point we were trying to make in her own first teaching:

I knew that my plans were not engaging my students. I realized one reason for this was because I had not sufficiently scaffolded my lessons. I was assuming because I knew something that the kids would too, or would at least catch on quickly. WRONG. Upon realizing this, I revised my plans, starting at point A. I went in the next day apologized to the kids, told them what I had reflected on, and they responded very graciously. They said it was interesting, but they didn't understand it. So we have just begun again.

Member of a Professional and Collaborative Learning Community

Teachers of language arts are active readers and writers and learners who model those behaviors and enthusiasm to their students (Assumption 8).

We believe that teachers do not and should not all look alike. The variety of voices in professional dialogue is a strength, not a problem. Teaching professionals do, however, take responsibility for carefully thinking about their stances and for providing clear rationales for their choices to the public (students and parents and others), to colleagues (in professional debate), and to supervisors (professors when students, administrators when employed) (Assumption 11).

Each Friday during the Fall Semester, teacher candidates, professors, and any visitors to the class write a 2-3 page *think piece* about their professional concerns

of the week. We write knowing we will receive extended feedback from others in the class in an hour-long read around. We each read eight to 10 papers, write notes in margins, and extend our thinking in signed end notes. Think pieces are generally exploratory, sometimes brave, occasionally confusing, and often challenging. Think pieces pose questions with no easy answers or serve to help the writer think her way to understanding with collegial support. Teacher candidates often write about differences between themselves and mentor teachers, concerns about or plans for teaching writing or literature, student cases, extensions of thinking about readings or class discussions, or budding awareness of the politics of schooling. As teacher educators, think pieces become a place for us to learn and make our thinking honestly visible as well. (See Blackstone, 1999.)

For example, this Fall Peg led the class through a new text, Jeff Wilhelm's *You Gotta BE the Book* (1997) about his experiences learning with his students both how students read well and why they do not. Teacher candidates struggled to understand how Wilhelm's situation applied in their classrooms. Sally, who was also reading the book for the first time, listened to their confusion. In her think piece, she purposely set up a dichotomy to help herself and students sort through their thinking about the book within the context of a larger class discussion of assessment. In this excerpt, she began with a big picture:

> Listening to our talk in class and in the listserv, I needed to make sense of the material in Wilhelm, especially as to how it sets up different types of assessments. Being a linear kinda-gal, I explore below in two charts how I see him articulating two kinds of reading:

TRADITIONAL SCHOOL READING	MEANINGFUL READING
◆ Is about TEXTS	◆ Is about KIDS
◆ From the New Critical stance, all that matters is the text, its elements etc. (not author, reader, history, other texts, etc.)	◆ "Curricular texts are pre-texts to personal meaning" (Wilhelm, p. 10) "The subject of the class has become not only our reading—but who we are as people—it's about us!" (p. 50, Wilhelm journal)
◆ TEACHER GUIDES / DIRECTS Teacher mediates Directs students to correct reading	◆ TEACHER SUPPORTS / GUIDES Teacher scaffolds to help students reach personal meanings, awareness of process
◆ TEXT read efferently, for information	◆ TEXT read aesthetically, for person meaning

In response, students wrote in the margins of this portion of the think piece:

◆ So the text itself isn't the end but the means to the end... RR

◆ Wouldn't Wilhelm say they have to engage before they can relate? JT

◆ This [right side] is what the students will keep/take with them...not the "correct"

or teacher's interpretation. They'll forget that after the unit test. A question of goals again. RR

◆ Wow, Sally, this really helps me to see where my views are. My heart & mind are on the right side all the way. I am realizing, though, that my language is sometimes taken from the left and makes little sense with my beliefs (i.e., "correct"). KM

◆ This chart helps me see the two extremes, but I see this as a continuum. Presently I feel my mentor teacher is between the two somewhere. Where will I be? CC

Through her think piece, Sally demonstrated how she reads as a professional, makes sense of a narrative research report that may not communicate as expository text, and connects what she knows to a new text. Students as readers openly entered into the professional dialogue offering agreement, clarification, and rebuttals. As Wilhelm recommends, Sally modeled a teacher's scaffolding and dialogue with students to co-construct meaning from texts.

In a following think piece, Sally acknowledged a common student concern—their felt need to collect and see more *activities* in our class—but she then challenged them to think harder about their decision-making as planners:

So many of you right now want lots of good activities. We agree—you need those to feel secure.... However, taking kids through disconnected *fun* activities is not teaching. It will last about a month.... Then what?

Believe it or not, kids want challenge. They want to be treated as mature, thinking people who have a right to be engaged in an education over which they feel they have some control. Your job as teacher and planner is to think about the *why* behind everything that happens in your classroom...and articulate that to kids.... Think of our class and how often you ask us, *why*? If we don't respond, you'll give up on us....

Sally pulls her readers back to the Wilhelm text and a much bigger, but related topic: the need for theory:

Finally, some of you are saying Wilhelm is a waste of time.... Yet, without a strong theory to guide you, you'll be frustrated and eventually burned out when [activity after activity fails to move the class forward]. Theory is about guiding you through the hard times. It's about helping you make decisions when everything looks hopeless. It's about finding your way through the data around you (think of Wilhelm's stance as teacher researcher) to make a difference in kids' lives. Notice how few *good ideas* Wilhelm has in his files. Instead, he observes kids, talks with them, and thinks of how to create the next events for them to move forward. You need a process for doing the same—or you'll fall to blaming kids, their families, their laziness, the schools, etc. Blame gets no one anywhere—it doesn't even *feel* good! The theories we share—or that you encounter or build elsewhere—are what you really need as teachers.

Sally knew all of this before writing—but mostly at an intuitive level. By

articulating her teaching rationale for students and embedding it in the stream of on-going community talk, she demonstrated how a professional might make sense of her students' struggles. She provided a model that students can use later when they must explain themselves to students, peers, parents, and colleagues or when they build semester-long portfolios that explain their own growth and reasoning.

Assessors In a Constructivist Classroom

We expect you—both as students and as teachers—to document your professional growth, to make it visible to others including professors, administrators, parents and students, and colleagues. We expect you to uncover ways to make your learning visible to others. We, as professors, will provide structures to help you learn how to do so (Assumption 13).

...We will strive in every instance to be sure you share and understand our perspectives of your work, teaching, and accomplishments. In all you do this year, you are being assessed as both prospective teacher and as student-learner. You are no longer "just a student" (Assumption 19).

Pushing grades to the background so that learning can occur is probably one of the most difficult but important constructivist moves (Richardson, 1997). From the beginning of our partnership, we have distanced our teaching as much as possible from grades and focused on assessment, performance standards, and excellence. For example, we never grade individual products, projects, or assignments. Instead, we tell our students, "we expect you all want A's and we do expect excellence. We will let you know if you start to lose ground, *and* we will let you know how to make progress." Then we begin a careful, structured, semester-long effort to make public both our criteria for success and our reasoning. In return, we ask students to take risks, collect evidence of their growth, and demonstrate their learning. As a result, students collaborate in reflecting on and articulating their own progress as teachers. We guide them to this stance through five processes:

◆ Establishing overall standards based on National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) as our vision and formative standards along the way;

◆ Explaining, demonstrating, and pointing to our theories, assumptions, and stances in action;

◆ Providing student and professional models;

◆ Co-developing criteria for success;

◆ Inviting teacher candidates to reflect on the impact of our assessment processes on themselves as students and as learners.

On the first day, with little fanfare or explanation, students receive copies of a Quality Assurance Contract (to meet state mandate), our own assumptions, NBPTS standards we have adopted, a list of *Fall Activities* to be completed at school, a

midterm formative assessment guide, and the semester-long portfolio assignment. We then begin a gradual introduction of many long-term, routine assignments: three-way dialogue journals among teacher candidate, mentor teacher, and professor; weekly think pieces; written responses to campus readings; weekly book clubs including book cards and *teacher as decision-maker* reflections; weekly writing workshop with writer's logs detailing processes, thinking, and teaching implications; and teacher research projects and fall activities at school including interviews with students and faculty, examination of student products and school texts and materials, and observations of teachers. These student products become the content of our campus classes. Peers and/or mentor teacher—as well as campus teachers— read and respond to every assignment, providing an inherent motivation to excel in interaction with valued audiences.

After a first read-around of one another's think pieces or book cards, the class can easily devise a list of criteria for what makes a good one. We also provide exemplary models from previous years and ask current group members to post good models on our listserv. In an e-mail, Carolyn attested to the importance of models, both as a student and as a future teacher:

> This experience with something foreign to me [a portfolio] really taught me a lot about who I am as a learner and how kids must feel when they are approached with a totally new concept, activity, or expectation. It gave me a depth of insight into the struggles of many students and showed me how to respond.

Each year we introduce new facets of our assessment plans based on the previous students' input and needs. When we do not have ready-made models available, we must publicly build a sense of what works, what doesn't work, what scaffolding students need, and how to adjust for the following year. Students always read one another's work, and at the end of any activity, we debrief orally and in writing. Students whose work is less successful receive abundant feedback and opportunity and support for revision, if and when such an investment of time will be productive. Otherwise, because products aren't graded, we can all move on having tried our best and learned (unless a student demonstrates a pattern of less successful work for which we will counsel him or her). Instead of punishing students, we think aloud about "next time." As a result, each class not only benefits from previous classes' experiences but also contributes to future classes' success. We consciously try to model all teachers' struggles with making assessment clearer for students.

For example, last year, we first introduced the NBPTS standards as a guide for fall and spring portfolios. That class taught us that students needed more guided opportunities to focus on each standard in order to visualize their own data as evidence. Their portfolios were acceptable, but not as deep, rich, or examined as we had hoped. We shared their portfolios with the current cohort with the caveat that we would now spend more time on understanding the standards. Carolyn again wrote in an e-mail,

Sally, I'm glad you clarified that about the portfolios. Looking at them really helped me out.... Even without knowing that last year's class did not have the assistance we have [with standards], I recognized that the portfolios could be taken much farther. Overall, I feel much more confident now that I have an idea of how to pull all of my experiences together and analyze them. Also, seeing them gave me a new vision for my actions for the rest of the semester.

After midterm, when students had collected a wealth of data, we began seriously walking through each standard—one or two each class period—so that students could think toward their portfolios in all they did. They asked themselves and each other, How can I demonstrate *fairness* or my *contributions to the professional community*? What kinds of experiences do I still need to seek out? They could now see how certain think pieces, dialogue journal entries, student interviews, experiences with grading student work, and parent phone calls were adding up to their own personal demonstration of *fairness*.

Our students experience rich formative feedback (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999). We routinely respond to all assignments with suggestions, questions, and probing. In the teaching team's shared grade book, we record checks, plusses, and minuses with notes to keep track of any patterns of weakness. If patterns emerge (such as too brief responses or a refusal to probe issues beyond a surface level), we confer with a student. But we withhold discussing grades as long as we can.

This year, when the class finally asked for grades in October, we were prepared for the first time with an "Overview of Courses, Evidence for Grades by Course, and Correlation to Standards for the Portfolio." Again, our tension in past years of not being able to articulate how we constructed five separate grades led to this new chart over the summer. By the time students saw this configuration of their work in progress, they were already successful learners, and it was clear to them how their work buildt toward specific courses and, more importantly, toward particular standards. At midterm, we provided grade estimates for each of the five courses. Some students received B's or C's with explanations of where their work was less than exemplary. Further models, analysis of specific pieces, and individual probes to deepen thinking usually helped students make progress. Some, however, quite reasonably decided to accept lower grades given their personal or work circumstances.

We do not yet know if extra time spent on explaining standards or our attempts to articulate grades more clearly for five courses will be fully satisfactory. However, we think that our students realize—both as learners and as future teachers—the difficulties of making assessment practices fair, explicit, helpful, and productive rather than mysterious or punitive. They also experience the power of a classroom committed to learning and growth rather than grades. By learning with our students and articulating how we are changing our own assessment practices, we not only teach better but can also expect and support higher levels of achievement each year.

Discussion and Implications for Teacher Education

We are not always successful as teachers; no one is. There often seem to be as many losses and disappointments as there are achievements and movement ahead each year. Our challenge as teacher educators and collaborators working from a social constructivist stance is to work and learn with each new cohort of teacher candidates. Each year, we more confidently take the next group where previous cohorts have taught us to go; however, we also adapt for new struggles brought into our classroom. The diverse histories, beliefs, and experiences of individual teacher candidates, the changing populations and agendas of public schools, and the educational reform movements that buffet all of us must have an impact on teacher educators, or we become stagnant. At the same time, teacher educators must accept the difficulties of their own choices as teachers. For example, we are exploring issues of gender in new ways with our current class. We suspect that males, and some female students, are less engaged by a social constructivist stance that invites students to collaborate and think more deeply about their own learning. We hear it in their chorus of "I just want to do it, not think about it" (see also Bolin, 1990). Many teacher candidates hear the same message from their own students. Together, we now ask: Does a social constructivist stance make sense for all students—in teacher education or in high schools? Without giving up our own principles, how can we adjust to help all students succeed? What then does *success* look like?

As other teacher researchers attest, our teaching is complicated—but also enhanced—by our role as researchers of our own practice. While we could invite others to study our teaching and present it from an outsider's perspective, two issues drive us to continue with self-study. First, we survive and thrive within a major research institution where we are expected to engage in research as much as teaching and outreach. We manage the time-consuming work of school / university collaborations and co-teaching *because* the focus of our research is our teaching and collaborations (Boyer, 1990). While we acknowledge the need and seek support for external review of our program and practices, we cannot stop engaging in that examination or in publishing it ourselves. Secondly, teacher educators are noticeably missing as the focus of research literature on learning to teach (Richardson, 1997; Wideen, et. al., 1998). Our own biographies, reflections, decisions, professional development, and stories are important to the field. We have special insights and perspectives that may push the literature in new directions. We believe we also have the obligation to reflect on teaching publicly both with our students and with the profession at large if we, like Richardson (1997), argue that our own "learning cannot be separated from action" (p. 8).

Helping preservice teachers reflect on their own practice demands modeling how we do so ourselves—as well as confronting the moral, political, and emotional implications of putting teaching in doubt (Hargreaves, 1995). Like pulling away the

wizard's curtain, we ask teacher candidates to examine their autobiographies and experiences as well as the impact of our teaching on their own learning. They are thrilled to share power, but disheartened, angry, and even in denial to learn that teaching will not be easy. Disequilibrium is both heady and terrifying stuff, especially when many students are also undergoing major life changes: graduation, marriage or children, working with others unlike themselves, first real jobs, family crises (Upcraft, 1996). Generations of teacher educators have bemoaned the power of the apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) and the pull of tradition on beginners in public schools (Abdal-Haqq, 1998). Yet as Hargreaves says, we too understand that our students' previous teachers and future colleagues are "not personally unskilled or uncaring, but rather people of a particular time and place, shaped and constrained as much by the structures and traditions of secondary schooling as were their students" (p. 10). We hope that by preparing teacher candidates in an honest, *bi-cultural* approach (Tom, 1999), we help them comprehend and negotiate the realities of the positivistic theories more common in public schools at the same time they deeply understand—as learners—the power of social constructivist approaches to teaching and learning. We clearly need to study how experiences as learners in social constructivist environments impact teachers across their careers (see Loughran & Russell, 1997); however, we also agree with Hargreaves that we must support teachers through the moral, political, and emotional uncertainties of learning to teach in the postmodern era.

Finally, like many teacher educators, we believe that beginning teachers may be more able to confront uncertainty and their own beliefs if they learn to teach within a robust, *ecological* program (Wideen, et. al., 1998). We strive to provide a consistent message and reinforce it across settings within a supportive environment where it is acceptable to continue learning and growing as a teacher. Arguably, coherence is hampered by traditional structures within universities. While professional development school models work against the limitations of these structures, maintaining *new* structures can sometimes obfuscate commitment to on-going learning.

We did not realize in 1994 that our request and decision to co-teach all courses across the year would be so critical in designing a school / university collaboration. By examining our own teaching together, we model for teachers—as well as teacher candidates—new, social constructivist roles and possibilities and move beyond our own isolation. While we have focused on our campus classroom for this article, we cannot underestimate the importance of the UGA-NETS mentor teachers as *our* co-learners within our local discourse community. We do not co-teach in a vacuum, but within the context of a powerful group of other teachers, most of whom are equally engaged in self-study and view their work as co-teaching with preservice partners. In short, our teacher candidates are not the only ones who experience uncertainty, challenges to their beliefs, teacher research, or the importance of a community of learners. They see their professors and mentors seeking the same things as part of professional groups. We hope and hypothesize that this preservice taste of what

Hargreaves (1995) calls *desire* —including creativity, spontaneity, connections to students, fulfillment, accomplishment, and closeness to others—will be addictive enough to create a new kind of teacher.

We recognize that our teaching collaboration is special. While co-teaching has generally been portrayed positively in the literature (Anderson & Speck, 1998; Cruz & Zaragoza, 1998), it is very difficult to enact. As Anderson and Speck suggest, success depends upon compatibility, similar vision and teaching philosophy, a collaborative style, mutual respect, and a collective goal to share power with other teachers and with students. Constantly critiquing one's own practice is much easier with a long-term partner who challenges your thinking, provides alternative interpretations and ideas, and shares a history of collaboration with over 100 student cases. Examining one's own teaching in front of a wide range of public audiences is difficult and not yet widely accepted within the university. By doing so, however, we offer new models of teaching and learning for preservice and experienced teachers. We also satisfy our own professional longing for challenge and fulfillment as teachers. In the long-term, we hope to push the limits of knowing in teacher education itself.

References

Abdal-Haqq, I. (1998). *Professional development schools: Weighing the evidence.* (Critical Issues in Teacher Education series of AACTE). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Anderson, R.S., & Speck, B.W. (1998). "Oh what a difference a team makes": Why team teaching makes a difference. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 14 (7), 671-686.

Austin, A.E. & Baldwin, R.G. (1992). *Faculty collaboration: Enhancing the quality of scholarship and teaching.* Washington, DC: Georgia Washington University, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 347 958).

Blackstone, S. (1999). Think pieces: Connecting school and campus learning. In P. Graham, S. Hudson-Ross, C. Adkins, P. McWhorter, & J. Stewart (Eds.), *Teacher/mentor: A dialogue for collaborative inquiry* (pp. 113-122). New York: Teachers College Press and the National Council of Teachers of English.

Bolin, F.S. (1990). Helping student teachers think about teaching: Another look at Lou. *Journal of Teacher Education, 41* (1), 10-19.

Boyer, E.L. (1990). *Scholarship revisited: Priorities for the professoriate.* Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Bransford, J., Brown, A.L., & Cocking, R.R. (Eds.) (1999). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Brookhart, S.M., & Loadman, W.E. (Spring, 1992). School-university collaboration: Across cultures. *Teaching Education, 4* (2), 53-68.

Clifford, G.J., & Guthrie, J.W. (1988). *Ed School.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Cruz, B.C., & Zaragoza, N. (1998, Spring). Team teaching in teacher education: Intra-college partnerships. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 25* (2), 53-62.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1994). *Professional development schools: Schools for developing a*

profession. New York: Teachers College Press.

Fosnot, C.T. (1989). *Enquiring teachers: enquiring learners: A constructivist approach for teaching*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Goodlad, J.I. (1990). *Teachers for our nation's schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Graham, P., Hudson-Ross, S., Adkins, C., McWhorter, P., & Stewart, J. (Eds.) (1999). *Teacher/mentor: A dialogue for collaborative inquiry*. New York: Teachers College Press and the National Council of Teachers of English.

Hargreaves, A. (1995). Development and desire: A postmodern perspective. In T.R. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education* (pp. 9-33). New York: Teachers College Press.

Holmes Group (1995). *Tomorrow's schools of education*. East Lansing, MI: The Holmes Group.

Hudson-Ross, S. (1998, Sept./Oct.). A discipline-based "professional development faculty" in secondary teacher education: A case for multiple-site collaborative reform in the disciplines. *Journal of Teacher Education, 49* (4), 266-275.

Hudson-Ross, S. (in press). Intertwining opportunities: Participants' perceptions of professional growth within a multi-site teacher education network at the secondary level. *Teaching and Teacher Education*.

Hutchings, P. (Ed.) (1995). *From idea to prototype: The peer review of teaching/ a project workbook*. Washington, DC: American Association for Higher Education.

Levine, M. (Ed.) (1992). *Professional practice schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Loughran, J., & Russell, T. (1997). Meeting student teachers on their own terms: Experience precedes understanding. In V. Richardson (Ed.), *Constructivist teacher education: Building new understandings* (pp. 164-181). London, UK: The Falmer Press.

McIntyre, D.J., & Byrd, D.M. (1996). *Preparing tomorrow's teachers: The field experience, Teacher Education Yearbook IV*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Metcalf-Turner, P., & Fischetti, J. (1996). Professional development schools: Persisting questions and lessons learned. *Journal of Teacher Education, 47* (4), 292-299.

National Commission on Teaching & America's Future. (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future*. New York: National Commission on Teaching & America's Future.

Richardson, V. (1997). Constructivist teaching and teacher education: Theory and practice. In V. Richardson (Ed.), *Constructivist teacher education: Building new understandings* (pp. 3-14). London, UK: The Falmer Press.

Schön, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: Basic Books.

Shulman, L.S. (1993). Teaching as community property: Putting an end to pedagogical solitude. *Change, 25* (6), 6-7.

Tom, A. (1999, September 23). Speech at The University of Georgia College of Education. Athens, GA.

Upcraft, M.L. (1996). Teaching and today's college students. In R.J. Menges, M. Weimer, & Associates (Eds.), *Teaching on solid ground: Using scholarship to improve practice*, 21-42. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Walker, C.J., & Quinn, J.W. (1996). Fostering instructional vitality and motivation. In R.J.

Menges, M. Weimer, & Associates (Eds.), *Teaching on solid ground: Using scholarship to improve practice*, 315-336. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Wideen, M., Mayer-Smith, J., Moon, B. (1998). A critical analysis of the research on learning to teach: Making the case for an ecological perspective on inquiry. *Review of Educational Research, 68* (2), 130-178.

Wilhelm, J. (1997). *You gotta BE the book: Teaching engaged and reflective reading with adolescents*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Zeichner, K. (1998). Vice Presidential Address given at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.